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Author: Elana Firsht

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“Assembly Line Americanization:” Henry Ford’s Progressive Politics

Henry Ford is often credited as the father of modern industry. His assembly line innovations not only increased productivity for the Ford Motor Company (FMC) but also for American manufacturing in all sectors. However, in addition to mass-producing cars, Ford was also very interested in helping his workers. He created the Five Dollar Day—a new wage program that promised workers a living wage that would enable them to participate in the new consumer culture. Still, workers did not automatically qualify for this program; they first needed to pass an inspection by the Ford Sociological investigators. The Sociological Department, created in 1913, was center of cultural change in the Ford plants.¹ Because many of the immigrant workers did not automatically qualify, Ford created the Ford English School, a free program organized within the Sociological Department for immigrants that instructed them in the English language and American values.² Henry Ford designed the school to turn out Americans in the same way he mass-produced cars. Ford believed that by instilling certain values, such as English language, thrift, and citizenship, immigrant workers could be reformed into proper Americans and could create a solid, moral foundation for America’s new working class. While Ford’s methods may have helped workers, such programs also embodied deeply paternalistic ideals that were supported by the Progressive Era ideals of the time.

Between 1900 and 1910 the promise of a living wage attracted waves of Eastern and Southern European immigrants to settle in Detroit and to take unskilled jobs at the Ford Motor Company.³ Immigrants entered the automobile industry in such great numbers that by 1914,

¹ Stephen Meyer III, *The Five Dollar Day: Labor Management and Social Control in the Ford Motor Company 1908-1921* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), 123.

² Steven Watts, *The People’s Tycoon: Henry Ford and the American Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 205-206.

³ Meyer, *Five Dollar Day*, 76.

almost three quarters of the Ford employees were foreign born.⁴ Plant coordination was difficult due to the multiplicity of the workers' ethnicities; there was no common language for directions, and in the new assembly line system, communication and coordination were crucial. This was especially problematic because the assembly line required increased coordination between workers. This new form of labor was a stark contrast from the agrarian cultures that many immigrant workers had left in their old countries. They were not accustomed to the detailed level of work discipline necessary of the new industrial work place.⁵ Thus, the discontent that workers felt toward the menial labor of the assembly line was reflected in the incredibly high rate of turnover. In 1913, the rate of turnover was 370%.⁶ In order to keep the factories operating, it required extensive work of the Ford staff to continually hire and train new workers.

To rectify his immigrant problem, Ford sought to Americanize his foreign workforce through the Ford English School, which began in 1914. Taught by native-born American workers, the English School was mandatory for foreign-born employees. Samuel Marquis, head of the Ford Sociological Department, stated in a speech that workers who did not make an effort to go to school would be discharged.⁷ While the explicit purpose of the English School was to teach foreign workers English and how to spend their wages, the English School had a much further reaching impact. Ford said, "These men of many nations must be taught American ways, the English language, and the right way to live."⁸ The "right way to live" according to Ford was a life of middle class, bourgeois values that favored consumerism. Ford foreign workers were educated to be a consummate working class—complete with knowledge of important middle

⁴ Meyer, *Five Dollar Day*, 77.

⁵ Stephen Meyer, "Adapting to the Immigrant Line: Americanization in the Ford Factory 1914-1921," *Journal of Social History* 14, no. 1 (Autumn, 1980): 69.

⁶ Meyer, "Adapting to the Immigrant Line", 69.

⁷ "Lecture by Dr. Marquis, Delivered Before the Convention of the Conference of National Charities YMCA, May 17, 1916", in acc 63, Folder 1, FMCA.

⁸ As quoted in Watts, 215.

class traits. Under this view of social classes, immigrants would form a stable working class, grounded in middle-class values that resembled the genteel traditions of self-restraint and hard work emblematic of the bourgeois class since the 1830s.⁹ His middle class ideals had Protestant undertones, which explains Ford's choice of Marquis, a clergyman, to head the Sociological Department.¹⁰ The lessons of the Ford English School were meant to make workers more disciplined, socially responsible, and family oriented, which to Ford meant a sole male breadwinner who was moral, sober and able to raise responsible children.¹¹ Ford warned that children who played on the streets would not grow up to become moral, and that it was a parent's responsibility to raise productive adults. A pamphlet distributed to employees stated, "THE EXAMPLE PARENTS SET THEIR CHILDREN GOES A LONG WAY IN FORMING THEIR HABITS. A GOOD EXAMPLE IS THE BEST SERMON."¹² The English School was meant to be more pervasive than solely educating one worker, as he was supposed to take these lessons home to teach his children.

Ford manufactured cars by sending parts down an assembly line while workers each added a part until a final product was reached. He approached Americanization in the same way: a step-by-step process that, like the assembly line, produced identical products. Marquis, in a speech to a group of educators, stated, "This is the human product we seek to turn out, and as we adapt the machinery in the shop to turning out the kind of automobile we have in mind, so we have construed out educational system with a view to producing the human product in mind."¹³ Workers were not seen as individuals, but rather as a group of immigrants that could be

⁹ Watts, 206.

¹⁰ The Sociological Department, along with Ford, crafted the lessons of the Ford English School

¹¹ Single men and some women were also hired, but Ford emphasized the importance of families, and single men and women were paid less; *The people's tycoon*, 207

¹² *Helpful Hints and Advice to Employes: To Help Them Grasp the Opportunities Which are Presented to Them by the Ford Profit Sharing Plan* (1915), Acc. 951, box 23, in FMCA, 15.; Caps in original

¹³ As quoted in Meyer, *Five Dollar Day*, 157.

transformed into “Americans”. The Ford English School produced Americans by “Seventy-two lessons...taught in thirty-six weeks, two lessons a week, each covering a period of an hour and a half.”¹⁴ By continually adding knowledge of American values to the raw product of the immigrant, they could eventually be turned out as the finished product as Americans. Therefore, because it was almost compulsory for immigrants to attend the English School, Ford could be promised a constant stream of new Americans. An article in the *Ford Times* exclaimed, “By treating employees as Men and making possible for themselves and their families to live respectably, it has become possible—*yes, easy* [my emphasis]—for these thousands of foreign born workers to be refashioned and woven into the warp and woof of greater Americanism.”¹⁵ The FMC believed that this was an “easy” process that could be easily implemented on any immigrant to make them American. Americanization became a sudden and immediate transformation.

For the process to work, immigrant workers had to embrace the Ford English School values. In Ford’s eyes, ethnicity was zero-sum: Americanism stood in opposition to their previous nationality and there was not room for multiple nationalities. The *Ford Times* boasted, “ask anyone of [the graduates] what nationality he is, and the reply will come quickly, ‘American!’ ‘Polish-American?’ you might ask. ‘No, American,’ would be the answer. For they are taught in the Ford English School that the hyphen is a minus sign.”¹⁶ The English School taught immigrants to suppress any customs, behaviors, and ideas from their previous nations and instead to embody the high-culture American values taught in the school. Ford had such confidence in this system because he assumed that all of his immigrant workers were passive

¹⁴ “Better Workmen and Citizens,” *Ford Times*, February 1917, 315-316.

¹⁵ “From Codfish to Motor Cars,” *Ford Times*, August 1915, 31.

¹⁶ “The Making of New Americans,” *Ford Times*, November 1916, 152.

individuals anxious to learn how to become American.¹⁷ This system favored Americanization by force, rather than consent, insisting that immigrants shed their old nationalities as soon as possible. This system closely mirrored President Theodore Roosevelt's ideas of Americanism. In a speech to the Knights of Columbus, President Roosevelt said, "There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism... The one absolutely certain way of bringing this nation to ruin, of preventing all possibility of its continuing to be a nation at all, would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities... each at heart feeling more sympathy with Europeans of that nationality, than with the other citizens of the American Republic."¹⁸ Immigrants shed their hyphen to become one race, Americans, and newly naturalized citizens were intended to share a communal feeling of brotherhood. In Ford's mind it was inconceivable that they would resist this change.¹⁹

The article in the *Ford Times* entitled "The Making of New Americans" speaks to this. It begins by telling the story of an immigrant who enrolled in the Ford English School and after completion of the course, was elected president of his class and was currently serving in the Educational Department at the Ford plant at the time the article was written. The immigrant has changed his name from Haralambos Yannaki to Harry Yannaki and the "Ford English School is making his dreams in the land of liberty come true."²⁰ Beginning with the title, this article demonstrates how, if immigrants fully embrace the values set by the English School, they will become successful Americans. The change from a very ethnic name to a common American name demonstrates one way this particular immigrant embraced American values, and how he has succeeded. The article explains that he is talking to the third graduating class of Ford

¹⁷ Dorothee Schneider, *Crossing Borders: Migration and Citizenship in the Twentieth Century United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 159.

¹⁸ "Roosevelt Bars the Hyphen," *New York Times*, October 13, 1915, 1.

¹⁹ "The Making of New Americans," 152.

²⁰ "The Making of New Americans", 151.

employees, a role model for the other immigrants at the plant. If they engage in the same process that he did, they will be successful as well.²¹

The English language was one trait that was most important to the middle class, and therefore crucially important at the English School. Not only was English necessary for factory communications, it was also a key aspect of a “normal” American life. Ford considered “normal” life to be that of the bourgeois, middle class. Foreign languages were constant reminders that immigrants had come from “other” countries, while English represented a type of “cultural nationalism” that focused on Protestant, Anglo-Saxon traditions that were steeped in an ethnic and linguistic heritage.²² President Theodore Roosevelt felt that learning English was the first step toward Americanization.²³ In their monthly newspaper to Ford customers and workers, the FMC boasts, “Pupils were delighted to learn English and become as other Americans.”²⁴ Immigrants could now speak “our” language, and it would rid them of their foreign influences.²⁵ The English School taught immigrants lessons in English to help them in every day life, such as how to read newspapers and advertisements.²⁶ More importantly, by teaching immigrants English, the working class would not radically alter the social structure of the United States as they continued to live in America. As the working class constituted the largest portion of the United States, if immigrants were left to speak their own language then the importance of English might have diminished.²⁷ Teaching them English drew immigrants into the greater American culture, enabling immigrants to leave their ethnic enclaves, buy food and clothing from non-ethnic stores, and meet other types of people. This promoted a greater “American

²¹ “The Making of New Americans,” 151.

²² Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in the War and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 113.

²³ Allan Nevins, *Ford: the Times, the Man, the Company*, (New York: Scribner, 1954), 558.

²⁴ “Assimilation through Education,” *Ford Times*, June 1915, 411.

²⁵ Dawley, 113.

²⁶ Nevins, 558.

²⁷ Dawley, 113.

race”, rather than fragmented ethnic groups. When immigrants spoke English, the nation was less threatened by their foreign ways.

Additionally, thriftiness and the ability to save were extremely important lessons at the Ford English School. Henry Ford believed that because workers were receiving such high wages, they needed to learn how to spend their money correctly. Ford approved of spending that would contribute to the greater consumer culture, rather than to the underground world of vice. Alcohol and other abusable commodities not only interfered with work, but also affected the lives of the families of workers. It was important to Ford that workers were not selfish, and did not purposefully force their families to live in slums with boarders in order that the male breadwinner could spend his earnings on alcohol. Workers were taught how to save their money, how to open a bank account, and what best to spend it on. A booklet published by FMC to its employees, stated that workers should save part of their earnings to avoidant becoming dependent on others when they are in hard times and to foster self-control.²⁸ The Ford School taught immigrants that they should save their profits in order to move into better housing conditions. Most immigrants in the time were living in tenement slums. Ford, in an effort to uplift his workers, required them to live in good housing conditions in order to qualify for the Five Dollar Day. Before the implementation of the Five Dollar Day program, 46% of workers’ homes qualified as good; by 1917, that number rose to 88%.²⁹ These poor homes were cramped, housed too many people, and were unsanitary.³⁰ FMC expected immigrants to improve their living conditions, and the English School helped teach workers how to save their money for this. By eliminating tenement slums, immigrants were able to live a better, more wholesome life.

²⁸ *Helpful Hints and Advice to Ford Employes*, 17.

²⁹ “Home Report,” Acc 572, box 31, in FMCA.

³⁰ *Helpful Hints and Advice to Ford Employes*, 13

By teaching thrift, the Ford English School taught the principles of capitalism, a very American value. Because socialism and communism were most likely to be associated with the lower classes, it was especially important to inculcate in them a sense of capitalism if they were to be Americanized. Leftists at the time realized the harm that Ford's Americanization program would bring to their cause. Journalist Gerald Stanley Lee, in an issue of *Harper's Weekly*, pointed out that if industrialists tried to improve the lives of their workers rather than saving every cent, radicalism would likely disappear, while also helping the industrialist.³¹ According to many in the upper class, radicalism was un-American at its core. Matthew Jacobson, a historian, writes that, "The principles of socialism were at war with the Constitution."³² Any successful Americanization program must remove any traces of radicalism from its subjects. Socialism grew out of industrial America.³³ Its proponents of equality of wealth sought radical wealth redistribution, which would gravely harm the middle and upper classes. Therefore, a focus on capitalism was key for forming American identity. The implications of preaching the importance of capitalism at the Ford English School sought to solidify in the working class complacency with the current system. If immigrants believed in American values, and therefore democracy, they would not be looking to redistribute wealth from their employers, but rather work hard to achieve their own wealth, better known as the American Dream. This would leave the current wealth structure intact—in which the lower classes would be working to achieve the same ranks as the upper and middle classes. However, until the time when the poor achieved wealth of their own, the two classes would be separate.

³¹ As quoted in Watts, 197.

³² Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: the United States Encounters Foreign Peoples At Home And Abroad, 1876-1917*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 94.

³³ Meyer, "Adapting to the Immigrant Line", 69.

Citizenship was also an important lesson taught in the Ford English School. The *Ford Times* stated that the goal of the English School was always working toward citizenship.³⁴ A diploma from the English School was accepted in the place of the “first papers” for naturalization.³⁵ In addition to the importance of becoming American citizens, English School students were educated on the principles needed to become *good* citizens. Nationally, good citizenship was seen as having certain values attached to it. The Committee for Immigrants in America stated, “Is [the immigrant] not a good citizen when he promotes the welfare of his community and habitually lives for the good of our American society? This means that he will take an active part in good politics... that he will be an honest workman, while taking good care of his family, and that he will...obey the laws.”³⁶ In addition to the other values taught at the English School, good citizens also valued cleanliness and a disciplined work ethic. A Ford pamphlet advised employees, “Employees should use plenty of soap and water in the home, and upon their children bathing frequently...Notice that the most advanced people are the cleanest.”³⁷ With the assumption that immigrants were unclean, most likely derived from their abhorrent living conditions, the Ford School emphasized the importance Americans placed on cleanliness.

Hard work was another mark of good citizenship. Peter Roberts, a major contributor to the English School curriculum, stated, “Good citizenship, means each one in his sphere keeping busy, doing honest work, and contributing to the sum total wealth for the support of the nation.”³⁸ By mentioning that each person occupies a sphere, Roberts alludes to the separation of

³⁴ “Assimilation through Education,” 411.

³⁵ “A Motto Wrought into Education,” *Ford Times*, April 1916, 406.

³⁶ Committee for Immigrants in America, *Citizenship Syllabus*, (New York: New York State Department of Education, 1916), 2.

³⁷ *Helpful Hints to Ford Employes*, 15.

³⁸ As quoted in Meyer, *Five Dollar Day*, 152.

classes in America. As long as each class worked hard, they would be good citizens as long as they contributed to the growth of the nation. Immigrant workers produced a product highly valued in America, which contributed to the advancement of the nation. The English School curriculum reinforced the self esteem of the workers by assuring that, even though they may not have the money of the middle class, they were still good citizens. This subtly hinted that even though immigrants were learning the values and ethics of the middle class, they still remained separate. The English School only turned out Americans, not middle-class Americans. It was not meant to redefine social classes, but rather uplift the lowest class so that their work could support the middle and upper classes. An Americanized lower class provided a stable base for America; it would accept existing beliefs rather than implement their own. The belief in capitalism reinforced the American Dream, and the knowledge of English allowed immigrants to interact and function in the greater society. But nowhere in the English School curriculum did it advocate that the lower immigrant class join the pre-existing middle class.

The American-ness of the newly Americanized immigrants was celebrated with a spectacular pageant. In this ceremony, Ford celebrated how the diversity of immigrants had blended together to form one homogenized race. The ceremony, labeled Ford's "Melting Pot," was a grand pageant. As described in an article in the *Ford Times*, students walked a ramp that appeared to be a gangplank into what looked like the hull of a ship dressed in their traditional clothing. The ceremony is described:

Into the gaping pot they went. Then six instructors of the Ford school, with long ladles, started stirring. 'Stir! Stir!' urged the superintendent of the school. The six bent to greater efforts. From the pot fluttered a flag, held high, then the first of the finished product of the pot appeared, waving his hat. The crowd cheered as he mounted the edge and came down the steps on the side. Many others followed him, gathering in two groups on each side of the cauldron. In contrast to the shabby rags they wore when they were unloaded from the ship, all wore neat suits. They were American in looks.³⁹

³⁹ "The Making of New Americans," 151.

This pageant was meant to demonstrate that graduate of the Ford English School were American. By graduating from the school, they had shed their native identities in favor of an American one.

While the English School and the implementation of these lessons by the Sociological Department may have objectively helped workers, it calls into question the right that Ford had to intrude into the lives of his workers. Ford, raised on traditional Victorian values, believed them to be necessary for creating the best citizens. However, that does not mean that these values were the best, nor does it mean that immigrant workers wanted to learn them. Henry Ford's Americanization programs represented an intrusion of wealthy, corporate power into the lives of the working class. In retrospect, these programs were deeply paternalistic; on the one hand they were attempting to better the lives of workers, but they simultaneously tried to fit the worker into a preconceived mold of a better life,⁴⁰ although Henry Ford at the time did not think so.

Ford's vision for the Sociological Department and the English School resembled the rhetoric of progressive reformers of the time, many of whom were the greatest supporters of his efforts. Like many progressives, Ford believed that the root cause of many of the social ills was due to the home life of the working class. By instilling the values of the Ford English School, they could be corrected and workers would live better lives as good citizens.⁴¹ Ford explained:

We want to make men in this factory as well as automobiles. This company has outlived its usefulness as a money making concern, unless we can do some good with that money. I do not believe in charity, but I do believe in regenerating power of work in men's lives...I believe the only charity worthwhile is the kind that helps a man to help himself...I want the whole organization dominated by a just, generous, and humane policy.⁴²

The English School taught workers the correct way to spend their money, and therefore workers did not need to receive charity. The English School taught workers how to stand on their own

⁴⁰ Meyer, "Adapting to the Immigrant Line", 69.

⁴¹ Watts, 207.

⁴² As quoted in Watts, 207-208

feet. At the time, Ford and his staff believed that workers welcomed and wanted these programs, and those who did not were workers who wanted to continue to lead a life of vice. The rest of the workers welcomed the chance to change their ways and adapt to a better life, and FMC was helping them do that in a friendly way. S. S. Marquis explained to critics that the system was fraternal, rather than paternal.⁴³ Ford saw his programs as a strictly beneficial, friendly way to help his workers, and states that, “nothing paternal was intended.”⁴⁴

The English School and Ford’s other Americanization programs found support outside of the company. Progressives throughout the nation were arguing for more services to help the poor, including lessons in English and improving housing conditions.⁴⁵ The principles that Ford was espousing fit well with their reformist rhetoric. Ford’s moralistic, Christian ideals echoed much of the reformist sentiment, like prohibition and temperance.⁴⁶

One progressive, Ida Tarbell, gave Ford’s plant enthusiastic support. She not only supported the increased pay for workers during the Five Dollar Day, but also the efforts of the Sociological Department and the Ford English School. She was especially impressed with Ford’s efforts at cleanliness and sobriety for his immigrant students, noting that workers came to tell her how it felt good to be “clean” for the first time in their lives.⁴⁷ As noted earlier in a pamphlet distributed by FMC, immigrants were thought to be unclean, and were instructed on how to maintain proper hygiene. Additionally, she lauded Ford for his implementation of sobriety, and Ford’s effort to reform workers. She spoke with one worker who explained to her that he is happy now that he is sober, remarking that he wishes that someone had helped him years

⁴³ Watts, 219.

⁴⁴ Henry Ford, *My Life and Work*, (Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1922), 130.

⁴⁵ Steven Diner, *A Very Different Age: Americans in the Progressive Era* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 201.

⁴⁶ Lewis Gould, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1914*, (Harlow: Longman, 2005).

⁴⁷ Ida Tarbell, *All in a Day’s Work: An Autobiography* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1939), 291.

before.⁴⁸ She sums her experience by saying, “[FMC was] taking men and women, individuals, families, and with patience and sense of humor and determination were putting them on their feet, giving them interest and direction in managing their lives. This was Henry Ford of 1916.⁴⁹ Her literature on the subject illustrates her respect for Henry Ford’s work.

The city of Detroit also lauded Ford’s Americanization programs. Ford’s programs became the model for the Americanization programs for the city of Detroit. Detroit’s “English-First” campaign was designed to teach all of the immigrants living within the city how to speak English, as well as prepare them for the citizenship examine. Few changes were made to Ford’s idea, except that it was less pervasive into the lives of immigrants because it was not possible to enforce in the same way that Ford was able to. The Detroit Board of Commerce asked employers to display posters depicting, “Uncle Sam welcoming the immigrant and directing him to the public school, the road to the English language and to American citizenship.”⁵⁰ Like Ford, the Detroit system also emphasized the dual need of English and citizenship. Others businesses in Detroit responded to this enthusiastically, some taking the example of FMC and making attendance at Detroit’s night schools compulsory. It was proudly reported that, “with co-operation of this kind the campaign to make Detroit a city of English-speaking factories within a year seems not visionary.”⁵¹ The programs of Detroit, in turn, were used as a model for the National Americanization Committee.⁵² Henry Ford’s Americanization programs therefore, served a national purpose, Americanizing immigrants throughout the nation.

Not all agreed with Ford’s programs. The investigators, sent to determine whether or not immigrants were embracing the values taught in the English School, pried into the intimate

⁴⁸ Ida Tarbell, *New Ideals in Business*, (New York: MacMillan Company, 1917), 128.

⁴⁹ Tarbell, *All in a Day’s Work*, 291.

⁵⁰ Esther Everett Lape, “The English First Movement in Detroit,” *Immigrants in America Review* 1 (Sept. 1915), 46.

⁵¹ Lape, 50.

⁵² Meyer, “Adapting to the Immigrant Line,” 76.

details of workers' personal lives, which many saw as a form of tyranny. Many critics questioned the right of Ford to regulate the personal lives of workers because he was paying them good wages. Workers were forced to face brutal humiliation in order to earn a decent wage; something that more skilled workers did not have to face.⁵³ One journal stated, "[The workers] want to live their own lives in their own way, advancing to a higher social status, if that is what it is, by process of evolution, certainly not by processes of proscription."⁵⁴ These critics argued that workers deserved the freedom to spend their paychecks however they wanted, even if their wants were not based in strong moral values. It was their duty to work hard for Ford, but Ford's responsibility for them ended when they left the factory.

While the aims of the English School were benevolent, they were achieved by highly manipulative means. Workers were treated in a paternalistic manner, and Ford regarded the immigrants like children. John Reed, a leftist journalist, denounced Ford's programs; stating, "This action, makes one seriously doubt whether, after all, men should not be treated like slaves or children."⁵⁵ Even in the lessons taught at the English School, workers learned by repeating after the teacher like young school children.⁵⁶ Although workers may have appreciated some of the benefits from the Ford English School, they did not appreciate having to let investigators enter their private lives. Some workers did not want to attend the English School, and in 1919, thirty-eight workers were dismissed for refusing to attend.⁵⁷ Ironically, while Ford was trying to teach his workers the benefits of living in a free state, he pried into their lives like a totalitarian dictator.

⁵³ Meyer, 147.

⁵⁴ As quoted in Watts, 220.

⁵⁵ As quoted in Watts, 221.

⁵⁶ "Assimilation through Education," 410.

⁵⁷ Little information was left by the workers, and due to time constraints, the only available information has been found in this book. There most likely were more cases of workers rebelling against the Ford system; Watts, 221

Thus, the Ford English School taught thousands of workers how to become proper Americans, but only through condescending and paternal means. In his autobiography, Ford writes, “[Americanization] tended toward paternalism. Paternalism has no place in the industry.”⁵⁸ By 1920, the Americanization experiment ended. Workers may have been able to achieve a high standard of life, but only by losing their freedom and submitting to Ford’s total authority. However, the Americanization debate did not end with the end of the Ford English School. As large numbers of immigrants continue to enter America today, the debate between acceptance and assimilation continues on. In light of the current immigration situation, politicians can look back on our immigrant past for lessons on how to treat immigrations.

⁵⁸ Ford, 130.

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*Note—FMCA stands for Ford Motor Company Archives

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The Rise of Beriberi and the fall of Colonialism

Southeast Asian communities have sustained themselves on rice for millennia. Rice paddies dominate much of the landscape, and the cultivation of this rice in turn dominates the lives of many Southeast Asians. The centrality of rice to Southeast Asia is nicely represented in Carpenter's observation that in Malay, "the word *nasi* is used for food in general and for cooked rice in particular. In Thailand, the general term meaning 'to eat' translated literally means 'to eat rice'"(Carpenter, 15). The processing of rice changed dramatically in the 1870s with the advent of power-driven steam mills that made it possible to produce refined white rice cheaply and efficiently. Since white rice stores longer than brown rice, colonial governments used white rice preferentially in their institutions, and a large-scale dietary shift to white rice consumption ensued in colonial population centers. However, removing the rice hull to process white rice also removes many essential nutrients from the rice, including Vitamin B1, also known as thiamin. Vitamin B1 deficiency causes beriberi, which is a debilitating and if untreated, fatal, ailment. Large-scale production and consumption of white rice, made possible by power driven mills, resulted in an explosion in beriberi in Southeast Asia in the late 19th century. In 1896, Christiaan Eijkman serendipitously identified the cause of the disease as a nutrient deficiency associated with consumption of white rice. Even then, Western scientists continued to search for a cure for beriberi, failing to recognize or pursue the connection of the epidemic to colonial rice milling. The specific deficiency involved was not identified until the 1930s, and it was not until 1947 that Western scientists developed techniques for enrichment of white rice with thiamin that effectively ended the beriberi

epidemic. The history of this epidemic, including its ironic role in both threatening colonial ideology as well as prolonging it, offers a window on that ideology and its practice in Southeast Asia.

Beriberi threatened colonial rule both not only because it crippled colonial military forces, thereby hindering the enforcement of colonial dominance, but also because the epidemic, which was recognized even then as affecting primarily those integrated into the system, called into question the belief that colonial rule improved the lives of the colonized. Ironically, this conceit of Western superiority blinded colonial scientists to beriberi's real cause, gave those scientists a false impression of their control over the disease, and prolonged the epidemic until the colonial era had already come to an end.

