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The Rise of the Abolitionism during the Revolutionary Period, 1770-1800*

Young Hwi Yoon**

Abstract

This research scrutinises the moral and political crisis of the empire caused by the American Revolution and indicates its impact on Anglo-American evangelicals' attitudes towards slavery. Anglo-American evangelicals made a new leap forwards in antislavery ideology or abolitionism during the revolutionary period. For this process, the Revolution was of importance in three respects: it offered a set of conditions in which antislavery became more useful for many political and religious purposes; an evangelical sense of crisis was intensified in the political crisis caused by the Revolution and American evangelicals in particular recognised the inconsistency between their revolutionary ideas and the nature of slavery. In contrast to some historians' view, the critical moments caused by the American Revolution only intensified the existing religious motivation of evangelicals which had been evident between the 1730s and the 1760s. In this sense, the Revolution did not cause, but stimulated, the rise of an antislavery ideology or abolitionism.

Keywords: the American Revolution, the Antislavery Movement, Abolitionism, Evangelicals, Political Activism, the Transatlantic Evangelical Network.

* This study stems from part of the author's PhD dissertation, "The Spread and Transformation of Antislavery Sentiment in the Transatlantic Evangelical Network, 1730s-1790s" (University of Warwick, 2011).

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Introduction

This essay analyses the critical situation caused by the American Revolution and demonstrates how it affected Anglo-American evangelicals' attitudes towards slavery. As demonstrated by a number of scholars since the early 1980s, the transatlantic network of evangelicals, stimulated by "the Great Awakening" or the religious revival in the 1730s-1740s, offered a communication channel for discussions about slavery on an Atlantic scale, and enhanced the propagation of antislavery views.¹ However, these religious factors were not enough to explain the rise of the abolitionist movement in Britain and the new United States. Discomfort does not necessarily lead to activism; this required a conviction to act against the institution of slavery. The development of a coherent ideology, and a set of conditions in which antislavery became useful for political purposes, were both needed to transform the sentiment into purposeful action. Both contemporary and modern scholars have viewed the Revolution as a catalyst for this transformative process.² This essay supports this assessment of the Revolution but focuses more narrowly on the changes in the evangelical mindset. Firstly, the interrelation between the American Revolution, evangelicalism and the development of the antislavery movement is examined. Secondly, there is a discussion of how and why the Revolution affected the rise of evangelical abolitionism.

1. The Correlation between the Revolution and Evangelical Abolitionism

Evangelical Protestantism, the antislavery movement and revolutionary republicanism are important themes in late eighteenth century Britain and America. For a more comprehensive interpretation of the period, we need to examine the interrelationships between these themes. As mentioned above, it is largely

¹ For the transatlantic evangelical network, see. [Durdin] O'Brien, "A Transatlantic Community of Saints: The Great Awakening and the First Evangelical Network, 1735-1755," *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 811-832; Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters, from the Foundation to the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1978), 394-406.; Frank Lambert, "'Pedlar in Divinity': George Whitefield and the Great Awakening, 1737-1745," *The Journal of American History* 77 (1990): 812-837.

² Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade In Two Parts* (London: J. Phillips, 1788), p. 30; Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: The North Carolina University Press, 2006), *passim*.

demonstrated that a transatlantic communication channel for discussions about slavery issue was forming through the transatlantic evangelical network throughout the eighteenth century.³ Thus, this essay focuses on the correlation between the Revolution and the abolitionist movement, and the interplay between the Revolution and evangelicalism.

1.1. The Relationship between the Revolution and the Antislavery Cause

There has been virtual agreement among scholars that the Revolution influenced the rise of the antislavery movement. One of the strongest indications of a correlation between the American Revolution and the development of evangelical antislavery ideology may be found in the timing of antislavery publications. It is notable that expressions of antislavery sentiment in print culture by Anglo-American evangelicals increased sharply towards 1780s, when the tension caused by the American Revolution also reached its peak. The close relationship between these developments is indicated by evidence in Charles Evans' *American Bibliography*, published in 1904, an important source which details the titles of most books, pamphlets and periodicals published in the United States of America from 1639 to 1820.⁴ This data may be used to analyse the proportion of material related to pro and antislavery literature, in order to ascertain the link between the Revolution and attitudes to slavery.

During that time, American printers eagerly imported and reprinted British publications, and American publication markets were much dependent on British writers. Considering this trend, data compiled from Evans' source reflects changes in publications not only in the American colonies, but also to some extent in Britain. Furthermore, this data also shows the contribution of evangelicals to the development of antislavery publications. Although the religious inclination of all writers is not precisely identified, at least 48 percent of antislavery publications (11 out of 23) in the 1770s and 41 percent (15 out of 36) in the 1780s were written by those who clearly expressed their evangelical faith. If the petitions by antislavery societies, mainly

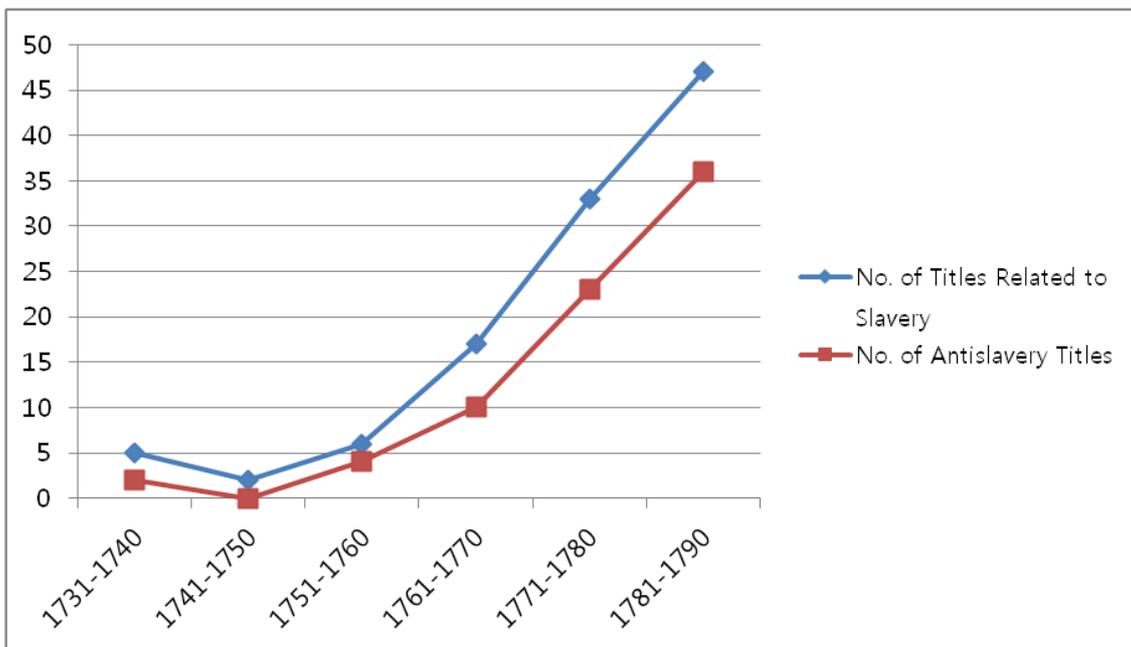
³ In addition to scholars mentioned in footnote no. 2, for the interrelation between evangelicalism and the antislavery movement, see Young Hwi Yoon, "The Spread of Antislavery Sentiment through Proslavery Tracts in the Transatlantic Evangelical Community, 1740s-1770s," *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 81 (2012).

⁴ Charles Evans, *American Bibliography: A Chronological Dictionary of All Books, Pamphlets, and Periodicals in the United States of America from the Genesis in 1639 Down to and Including the Year 1820* (vols. 13, Chicago: Printed for the author by the Blakely Press, 1904).

initiated by evangelicals, were added on to this figure, the proportion of evangelical antislavery publications would be even higher.

From the 1730s to the 1760s, the number of slavery-related publications in each decade was fewer than ten. However, this figure increased to 17 in the 1760s when conflicts between Britain and the American colonies intensified, and doubled to 33 in the 1770s when the War of American Independence broke out. In the 1780s, the proportion of slavery-related titles continued to rise. The number of antislavery publication also increased dramatically towards 1790: recording a twofold increase over the 1760s and continuing to grow in the 1780s. (See, Figure 1)

<Figure 1> American publications related to slavery, 1731-1790⁵



Comparison of the total number of titles published in the period indicates that the rate of increase of slavery-related publications exceeds that of the total publications, although the quantity of publication itself was relatively small.⁶ For the two decades after 1771, there were 11,145 items published in America, which represented a 130

⁵ Data compiled from Evans, *American Bibliography*, vols 2-8.

⁶ Data compiled from Evans, *American Bibliography*, vols 2-8. The publications related to slavery were less than 1 percent of the total. Evans' data did not reflect how many copies of the slavery publications were sold but only listed the individual titles published during a particular period. Thus, small number of titles does not necessarily mean small sales volume.

percent increase over the total number of titles (8,571) published in the four decades from 1731 to 1770. In the same period, the number of titles related to slavery increased by 260 percent, and those about antislavery by 370 percent. The ratio of antislavery literature to general slavery-related publications showed rapid growth: 53 percent between 1731 and 1770 increasing to 73.5 percent between 1771 and 1790. Although Figure 1 does not reflect the entire production of American publications, it still gives an idea of what writers and publishers believed would appeal to their readership. It certainly indicates that their interests in the antislavery cause rapidly increased during the two decades after 1771.

A close examination of the themes of these titles supports a connection between the Revolution and antislavery publications. The antislavery publications in the years between 1731 and 1790 may be categorised into six basic types according to their themes: 'Revolution', 'Religion', 'Law', 'Humanity', 'Quaker' and 'Narratives'. The category 'Revolution' includes titles which viewed slavery in the context of the Anglo-American relationship and reflected the revolutionary context of their titles. 'Religion' includes religious tract, sermons and hymns. 'Law' includes petitions to the colonial assemblies, court cases for slaves and legislation in parliament. 'Humanity' titles are relevant to the humanitarian argument. The category 'Quaker' has Yearly and Monthly Meeting reports. 'Narratives' includes essays and poems relevant to the antislavery cause. The analysis of the antislavery titles provides some idea of the writers' rationale. Table 1 shows that before 1770 there were only a small number of antislavery publications and few expressed revolutionary ideas. However, the number of titles in the category 'Revolution', increased rapidly after 1770. In the 1770s, 48 percent (11 out of 23) of antislavery publications dealt with the critical situation of the Revolution. However, the ratio of revolutionary antislavery titles declined to 14 percent (5 out of 36) in the 1780s when the critical issues of the Revolution were resolved. Another theme, 'Law' also showed rapid growth: 6 percent of antislavery publications (1 out of 16) from 1731 to 1770 increasing to 17 percent (4 out of 23) in the 1770s, and to 17 percent (6 out 36) in the 1780s. Some of the 'Law' publications were also relevant to revolutionary ideology as they dealt with the rights of slaves as well as those of colonials. The rapid growth of antislavery publications relevant to the revolutionary theme in the 1770s and 1780s suggests that the social changes caused by the American Revolution may be one of the key factors affecting public views on slavery. The quantitative information offers a comprehensive explanation of the upward trend in antislavery publication and its correlation with the American Revolution.

<Table 1> Themes of Antislavery Publications⁷

	Revolution	Religion	Law	Humanity	Quaker Yearly Meetings	Narrative/ Essay	No. of Antislavery Titles
1731-1740	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
1741-1750	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1751-1760	0	1	0	1	2	0	4
1761-1770	1	2	1	1	0	5	10
1771-1780	11	4	4	0	0	4	23
1781-1790	5	2	6	2	3	18	36
Total	17	11	11	4	5	27	75

1.2. The Relationship between the Revolution and Evangelical Protestantism

There also existed interplay between the religious and political movements which led to the rise of abolitionism. While there was a demonstrable correlation between the revolutionary environment and antislavery expression, religious elements were a crucial factor in the development of the antislavery movement. Thus, the influence of the American Revolution on the rise of the antislavery movement needs to be investigated in the context of the evangelical network.

Many historians acknowledge the evangelical contribution to the development of American revolutionary ideas. For example, Perry Miller showed that a synthesis existed between evangelical Protestantism and republicanism, and tried to find revolutionary potential in the transatlantic religious revivals of the mid-eighteenth century.⁸ Alan Heimert divided American colonials into evangelicals and

⁷ Data compiled from Evans, *American Bibliography*, vols 2-8..

⁸ See Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind in America from the Revolution to the Civil War*

anti-evangelicals according to their religious tendencies. He connected the former with the Revolution and counted Jonathan Edwards as a pioneer who provided patriots with an intellectual context; whereas anti-evangelicals he described as being resistant to the Revolution.⁹ The main premise of this historiography was that religious factors caused political changes. More recently, James T. Kloppenberg presented evangelicalism as a source of liberal ideas; he argued that liberal ideology was connected with ideas from Protestant traditions as well as classical republicanism in the early history of the United States;¹⁰ similarly, Jon Butler deemed the Great Awakening a significant cause of the change in the political sphere of the early republic.¹¹

The difference between Perry Miller and other researchers, like Morgan and Sidney E. Mead, William McLoughlin and John Murrin, who attempt to downplay evangelical influence in their historical interpretation of the revolutionary era, is not about whether evangelicals influenced the Revolution but by how much. Murrin cannot but acknowledge that “an extraordinarily high correlation exists between New Lights and patriots.”¹² He emphasises that the Great Awakening did not create the Revolution itself but also recognises that the Awakening surely contributed to the success of the Revolution to some extent.¹³ If, as these researchers argue, evangelicalism had an effect on the development of republicanism, to what extent and in which ways were they connected to each other, and how did this connection affect the rise of the abolitionist movement?

Most of all, the moral discourse of leading evangelicals enhanced a link between evangelicalism and republicanism in the eighteenth century. In the critical moment caused by the Revolution, the moral authority of the imperial system was undermined; British restrictions on the ‘God-given rights’ of property and liberty of the American colonials, and British authorisation of the slave trade led many people to doubt the justification of the imperial policy. In the tense atmosphere caused by the Revolution, Americans felt it necessary to assert their moral superiority while attacking the immorality of their counterparts. Evangelicals’ constant emphasis on “virtue,

(New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), 3-95.

⁹ Alan Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind from the Great Awakening to the Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 398-400.

¹⁰ James T. Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism: Christianity, Republicanism, and Ethics in Early American Discourse,” *Journal of American History* 74 (1987): 9-33 at 9-10.

¹¹ Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 195.

¹² John Murrin, “No Awakening, No Revolution? More Counterfactual Speculations,” *Reviews in American History* 11 (1983): 161-171 at 161.

¹³ Murrin, “No Awakening, No Revolution?”, 169.

responsibility, and, especially morality” helped make that immorality of the imperial system stand out, and made sense of revolutionary rhetoric about corruption and the evil behaviour among British politicians and society.¹⁴ Here, American evangelicals found a space to connect their religious values with the revolutionary cause. “Liberal ideas could be joined with ideas,” as Kloppenberg pointed out “from the different traditions of Protestant Christianity and classical republicanism,” at a decisive moment, when “Americans were launching the Revolution.”¹⁵ During the revolutionary period, “a Protestant tradition rooted in the Reformation and recently renewed by the New Light revivalism of John Wesley, George Whitefield, and [Jonathan] Edwards who stressed human disability... [and] noetic deficiency” became intertwined with “the language of commonsense moralism.”¹⁶ This “coming together” of religio-political ideologies has appeared in many studies, although some researchers considered it “an oddity in the eighteenth century”.¹⁷

More importantly, in this context, the evangelical revival enhanced the compatibility of religious discourse with political language. The Awakening stimulated public religious sensitivity and also offered prominence to evangelical moral perception. In the words of Mark Noll, this brought “the Puritan heritage closer to the moral reasoning of the developing republican tradition.”¹⁸ In the revolutionary era, evangelicals and patriots came to speak alike on social issues as both religious and political discourses became useful to each other. The patriots pamphlets spoke the language of republicanism “as clearly as they spoke the language of dissenting Protestantism,” and the evidence that “the two languages coexisted in revolutionary political discourse is incontrovertible.”¹⁹ Noll asserted that the exercise of evangelical virtue provided “the necessary foundation for a free and well-balanced society.”²⁰ In the revolutionary years, “meanings from the religious sphere came to infuse the political project, or – from the

¹⁴ Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, 201.

¹⁵ Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism,” 9-10.

¹⁶ New Light refers to those who supported the evangelical revival in diverse protestant denominations during the “Great Awakening”. Mark Noll, “The American Revolution and Protestant Evangelicalism,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (1993): 615-638 at 619.

¹⁷ Ruth H. Bloch, *Visionary Republic: Millennium Themes in American Thought, 1756-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Patricia U. Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 187-222; Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, 194-206; Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism,” 9-10. Quotations are from Noll, “The American Revolution and Protestant Evangelicalism,” 617.

¹⁸ Noll, “The American Revolution and Protestant Evangelicalism,” 627.

¹⁹ Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism,” 20.

²⁰ Noll, “The American Revolution and Protestant Evangelicalism,” 631.

other direction – the valences of politics came to inform religious life.”²¹ Kloppenberg has argued that in the 1790s American Protestantism was able to accommodate “itself to a comfortable position” as guardian of new revolutionary virtues.²² As religious and political languages became interchangeable, the evangelical tradition was grafted into “a republican environment in which it continued to grow.”²³

The coming together of evangelicalism and republicanism in moral discourses was closely related to the development of the antislavery cause. First of all, this connection between religio-political ideologies was actively expressed in the form of the antislavery argument. As will be discussed further in a later part of this article, Anglo-American evangelicals took the antislavery cause as a means to strengthen their moral position in the revolutionary era as slavery and the slave trade were the most notable ‘evil’ in the Atlantic world. In this light, the conjuncture of religious and political discourses during this period played a significant role in making the antislavery argument more prevalent. Furthermore, this religio-political connection in moral discourses also opened the possibility of migration between evangelical abolitionism and moral discourse for national reformation; for leading evangelicals, the antislavery campaign, an attack on the most evident evil, played a substantial role in the greater project of the reformation of national morality. As the critical moments of the Revolution stimulated linguistic interchange between religious and political ideology, it also made religious language compatible with antislavery arguments.

In this way, evangelicalism, the Revolution and the cause of antislavery are closely bound to each other. It is true that the Revolution offered a tumultuous atmosphere which stimulated antislavery expression. However, evangelicalism was also of importance; in the revolutionary era, particularly, evangelicalism extended its influence in the political movement for abolition, playing a significant role in the development of revolutionary ideology. Therefore, when the impact of the Revolution on the antislavery movement is analysed, the religious context should be considered together for a comprehensive interpretation.

²¹ Noll, “The American Revolution and Protestant Evangelicalism,” 624.

²² Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism,” 25.

²³ Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism,” 12.

2. How and Why the Revolution Influenced the Rise of the Evangelical Antislavery Movement

The demonstrable interplay between the American Revolution and the increased antislavery expression raises a further question about how the Revolution affected the developmental process of the abolitionist movement. For the rise of abolitionism, the Revolution was of importance in three respects: it offered a set of conditions in which antislavery became more useful for many political and religious purposes; an evangelical sense of crisis was intensified in the political crisis caused by the Revolution and American evangelicals in particular recognised the inconsistency between their revolutionary ideas and the nature of slavery.

2.1. Antislavery Arguments and Political Expediency

In the atmosphere of tension and conflict caused by the American Revolution, antislavery became a means to achieve multiple political ends. Here the Brown thesis is useful; Christopher Leslie Brown has claimed that the disruption and conflict caused by the Revolution undermined the moral authority of the British Empire and formed the atmosphere in which opponents of slavery, the most noticeable ‘vice’, could gain moral prestige; thus, the “antislavery argument became more useful during the era of the American Revolution and, thereafter.”²⁴ Here, Brown attempted to transcend the dichotomy between ideals and interests in the analysis of abolitionists’ motivation using the social science concept, “moral capital” or “moral prestige”.²⁵ It means that a moral distinction can become a source of power in the world in the way that it facilitates and legitimises action; people who develop these forms of capital “possess investable resources capable of providing tangible returns.”²⁶ Moral capital can serve a variety of purposes: cultural, intellectual, social, emotional or interpersonal. Contemporaneously, moral ideology and political interests are not inevitably opposed to each other. In this view, political cause can be a means to fulfil the moral cause and vice-versa. Brown presented the revolutionary environment as a crucial context which opened a door for abolitionists to gain this ‘moral capital’, campaigning with religious and moral purpose,

²⁴ Brown, *Moral Capital*, 458.

²⁵ Brown, *Moral Capital*, 457-459. Political scientist John Kane defined, ‘moral capital’ as “moral prestige – whether of an individual, organisation or cause – in useful service.” John Kane, *The Politics of Moral Capital* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7.

²⁶ Kane, *The Politics of Moral Capital*, 7.

as well as for political objectives. For example, Quakers were able to enhance their social prestige whilst expelling slaveholding members from their religious community. William Wilberforce also earned moral capital through his antislavery cause, and used it to promote Christianity. Following this, the defenders as well as critics of imperial policies were also able to use antislavery arguments as a means to an end during the years of political crisis caused by the Revolution. This section analyses this process focusing on the political rhetoric of specific evangelicals: John Wesley, James Ramsay and Granville Sharp.

For evangelicals like John Wesley, who had negative views of the Revolution, antislavery provided a means to intensify his arguments. Wesley emphasised the seemingly revolutionary ideas of liberty and equality in his tracts, but grounded them in the English legal tradition. Central to his *Some Observations on Liberty* published in 1776 was the condemnation of American Patriots. Wesley acknowledged that “to Liberty, [Americans] have an undoubted right” and to enjoy their liberty “in as full a manner as I do; or any reasonable man can desire.”²⁷ However, Wesley thought that colonials already enjoyed that liberty, guaranteed by the English constitution.²⁸ Moreover, he distinguished liberty from independence; independence was nothing more than an excuse “no longer to own the English Supremacy.”²⁹ Wesley justified the power of Parliament “to make statutes, to bind the Colonies in all cases whatever,” as it had power “to make statutes, which bind Englishmen likewise.”³⁰ For his political argument, Wesley actively used the antislavery cause to highlight Americans’ moral inferiority. While Americans claimed that “the Parliament has already deprived them of one great branch of liberty,” by taxing without their consent, Wesley pointed out that they did not realise their own abuse of liberty.³¹ He posited that slaveholding itself rebutted the revolutionaries’ arguments. While Americans complained that they are “bound by a law, to which [they] do not consent,” it was slaves who remained in such state. After defining slavery as a state, “wherein neither a man’s goods, nor liberty, nor life, are at his own disposal,” he refuted American slavery rhetoric for patriot cause. Wesley asked, “are their masters... in just the same slavery with the negroes... Does any one beat or imprison [these masters] at pleasure? Or take away their wives, or children, or lives? ...

²⁷ John Wesley, *Some Observations on Liberty: Occasioned by A Late Tract By John Wesley, M. A.* (London: Printed by R. Hawes, 1776), 3-4.

²⁸ Wesley, *Some Observations on Liberty*, 4-5.

²⁹ Wesley, *Some Observations on Liberty*, 3, 5.

³⁰ Wesley, *Some Observations on Liberty*, 25.

³¹ Wesley, *Some Observations on Liberty*, 5-6.

This is slavery: and will you face us down, that the Americans are in such slavery as this?"³² As long as Americans were closing their ears to men "chained to the oar", portraying themselves as under the yoke of Parliament did not make sense.³³ Wesley did not only oppose slavery in America in this tract but also criticise American Independence and for this end, he exemplified the exploitation of the antislavery cause as a rhetorical weapon against revolutionary ideology.

The antislavery cause could also serve as an argument for a middle ground between the continuation of the imperial system and American Independence. The British evangelical writer, James Ramsay, like many other British evangelicals, was angered by the audacity of the North American rebels.³⁴ However, unlike Wesley, he recognised the right of the American colonies to claim independence and declared, "North America is now separated for ever from the British state" and the British now "have no tie over them but conveniency."³⁵ Accepting American independence as fact, Ramsay would rather focus on how to strengthen an imperial policy relationship in the new circumstance after American Independence. For Ramsay, antislavery became an important means of establishing a new international relationship as well as promoting imperial commercial growth. He asserted that Britain would be "free to settle [its] trade, and accommodate [the British] in the manner that will best suit [their] purpose, without taking into account how it may probably affect them," through the abolition of the slave trade.³⁶ He claimed that the slave trade was harmful for the British imperial economy: British traders were still providing thousands of slaves to foreign merchants in the West African coast, contributing to their rivals continued naval importance.³⁷ Ramsay asserted that Britain should turn to Africa where it might enjoy extensive and free trade rather than attempting rapprochement with the North American colonies. "In the civilization of Africa," he claimed, "we have a certain remedy" against the danger caused by the loss of North America.³⁸ While criticising the slave trade, Ramsay was able to present an ideal commercial relationship for Britain, which would be, in the long

³² Wesley, *Some Observations on Liberty*, 25.

³³ Wesley, *Some Observations on Liberty*, 34.

³⁴ Brown, *Moral Capital*, 326.

³⁵ James Ramsay, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade, and of Granting Liberty to the Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies; by the Author of the Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies* (London: Printed and sold by J. Phillips, 1784), 12-13.

³⁶ Ramsay, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade*, 13.

³⁷ Ramsay, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade*, 21.

³⁸ Ramsay, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade*, 22.

run, the best way of responding to American independence.³⁹

Antislavery arguments provided critics of the Empire, who were well disposed to American Independence, with a means to fortify their political stance. Granville Sharp was one who perceived the necessity of the reformation of the imperial system; he was also one of a few Britons who supported colonial autonomy and defended colonial rights. Unlike Wesley, Sharp believed that parliamentary supremacy over American affairs was against the spirit of English law. He thought that “British subjects, in general are commonly supposed to inherit” natural freedom and the “inestimable benefits of that happy legal Constitution,” by birthright.⁴⁰ Colonial resistance to the British government was justifiable, as their “most essential” rights of “the free Representation of the people in the legislature”, accorded by the English constitution, had been violated.⁴¹ Antislavery became an important means to maintain “excellent equilibrium of power, or mixt government, limited by law,” and to protect the “best Birthright and Inheritance” of people in the British Atlantic world.⁴² Sharp presented the British slave trade as an emblem of the “most abominable Tyranny,” and associated the fight against slavery with challenging the deterioration of the English constitution.⁴³ He considered American slavery as a British institution because acts of the colonial assemblies to ameliorate slavery were “absolutely rejected,” by the British parliament and the King.⁴⁴ Highlighting “the African Slave Trade encouraged in GREAT BRITAIN,” and the “toleration of Slavery in THE BRITISH COLONIES,” he was able to undermine the moral authority of the imperial polity; the slave trade was “the HUMAN SACRIFICES offered up to MAMMON by the BRITISH NATION”.⁴⁵ Sharp was able to strengthen his critical views of imperial policy with the antislavery cause and furthermore, also offer a strong argument which the American patriots could use for the justification of independence.

Antislavery was further conducive to consolidating the revolutionary legacy in

³⁹ Brown, *Moral Capital*, p. 326.

⁴⁰ Granville Sharp, *A Declaration of the People's Natural Right to a Share in the Legislature; Which is the Fundamental Principle of the British Constitution of State* (London: Printed for B. White, 1775), ii.

⁴¹ Sharp, *A Declaration of the People's Natural Right to a Share in the Legislature*, 14.

⁴² Sharp, *A Declaration of the People's Natural Right to a Share in the Legislature*, 15.

⁴³ Granville Sharp, *The Law of Retribution or a Serious Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies, Founded on Unquestionable Examples of God's Temporal Vengeance against Tyrants, Slave Holders and Oppressors* (London: B. White and E. and C. Dilly, 1776), 327, 328.

⁴⁴ Sharp, *The Law of Retribution*, 313-314.

⁴⁵ Sharp, *The Law of Retribution*, 152, 202, 316.

post-revolutionary America. On the opposite side of the Atlantic, Morgan John Rhees, a Baptist minister in West Pennsylvania, lamented that Americans were distant from the revolutionary rationale after the political and military crisis caused by the Revolution was dissolved and he thought that in America, “gross darkness” was covering the land, and “strange infatuation possess the people.”⁴⁶ Rhees thought that the revolutionary ideals were already threatened and to resist this trend he started attacking slavery. In his view, the institution deprived men of their natural rights and was contrary to what Americans pursued through the Revolution. That Americans should “with one hand sign a bill of rights declaring all men equally free, and yet with the other hand brandish a whip over their affrighted slaves” was a great contradiction.⁴⁷ Thus, he presented slavery as the antithesis of liberty – one of the key revolutionary ideas – and attempted to raise moral capital for the revolutionary rationale through attacking the counter-revolutionary features of slavery. In his view, planters’ mistreatment of slaves meant the neglect of a “duty of citizenship” which did not comply with the revolutionary ideology in the new republic.⁴⁸ In *Letters on Liberty and Slavery*, slaveholders’ rejection of Christian instruction to slaves was depicted as opposition to a “law of liberty.”⁴⁹ These ideas were widely shared by many other evangelicals such as Benjamin Rush and Samuel Davies. For many evangelical abolitionists in America, the condemnation of slavery was the best route to attack anti-revolutionary practice in the early United States.

During the revolutionary era, antislavery came to serve a range of political purposes. As shown above, evangelical abolitionists were able to strengthen their views of what was politically right by asserting their moral superiority and blaming the immorality of their counterparts through attacks on the institution of slavery. This indicates that the American Revolution produced an environment in which “opposition to slavery could seem worthy of praise.”⁵⁰ The political utility of attacks on slavery for critics of imperial policy as well as its defenders gave the antislavery cause a political importance which it had not had before, and was therefore conducive to forming an antislavery ideology that the institution should be abolished.

