

## Model Annotations

### Activity 1: The Albany Congress and Political Identity

Thomas Pownell, British imperial administrator, selection from his 1765 *The Administration of the Colonies*

*a leading measure to the forming Great Britain, 'with all its Atlantic and American possessions, into one great commercial dominion....*

so that, for every power, which they exercise or possess, they will depend on the government of Great Britain; so that, in every movement, they may be held, each within its proper sphere, and be drawn and connected to this center: and as forming a one system, they will be so connected in their various orbs and subordination of orders, as to be capable of receiving and communicating, from the first mover (the government of Great Britain) any political motion, in the direction in which it is given. Great Britain, as the center of this system, must be the center of attraction, to which these colonies, in the administration of every power of their government, in the exercise of their judicial powers, and the execution of their laws, and in every operation of their trade, must tend. They will be so framed, in their natural and political interests; in the rights, privileges, and protection they enjoy; in the powers of trade, which they actuate, under the predominating general commerce of the nation, that they will remain under the constant influence of the attraction of this center; and cannot move, but that every direction of such movement will converge to the same. At the same time that they all conspire in this one center, *they must be guarded against having, or forming, any principle of coherence with each other above that, whereby they cohere in this center*; having no other principle of intercommunication between each other, than that by which they are in joint communion with Great Britain as the common center of all. At the same time that they are, each in their respective parts and subordinations, so framed, as to be actuated by this first mover,—they should always remain incapable of any coherence, or of so conspiring amongst themselves, as to create any other equal force, which might recoil back on this first mover; nor is it more necessary to preserve the several governments subordinate within their respective orbs, than it is essential to the preservation of the empire to keep them disconnected and independent of each other : they certainly are so at present; the different manner in which they are settled, the different modes under which they live, the different forms of charters, grants and frame of government they possess, the various principles of repulsion that these create, the different interests which they actuate, the religious interests by which they are actuated, the rivalry and jealousies which arise from hence, and the impracticability, if not the impossibility of reconciling and accommodating these incompatible ideas and claims, will keep them for ever so....

Under the guidance therefore of these principles—that the final external profits of the labour and produce of colonies should center in the mother country,—that the colonics are the appropriated special customers of the mother country,—that the colonies, in their government and trade, should be all united in communion with, and subordination to the government of the mother country, but ever disconnected and independent of each other by any other communion than what centers here.

Thomas Pownall, *The Administration of the Colonies* second ed. (London, 1765), 35-38.

**Comment [D1]:** Pownall depicts Great Britain at the center of the universe, "the first mover" in the imagery of the solar leading in every facet of life, both politics and economics, over the colonies. The planets or colonies are subordinates within the early modern view of the rigid social hierarchy or order of things.