Beriberi is a devastating and painful neurodegenerative disease. Robert Williams, who helped end the epidemic when he developed a technique to enrich white rice, describes the symptoms characteristic of the onset of beriberi, which begin with a growing numbness of the legs that:

becomes an exquisite tenderness of the muscles so that severe pain is elicited by pressure on the calves.... [T]he muscles shrink and waste away and the gait is extremely lame....[T]enderness may extend to the arms so that feeding and dressing oneself becomes almost impossible. The victim ultimately becomes a helpless and shrunken skeleton (Williams, 62).

Despite Williams' euphemism 'tenderness', the creeping paralysis he describes must have been nightmarish, particularly for young colonial officers who found themselves incapable of moving their legs and, with time, unable to move their arms. J. Ridley, a British Army Surgeon serving in Ceylon in 1813, oversaw an area in which a serious outbreak of beriberi was killing five to eight men every day. One can only imagine his

anxiety when he awoke “...with a sensation of tightness, as if a bar were placed across my breast... I found my legs and feet perfectly numb and swollen, the space around my mouth, reaching nearly my eyes, felt numb”(Carpenter, 26). Ridley recovered in full upon his return to England, but the soldiers he left behind died. Such continuous loss drained colonial armies of their manpower.

For the European armed forces, beriberi represented a grave threat to colonial dominance in Southeast Asia. Carpenter remarks, “For the administrators of the European colonies in Southeast Asia towards the end of the nineteenth century, one of the worrying things was that the disease [beriberi] was a particularly serious and increasing problem among men in their employ, whether as soldiers or civilians”(Carpenter, xi). That is to say Beriberi imperiled the colonial state apparatus. Charles Smart, a Surgeon General in the US Army, reported in 1903 that ““The 39th and 44th companies of Philippine Scouts were the sufferers [of beriberi] at Iloilo [...] In the third week of the quarantine the first case of beri-beri occurred, and soon afterwards one-third of the company was affected””(Brandon, 103). The Dutch campaign against the Sultan of Aceh highlighted beriberi’s ability to incapacitate a colonial fighting force. In 1886, an offensive against the Sultanate of Aceh was suspended in response to the “alarming increase in cases of beriberi among soldiers and sailors”(Carpenter, 32). When the campaign resumed, beriberi continued to decimate the troops. A table from *Koloniaal verslag* published in 1894 shows that in 1893 an average of 500 soldiers died every month from beriberi, and an additional 500 soldiers were evacuated, so that casualties from beriberi exceeded 1,000 soldiers a month, for a total of 13,096 casualties in 1893 alone (Hellwig & Tagliacozzo, 2009).

In addition to threatening the apparatus of colonial rule, the beriberi epidemic of the colonial era also flew in the face of the ideological principle upon which the colonists relied to justify their occupation and exploitation of foreign lands, that is to say, that they were improving the lives of the indigenous people. Beriberi was most prevalent in colonial-run institutions such as jails, asylums, hospitals, armies, and navies where the colonial institutions supplied white rice. Thus it was apparent that colonial rule was in fact detrimental to the health of native populations. In his 1913 book detailing beriberi, Captain Edward Vedder of the US Army Medical Corps remarked that, “Beriberi is, moreover, principally a disease of large towns, usually the low-lying ports of the city being principally attacked. Occasionally, certain centers and certain buildings are specifically attacked particularly jails, barracks, and hospitals”(Vedder, 136). Williams, writing in 1961, also noted the connection between colonial centers and beriberi:

All who have read the early Dutch studies of beriberi have been struck by the fact that, at its worst, its appearance was limited to jails, armies, navies, and institutions where large numbers of persons were fed from a common kitchen. While beriberi had occasionally appeared spontaneously among the Javanese people in their homes, several of the Dutch writers of last century [19th century] emphasize that it never was a disease prevalent in the native villages where the life of the people had been little influenced by Western industry and culture (Williams, 230).

These descriptions of beriberi’s distribution make clear that the disease was recognized to be most common in parts of the country under direct colonial administration where mass-produced white rice was principally consumed. Moreover, the incidence of beriberi increased in the areas of greater colonial control, such as large port towns and government run institutions. These facts raised the following question: why, if colonialism improved the lives of indigenous peoples, were those living

traditional lifestyles left unaffected by the epidemic while those who followed the lifestyle patterns of their colonial overlords the ones who suffered most?

Ironically, the observation could have led to elucidation of the etiology of the disease, and dietary solutions—such as were long practiced for scurvy, which was recognized as a dietary deficiency, and “solved” by consumption of foods supplying Vitamin C long before its specific cause was identified. In fact, in 1890, C.O. Gelpke, a Dutch medical officer, wrote that beriberi should be called

‘the government disease’ and . . . suggested that natives in their villages remained free from beriberi because they stored their rice crop in the husk, and hand-pounded only enough for their immediate needs, whereas in government establishments milled rice was kept for long periods before use (Carpenter, 42).

Gelpke here implicated western technology, the West’s gift to its colonies, as the cause of beriberi, and unknowingly suggested a way to end the epidemic: return to the native Southeast Asians’ traditional methods for storing and processing rice. Gelpke’s analysis, however, was ignored by a society entrenched in its ideology that colonization surely benefited local peoples.

Colonial scientists appear to have been so loyal to the ideological principle of colonialism as a beneficent force that they could not accept the possibility that colonial technology had caused the epidemic. Moreover, their belief in the efficacy of Western science, germ theory and Western methods of quantifying disease gave them a false sense of control over beriberi. This mindset ultimately prolonged the epidemic.

In 1878, William Anderson, a British doctor, began his report on beriberi to the Asiatic Society of Japan with the statement that beriberi “ is peculiar to the East and is unlikely to excite much interest in Europe and America”(Anderson, 155). The false perception that beriberi was an exotic disease of the Far East resulted from the conceit

that the tropics were an unsanitary region requiring the aid of Western science.

Beriberi's supposed exotic nature is apparent in its very name. There is no single dominant theory about the origin or meaning of the name 'beriberi,' but all explanations connect beriberi to an ancient past in tropical Asia. Jacobus Bontius, a Dutch doctor, proposed that 'beriberi' was derived from a local Javanese word for sheep because the victim's weak gait resembled that of a sheep. Carpenter states that some of the alternative explanations have been, "the Hindi word *bharbari* (swelling); or the combination of the Arabic words *buhr* (shortness of breath) and *bahri* (marine)" (Carpenter, 25). Dr. Sarat Ghose, a physician in Calcutta, reinforced the connection between beriberi and Asia in his book published in 1910: "The name Beri-beri has been given to this malady by Nalanban—singalese for weakness and the repetition means extreme weakness. ... [I]t is a malady known to the people of the greatest antiquity and was prevalent in China from an extremely distant period"(Ghose, 1-2). Thus, the only consensus among these etymological theories is that this mysterious word originated in the East, reinforcing Western beliefs that beriberi was a fundamentally Asian disease with an etiology unique to the tropics.

Captain Edward Vedder, though well aware in 1913 that beriberi was a nutrient deficiency disease and not restricted solely to Asia, not only accepted a historiography of the disease tying beriberi to ancient China but also ignored the relationship of the epidemic to the introduction of the rice mill. He postulated "Chinese customs and conditions of life have changed little with the passing of centuries, and were probably much the same then [2697 B.C.] as they are now. We should expect that beriberi, a food disease, would be prevalent then exactly as it is now"(Vedder, 1). Writing in 1913, after

Eijkman had established that the disease was related to white rice consumption, Vedder nevertheless could not see that, while rice had been the staple crop of Asia for millennia, its nutritional quality had been significantly reduced under colonial rule. In this way, he avoided acknowledging that the epidemic was fostered by the colonizers and could instead conceive of beriberi as an endemic plague that the white colonists valiantly set about to conquer.

Early theories on beriberi's cause reveal not only a similar insistence that beriberi was a peculiarity of tropical Southeast Asia but also an excessive enthusiasm for Western germ theory. In his book, Braddon presented three theories of beriberi's etiology that were prominent in 1907. "Wright's Theory of Dirt Infection," according to Braddon, was that victims pick up and carry a germ living in the dirt (Braddon, 26). Durham, according to Braddon, presented a similar theory that a microbe living in the ground only in the tropics caused beriberi. Finally, Braddon proposed the "Pure Miasma Theory" that "[t]he extrinsic cause [...] a mold, a microbe—produces a toxin—dust, liquid, a gas—the continual absorption of which, disseminated or spread through air into the system produces beriberi"(Braddon, 32). While these theories differ in their particulars, they all espouse the idea that there is some contagion particular to Southeast Asia causing beriberi.

Braddon rejected those theories, asserting instead that stale rice produces a toxin. However, this theory also specifically linked beriberi to the rice-eating people of Southeast Asia and it did not consider the role of Western food technology in causing the epidemic. Indeed, the idea that beriberi was an ancient tropical disease and that the epidemic had nothing to do with colonial development was so entrenched that even

Eijkman, the first to classify beriberi as a nutritional deficiency resulting from the consumption of milled rice, thought for a period of time that beriberi resulted from “infections present in Indonesia which were acquired, in combination with poor diet” (Carpenter, 53). Eijkman was also predisposed to believe that there was some contagion in Southeast Asia that caused beriberi, suggesting that Western scientists’ investigations were shaped by colonial prejudices that perverted their insights.

The resistance to the idea that beriberi was simply a nutritional disease like scurvy, rather than a tropical disease reflecting something sinister and unsanitary about Southeast Asia, reflects these colonial prejudices. John Malcolmson, the Assistant Surgeon General in Madras, stated in an 1835 report that “[t]he easy circumstances of many of the native soldiers who suffered [from beriberi] are fatal to any supposition of the disease depending on deficient and unhealthy diet”(Malcolmson, 42). Eijkman only determined the nutritional cause of the disease when he noticed that laboratory chickens fed a diet of milled white rice developed symptoms of beriberi, and recovered when they received unshelled rice. Other scientists, however, resisted Eijkman's theory. In 1910, Dr. Ghose wrote, “we will be fairly convinced that these conditions [eating milled rice] prevail over vast areas of India, but epidemic dropsy, or beriberi is, by no means, a widespread malady”(Ghose, 25). Long-lasting dissent to beriberi as a nutritional disease reflects incredulity that under enlightened European rule there could possibly be a dietary deficiency. Notions of Western cultural superiority thus prevented western scientists from seeing what now seems obvious: colonialism caused the beriberi epidemic.

Confidence in the West's scientific superiority also convinced colonialists that applying Western methods allowed them to control and understand beriberi. While evaluating Japanese medical descriptions of beriberi, Anderson remarked:

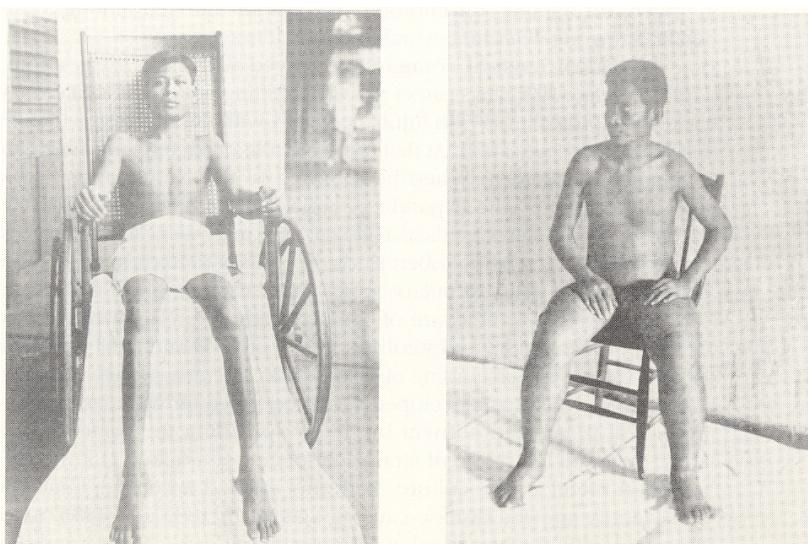
The description by Tachibana Nanke, which is still considered the best in this country, is very curious and interesting, but its usefulness is greatly limited by the groping after tortuous explanations of natural and morbid phenomena in the misty influences of the *in* and *yo*, and the complex interrelationships of five pseudo- elements of Chinese philosophy to the neglect of close observation and scientific research (Anderson, 156).

Anderson's distaste for non-Western medical theory is evident in this quotation; his concession that Nanke's description is the best in Japan only reinforces his patronizing dismissal of what he considered pseudo-scientific medical theories. Moreover, Anderson's emphasis on the importance of "close observation and scientific research" implies that Westerners can understand and gain control over beriberi through the simple application of the scientific method. There is also more than a hint here that Westerners, armed with scientific knowledge, are more fit to rule than Asians mired in superstition. However, the irony in Anderson's remarks is that, as described above, Westerners propounded many pseudo-scientific theories about beriberi while they failed to control the epidemic and only gradually groped their way toward an understanding of the disease.