⁴⁶ Morgan John Rhees, *Letters on Liberty and Slavery: In Answer to a Pamphlet, Entitled, ‘Negro-Slavery Defended by the Word of God,’ by Philanthropos* (New York: R. Wilson, 1798), p. 5.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵⁰ Brown, *Moral Capital*, 458.

2.2. A Sense of Crisis

The sense of crisis engendered by the Revolution also affected the rise of the evangelical abolitionist movement. National events in the 1770s and the 1780s, such as the American War of Independence and the dissolution of the British Empire in North America, caused this unease and intensified a fear of impending judgement in the evangelical network. This fear, compounded by the antislavery elements in evangelicalism, made people connect the ‘iniquity’ of slavery to wars, inflation and epidemics during the revolutionary years. Many British evangelicals thought national sin brought God’s judgement, and this had led to a crisis in the empire. Americans shared this apocalyptic sense of crisis as well, especially due to the potential threat from British invasion and economic and political instability in the newly-born nation. In this critical moment, many evangelicals on both sides of the Atlantic thought that their ‘sins’ contributed to the considerable social upheaval caused by the Revolution.

During the revolutionary period, many evangelicals were aware of crisis on the level of personal faith as well as on a national scale. First, they articulated their personal crisis of faith that had been ignored for a long time. Many evangelicals perceived that the institution of slavery undermined the foundation of their religious faith. For example, Samuel Hopkins, a late eighteenth century theologian in New England, highlighted that slavery seemed to weaken an essential principle of evangelicalism, benevolence, and warned of the disastrous consequence which American ignorance of this sin would bring about. He followed Jonathan Edwards’ concept of ‘disinterested general benevolence’, positing this kind of love as the most cordial friendship applied to all fellow creatures.⁵¹ Hopkins claimed that disinterested benevolence asked for unselfish goodness not just to “mankind in general” but to those who needed this love most and in his view, the most persecuted group was the enslaved Africans.⁵² Americans ignored that their practices effectually prevented “the introduction of the

⁵¹ Samuel Hopkins, *An Inquiry into the Nature of True Holiness. With an Appendix; Containing an Answer to the Rev. Mr. William Hart's Remarks on President Edward's Dissertation on the Nature of True Virtue* (Newport: Printed by Solomon Southwick, in Queen-Street, 1773), 39.

⁵² Jonathan Edwards Sr., *Two Dissertations, I. Concerning the End for Which God Created the World. II. The Nature of True Virtue. by the Late Reverend, Learned and Pious Jonathan Edwards, A.M. President of the College in New-Jersey* (Boston: Printed and sold by S. Kneeland, 1765), 183; David Lovejoy, “Samuel Hopkins: Religion, Slavery, and the Revolution,” *New England Quarterly* 40 (1967): 227-243 at 233-34.

gospel” to slaves and “directly” counteracted Christ’s command of benevolence.⁵³ In his discourse, the personal crisis in faith was closely linked to the national crisis. Hopkins clearly outlined “a future judgement” to come, which the continued violation of key principles of their religion would bring to the nation.⁵⁴

In line with this, the revolutionary evangelicals also felt the sense of crisis on a national level. They found their ‘concept of covenant’ weakened whilst they permitted the slave trade. In the colonial era, for example, many Americans, like their Puritans ancestors who had emigrated to New England, believed that divine providence was peculiarly American and that they were “God’s professing people”.⁵⁵ This ‘special’ relationship with God was not unconditional, only persisting as long as they followed teachings in the Scriptures. As Lovejoy pointed out, Americans believed that “owing to this privileged arrangement, more was expected of man in America than elsewhere.”⁵⁶ When Americans ignored scriptural teachings they would be punished “in order that the covenant be renewed.”⁵⁷ American evangelicals became conscious that the continuation of slavery in post-revolutionary America undermined their evangelical identity as “God’s elect”. Slaveholding meant a rejection of “a particular Providence” upon Americans to “set [slaves] free,” when they obtained their own liberty.⁵⁸ Referring to the turmoil witnessed in the early Republic such as insurrection, the destruction of cities and reduced commerce, Rhees, an American evangelical, an American evangelical, strongly asserted that the slave trade caused “the calamities that came on God’s professing people of old.”⁵⁹

This sense of crisis on a national and personal scale was connected to a fear of impending divine judgement. Terms like “retribution”, “judgment” and “punishment” were more intensely and repeatedly employed in evangelical antislavery tracts during this period than in the mid-eighteenth century. American evangelicals embraced this

⁵³ Samuel Hopkins, *A Discourse upon the Slave-Trade, and the Slavery of the Africans: Delivered in the Baptist Meeting-House at Providence, before the Providence Society for Abolishing the Slave-Trade, &c.* (Providence: J. Carter, 1793), 12.

⁵⁴ Hopkins, *A Discourse upon the Slave-Trade*, 14.

⁵⁵ Samuel Hopkins, *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans, Showing It to Be the Duty and Interest of the American States to Emancipate All Their African Slaves: with an Address to the Owners of Such Slaves. Dedicated to the Honorable the Continental Congress* (Norwich: Judah P. Spooner, 1776), 19, 58.

⁵⁶ Lovejoy, “Samuel Hopkins: Religion, Slavery, and the Revolution,” 236.

⁵⁷ Lovejoy, “Samuel Hopkins: Religion, Slavery, and the Revolution,” 236.

⁵⁸ Morgan John Rhees, *Letters on Liberty and Slavery: In Answer to a Pamphlet, Entitled, ‘Negro-Slavery Defended by the Word of God,’ by Philanthropos* (2nd edition, New York: R. Wilson, 1798), 23.

⁵⁹ Rhees, *Letters on Liberty and Slavery*, 23.

opinion. Benjamin Rush urged the colonials to remember that “national crimes require national punishments” referring to God’s “Rod” as shown in the British repressive measures such as collecting tax through the Stamp and Revenue Acts.⁶⁰ “Without declaring what punishment awaits this evil,” he warned his American contemporaries, “you may venture to assure them, that it cannot pass with impunity, unless God shall cease to be just or merciful.”⁶¹ Samuel Hopkins also insisted that “the hand of God very visibly stretched out against us” and “the calamities... introduced, as a judgment which God has brought upon us for enslaving the Africans.”⁶² “Unless this practice be reformed,” he warned, “greater judgments” would be brought out.⁶³

The fear of the impending judgement also played a role as a constant motivation for British abolitionists. Granville Sharp thought that nations which deprived natural liberty from people in the slave trade, would likewise forfeit their own, and sit “under the IRON YOKES of *unnatural, arbitrary Government*”, such that the deplorable state of national misery would never diminish until “by... *public* Contempt of God’s eternal Laws, they had rendered a national RETRIBUTION.”⁶⁴ Sharp informed his British audience that “we are *absolutely* in danger of THE LIKE JUDGEMENTS, if we do not immediately put a stop to all *similar Oppression* by National Authority.”⁶⁵ “Therefore Now,” he urged the British, “amend your ways and your doings, and obey the Voice of the Lord your God.” The immediate abolition of the slave trade was the only way to avoid the impending vengeance and to expect “the Assurance of Peace.”⁶⁶ This fear of national punishment was repeated in the late eighteenth century evangelical discourse. British evangelicals aggressively employed this rhetoric of crisis in their Parliamentary campaign in the late eighteenth century. For example, Wilberforce topped his speech in the parliamentary debate on abolition with an appeal to the fear of the divine judgement. He fully perceived the “present circumstances of his country,” which he argued “to be contrary to the rights of human nature, and the laws of God.” He invoked

⁶⁰ Benjamin Rush, *An Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements in America, upon Slave-Keeping* (Philadelphia: Printed by John Dunlap 1773), 30.

⁶¹ Rush, *An Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements in America*, 30.

⁶² Samuel Hopkins, “Essay on the African Slave Trade,” *The Providence Gazette and Country Journal*, Oct. 6 and 13, 1787, reprinted as “The Slave Trade and Slavery” in Hopkins, *Timely Articles on Slavery* (Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1854), 619-20; Hopkins, *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans*, 51.

⁶³ Hopkins, *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans*, 51; Hopkins, *A Discourse upon the Slave-Trade*, 14.

⁶⁴ Sharp, *The Law of Retribution*, 67-68.

⁶⁵ Sharp, *The Law of Retribution*, 7.

⁶⁶ Sharp, *The Law of Retribution*, 76.

the House, “in an exigency like the present, not to insult the forbearance of Heaven, and practically disclaim every hope of the divine favour,” by the support of the slavery system.⁶⁷ He defined the slave trade as “a national crime” and asserted that “a continued course of wickedness, oppression, and cruelty... must infallibly bring down upon us the heaviest judgment of the Almighty.”⁶⁸ In a crucial parliamentary debate in the post-revolutionary era, Charles Stanhope, Lord Mahon urged MPs to take immediate action to avoid the impending judgement; “if we continue in so flagrant a manner to violate [God’s] laws,” he asked, “what right we can venture to expect the protection and support of the Almighty”. Thus, he appealed; “Let us wash our hands clean of this foul pollution, let us act upon the principles of equal and impartial justice, and we may then, look... to the protection and support of that Supreme Disposer of events.”⁶⁹

The sense that the nation was facing God’s wrath, and thus had to repent, motivated evangelicals’ practical action to avoid this ‘judgement’. This marked a difference from the antislavery expression of the pre-revolutionary era. Two things need to be considered. Firstly, a number of Anglo-American evangelicals did believe that national crimes of the slave trade brought about national punishment and also were convinced that their religious appeal would stir public action. Otherwise, there was no particular reason for abolitionists to spend so much time and energy on ineffectual discourse.⁷⁰ Secondly, a crisis in the empire caused by the Revolution was of importance in this process. Although the Revolution itself did not cause the antislavery movement, this created the circumstances in which a sense of national crisis would be increased, and this contributed to the rise of the abolitionism on both sides of the Atlantic.

2.3. Inconsistency between Slaveholding and the Revolutionary Rationale

While the Revolution had an indirect influence upon the rise of the antislavery movement enhancing the sense of crisis, being intertwined with a fear of divine

⁶⁷ *The Parliamentary History of England, from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803* (London: T. C. Hansard, 1818), XXXII, 763.

⁶⁸ William Wilberforce, *A Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade; Addressed to the Freeholders and Other Inhabitants of Yorkshire* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1807), 5-6, 150.

⁶⁹ *The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803 to the Present Time* (41 vols, London: T. C. Hansard, 1803-20), vol. VIII, col. 971.

⁷⁰ John Coffey, “A Spur to Incessant Activity’: God, Providence and the Abolitionists,” *Christianity and History Forum Bulletin* (2007), 45.

judgement, the very nature of the revolutionary war meant that evangelicals who supported American independence perceived more vividly the contradiction between their rationale for war, and slaveholding practices. Although a large number of Americans gained economic benefits from the plantation system it was hard to ignore the fact that Africans in America had the same right as long as they considered the right to liberty as natural and inalienable. The fundamental inconsistency between Americans' claim to rights and retaining the institution of slavery stimulated evangelical antislavery discourse. Central to Samuel Hopkins' work, *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans*, was his elaboration of the inconsistency between slavery and the spirit of the Revolution. In his dedication in this publication to the Continental Congress, Hopkins argued that holding Africans who had "an equal right to freedom with ourselves" in slavery was untenable, "while we are maintaining this struggle for our own and our children's liberty."⁷¹ He considered that if they refused African slaves' humanity, and right to liberty, while they pursued liberation from the tyranny of King and Parliament, it would be a denial of the revolutionary ideology.⁷² Similar lamentations about the contradiction between American actions and words were found in other literature. The persistence of slavery discredited evangelical patriots' claims to liberty. David Rice, a renowned American Presbyterian minister, deemed slavery "a standing monument of the tyranny" and "inconsistency of human governments," which American patriots had pursued through the Revolution.⁷³ In his view, Africans in America were declared "to be nature free," and entitled "to the privilege of acquiring and enjoying property," by "the united voice of America" through the Revolution.⁷⁴ Rice criticised several states, which retained slavery on the grounds that they were defending principles, "which they are actually and avowedly destroying," during the revolutionary war. Thus, he urged slaveholding Americans, to be consistent with their avowed revolutionary principles.⁷⁵

While American colonials kept holding Africans as their slaves, the revolutionary rhetoric only highlighted the colonials' hypocrisy. During the 1760s and 1770s, one of the favoured rhetorical devices for the revolutionary cause was the allegory of slavery equating British imperialism with enslavement. For example, an address by an

⁷¹ Hopkins, *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans*, iii.

⁷² Hopkins, "Essay on the African Slave Trade," 616-618.

⁷³ David Rice, *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy; Proved by a Speech Delivered in the Convention, Held at Danville, Kentucky* (London: M. Gurney, 1793), 9.

⁷⁴ Rice, *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy*, 9.

⁷⁵ Rice, *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy*, 9.

anonymous person in New York contrasted, “union, activity and freedom” with “division, supineness and slavery.”⁷⁶ Robert Bell entitled his address to citizens of Pennsylvania for American Independence, as *Sentiments of What is Freedom, and What is Slavery*.⁷⁷ Slavery was a presence in everyday life throughout the colonies, so it was natural for writers to use it as an example. However, antislavery evangelicals found contradiction within these words. Rice blamed Americans for “using one measure for themselves, and another for their [slave] neighbours.”⁷⁸ While the American patriot leaders had appointed “days for humiliation, and offering up of prayer” to ask God’s favour for their liberty, Cooper pointed out, “the poor Africans are continued in chains of slavery as creatures unworthy of notice in those high concerns, and left subject to laws disgraceful to humanity.”⁷⁹ In this situation, an ‘allegory of slavery’ simply held Americans up to mockery. “In order to gain credit abroad, and confidence at home and to give proper energy to government,” Rice asserted, Americans should be “sensible of the evil of [their] conduct.”⁸⁰ Many colonial evangelicals naturally came to think that they should take action to abolish slavery in the same way as they sought protection for their own liberty. This is one answer as to how national events during the revolutionary period contributed to the rise of political activism for abolition.

In this way, the American Revolution evidently stimulated changes in evangelical attitudes towards slavery; antislavery became useful to achieve multiple political ends during this period; the sense of crisis caused by the Revolution played a role as a motivation for evangelical abolitionists; the nature of the revolution made evangelicals find the inconsistency between their rationale for war and slaveholding practices. Anglo-American evangelical attitudes were not unanimously antislavery in this period: a large number of proslavery tracts were still published and substantial numbers of evangelicals were holding slaves on their plantations. However, as for evangelicals who had antipathy towards slavery, views towards slavery during the revolutionary period changed through this process from unease with the institution to a firm conviction that it should be abolished.

⁷⁶ Anonymous, *Union, Activity and Freedom, or, Division, Supineness, and Slavery. My Dear Fellow Citizens*. (New York: 1769).

⁷⁷ Robert Bell, *Bell’s Memorial of the Free Sale of Books: to Which are Added Sentiments of What is Freedom, and What is Slavery* (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1784).

⁷⁸ Rice, *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy*, 9.

⁷⁹ David Cooper, *A Serious Address to the Rulers of America, On the Inconsistency of Their Conduct Respecting Slavery* (London: J. Phillips, 1783), 14.

⁸⁰ Rice, *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy*, 21.

Conclusion

As has been demonstrated, the American Revolution affected the development of antislavery ideology in the evangelical network, and acted as a stimulus that changed the nature of evangelical antislavery. Focusing on evangelical abolitionism is a useful way of understanding the impact of the Revolution on the transatlantic evangelical community. Much evidence supports a correlation between the intensity of the imperial crisis and the increase in antislavery publications. The question is why the Revolution changed evangelical attitudes towards slavery. Brown offers a persuasive argument that many Americans and Britons found a useful way to enhance their political and moral stance using antislavery during the years of crisis caused by the Revolution. In fact the situation in evangelical communities was more complex: through political events in the revolutionary era, evangelicals' diverse views on slavery became more complicated, being intertwined with their opinions on the imperial system. In this sense, Brown's views of Anglo-American attitudes towards slavery do not convey the whole story.

In contrast to some historians' view, what made religious people take action was the sense of crisis caused by the Revolution, rather than the critical situation of the Revolution itself. The sense that "the national sin brought the national punishment" led a greater number of evangelicals into political action targeting the abolition of slavery. The critical moments caused by the Revolution intensified the existing religious motivation of evangelicals which had been evident between the 1730s and the 1760s. When Anglo-American evangelicals reached the conclusion that they were facing impending divine judgement due to slavery, the natural choice was to take political action to remove that "national sin". This reflects that evangelical antislavery sentiment developed into antislavery ideology.

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Un-homely Welcome: The Resettlement of the Asians Expelled from Uganda (1972-74)

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Abstract

The period of 1972-74 saw a large-scale resettlement in Britain of the Asian population expelled from Uganda. Some literatures suggest that these people were accepted virtually as 'refugees', although their citizenship status was 'British' (Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies) and therefore technically they could not be regarded as refugees. Considering the facts that they were forcedly expelled from Uganda in a short period of three months and many of them arrived in Britain literally penniless as they were not allowed to take their properties out of Uganda, they were entitled to be assisted as 'refugees' once they were in Britain. However, while their admittance was justified as humanitarian acceptance of the unfortunate refugees when the British Government tried to persuade the indigenous population to tolerate another wave of immigrants, the public support afforded to the Asians after they were admitted was restricted by the governmental stance that preferential treatment for the Asians would allegedly perpetuate their presence in British society and 'harm race relations'. Consequently, their resettlement had to be supported by generous help from voluntary organisations, and their own self-help. After all, these Asian expellees were welcomed reluctantly, and treated as "un-belongers" to post-imperial Britain.

Keywords: immigration, post-imperial Britain, refugees, race relations

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1. Introduction

This article will focus on the resettlement of the so-called ‘Uganda Asians’ in the early 1970s. Through the two decades from the early 1950s, Britain had become a more ‘multi-ethnic’ or ‘multi-racial’ state as a result of waves of immigration from the former colonial territories, mainly the West Indies and the Indian subcontinent¹. Being visibly distinct—mainly because of the colour of their skin—the incoming of these so-called ‘Commonwealth’ immigrants into the metropolis had underlined the unfamiliarity of these ‘fellow’ British subjects. Such unfamiliarity led to a widespread surge in anti-immigration feelings, which urged the Conservative Government to adopt restriction measures by 1962. Thus the abolishment of the ‘open door policy’ decreased the flow of the British subjects into their ‘mother country’, and the succeeding Governments, both Conservative and Labour, continued to adopt legal measures to shut the door more firmly against former colonial subjects. This, however, did little to resolve the complex situation surrounding immigration and citizenship in post-war Britain, and only highlighted inconsistencies present in the blurred, situational boundary making of the imperial British community had long involved².

Against the background of this racialization of British immigration policies, the admittance and resettlement of the Ugandan Asians shows how these complexities affect the experiences of a particular group of people uprooted from their ‘homeland’ and trying to find a new ‘home’ in a country whose citizenship status they retained for security in post-colonial Africa. It shows that the boundary between ‘belongers’ / ‘non-belongers’—in other words, those who were thought to belong to the post-imperial British national community and those who were not—was constantly redrawn even through the sympathetic process of accepting unfortunate expellees.

A number of literatures have dealt with this unprecedented influx of large number of ‘refugees’ in such a short period of time. Many of them were written not so long after the incident, and well before the public documents concerning the relevant government

¹ See, for example, Panikos Panayi, *An Immigration History in Britain: Multicultural Racism since 1800* (Harlow 2010), for one of the most recent and most comprehensive overviews of this tremendous societal change. Recent historical research of immigration such as Panayi’s, however, often tries to emphasise the continuity beyond 1945, thus invalidating the influential view that Britain was suddenly ‘transformed’ into a multicultural society with the post war influx of ‘Black and Asian’ immigrants.

² There are a number of works on British immigration policies, two of the most recent and influential of which were Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain*, Oxford 2000 and Katherine Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Post-war Era*, Ithaca 1997.

policy were opened under the thirty years rule³. These articles and books include a lot of useful first- or second-hand information about how the Asians were treated at the time, although they were not always situated in a broader framework of immigrants / refugees integration in Britain. On the other hand, other literatures written in the proceeding decades⁴ have introduced intriguing perspectives on this peculiar ‘refugee resettlement’. However, these works have often focused on the resettlements in some particular local contexts⁵, therefore a close examination of the central government materials was not always well incorporated into their arguments. When extensively examined, these materials can provide a deeper understanding of the inherent complexity of the operation.

In this article, the focus will be on how the British Government’s ‘reluctance’ affected this resettlement process: the Government, while persuading the indigenous population to tolerate another influx of ‘coloured’ immigrants based on their ‘unfortunate refugee’ rhetoric, had a strong commitment to the view that these Asians should not receive preferential treatment in Britain for the sake of ‘good race relations’. The governmental documents (mainly the Home Office papers concerning the resettlement managed by the Ugandan Resettlement Board) will be analysed, with the particular focus on how the Asians were ultimately excluded from the ‘British’ national community in post-imperial Britain.

2. Background

In the Uganda Asian Crisis, which was triggered by the expulsion order of the Ugandan dictator Idi Amin on 5 August 1972, British passport holders (United Kingdom Passport Holders, hereafter UKPH) of Asian origin living in Uganda were told to leave the country within 90 days. At that time it was estimated that there were

³ Derek Humphrey and Michael Ward, *Passport and Politics*, Harmondsworth 1974, and William G. Kuepper, et.al., *Ugandan Asians in Great Britain*, London 1975.

⁴ Valerie Marett, *Immigrants Settling in the City*, Leicester 1989, Tony Kushner and Katherine Knox, *Refugees in the Age of Genocide: Global, National and Local Perspectives During the Twentieth Century*, London 1999 and Emma Robertson, ‘Green for Come: Moving to York as a Ugandan Asian Refugee’ in Panikos Panayi and Pippa Virdec, *Refugee and the End of Empire: Imperial Collapse and Forced Migration in the Twentieth Century*, Basingstoke 2011.

⁵ Marett focuses on the resettlement in Leicester, Kushner and Knox on the case in Hampshire, and Robertson on the case in York, although each has evaluated the central government’s and the URB’s operation to a certain extent.

50,000-60,000 residents of Asian origin living in the country, and about half of them were believed to hold British citizenship status. They were a linguistically and religiously heterogeneous group of people; most of them were offspring of those who migrated from the Indian subcontinent before and under British colonial rule, and substantial percentages of them had already lived in Uganda for more than a few decades. In the colonial society, they were granted 'middle-person' status between the small minority of the ruling Europeans and the majority of the indigenous Africans. As a result, a substantial part of the Asians were professional middle class, although still heterogeneous in social positions and education levels⁶.

The origin of their British citizenship can be traced back to Uganda's former British Protectorate status. In the 1960s when East African countries such as Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania became independent, the British Government offered these Asians the option of maintaining their status as Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies (hereafter CUKC). Many of the Asians in Uganda retained this status as CUKC mainly because of concerns over their insecure position in a newly independent African majority-rule state. They were, rather accidentally, exempted from restriction posed by the 1962 Act, due to the facts that they were eligible for passports issued by the British High Commission in Kampala after independence and that the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act used the passport-issuing authority as a tool for restricting immigrants from former colonies,⁷.

It was the influx of Kenyan Asians in the late 1960s that caused social and political hysteria in Britain, which led to the enactment of the new Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1968 by the then Labour Government. The Kenyan Government's 'Africanisation policies', that is, policies adopted to restrict Asian non-citizens' social and political rights, urged the Asian CUKC to flee from East Africa, often exercising their rights to enter Britain. Under the 1968 Act, even British citizens (CUKC) holding passports issued by the British Government came under immigration control unless they had direct connection with Britain through immediate ancestry. It means that most of the UKPH in East Africa lost their unconditional legal rights of entry into Britain, even when their only passports were British. Their arrivals were 'phased out' by special entry vouchers, which were subject to an annual quota, thus rendering the Asian CUKC the

⁶ Douglas Tilbe, *The Uganda Asian Crisis*, London 1972.

⁷ Randall Hansen, 'The Kenyan Asians, British Politics and the Commonwealth Immigration Act, 1968', *The Historical Journal*, 42, 3, 1999, 809-834.

second-class citizens with ‘devalued’ passports⁸.

In Uganda, like in Kenya, a similar kind of sparks were ready to burst into flame anytime: anti-Asian legislations started to restrict the Asian non-citizens’ rights to live and work in Ugandan society in the late 1960s, and after Amin seized power in a military coup in 1971, he often exploited persecution of minority population like the Jewish and the Asians to boost his popularity and accordingly the ethnic tensions were building up. The Asian queue for entry vouchers into Britain was getting longer and longer, and at the time of the expulsion order in August 1972, some 3000 heads of families were waiting in line.

Therefore, although the Amin’s expulsion order was absolutely shocking to the world, and this was especially the case for the UK government which was named to assume the responsibility for the Asians with British passports, it was not a totally unimaginable situation; at least the Home Office officials were always mindful of this potential development, but had hoped that they would have been given a greater notice. They were also aware that when this situation did occur, Britain would have to be somehow responsible for those with British citizenship⁹. After a short attempt to alter Amin’s mind by posing economic sanctions, Britain made clear—or had to make clear—that it would accept the Asians holding British passports. Soon after this, the British Government set up the Uganda Resettlement Board (hereafter URB) as a body that would coordinate the resettlement process. At the same time, trying to disperse the Asian ‘burden’ internationally, the UK Government approached the governments of some 50 countries—including the Commonwealth countries they expected to be more amenable than others—to persuade them to accept some of the Asians.

In the end, during the three months up to early November, Britain accepted more than 27,000 Asians from Uganda. The Heath Government’s determination to accept the responsibility was certainly praiseworthy, particularly considering the presence of political campaigning mounted by the anti-immigration political circle, and most notably by the anti-immigration hero, Enoch Powell¹⁰. Moreover, the public feeling was also apparently against another influx of ‘coloured’ immigrants; an opinion poll in August 1972 shows only six per cent of the respondents thought Britain should accept

⁸ Mariyam Harris, *The ‘D’-valued Passport*, London 1971.

⁹ The acceptance of the Asian UKPH was guaranteed during the debate over the 1968 bill by the then Home Secretary James Callaghan.

¹⁰ Zig Layton-Henry, *The Politics of Immigration: Immigration, ‘Race’ and ‘Race’ Relations in Post-War Britain*, Oxford 1992, 85-7.

all the UKPH from Uganda straight away¹¹.

Although their acceptance was a laudable act of admitting responsibility for these unfortunate people, the airlift of the Asians was delayed (or more precisely, its swift execution was intentionally avoided)¹². It was a politically expedient action, because the majority of the British nation was not happy to accept them immediately and the Government was most concerned with the domestic public opinion¹³. Their acute concerns about a possible Asian ‘panic’ also led them to pursue the policy of the international dispersal of the Asians to lighten the burden.

This ‘foot-dragging’ consequently placed the British Government in a better position to accept this unprecedented influx of people coming to Britain in such a short period. Britain succeeded in persuading other countries like Canada and India to ‘share the burden’, and consequently the British burden to bear was significantly lightened¹⁴. It also allowed enough time for the Government and the institutions involved in the resettlement (such as the URB) to prepare for the influx of Asians. Above all, this was also fortunate for the Government because the public opinion became increasingly sympathetic to the Asians, thus the resettlement of the Asians became less unacceptable, partly due to the media representation of the Asians as the ‘unfortunate refugees’. The media represented the Asians as pitiable victims of Amin’s violent racist expulsion and also as a middle-class, well-educated professionals who could speak fluent English and therefore would be easy to absorb into British society. The opinion poll figures showed that the percentages of respondents who disapproved the government’s handling of the issue had steadily declined by mid-September 1972.

It cannot be denied, however, that there were imminent dangers for the Asians: ill-disciplined Ugandan soldiers of the Amin regime would anytime threaten (and were actually threatening) their security and property¹⁵. Merely acknowledging the danger

¹¹ David Kohler, ‘Public Opinion and the Ugandan Asians’, *New Community*, 2, 1973, 194-7.

¹² My preceding article closely examined the political and media discourse surrounding the acceptance of the Asians in the crucial three months from the Amin’s expulsion order to the November deadline. The following arguments in the background section are based on my arguments in “‘Imperial Burden’ or ‘Jews of Africa?’: An Analysis of Political and Media Discourse in the Uganda Asian Crisis (1972)”, *Twentieth Century British History*, 22-3, 2011, 415-436.

¹³ The National Archives: Public Record Office, Kew (hereafter TNA), CAB 130/614, Cabinet Ministers’ Meeting, UKPHs in Uganda.

¹⁴ Canada was quickest to respond to British call for help, and other countries such as the US, New Zealand, and Sweden started to follow suits in early September. It was most fortunate for Britain that by mid-September, India agreed to accept up to 15,000 on a temporary basis after long diplomatic negotiations.

¹⁵ Bert N. Adams and Mike Bristow, ‘Ugandan Asian Expulsion Experiences: Rumour and

did not, however, urge the British Government to accelerate the procedure of the Asian airlift. They finally decided to speed up their document issuing procedure at the British High Commission in Kampala, when they became acutely worried that their slow documentary clearance might give the impression to the international community that they were dragging their feet¹⁶.

The Government was fully aware of the fact that these Asians were not technically 'refugees' because according to the definition by the 1951 UN Convention, refugees are people who seek asylum outside of their country of nationality. The Government officials, however, approved this media labelling and the public perception of the Asians as 'refugees' because they believed that it would be beneficial for them, putting the Government in a better position to persuade the public to accept the Asians¹⁷. At one cabinet meeting it was noted 'the public now seemed disposed to accept the Asian UKPH as *genuine* refugees'¹⁸.