Meanwhile, colonial scientists relied on the trappings of Western science, quantitative measurement and documentation, to give the impression that they both understood and controlled the disease. Almost every primary source analyzed for this paper contains extensive tables and graphs documenting the incidence of beriberi in different populations. The table *Casualties from Beriberi in the Aceh War, 1893* from the *Koloniaal verslag* counts victims by race—European, African, Ambonese, and indigenous people—month, and whether the patient died or was evacuated. What the

table also shows is that the Dutch—rather in the manner of whistling in the dark to convince them that they were really, as befitted the colonial masters, in control—conflated measuring the disease with controlling it. Braddon’s book similarly contains an intricate foldout graph that tracks average rainfall, case-incidence of beriberi, mortality, and Chinese rate of sickness, at thirty-one stations over twenty years (Braddon, 336). The graph reveals how Braddon carefully, keeping with the best traditions of Western science, examined the incorrect variables when trying to understand the epidemic. Perhaps intentionally, it also gives an impression of Britain’s extensive power in the Malay and reinforces the sense that colonial rule was a well-established, almost pre-ordained, feature of the Malay Peninsula.

This idea of control through scientific technology also pervades photographs taken of beriberi patients during the epidemic, which seek to emphasize Westerners’ supposed control of beriberi through science as well as their colonial subjects. In theory, photographs objectively portray their subjects, and present an ideal medium for the scientific study of disease. Through the selection of images and posing of subjects, however, photographs like those shown below, contribute little to understanding the beriberi epidemic, yet simultaneously convey the message that the colonialists had the tools to wage war against tropical diseases in Southeast Asia. Photography demonstrated



that colonial doctors had access to the most advanced technology: if anyone were to unravel this mysterious, deadly disease, certainly it would be

those with the most advanced modern technology. These photographs also demonstrate the colonialists' power over their subjects, as they required them to strip and display their withered or swollen legs in the name of scientific progress and presumably their own good. And, by placing the subjects in laboratory-like settings, the photos also imply a connection to science and reinforce the impression of scientific mastery.

Finally, once it was understood that the disease was caused by consumption of milled white rice, the colonial powers chose to develop a "cure" rather than reverting to brown rice, ultimately prolonging the beriberi epidemic for another thirty years. In 1912, after Eijkman's theory that beriberi was a disease of nutrient deficiency had been widely accepted, the Far Eastern Association of Tropical Medicine met in Hong Kong to address beriberi. The Director of Health in the Philippines, Victor Heiser stated, "[t]he time has come to bring this knowledge to the attention of all Governments concerned... [P]eople are dying of beriberi by the thousands and the knowledge by which this can be prevented is at our command"(Carpenter, 95). Heiser called upon colonial powers to use that knowledge to save thousands of Asian lives. Remarkably, however, rather than simply returning to reliance on un-milled rice to end the epidemic, the colonial delegates of the Far Eastern Association of Tropical Medicine resolved to isolate the nutritional factor missing in milled rice, and then replace it. The Association in effect rejected agricultural and dietary practices prevalent in Asia for centuries in favor of maintaining the conditions that caused the epidemic so that they would have a chance to correct the deficiency in milled rice.

It took Williams another two decades, until 1934, to determine thiamin's chemical composition, and two more years for him to synthesize it. It took yet another eleven

years finally to implement Williams' "cure" for the first time in 1947. It is telling that in his book on beriberi, Williams acknowledged the scientists whose accomplishments made his discoveries possible, thanking Vedder, Casimir Funk, Atherton Seidell, Jansen, Donath, R.A. Peters, Takaki, Eijkman, Grijns, Fraser, and Stanton. Of the eleven people acknowledged, only Takaki is Asian; of the Westerners, only Funk was not from a colonial power. Williams thus makes it clear that the conquest of beriberi was predominantly a colonial effort, propelled, but also impaired, by the colonial belief in the "white man's burden."

The ultimate demonstration of European colonial control over beriberi came too late to legitimize colonial rule. Beginning in 1947, one year after the United States recognized Philippine independence, Williams, in collaboration with Dr. Juan Salcedo, a Filipino Doctor, conducted the Bataan Experiment, which proved the efficacy of a thiamin coating to milled rice in preventing beriberi:

The results of the experiment *in toto* seemed very significant of the benefits conveyed by rice enrichment. Considering the difficulties of the task and especially of controlling the desire of people of the control area to share in the benefits of the program among their neighbors, one could scarcely ask for better evidence (Williams, 198).

Perhaps it is the final irony of the epidemic that, while it was too late to maintain the colonial system that had fallen victim to the Great Depression and World War II, Williams nonetheless transformed beriberi from a colonially-caused disease into a colonially-cured one.

Beriberi is sometimes seen as a poster child for the triumph of Western medicine over disease. Eijkman received a Nobel Prize in 1929 for his work on beriberi, and William's technique to enrich rice removed beriberi from the world's consciousness.

However, while the conquest of beriberi is in some ways the story of the power of Western medicine, it is also the story of the unintended consequences of technology—and of how colonial ideology and, perhaps, arrogance, hindered Western science and extended an epidemic caused by technology.

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Author: Sarah Leddon

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How Tutti-Frutti Hats and Booties Reshaped American Cultures

The hypnotizing sway of the Carmen Miranda's colorful hips, the flirtatious flicker of her dark eyes, and her heavily accented singing voice introduced Americans to an exciting new object of obsession, sexualization, objectification, and adoration: the Latina entertainer. The umbrella term "Latina" is broad and somewhat fluid, but in this paper I will define Latinas as "women of Latin American birth or heritage, including women from North, Central, and South America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean" (Ruiz and Korrol 5). Born in Portugal but raised in Brazil and identified as Brazilian, Miranda falls under this expansive term. The legacy of the Latina entertainer has evolved and reappeared in mainstream American culture since Miranda's success in the 1940's and 50's, most recently in the career of Jennifer Lopez, the Puerto Rican singer, actress, dancer, fashion mogul, and television personality. While both Carmen Miranda and Jennifer Lopez have enjoyed great popularity in America among the dominant white culture, their success has been anchored to their status as brown and exotic others- seductive yet distinct outsiders. This racialized and sexualized seclusion from white "normativity" simultaneously limits Miranda and Lopez from being fully accepted into mainstream society as equals and paradoxically empowers them to challenge social norms from the "outside." Carmen Miranda and Jennifer Lopez have been instrumental in increasing the visibility of Latinas in the media, though they primarily remain in the complex context of otherness, but their success has also generated restricted and generic definitions of Latinas in the U.S. While both Miranda and Lopez have been racialized and sexualized by mainstream American society, each woman has demonstrated significant agency in shaping her successful career.

Though Latinas have lived in America since before the nation's founding, the meteoric rise to fame of Carmen Miranda after she came to the U.S. in 1939 finally put a Latina face on

Broadway and then the big screen. Miranda's years in Hollywood coincided with the Good Neighbor Policy, a Washington effort to align the U.S. with fellow countries in the Western Hemisphere, specifically those in Latin America, in order to "shore up economic ties and thwart Nazi influence in the region" (O'Neil 202). Consequently, Hollywood began producing more Latin-themed films and casted the talented Miranda in sixteen of them in a span of less than fifteen years. Miranda's accent and style, inspired by Afro-Brazilian women's *baiana* and Brazilian samba music, both broadcasted her *Latinidad* to huge audiences and infused Hollywood with diversity and multiculturalism. Unfortunately, these films type-casted Miranda as she portrayed "stereotypical images of Latinos as perpetual fun-seekers, flirts, and flamboyant dancers" (O'Neil 203). Although Miranda contributed to legitimizing stereotypes, she ultimately "was able to create some awareness within the United States of cultures below its border due to her popularity" (Ellis 79). Pricilla Peña Ovalle, assistant professor of film and media studies at the University of Oregon, similarly conceded that "in spite of Fox studio's insensitivity to Latin America and the limited characterizations it offered Miranda, its film catalog represents a contradictory period of progress for non-white performers in mainstream Hollywood film" (Ovalle 55). While her legacy in Hollywood has been controversial and problematic, Miranda's undeniable presence has helped to facilitate progress and cultural awareness that mainstream America had been previously lacking.

Carmen Miranda introduced American audiences to Latinas, and Jennifer Lopez has since made it impossible for America to ignore them. As an actress, recording artist, dancer, business woman, fashion designer, and television personality, Lopez's products are consumed everywhere from movie theaters, to living rooms, to a billboard or the local Macy's. She "continues to grace more magazine covers than most any other star," Latina, white, or otherwise (Guzmán and

Valdivia 209). Through her multiple and diverse ventures, Lopez has become a “crossover success,” signifying that the recognition of Latinas has greatly increased since Miranda’s days of being type-casted and strictly limited to the same stereotypical act (Valdivia 137). While Lopez’s career notes that the representation of Latinas in the media has made significant gains, she still shares the status of “the Other” with Miranda as a Latina woman performing in the context of “the dominant U.S. binary of Black or White identities” (Guzmán and Valdivia 214).

In the U.S., Latinas occupy a space of otherness between the privileged position of whites and the denounced position of blacks, which consequently leaves Latina/os out of dominant racial discourse. This secluded space provides Latinas with opportunities of bridging and challenging these norms and financially benefitting from working between them, but it also positions Latinas as outsiders -- exotic, hyper-sexualized beings that are somehow less than fully human. While all actresses in Hollywood are to some extent sexualized, the sexualization of Latina actresses is tied to race, and manifests itself in specific, exoticized ways. This racialized otherness presents a paradox: Latina bodies are marginalized and “marked as other, yet it is that otherness that also marks Latinas as desirable” (Guzmán and Valdivia 212). Scholars Isabel Molina Guzmán and Angharad N. Valdivia connect Latina’s otherness to being desirable, implying that the marginalization of Latina bodies leads to the sexualization.

Both Miranda and Lopez have been viewed as these exotic others and have consequently been fetishized by U.S. mainstream culture. Carmen Miranda’s bold costumes, red lips, olive skin, and accented English distinctly separated her from her white counterparts in films and presented her as exotic. Eroticized through these exotic qualities, Miranda and other Latina actresses “became fetishes, goddesses to be admired, desired, and, hence, dehumanized’ (Ellis 64). As exotic others, Latinas represent exciting and erotic images to admire, yet, due to their

lack of “pure” whiteness, they are inappropriate mates and are limited to becoming dehumanized and fetishized objects.

For example, Jennifer Lopez similarly inhabits the realm of the sexualized other with the attention focused on her large buttocks. Her famed “bootie is marked as unusually large... and by implication not Anglo-Saxon,” therefore she too is banished to the in-between (Guzmán and Valdivia 212). Again, as an exotic other, Lopez’s butt “is glamorized and sexually fetishized,” reducing her to an anatomical part synonymous with over sexuality and defecation- topics, considered dirty and taboo by white mainstream culture. Due to their position as racialized others, Miranda and Lopez are hypersexualized and stripped of a respected human identity.

While “otherness” limits the Latina entertainers to dehumanized sexual symbols, it also permits them to act in less-restricted ways by challenging the dominant culture. It was Miranda’s ability to move between cultures that enabled her to find success in Brazil and the United States. In the first half of the 1900’s, Brazil was strictly stratified along class lines with white elites rejecting the value of the black poor. As a working-class, light skinned woman singing the African inspired samba, Miranda looked like the rich, and related to the poor, existing in-between the two sides, and thus became “the embodiment of Brazilian popular music” (Ovalle 58). Her connection to the rich and poor made her the perfect unifying force the Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas was searching for and “enabled her to challenge societal norms” with the full support of the state (Ovalle 57). Miranda sang on the radio, a radical move for a woman, and popularized an African and consequently “low-class” style of music and dress, making gains for both women and blacks.

Once in America, Miranda again transmitted “black styles and culture through a white body” but this time “under the code or guise of Latinness” instead of whiteness (Ovalle 60). As

an “other” in America, Miranda was able to access mainstream culture, unlike blacks, and also emulate and engage with black culture, unlike whites. Miranda’s explicitly African Bahian look became incredibly popular in U.S. department stores, and Saks Fifth Avenue filled its windows with mannequins adorned in colorful turbans and modified bainas (O’Neil 199). The promotion of an inherently black style in New York City, one of the fashion capitals of the world, stands as a testament to Miranda’s excellence at mediating between blackness and whiteness in order to break the normative rules of society.

As a signifier of her otherness, Jennifer Lopez’s bodacious butt excluded her from hegemonic society but also enabled her to challenge and reshape that very same society. Lopez’s butt has often been the focus of interviews, magazine covers, journalistic discourse, and pop culture. Her curvaceousness has mediated between “white normativity and black unacceptability” by enticing both groups yet belonging to neither (Valdivia 39). Before Jennifer Lopez, the well-endowed buttocks was “generally considered shameful by American standards of beauty and propriety,” but Lopez’s commanding presence as a celebrated other “ushered in a butt focus...and therefore has intervened in the codes of beauty and femininity” (Negrón-Muntaner 237, Valdivia 142). Lopez successfully toppled former “buttless” notions of beauty that mainly encompassed thin whites and provided curvaceous women of color an opportunity to reclaim their legitimate beauty as well. In this drastic inversion of beauty, we can see how Lopez maneuvers between whites and blacks. Similarly to Miranda, Lopez’s light skin allows her to access white society in a non-threatening guise, while simultaneously performing blackness in specific ways. Though Lopez’s butt is more aligned with female African Americans’ (stigmatized) curvaceous bodies, her preferential treatment as a light skinned other permits her to perform and popularize blackness among whites. While otherness can limit Latinas to restrictive

sexual and racial identities, it can also empower them to voice new opinions in conflict with societal customs.

As “others” performing for a dominant society they do not belong to, Miranda and Lopez have both earned significant financial benefits through their token status as Latinas. In order to find success in Brazil and the United States where she occupied a space of in-between, “Miranda created an outrageous stage identity and utilized the fetishization of her racialized body for male audiences to her benefit” (Ellis 69). This benefit played out to the tune of an income well above \$200,000 a year by 1945, making Miranda the highest-paid woman in America (O’Neil 201). Lopez currently holds a similar position as the highest paid Latina actress, hauling in \$13 million per movie ((Guzmán and Valdivia 209). Frances Negrón-Muntaner locates the source of Lopez’s immense revenue and jokes commenting, “No wonder she says ‘I have a curvaceous Latin body...I like to accentuate that.’ So would I- all the way to the bank” (Frances Negrón-Muntaner 235). While Miranda’s stage identity and exoticism, and Lopez’s shapely butt, are tied to their status as “others” in mainstream American society, both have used these labels in order to exert agency in leveraging their restricted but desirable roles and bodies to gain wealth and fame.

Carmen Miranda and Jennifer Lopez’s shared status as particularly influential others caused their voices/portrayals to be privileged as the all-encompassing model of who Latinas are. As the most widely consumed Latina stars of their times, they “serve as emblems of Latinidad in the popular imagination, they also, as Alberto Sandoval-Sánchez contends, ‘put into question who is Latino/a, what is Latino identity, and which images of Latinidad predominate and circulate” (Valdivia 17). Clearly, the most visible Latina has the power to define who a Latina is and how she is perceived through circulated images.

In her widely popular movies, Miranda's signature and unchanging style of "colorful costumes, heavily accented English, and performative body parts (hips, arms, and eyes)" produced a "generic, if exaggerated, Latin American Other" (Ovalle 50). The redundancy of Miranda's performances as she played Cuban, Brazilian, and Argentinian Latinas implies that there exists only one homogenized Latina identity and erases all diversity within the group.

Her stagnant roles express exactly how this generic Latina is to act. Due to her early place in Hollywood, restrictive roles, and redundant portrayals, Miranda can be viewed as the founding mother of Latina stereotypes in Hollywood film. In particular, she equates Latinidad with what is now referred to as tropicalism: the close association of Latino/as with "bright colors, rhythmic music, and brown or olive skin" along with "red-colored lips, bright seductive clothing, curvaceous hips and breasts, long brunette hair, and extravagant jewelry" for Latinas in particular (Guzmán and Valdivia 211). These tropes constitute some of the most enduring stereotypes of Latinas, revealing both the influential power Miranda had in the 1950s and 1960s but also the great harm she caused. In many of her movies, Miranda has few or no lines of dialogue, which in turn indicates that the common Latina lacks a voice and therefore also lacks agency in her personal life. These harmful restrictive stereotypes consequently "started a tradition still prevalent in mass media Latino/a depictions" (Ellis 78).

Jennifer Lopez's immense success and status as the most famous Latina has similarly put her in the privileged position of speaking on behalf of all Latinas. Angharad Valdivia notes this and writes "J.Lo is the contemporary signifier for Latinidad and stands alone in a nearly iconic position vis-à-vis other mainstream Latina actresses" (Valdivia 130). As the lone icon placed above other Latina actresses, Lopez acts as an authoritative embodiment of Latinidad for white, mainstream audiences. And of course, the butt figuratively does a lot of the talking. Speaking

about her curvaceous body, Lopez claims, “They’re [wardrobe designers] always trying to minimize- put it that way- and its because we see all those actresses who are so thin and white. Latinas have a certain body type. Even the thin ones, we are curvy” (Lockhart 163). Lopez here indicates that her “certain body type” stands in opposition to the typical white bodies and therefore symbolized the norm for Latinas. While her body type has contested the normative standards of beauty, it has also limited the Latina space of beauty to curvaceous bodies with voluptuous breasts and butts. Consequently, Lopez’s desirable butt has excluded “*puertorriqueñas chumbas* (flat reared) who are victimized by their lack” (Negrón-Muntaner 237). Lopez has therefore defined beautiful Latinas as those with curves- a new but restricted definition.

Similarly to Carmen Miranda, Lopez’s portrayal of Latinas has taken on a panethnic flair. With regard to Lopez’s early movies *Mi familia*, *Selena*, and *Money Train*, Valdivia remarks that Lopez is “like earlier Latina or Hispanics stars (perhaps most notable Carmen Miranda). [her] film roles signify multiple Latin/Spanish populations” (Valdivia 155). Lopez has been able to move between the diverse Latina identities in her cinematic portrayals but I argue that Lopez’s interpretations are less restrictively homogenizing than Miranda’s portrayals. Lopez’s characters capture more nuance than Miranda’s in regards to their specific Latina ethnicity. For example, in Lopez’s breakout role playing the late Tejano superstar Selena, she convincingly portrays Selena and satisfies Mexican-American critics who had been outraged at casting a non-Tejano, in this case Puerto Rican, actress (Lockhart 150). Lopez’s nuanced yet pan-ethnic approach speaks to the growing trend in mainstream America: “On the one hand, there is an effort to flatten all difference in the brown race. On the other hand, there is the recognition that not all browns are alike” (Valdivia 134). As both the token Latina used to satisfy Hollywood’s expectations as an

exotic other and an actress aware of nuance and difference, Lopez embodies this conflicting movement.

While Miranda and Lopez, especially Miranda, can be viewed as commodified others manipulated by Hollywood to portray a specific idea of *Latinidad*, both women have undeniably exerted agency in their successful careers. Miranda's start in Brazil demonstrates the power she had over her own life. In Brazil, "whether smoking in public, driving her own car, or using the coarse slang of the streets, Carmen Miranda reveled in defying the social constraints placed on women in her era" and demonstrated a "strong-willed independence [that] would serve her well in the male-dominated world of the entertainment industry" (O'Neil 196). Miranda's radical behavior was the result of her "strong-willed independence" that challenged notions of proper femininity. An enduring symbol of Miranda's agency is her clothing style. By developing her own style based off of marginalized Afro-Brazilians, "Miranda wrested the traditional control that men have had over the look of women's bodies" (Ovalle 59). And while Miranda certainly lacked complete control over her representation in U.S. films, she remained committed to dictating the style of her clothes and continuously made alteration to her dress, changing that "Hollywood designers were doing to her original *baiana*" (Ellis 65). By making these alterations, Miranda declared that through her years in Hollywood she continuously desired to portray authenticity with her *baiana*, a symbol of Brazilianness and Africanness.

Jennifer Lopez's greater degree of agency than Carmen Miranda proves the progress of Latina actresses in Hollywood. Though Lopez is put in the space of "in-betweenness", she has demonstrated agency in manipulating and maneuvering around this barrier. The scholar Tara Lockhart comments that "Lopez's formations are always in flux, contingent on the star herself, who can choose how and where to align and represent herself," locating the agency of self-

representation on Lopez (Lockhart 164). As a result of Lopez's star power, her agent was able to convince the producer of *The Wedding Planner* to cast Lopez in the non-Latina role as an ambiguously white Italian-American (Guzmán and Valdivia 215). Lopez's ability to characterize herself as various Latinas and even as non-Latinas demonstrates the authority Lopez has to manipulate her own representation, a power unavailable to Carmen Miranda. In the same vein of self-representation, Lopez can be seen as an adept agent at creating a fan-friendly personality. Lopez distances herself from critics and aligns herself with a supportive fan base. She explains, "journalists try to create a persona that's not really there... but now I feel that the public understands me better than some writer. There are people who know who I really am" (qtd. in Lockhart 152). Lopez thus represents herself as an accessible and authentic person closely related to understanding fans and rejects negative journalistic discourse as imagined and incorrect. On-screen and off, Lopez has a significant amount of control over her representation.

As the most famous and highest paid Latina entertainers of their time, Carmen Miranda and Jennifer Lopez exemplify the complicated place Latinas locate in the media and society. While the stereotypes popularized by Carmen Miranda have endured, Jennifer Lopez has also been able to provide an example of a multi-talented Latina who more obviously exerts her own agency. By working in an American society marked by the binary of favorable whiteness and condemned blackness, these Latinas were secluded as "others" and consequently sexualized because of their seemingly exotic features. Miranda and Lopez were limited by this separation but also became dissenting voices that challenged rigid customs of racism and beauty in dominant culture. These women leave a complicated legacy, representing ties to colonialism as less than human "others" and stereotypical *Latinidad* while reaching for empowerment, agency, and success in a male-dominated arena.

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Private Profits and the South Sea Company: Illicit Trafficking Under the Asiento

Since 1528, Spain had turned to neighboring European powers to provide its mercantile projects in America with a consistent supply of slave labor.¹ Proscribed to enslave the indigenous population of the Americas, “South America had an inexhaustible appetite for African slaves.”² To facilitate the importation of African slaves, the Spanish, according to John Carswell, had granted foreigners the exclusive right to import the human commodity since the late 17th century. “[T]his concession, the celebrated Asiento, had been granted to foreign business syndicates,” writes Carswell, “first of Italians, then of Portuguese.”³ The Asiento was finally transferred to the British in 1713 as one of the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht.⁴ While in the possession of the British, the Asiento and its privileges were bestowed upon the South Sea Company.

In May 1711, the Company of Merchants of Great Britain trading to the South Seas and other parts of America, or the South Sea Company, was created as a joint-stock company. Founded by an act of Parliament, the Company was commissioned to manage and restructure a portion of the massive public debt which Britain had accumulated over the course of the War of the Spanish Succession. Once assumed by the Company, the debt became its source of capital,

1. John Sperling, *An Historical Essay and Bibliographical Finding List* (Boston: Baker Library, Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, 1962) 13.

2. John Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble* (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1960) 47.

3. Ibid.

4. Salvador Carmona, Rafael Donoso, and Stephen P. Walker, “Accounting, International Relations and Treaty Verification: Britain, Spain and the Asiento,” *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 35.2, 2010: 5, accessed 5 March 2012, www.hec.edu/var/file/storage/original/application/52800b9af44dad7f465fe09afbba48fl.pdf; Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 12-13.

funding operations and backing any shares that were issued.⁵ From the outset, the Company's future as a legitimate company was dubious. In fact, Manassas Gilligan, "a long-time West Indian smuggler" who may have known that the Asiento's real value lay in its potential to provide a vehicle for illegal trade, had been one of the negotiators sent by the English to Madrid in order to finalize the conditions of the Asiento.⁶ In June, 1713, the Asiento was awarded to the South Sea Company.

From the beginning, the financial operations of the South Sea Company were intertwined with contemporary politics and international diplomacy. The South Sea Bubble in 1720, and the collapse of diplomatic relations between England and Spain in 1739, demonstrates the Company's complex profile. At the time the Company was founded, Britain was burdened with a floating public debt of £9,000,000.⁷ The British government endeavored to resolve its fiscal problems by converting public debt into shares of the Company. Essentially, the Company served as a type of holding company for British debt and, in return, received an annual fee from the British government for managing its debt. As Sperling states, the "monopoly of trade in the South Seas" was an additional appeal that enticed investors.⁸ As a result of its involvement in

5. Elizabeth Donnan, "The Early Days of the South Sea Company," *Journal of Economic And Business History II.3* (1930) : 423; Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 54.

6. Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 13.

7. Floating debt is typically short-term debt that is continuously refinanced. This would have been a serious problem for the British government if funds were not made available to maintain this burden. England's ability to conduct war with France (War of the Spanish Succession) would have been severely impaired.

8. Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 1, 25. This Company received £8,000 annually for management in addition to an annuity of £550,678 to pay stockholders 5% interest.

the public sphere, the Company became what Helen Paul has termed “a quasi-public entity – a hybrid.”⁹

Although the events that triggered the South Sea Bubble were perhaps set in motion at the Company’s inception, “the immediate stimulus” for the scheme occurred in 1719 when England sought to pursue an aggressive policy of economic expansion to match economic developments occurring in France.¹⁰ The Company seemed to be an obvious potential benefactor of this policy. Between September 1719 and August 1720, what is generally perceived as a speculative mania, gripped the London Stock Exchange.¹¹ On January 1, 1720, the price of South Sea Company stock was £128 per share. In mid-June, speculation pushed the stock price to its peak of £1,050. The run was transient. In August, sustained downward pressure gave way to a complete collapse of the Company’s stock which again traded at £128 in mid-December. Stock manipulation and “gross corruption” on the part of high ranking Company officials are believed to have exacerbated the bubble.¹²

Today, as in the early 18th century, the South Sea Company remains infamous for the eponymously named financial bubble of 1720. Although the Company is most closely associated with the South Sea Bubble, this paper does not discuss this particular instance in the Company’s long history. Instead, this paper focuses on the illicit trade in which the Company

9. Helen J. Paul, “The South Sea Company and The Royal African Company’s Combined Slaving Activities,” *Economic History Society Conference* (St. Andrews, 2006): 1, accessed 24 February 2012, www.esrc.ac.uk/my.../86f877cd-392e-4a6b-aead-06f392081b2e.

10. Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 26. According to Sperling, John Law had successfully accomplished with the Mississippi Company, in France, what the British hoped to do with the South Sea Company. The British were anxious about France’s financial development and wished to counter it with the use of similar financial entities.

11. The Company seemed to be an obvious potential benefactor of this policy. Between September 1719 and August 1720, what is generally perceived as a speculative mania, gripped the London Stock Exchange

12. Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 31.

engaged a decade after the collapse of the bubble. Among historians who have studied the South Sea Company, there is disagreement as to the extent, impact, and machinations of the Company's illegal trafficking during the 1730s. This paper explores the controversy and re-examines the documents at issue.