This 'refugee' representation and humanitarian discourse obscured the British Government's legal and political responsibility toward the Asian UKPH and could have potentially undermined the logical ground for the British Government's rejecting non-UKPH such as stateless Asians who should have been accepted on a humanitarian basis. Most of them were former CUKC who were denied their Ugandan citizenship. The British Government insisted that their responsibility was exclusively for the British Citizens, and refused entry of so-called stateless Asians even when they knew this would result in family separation. This issue was to haunt the later resettlement and become known as the 'headless family' issue.

In the official discourse, the term(s) 'belongers' (and 'non-belongers' though less frequently) was used to differentiate between CUKC who have ancestral connections with Britain (the white British residents in Uganda), and those who do not (the Asian CUKC). These two groups were treated separately, and the 'belongers' were given more serious consideration concerning their security¹⁹. The 'belongers' were also invisible in their admittance and resettlement.

Reality', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 14, 1979, 191–203.

¹⁶ TNA CAB 134/3523, The Minutes and Memoranda of Emergency Sub-committee. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Memorandum 72(9), 14 September.

¹⁷ TNA FCO 31/1380, Expulsion of holders of British passports of Asian origin from Uganda. A Letter from T. Fitzgerald of the Home Office to C. P. Scott in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 17 August 1972.

¹⁸ The emphasis was added by the author. TNA CAB/128/50/43, The Cabinet Meeting Minutes, 21 September 1972.

¹⁹ TNA, CAB 130/614, UKPHs in Uganda: Meeting Minutes, Contingency Planning for the Evacuation of UK 'Belongers'.

This can be placed within a framework of belonging / un-belonging to an imagined national community²⁰. In the acceptance of the Asians from Uganda, labelling them ‘refugees’ certainly eased the opposition towards the Asian influx, but it also located them outside of the national community. In other words, it was labelling them as ‘outsiders’ who were entitled to help due to their unfortunate predicament, but who should otherwise be excluded. Furthermore, as it has been pointed out, there is an inconsistency between their ‘humanitarian’ discourse and their position on the admittance of non-citizens, because the British Government still insisted on drawing a strict line between the CUKC and the non-CUKC. They rejected the stateless people, especially the stateless heads of families, although they knew it would cause tragic family separations. On 18 October 1972, in his oral answers to questions, Home Secretary Robert Carr repeatedly called the Asians ‘refugees’ and declared ‘the British people as a whole have shown themselves ready to respond with humanity and warmth to the plight of fellow human beings who are in need’. However, he at the same time made it clear that they would not accept any responsibility for the ‘stateless refugees’ and that their welfare was the responsibility of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He stated that accepting these non-UKPH husbands ‘would be putting on this country a burden which is not ours to bear’ when they were ‘already bearing a pretty onerous one as it is.’²¹

This image of Asians as helpless victims and a heavy burden to be shared was strengthened through the domestic resettlement process. This will be the focus on the analysis in the next section.

3. Un-homely welcome

The humanitarian discourse the Government employed could have helped persuade the national ‘public’ opinion to tolerate another wave of incoming Asians. This, however, betrayed inherent inconsistencies in their own reluctant attitude. The British

²⁰ James Hampshire has argued that in the British immigration policies, belonging was defined in terms of descent, which had inevitable racial connotations. The enactment of the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act had already suggested that the post-imperial imagined national community should be based on exclusive Britishness, rather than ‘imperial’ and ‘inclusive’ British identity, thus making the citizenship status as CUKC ‘an empty promise’. James Hampshire, *Citizenship and Belonging: Immigration and Politics of Demographic Governance in Post-war Britain*, Basingstoke 2005, 12.

²¹ *Hansard*, 843, cc. 261-9, 18 October 1972.

Government accepted their responsibility, but this sense of responsibility never extended beyond a 'reluctant hospitality' in which they tried to decrease their share of the cost. Now it will be argued that this reluctance had an undeniable impact on the subsequent resettlement process, making this 'an un-homely welcome'.

Here once again, their belongingness / un-belongingness was at stake. Once they placed their feet on British soil, these Asians started to be called 'Ugandan Asians' (not 'British Asians' as they had sometimes been referred to while they were in Uganda). Their resettlement in a new 'home' was systematically supported by public and voluntary sectors, but the Government was always worried about the large cost of the resettlement, and particularly how these costs were presented to the British public. As they tried to refrain from making (or at least hide) their positive efforts to ensure the Asians' early arrival in August and early September, so too did they try to cover up or inhibit preferential treatment for these virtual 'refugees', in the sense that they were people in need of special help.

The resettlement operation of the Ugandan Asians has often been evaluated as one of the largest-scale 'refugee resettlements' in Britain by some researchers. For example, Tony Kushner and Katharine Knox, in *Refugees in an Age of Genocide* evaluated the resettlement process as one of the notable cases of the refugee resettlement in the UK, while pointing out that the Asians from Uganda 'were rarely considered as "refugees" in Britain but were termed "immigrants" for whom Britain had an obligation to provide'²². In the following section, it is possible to confirm the point they made, if it meant that the Ugandan Asians were (at least supposed to be treated as) 'refugees' but were not treated as such, and that the general perception was these Asians were adding to the burdens imposed on the 'British' national community by those 'immigrants' who had come before them.

When we trace the Government's change of discourse from presenting them as 'unfortunate refugees' when they tried to persuade the public to accept them sympathetically, to treating them as 'immigrants' who should not enjoy any preferential treatments, their status as 'refugees' or 'immigrants' can be interpreted in terms of the framework of belongs / non-belongs in which the Ugandan Asians were eternal outsiders. At the same time, although they were regarded as 'immigrants' in the sense that they were denied any 'preferential treatment' especially once settled in a community and mainstreamed into the other 'immigrant' groups, there were genuine

²² Kushner and Knox, *Refugees in an Age of Genocide*, 287.

public sympathies for them as ‘refugees’ when it came to ‘help’ offered by voluntary organizations and individuals, which was ironically a consequence of the political (and the media’s) ‘refugee’ rhetoric.

3-1. Were the Asians refugees?

Some have argued that the Asians were fortunate to be regarded as ‘refugees’ because it allowed them to enjoy sympathetic help offered by the British public. A *Race Today* editorial in 1972 argued: ‘It is only right that the Asians should be regarded as refugees...it is likely, given the present British mood on race, that they would receive very much less than their deserts—or they needs—if they were regarded in any other way.’²³ It can surely be said that where their resettlement was concerned, these Asians *were* virtually ‘refugees’, and they certainly needed special treatments considering their traumas and dire straits caused by their sudden expulsion.

In the resettlement process, however, their status as ‘refugees’, as it meant that they should deserve special treatment, was not always guaranteed, even though they were often referred to as such. One of the politicians who were involved later recalled their policy: ‘[w]e were not to discriminate in favour of these people. Help was to be on the absolute minimum scale.’²⁴ Thus contrary to their humanitarian discourse the Government employed to persuade the indigenous people to accept these Asians, the Government (and therefore, the URB) absolutely opposed to the idea of Asians receiving any preferential treatment, or anything that might give an impression that ‘the Asians were getting ahead at the expense of the native population’. They justified their position claiming that the special treatments would perpetuate the presence of the Ugandan Asians, and this would be harmful for race relations in British society.

In a sense, the establishment of the URB itself needs to be understood as a strategy the Government employed to distance itself from the resettlement process, while placing it under absolute control. The URB was established in late August 1972, and appointed as its chairman was Sir Charles Cunningham, a former Permanent Secretary to the Home Office, an eminent bureaucrat²⁵. Other members of the board were mainly

²³ Quoted in Valerie Marett, ‘Resettlement of Ugandan Asians in Leicester’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 6-3, 1993, 258. On the other hand, there were Asians who were unhappy to be called ‘refugees’ and to be regarded as someone who is dependent on other people (e.g. Mahmood Mamdani, *From Citizen to Refugee*, London 1973.).

²⁴ Humphrey and Ward, *Passports and Politics*, 47.

²⁵ The other initial Board members were Mark Bonham Carter, Chairman of the

chosen from voluntary organizations, local authorities and immigrant communities, although it was not necessarily a 'balanced' representation²⁶ of the actors involved. The URB's task was to coordinate the resettlement process and act as a mediator among these different actors and the Government departments.

The meeting minutes and other papers concerning the resettlement operation managed by the URB show how the coordination by the URB was frustrated by the fact that it was a Government-appointed body and therefore a Government-controlled organization. The Government's overall reluctance to accept these Asians, and its desire to decrease the 'cost' of such an acceptance—or at least hide it from the public eye—had various (often negative) effects on the success of the initial resettlement.

This first characterized the funding process for the Asian resettlement, which was pretty indirect; the Government aimed to camouflage the cost of resettlement by dividing it into a few channels, mainly support through increasing the amount of expenditure for the Rate Support Grants, and reimbursement of the costs which was spent at the discretion of the URB. The Government preferred the former channel, possibly because it is more indirect and 'invisible' from the eyes of the taxpayers. However, this led to diminishing the URB's power as an agency of funding for the local authorities' resettlement efforts²⁷.

Even when they had to acknowledge that the cost was substantial, the Government claimed that suspending the financial aid to Uganda would cancel out the current cost. Questioned about the cost of resettlement in the Parliament, Home Secretary Carr stated that he did not believe the cost of resettlement would not 'add to that burden [namely, the original cost of international aids].'²⁸ This statement implies that the development aid and the resettlement cost could be equated as post-Imperial 'burdens' to bear, and bearing a new burden would be financially justified by suspension of the old.

Community Relations Commission; Mrs Francis Clode, Chairman of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service; Praful Patel, Secretary of the Committee of UK Citizenship; B. Wilson, Town Clerk of the London Borough of Camden; Douglas Tilbe, Director of the Community and Race Relations Unit of the British Council of Churches. Those who were later added were Sir Walter Coutts, an ex-Governor General of Uganda; Sir Ronald Ironmonger, Leader of the Sheffield City Council; Sir Frank Marshall, Leeds City Council; Lord Peter Thorneycroft, Conservative, House of Lords.

²⁶ Marett, *Immigrants Settling in the City*, 69.

²⁷ Marett, *Immigrants Settling in the City*, 71. According to the final report of the URB, out of the net expenditure up to December 1973, only one tenth of the URB's total expenditure (about £610, 000) was spent as grants to the local authorities. Uganda Resettlement Board, *The Final Report*, London, 1974, 17.

²⁸ *Hansard*, 843, c. 268, 18 October 1972.

The policy that the Asians should not be treated preferentially had an undeniable influence on the process of Asian resettlement and integration into the wider community. Praful Patel was a Ugandan Asian already settled in the UK and a URB board member, who wanted to ensure effective resettlement by calling for the establishment of a loan scheme for business and house purchasing²⁹. He repeatedly appealed to the Home Office and the URB to encourage the Government to make a positive commitment to this scheme and there were certainly much possibilities of large-scale funding scheme as some affluent Asians were interested in giving support. In the end, however, the Government refused to offer any funding or public guarantee to this scheme, claiming that it would undermine the principle that the Asians should not be treated preferentially³⁰. What the Government preferred was a small charitable fund called the Uganda Asian Relief Trust, which could only offer minimal help (only five pounds per head) for the Asians such as purchasing basic furniture and goods for their new home³¹.

The effort to minimise the cost led to another salient feature of the resettlement: its heavy, in a sense absolute, dependence on voluntary elements. Throughout the resettlement process, the support from the voluntary bodies was completely indispensable. As will be shown later, they played central roles in running the resettlement centres and helping the Asians adapt to their lives in Britain in almost every aspect. Even after the Asians left the centres and settled in communities, the voluntary bodies were expected to continue to offer support for the Asians. The Government also tried to count on the Asian community's self-reliance, and expected the Asians, especially the rich quarters already settled in the UK, to offer financial help for their 'fellow' Asians.

The Women's Royal Voluntary Service, the British Red Cross, the St. John Ambulance Brigade were the three 'traditional' voluntary agencies the government tried to rely on for their expertise on contingency planning for emergencies, but helps from other less conventional voluntary bodies were also indispensable. Their contribution was coordinated by an umbrella body, the Co-ordinating Committee for the Welfare of

²⁹ Patel also argued that this would help the Government to disperse the Asians as much as possible by giving the Asians incentives to settle in the 'green' areas.

³⁰ TNA, HO289/57, Approaches to Banks for Possible Financial Loans to UKPHs. See also TNA, HO289/5, Meeting of the Board; TNA, CAB134/3519, Home and Social Affairs Committee.

³¹ TNA, CAB128/50/42, The Cabinet Meeting Minutes, 7 September 1972 and TNA, HO 289/10, Establishment of a Charitable Fund.

Evacuees from Uganda (hereafter CCWEU), which was formed in August 1972³². The operation coordinated by CCWEU involved about 70 voluntary groups. The CCWEU kept a cooperative but independent stance from the Government operation, and was an acute critic of the URB.

The 'voluntary' element was also obvious in the coordination of housing for the Asians. As the housing shortage was one of the thorniest issues at that time, the URB called for offers of private unused accommodation from the public, and also approached local authorities to get them to offer available council housing.

The offers of private housing came in considerable numbers; according to the URB interim report, 2,284 people offered private accommodation for the Asians. After the Women's Royal Voluntary Service paid local visits and vetted these offers, the URB utilized 756 of them³³, which housed 2,149 people. Though it is only a fraction of the total, it certainly shows British people's sympathy for these unfortunate people uprooted from their 'homes'. Intriguingly, at the same time, these private housing offers were represented by the media and were dismissed by the general public as a 'charitable' act of the affluent middle class³⁴.

The Government had great difficulty in persuading the local councils to offer public housing for the Asians³⁵. Sometimes through regional officers of the Department of Environment, the URB kept placing pressures on the local governments to accept their 'share' of the Asians up to the later stages of the resettlement. In its *Final Report*, the URB gives the details of local authorities' offers as follows: out of 2,292 dwellings offered by the time of the interim report, 1,680 had become available by the time of the final report and there were further 177 offers in the meantime. The URB appreciated this as

³² The organisations include the National Council of Social Service, the Community Relations Commission, Community Service Volunteers, the British Council of Churches' Community and Race Relations Unit, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, the United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service, Oxfam, and Christian Action. The immigrant communities, Asian and non-Asian, were also included in member organizations, and played important roles.

³³ Many of the failed offers were either small accommodations for Asian families or not in good condition, or had only temporary terms of availability, so they were unavailable at the time of the actual resettlement or judged to be unsuitable for the purpose. TNA, HO289/3, Meeting of the Board.

³⁴ For example, a cynical *Punch* cartoon suggests that accommodating the Asians was some kind of new 'social status' symbol. It also underlined the stereotype of East African Asians as educated, professional, 'posh' middle-class.

³⁵ TNA, HO289/4, Meeting of the Board. The files of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government also show how long they struggled to attract housing offers from local authorities (TNA, HLG156/728 and HLG156/729, Policy on the Housing of Immigrants in East Midlands area).

‘invaluable help’³⁶, but this is in a way a fruit of their incessant pressure on beleaguered local authorities, which were already suffering from housing problems before the incident.

Against this background of a serious housing shortage, for some sections of the British public (obviously not those who would happily offer their unused housing to the ‘refugees’) it would be disturbing to think that the Asians were being offered housing at their expense—the ‘native’ British. Actually the Race Relations Board received a considerable number of complaints from the public that the resettlement of the Uganda Asians infringed the 1968 Race Relations Act which prohibited discrimination ‘on grounds of colour, race or ethnic or national origins’. These complaints were triggered by a reader’s letter published in *Sunday Telegraph* which took exception to an advertisement in the local press offering accommodation to a Ugandan Asian family. The Race Relations Board protested to the newspaper claiming that the offer was made because they were ‘a particular group who are in need because of their summary expulsion from Uganda’, in other words, they were ‘in effect refugees’.³⁷ However, while the URB repeated the same stance³⁸, it did not necessarily mean that for them, the Ugandan Asians should really be treated preferentially.

3-2. Reception at the Airports

While they were still in Uganda, the Asians learned of the news concerning the British public’s opposition to the Asian influx. The most apparent of this ‘unwelcome’ came from one English city in the East Midlands, Leicester: in early September, a newspaper advertisement in the *Ugandan Argus* posted by the Leicester City Council tried to dissuade the Asian from coming to the city. They had also seen news coverage of anti-immigration demonstrations in which angry British demonstrators were shouting ‘Asians out’ and ‘Britain is for the British’.

Therefore, by mid-September, when the special flight airlift of the Asians started, it is not difficult to imagine how apprehensive the arriving Asians were about coming to this new unwelcoming ‘home’. On the first day, the Asian arrivals were greeted by cold drizzle (the British newspapers unanimously pitied them who had to be transferred from temperate Kampala to the miserable weather of England). Contrary to their

³⁶ URB, *The Final Report*, London, 1974.

³⁷ TNA, CK2/234, Uganda Asians: General Correspondence with the Public.

³⁸ TNA, HO289/70, Issues of Circular to Local Authorities Regarding RRA1968.

possible expectation, they received a 'warm' reception by people from voluntary organizations helping the URB to welcome these Asians at the airports. They offered teas and snacks in what the media described as 'a typical English welcome'³⁹. The Ugandan Asians were also offered warm clothes contributed by mainly women and Christian organisations, in which they were wrapped up before they left for their next destination, while the Red Cross provided medical care and advice. The help offered by voluntary bodies at the time of the reception at the airport was literally for twenty-four hours and truly wide-ranging: interpretation, offers of short- and long-term accommodation, transport, finding jobs and places in schools and colleges, providing warm clothes and blankets, counselling and medical care⁴⁰.

The URB assumed that the arriving Asians might have already arranged their own destinations, and it was particularly worried that the Asians would instantly head for areas such as the London boroughs, and Leicester, Birmingham and other 'immigrant' areas outside London. The URB could not stop the Asians if they travelled at their own expense.

Thus from the very beginning, the URB's resettlement operation tried to disperse the Asians as much as possible, even though they knew that they could not enforce it. The news of the influx of the Asians had already caused panics in some localities, most notably in Leicester, where it was believed that most of the Asians were heading. The initial panic was eased by the financial package the Government promised, but still the concentration of the Asian 'burden' was regarded as undesirable, so every measure to dissuade the Asians to go to these areas was adopted by the URB.

The famous 'red' and 'green' area designations were introduced here to achieve this aim: they tried to dissuade movement to the so-called 'red' areas⁴¹ and persuaded migration to the 'green' areas. A less well-known fact is that these areas were originally named as 'black' and 'white' areas respectively but the names were changed because

³⁹ See, for example, 'Tea in England for Asian Exile', *Daily Mail*, 19 September 1972.

⁴⁰ London Metropolitan Archive (hereafter LMA), ACC/3121/E/04/0284, Ugandan Asians: Expulsion from Uganda. The Co-ordinating Committee for the Welfare of the Evacuees from Uganda 'Twenty-Four-Hour Service for the Uganda Asians from the Voluntary Societies', 25 September 1972.

⁴¹ The so-called red areas included London Boroughs: Brent (Willesden and Kilburn), Camden, Ealing (Southall), Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Hammersmith, Islington, Kensington, Lambeth (Brixton), Lewisham, Newham (East and West Ham), Southwark, Tower Hamlets (Stepney), Wandsworth (Clapham) and Westminster (Paddington); West Midlands: Birmingham, Leicester, Smethwick, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton; West Riding: Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield.

they were thought to be racially insensitive⁴². That tells volumes because it seems that in many cases the red / green areas were designated based on the mere concentration of the coloured immigrants in the areas, rather than the actual social difficulties people were experiencing there. It was also based on impressions and pressures rather than the exact statistics and numbers, and different Government departments had different criteria⁴³. At first, the Government tried to keep the list of 'red' areas secret, until the newspapers revealed it as early as 18 September.⁴⁴

In the guideline written up by the URB for voluntary workers who interviewed the Asians at the airport, the URB expected these workers, on their behalf, to 'guide the family to a suitable decision'. Admitting that the newcomers would need 'more than ordinary tact and sympathy' in their reception, the URB was asking the volunteers to persuade (because they knew that they 'have no power of direction') to settle in areas other than those listed. Without clarifying by whom, the guideline claims that these areas were already overcrowded, therefore those who had settled there were already suffering from severe housing shortage and difficulty in finding jobs, causing great strain on the social, medical, and educational services. Therefore, 'in the interests of the newcomers, as well as those of existing Asian communities in this country' the newcomers should be advised to settle elsewhere. It also made clear that if they head for the areas listed, they would not be given any financial help to travel from the airports.

Reading this guideline, John Lyttle, the Chief Officer of the Race Relations Board, wrote to Mark Bonham-Carter, the Chairman of the Community Relations Commission and a URB board member, that it was 'appalling' that 'the URB should follow the popular myth' blaming immigrants for causing housing and job difficulties, and banning them from going to areas with an already substantial 'immigrant' population as they may cause more of the problems. He was 'incredulous that [the URB] should think that they could send materials like this to bright young volunteers from [Community Service Volunteers] and get away with it.' He even called the guideline 'transparent hypocrisy'⁴⁵. The CCWEU was also critical of the dispersal policy and the voluntary bodies gave support to the Asians who were not given travel warrants just because they were heading to the 'red' areas⁴⁶.

⁴² TNA, HO289/73, Resettlement of UA in Localities Defined as Red Areas.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Guardian*, 18 September 1972.

⁴⁵ TNA, CK2/333, Uganda Resettlement Board. A Letter from John Lyttle to Mark Bonham-Carter.

⁴⁶ Humphry and Ward, *Passports and Politics*, 58.

3-3 Resettlement Centres

After receiving the welcome at the airports, those who had no immediate destinations were accommodated at 16 resettlement centres or camps, which were prepared and opened in September and October 1972 by the URB. These camps or centres were mainly disused military installations, scattered across the country, and some were in very remote locations (one in a coastal area of Wales, another in Cornwall, two in rural Lincolnshire). According to the URB's final report, out of 28,608 who passed through their 'resettlement' operation⁴⁷, 21,987 went to and stayed at the 16 centres (regardless of length of their stay although the majority left the centres after short periods). The others (6,621) just received welcome at the airport by the URB and voluntary organizations, but did not stay at the resettlement centres or camps at all. They went to their own destinations—in most cases, where their families and friends had already settled—by their own arrangements.

Each centre was administrated by mainly ex-military persons employed by the URB, and in appointment of these administrators, those with 'colonial backgrounds' were preferred. Humphry and Ward describe this as 'unconscious reconstruction of colonial situations'. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the URB assumed the Asians would be better controlled by this particular type of people, which tells what these 'centres' were all about. When in need of an extra administrator, the URB instantly turned to the Ministry of Defense⁴⁸.

This 'quasi-military' control by some administrators led to some conflicts between them and the voluntary staff who were indispensable in running the centres⁴⁹. The voluntary workers, especially the less conventional, young volunteers, were generally critical of these administrators because of their inflexible and high-handed manners. The voluntary workers thought that the administrators were only concerned with providing the Asians 'food and bed' and maintaining order at the camp at the lowest cost⁵⁰, while the majority of voluntary workers believed that the centres should offer

⁴⁷ These figures include those who arrived after the early November deadline.

⁴⁸ TNA, HO 289/2, Meeting of the Board.

⁴⁹ The Emergency Sub-Committee minutes and memoranda show how the running of the centres was dependent on the voluntary organizations' help. TNA, CAB134/3523, The Emergency Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes of 10 October 1972.

⁵⁰ The officers tried to strictly control centres' expenditures, and in the officers' perception, the Asians were not cooperative enough in the daily management of the centres, such as cleaning. In one officer's briefing memo for internal audit, it was claimed that it was because they did not want to do 'degrading' menial work as they were used to having

other functions such as entertainment and education to the Asian residents who stayed for longer periods⁵¹.

The situations varied in different centres, of course. They were more complex when the volunteer staffs were not homogeneous: there seem to have been some minor conflicts between different organisations and different generations of workers⁵², while the older Asians expressed concerns that the young 'hippie' voluntary members might influence young Asians, especially the girls. The URB records show that there were a couple of troubles in the Greenham Common resettlement centre and it eventually led to evictions of three volunteers in a short period. This case clearly shows the complexity of multi-sided frictional situations among the administrator, volunteers and the Asians⁵³. On the other hand, the progress report by the CCWEU tells that in some centres the administrators were less against, if not supportive of, the voluntary workers' efforts to make the resettlement centres more comfortable and educationally oriented, and to integrate the Asians into the local indigenous populations⁵⁴.

The voluntary organisations also criticised the URB for their insensitivity in transferring the Asians from camp to camp many times. The URB aimed to reduce the cost of running the centres because as the Asians started to leave the centres to settle, maintaining as many as 16 centres was becoming financially unreasonable and actually some centres used facilities almost unfit for use. Yet the voluntary bodies were critical of the URB's policy because many of such transfers were made at very short notice, without considering the situation of resettlement for the Asians⁵⁵.

Another URB record shows that there were certainly other considerations as well. When there was a request for transferring some Asians from one camp to another so that they can be reunited with their family members who were separately accommodated, the URB rejected these requests: they presumed that the transfer would make staying at the centre more comfortable and delay their departure. The URB was also worried that such reunion would make the family unit bigger, which would make

Africans do such jobs in Africa. The memo continues: 'if they think the British taxpayer is going to willingly and meekly foot the bill for their little quirk, then they have to think again.' TNA, HO289/60, Internal Audit, Points Stressed at Briefing at Staff Officers, 13 November 1972.

⁵¹ Kuepper et al., *Uganda Asians in Great Britain*, 66-68.

⁵² Humphry and Ward, *Passports and Politics*, 54.

⁵³ TNA, HO289/36, Review of the Role of Volunteers at Greenham Common.

⁵⁴ LMA, ACC/1888/200, The Coordinating Committee for the Welfare of the Evacuees from Uganda, The Progress Report, No. 6, 'Liaison Officers and Resettlement Centres'.

⁵⁵ TNA, HO289/3, Meeting of the Board.

the resettlement even more difficult⁵⁶.

3-4 Clearing the burden

The resettlement procedure—finding houses and jobs for the Asians—was coordinated by the resettlement teams of the URB, who were civil servants recruited from the Government departments. The resettlement teams at first tried to match job opportunities with housing offers, but later abandoned the policy for being unrealistic. This was because there were not enough housing available, and where this was available, there were not enough work places that could offer jobs for the Asians. Generally, finding a house was more difficult than finding a job.

Resettling all the Asians in a short period of time was not at all an easy job. Since the Ugandan exodus was a forced migration and therefore it embraced the total population, it included a larger proportion of the elderly and the handicapped than is usual in ordinary immigrant communities, as well as children and women. There were big extended families, which the resettlement teams could not place in average-sized houses. Contrary to their ‘professional, highly educated, English-speaking’ image often promoted by the media, those who had sought employment for long often needed English-language training⁵⁷. There seemed to be some, especially young single males, who were not satisfied with the type of jobs they were offered. In many cases, the jobs were menial, and below their qualifications and expectations. The URB complained that the Asians would not accept job offers because they were too ‘choosy’ and demanding. But in fact, most of the Asians were more than happy to accept the jobs that were much below their qualification and experience, and tried hard not to be a ‘burden’ on the public⁵⁸. Here what was more problematic seemed to be the attitude of the resettlement officers who were eager to just ‘clear’ the Asians from the centres.

From the Government’s perspective, the Asians were still ‘burdens’ to bear and if possible, to be shifted onto someone else. Even at the resettlement centres, the Asians were constantly encouraged to emigrate to the third countries. If they were emigrating overseas, the URB was expected to give financial assistance to the Asians by paying the

⁵⁶ TNA, HO289/52, Transfers between Resettlement Centres: Board Policy.

⁵⁷ TNA, CAB134/3523, Minutes and Memoranda of Emergency Sub-committee. The Department of Employment Memorandum 72(22), 6 October 1972.

⁵⁸ Community Relations Commission, *One Year On: A Report on the Resettlement of the Refugees from Uganda in Britain*, 1974, 15.

fares and ‘reasonable’ incidental costs of up to 750 pounds per family⁵⁹.

The issues of split families become rather relevant here. As pointed out earlier, the British Government refused the entry of Asians without British citizenship even when it would lead to family separations; therefore, when the head of a family was a non-citizen, only the family members with citizenship were accepted into Britain. These so-called ‘headless’ families could not be resettled easily because most of them hoped to be reunited first with the husbands and fathers, and the URB started to realize that most probably they would remain in the centres or depend on public support for a long time. The British Government announced that they would accept these non-citizen heads of families in February 1973⁶⁰. The Home Office papers around that time show that the decision to admit the stateless heads of the family was based on financial rather than humanitarian considerations⁶¹.

The URB believed that their job would be finished when the Asians resettled in the community. It was based on the Government’s belief that once the Asians were in the communities they should then rely on local agencies and statutory bodies just as other immigrant groups and the indigenous British population should.⁶² The Asians were resettled (some said cynically that they were only ‘relocated’ not ‘resettled’⁶³) by the URB, but difficulties still remained, especially when the families were resettled in remote places where there were not many Asians living in the surrounding areas. The URB tried to coordinate the ‘cares in the community’, and relied on the Community Relations Commissions, and the Women’s Royal Voluntary Service in localities where there was no CRCs⁶⁴. The Asian organisations’ self-help was also expected to play an integral role here, too. There were arguments as to whether the URB should offer public funding support for the voluntary services caring for the Asians in the community. Once more, within the URB, there was opposition based on ‘no preferential treatment for the Asians’ policy⁶⁵.

The URB—and the Home Office with pressure from the Treasury—were hoping to

⁵⁹ TNA, HO 289/2, Meeting of the Board.