The opprobrium of the South Sea Bubble of 1720 certainly presaged later events for which the Company would also be remembered. While the bubble's collapse ruined many shareholders, investors in the Company did not fare much better in the years after the collapse. Throughout the years following the bubble, the Company routinely conducted a private trade at the expense of its stockholders; the interests of investors were disregarded and their affairs were sometimes subordinated to those of the Company's insiders. Looking back on the South Sea Company, Adam Smith wrote:

It was naturally to be expected...that folly, negligence, and profusion, should prevail in the whole management of their affairs. The knavery and extravagance of their stock-jobbing projects are sufficiently known...Their mercantile projects were not much better conducted.¹³

Although Smith described the company over 30 years after the Asiento was revoked, he accurately observed its perfidious and irresponsible practices.

In "Contraband Trade under the Asiento, 1730-1739"¹⁴ and "The Asiento Treaty as Reflected in the Papers of Lord Shelburne,"¹⁵ historians George Nelson and Arthur Aiton assert that the Company deliberately engaged in a private trade that was condoned and directed by the Company's top officials. Nelson specifically states that, "based on the secret books of the inner

13. Adam Smith, *The Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1863) 335.

14. George H. Nelson, "Contraband Trade Under The Asiento, 1730-1739," *The American Historical Review* 51.1 (1945): 55-67, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1843076>.

15. Arthur S. Aiton, "The Asiento Treaty As Reflected In The Papers of Lord Shelburne," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 8.2 (1928): 167-77, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2506113>.

clique of the South Sea directors...contraband traffic under the Asiento was of such magnitude that it was a real threat to Spanish mercantilism.”¹⁶ The arguments set forth by Nelson and Aiton are based primarily on the Asiento Papers in the Shelburne Manuscripts. Included in the Asiento Papers are the official documents of the South Sea Company as well as the private correspondence between the sub-governors in England and the Company’s factors in the Spanish Indies. The private correspondence of the Company’s factors in Jamaica, John Merewether and Edward Manning, and Sir John Eyles and Peter Burrell, both of whom served as sub-governor of the Company during the period under investigation¹⁷ provide a window through which to view the true nature of the Company’s widespread illicit activities and their impact on trade and diplomatic relations between England and Spain. This correspondence was reviewed for the purpose of this paper.

Although John Sperling wrote what is generally regarded as the seminal essay on the South Sea Company, he argued that by the early and mid-1730s company officials purported to “control the illicit trade,” and that “by 1735 illicit trade carried on by the negro vessels could not have been of much real bother to the Spanish authorities.”¹⁸ While Sperling claims to have read the Shelburne Manuscripts and specifically disputes the findings of Nelson and Aiton,¹⁹ his analysis is cursory, and he seems to disregard the plethora of incriminating evidence implicating the Company’s officials.

After examining volumes 43 and 44 of the Shelburne Manuscripts, which comprise the Asiento Papers, it is clear that Sperling grossly understates the corrupt and collusive practices in

16. Nelson, “Contraband Trade,” 64.

17. *Ibid.*, 56, footnote 5. Sir John Eyles served this post from 1721 to 1733, and Peter Burrell served from 1736 to 1739.

18. Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 42.

19. *Ibid.*, footnote 36.

which the Company's officials were actively involved and countenanced until the onset of the War of Jenkins' Ear and the revocation of the Asiento. Although the illicit trade carried on by the Company perhaps did not directly cause the War of Jenkins' Ear, it was a "constant source" of friction between England and Spain.²⁰ It is true, as Sperling states, that Aiton and Nelson argue that the clandestine trade of the Company significantly disrupted Spanish commerce by the late 1730s. Aiton, however, acknowledges that the Company was not alone. "[O]ther Englishmen, as private or illicit traders," Aiton writes, "also entered the new commercial field to the detriment of Spain's monopoly and the injury of Spanish Merchants."²¹ Regardless of the immediate cause of war in 1739, the Company's officials continued to operate an extensive and private trading scheme throughout the Spanish Indies after 1735, contrary to the arguments put forth by Sperling.

As has been argued by Nelson, the circumvention of the Asiento was perhaps "the inevitable result" of its contractual conditions.²² "[B]oth the Portuguese and French companies," noted Smith, operated the Asiento "upon the same terms" and were "ruined by it."²³ Due to losses that were likely to occur from the slave trade, the Spanish permitted the South Sea Company to send an annual ship of 500 tons, later 650 tons, to "trade duty free at the fairs held on the arrival of the galleons at Cartagena or the flota at Vera Cruz."²⁴ In light of the high mortality rate of the Middle Passage, the maintenance of the factories in the Indies, shipwrecks, and the myriad "fees exacted by the Spanish officials," it seems clear that the slave trade was a

20. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, "Accounting," 23.

21. Aiton, "Asiento Treaty," 168.

22. Nelson, "Contraband Trade," 55.

23. Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 335.

24. Ibid; Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 13.

burden to the South Sea Company, rather than a reliable source of profit.²⁵ Benjamin Wooley, the factor at Havana, Cuba, in 1733, attested to the difficulty in selling slaves and the high cost of maintaining those that remained unsold.²⁶

Non-compliance with the Asiento became obvious by the 1730s. In order to monitor the activities of the Company more closely, Philip V of Spain appointed Sir Thomas Geraldino, who was also the Spanish ambassador, as his representative on the Company's board of directors.²⁷ The Spanish monarch, however, was outmaneuvered. In 1730, "the sub and deputy governors," according to Nelson, were placed "in charge of all matters of importance."²⁸ In May 1730, Sir John Eyles wrote, "A special power [is] to be lodged in...two governors to take care of all matters of importance."²⁹ Contrary to Sperling's suggestion, it is obvious that the Company was not intimidated by the Geraldino's presence on the board. The Company conspired to conceal the true state of its affairs which were memorialized in the private correspondence of the sub and deputy governors and only "routine matters were placed before the court in Geraldino's presence."³⁰

There can be no dispute that, before the 1730s, the Company's use of bribery was rampant. In return for adequate financial security, two agents of the Company provided the

25. Donnan, "Early Days," 447-448; Helen Paul, "The South Sea Company's Slaving Activities," *Discussion Papers in Economics and Econometrics*, (University of Southampton 2004): 2, accessed 24 Feb. 2012, www.ehs.org.uk/ehs/conference2004/assets/paul.doc.

26. Benjamin Wooley. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct; and His Being Stationed By The Court of Directors of the South-Sea Company, First Factor at Porto Bello and Panama*, (London: A. Dodd, 1735) 13-14.

27. Nelson, "Contraband Trade," 56; Aiton, "Asiento Treaty," 170.

28. Nelson, "Contraband Trade," 56.

29. "Governors Book of Sir John Eyles," (May 27, 1730), Lord Shelburne Manuscripts, XLIII, 385, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, (hereinafter "Shelburne MSS").

30. Aiton, "Asiento Treaty," 170.

Spanish with official documents and detailed affidavits which exposed the illicit activities of the Company through the late 1720s.³¹ Included in the documents provided by the informants were “the names of Spanish officials in the Indies who accepted bribes to allow the import of contraband goods.”³² The informants affirmed that the chief Spanish representative to the Company in London, Don Guillermo Eon, had in fact “received a thousand pounds and an annual pension of eight hundred pounds, in return for countenancing false measurements of the permission-ships and other frauds on the part of the company.”³³ Based on the sources reviewed in this paper, there is no reason to believe that these practices abated in the 1730s.

After the Company’s affairs were placed in the hands of its senior officials in 1730, these officials engaged in blatant machinations to bribe top Spanish officials. In 1731, Eyles wrote to Sir Benjamin Keene, the Company’s agent in Spain as well as British ambassador,³⁴ detailing how operations could be improved by bribing Don Josef Patino, a powerful Spanish minister.³⁵ According to Eyles, “If Patino were to be bribed our affairs would be settled with him.”³⁶ Bribery was apparently a source of much frustration for the Spanish. According to Nelson, “Philip V attempted to cope with the problem in Europe by instructing” his representatives to

31. Vera Lee Brown, “The South Sea Company and Contraband Trade,” *The American Historical Review*, 31.4 (July 1926): 662, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1840061>. One of the informants, Mathew Plowes, was the secretary and chief accountant of the Company. He produced forty-two documents to the Spanish which included detailed financial statements, 665-667.

32. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, “Accounting,” 8.

33. Ibid; Brown, “South Sea Company and Contraband,” 666.

34. Nelson, “Contraband Trade,” 58; Aiton, “Asiento Treaty,” 170.

35. John Eyles to Benjamin Keene, April 29-May 10, 1731, Shelburne MSS, XLIII 394-395; Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, “Accounting,” 9.

36. John Eyles to Keene, April 29-May 10, 1731, Shelburne MSS, XLIII 394-395.

reach an agreement with the British on this particular issue.³⁷ Additionally, Nelson avers, “Geraldino was very energetic about attempting to eradicate bribery.”³⁸ Although Patino is perhaps the most senior Spanish official that the Company purported to corrupt, bribery of Spanish authorities was entwined with standard Company practice.

Spanish colonial officials in the Indies routinely accepted compensation from the British.³⁹ It was common practice to offer Spanish officials in the Indies “regalos,” or gifts, in order to maintain satisfactory relations. According to Palmer, by the mid-1730s, Keene was authorized to distribute a yearly sum among Spanish ministers, if he thought the gift would benefit the Company’s operations.⁴⁰ In the colonies, observes Palmer, “[r]egalos were distributed at appropriate times, and small presents were offered to select officials on festive occasions, such as at Christmas.”⁴¹ The concomitant benefits of bribes certainly diminished the typical obstacles the company faced in the Indies. For example, between 1730 and 1734, the Company’s agents at Havana spent “3,000 pesos in regalos,” and, as a result, “[m]any lawsuits had been terminated in their favor.”⁴² Palmer also notes that “[s]laves who arrived with smallpox” were able to bypass the required quarantine in exchange for a “gratuity.”⁴³ Spanish officials in the Indies, however, began to expect bribes as an “established part of the trading process.”⁴⁴ The financial statement of one voyage in 1731 accounts for £10,000 of obscure “extra

37. Nelson, “Contraband Trade,” 58.

38. Nelson, “Contraband Trade,” 58.

39. Colin Palmer, *Human Cargoes: The British Slave Trade to Spanish America, 1700-1739* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981) 27.

40. *Ibid.*, 72.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

charges” that were possibly allotted to satisfy these expectations.⁴⁵ In addition to Palmer, Nelson recognizes that bribery “did not always prove to be completely satisfactory as honest or disappointed Spanish officials upset it in several ports.”⁴⁶

In *The South Sea Company’s Slaving Activities*, Helen Paul writes, “It was clearly understood by contemporaries that the company would try to smuggle contraband goods into Spanish American ports.”⁴⁷ It could not have been understood, however, that the profits from proscribed trade in contraband goods would be pursued without regard to the interests of the stockholders. In 1732, a disgruntled stockholder published an address informing other proprietors of the abhorrent trade abuses and negligence committed by the Company to the detriment of its investors. Affidavits from two deponents who allegedly served on ships that took part in private trade for the South Sea Company were included in the address. The first deponent swore to have served “on board the Prince William, belonging to the South-Sea Company, William Cleland commander, in the year 1730.”⁴⁸ If taken at face value, this deponent provides a detailed account of an explicit and egregious illicit operation where legitimate profits were risked and deemed expendable.

The Prince William, according to the deponent, “put on board the St. Philip, Captain John Cleland, a snow belonging also to the South-Sea Company, all the remaining part of the upper and lower deck guns” in order to “lighten the said ship, and give room for receiving of private

44. Ibid., 73.

45. Shelburne MSS, XLIII, 278.

46. Nelson, “Contraband Trade,” 58.

47. Paul, “South Sea Company’s Slaving Activities,” 2-3.

48. Proprietor of the said company. *An Address to the Proprietors of the South-Sea Capital: Containing a Discovery of the Illicit Trade Carried On In the West Indies*, (London, S. Austen 1732), 6.

trade.”⁴⁹ Following the rendezvous with the *St. Philip*, the *Prince William* encountered another ship, the *James Galley*, which did not belong to the Company. From the *James Galley*, the *Prince William* received “at least two hundred tons, part of which cargo was cakes of white wax, a great number of barrels fill’d with the like wax, a large quantity of cinnamon well pack’d,” and “bale goods.”⁵⁰ Not only did the *Prince William* take on contraband cargo, it was so heavily laden with it that “the under cells of the lower tier of ports were a considerable way under water.”⁵¹ In addition to facilitating the Company’s private trade, Cleland and the ships’ chief supercargo, James Dolliffe, “distributed amongst the aforesaid *Prince William*’s ship’s company, two hundred pounds,” which the deponent characterized as “hush-money”.⁵² After first putting in at Cartagena, the private cargo received by the *Prince William* was sold at Porto Bello.⁵³

The second deponent, whose affidavit appears in the *Address to the Proprietors*, claims to have served on the *James Galley*. The deponent states that additional wages were promised to the ships’ crew, since the ship “did not immediately proceed to Jamaica” after putting in at St. Christopher’s in the West Indies.⁵⁴ Subsequently, this deponent confirms the arrival of the Company’s annual ship to which all the cargo from the *James Galley* was transferred. Lastly, the deponent from the *James Galley* questioned the sailing condition of the *Prince William* after it was fully laden with the unlicensed cargo.⁵⁵

49. *An Address To the Proprietors*, 6.

50. *Ibid.*, 7.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*, 8-9.

While the ships' private cargo was eventually sold at Porto Bello in January, 1731, the ship and its legitimate cargo were wantonly and deliberately endangered in pursuit of private profits. Before the voyage, the Company's proprietors were concerned that the ship would arrive at Porto Bello too late to sell its cargo at the fair. The author of the address does not attempt to conceal his disgust over the irresponsibility with which the voyage was conducted. "[T]o make more room and lighten the ship," the deponent described, "the remaining part of both tier of guns were taken out and sent to Jamaica...by which your ship and effects, although of so great value, were left naked and defenseless."⁵⁶ More importantly, the author believes that the ship "was so very heavy, that had she met with any bad weather, she must have been inevitably lost."⁵⁷ According to the author, corrupt captains and supercargoes that received the "most advantageous part of the trade" were consistently defrauding the proprietors.⁵⁸ Unbeknownst to the author of this vituperative address, that private trade was not just an endeavor of individual ship captains and supercargoes. In fact, private trade was systemic within the Company and its principal benefactors were the senior officials.

Interestingly, Sir John Eyles, who was criticized in the anonymous *Address to the Proprietors*, also discussed the 1730 voyage of the Prince William in detail in a private correspondence with Sir Benjamin Keene. In his letter to the British ambassador, Eyles stated that the voyage returned a paltry 25 percent profit.⁵⁹ Contrary to modern standards, Eyles regarded this return as a "failure" as the annual ships were generally expected to return 100

56. *An Address To The Proprietors*, 10.

57. *Ibid.*, 11.

58. *Ibid.*, 10-11.

59. "Governor's Book of Sir John Eyles," Eyles to Keene, London, September 16-27, 1731, Shelburne MSS, XLIII, 397.

percent on the Company's invested capital.⁶⁰ Eyles attributed the poor return to an earthquake in Chile and its disruption to commerce, in addition to a "full supply of goods in 1727."⁶¹ Although Eyles attempted to justify the disappointing profit due to a saturated market and natural disaster, he confided in Keene that the Spanish would inevitably view the voyage with suspicion and likely not tolerate such discounted sales: "Patino will be angry at our selling at this [rate] which must ruin...galeonists and totally discourage...Spanish Commerce."⁶² On the surface, there is little reason to suspect that Eyles' explanation for the unsuccessful voyage is anything but sincere; however, the evidence and testimony provided by the anonymous proprietor raise reasonable skepticism. Because of the "indefatigable" obstructions that the proprietor's investigation encountered, as well as the unwillingness of the board of directors to open the Company's books, there is reason to believe that Eyles and Keene were informed of the illicit trade which, if there is any shred of accuracy in the proprietor's address, certainly contributed to the meager official profit from the Prince William's voyage.⁶³

There is further cause to suspect the complicity of the directors due to the preferential treatment given to Benjamin Wooley, the young and unqualified factor of Porto Bello and Panama. According to a contemporaneous essay, Wooley first "petitioned the Court of Directors of the South Sea Company, the 30th of March, 1733, to be sent Book-keeper to the Havana Factory;" he was approved for the position the following month.⁶⁴ Upon the subsequent deaths of his superiors, Mr. Holloway and Mr. Eden, Wooley became the sole Factor at Havana

60. Shelburne MSS, XLIII, 278.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. *An Address To The Proprietors*, 9, 14.

64. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct*, 3

in October 1733. After having only served his intended position for several months, Wooley now assumed the responsibilities of a senior factor. Recognizing Wooley's inexperience, the court of directors suggested that he be appointed junior factor at Porto Bello. In October 1734, the court of directors and the committee of correspondence resolved to accept petitions for "settling the Panama and Porto Bello factory."⁶⁵ Despite the court's previous recommendation, Wooley was permitted to petition for the senior post at the Porto Bello and Panama factory.

In December, the directors voted on candidates, with Wooley, Moses Davidson, and Francis Humphreys receiving the majority of the votes. The court then recommended that the committee of correspondence station the three individuals at the Porto Bello and Panama factory as its factors.⁶⁶ In January 1735, the court of directors decided that the 22-year-old Wooley, despite his lack of experience, would serve as first factor for Porto Bello and Panama. Davidson was chosen as second factor, while Humphreys was selected as junior factor and book-keeper.⁶⁷ In comparison to Wooley, who had only been in the Company's service for less than two years, Davidson served the Company for almost 10 years. After being employed by the Company for almost two years, Davidson went abroad in 1723 and spent four years in the Spanish Indies "without wages from, or any expenses to the Company, but was ashore the whole time at his own charge, to get master of the Spanish language."⁶⁸ Ostensibly unimpressed, the Company appointed Davidson "first writer" to the Porto Bello factory.⁶⁹

65. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct*, 3, 6.

66. *Ibid.*, 7.

67. *Ibid.*, 9.

68. *Ibid.*, 10.

69. *Ibid.*

Although Davidson was clearly the more experienced, Wooley was given the commission of first factor. Commenting on the court's decision, the author of *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct* stated, "As from the tenure of the petition of Wooley and Davidson, it is very natural to suppose the latter, had the fairest title, to be the first in nomination of those two."⁷⁰ More importantly, the author averred that "the observation the court of directors had made, of the youth and inexperience of Mr. Woolley [sic] for first factor at Havana, was well grounded."⁷¹ It is likely that Wooley was given the commission because he was familiar with the Company's private dealings in the Indies. During his tenure in Havana, Wooley unsuccessfully conducted the Company's legitimate slaving activities, embezzled funds, and was guilty of negligence. After Eden's death, Wooley spent months trying to find buyers for 46 slaves. Meanwhile, maintaining unsold slaves was expensive and, according to Wooley, the Company did not fully cover its cost. Additionally, Wooley estimated the cost for nursing sick slaves to be "6 Ryals a Day per negro, for which no allowance is made by the Company."⁷²

Besides conducting an underwhelming slave trade, Wooley was allegedly involved in a controversy surrounding the *Lyon* and its captain, Stephen Bowen. The *Lyon* arrived in April 1734, with a cargo of slaves, and garnered the attention of the Spanish authorities. "The Captain is at present in some trouble," wrote Wooley to the directors, "occasioned by a small parcel of goods being found in his sailors' chests, but so small as would not amount on sale here to three hundred pieces of eight."⁷³ Wooley assured the directors of the Bowen's innocence.⁷⁴ Geraldino

70. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct*, 11.

71. *Ibid.*

72. *Ibid.*, 12-14.

73. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

74. *Ibid.*

and the Spanish interventer believed otherwise. The interventer described to Geraldino an “irregularity as to the number of slaves,” and concluded that Wooley’s reluctance to disclose the account of the Lyon was proof of the sale of contraband.⁷⁵ A close examination of the ship’s provisions confirmed the suspicions of Geraldino and the interventer: “The stores and provisions...show the foregoing private trade of too considerable a tonnage, to be privately concealed in seamen’s chests.”⁷⁶ While Wooley wrote the Company that the illicit goods would only amount to 300 pieces of eight, Geraldino believed the value to be closer to 30,000 pieces of eight. Merewether would later refer to this incident as “the cause of all the embarrassments” and confirmed Wooley’s complicity in a private letter to Burrell.⁷⁷

In addition to smuggling contraband and likely misrepresenting its value to the court of directors, Wooley was blamed for the detention of the *Union*, a Company ship, by its captain William Williams. The *Union* was initially delayed in port at Havana due to “contrary winds.” The Spanish later detained the *Union* as it was preparing to leave port.⁷⁸ According to Williams, the *Union* “was loaded and ready to put to sea” early in 1734, but the ship had stayed too long at Havana and its 60-day charter had expired.⁷⁹ Williams informed Wooley of the situation but could only sail after signing the register at the custom-house. Until Wooley disclosed “what money he intended to ship on board,” this was impossible.⁸⁰ Because Wooley would not release

75. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley’s Conduct*, 19.

76. *Ibid.*, 22

77. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, Kingston, Jamaica, February 11-22, 1736, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 861. When citing dates from this period, historians sometimes include two years in order to account for the difference between the old Julian calendar and the new Gregorian calendar. The Julian calendar began the year on March 25 while the Gregorian calendar begins on January 1.

78. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley’s Conduct*, 16.

79. *Ibid.*, 26.

the account of the Union, the ship and its return cargo remained at Havana until mid-June.⁸¹ During this delay, the Spanish authorities ordered the ship to be unloaded under the pretense that contraband had been loaded; sugar, snuff, and tobacco comprised the ship's cargo. Three days later, the Spanish governor and royal officers searched the vessel and ordered it to be loaded again. During the intervening days, a "great part" of the cargo had been damaged causing injury to the Company and "all others concerned in the said cargo."⁸² Wooley's failure to deliver the account of the Union in a timely fashion and disclose its inventory to the Spanish authorities directly caused the ship's delay. The St. George was delayed in 1734 for similar reasons. Moreover, any loss incurred by the Company or its investors from this episode was directly attributable to Wooley's incompetence.

If Geraldino's estimates were correct, it is likely that Wooley intentionally misrepresented the value of illicit goods in order to provide the court of directors, of which Geraldino was a member, with a satisfactory account of the Havana factory. Because two sets of letters were often written at this time, one to the Company's court of directors and one to the sub and deputy governors, it is likely that Wooley provided the sub and deputy governors with the true accounts of all activities occurring at Havana, including the private trade. The only reason for Wooley to face the scrutiny of the sub governor and the court of directors would have been the reckless handling of the private trade or withheld profits generated by the trade from his superiors; Merewether was forced to reprimand two Company agents serving on the Don Carlos

80. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct*, 26.

81. *Ibid.*

82. *Ibid.*, 27.

for concealing the amount of goods seized by the Spanish.⁸³ In the absence of such letters, however, this argument remains conjectural and requires further reading of the Asiento papers.

Although the court of directors officially disapproved of Wooley's actions and explicitly blamed him for delays encountered by the Lyon and St. George, the court nevertheless selected him as chief factor for Porto Bello and Panama.⁸⁴ In April, 1735, however, the sub governor⁸⁵ announced to the general court that the court of directors would be sending Wooley "an account of the sundry accusations laid against him," and that he should not assume his new post until he responded all such charges.⁸⁶ One can only guess at the reason for which the directors began to doubt their decision. Perhaps at the urging of Geraldino, the directors had no choice but to at least superficially re-examine their selection.

If Geraldino believed that his presence at the court of directors would deter and diminish cases of private trade, he was mistaken. The voyage of the Company's final annual ship, the Royal Caroline, best demonstrated the Spanish ambassador's futile efforts to control illegal activity. The Spanish supervised the loading of the vessel which began in August of 1732, and Geraldino even placed two Spanish officers on the ship to guard the cargo during the voyage. From the outset, Geraldino believed that some of the cargo was in violation of the Treaty of Utrecht. However, after the Company denied that such cargo had been permitted on previous voyages, Geraldino allowed the cargo to be loaded. Although the Spanish minister relented, he still "requested copies of invoices relating to the cargo" which he subsequently "forwarded to the

83. John Merewether to Peter Burrell, Kingston, Jamaica, February 11-22, 1736, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 862.

84. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct*, 30.

85. Sir Richard Hopkins was the sub governor during this time until 1736 when he was succeeded by Peter Burrell.

86. *The Particulars of the Enquiry into Mr. Benjamin Wooley's Conduct*, 32.

Spanish manager in Veracruz.”⁸⁷ If any irregularities relating to the cargo occurred, they would be promptly discovered.⁸⁸ When the Royal Caroline arrived in Veracruz in December 1732, the Spanish authorities inspected its cargo. According to the Spanish, the amount of provisions, ostensibly for consumption by the crew, was unnecessarily large. The Spanish complained that extra provisions were loaded for the purpose of smuggling and delayed the unloading of the cargo. The Spanish Viceroy intervened in the Company’s favor, however, and the unloading resumed.⁸⁹

The Royal Caroline returned to England in January of 1734, and the Company immediately marginalized Geraldino by circumventing his authority. The Spanish minister was given no information relating to the Royal Caroline’s voyage on its arrival. Rather, the ambassador received documents detailing the voyage during a general court meeting of the Company. Geraldino suspected that this maneuver demonstrated “an attempt to hide the fact that a portion of the cargo belonged to private individuals.”⁹⁰ Juan de Ávila, the Spanish factor in Veracruz, reported to his superior that a significant amount of contraband silver had been loaded on the ship. Ávila also contacted the Spanish Treasury Minister to warn him of the ambiguous account of the annual ship’s cargo. According to Ávila, “expenses incurred during the winter in Veracruz” had not been properly accounted for by the ship’s officers.⁹¹ In addition to inaccurate reporting of expenses, it was unclear which items of cargo were for trade and which were

87. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, “Accounting,” 18.

88. *Ibid.*, 17-18.

89. *Ibid.*, 18.

90. *Ibid.*

91. *Ibid.*

intended for provisions during the voyage.⁹² To complicate matters, the Company refused to relinquish the official accounts of the voyage and to settle the payment of profit earned due to the Spanish. In March, 1735, “Geraldino requested that the court of directors of the Company supply the accounts of the Royal Caroline”, though the court insisted that “the accounts of the annual ship should be ‘rendered jointly’ with the five-yearly accounts of the *Asiento*, which were next due on 1 January 1736.”⁹³ The court supplied a number of excuses to justify their evasiveness and effectively nullified any clout Geraldino might have possessed.⁹⁴ The Company’s determination to withhold the accounts of the Royal Caroline indicates a plot to conceal contraband from the Spanish and rendered Spanish oversight impossible.

By 1736, under the sub governorship of Peter Burrell, private trade had continued to flourish, and the Company’s senior officials took care to protect themselves from being implicated in any wrongdoing. Burrell, for example, possessed intimate knowledge of the illegal trade and approved of those factors engaged in it.⁹⁵ In Jamaica, Merewether and Manning supervised the illicit trade that was conducted under the cover of the Company’s slaving activities in the Spanish Indies.⁹⁶ The two factors regularly informed Burrell about the illicit activity including any difficulty encountered with the Spanish authorities.