⁶⁰ There were remaining issues because this decision was applied to those who went to the refugee camps in Europe and there were remaining ‘stranded’ heads of families in countries like India. The CCWEU kept raising this issue to the URB. LMA, ACC/1888/200, A Letter from Lewis Donnelly, Chairman of the CCWEU to Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Foreign Secretary.

⁶¹ TNA, HO289/16, Split families.

⁶² TNA, HO289/4, HO289/5, Meeting of the Board.

⁶³ Kuepper, *Uganda Asians in Great Britain*, 83.

⁶⁴ TNA, HO289/79, Follow-up to Resettlement.

⁶⁵ TNA, HO289/56, Voluntary Organizations and Community Relations Council.

close the resettlement centres as early as possible. As of the end of March 1973, there were five centres that were still open, with 3,380 Asians living there⁶⁶. Adding to the ‘rushed’ closure of the centres by concentrating the Asians in the remaining centres, new admittance was actively controlled, and when there were prospects that the Asians who went to India (India agreed to take the Asians in on the condition that it was a temporary resettlement) would try to enter Britain after the six months’ moratorium in early 1973, the URB and the Government agreed that the centres would hurriedly close the doors on those who arrived after 23 April 1973⁶⁷. All the resettlement centres were closed by January 1974, and the URB dissolved in the same month.

Shortly before its resolution, the URB was saturated with criticism from different sectors, including its important partner and an acute critic, the CCWEU. The CCWEU’s report ‘A Job Well Done?’ questioned the claimed success of the resettlement procedure and pointed out the enduring difficulties⁶⁸. The URB Chairman issued a statement that he did not accept this ‘as a fair description of the situation’, and argued that ‘many have settled satisfactorily and are making success of their new life.’ The enduring difficulties and limitation of the URB operation was, however, fully acknowledged by the URB or at least by its board members. Its internal memorandum shows that the members tried to reconcile themselves to this situation by admitting that the ‘situation is, clearly, far from satisfactory; but it seems, unfortunately, that there is little that the Board can do in the short term to improve it’⁶⁹.

In the end, how successful could we say the URB was in ‘dispersing’ the Asians and rendering them invisible from the public eyes? It is obvious that it was not as successful as the URB finally claimed in its final report: two-thirds of the Ugandan Asians went to settle in the red areas by their own arrangements, and only about one third were actually dispersed by the URB, being resettled in about 400 areas all over England, Wales and Scotland. However, it was believed that many of those who were dispersed, subsequently found their way to places where they could find more familiar faces, like

⁶⁶ Uganda Resettlement Board, *The Interim Report*, London 1973, 11.

⁶⁷ TNA, HO289/18, Policy on Position of UA Who Went from Uganda Direct to India. This clearly contrasts with the attitude when there was a prospect that the Ugandan Authorities were pressuring the British ‘belongers’ to emigrate in December 1972. TNA, HO289/17, Policy Positions of UK Belongers.

⁶⁸ ‘A Job Well Done?’, written by Helene Middleweek and Michael Ward, is a report published by the CCWEU in September 1973. It states: ‘In looking at the resettlement programme we are not monitoring success but examining the evidence of failure’.

⁶⁹ TNA HO289/5, Meeting of the Board.

Leicester and other red areas⁷⁰. One estimation tells us that by 1976, as many as 80 per cent of the Uganda Asians were living in areas where they could live with other East African Asians, that is, what the Government called the 'red' areas⁷¹.

4. Conclusion

The acceptance and resettlement of the Asians from Uganda is a small, but intriguing, episode in the history of immigration into Britain. As it has been illustrated, the British Government's and the Government-appointed URB's policy on the Asian acceptance and resettlement was influenced by the Government's overall reluctance to accept this group of people into Britain.

The Government and the URB offered an official welcome mat, but there are doubts if it was a genuine 'homely' welcome. The voluntary bodies, who tried as much as they could to make the Asians feel 'at home' even at the 'un-homely' resettlement camps, were often frustrated by the URB's bureaucracy, and the camp administrators' quasi-colonial attitude toward the Asians. Here they were generally sympathised as 'refugees' (other than the voluntary organizations' help, the British peoples' sympathy was expressed by their offering of unused private accommodation), but in the official policies the political expediency again crept in, and 'preferential treatments' were avoided as being destructive to 'good race relations'. In this situation, they were recognised as 'immigrants' who were less welcome and less entitled to help than 'refugees'. At the same time, the image of the Asians as 'a burden to bear' or 'a burden to share' was crystallised through the dispersal policies.

The national community was also imagined as a community bearing the burden, excluding the Asians as 'outsiders': Home Secretary Carr described the public sentiments over the issue: '[m]any people who believed that this was a responsibility and obligation which we were right to accept would have wished that we did not have it and there is nothing dishonourable about that'⁷² and the general concerns were 'very genuine and perfectly natural'. These statements presumed that there were the British 'nation' ('us'), most of whom were prepared to accept the responsibility toward these 'unfortunate' Asians ('them'), wishing that they had not had to. On the other hand, Carr

⁷⁰ Uganda Resettlement Board, *The Final Report*, London 1974, 7-8, 12

⁷¹ Valerie Marett, *Immigrants Settling in the City*, 71.

⁷² *Hansard*, 843, cc.272-273, 18 October 1972.

argues, there were people who tried to exploit this 'unfortunate situation' as 'a general attack on our society and on democratic society generally' obviously meaning Enoch Powell, the anti-immigration lobbies and the National Front. Here, Carr criticised their attack on the Asians but justified the fear and discontent the 'nation' rightly felt towards the Asians. In this sense, he failed to develop a convincing criticism of the National Front which later exploited the issue of housing offered to the Asians in local election campaigns and was successful in securing seats.

There is no denying that the Ugandan Asians were persecuted people in great need who had been expelled from their place of long-term residence in a very short period of time. However, as far as the official minds were concerned, these Ugandan Asians were treated as refugees where they were not supposed to be, and were *not* treated where they were entitled to be.

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Industrial Contraction and Union Structure: The Nottingham lace industry and the union merger in 1933*

Kentaro Saito**

Abstract

A principal feature of British industrial relations was a strong influence of skilled workers on the shopfloor. This article examines how craft unions responded to the drastic changes in the interwar economy and tried to survive. The Nottingham lace industry suffered from industrial contraction during the interwar period. The Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace Makers (ASOLM) was a typical craft union among British trade unions, and was affected by industrial decline very seriously. Although the high level of horizontal and vertical specialization characterized the industry, industrial contraction made the established industrial organizations less effective. Amalgamation between the ASOLM and the Auxiliary Societies took place in 1933, and it was a solution to the problem. In conclusion, this article claims that the ASOLM intended to fortify the existing craft structure, and strengthen their relationship with semi-skilled workers and their unions, in order to shelter from the pressure of the industrial slump. However, the merge of the unions did not enable the craft union to strengthen its influence on the lace industry as a whole, and the ASOLM itself became less attractive even among the members.

Keywords: skilled workers, industrial organization, craft union, amalgamation, the lace industry

*This paper is based on unpublished MPhil dissertation, Kentaro SAITO, *Craft Structure in the Nottingham Lace Industry in the 1920s and 1930s*, University of Leicester, 1996. See especially its chapters 3 and 4.

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Introduction

A process of production in an industry is usually divided into many sub-divisions, and trade unions in Britain were traditionally organized in the each section. Segmentation was, thus, one of the main characteristics of the trade union structure in Britain. This feature is interlocked with craft structure in British industrial relations. Craft unions and operative unions, whose members' skill was the most advanced and top-ranked in each industry, did not admit either female or unskilled workers into their own unions. In the nineteenth century, for example, the cotton industry is well-known as its vertical segregation in the industrial organization, and cotton spinning unions fought to exclude less skilled workers.¹ In the early twentieth century, engineering unions merged into the Amalgamated Engineering Union in 1920 and the headquarters tried to enroll the lesser skilled into the Union for expanding membership throughout the interwar period. However, highly skilled engineers, such as toolmakers, felt that they were not well-presented in the new union, and were not always corporate to the policy.² Internal frictions of this kind between trade unions were seen in many British industries.

In spite of this tradition, the interwar period witnessed relatively many amalgamations between trade unions. From the beginning of the century to the end of the 1930s, trade union membership grew rapidly and the growth led to enthusiasm to merge. It is likely that merging activities were accelerated by economic fluctuation as J. Waddington discussed in his *The Politics of Bargaining*.³ Rapid growth in membership set off competition between unions with the result that the larger sought amalgamation as a means of pushing ahead, and the smaller as the best way to get into the race. Most mergers in the interwar period, again as Waddington has stated, were vertical mergers within the same industries.⁴ However, union merger was not always boosted up in a

¹ Regarding the industrial organization in the cotton industry in general, see, W. Lazonick, 'The cotton industry' in *The Decline of the British Economy*, Oxford, 1986, 18-50. Higgins has rejected 'Lazonick approach' in D.M. Higgins, 'Rings, mules, and structural constraints in the Lancashire textile industry, c.1945-c.1965', *Economic History Review* (46) 1993, 342-62. For reluctant attitudes among skilled workers against unskilled workers' entry, see, for example, J.L. White, 'Lancashire cotton textiles,' in C.J. Wrigley (ed.), *A History of British Industrial Relations Volume II, 1914-1939*, Brighton, 216-7.

² Regarding the expansion policy of the AEU and the resistance by the skilled engineers, see, J.B. Jefferys, *The Story of the Engineers, 1800-1945*, London, 1972, 235-6.

³ J. Waddington, *The Politics of Bargaining: The Merger Process and British Trade Union Structural Development 1892-1987*, London, 1995.

⁴ R. Undy, 'Review Essay: Mergers and Union Restructuring: Externally Determined Waves or Internally Generated Reforms?' in *Historical Studies on Industrial Relations* (2), 1996, 125-37.

good economic performance as in the post-war restocking boom in the early 1920s and the process of merger itself seems to have affected more by internal logic of union structure rather than external causes. This article will deal with a union merger between an operative union and their lesser unions in the Nottingham lace industry in interwar period to discuss union structure, especially craft structure, in Britain.⁵

The machine lace industry in the Nottingham area developed its specification in the process of production in the late nineteenth century though the scale of the industry was relatively small.⁶ It was one of the typical examples for fragmented structure of British industry. The lace industry was, in the first place, divided horizontally into three sections in accordance with the type of its products; the plain net section, the curtain section and the lever section. And then, the each section was compartmentalized vertically into more than 10 processes (Diagram 1). The lace firms were also specified in accordance with these divides. Secondly, as in the other industries in Britain, the trade unions in the lace industry developed within its horizontal and vertical divides. The Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace Makers (hereafter referred as ASOLM) was established in 1872 as the prime operative union for 'twisthands', who were the most advanced skilled workers in the lace industry.⁷ However, its horizontal sectionalism remained as the three sections, the Plain Net Section, the Curtain Section and the Lever Section, within the Union even after the First World War. Employers' associations in the industry were also divided due to the sections and the sectionalism was also very strong. The Midland Counties Lace Manufacturers' Association was in the Lever Section and the British Plain Net Manufacturers' Association in the Plain Net Section.⁸ On the other hand, as for the vertical divides, there were many separate and independent trade unions, such as the British Association of Lace and Embroidery Designers and

⁵ Textile unions are conventionally classified as operative union whereas engineering unions, for example, as craft union. Although the difference is said whether or not they have apprenticeship this definition is not very clear. This article does not go to the details and define craft structure as a wide concept to cover both craft union and operative union.

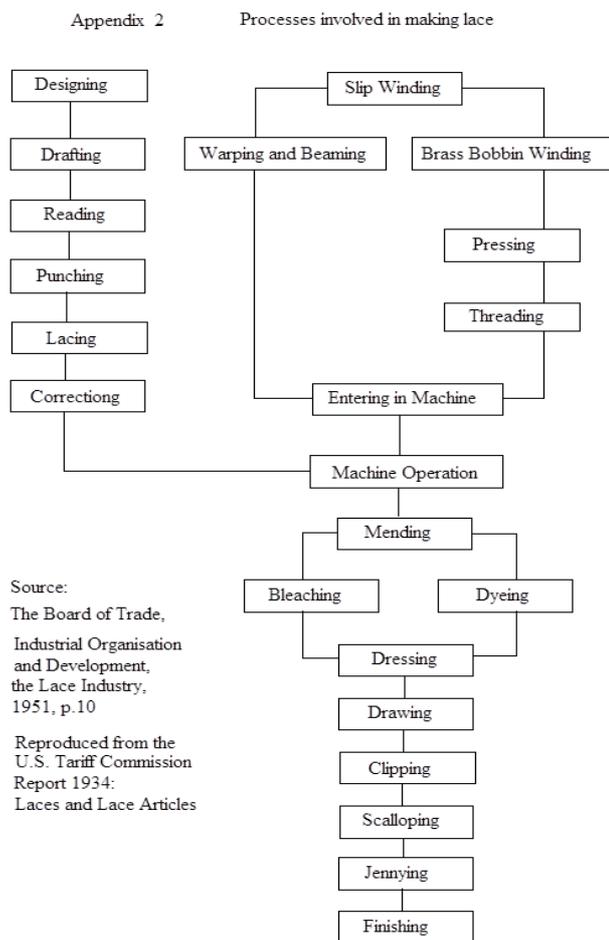
⁶ The lace product was well-known as the Nottingham lace. However, the area was actually wide-spread over the East Midlands. Lever lace, for example, being better-known as fancy lace, was mainly produced in Long Eaton of Derbyshire from the 1880s.

⁷ Machine operators in lace making in the Midlands were called 'twisthands' although in Scotland and the USA, they were called 'weavers'. As another operative union for twisthands, there was the Southwell Lace Operatives Society in the Nottingham area. But the membership was much smaller than that of the ASOLM. For the early organization of workers in the lace and knitting industry before the establishment of the ASOLM, see W. Felkin, *History of the Machine-wrought Hosiery and Lace Manufacturers*, Nottingham, 1867.

⁸ D.H. Varley, *A History of the Midland Counties Lace Manufacturers' Association 1915-1958*, Long Eaton, 1959.

Draughtsmen, the Amalgamated Society of Lace Pattern Readers, the Lever Card Punchers Association, the Auxiliary Society of Male Lace Workers, the Auxiliary Female Lace Workers, the Nottingham and District Warpers' Association and the Basford Lace Bleachers Society in the Nottingham area. There were also employers' organizations in accordance with the sections, such as the Nottingham Lace Furnishing Manufacturers', the Nottingham Embroidery Manufacturers' Association and the Warp Lace and Net Manufacturers' Association.⁹

<Diagram 1> Processes involved in making lace



We will examine the amalgamation took place in 1933 between the ASOLM, the Auxiliary Society of Male Lace Workers (hereafter referred as the Male Workers' Society) and the Auxiliary Female Lace Workers. The chief purpose of this article is, however, not only to analyze union merger itself, but to explore how an organization of

⁹ The Board of Trade, *Working Party Report: Lace*, London, 1947, 11-15.

skilled workers in fragmented structure of industry, which worked efficiently in the nineteenth century, responded to serious industrial contraction in the interwar period and tried to rescue their organization and trade. In the following, before discussing the merging process, we will summarize backgrounds to the merger. In the first place some industrial conditions, focusing on production and employment, of the Nottingham lace industry in the interwar period will be overlooked because these external factors all together became a driving force for the amalgamation. Secondly we will examine how the trade unions suffered from the industrial contraction in the light of the changes in their membership and financial situation in order to investigate some internal logic within the trade unions for the merger. In the next section, the process of this amalgamation will be explored as the response of the Lace Makers Union to their industrial and organizational crisis. In conclusion, after briefly touching the result of the amalgamation, we will consider some aspects of the relationship between craft structure in Britain and industrial contraction.

The British Lace Industry and its trade unions

The British lace industry was originally located in the small towns and villages mainly in the South, and produced bobbin lace by hand. However, after John Heathcoat of Nottingham built the first machine capable of producing lace in 1808, the East Midlands became the centre of the production in Britain.¹⁰ The lace industry in the South and East of Scotland grew from the late nineteenth century. However, Nottingham dominated the British lace market for long, and in practice was a centre of lace production in the world until the end of the nineteenth century.¹¹ However, the industry started to contract after the turn of the century. The Nottingham lace industry had depended largely on exports, but it was caught up by other countries and slowed behind them. In 1912, exports accounted for 62 per cent of the Nottingham production, 31 per cent of them going to USA, 31 per cent to the Continent, 20 per cent to British

¹⁰ Regarding the handmade lace industry in the nineteenth century, see, J. Bourke, "I was always fond of my pillow": the handmade lace industry in the UK 1870 - 1914", *Rural History* (5) 1994, 155-69.

¹¹ Even in 1951, three-quarters of lace firms and about the same proportion of workers in the British lace industry were in the Nottingham district, which produced more than 70 per cent of the total output. F.A. Wells, 'The Lace Industry', in H.A. Silverman (ed.), *Studies in Industrial Organization*, Oxford, 1946, 47-48.

possessions overseas.¹² The proportion of exports to production decreased on a net basis during the interwar period. It reduced from 62% in 1912, to 39% in 1924 and 25% in 1935.¹³ As the result, the output decreased almost constantly during the period although the pace of decrease varied due to the sections of the products (Table 1). The main reason of the decrease was the rise of the American production. The First World War greatly assisted the newly established American industry, and after the war exports to America were further handicapped by increased tariffs. Among other lace-producing countries France was the most successful partly because the rate of exchange made French lace cheaper for America to buy from France, and then even from Germany, than from Britain. It has also to be pointed out that boom and slump in the lace industry considerably depended on the trend of fashion. Market changes were virtually impossible to predict. Particularly in the early 1920s, changes in people's taste in fashion had a bad influence on the industry. The industry generally suffered from its industrial contraction over the years.

<Table 1> Production of lace: England and Wales, 1907 - 30 (£,000)

<u>Sections/Years</u>	<u>1907</u>	<u>1924</u>	<u>1930</u>
Plain net	1,081	903	439
Curtain	656	792	662
Lever	2,482	1,302	375
Total Value of Goods	9,578	7,657	5,749

Source: Census of Production: 1907, 1924, 1930, 1935.

Notes: (1) The plain net section is listed as 'Cotton net, including all net made on net machines' in the Census. The Curtain section is listed as 'Cotton lace curtain and piece goods on curtain machines'. The lever section, known as the fancy lace, is listed as 'Cotton lace and articles thereof made on other than net or curtain machine'.

(2) Total includes other type of lace, such as silk lace, artificial silk lace, muslin curtains, women's garments, embroidering on lace and the sections of bleaching, dyeing and dressing of lace.

The industrial contraction meant serious decline in the employment of the industry. The Report of the Barlow Commission shows that the number of insured lace makers decreased by 40 per cent between 1923 and 1937: 9,420 in 1923 to 5,650 in 1937. The number of firms in 1946 represented 72 per cent of the number in 1923.¹⁴ This decrease in the number of the employment and the firm does not indicate technological progress. Attachment to established lace machinery was widely seen among the Nottingham lace

¹² R.G. Walton, *The History of the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce 1860-1960*, Nottingham, 1962, 79-80.

¹³ Wells, 'The Lace Industry', 68-9.

¹⁴ M.P. Fogarty, *Prospects of the Industrial Area of Great Britain*, London, 1945, 308-12.

manufacturers. The lace industry used machines which were fundamentally the same as those used at the turn of the century, even until the 1960s.¹⁵ New machines were built, but they incorporated no revolutionary changes. A few innovations, thus, both in introduction of new machinery and new management system, were introduced into the industry. Therefore it can be said that the numbers employed decreased throughout the period simply reflected the industrial slump.

<Table 2> Employment of Lace Makers* in England and Wales

Years	Males		Females			Total	
	Under 18	All ages	Under 18	All ages	Under 18	All ages	
1907	1,956 (16.2)	12,087	4,611 (26.7)	17,260	6,567 (22.4)	29,347	
1924	357 (7.6)	4,613	1,768 (20.7)	8,838	2,122 (15.8)	13,451	
1930	369 (9.8)	3,745	1,525 (21.0)	7,257	1,894 (17.2)	11,002	
1935	484 (11.2)	4,309	1,510 (19.7)	7,638	1,994 (16.7)	11,947	

Source: The Census of Production; 1907, 1924, 1930, 1935, 1951.

Notes: (1) Bracketed figures show the percentage of the employed under 18 years old to all male operatives and females workers.

: (2) Lace makers were listed as 'wage earners' in the Census of 1907, and as 'operatives' in 1924 to 1951. Both are the average number of persons at work in lace factories and warehouses.

In particular some changes in the occupational structure of male workers were very serious problems to the industry; firstly the employment of youth decreased drastically and secondly the age distribution among the workers changed badly against the industry. According to the Census of Production, the number of lace makers under 18 year old was 1,956 in 1907, 357 in 1924 and 369 in 1930 (Table 2).¹⁶ Apprenticeship in the lace industry took at least 5 years in those days and it was becoming risky for young workers to enter the lace industry in decline. In addition to it, unfortunately to the lace industry and fortunately to the youth in the area, there was an alternative option for young workers in the East Midlands. The hosiery industry, which needed no apprenticeship and less skill than lace-making, was growing steadily. It worried, as it will be stated later, manufacturers and trade union leaders in the lace industry that many young workers were actually absorbed into the hosiery industry. The changes in the age distribution among the male workers shows more comprehensively what was going on in the lace industry. Population Census shows that the largest age-group in a cohort of the lace industry progressed towards the older age group over the years. In

¹⁵ *Nottingham Guardian*, 29 May 1965.

¹⁶ *The Census of Production*; 1907, 1924, 1930, 1935, 1951. Lace makers were listed as wage earners in the Census of 1907, and as operatives in 1924 to 1951. Both are the average number of persons at work in lace factories and warehouses.

1911 the largest age group was the 25-34 group with 21.2 per cent. But it was the 45-54 group in 1921. And in 1931 and 1951, the peaks fell in the 55-64 age group with about 24 per cent.¹⁷ The same trends can be seen in the female employment although the progress of the largest age group to the older group was slower and remained in the younger group than the male's case.¹⁸ The changes in the employment became serious problems in the lace industry. Above all, here, we have to note that youths meant in many cases workers engaged in the auxiliary processes in the lace industry. Auxiliary processes in lace making are principally the processes through which the yarn passes before reaching the lace machine i.e., winding, drumming, warping (or beaming), brass bobbin winding.¹⁹ It was the custom up to the 1960s for boys to begin as threaders. At the age of eighteen those who had determined to become a fully-skilled lace-workers entered a period of apprenticeship for a skilled lace maker, whereas females had been confined to the auxiliary work within factories since the nineteenth century. Accordingly, the decrease in young workers under 18 year old did not mean merely that the apprenticeship for lace makers declined and then the labour supply would not be enough in the future, but also that 'twisthands' could not start their work because the auxiliary processes were indispensable for the whole process of lace-producing although they were less skilled. The decrease in the number of youth, thus, threatened the future and present of the industry. However, the changes in the occupational structure were more concretely intimidating for the trade unions in the Nottingham lace industry.

The ASOLM was, as stated, the chief operative union in the Nottingham lace industry and had been enjoying the high-organizational rate until before the First World War. S. and B. Webb wrote in 1896 that the incomparably strongest union among textile unions was not the Cotton Workers but the Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace Makers, which comprised practically all the adult male workers in the Nottingham machine-lace trade and therefore among the Nottingham Lace Makers as a whole, and that

¹⁷ The population Census, England and Wales: Occupation Table; 1911, 1921, 1931, 1951. The age is categorized by, 14-19, 20-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65 and over. Lace makers are listed as workers of lace manufacture in 1911, as lace machine tenters and warp hands in 1921 and 1931, and as just lace in 1951.

¹⁸ Almost half of the labour force can be said to have been under 24 years old before the end of World War II; 47.3 per cent in 1911, 50.3 per cent in 1921 and 47.8 per cent in 1931, though it jumped to 45-54 years old group in 1951. *The population Census, England and Wales: Occupation Table; 1911, 1921, 1931, 1951.*

¹⁹ According to the rules of the Auxiliary Male Society, shop lads, pressers, jackers-off, changers, and card levers could be considered auxiliary workers. Rules of the Auxiliary Society of Male Lace Workers, 1911, Lm Ru 22, Hallward Library, University of Nottingham (hereafter HL).

non-Unionism was almost unknown.²⁰ Exaggerated was it by the Webbs (twisthands had a choice as to whether or not they joined the union). It was certainly true that the union density, the proportion of union members to those who were eligible to become members, was high in the lace industry. It was 52.6 per cent in 1921 and 39.0 per cent even in 1930, being always about 10 per cent higher than the national average.²¹ The membership of the ASOLM saw a peak in the 1880s and then started to decline. It was 3,661 in 1901, 2,311 in 1911 and fell to 1,650 in 1929. In 1931 the numbers of lace makers fell to 1,440, the lowest level figures during the interwar period.²² These decrease in the membership in turn affected their activities through the income of the Society because contributions were the main source of the Society's income. Contributions consistently accounted for over 90 per cent of the total income. There were branches in Nottingham (the headquarters of the Society), Beeston, Long Eaton, and Ilkeston, and the contributions from the Nottingham Branch consistently accounted for over 80 per cent of total contributions.²³ But the most decrease in membership took place in the Nottingham area. The contributions decreased throughout the interwar period. In 1931 the sum of the contributions was less than half of that of 1919.

In accordance with the decline in income, the total expenditure dropped dramatically, especially after the end of the First World War. Unlike other industries, unemployment in the lace industry was worse in the early 1920s than during the 1930s. The Society was obliged to pay a great number of out-of-work grants between 1919 and 1921, with the result that it incurred a large bank overdraft. It was recommended in 1922 that the out-of-work benefit should be suspended until the overdraft at the Bank was completely paid off.²⁴ By the end of 1925 the Society cleared itself from debt. The Executive Council of the ASOLM decided that the question of restoring benefits to their normal level should be raised.²⁵ However, there is no evidence that the out-of-work grant was reinstated between the wars. It seems that the Society continued to keep a tight rein on

²⁰ S. and B. Webb, *The History of Trade Unionism*, London, 1896, revised edition 1920, 435-6, 441.

²¹ *Census of Population*, 1921 and 1931; *Census of Production*, 1924, 1930 and 1935. About the national average of union density, see G. Bain and R. Price, *Profile of Union Growth*, Oxford, 1980, 37.

²² The number did not change at all during the interwar years. It seems that the ASOLM reported the manipulated number of the membership to the TUC.

²³ ASOLM(AW), Statement Account of Balance Sheets (hereafter Balance Sheets), 1919-39, Lm 2P 7, HL.

²⁴ ASOLM, *Annual Report*, December 1922, Lm 3A, HL

²⁵ *Ibid.*, December 1926.

their finance during these years. The expenditure, thus, continued at the low level. The total expenditure for 1939 was less than half that for 1919. Unemployment benefits were not the only one. There were cuts and changes to most benefits during this period. In 1922 the Management Committee of the ASOLM recommended the form of a complete alteration of the rules, in which reductions were made in all benefits except those relating to strike or lock-out, and superannuation. It seems that the provision policy of the ASOLM was changed to meet the Society's determination to ensure its financial stability. As it will be seen, the scale of contributions for the lace makers was much higher than that of the auxiliary workers. Therefore it does not seem that the ASOLM sought the amalgamation in 1933 for raising money to the finance of the Society. However, it has to be pointed out that it was in the early 1930s when the membership of the ASOLM reached at the lowest level that they started to the amalgamation scheme. The industrial contraction became actual problems to the skilled workers through the decline in the membership and they decided to tackle with the industrial inefficiency by reorganizing their own union. However, union membership decreased not only in the skilled sector in the industry but also in the less skilled sectors.

The Auxiliary Male Workers Society in the lace industry was established in the early 1890s, and was an independent and autonomous body from the craftsmen. Partly because major general unions, composed of unskilled workers and semi-skilled workers, were formed in the same period, the Auxiliary Male Society has been classified in a previous study as a type of 'new union'.²⁶ It is certainly true that the Auxiliary Male Society was continuously strong and active in the political field before the First World War. A threader who was expelled by the Society was noticed publicly in 1911.²⁷ The membership of the Auxiliary Society reached 600 in 1907.²⁸ However, the Society became weaker, in particular, during the 1920s. The membership of the Auxiliary Society seems to have started to decrease from the years. There is no records of the membership of the Auxiliary Society in the 1920s. However the pattern of membership can be seen in their contribution books.²⁹ The amount of contributions was £344 in 1920. And then, it dropped sharply in 1921 and then continued to decline at a constant rate, falling to £85 in 1925. This decrease seems to have continued up to the early 1930s. It

²⁶ P.H. Wyncoll, *The Nottingham Labour Movement, 1880-1939*, London, 1985, 57.

²⁷ N.H. Cuthbert, *The Lace Makers Society: A Study of Trade Unionism in the British Lace Industry*, Nottingham, 1960, 62-4.

²⁸ Board of Trade, *Report on Trade Unions in 1908 - 1910*, HMSO, 1912.

²⁹ Contribution books, Lm P 65, HL.

was reported at the request of the General Council of the TUC that their income from contributions was £40 in 1930.³⁰ In 1931 the membership was only 60 by 1931.³¹ It can be easily imagined that the decline in the membership hit harshly the Male Society. A scheme for amalgamation was in fact proposed by the Auxiliary Society to the ASOLM in the 1920s. In 1924, a deputation from the Auxiliary Society requested financial assistance because their funds were too low to pay a deceased member's funeral benefit of £4.³² The idea of merger was not realized at the time because the ASOLM had an external problem to solve urgently. The General and Transport Workers' Union projected to absorb the lace industry in the Derby area, especially in Long Eaton. The Workers' Union after the First World War formed a Lace Operatives Branch in Derby and started to recruit lace makers. They tried to extend their influence to Nottingham, but their 'poaching twisthands' angered the ASOLM and their attempts were strongly resisted. The proposal for merge was being put off mainly because the ASOLM was stacked in tackling to solve the problem in the late 1920s. However, with these backgrounds, the amalgamation was expected to be achieved very smoothly because both the parties needed to merge. The problems, crisis in the membership and the finance, were serious enough to give an impetus for the unions to fuse together. However, it took in fact much longer than it had been expected. It turned out in the process of the merger that their intentions for fusion were crossing each other at some crucial.

Process of the Merger

By August of 1930, a draft proposal for amalgamation had been prepared by the General Secretary of the ASOLM, and at the request of the TUC this was discussed with its Organization Secretary in a private meeting during the Annual Congress of the TUC, held that year in Nottingham. The Executive Council of the ASOLM had sought the TUC advice on the whole matter of relations with the smaller unions in the industry.³³

³⁰ Financial Statement from January to December 1930, the Auxiliary Society of the Male Lace Workers, dated 15 May 1930, MSS 292/82.30/2, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick (hereafter MRC).

³¹ Letters from T.J. Severn to A. Hayday and General Council of the TUC, dated 13 February 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

³² Cuthbert, *The Lace Makers Society*, 243.

³³ Playing a role in union amalgamations was a traditional interest of the TUC although it seems to have had little or nothing to do with the important developments between the wars. R.M. Martin, *TUC: The Growth of a Pressure Group 1868-1976*, Oxford, 1980, 196-7.

However, it was at the beginning of 1931 that the negotiations started in a real sense. In February of 1931 Arthur Hayday, M.P., received a letter about this proposal from J.T. Severn, the Secretary of the ASOLM.³⁴ H.V. Tewson, the Assistant Secretary of the Organization Committee of the TUC, was asked by A. Hayday to discuss the issue at the General Council and the TUC started to consider the matter from March of 1931. From then on, the amalgamation was achieved mainly through five joint meetings of representatives of the three unions under the auspices of the General Council of the TUC over a period of more than two years.

On the 11th of April 1931 a conference of unions was held in Nottingham under the chairmanship of A. Hayday to discuss the amalgamation. Originally the General Council invited nine lace workers unions; the ASOLM, the Southwell Lace Operatives Society, the Lever Card Punchers Association, the British Association of Lace and Embroidery Designers and Draughtsmen, the Auxiliary Society of Male Lace Workers, the Female Lace Workers, the Amalgamated Society of Lace Pattern Readers, the Basford Lace Bleachers Society, and the Nottingham and District Warpers' Association. Of these, the Female Lace Workers, the Basford Lace Bleachers Society, and the Nottingham and District Warpers' Association were female organizations, and they did not participate in this conference. As a result, only six unions attended. Each sent representatives, and A.E. Colton, J.T. Severn and R. Sale, who were secretaries of the British Association of Lace and Embroidery Designers and Draughtsmen, the ASOLM and the Southwell Lace Operatives Society respectively, were appointed as the representative of the British Lace Operatives Federation (BLOF). The BLOF was the Federation in the lace industry established in 1918 to standardize wages and rationalize the lace industry nationally. However, the BLOF was not successful in developing collective bargaining and became a totally ineffective body mainly because of the sectionalism in the ASOLM. Although the three representatives from the skilled organizations were on behalf of the BLOF it was just for formality. And it was only in this meeting that the mane of the BLOF could be seen in the process of the amalgamation.

It seems that there was a difference in the intentions of the ASOLM and the General Council of the TUC at this point. Tewson wanted all the unions to merge. However, S. Dance, a representative of the Lever Card Punchers Association, rejected the

³⁴ Arthur Hayday was the first MP. for the Labour Party in Nottingham, See, Wyncoll, *The Nottingham Labour Movement*, pp. 110, 140 - 7. T. Severn was the General Secretary of the ASOLM(AW) between 1928 and 1950.

amalgamation on the grounds that it would mean the sinking of individual identity. It seems that the Southwell Lace Operatives Society declined to amalgamate because they had a good relationship with their firm and had no reason to consolidate with other unions.³⁵ The draughtsmen's Society did not agree with the suggestion of the TUC either. As a result, it was agreed at the conference that representatives of the ASMLW, the ASOLM and the Amalgamated Society of Female Lace Workers only should meet again under the auspices of the General Council to pursue further the possibility of fusion.³⁶ However the factors affecting the proposed amalgamation were not at all simple.

F. Rowland, the Secretary of the Auxiliary Society of Male Lace Workers, made it clear that there were difficulties in amalgamation despite the union's final decision to continue discussion. He claimed firstly that the attitude of the Lace Makers to the auxiliary workers was very unsatisfactory, and secondly that, their wages were so low as to preclude the payment of higher contributions. He cited cases where men were earning only 20s. to 30s. for a full week.³⁷ On the other hand, the ASOLM hoped that the amalgamation would take place soon, and for them 'the only problem which appeared to stand in the way was that of superannuation'.³⁸ There were no particular difficulty in amalgamation for the Female Auxiliary Society, and in November of 1931, the Female Society expressed a strong desire for amalgamation.³⁹

One of the most difficult problems was practical one of how to fix contributions and benefits for auxiliary members in the new organization. Tewson asked Severn, Rowland and M. Ball, the secretary of the Female Workers Society, to send copies of the rules and balance sheets of each Society to him for his examination. Severn also enclosed a proposed scheme of contributions and benefits for auxiliary workers together. The Male Society was not satisfied with this proposal. Rowland wrote to Tewson that he was afraid that if contributions were increased the organization would be severely handicapped.⁴⁰ According to their original rules, the contribution for members under 18 years old was 3 pence per week and 6 pence per week for members over 18 years.⁴¹

³⁵ TUC, Conference of Representatives of Unions in Nottingham and District Catering for Lace Makers, p. 2, 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

³⁶ TUC, *Report of Proceeding at the 63th Annual Trade Union Congress*, p.111. 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

³⁷ TUC, Conference of Representatives of Unions in Nottingham, op.cit., p.2. 1931.

³⁸ Letter from Severn to Tewson, dated 29 May 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, dated 18 November 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴⁰ Letter from Rowland to Tewson, 29 April 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴¹ Rules of the Auxiliary Society of Male Lace Workers, 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

Under the proposal although members could receive special benefits, such as sickness benefit, which had not been available in their own organization, they would each have to pay a 3 pence higher contribution; 6 pence for members under 18 years and 9 pence for members over 18 years. Strike and lock-out benefits were allowed for members in their original rules, but they were not actually effective for so long years as shown. Tewson informed Severn of the dissatisfaction of the Auxiliary Society.

Tewson and Severn had a talk in order to solve this problem. In that meeting, Severn promised to create a system with different level of contributions and benefits and to endeavor to provide for a lower scale of contributions with correspondingly lower benefits.⁴² In December 1931, another meeting of the three unions was held under the chairmanship of Hayday and Tewson, and the general principle of amalgamation was agreed.⁴³ At this meeting, however, Severn suggested the same proposed scheme for Contributions, Benefits and Entrance fee for Auxiliary members as the one he had suggested in April.⁴⁴ It seems, as a result, that the ASOLM and the Auxiliary Male Society were not in agreement with each other. It was decided not to alter rules in these areas until one year after amalgamation and to keep to the original contribution and benefits for each society until then. Further to this compromise, in January of 1932, the name of new union, composition, funds, contributions, benefits, trade practice were agreed, and it appeared that amalgamation would be in operation soon.⁴⁵

The question of contribution seems to have once settled down by the compromise. However, the intention of the General Council of the TUC was not exactly the same as that of the ASOLM, regarding contributions and benefits in the new organisation. In a letter of 3 November 1932, Tewson voiced his concern about the inflexible attitude of the Lace Makers the issue of concession for the Auxiliary Society on benefits. Tewson wrote to Severn as follows:

A further matter... is the fact that no specific provision is made for the benefit to the Auxiliary Workers. ...it would appear that they [auxiliary workers] are entitled to the same benefit as the Lace Makers Section. ... and there is no provision stating who are and who are not entitled to sickness, out-of-work and superannuation benefit.⁴⁶

⁴² TUC, Memorandum of interview, 12 May 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴³ TUC, Report of Meeting of Representatives of Unions in the Nottingham Lace Trade, December, 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴⁴ Letter from Severn to Tewson, dated 7 December 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴⁵ TUC, *Report of Meeting of Representatives of Unions in the Nottingham Lace Trade*, 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴⁶ Letter from Tewson to Severn, dated 3 November 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

This was further proof of the difference in intention of the ASOLM and the General Council of the TUC. Although it seems that the TUC promoted this amalgamation in the context of the wider meaning of the trade union movement, the ASOLM sought only their own interest. Therefore Severn's answer to Tewson's query was very simple and he just repeated that they would proceed under the agreement of 12 December 1931 and present contributions, benefits and trade practice would remain the same for the first twelve months of the new union. We will discuss what real intention of the executive of the ASOLM was.

It appeared that the scheme would come into effect early in 1932. However, another query was raised again by the Auxiliary Male Workers in March. Rowland asked Severn about the question of the legality of amalgamation before a ballot of the members had been taken.⁴⁷ This discussion on the legal position of effecting the fusion took nine months, and the proposals were unanimously agreed at a meeting on the 15th of October 1932.⁴⁸ This was not the end of the discussion. The Auxiliary Workers again tried to delay fusion, raising the question of continuity of membership. Although the General Council and the ASOLM worked the merger to come into effect at the beginning of the New Year, the Male Society requested June as the date of amalgamation.⁴⁹ These repeated rejections by the Male Society were not common attitudes among auxiliary workers in the lace industry. Severn wrote to Tewson on the 1st of November 1932 that they would be able to impress on the Male Society the importance of getting the scheme into operation as soon as possible as it was known that a number of auxiliary workers were anxious to become members as soon as the amalgamation was completed, but absolutely refused to join the present organization.⁵⁰ Furthermore to it, some members of the Male Society allowed their membership to lapse because they felt that the Society was not an effective organization.⁵¹ However, as far as the Executive of the Male Society was concerned, there seems to have been strong doubt about amalgamation.

There is no clear evidence showing the reason for their repeated complaints. Tewson wrote in a letter to Hayday that the Male Society was playing for time without any valid reason.⁵² However, the next letter from Severn to Tewson indicated what was allegedly

⁴⁷ Letter from Severn to Tewson, dated 30 March 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴⁸ TUC, Summarised Report of Meeting of the Joint Executives of the ASOLM, the ASMLW and the ASFLW, 15th October, 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁴⁹ Letter from Severn to Tewson, dated 27 October 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, dated 1 November 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁵¹ Letter from Tewson to Hayday, dated 28 October 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁵² *Ibid.*

the 'very unsatisfactory' attitude of the Lace Makers to the Auxiliary workers.⁵³ Severn stated in his letters to Tewson that

...at one of firms where the Auxiliary Workers joined the Auxiliary Society some time ago, and left off paying contributions owing to the apathy of the officials of the Society, a dispute has been in progress ... I have been asked by both the workers and the employer why we cannot take in these workers. At the moment they have no one to look after them, and it is doubtful if the Auxiliary Society have one per cent of the workers in this section in their Society. If we could only get permission to enroll these workers, we could have at least 70 per cent of them in the Society in a few weeks time.⁵⁴

Severn acted as a mediator between the employer and the workers in this dispute. He had stated in a previous letter that some employers were looking forward to the amalgamation in order that they could get auxiliary workers when necessary.⁵⁵

By contrast to the reluctant attitude of the Male Workers, the Female Auxiliary Society was very positive toward the amalgamation. It is clear that as in the case of lace makers and auxiliary male workers, the membership of the Female Auxiliary Society had also decreased over the years. The membership reached its peak of 222 members in 1906, and then gradually decreased between 1910 and 1914. It dropped to 130 in 1914 from 175 in 1910.⁵⁶ After that it seems to have maintained almost the same level of membership during the 1920s.⁵⁷ Although decrease in membership might have been one of the reasons why they accepted amalgamation soon after its proposal, the main reason was that they were almost completely under the control of the ASOLM. Their organization was originally established by the ASOLM, who spent 'both money and time'.⁵⁸ According to B. and S. Webb, the women's union was totally controlled by the male lace makers.⁵⁹ Regarding contributions and benefit, they were 3 pence per week for members over 16 years old and 2 pence for members under 16, and there was to be no great change as a result of amalgamation.⁶⁰ Therefore the Female Society did not express any dissatisfaction about the amalgamation proposed.

⁵³ Rowland's statement at the Conference of April 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁵⁴ Letter from Severn to Tewson, dated 14 March 1933, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, dated 7 March 1933, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁵⁶ Board of Trade, *Report on Trade Unions* (1912), pp. 38-9. Regarding the membership of the Female Society in the 1910s, data is available in Ministry of Reconstruction, Report of the Women's Employment Committee (HMSO, 1919). According to this source, the membership was, 130 in 1914, 125 in 1915, 75 in 1916 and 129 in 1917.

⁵⁷ In 1931, the membership of the Female Society was 118. Letter from J.T. Severn to A. Hayday, dated 23 February 1931, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁵⁸ Wyncoll, *The Nottingham Labour Movement*, 94.

⁵⁹ B. & S. Webb, *Trade Union Collection, Section A*, vol. XXXIX.

⁶⁰ Rules of the Female Lace Workers' Union, Nottingham 1920, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

It should be noted that female auxiliary workers constituted only one section of female workers in the lace industry. There were a huge number of women workers engaged in other processes of lace making, such as finishing and mending, who did not belong to an organization. The amalgamation proposal interested some of these. In October of 1932, Susan Lawrence, an ex-leader of the workers side on the Lace Finishing Trade Board,⁶¹ informed the General Council of the TUC that the Lace Finishers, both factory workers and out workers, were completely unionized, and the proposed amalgamation should widen its scope so as to take in finishers.⁶² The workers engaged in the finishing section were employed partly in the warehouses, and partly as outworkers. In 1932, there were 1,800 female workers in this section; some 1,000 were employed in the warehouses or factories and about 700 were home-workers.⁶³ The Trade Board played a part in regulating their wages. However, the Board applied only to the out-workers, and the wages of those working inside on similar jobs were totally unregulated. Therefore, it was natural for some of them to want to have a proper system for assuring systematic bargaining. Before the slump in the 1920s, there had been an organization for the outworkers known as 'the Home Workers League' with 300 members paying penny each per week. This organization was carried on with the knowledge of the Lace Makers Union and was to be converted into a proper trade union as soon as the outworkers were 'sufficiently educated'.⁶⁴ However, it had fallen apart as a result of the slump and both outworkers and inworkers were without organization in 1932. S Lawrence also approached Severn and promised to help M. Ball, the secretary of the Female Society, to organize a campaign for promoting membership. Severn promised to discuss this issue with the Executive Committee of the ASOLM. However, there is no evidence that the Lace Makers discussed this matter seriously. Judging by the rather limited increase in the membership of the females in the years following the amalgamation, as will be discussed in the next section, it seems likely that the participation of the finishing workers did not take place and their joining the new union was out of the interest of the ASOLM.

We return to the main process of the amalgamation. By December of 1932, *'Proposed scheme of fusion: for the information of members'* had been prepared by Severn and

⁶¹ According to her letter, she was forced to resign the status in 1929. However, Popplewell, an officer of Trade Board, requested that she return to back to her previous position. Letter from S. Lawrence to Tewson, dated 1 October 1932. Letter from Popplewell to Lawrence, dated 5 September 1932, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁶² Letter from S. Lawrence to Tewson, op.cit., MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁶³ Letter from F. Popplewell to S. Lawrence, op.cit., MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁶⁴ Letter from S. Lawrence to Tewson, op.cit., MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

Tewson. Amalgamation was becoming reality. This leaflet said that 'The negotiation is to create a single union for lace makers and auxiliary workers in order that a united appeal may be made for all eligible members to join and thus secure 100 % trade union organization. In this way it is hoped that, by united action, the interests of the industry and the workers engaged will be furthered to an extent which has hitherto been impossible owing to lack of essential unity'.⁶⁵ However, at the same time, this proposal claims that "it should be understood that existing contributions, trade customs and privileges of the respective organization have been safeguarded and will be maintained by the fusion".⁶⁶ Later pages of the leaflet detailed such items. For example, there remained a difference in contributions and benefits between craftsmen and auxiliary workers by introducing scales. It seems that the auxiliary workers in fact did not gain anything from this amalgamation. In May, Severn urged non-unionized auxiliary workers to join the new organization and sent bills to shop stewards for display on the shopfloor. He wrote again to Tewson that he had received a number of names from various workshops, of workers who were ready to join the new Society as soon as they could be enrolled in them as members.⁶⁷

Results of the Merger

The Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace Makers and Auxiliary Workers (hereafter ASOLMAW) eventually came into existence in 1933. This amalgamation seems to have been rated as a failure in previous studies.⁶⁸ As long as it is seen in the official records of the TUC, as stated, the membership of the ASOLMAW did not change throughout the 1930s.⁶⁹ However, the contribution books set up for the new auxiliary section after 1933 shows that the merger was, to some extent, influential to the auxiliary workers.⁷⁰ Although the total contributions of the auxiliary members were £57 at the end of 1933,

⁶⁵ The ASOLM, *Proposed scheme of fusion: for the information of members* (Nottingham, 1933).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Letter from Severn to Tewson, dated 10 May 1933, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

⁶⁸ Cuthbert, *The Lace Makers Society*, 243-44.

⁶⁹ The TUC, Reports of Proceedings of the Trade Union Congress, 1919-1939.

⁷⁰ In the contribution book, we can see how individual members actually paid their contributions. The members' name and the sum paid can be seen for each week from April of 1933 to December of 1939

<Table 3> The number of the Auxiliary workers in the ASOLMAW, 1933-39

<u>Years</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
1933	139	56	195
1934	159	122	281
1935	180	120	300
1936	185	126	311
1937	185	123	308
1938	162	124	286
1939	115	97	212

Source: The Amalgamated Society of Operative Lace Makers and Auxiliary Workers, Contributions Books, Auxiliary Workers, 1933-1939. Lm P/65, Hallward Library, University of Nottingham.

it started to rise after the merger and reached to £ 255 in 1936.⁷¹ The membership of the auxiliary workers also increased from 1933. Table 3 shows the changes in the total numbers of the Auxiliary workers in 1931 and between 1933 and 1939. In 1933, the membership was 195 and it rose up to 311 in 1936. Although the figures are not large and the term of increase was short, the amalgamation somehow appealed to the auxiliary workers in the lace industry for a while.

The number of both the male workers and female workers increased from 1933. After peaking in 1937 in the male case and 1936 in the female case, the numbers started to decline noticeably from 1938 in the male case and in 1939 in the female case. Breaking down by the sections in the auxiliary workers shows the details of the reaction among the auxiliary workers. The member of the new organization was divided into five sections by the scale of contribution. They firstly were divided into two parts, the lace makers (Scale A) and the auxiliary workers, and the latter was sectioned further into four parts: male auxiliary workers over 18 year old (Scale B), threaders and brass bobbin winders (Scale C), male auxiliary workers up to 18 year old (Scale D) and female auxiliary workers (Scale E). The contributions were respectively 6 pence, 6pence, 3pence, and 3pence. The left columns of Table 3 show the age distribution of the male auxiliary workers. It shows firstly that the numbers of high-scale auxiliary workers was stable, but by contrast, the numbers of the workers under 18 year old were more variable. Despite no great change between 1933 and 1934, they gradually rose and had doubled by 1936. Although these numbers were not great influential enough to affect the total number due to their small percentage, we can see that young workers responded to the alterations in the union's organization. The middle columns of Table 3 shows the breakdown of the female auxiliary workers by the scale distribution as we

⁷¹ Contribution books, Lm P 65, HL.

cannot break down female workers by age group owing to the method of classification of the scales in the contribution book. In contrast to the male workers' case, the ratio of low scale members to the total members in female auxiliary work was consistently high and was never less than eighty per cent of the total members. The ratio of low scale members to high scale members reflects the ratio of low scale workers to high scale workers in the industry as a whole. The number of low scale female workers jumped in 1934 and stayed almost at the same level, whereas that of the high scale workers did not change much. To sum up briefly, the high scale auxiliaries did not show a measurable response to the amalgamation, whereas low scale auxiliaries, male auxiliaries under 18 years old and low scale female auxiliaries responded to it positively.

As mentioned, after the amalgamation, the ASOLMAW started campaign for promoting membership. This effort was continued throughout the 1930s. In 1936, the executive committee again appealed to all Lace Makers to render all possible assistance in making the auxiliary section a strong one.⁷² This appeal was not successful, partly because of apathy for trade unionism among the young workers,⁷³ and partly because of the transfer of workers to other trades.⁷⁴ However, the main reason for the decrease in membership in the later 1930's was the attitude of the organization, which did not fully recognize the status of the auxiliary workers and their value of his membership. This made the recruiting campaign of the mid-thirties far less effective than it could have been, although some auxiliary members reported that their position had greatly improved since joining. In 1938, the annual report stated, "The Auxiliary Section members...have remained loyal; true, there have been some cases where difficulties have arisen, but those difficulties could easily be overcome if the lace makers ... would assist the Executive Council".⁷⁵ This situation seems to have been resolved after the outbreak of World War II. The annual report of 1940 stated that "the Auxiliary section of the industry is now entirely under the control of the Executive Council. The two small Societies having now transferred their members to the present body, it is hoped to make this section much stronger than in the past".⁷⁶

⁷² *Annual Report, op.cit.*, December 1936, p. 4.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, December, 1933, p. 3.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, December, 1937, p. 4.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, December, 1938, p. 4.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, December, 1940, p. 4.

Conclusion

It is certain that vertical segregation of the lace industry both in the process of making lace and in employment relations made the industry potentially inefficient, especially in the Slump when the number of semi-skilled workers and unskilled workers, especially young workers, were decreasing. Partly because the hosiery industry could absorb workers during contraction of the lace industry, assuring sufficient numbers of lower skilled workers was a serious problem. Drastic changes in the situation of the industry during the interwar period made the established industrial specialization less effective and then led to a need to overcome this problem. Amalgamation between the ASOLM and the Auxiliary Societies was a type of unification and an answer for the problem. This amalgamation was undertaken for further unification between processes in lace making from the point of view of trade union organization. It is clear that the ASOLM saw the amalgamation as a means of recovering control over the lower unions. The numbers of workers in the lace industry and membership of the unions in the industry had decreased drastically in the inter war period. The supply of auxiliary workers had already been recognized as one of the most difficult problems in 1919.⁷⁷ It was pointed out in the early 1920s by the Executive Committee of the ASOLM that large percentages of young workers, more particularly auxiliary workers, obtained employment in other trades.⁷⁸ It was, therefore, necessary for the craftsmen to assure the number of auxiliary workers and to have them under the craftsmen's control. The amalgamation was undertaken in order to meet this necessity on the shop floor of the lace industry. This intention of the ASOLM was, despite some differences, correspondent with that of the General Council of the TUC to promote a powerful trade union movement through an expansion of membership. In addition, it should be noted that this merger was welcomed by the employers and their associations as stated by Severn, Secretary of the AOLM.⁷⁹ There is not a lot of tangible evidence of employers and union relations, but the following is a good example. Some auxiliary members did not pay their contributions even after the start of World War II. In 1941 an arrangement was proposed between the union representatives and the employers side 'NOT TO PAY THOSE WHO REFUSE TO JOIN OR ARE UNWILLING TO BE FINANCIAL

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, December, 1919, p. 3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, December, 1923, p. 4.

⁷⁹ Letter from Severn to Tewson, dated 14 March 1933, MSS 292/82.30/2, MRC.

MEMBERS' in order to force them pay their contributions.⁸⁰ This is a sign of co-operation between the union representatives and employers regarding securing of auxiliary workers. The proposed amalgamation by the ASOLM was, to some extent, at least at the beginning of the negotiation, welcomed by the Auxiliary Male Society. The slump of the early 1920' had weakened the position in the industry. However, it was becoming clear that full fusion as proposed by the ASOLM would mean a loss of control. It seems that this was a major reason why the Auxiliary Male Society delayed merging and dissolving themselves. On the other hand, the situation of the female workers was very different from that of the male workers. With the exception of only a few workers, there was no effective organization for female workers despite the still extremely large number of female workers in the lace industry. Although the female members increased as had been expected, the increase was not very great considering the huge numbers of female workers in the industry.

Overall the amalgamation was not as successful as T. Tewson, the secretary of the ASOLM, had hoped during the stage of negotiation. Young male workers under eighteen years old were responsive to this amalgamation. However, the increase in membership was not great enough to be influential on the recovery of the union's influence, nor to the industry as a whole. In the middle of the 1930s the industry recovered for a short while. The output of the Plain Net section rose up to £1.416 in 1935 from £439 in 1930, and in the Lever Section from £375 to £904 in the same period.⁸¹ Even the number of young workers under 18 year old reversed to 484 in 1935 from 369 in 1930 (Table 2). However, it seems that the amalgamation could account for only small portion, 10.8 per cent, of the increase in the whole industry.⁸²

In conclusion, we can detect the intention of the skilled workers' union in the lace industry to fortify the existing craft structure, and strengthen their relationship with semi-skilled workers and their unions. The merging activities in the lace unions were accelerated not by good economic situations but in order to shelter from the pressure of the industrial slump. However, the amalgamation did not enable the union to strengthen its influence on the lace industry as a whole. In addition, the Lace Maker's Society itself seems to have become less attractive even among the members. The

⁸⁰ *Annual Report*, December, 1941, p. 4.

⁸¹ *Census of Production*, 1930 and 1935.

⁸² In 1935 there were 484 young male workers under 18 years old in the lace industry according to Table 2. We can find at least 52 male auxiliary members in the Society from Table 3. Therefore, we can obtain 0.107 by dividing 54 by 484. The output and employment decreased again. The employment of the young male workers fell to 278 in the Census of Production in 1951, which was lower than the level of 1930.

Executive wrote in the Annual Report of December 1938 that they 'desired to draw the attention of the members to the insufficient number of nomination for the various committees and urge the responsible members to do all that is possible to secure nominees in order that the Committee may be at full strength'.⁸³ This is evidence that their influence on the working community became weaker, and the absorption of the lower grade unions was, probably, their last attempt to secure their survival before Second World War.

⁸³ *Annual Report, op.cit.*, December, 1938, p. 4.

The Bank of England Financial Advisory Missions to Latin
America during the Great Depression:
An Analysis on "Money Doctoring" from the Perspective of the Periphery*

Jun Sato**

Abstract

This paper examines the activities of the Bank of England Missions to Latin America during the 1930s, focusing on the Niemeyer Missions to Argentina in 1932 and the Powell Mission to El Salvador in 1934. Previous studies have shown little interest in examining the reactions of the countries which received the missions or the intentions of the local governments and other interests, such as major politicians or big commercial bankers, etc. Therefore in this article, I would like to analyze these local factors and actors in detail and insist that the success of "money doctoring" depends on the political and economic situation in the country which receives the mission, i.e. whether there are local promoters or collaborators. This would not only furnish a fresh interpretation of the Bank of England Advisory Missions in the interwar years, but also provide a new image regarding "money doctoring" in general.

Keywords: Bank of England, "money doctoring", central bank, Latin America

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Introduction

After the First World War, Lord Montagu Norman (Governor of the Bank of England, 1920-1944) attempted to reconstruct international monetary and economic order through the establishment of a gold exchange standard¹. In order to achieve this goal, Lord Montagu sought to establish "orthodox" central banks in as many of the peripheral countries as possible². The "orthodox" central banks were supposed to be independent from national governments and function as the guardians of sound money both internally and externally, and were also expected to economize on their use of gold reserves. In addition, these central banks were expected to be agents that would promote central bank cooperation under the leadership of the Bank of England and ultimately realize world peace.

In order to propagate the "orthodox" central banking doctrine, during the inter-war years British financial advisory missions were dispatched all over the world from the Bank of England³. As Table 1 shows, the activities of the Bank's missions seem to be more comprehensive in scale and deeper in their impact than those of the well-known Kemmerer missions in the 1920s⁴. The Bank's missions were not only dispatched to countries in the British Empire, but also to so-called "informal empire" countries such as Argentina, China and Egypt. Hence, the Bank of England missions are widely considered to be the most important case of "money doctoring" in history.

This article examines the activities of the Bank of England Missions to Latin America during the 1930s, focusing on the Niemeyer Missions to Argentina in 1932 and the Powell Mission to El Salvador in 1934, based on research of primary documents held by the Bank of England Archives. These missions are considered to be worthy of attention for the two following reasons: first, they shed light on the British policy regarding the countries which constituted the "informal empire" on which few studies have been

¹ There are a few biographies of Lord Montagu Norman. See, in particular, Boyle, A. Montagu Norman, London, 1967; Clay, H. Lord Norman, London, 1957.

² For the Lord Montagu Norman's epitome of the "orthodox" central banking, see Cottrell, P.L. *Rebuilding the Financial System in Central and Eastern Europe, 1918-1994*, Aldershot, 1997, 63.

³ The activities of the Bank of England Financial Advisory Missions in the interwar years are roughly reviewed by the following books: Sayers, R.S. *The Bank of England, 1891-1944*, London; New York; Melbourne, 1976; Singleton, J. *Central Banking in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge; New York, 2011.

⁴ For details of the Kemmerer Missions, see Drake ed., P.W. *Money Doctors, Foreign Debts, and Economic Reforms in Latin America from the 1890s to the Present*, Wilmington, 1994.

published⁵. Second, they represent an interesting case study of "money doctoring" or "money doctors", because almost all of the Latin American countries in the 1930s were in default and were plagued by a series of military coups d'état⁶, inevitably making the missions' tasks both daunting and challenging.

In this study we have focused on the following point, which has not previously been addressed. It is inevitable that "money doctoring" from abroad must have involved infringement of sovereignty and provoked some kind of conflict of interest or nationalism on the side of the countries that invited the "money doctors". However, previous studies have shown little interest in examining the reactions of the countries which received the missions or the intentions of the local governments and other interests, such as major politicians or big commercial bankers, etc.⁷

<Table 1> British Financial Advisory Missions in the Interwar Years

Countries	Year	Advisors and Institutions	Results
South Africa	1920	Sir Henry Strakosch	the South African Reserve Bank was established
Austria	1923	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	the Australian National Bank was established
Poland	1923	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	reorganized the National Bnak of Poland into a central bank
Free State of Danzig	1923	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	the Bank of Danzig was established
Hungary	1924	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	reorganized the National Bank of Hungary into a central bank
Czechoslovakia	1926	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	the National Bank of Czechoslovakia was established
Estonia	1927	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	reorganized the Bank of Estonia into a central bank
Bulgaria	1928	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	reorganized the National Bank of Bulgaria into a central bank
Greece	1928	Financial Committee of the League of Nations	the Central Bank of Greece was established
Australia	1930	Sir Otto Niemeyer	reorganized the Commonwealth Bank into a central bank
New Zealand	1930	Sir Otto Niemeyer	the Central Reserve Bank of New Zealand was established
Brazil	1931	Sir Otto Niemeyer	reorganize the Bank of Brazil into a central bank(failed)
Canada	1933	Lord Macmillan, Sir Charles Addis	the Bank of Canada was established
India	1933	Sir Earnest Harvey, W.H.Clegg	the Central Reserve Bank of India was established
El Salvador	1934	F.F.J.Powell	the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador was established
Argentina	1935	Sir Otto Niemeyer	the Central Bank of Argentina was established
China	1935	Sir Frederick Leith-Ross	financial and currency reforms were carried out
Egypt	1936	Sir Otto Niemeyer	reorganized the National Bnak of Egypt into a central bank

Based mainly on the description by Sayers, R.S. *The Bank of England, 1891-1944*, London; New York; Melbourne, 1976.

⁵ After the World War I, the Bank of England Financial Advisory Missions were sent mainly to the central and eastern Europe, "formal" empire countries and "informal" empire countries. We already have a few good studies on the former two areas. For details of these, see, in particular, Orde, A. *British Policy and European Reconstruction after the First World War*, Cambridge, 1990; Cottrell, P.L. *Rebuilding the Financial System in Central and Eastern Europe, 1918-1994*, Aldershot, 1997; Péteri, G. "Central Bank Diplomacy: Montagu Norman and Central Europe's Monetary Reconstruction after World War I", *Contemporary European History*, 3, 1992.

⁶ Marichal, C. A. *Century of Debt Crisis in Latin America: From Independence to the Great Depression, 1820-1930*, Princeton, 1989, Chap.8.

⁷ On this subject, see Frandreau, M. ed. *Money Doctors: The Experience of International Financial Advising, 1850-2000*, London and New York, 2003.

Note: The Financial Committee of the League of Nations was dominated by a few British officials such as Strakosch (Sir Henry Strakosch) and Niemeyer (Sir Otto Niemeyer). Therefore activities of the Financial Committee are included in this Table.

1. The Bank of England Missions to Latin America during the Great Depression

1.1. Latin American Economy in the Interwar Years

In this section, we briefly overview the economy of Latin America in the interwar years. It is well-known that the Latin American region was a typical area of the British informal empire from the 19th to the early 20th century. However, as Tables 2 and 3 show, the area has been encroached on by American financial and economic influence since the First World War.

According to these tables, the United States increased its trade and investments, particularly in the countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Chile which were grouped as "Mineral-producing countries" and "Tropical agricultural countries" by the League of Nations⁸. There was a close connection between American investments and trade in Latin America since three-quarters of the capital represented direct investments, mainly by enterprises engaged in plantation and mining for export⁹.

<Table 2> Latin American Imports and Exports: Market Shares, 1913 and 1929 (%)

	Imports				Exports			
	1913		1929		1913		1929	
	US	UK	US	UK	US	UK	US	UK
Colombia	25	21	46	15	45	15	75	5
Peru	28	28	42	14	34	36	35	19
Chile	17	35	32	18	21	39	25	13
Brazil	16	24	27	21	32	13	45	8
Argentina	15	31	26	19	5	25	8	32

Source: Knight, A. "Latin America" in J.M. Brown and Wm.R. Louis eds., *The Oxford*

History of the British Empire Vol.4: The Twentieth Century, Chapter 27, Oxford and New York, 1999, 628.

⁸ League of Nations. *The Network of World Trade*, Geneva, 1942, 12.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 56.

<Table 3> Outstanding Long-term Investment of UK and US in Latin America in 1939 (millions of dollars)

	UK	US
Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay	2,250	800
Brazil	1,000	500
Chile	300	600
Rest of South America	300	600
Mexico and Central America	300	670
Cuba	150	750
Other West Indies	200	80
Total	4,500	4,000

Source: League of Nations. *The Network of World Trade*, Geneva, 1942, 56.

Against the backdrop of this situation, the well-known Kemmerer Missions were dispatched to many Latin American countries. In the 1920s, US investors were eager to invest there, but, at the same time, they demanded assurance of the security that would come with financial stability. Therefore on the part of the Latin American governments, the establishment of central banks and the financial reforms recommended by the Kemmerer Missions were essential for attracting US capital¹⁰. Central banks were actually established in many Latin American countries under the guidance of the Kemmerer Missions in the 1920s.

However, the 1929 Crisis completely devastated the financial order established by Kemmerer. Without the possibility of getting American loans, almost all of the Latin American countries fell into default, and a few Latin American countries such as Argentina and Brazil started to implement unorthodox policies such as open market operation in order to avoid undergoing external shocks¹¹. From the standpoint of the orthodox doctrine, these measures seemed inflationary and it was considered that they would lead to financial chaos. Furthermore, given the economic difficulties caused by the 1929 Crisis, the Bank of England saw the situation as a chance to reclaim its financial influence in Latin America¹². This was the context in which the Bank of England Financial Advisory Missions were dispatched.

¹⁰ Dalgaard, B.R. "Monetary Reform: Prelude to Colombia's Economic Development", *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol.40, No.1,(Mar.), 1980, 100.

¹¹ Bulmer-Thomas, V. *The Economic History of Latin America since Independence*, Cambridge and New York, 1994, 194.

¹² Cain, P.J. "Gentlemanly Imperialism at Work: the Bank of England, Canada and the Sterling Area,1932-1936", *Economic History Review*,XLIX,2, 1996, 337.

<Table 4> Latin American Debts and Defaults

Country	Date of Initial Default	Funded External Debt in 1933(U.S.\$)
Argentina	No default	864,000,000
Bolivia	1/1931	63,000,000
Brazil	10/1931	1,239,000,000
Chile	7/1931	343000000
Colombia	2/1932	164,000,000
Costa Rica	11/1932	21,000,000
Cuba	1933-34	153,000,000
Dominican Republic	10/1931	16,400,000
Ecuador	7/1931	23,000,000
El Salvador	1/1933	4,000,000
Guatemala	2/1933	14,000,000
Haiti	No default	13,000,000
Honduras	No default	4,000,000
Mexico	1914	684,000,000
Nicaragua	No default	21,000,000
Panama	1/1932	16,000,000
Paraguay	6/1932	3,000,000
Peru	5/1931	114,000,000
Uruguay	1/1932	98,000,000
Venezuela	No default	0

Source: Marichal, C. A. *Century of Debt Crisis in Latin America: From Independence to the Great Depression, 1820-1930*, Princeton, 1989, 212-213.

1.2. The Bank of England's Policy on Latin America

As Sayers' seminal study indicated, there was every possibility that the Bank of England Financial Missions could succeed in creating central banks based on the orthodox principle in Latin America¹³. There were three main reasons for this. Firstly, the Latin American region still had strong economic relations with Britain, both in terms of trade and investments, even after the Great Depression. Secondly, most of the Latin American governments still considered the City as one of the international financial centers and thought it appropriate to seek advice on central banking from the Bank of England. Thirdly, the United States' government was so committed to the internal economic recovery program that it lost the will to dispatch missions to Latin America after the Great Depression.

Hence, a chance appeared for the Bank to propagate its central banking doctrine to

¹³ Sayers, *The Bank of England, 1891-1944*, 521-522

Latin America in the 1930s. According to a memorandum by the Bank's Overseas & Foreign Department, the Bank itself recognized this opportunity and seemed to have a very optimistic view of sending the missions to Latin America.

“Economic ideas are very catching in Latin America, and with returning prosperity there seems every possibility that other republics will follow the example of the Argentine and Salvador. In addition to these two republics the five Kemmerer countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile) already have Central Banks, ...although their statutes do not fulfill all the requirements of a true Central Bank.”¹⁴

However, in reality, contrary to this optimistic view, the Bank sent missions only to Brazil in 1931, Argentina in 1932 and El Salvador in 1934, and succeeded in creating central banks only in Argentina and El Salvador. In Brazil, Niemeyer's advice was rejected as an "unpalatable dish" by Vargas's government¹⁵. Furthermore, although central banks were established in Argentina and El Salvador, very little is known about the factors which led to their creation.

2. Niemeyer Mission to Argentina

2.1. The Creation of the Central Bank of the Argentine Republic

The former banking system was completely altered by five closely connected laws: (1) The Central Bank of the Argentine Republic (hereafter CBAR) (Law 12, 155); (2) The Banking Law (Law 12, 156); (3) The Institution for the Liquidation of Bank Investments (Law 12, 157); (4) Amendments to the Laws of the Official Banks (Law 12, 158/12, 159); (5) The Law of Organization (Law 12, 160)¹⁶. Through these laws, a central banking system was firmly established in Argentina. As Figures 2-1 and 2-2 show, the Conversion Office and Exchange Committee, and certain functions of the National Bank were merged into the newly-created central bank.

¹⁴ Overseas and Foreign Department, "Bank of England Missions to Latin America", *OV188/2*, Bank of England Archives, 1935.

¹⁵ For details of the Niemeyer's recommendations, see *Report Submitted to the Brazilian Government by Sir Otto Niemeyer, K.C.B., G.B.E.*, Rio de Janeiro, 4th July, 1931.

¹⁶ Editorial la Ley Buenos Aires, *Anales de Legislación Argentina, Año 1920-1940*, Buenos Aires, 1953, 596-610.

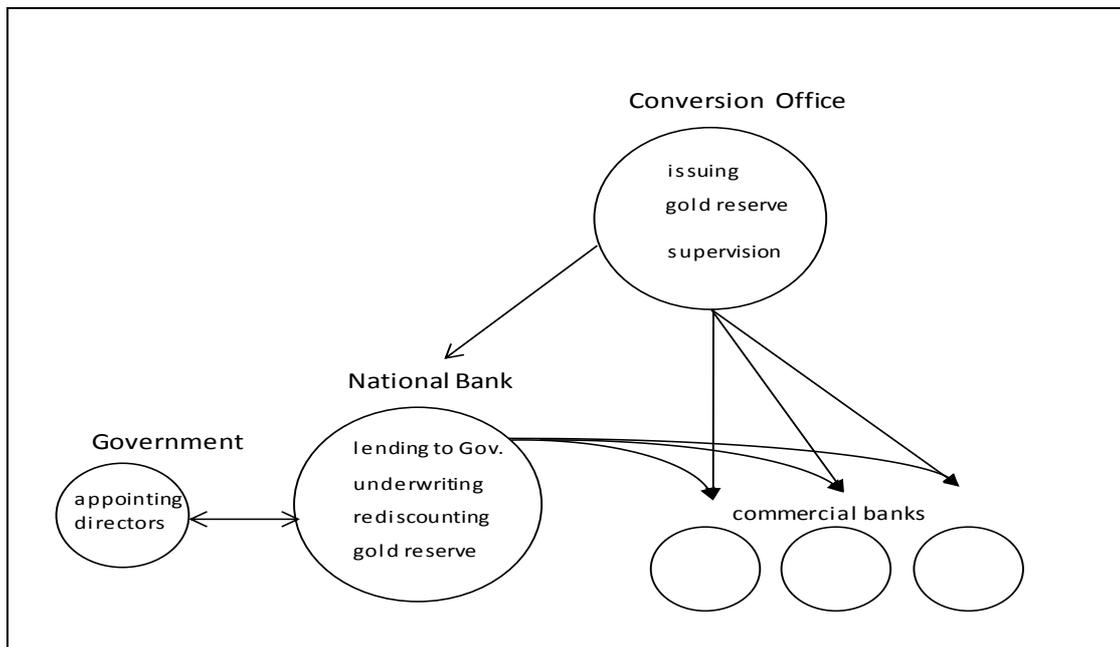
According to the analysis of the League of Nations, the banking reform was based on Niemeyer's recommendations¹⁷. However, in reality, these bills concerning the CBAR were drawn up by the then Finance Minister F. Pinedo and sent to Congress on 17th January. Although, up till now, it has been argued that the Laws concerning the CBAR were framed based on Niemeyer's draft, this view must be modified in light of the three following facts.

Firstly, Law 12, 155 stipulates that the CBAR is a joint-stock company with a capital of 30 million pesos, a 10 million peso block of which is to be subscribed by the government. However, in order to assure the independence of the central bank, Niemeyer recommended that the government should not subscribe to shares of the CBAR. Secondly, under the stipulations of Law 12,155, open-market operations were implemented for the first time in Argentina, although Niemeyer did not recommend these measures because of Argentina's immature financial market. Thirdly, the Liquidation of Bank Investments was created under the instructions of Pinedo.

These findings seem to refute the above-mentioned argument regarding Sir Otto's role in forming the laws relating to the financial reform of Argentina. That is, they underline the importance of the role played by Pinedo. In fact, we have already confirmed that, in addition to even the basic rule of independence of the central bank not being assured by the laws, drastic measures were introduced by Pinedo. This is because leadership in creating the central bank in Argentina was taken by Pinedo, not Sir Otto. It is crucial to remember this fact if we are to discover the true factors leading to the creation of the CBAR.

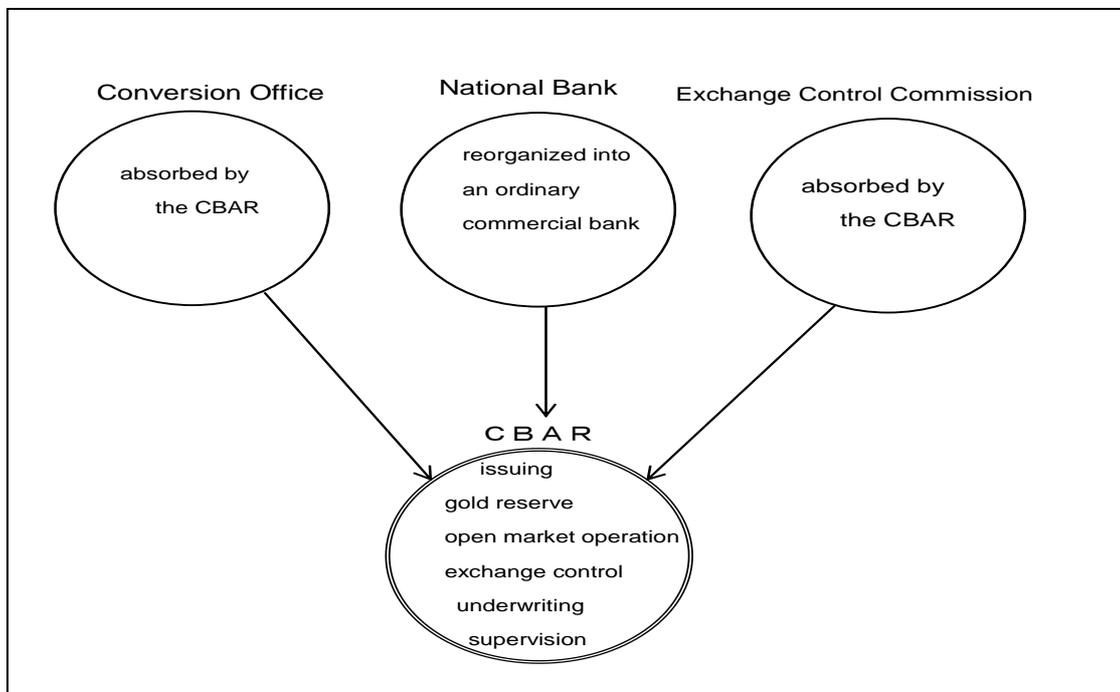
¹⁷ For details of the Niemeyer's recommendations, see Report Presented to the Argentine Government by Sir Otto Niemeyer, K.C.B.,G.B.E., Buenos Aires, 24th March, 1933.

<Figure 2-1>



Based mainly on the description by the League of Nations, *Economic Statistical Series 1910-1945*, 45, Far Eastern Book-Sellers(Kyokuto Shoten), Tokyo, 1987, p.2.

<Figure 2-2>



Based mainly on the description by the League of Nations, *Economic Statistical Series 1910-1945*, 45, Far Eastern Book-Sellers(Kyokuto Shoten), Tokyo, 1987, p.2.

2.2. Factors Leading to the Creation of the Central Bank of the Argentine Republic

In the previous section, we confirmed that the laws concerning the creation of the CBAR were modified by Pinedo. Why then did Pinedo make these modifications? Finding the answers to this question will allow us to discover the factors leading to the creation of the CBAR.

It is important to note that, in short, Sir Otto intended to create a central bank which only had the power to supply money based on the gold exchange standard. In other words, Sir Otto expected the CBAR to be an institution which would act simply as an "orthodox" central bank. However, Pinedo and R. Prebisch, the General Manager of the CBAR, went so far as to implement the following novel or heterodox measures¹⁸.

Firstly, they further developed the exchange control system which had been in operation since October 1931. The CBAR's foreign exchange department not only purchased and sold gold and performed foreign exchange, but also—taking advantage of a dual exchanged market—raised funds for creating various kinds of marketing boards which alleviated the distress of the primary exporting sectors¹⁹.

Secondly, as mentioned before, they created a transitional institution to bail-out the four big commercial banks which had accumulated huge quantities of bad assets relating to government bonds and mortgages. In exchange for getting the money to liquidate the bad assets, they were forced into one bank called the Banco Espanol del Rio de la Plata Limitado. In addition, the Banco Escandinavo Argentino and Banco Italo Argentino were liquidated due to their bad management²⁰.

Finally, this being the most important point, after sanitizing the corrupt banking system, Pinedo introduced counter-cyclical measures. This was totally out of line with the orthodox central banking doctrine of the Bank of England. Prebisch introduced open market operations with the securities which had been gradually sold to the market and succeeded in managing the fluctuations of the international business cycle. This policy was praised by the League of Nations as 'the most striking example of cyclical neutralization'²¹.

¹⁸ Dosman, E.J. *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch, 1901-1986*, Montreal; London; Ithaca, 2008, 98

¹⁹ Salera, V. *Exchange Control and the Argentine Market*, New York, 1941, Chap.4.

²⁰ Della Paolera G. and Taylor A.M. *Straining at the Anchor: the Argentine Currency Board and the Search for Macroeconomic Stability, 1880-1935*, Chicago and London, 2001, 253-254.

²¹ League of Nations. *International Currency Experience: Lessons of the Inter-War Period*, Geneva, 1944. League of Nations 1944, 85.

In conclusion, we could argue that a key factor playing a major role in the creation of the CBAR was the intentions of the economic policy-makers such as Prebisch and Pinedo, not those of Sir Otto. What role then did Sir Otto play in setting up the CBAR? The answer can be found in Pinedo's following recollection.

“ . . . There was rather excessive partiality in favor of the British proposal that of Sir Otto Niemeyer from which we drew not only many ideas but also phraseology, when we thought there was no serious objection to doing so, even though we may have felt that better texts could have been adopted. We did this because we did not want to create serious obstacles to the approval of the bills and we knew that, by a curious characteristics of the collective mentality, at that moment the adoption of the government's proposals would be facilitated if we could make them appear to coincide to a great extent with what the foreign expert had advised.”²²

It is true that this shows that Sir Otto's format for creating a central bank was respected. But we should take more notice of the fact that Pinedo used Sir Otto's—i.e. the Bank's—authority to pass the law which stipulated creation of the CBAR and helped Prebisch and Pinedo achieve their own goals. Cain's recent work on the creation of the Bank of Canada also concluded that Canadian politicians succeeded in using the Bank's prestige and influence to serve their own domestic ends²³.

3. Powell Mission to El Salvador

3.1. The Creation of the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador

In this section, we deal with another case of a successful Bank of England Financial Advisory Mission to Latin America. In this case, the Bank sent F.F.J. Powell to give advice on central banking matters to the government of El Salvador²⁴. As a result, the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador Law was enacted on 19 June, 1934²⁵. From the

²² Ciria, A. *Parties and Power in Modern Argentina*, Albany, 1974, 24-25.

²³ Cain, P.J. *op.cit.*, 1996, 354.

²⁴ For details of the Powell's recommendations, see Report Presented to the Government of El Salvador by F.F.J. Powell, 8th March, 1934, OV20/1, Bank of England Archives.

²⁵ For details of the law, see Diario Oficial, Imprenta Nacional Ministerio de Gobernación, El Salvador(<http://www.imprentanacional.gob.sv/index.php/institucion>).

Bank's or Powell's standpoint, this could be judged as a very successful Mission. According to Sayers' work, Lord Norman praised Powell's success, and the Mission was remembered long afterwards²⁶. The Powell Mission to El Salvador was seen as successful based on the following three points.

Firstly, central bank independence was assured by Law; the Government was strictly prohibited from being a shareholder in the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador (hereafter 'CRBES'). In addition, L.A. Duran, who had been recommended by Powell as a sound central banker, became the first President of the CRBES.

Secondly, as Figures 3-1 and 3-2 show, drastic financial reform was successfully carried out. The banking system of El Salvador had actually been dominated by the "big three" commercial banks since the end of the 19th century, and each enjoyed issuing rights without any strict regulations²⁷. However, one of these commercial banks, the Banco Agricola Comercial, was transformed into the CRBES, and the other two were forced to abandon issuing rights and surrender their gold reserves to the CRBES.

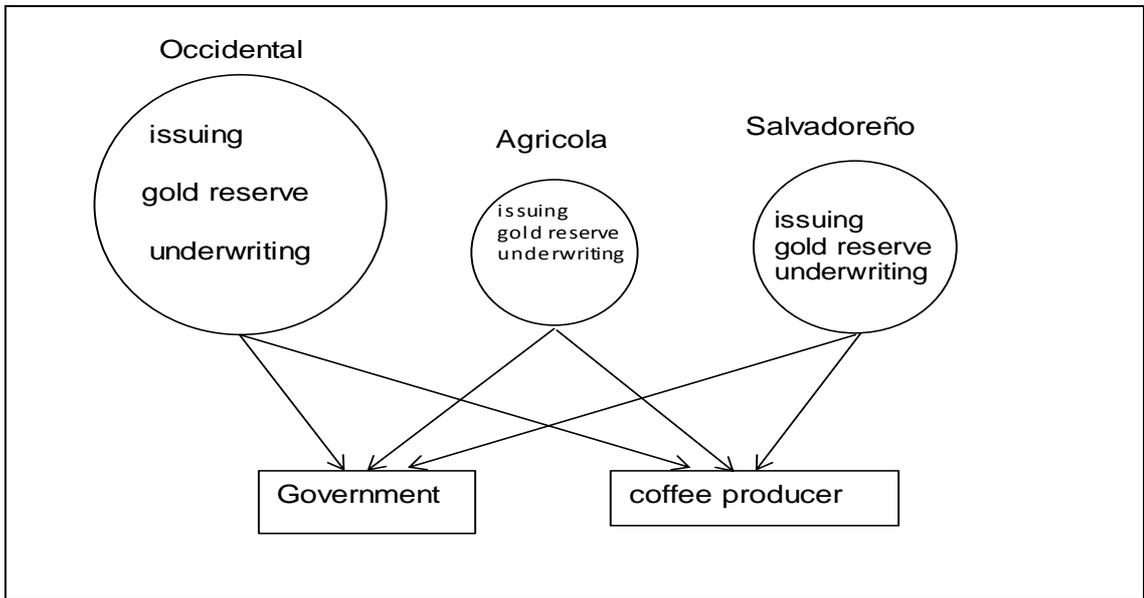
Thirdly, unlike the case of Argentina, there was no stipulation concerning open market operations. The CRBES was given only the power to maintain the external and internal values of the colón, and to control the internal volume of money in accordance with the volume of gold and foreign exchange. According to Wallich and Adler, El Salvador has the almost unique distinction among Latin American countries having maintained a stable exchange rate and a free exchange market since 1934²⁸. The colón was pegged a rate of 2.5 to the United States dollar by the CRBES. The CRBES was exactly the "orthodox" central bank that Norman and the Bank wanted to create.

²⁶ Sayers, R.S. *The Bank of England, 1891-1944*, London; New York; Melbourne, 1976, 524.

²⁷ Anderson, T.P. *Matanza: The 1932 "slaughter" that traumatized a nation, shaping US-Salvadoran policy to this day*, Second Edition, Connecticut, 1992, 193.

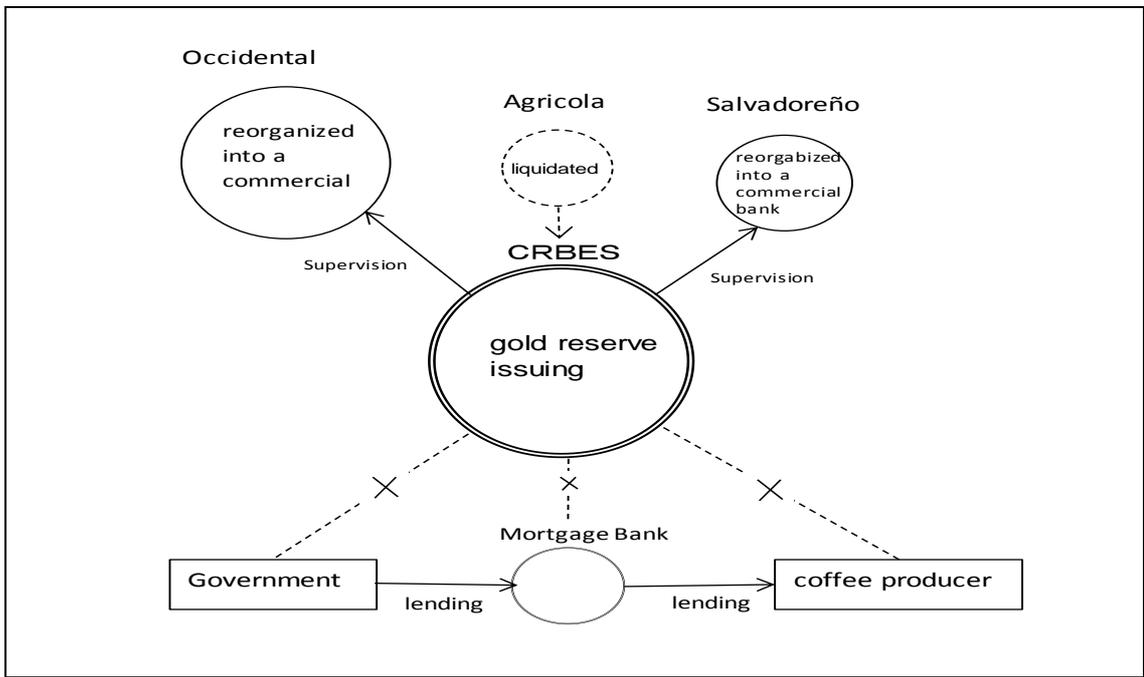
²⁸ Wallich, H.C. and Adler J.H. *Public Finance in a Developing Country: El Salvador-A Case Study*, Cambridge and Massachusetts, 1951, 35.

<Figure 3-1>



Based mainly on the description in *OV20/1*, Bank of England Archives.

<Figure 3-2>



Based mainly on the description in *OV20/1*, Bank of England Archives.

3.2. Factors Leading to the Creation of the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador

What then brought about these successful results? In short, the 'orthodox' central bank in El Salvador was not created because the El Salvadoran policy-makers wholeheartedly accepted the Bank of England's orthodox doctrine. It was a by-product of the political struggles between M.H. Martínez and R. Duke who played critical roles in the creation of the CRBES.

Martínez was the President when Powell visited El Salvador²⁹. He was from the lower middle class and of Indian ancestry. He engaged in military service and distinguished himself as an able military technician. His ultimate objective as President seemed to be the establishment of the military as the nation's governing elite, in place of the coffee oligarchy known as the 'fourteen families' that had exercised control since the end of the 19th century³⁰. On one hand, he established the state-guaranteed Commission for the Defense of Salvadoran Coffee in order to prop up the coffee industry, an action which, in a way, served the interests of the oligarchy. On the other, however, he was determined to create a system in which the state directed the economy.

In contrast, Duke was managing director and majority shareholder of the Banco Agrícola Comercial, which had grown together with 'coffee prosperity' since the end of the 19th century³¹. Duke actually accepted his bank being transformed into a central bank not only because he thought it would bring him some money through a part of the shares of Agrícola being sold to the government, but also because he believed he would get the post of President of the CRBES, allowing him to become a dominant power in financial and banking circles³². According to Anderson, he went so far as to eliminate Martínez by backing another army officer³³.

Knowing Duke's intentions, Martínez expressed his wholehearted support of Powell's recommendation and realized the creation of the CRBES. As already mentioned, the Banco Agrícola Comercial lost the right to issue its own paper money and its own gold reserve. In addition, Martínez appointed Duran, who was recommended by Powell as a

²⁹ For further details Martínez, see Parkman, P. *Nonviolent Insurrection in El Salvador: The Fall of Maximiliano Hernández Martínez*, Tucson, 1988, Chap.2.

³⁰ Kinsbruner, J. and Langer E.D. eds. *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*, Second Edition, Vol.3, 2008, 91.

³¹ Lindo-Fuentes, H. *Weak Foundations: The Economy of El Salvador in the Nineteenth Century*, Berkeley, 1990, 183.

³² Letter from F.F.J. Powell to Sir Otto Niemeyer, 7 Feb., 1934, *OV20/1*, Bank of England Archives.

³³ Anderson, T.P. *Matanza: The 1932 "slaughter" that traumatized a nation, shaping US-Salvadoran policy to this day*, Second Edition, Connecticut, 1992, 195.

sound banker with no political ambitions. We could argue that the authority of the Bank and its advisor Powell was used by Martínez to eliminate the power of his rival. As in the case of Argentina, the authority of the Bank and its advisor was used by local interests and policy makers. We can conclude that this is the factor that led to the creation of the CRBES.

Conclusion

Both case studies underlined the importance of the local factors and actors. Prebisch and Pinedo in Argentina, and Martínez in El Salvador, all succeeded in using the Bank of England's prestige and influence to serve their own agenda. What these findings seem to highlight is the major role played by the local or peripheral actors, once called "collaborating elites" by Gallagher and Robinson³⁴.

Although this study is limited to the Latin American region and is still in its early stages, this may indicate that the success of "money doctoring" depends on the political and economic situation in the country which receives the mission, i.e. whether there are local promoters or collaborators. An approach from the perspective of the periphery could be applied to previous studies on the Bank of England policies regarding central and eastern European countries and the countries of the British formal Empire.

Hence, what we need to do now is to review the history of "money doctoring" based on the view from the peripheral standpoint. This would reveal the actual process of "money doctoring", and the negotiations between advisors and local interests and amongst the local interests themselves. This would not only furnish a fresh interpretation of the Bank of England Advisory Missions in the interwar years, but also provide a new image regarding money doctoring in general. In addition, studies based on the peripheral viewpoint could provide interesting historical case studies which might support policy makers.

³⁴ Gallagher J. and Robinson R.E. "The Imperialism of Free Trade", *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser. VI, 1953.

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[Perspective]

Decolonization and Disorder

Dane Kennedy*

How the British lost their empire has recently attracted renewed attention from historians. Their interest has been fueled both by the release of new archival records about the collapse of colonialism and by the broader resurgence of research into the imperial experience and its postcolonial legacies. The causes, course, and consequences of decolonization have generated a flood of books and articles in recent years, ranging from specialized studies to broad surveys. Many more such works can be anticipated in the near future. For the past seven years, I have had the privilege of serving as a faculty participant in the National History Center's International Decolonization Seminar, which brings to Washington D.C. fifteen junior scholars from around the world for a month of research and debate about European decolonization.¹ The fascinating array of research projects that they and other historians are currently pursuing promise to enrich our understanding of the history of decolonization for years to come.

While it would be erroneous to claim that a new interpretive consensus has emerged among historians about the collapse of the British Empire, much recent and forthcoming work shows that the British were far more reluctant to relinquish control over their imperial possessions than the conventional narrative has acknowledged and that the process of decolonization was consequently far more troubled and violent in many cases than we had previously appreciated. The decolonization of the British Empire is often still conceived as a carefully choreographed series of ceremonies where colonial officials and nationalist leaders stood together on stages, gave speeches, signed documents, exchanged handshakes, and observed the lowering of the Union Jack and the raising of the new nations' flags while military bands dutifully played "Pomp and

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¹ The seminar is directed by Wm. Roger Louis, funded by the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and hosted by the Library of Congress. Information about its mission and activities can be found at: <http://nationalhistorycenter.org/category/decolonization-seminar/>.

Circumstance". What happened at these events is usually referred to as the 'transfer of power,' a trite phrase that suggests decolonization was a consensual, constitutional, and, above all, orderly process. This complacent characterization of the British experience is often contrasted to the violence and chaos that accompanied the decolonization of the French, Dutch, Belgian, and Portuguese empires. What much of the recent scholarship on decolonization has shown, however, is that the break-up of the British Empire was no less afflicted by disorder, displacement, and destruction than were other European empires, contradicting simplistic assumptions about the exceptional character of the British case.

Another version of exceptionalism has continued to inform the conventional view of decolonization as well, if only because it is left largely unspoken and unexamined. This is the belief that European decolonization in the two to three decades after World War II was a unique event, a turning point that brought an abrupt end to the age of empire and the triumph of the age of the nation-state. The very fact that the word "decolonization" was not coined until the late 1930s and did not come into common usage until the late 1940s certainly suggests that the events it signified were unprecedented in nature. Yet this period was not the first one to find European empires forced by global crises to surrender control of colonies to rebellious colonists and other parties. Nor, arguably, was it the last. Once we remove our teleological blinders, it becomes clear that the British Empire and its European rivals had passed through several previous periods of decolonization, even if that term had not been coined in time to describe them. Our understanding of the disintegration of the European empires after World War II can be greatly enriched by examining this moment of decolonization in the context of these earlier eras of imperial upheaval.

But, first, it is important to understand how these misconceptions about British (and, more broadly, European) decolonization came into play and why they have endured as long as they have. The simple answer is that they served the interests of the major parties involved in the process of decolonization. For the British, it was obviously preferable to portray decolonization as an act that they had undertaken of their own accord, the culmination, in effect, of their self-professed efforts to prepare their colonial charges for the responsibilities of self-government. Where the scale of the violence and disorder that often accompanied decolonization made it impossible for the British to claim good will and a graceful exit, they did their best to erase these events from their memory.

The nationalist regimes that inherited power in these ex-colonial states had their own

reasons to encourage a kind of selective amnesia about decolonization. True, their public histories place more emphasis to the actual struggles to win independence than did those offered by the British. Much attention was paid in particular to the trials and tribulations of the new nations' founding fathers. But those groups and individuals that had sought to create differently constituted states or had conceived of the nation in different terms were ignored or vilified by the victors, and the internal conflicts that so often gave rise to civil wars and ethnic cleansing were subsequently erased from public memory. The desire to let sleeping dogs lie provided a powerful incentive to promote a kind of selective amnesia about the process that produced nation-states out of empires.

So both the British and their ex-colonial heirs have had a shared interest in promoting a selective and sanitized version of decolonization, one that presents it as a rational process carried out by political elites whose actions affirmed the authority and legitimacy of the governments they represented. The two parties also have had a shared interest in portraying the era of decolonization as an unprecedented historical event, one that brought into being an entirely new epoch. This teleology also appealed to the two postwar superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, both of which were determined to present themselves as the agents of modernity, ushering in a new world, a postcolonial (and, so they claimed, a post-imperial) world that fulfilled the promise of national self-determination through the creation of an international concert of independent nation-states.

* * *

Far from being unprecedented, the upheavals that brought about the dismantlement of the British and other European colonial empires in the aftermath of the Second World War comprised the third wave of decolonization. The first wave can be termed as the era of New World decolonization (1776-1822), the second the era of Old World decolonization (1917-1922), and the third the era of Third World decolonization (1947-1970s). Some might characterize the disintegration of the Soviet Union as still a fourth wave. Each of these waves resulted in the transfer of sovereign authority over large tracts of territory from European empires to independent nation-states. Yet Britain in particular was able to reconstitute and revivify its empire despite the losses it incurred in the first and second waves, and it sought to do the same by means of the

“special relationship” it established with the United States during the third wave.²

Two themes become apparent when we place the decolonization of the post-World War II period in the context of the two prior waves. The first is the crucial role that global wars played in the process of decolonization, creating the economic and political crises that made this transformation possible. The second is the degree to which decolonization was not simply the rejection or negation of imperialism, but a manifestation of the collision between empires and, all too often, an impetus to renewed imperial ambition and aggrandizement.

The first great wave of European decolonization occurred in the Americas. It began in 1776 with the rebellion by the thirteen North American colonies against British rule. This was followed in 1804 by the great slave revolt against French rule in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), which made that island colony the second nation in the Western hemisphere to break away from European control. Soon thereafter a series of revolutions swept through Spain’s new world colonies, extending from Mexico to Argentina in the early decades of the nineteenth century. In addition, Brazil declared its independence from Portugal in 1822. The crucial precondition and impetus for the American Revolution was the global imperial struggle between Britain and France during the Seven Years War.³ It produced the economic and political pressures that provoked rebellion by American colonists. All the other New World revolts came about as a by-product of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, which were in many respects a continuation of the earlier global struggle between Britain and France. Napoleon was unable to reestablish control of Saint-Domingue and his invasion of Spain and Portugal undermined those empires’ ability to maintain control of their own American colonies. Yet “what emerged from [these] imperial revolutions was not the antithesis of empire, but the revitalization of the notion of empire itself.”⁴ The main beneficiary of this imperial revitalization within the Americas was the United States, which used the Louisiana Purchase to launch its bid to build a transcontinental empire, one that eventually incorporated territory previously claimed by Britain, Spain, Mexico, and Russia, not to mention many Native American polities. The other major beneficiary was Britain, which was able to impose informal imperial control over many

² Wm. Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson, “The Imperialism of Decolonization,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 22, 3 (1994): 3462-511.

³ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Vintage, 2001).

⁴ Jeremy Adelman, “An Age of Imperial Revolutions,” *American Historical Review*, 113, 2 (April 2008), 320.

of the newly established South American states, enforced by means of gunboat diplomacy.

The second great wave of decolonization was precipitated by World War I. All of the European continental empires collapsed under the strain of that terrible conflict. The first to go was the Russian empire: the revolution that overthrew the Czarist regime resulted in the political fragmentation of its vast dominions. Poles, Estonians, and other subject peoples along the empire's western borderlands were able to form independent nation-states—at least until the next war provided the Soviets an opportunity to reassert its Czarist predecessor's sovereignty. And once the Bolsheviks had established control of the Russian heartland, they began to reassert influence over the wayward provinces to the south and east, rebuilding the Russian Empire on new ideological and organizational foundations as a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Austro-Hungarian Empire also broke up as a result of the war, and although it may be more problematic to describe its domains as colonies, Vienna certainly ruled over restive peoples in central and southeast Europe, as the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand by Serbian separatists—the precipitating cause of the Great War—made abundantly clear. The Czechs, Hungarians, and other subject populations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would become beneficiaries of President Woodrow Wilson's call for national self-determination by establishing nation-states. Imbedded in this new principle was the premise that these new nation-states would possess relatively homogeneous populations, which gave rise to what Eric Weitz has termed “the pursuit of population politics.”⁵ The problem posed by population politics was most readily apparent as a result of the post-war collapse of another great continental empire, the Ottomans. When the truncated nation-state of Turkey emerged from the empire's ruins and the Greeks failed in their irredentist efforts—supported by the British—to assert control over a large swathe of Anatolia, a massive population transfer ensued, with a million Greeks driven out of Turkey and 350,000 Muslims forced from their homes in Greece.⁶ This horrific case of ethnic cleansing would be a harbinger of things to come.

Britain and its great power allies made it clear, however, that the Wilsonian principle

⁵ Eric D. Weitz, “From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions,” *American Historical Review*, 113, 5 (December 2008), 1323.

⁶ Michelle Tusan, *Smyrna's Ashes: Humanitarianism, Genocide, and the Birth of the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

of national self-determination did not extend to non-European peoples.⁷ Nowhere was this more apparent than in the southern and eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which the British and the French divided between themselves as ‘mandated territories’, quasi-colonial possessions sanctioned by the League of Nations. Similarly, the German Empire’s colonies in Africa and the Pacific were distributed among the victors. Meanwhile, Egyptian, Chinese, Korean, and other non-western advocates of national self-determination were simply ignored. The war, then, brought decolonization to Europe itself, but it simply reshuffled the imperial deck elsewhere, much as the decolonization of the New World had done. No imperial power benefitted more dramatically from these developments than Britain, which acquired direct or indirect control of ex-German colonies in Africa and the Pacific, Ottoman territories in the Middle East, and, at least temporarily, portions of what had been Russia’s imperial sphere in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

One final example of Old World decolonization in this era is worth special attention: the curious case of Ireland. This is the only significant territorial loss by one of the victors in World War I, and it is noteworthy for several reasons. First, it marked the failure of more than a century’s worth of efforts to bring about the political integration of Ireland within the United Kingdom. In this respect, Ireland was to Britain what Algeria was to France—a territory separated from the imperial homeland by a narrow sea, occupied by a large settler population, and nominally incorporated within the metropolitan political system. Yet much of the indigenous Irish population, not unlike its Algerian counterpart, was never wholly reconciled to its conquerors. Second, the mutual antagonisms between the Catholic and Protestant populations within Ireland meant that the struggle for independence was also in some respects a civil war, with ethnic cleansing one of its consequences. In the south, Protestant landlords were driven off their estates and their country houses were burned to the ground. In the north, Protestants launched what has been described as a ‘pogrom’ against Catholic communities. Nowhere were its effects more devastating than in Belfast, where 650 houses and businesses were destroyed, 8,000 residents fled their homes, and nearly 500 individuals—two-thirds of them Catholics—were killed.⁸ The immediate consequence of this ethnic violence was the partition of Ireland, an outcome that would recur in other

⁷ Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁸ Robert Lynch, “The People’s Protectors? The Irish Republican Army and the ‘Belfast Pogrom,’ 1920-1922,” *Journal of British Studies*, 47, 2 (April 2008), 375-376.

places where decolonization exposed and intensified ethnic tensions and conflicts.

* * *

The third major wave of decolonization—the one we most commonly associate with the term—was precipitated by another world war. The states that launched World War II were trying, in effect, to reverse the decolonization of Europe *and* to redraw the imperial map in Asia. Hitler, like Napoleon, sought to establish a European-wide empire, though unlike Napoleon, he pursued a reactionary agenda that relied on racial hierarchies and slave labor. There is a good deal of truth to the claim that Hitler was simply attempting to apply within Europe the same doctrines and practices that governed European colonial rule over non-European peoples.⁹ Japan sought to establish a similarly structured empire across Asia and the Pacific, one that treated Chinese, Koreans, and others as inferior races and sought to replace Europeans as the colonial masters. Nor should we forget Italian efforts to establish a new Roman empire in the greater Mediterranean region, which also collided with the interests of established European imperial powers.

World War II was in many respects far more genuinely global in its scale and repercussions than World War I, and its devastation stretched far beyond the battlefields. In Asia, for example, the war caused massive disruptions in trade and especially food supplies, leaving populations vulnerable to starvation. One result was the notorious Bengal famine of 1943, which left some 3 million people dead; another was a famine in Vietnam in 1944-45, which claimed an estimated 1.5-2 million victims.¹⁰ These were only the most dramatic examples of the widespread suffering experienced by civilian populations across Asia as a result of economic disruptions, food shortages, forced labor, and political violence. Only recently have historians begun to appreciate the full dimensions of this human disaster. Elsewhere, the historical neglect has been even more noticeable. To my knowledge, no one has devoted much attention to the civilian suffering that the war in North Africa produced, though countless people were

⁹ Sven Lindqvist, *Exterminate All the Brutes: One Man's Odyssey into the Heart of Darkness and the Origins of European Genocide* (New York: New Press, 2007).

¹⁰ For the Bengal famine, see Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Armies: The Fall of British Asia 1941-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), ch. 5. The Vietnamese famine figures come from Ronald Spector, *In the Ruins of Empire: The Japanese Surrender and the Battle for Postwar Asia* (New York: Random House, 2007), 105.

displaced by the movements of armies and a terrible famine that swept through the region. Even in sub-Saharan Africa, which was largely untouched by fighting, the war placed immense pressures on populations. A famine in Rwanda killed an estimated 300,000 people (probably a higher per capita death toll than in the Bengal famine).¹¹ Britain mobilized nearly half a million of its African subjects for military service, and many more were pressed into forced labor, including 100,000 men sent to work in the tin mines of Northern Nigeria and another 84,500 in the sisal and rubber plantations of Tanganyika.¹² The traumatic effects of the war were felt by peoples all across Asia and Africa. It shattered or strained colonial institutions, gave impetus to nationalist doctrines, and made violence so pervasive a feature of everyday life that its effects proved difficult to contain even after official hostilities ceased.

If the experience of war gave impetus to anti-colonial feelings, its outcome also ironically gave the British and their European allies new hopes of recovering the colonies they had lost to the Japanese and reinvigorating those they had retained. Some American officials sarcastically suggested that the acronym SEAC (South East Asia Command) actually meant Save England's Asian Colonies.¹³ To be sure, the British recognized that major concessions to Indian nationalists would be required when the war ended, but they did not believe that this necessarily meant the loss of their imperial influence on the subcontinent. Churchill, for example, had hopes that the outcome would be the balkanization of India into "Pakistan, Hindustan, and Princistan," each sufficiently weak and suspicious of the others to ensure a continued British presence in the region.¹⁴ And almost immediately after the surrender of Japan, the British moved to regain control of the colonies they had lost in the war. British rule was soon reestablished in Burma, Malaya, Singapore, and Hong Kong. British forces (which meant Indian troops in many cases) also occupied Indochina and Indonesia. By their own lights, the British were not seeking imperial aggrandizement by these actions, but rather the restoration to the French and the Dutch of their rightful colonial domains.

Not surprisingly, these postwar initiatives ran into plenty of opposition from peoples whose deference to imperial authority had been shattered by the war. The Burmese

¹¹ Martin Shipway, *Decolonization and its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of the Colonial Empires* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 70.

¹² Hyam, 125.

¹³ Bayly and Harper, *Forgotten Armies*, 363.

¹⁴ Sir Archibald Wavell, *The Viceroy's Journal*, ed. Penderel Moon (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 120.

objected, the Malaysian Chinese objected; the Indians, who had been objecting for some time, did so with renewed vigor. British efforts to restore Dutch rule in Indonesia stirred up a hornet's nest of resistance. Its most dramatic manifestation was the battle for the city of Surabaya, which "equaled in intensity many of the urban battles of World War II".¹⁵ The city was almost totally destroyed and Indonesian casualties numbered 7,000. And this was simply a preview to the violence that accompanied Dutch efforts to re-impose colonial control over Indonesia. The same thing happened in Vietnam as French reoccupation provoked resistance from the Viet Minh. Even so, the more telling point in the immediate aftermath of the war is not that the British and their European allies ran into resistance, but that they were so determined despite that resistance to reconstitute their Asian empires.

They were even more optimistic about the prospects for a new imperial era in other parts of the world, especially sub-Saharan Africa, with its vast, underutilized resources. Here the British in particular made plans to turn their African colonies into another Raj, using the mineral and agricultural resources of the continent to revive its own economy and protect it from American competition. The French had similar ambitions for their African colonies, as did the Belgians and even the Portuguese. All of them embraced the rhetoric of modernization, and all hoped that colonial economic development would forestall demands for political freedom.¹⁶

When nationalists' demands in fact intensified in spite of—or, in some cases, because of—the postwar economic boom in minerals, edible oils, and other primary products, European officials tried to head off or blunt any real devolution of power with clever schemes to restructure colonial institutions, territorial boundaries, and constitutional relations to the imperial metropolis. The British Commonwealth offered one model: it had provided the basis for protectionist policies during the Great Depression and for a common strategy during the Second World War, and British officials were determined to hitch India and other colonies to that institution. France and the Netherlands developed post-war commonwealth proposals of their own: in each instance the aim was to bring colonies into closer political association with the imperial center, often by admitting representatives to a common parliament. The problem, of course, was that these schemes were designed to ensure that colonial peoples had little real political leverage.

¹⁵ Spector, *In the Ruins of Empire*, 187.

¹⁶ Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Another institutional strategy the imperial powers introduced to diffuse nationalist demands was to draw neighboring colonies together in regional federations. A key purpose of these schemes was to shackle those colonies that were troubled by nationalist agitation to other colonies that were more subservient to imperial interests—in effect, replacing divide-and-rule with combine-and-rule. The British got into federations in a big way: their schemes included the Central African Federation (Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland), the East African Federation (Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika), the Malayan Federation (Malaya, Singapore, Borneo), the West Indies Federation (Jamaica, Trinidad, and other Caribbean islands), and the South Arabian Federation (Aden and South Yemen). The French introduced an Indochina Federation and a West African Federation. The Dutch tried to establish an East Indies federation. Some of these federations never got off the drawing board, and none lasted very long. They are important nonetheless for two reasons: they demonstrate both that imperial authorities were prepared to cook up new institutional schemes to hold onto their colonies in one form or another and that they regarded colonial territorial boundaries as arbitrary and fungible.

The British and their European counterparts also turned when necessary to that old standby, violence and repression. Torture, detention without trial, forced relocation, and brute military force became characteristic features of late colonial regimes. The sheer scale of the violence that accompanied decolonization has been forgotten in far too many cases. It is difficult to find much information about the 1947 nationalist rebellion in Madagascar, which required 18,000 French and Foreign Legion troops to crush and cost some tens of thousands of Malagasy lives.¹⁷ We still know surprisingly little about the Dutch military campaign to maintain control of Indonesia from 1946 to 1950. At its height, this campaign involved 140,000 Dutch and auxiliary troops, along with a militarized police force of 35,000, and it carried out what has been described as “extreme violence” against nationalists.¹⁸ Portugal’s prolonged struggle to retain control of its African colonies of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau required the use of more than 200,000 soldiers, and we may never know how many hundreds of thousands of Africans died in its counter-insurgency campaigns. No European empire, however, is likely to have surpassed the death toll the French compiled in their

¹⁷ Shipway, *Decolonization and its Impact*, 146.

¹⁸ Petra M. H. Groen, “Militant Response: The Dutch Use of Military Force and the Decolonization of the Dutch East Indies, 1945-50,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 21 (1993), 35, 39 (quote).

desperate efforts to hold on to Vietnam and Algeria. In Vietnam, some 20,000 French soldiers were killed, along with 11,000 foreign legionnaires (many of them German veterans of World War II), 15,000 Senegalese and other African troops, and 46,000 Indochinese recruits—a telling reminder of how much colonial armies relied on subject peoples as cannon fodder.¹⁹ Vietnamese losses numbered half a million. The Algerian war absorbed nearly 500,000 French troops, of whom almost 18,000 were killed, while the death toll among Algerians may have reached a staggering million people.²⁰

Some British historians rather smugly insist that their country managed the business of decolonization with far less violence and destruction than other empires. Ronald Hyam, whose *Britain's Declining Empire* is the most recent major study of the subject, praises the British for their “relatively smooth and peaceful transfers of power,” proclaiming the outcome of decolonization “a success story.”²¹ This strikes me as a highly selective and deeply distorted judgment. Two years after the end of World War II, Britain had army battalions stationed in Egypt, Libya, Cyprus, Somaliland, Sudan, India, Burma, Malaya, and various other territories, including Palestine, where 80,000 troops and 20,000 police waged an unsuccessful campaign to maintain control over that small but explosive land. In 1948 the National Service Act instituted peacetime conscription for the first time in British history; it remained in force through 1960. The law required all young adult males to spend 18 months (extended to two years in 1950) on active duty in the armed force, followed by four years in the reserves. Nearly one and a half million Britons were conscripted during this period. They served in a series of military operations, including long and bloody counter-insurgency campaigns in Malaya (1948-60), Kenya (1952-56), Cyprus (1955-59), Oman (1957-60), and Aden (1963-67), as well the great debacle at Suez (1956) and the quasi-colonial clash with Indonesia in Borneo (1962-66).²² Many of these campaigns have been all but purged from the British public memory. *Forgotten Wars* is the apt title that Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper have given to their important book on the wars of decolonization that broke out in British South and Southeast Asia.²³

¹⁹ Shipway, *Decolonization and its Impact*, 114.

²⁰ Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), 538.

²¹ Hyam, 403.

²² L. V. Scott, *Conscription and the Attlee Governments: The Politics and Policy of National Service, 1945-1951* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Trevor Royle, *The Best Years of Their Lives: The National Service Experience, 1945-63* (London: Michael Joseph, 1986).

²³ Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Wars: Freedom and Revolution in*

One of the conflicts that registered quite forcefully in the British consciousness at the time it occurred was the Mau Mau rebellion in colonial Kenya.²⁴ Only recently, however, has the scale of the violence that the British perpetrated against suspected rebels been revealed. Although they disagree about how many Gikuyu and other Kenyans were killed and incarcerated in detention camps, even the lower estimate is daunting: 20,000 dead and 150,000 imprisoned. David Anderson notes that 1090 Mau Mau rebels were hanged, and he observes that “at no other time in the history of British imperialism was state execution used on such a scale as this.”²⁵ The recent revelations that the British government destroyed thousands of records concerning torture, murder, and other human rights abuses during their retreat from empire and hidden thousands of other embarrassing files in a secret Foreign Office archive at Hanslope Park suggest that the Kenyan case was not unique.²⁶ So far, no one to my knowledge has conducted a systematic examination of the human costs of British counter-insurgency campaigns in the post-war era, but those costs were clearly not negligible.²⁷

Once these attempts by the British and other European imperial powers to restore and maintain colonial rule through military force and political stratagems collapsed, as they eventually did, the consequence was often a precipitate, chaotic rush to withdraw. Roger Louis has argued that European decolonization was as much of a ‘scramble’ as European colonization had been.²⁸ This term perfectly captures the often unplanned, disorderly nature of the withdrawal. The retreat from empire was characterized by two striking developments that often get overlooked in celebratory accounts of decolonization. One was the mass flight of European soldiers, settlers, and other colonial agents, as well as many of their non-European collaborators. The other was

Southeast Asia (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).

²⁴ See the classic work by Carl G. Rosberg, Jr., and John Nottingham, *The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya* (New York: Meridian, 1970), David Maughan-Brown, *Land, Freedom, and Fiction: History and Ideology in Kenya* (London: Zed, 1985), and Dane Kennedy, “Constructing the Colonial Myth of Mau Mau,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 25, 2 (1992): 241-260.

²⁵ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 7, whose estimates are presented. Caroline Elkin, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain’s Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), estimates the number of those killed at 136,000-300,000 and those placed in detention camps at 1.5 million (xiv, 366).

²⁶ See Ian Cobain, Owen Bowcott, and Richard Norton-Taylor, “Britain Destroyed Records of Colonial Crimes,” *The Guardian* (April 17, 2012), accessed online 4/23/2012.

²⁷ Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain’s Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

²⁸ Wm. Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez, and Decolonization* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006).

the outbreak of civil wars, ethnic cleansing, and other forms of political violence as competing regional, religious, linguistic, and other groups sought to shape the territorial dimensions and ethnic composition of nation-states while they were still up for grabs.

For Europeans, perhaps the most visible and dramatic manifestation of decolonization was the sudden flight of their countrymen from the colonies they had settled and governed. A preview of what was in store for them came with the collapse of the Japanese empire at the end of World War II. Lori Watt has studied the extraordinary five million or so Japanese settlers and soldiers who were forced to flee Manchuria, Korea, and other territories colonized by Japan, another of the aspects of decolonization that has until now been all but forgotten.²⁹

The British were fortunate to have had relatively few officials, planters, and the like in India, Burma, and Ceylon, and those who pulled up stakes had plenty of other sunny tropical climes to relocate to. For most sahibs and memsahibs, Africa and Australia was a far more appealing than damp, dreary Britain, struggling with postwar austerity measures. It was a different story, however, for the 300,000 or so Dutch and Eurasia refugees from Indonesia: they had few other options than cramped, cold Holland. Most of the tens of thousands of Frenchmen who were driven from Indochina in the 1950s also had little choice but to return to France. But their repatriation was little more than a trickle compared to the flood of *pied noirs* who fled Algeria after independence. Over a million settlers retreated to France; another 50,000 to Spain, and smaller numbers to Malta and Italy. Tiny Belgium had to absorb nearly 100,000 refugees when colonial rule in the Congo suddenly collapsed in 1960. And in the 1970s Portugal was obliged to absorb nearly half a million settlers and 200,000 soldiers when its African colonies were lost.³⁰

Far less well documented is the impact of decolonization on those minority populations that had found privileged niches as auxiliaries of colonial regimes. The Christian Ambonese had been the main source of recruits for Dutch colonial forces in Indonesia, and they paid a high price for their collaboration upon independence. An even more tragic example is the Harkis, poor villagers recruited to fight for the French during the brutal Algerian war. With independence, the victorious FLN probably

²⁹ Lori Watt, "Imperial Remnants: The Repatriates in Postwar Japan," in *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen (New York: Routledge, 2005): 243-255.

³⁰ This story is the subject of a forthcoming book by Elizabeth Buettner.

killed 100,000 of the Harkis and their families, while another 100,000 fled to France (despite efforts by the French government to keep them out).³¹ In plenty of places, immigrant communities that had established specialized niches in colonial economies, often as artisans and traders, were forced to pack up and go once decolonization occurred. Indians were made unwelcome in newly independent Burma and Malaysia, and later still their countrymen were expelled from Kenya and Uganda. Chinese were targeted as enemies in Malaysia and Indonesia; Lebanese were driven out of many West African states; Iraqi Jews were forced from Singapore. The Parsis of Bombay, who had enjoyed a privileged status in British India, saw their fortunes decline dramatically in the post-colonial era.³² Countless other examples could be mentioned.

What happened to these minority groups was often part of a larger process of civil unrest and ethnic cleansing as colonies were transformed into nation-states. Arguably the most tragic case was British India, where various groups—Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, princes and communists, scheduled castes and tribes and more—jockeyed for position, seeking to shape the outcome of decolonization. It is important to recall that there was nothing inherent or predetermined about the sort of state that would replace the Raj, despite the decades of Parliamentary commissions, government roundtables, and constitutional blueprints. “Partition took place,” Yasmin Khan has astutely noted, “in a society only partially emerging from long years of war,” which had inured many of its members to violence and eroded the power of the colonial state. The result was “one of the worst human calamities of the twentieth century.”³³ Even after the decision was made to partition India by giving a separate state for Muslims (but not Sikhs, Nagas, and various others), most of the subcontinent’s inhabitants had little real appreciation of what partition meant, where the boundaries were, and which ‘country’ they now belonged to. Hindu and Muslim extremists launched systematic campaigns of ethnic cleansing against members of the other community. Their efforts resulted in half a million to a million deaths, along with the rape, mutilation, and kidnapping of tens of thousands women, and the forced migration of some 12 million people across newly created, artificial borders. This was nation-building with a vengeance. Until recently, however, this tragic story has received remarkably little attention. Instead, we have

³¹ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 232-233.

³² T. H. Luhrman, *The Good Parsi: The Fate of a Colonial Elite in a Postcolonial Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996).

³³ Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 17, 5.

been treated to in-depth examinations of the strategies and negotiations that took place between Gandhi, Mountbatten, Nehru, and Jinnah—a worthy subject, to be sure, but one that fails to indicate what actually happened in the villages and cities of South Asia. For many of those swept up in the maelstrom of violence in the Punjab and Bengal, the only way they could cope with its emotional trauma was by asserting a kind of willful amnesia. Only recently have historians and others begun to break through that amnesia and record the memories of partition's survivors.³⁴

A very similar process occurred in Palestine, where decolonization again involved a desperate scramble by the British to get away and an equally desperate struggle by the Jews and Palestinians to drive one another out of their homes and claim the emptied land as their own. A recent book by the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé argues that the Zionists launched a calculated campaign of ethnic cleansing that resulted in the massacre of hundreds of Palestinian peasants, the destruction of over 500 Palestinian villages, the clearing of Palestinian neighborhoods in major cities, and the forced removal of some 800,000 Palestinians. Pappé also makes the point that since then the Israeli state has systematically sought to erase the memory of the Palestinian presence: most modern Israelis do not know that forests and parks and other public spaces were once Palestinian villages.³⁵

Much the same sad story of disorder and destruction was repeated in Burma, Malaya, Cyprus, Nigeria, Sudan, and elsewhere as British colonial rule gave way to an uncertain independence that encouraged competing groups to pursue their share of the prize. All too often this story has been divorced from the popular narrative of decolonization, conveniently averting any consideration of the culpability that Britain might have held for these terrible aftershocks of the end of the empire.

* * *

What I have argued against in this essay is an exceptionalist interpretation of British decolonization, one that remains surprisingly resilient in some circles. This exceptionalist stance rests on two premises: the first, often assumed and unstated, is that the British experience of decolonization in the period after World War II was

³⁴ Rama Lakshmi, "India's Survivors of Partition Begin to Break Long Silence," *The Washington Post* (March 12, 2008), A1, A12.

³⁵ Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007).

unprecedented; the second, often announced with a measure of pride, is that the decolonization of the British Empire, unlike that of other European empires, was planned and peaceful. Ronald Hyam may be the most prominent current proponent of this view. A related version of this exceptionalist stance has been advanced by Niall Ferguson, who argues that the British Empire “was dismantled not because it had oppressed subject peoples for centuries, but because it took up arms for just a few years against far more oppressive empires.”³⁶ While Ferguson is certainly right to see the war as a struggle between empires and its outcome as undermining British imperial power, his rendering of the reason decolonization took place suggests that the British relinquished their empire to save the world. In fact, the British not only had no intention of sacrificing their empire in this global struggle, but after it ended they clung to their colonies with a ruthless determination that carried terrible costs for all concerned.

Disorder, then, was an integral feature of European decolonization after World War II, not least in the British imperial realm. It was derived in the first instance from the global wars that so often precipitated decolonization by disrupting the imperial status quo and opening the door to alternative political configurations. As agents of change, wars obviously are destructive and destabilizing, and they certainly were so when it came to creating the contexts for decolonization. In the second instance, disorder derived from the fact that nation-states were not the inevitable result of imperial collapse. Other options existed, including the absorption of colonies into new empires, their consolidation into other corporate polities, such as federations or commonwealths, and their fragmentation into unstable, often mutually antagonistic polities. Each of these alternatives had their proponents, and it often required a violent struggle to determine which would win out. And, in the third and final instance, the triumph of the nation-state was itself an impetus for disorder. Invariably its creation required confronting that crucial, troubling question: whose nation? For all those who won the rights and privileges of statehood, countless others were made stateless or second-class citizens. As new nations fixed their political and ethnic and moral boundaries, those who had sought different boundaries and different definitions of inclusion either became oppressed minorities or refugees. Ethnic cleansing and forced diasporas were as integral as national self-determination to the creation of new nation-states. We can celebrate the end of empires, but we should not romanticize the ways they ended or

³⁶ Niall Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 248.

what they left behind. Nor should we assume that national liberation was in any way the irrevocable outcome of their collapse.

[Book Review]

Robert C. Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective*
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)

Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making
of the Modern World Economy*
(NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000)

Jaymin Kim*

Kenneth Pomeranz's book has had a significant impact in comparative global history. When scholars before him had looked for contrasts in economic aspects of Europe (represented by Britain) and Asia (represented by China or India), Pomeranz looked for similarities. The similarities he did find, and he made an argument based on them that was so counterintuitive but also attractive. According to him, Western Europe, China, and Japan were few candidates for a dramatic shift in economic possibilities based on relatively high levels of capital accumulation, demographic patterns checked by unique control mechanisms, and the existence of some kinds of markets. Neither these factors nor technological differences, however, can explain why that shift exactly happened in Europe. He admits that Europe had some distinct institutional bases that promoted both capitalism and consumerism but argues that they could not point a way out of early modern economic constraints: land, resources, etc. That explanation is to be found in intercontinental connections. The New World provided Europe with ghost acreage, and Europe's often violent relations with other continents helped Europe, as the world's first "modern" core, acquire needed resources from the world's first "modern" periphery. Then, China and Europe were on a similar path leading to Malthusian trap and Smithian limitations until a series of sharp discontinuities diverged their paths. The Industrial Revolution was accidental and represented something of a discontinuity.

Pomeranz's book and its reception prove that the Industrial Revolution is not a dead horse quite yet, and Robert C. Allen's recent book on the topic is yet another testament to the scholarly interest in the Industrial Revolution. While Allen does not address

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Pomeranz directly, one can make obvious comparisons between the two and see how this new work updates the literature we have on the Industrial Revolution. First, unlike Pomeranz's view, Allen's view on this historical phenomenon is that it was more contingent than accidental. From a historian's perspective, this perspective is almost inherently more attractive, for it explains both the beginning and the end of a historical phenomenon we know as the Industrial Revolution. Not only that, Allen incorporates many works that have looked at the Industrial Revolution as an incremental, *longue durée* historical process by taking seriously the entire "lifespan" of the Industrial Revolution. Second, Allen's focus is more narrow and wider at once. His narrow focus on technological aspects of the Industrial Revolution is complemented by his incorporation of the demand side of the story in addition to the supply side.

So how does Allen explain the Industrial Revolution? He does it in three steps. First, he analyzes Britain's pre-industrial economy, putting emphasis on high wage and cheap energy. His comparison across Eurasia shows the English worker to have enjoyed high wages in four senses: at the exchange rate, relative to the cost of consumer goods, relative to the price of capital, and relative to the price of energy. Life of the English worker, in turn, was positively influenced by this high wage economy in the following ways: quantity and quality of food, physical well-being, consumer revolution, education and learning. On energy, Allen first looks at Nef's "timber crisis" theory and admits that it is valid to a point. He argues, however, that coal could not have been activated as a backstop technology had Britain not achieved the level of urbanization and economic success it did. Here again, the supply side alone cannot explain the accelerating use of coal and its cheapness in pre-industrial Britain. A British urban household had to "learn" to heat a house with coal, and that was a long-term process.

Then Allen explores the birth and youth of the great inventions that substituted capital and energy for labor. Because these inventions responded to the British needs specifically, they were only useful in Britain and nowhere else. Obviously, demand alone could not have resulted in these breakthroughs. High rates of literacy and numeracy resulting from high wages supplied Britain with human assets for these developments. Allen refers to this stage of the Industrial Revolution as macro-invention or "inspiration" phase, following Edison's statement on the act of invention (1% of inspiration and 99% of perspiration). Even though these macro-inventions involved leaps of imagination and scientific discovery, decades and sometimes even more than a century of research and development were required to make these technologies more neutral in their utility. Looking at three great inventions of the Industrial Revolutions,

Allen concludes that Abraham Darby I's achievement in coke smelting (1700s), Newcomen's steam engine (1712), other macro-inventions to coke iron (1720-55), Hargreaves's spinning jenny (1764), Richard Arkwright's inventions (1760s-1770s), were useful in Britain and nowhere else. The late adoption of these technologies in countries like France, America, and India were not due to their cultural or intellectual backwardness. Rather, local circumstances simply did not render the use of these technologies cost-efficient just yet.

Allen then moves on to the maturation of these technologies: micro-invention or "perspiration" phase. For the steam engine, it took a century and half of improvement: James Watt's separate condenser (1769), Arthur Woolf's combination of compounding with high-pressure steam (1813), etc. By 1830, the falling cost of power had eliminated Britain's advantage, and thus the steam engine was diffused across the economy and the globe in the next four decades. For the production of cotton, improvements in the machines used and Samuel Crompton's invention of the mule (1780) gradually made the technology more neutrally effective. Here, the international context was crucial in that it was the reason that the British industry grew so large, so fast after its mechanization. Coke smelting, even after half a century of macro-inventions, had to wait a century of micro-inventions before it could be diffused worldwide. In an ironic turn of events, research and development made in Britain eliminated Britain's edge over its competitors and brought an end to the Industrial Revolution.

Allen's work has huge implications for comparative global economic history. His three-stage analysis strikes me as something that can be applied to studies of many other regional economies. For example, Pomeranz's work might have looked much different had Pomeranz not stopped at the analysis of pre-industrial economy and looked further to the birth and growth of industrial economy across Eurasia. His obsession with "origins" of the divergence, rather than the process of the divergence itself, makes his account ahistorical in more than one way. More broadly, Allen's work provides a good point of departure for analyzing diffusion of technologies and ideas in general. For example, scholars have taken considerable pains to explain the "divergence" of Japan and China in the second half of the twentieth century. They have mostly looked at factors unique to Japan and lacking in China as possible explanations for the "failure" of the Self-strengthening Movement and the "success" of Meiji Japan. This search again was driven by obsession with the origins: Why did the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 turn out to be so one-sided? Allen's work suggests, however, that a part of the answer might lie in micro-inventions that were neutral technical improvements

inspired from local learning. Much has been made of Japan's successful adoption of railroads and other aspects of industrialization and China's failed attempts to purchase and produce Western weapons and other heavy machineries. We might learn much more from looking at how this divergence exactly manifested in the process of technological maturation in both countries.

[Book Review]

Prasannan Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not: Global Economic Divergence, 1600-1850*
(Cambridge University Press, 2011)

Yasuki Kumajima*

I

As with the recent global historians, the author pays attention to European ‘divergence.’ However, its standpoint and case study greatly differ from previous scholars. He analyzed the case of the Indian subcontinent while China and England were mainly the subjects of comparative researches so far.

The introductory part suggests an assumption that there were the plural paths of development all over the world until the 19th century. As the means of justifying it, different criterion are adopted in comparing economy, society and politics of the subcontinent with those of Western Europe, the Ottoman Empire, China, and Japan: needs, pressures, and the ‘context’ of each society.

In chapter 2, the author claims that India was the core of world economic order during the 17th-18th century in terms of cotton textile production and trade. Also, along with chapter 3, India during that time had shared political and economic institutions, the standards of living and income, common to Western Europe. At least, there was neither superiority of the one to the other nor uniqueness in the ‘context.’ Rather, India was economically superior to Western Europe due to cotton textiles consumed and demanded in Europe, Middle East, West and East Africa, and Southeast Asia.

While identifying that product as a ‘pressure’ or a global challenge, chapter 4 makes clear English response to it. The author criticized previous historians who have traced technical innovation or mechanization from the context of European internal demand and supply. Instead of it, it is claimed that the inventors of spinning machines aimed at the improvement of yarn’s quality, which had been caused by the competition with

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Indian cotton textiles.

Additionally, contemporary France's and the Ottoman Empire's response to the cotton textiles are compared with English one in chapter 5. Here is the author's focus on the role of state in the different paths of economic development. Both England and France developed 'protectionism' as a state policy whereas the Ottoman Empire's policy was so-called 'provisionism.' England reduced a tax on Indian white textures while regulating its domestic consumption of Indian cotton textiles, and importing them only for overseas markets, especially in West Africa. England was also able to take advantage of such commercial network across the Atlantic Ocean. Meanwhile, France thoroughly practiced 'protectionism' whereby domestic manufactures were prevented from import substitution industrialization. According to the writing, such states' interventions with economy, independent of market economy which Adam Smith and other scholars have described, was crucial in the 'divergence.'

Another pressure, which Kenneth Pomeranz and other scholars have mentioned, is evaluated in chapter 6: deforestation and coal, namely the problems of ecological system and energy resources. According to it, both crisis of deforestation and easy access to coal had existed in China as well as England. The author's emphasis is laid on evidence that in England, there were state policies of coal trade - regulation on coal price, the protection of coal trade through navy, and customs to coal exports used in London - since the 18th century. At the same time, imposing tax to imported Swedish irons supported iron manufacturing in England. Consequently, at the end of the 18th century, 'new energy complex' consisting of coal, cotton textile, and iron or steam engine industries, was emergent in England. In contrast, China's state was in the shortage of policies for coal and iron industries. Instead of it, the state was concerned with population growth and a lack of grain. However, it brought about more deforestation through expanding cultivated land, consequently failed to deal with energy and ecological pressures. The use of coal in China did not sufficiently operate as a state's response to such needs. In this chapter, Japanese response to deforestation is referred to as a successful case, different from English policies. Meanwhile, the Indian subcontinent had never experienced the same crisis of deforestation. Also, there was not competition with external iron manufacturing. Since such ecological pressure did not exist, any responses of Indian states were never necessary during the 18th century.

Chapter 7 reconsiders another aspect of Europe's exceptionalism leading to the 'divergence': 'science culture.' Through a term 'mindful hand,' which indicates the mutual development of and inter-relation between pre-modern knowledge and skill, the

author attempted to exemplify that India and Europe had followed the same path in some terms: the interest of both states and intellectuals in knowledge, the political, military and economic application of scientific knowledge, the interest of even artisans in scientific or skillful knowledge. Thanks to the 'science culture' in India until the 18th century, as chapter 8 shows, the further technical development in and the transference of European technique into the subcontinent were astonishingly successful in the first half of the 19th century.

In chapter 8, the author attributes the failure of Indian industrialization to the lack of state policy, compared with the cases of 19th century France, Germany and Belgium. In India, the rule of the East Indian Company (EIC), by which public sectors such as education were not invested and Indian exports to England was highly taxed, had obstructed the economic development of India.

II

The author puts emphasis on the role of state in both Europe and Asia, not market economy. The unique viewpoint would inspire its readers to discuss further on the influence of state policy. For example, chapter 4 mentions the aim of spinning machines' inventors through the analysis of primary sources on the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in London. At the same time, we need to further think of whether English state's policy, represented by 'protectionism,' reflected the claims of and pressures for such economic organization intentionally or not. Also, it is doubtful that the author regards state intervention in England and France as 'self-conscious actions to protect and expand the national economy' (P. 144). How effective is the protection of 'national' economy, if any? More importantly, we should not forget the initiatives of local people and industries outside the scope of state policy. Indeed, although chapter 6 mentions a little, Midlands, Lancashire and Yorkshire had formed 'new energy complex' out of London to Northeast England where taxation on coal was carried out. In the case of India during the mid-19th century mentioned in chapter 8, the author seems to exaggerate the influence of colonial state and colonialism upon Indian economic development. Certainly, EIC and British rule were important factors. However, EIC's and the British Empire's impact would not be thorough, rather restrictive. There could have been a certain opportunities for local elites, nobles and artisans to develop local industry. Had local industry in the sub-continent been so

fragile and dependent on state support? We cannot neglect a possibility that Indian industry since the 19th century, even if its scale and efficiency were shrunk, survived without previous states' effort to promote skills and industries. Likewise, the succession of skills and knowledge, namely education, would not easily disappear even if texts were scattered and lost throughout the subcontinent since the beginning of the 19th century. Thus, further consideration should be taken about local initiatives in order to analyze the importance and commitment of state policy to market economy and industries.

Another merit of this book is the criteria for comparative research. The criteria depend on the 'context' of each region's society, economy and politics, a variety of pressures and response to them. According to the author's criteria, England had recognized economic (competition with Indian cotton textiles) and ecological or energy (deforestation) pressures. As a result, those pressures were overcome through the use of coal and state 'protectionism' in favor of iron and cotton industries. China (Ming and Ch'ing) experienced the same pressures as England. However, its response was different from the latter's and insufficient especially in dealing with deforestation. Meanwhile, any responses and breakthroughs had not been necessary for the Indian sub-continent until the 19th century, because its society had never been confronted with such pressures. Thus, the greatest common factors allow the author to accomplish a globally comparative research. In contrast, previous scholars on 'divergence' have mainly compared Western Europe (England) with China (Ming and Ch'ing); therefore, they are simply inter-national or inter-regional comparison, not global. In this sense, the author broadens more room for global comparison, by including India, the Ottoman Empire, the other European states and Japan. This technique could be applicable to any area studies.

For example, the 'provisionism' of the Ottoman Empire is suggestive even though it was not investigated enough in this book. Because of its policy, according to the author, it had never driven for the protection and promotion of domestic industries during the 17th-18th century. To some extent, the historians of the Ottoman Empire have a common in their interpretation, and have considered it as a mediator of conflicting economic interests within the commercial order across the Mediterranean Sea, the Middle East and the Indian Ocean since the Middle Ages. In particular, the historians have pointed out the remarkable openness of the Empire's market under the institutions of 'capitulations.' Indeed, the tariff rate of 3% until the end of the 18th century was much lower than those of mercantile European states, and even those of free trade European

states since the 19th century, which were generally 5% in trades with Asia¹. To forward global comparison with Europe, India and China, those facts should be further analyzed from the perspectives of pressures or context, and state response.

III

How about cases in Sub-Saharan Africa? African environment and society, in general, have caused the decentralization of political or state power. Scattering population and richness in land led to the lack of awareness of territory, and the shortage of accumulated wealth through surplus agrarian products. Also, polygamy brought about conflicts over successors, and consequently, the weaken power base of rulers². However, there were some objects for comparison in Africa during the 17th-18th century. For example, pre-colonial Ghana, especially the Asante 'empire' or Greater Asante had been a state where the development of market, production and differentiated labour was emerging. According to an African economic historian, Kwame Arhin, more actual pressures for Asante's rulers seem to have been the drain of gold through linkage to external or international trade. As a policy, in Asante, cowrie and gold as moneys were used in different areas separately: the former was a money for slave markets with the coastal area, and for trade in the border areas of savannah and tropical forest while the latter was used only in its domestic markets whose centre was Kumasi. Arhin maintains that 'Locating the termini of the regional long-distance trade away from central Asante was also consistent with the Asante state policy of discouraging commercialism in favor of militarism'³. In pre-colonial Asante, trading whereby economic wealth was accumulated had been the privilege of office holders such as Asantehene (paramount chief of Greater Asante) and subordinate chiefs. Indeed,

¹ Masako MATSUI, 'Most-Favored-Nation Clauses in Ottoman *Ahdnames*: A Case Study of Late Eighteenth-Century Treaties with Russia,' in Tadashi SUZUKI (ed.), *Aspects of Ottoman History*, Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2012, pp. 128-149 (in Japanese). Since the end of the 18th century, when the Ottoman Empire suffered civil wars and wars against Russia, it attempted to regulate international trade.

² Yoichi MINE, 'Dai-Isshou Afurika no rekishi kara manabu – ninngenn no 'shinpo' toha nanndarouka [Chapter 1 Learning from African History: what does 'progress' mean for human beings?],' in Yoichi MINE et al. (ed.), *Afurika kara Manabu [Learning from Africa]*, Tokyo: Yuhikaku, 2010, pp. 3-27 (in Japanese).

³ Arhin, Kwame, '4 Monetization and the Asante State,' Guyer, Jane I. (ed.), *Money Matters: Instability, Values and Social Payments in the Modern History of West African Communities*, London: James Currey, 1995, p.102.

international trade in southern and northern border areas was regulated strictly by the heavy taxation upon the exports of gold, slave and ivory, and the monetary system of cowrie and gold. While its rulers gained weaponry in exchange for slaves by the beginning of the 19th century and gold since the 19th century, they were concerned with the disintegration of their own social status whose symbol was gold and accumulated economic wealth acquired by commerce and trade⁴. When we take account of this book's criterion, international trade represented by slave trade should be regarded as pressures or needs for state rulers. Those standpoints should be investigated further in the cases of pre-colonial Africa. At least, the example of Greater Asante provides us with a trigger to consider the substance of state (rulers) and the significance of state policy for economy, politics and social life.

Thus, this book demonstrates the great potential of comparative research within global history studies. In this sense, the core arguments of this book should be more carefully considered or applied not only by European or Indian but also other historians in the world.

⁴ Arhin, Kwame, 'A Note on the Asante Akonkofo: A Non-Literate Sub-Elite, 1900-1930,' *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, vol.56, no.1, 1986, pp. 25-31.

[Book Review]

Catherine Hall, *Macaulay and Son: Architects of Imperial Britain*

(New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), xxviii + 389pp.

John Coffey*

This outstanding book reassesses the life and work of the antislavery activist Zachary Macaulay (1768-1838) and his son, the Whig historian Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859). Its author is no mere biographer. As a leading scholar of imperial Britain, Catherine Hall uses these two lives as 'lenses through which to explore the key themes of home, nation, empire and history writing' (xxi). The subtitle gives us a sense of the book's ambition. This is a major work, but it is also thoroughly readable and accessible. Each chapter is perfectly crafted and proportioned, illustrated with apt quotations and written with consummate skill. It should be read by anyone with an interest in British history and historiography.

First and foremost, this is a study of imperialism. Hall tells us that she began to work on the book in the wake of the 9/11, when Tony Blair joined with President Bush to fight 'the war on terror', and historians like Niall Ferguson resurrected the discourse of liberal imperialism. Hall feared that 'Moral rectitude was masking new geo-political claims. Britain's shameful colonial history in Iraq, and subsequently in Afghanistan, seemed to be entirely forgotten' (xiii). Thus this book is a tract for the times. It insists that we remember past 'civilising missions', and learn the perils of imperialism. *Macaulay and Son* can be read as the antidote to Ferguson's *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (2004). Of course, that book came with its own TV series, and was a bestseller. Hall's work will mainly be read by academics and students, though one hopes it will also reach a general readership. Whereas Ferguson enjoys provoking outrage among his fellow academics, Hall is closer to current orthodoxy in the field of imperial studies. Although she displays some sympathy for Zachary Macaulay's indefatigable abolitionism, she is more critical of him than his other recent biographer, Iain Whyte, for whom he is 'The Steadfast Scot in the British Anti-Slavery Movement'. Ideally, the

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two studies should be read alongside each other.

The focus throughout is on the hierarchical character of British imperialism. Both Macaulays were convinced of the superiority of British civilisation. Profoundly influenced by the Scottish Enlightenment's stadial view of history, they believed that colonisation would enable backward cultures to catch up with advanced imperial nations. The Macaulays lived before the rise of scientific racism, and neither believed that other races were biologically inferior and so incapable of civilisation. Yet Hall finds both guilty of cultural racism. Even Zachary, with his passionate conviction that God had created all humans in his own image, had a tense relationship with the black settlers in Sierra Leone. As a sober Anglican, he was disturbed by what he took to be the irrational and primitive fervour of black Methodists and Baptists. Exercising an 'authoritarian paternalism', he was more comfortable with the kneeling and submissive Africans depicted in abolitionist iconography than with uppity black settlers. Thomas Babington Macaulay was also patronising towards the Gaelic Irish, the Indians and aboriginal peoples. British culture, education and civilisation could enable these subject peoples to rise through stages of development, but as an administrator or an historian he could be contemptuous of their present state.

But Hall is also alert to the differences between father and son. Both were 'architects of imperial Britain', but whereas Zachary was a close friend of William Wilberforce and an earnest Evangelical Christian, his son left Evangelicalism behind (like other children of the Wilberforce circle). Zachary wanted a Christian and humanitarian empire, and (though Hall doesn't quite put it this way), this introduced a critical ambiguity into his thinking. Ideally, the interests of God and Caesar – the empire of Christ and the empire of Britain – would be in alignment. But on the issue of slavery, Zachary believed that Britain was at odds with the will of God. If the nation was to regain the favour of Heaven, it must abolish first its slave trade and then its colonial slavery. The younger Macaulay, by contrast, was sceptical about traditional Christian doctrine and allergic to expressions of piety. As a result, he did not struggle with any sense of dual allegiance to God and Caesar. His devotion was to Britain and its empire. Although he supported abolition (partly in deference to his father), he had little time for sentimental philanthropists. Unlike his father, he called Africans by the derogatory term 'niggers'. He could praise Cromwell's suppression of the Irish and advocate similar measures in the wake of the Indian mutiny. In general, Hall treats him with less sympathy than his father.

Where she is particularly sensitive is in probing gender relations and the influence of

family. The Evangelicals who gathered around Wilberforce were determined to set a fine example of godly family life and Christian manhood, something explored in Anne Stott's recent book, *Wilberforce: Family and Friends* (2012). They helped to shape Victorian family values and new ideals of Christian manliness that challenged less domesticated conceptions of masculinity. Hall shows how Zachary and his wife Selina created a closely knit family, while preserving firm distinctions between the private female sphere and the public world of men. Zachary was a firm patriarch, and his relationship with Tom was formal rather than warm. The boy bonded much more closely with two of his sisters and was devastated when one died and the other married. He remained celibate throughout his life and Hall suggests that he found solace in the world of books and papers, a world that was more easily managed than family relationships. While some of this is speculative, the analysis is highly plausible and avoids the pitfalls of crude psycho-history. Hall shows how particular notions of gender continued to shape Macaulay's perceptions of politics, empire and other cultures.

Last but by no means least, this is a book about historiography. The final chapter is a magisterial account of the younger Macaulay's greatest achievement, his multi-volume *History of England* (1848-1855). For Hall this was 'an iconic nationalist history' (xvi), a work designed and destined to shape the way the English thought about themselves and about the peoples they ruled. It described English history as a story of progress from barbarism to civilisation. Macaulay celebrated Britain's 'preserving revolution' of 1688, comparing it to the great political reforms of 1828-34 and contrasting it with the kind of 'destroying revolution' that shook Europe in 1789 and again in 1848. He ignored the darkest element of England's story – the transatlantic slave trade which his father had laboured so hard to destroy. Instead, he accented the positive. His England was liberal, secular, enlightened and sure of itself. And it was this vision that he hoped to instil in his readers.

Hall's book, then, works as a critique of Whig history as well as liberal imperialism. Yet for all that, *Macaulay and Son* is Whiggish in its own way. The Introduction explains how three waves of scholarship reshaped Western historiography in the second half of the twentieth century. First, Marxist historians 'rejected the whig story of peaceful progress and reform', and put class struggle into the picture. Second, feminist historians challenged 'the primacy of class' in the Marxian account, and asserted 'the centrality of gender, sexuality and reproduction to social and political formations'. Finally, the realities of immigration and the end of empire led historians to realise the importance of race and ethnicity in the construction of identities. Hall has brilliantly

brought these three themes – class, gender, ethnicity – to bear on the ‘architects of imperial Britain’ with striking results. But in the process, does she construct a new whig history, a tale of stadial progress and historiographical enlightenment? Macaulay and son are chided for being unenlightened on class, gender and race, just as they themselves chided ‘backward’ peoples. Hall’s history, like Thomas Babington Macaulay’s, is emphatically progressivist, with the liberal Left becoming ever more inclusive thanks to the contributions of Marxism, feminism and post-colonialism. By contrast, nineteenth-century liberals were paternalist and hierarchical: ‘Even the most progressive Englishmen and women tended to assume that their ways of life should be copied by colonial subjects’ (xiv); they ‘assumed that they themselves occupied a more civilised, and by definition much better, society than the dark others they increasingly encountered’ (19). But could not such statements be applied with equal validity to liberal Britons in the twenty-first century, who have little doubt that their own conceptions of gender and sexuality are ‘by definition much better’ than those of Nigerian Anglicans or conservative Muslims? Then and now, progressive politics entails a sense of cultural superiority towards those who are lagging behind.

Instead of finishing on this irony, however, we should leave the last word to the author, who highlights the many ironies of the Macaulay’s own liberal imperialism:

‘A nation founded on gender, class and ethnic inclusions and exclusions; an empire of virtue yet with authoritarian rule at its heart; a universal family of man yet an assumption of cultural and racial hierarchies; a certainty that Western women’s status was an index of levels of development yet a blindness to the culture of strangers; an insistence that all British subjects had the right to the rule of law yet some had more right to it than others; a conviction that civilisation was worth waiting for yet some would wait for centuries – these were amongst the legacies of Macaulay and Son’. (xxvii-xxviii)

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