Under the direction of Merewether and Manning, the proscribed trade was designed to ensure the innocence of the Company’s officials. In the event that the Spanish authorities discovered contraband, blame would be entirely placed on individual crews and captains in the

92. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, “Accounting,” 18.

93. *Ibid.*, 19

94. *Ibid.*

95. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, January 6, 1736, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 867.

96. John Merewether to Peter Burrell, Jamaica, June 20, 1739, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 721.

employment of the Company.⁹⁷ Merewether described one captain sailing to Porto Bello as “a sober industrious man and a good sailor.”⁹⁸ According to the factor, this particular captain was “very cautious in concealing” the contraband with which he was charged.⁹⁹ Before each voyage, Merewether stated, “I tell him [to]...take care of embarrassments you know the consequence for you can have no favor from us.”¹⁰⁰ Merewether evidently condoned the illicit traffic as long as it was operated cautiously. Unlike the captain applauded by Merewether in his letter to Burrell, a Captain Fennel and his accomplice Mr. Mayes were dismissed from the service of the Company because they were not “cautious and moderate in what they did.”¹⁰¹ In addition to Fennel and Mayes, Captain Cleland, who led the Prince William during a 1730 voyage and was later described by two deponents as fraught with illicit activity, was relieved of service at the behest of Geraldino.¹⁰² The Company “suspended or turned out” its servants only to appease Spanish officials like Geraldino and to avoid further public scrutiny.¹⁰³

Contrary to the Sperling’s argument,¹⁰⁴ the dismissal of low-level servants did little to stem illicit traffic. Instead, Company captains developed new methods to evade the Spanish

97. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, Jan. 6, 1736, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 868.

98. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, February 11-22, 1736, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 863.

99. *Ibid.*

100. *Ibid.*

101. *Ibid.*, 862. Fennel and Mayes may also have been fired due to withholding returns of the private trade from Merewether.

102. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, “Accounting,” 17.

103. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, Jan. 6, 1736, Shelburne MSS, Vol. XLIV, 868.

104. According to Sperling, by 1735 the Company had employed a number of controls to stop illicit trading, and he states that these “controls were effective.” Punitive action, however, was only received by Captains and other lowly agents, and no inquiries were ever conducted that investigated senior officials. Like Geraldino,

authorities and to facilitate illicit trade. Pleased with the vulpine tactics undertaken to circumvent Spanish commercial regulation, Merewether wrote Burrell outlining a successful operation at Cartagena. “The traders at Cartagena outwitted the great vigilance of this governor, they have fitted out vessels for distant voyages and met the illicit traders by appointment and returned to port under pretence of being disabled.”¹⁰⁵ Since the vessels were believed to have been disabled, subsequent searches were deemed redundant by the Spanish authorities who previously authorized the departures of these same vessels. Although the Spanish eventually discovered this ploy, it demonstrates the Company’s ongoing interest in the illicit trade. As the masters of these vessels were never investigated or reprimanded despite the sub governor’s explicit knowledge of their actions, it is evident that any controls instituted to slow illegal trade were superficial, at best, and the most senior officials had no interest in hindering the Company’s extra-legal affairs.

Rather than attempting to obstruct the private trade, the Company furthered illicit efforts by enlisting the support of the Royal Navy. During the period in question, Aiton writes, British warships carried contraband and escorted “the sloops of private traders.”¹⁰⁶ In January 1736, Merewether and Manning believed that even their government approved of the private trade due to the assistance they received from the Royal Navy. The factors wrote Burrell, “We have reason to believe it [the private trade] is favorably thought of at home, for our men-of-war now give a countenance to it.”¹⁰⁷ Now that that British government had endorsed the Company’s

Sperling underestimates the involvement of senior officials and their own stakes in a successful and pervasive illicit trade.

105. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, Jan. 6, 1736, Shelburne MSS, Vol. XLIV, 868.

106. Aiton, “Asiento Treaty,” 175.

107. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, Jan. 6, 1736, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 867.

clandestine activities, Merewether and Manning sought to capitalize on the new opportunities available to them. The sub governor wrote again in 1737 to inform him of their new scheme in which they conspired with a contact in the service of a British man-of-war to trade “a large parcel of goods.”¹⁰⁸ The presence of British warships offered agents of the Company, as well as other private traders, new possibilities for conducting illicit trade. Particularly, the threat of search and discovery by the Spanish guarda costas was greatly diminished once contraband was transported in the hulls of British men-of-war.

Soliciting the aid of the Royal Navy for the purpose of advancing the illicit trade was nothing new for the Company. In its infancy, the Company enlisted the service of the H.M.S. Warwick. The Warwick was chartered in 1712 to ship provisions and personnel to the Company’s recently acquired trading posts. Dr. Thomas Dover, who was to take up the position of chief factor at Buenos Aires, was a passenger on the Warwick, which “did not sail until 1 February 1715.”¹⁰⁹ When the Warwick finally arrived in Buenos Aires in September, Dover oversaw the development and expansion of the Company’s factory. Most importantly, Dover fostered friendly relations with the Spanish authorities and the influential Catholic ecclesiasts. It is obvious that Dover possessed ulterior motives, however, since the Asiento was contravened almost immediately after his arrival. Dewhurst and Doublet discuss the breach of the treaty that occurred under Dover involving hides. “At the beginning of January 1716,” Dewhurst and Doublet write, “hides were loaded aboard H.M.S. Warwick, 900 on 3 January and 1980 several days later, but between 23 and 28 February 5324 hides were transferred from the Warwick

108. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, Sept. 30, 1737, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 817.

109. Kenneth Dewhurst and Rex Doublet, “Thomas Dover and The South Sea Company,” *Medical History*, 18 (1974), *NIH*, accessed 28 February 2012, 111-112, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/.../pdf/medhist00119-0005.

surreptitiously to two chartered merchantmen.”¹¹⁰ According to Dewhurst and Doublet, the transfer of cargo from the warship to the two merchantmen violated the terms of the Asiento. They further aver that Company warehouses at the factory teemed with contraband.¹¹¹

The involvement of British warships is evidence that the illicit trade conducted by the Company was indeed pervasive and unaffected by trivial embarrassments. Furthermore, the assistance provided by British warships lends credence to Aiton’s argument that the already strained relations between England and Spain were seriously exacerbated by illicit trade. The British government, whose intent was to threaten the stability of Spain’s mercantile economy, officially sponsored the Company’s improper trade in addition to that practiced by other private traders.

Sperling’s argument is dated and incomplete. The relationship between the South Sea Company and the Spanish formed a cornerstone of British and Spanish diplomacy during the period preceding the War of Jenkins’ Ear. Because Sperling fails to examine the controversy surrounding the account of the Royal Caroline and the subsequent grievances the two parties claimed of each other, his claim that illicit trade conducted through the Company’s slave trade was of little importance to the Spanish by 1735 is myopic. Distinguishing the illicit trade carried on by the slaving vessels from that conducted on the voyages of the annual ships is inexpedient. In order to understand the dynamic and extent of Spain’s complaints against the Company, all clandestine activity must be examined together. While in 1736 the Company eventually provided the Spanish with accounts of the profits of Royal Caroline, the Spanish viewed these as unacceptable. Furthermore, the company equivocated over Spain’s share of the profit. In spite of Sperling’s claim, the dispute over Spain’s share of the profit and accurate accounts of the

110. Dewhurst and Doublet, “Thomas Dover,” 114.

111. *Ibid.*

annual ship plagued relations between the Company and the Spanish authorities until the outbreak of war in 1739.

In response to Spain's grievances, the Company presented its own list of demands. In November 1735, the British Secretary of State wrote Geraldino complaining that the Spanish coastguards "had prevented regular operations" of the Company and stating that concomitant compensation was necessary.¹¹² Geraldino was in fact seriously bothered by these grievances which were only settled by war. In January 1738, he attempted to address the "value of seizures and losses" incurred by the Company.¹¹³ Later that year, Geraldino and a colleague tried to settle the dispute over payments between the Company and Spain. The British, on behalf of the Company, initially claimed that they were to collect an outstanding balance of £140,000 from the Spanish "for seizures and losses."¹¹⁴ This figure included compensation for various seized British vessels in addition to those belonging to the Company.¹¹⁵ At the Convention of El Pardo in January 1739, the amount was reduced to £95,000. After a further reduction, the Spanish argued that the Company owed £68,000 in "over-due payments" of slave duties and "an adjustment on the differences in the rate of exchange."¹¹⁶ Unsurprisingly, the Company resisted this claim and refused to pay, claiming that the value of merchandise seized by the Spanish in

112. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, "Accounting," 20.

113. *Ibid.*, 21.

114. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, "Accounting," 21.

115. The Company was dragged into an international dispute when Prime Minister Walpole used the debt owed by the Company to Spain as leverage to reduce English claims against Spain. For a more detailed explanation, see Sperling, 47.

116. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, "Accounting," 21.

1718 and 1726 far exceeded this sum.¹¹⁷ Neither Spain nor the Company paid the sums demanded, and diplomatic relations between England and Spain deteriorated.

The Company's extensive illicit trade and non-compliance with the Asiento were central to the dispute which climaxed on the eve of war in 1739. Although the illicit trade conducted by the Company could not have been the sole factor leading to war, it was certainly "a major cause" as it facilitated the deterioration of Spain's commerce with its South American colonies.¹¹⁸ The Company's illicit interests, the flourishing private trade of other Englishmen, and the "great illicit trade" carried on by the Dutch cumulatively posed a serious threat to "Spain's economic grip on its colonies."¹¹⁹

As a counter-argument to Nelson's assertion that the Company was "responsible for the partial breakdown of [Spain's] colonial commerce," Sperling cites McLachlan's *Trade and Peace with Old Spain 1667-1750*.¹²⁰ McLachlan states, "The importance of the illicit trade of the South Sea Company seems to have been considerably exaggerated."¹²¹ Her rationale, however, is naïve. She incorrectly argues that "[t]he Company hardly ever smuggled corporately or officially, for such flagrant misconduct could not have secured the approval of the general court of the Company's shareholders."¹²² This argument easily falls apart when one acknowledges that the general court possessed no direct authority over the Company's affairs.

117. Ibid; Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 47.

118. Nelson, "Contraband Trade," 55.

119. John Merewether and Edward Manning to Peter Burrell, Jamaica, January 6, 1736, Shelburne MSS, XLIV, 867; Aiton, "Asiento Treaty," 177.

120. Sperling, *Historical Essay*, 42-43.

121. Jean O. McLachlan, *Trade And Peace With Old Spain, 1667-1750: A Study of the Influence of Commerce on Anglo-Spanish Diplomacy In The First Half of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1940): 78.

122. Ibid., 79.

McLachlan defends her position by asserting that the court of directors would never have approved of smuggling for “the official representative of His Catholic Majesty was always in attendance.”¹²³ To discredit this claim here would be redundant, since the ways in which the Company trivialized Geraldino and circumvented his authority have previously been discussed. McLachlan fails to recognize that by 1730 all matters of any significance, including the Company’s illicit activities, were handled by the sub and deputy governors, rather than the court of directors.

While McLachlan is merely oblivious to the methods practiced by the complicit officials to contravene the Asiento and to deceive the shareholders, Sperling recognizes their existence but denies their significance. Unlike McLachlan and Sperling, both the Spanish and the shareholders were suspicious of management in the Company. By the 1730s, neither the Spanish nor the shareholders believed the Company to be capable of conducting a legitimate and advantageous trade. Convinced the annual ship provided the Company with a front from which it engaged in illicit trade, the Spanish desired to terminate this privilege, and in 1732 insisted that the Company discontinue the annual ship. In exchange for its compliance, the Company would receive an equivalent to compensate for any lost profit. Over the next two years, the proposal grew to encompass the entire Asiento. Although shareholders were particularly receptive to the offer, the proposal produced legal complications. Since the Asiento was a condition of an international treaty, the final decision rested with the British government which refused to relinquish the coveted contract.¹²⁴ The willingness of shareholders to accept such a proposal demonstrates the contemporary perception that of the management as incompetent. This is not a surprising conclusion given that the general shareholders did not benefit from management’s

123. McLachlan, *Trade And Peace With Old Spain*, 79.

124. Carmona, Donoso, and Walker, “Accounting,” 9-10.

illicit trade. The Spanish knew better and were tired of being circumvented. During the years prior to the War of Jenkins' Ear in 1739, the Spanish increasingly attempted to regulate the Asiento trade. Beginning in 1735, harsh restrictions were placed on slaving vessels with the intent to combat smuggling. "In fact," Nelson states, "during the last years of this period," the Spanish aggressively attempted to prevent illicit trading.¹²⁵ Effective regulation and prevention occurred only after the outbreak of war with the "outright confiscation of all property" belonging to the Company in the Spanish Indies.¹²⁶

The Asiento ended in 1750 but the Company continued to exist for another one hundred years.¹²⁷ When the Company ceased trading in 1850 many of its papers were lost or destroyed¹²⁸ and therefore, the full extent of the Company's illicit activities under the Asiento may never be known. However, the existing documentation is sufficient to tell a cautionary tale of corporate misconduct that remains relevant to the present day.

125. Nelson, "Contraband Trade," 63.

126. Ibid.

127. Helen J. Paul, *The South Sea Bubble: An Economic History Of Its Origins and Consequences* (New York: Routledge 2011) 107.

128. Ibid., 111.

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Author: Sam Spiegelman

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Conflict and Consent: LDP Predominance, *Shimin* Ideology, and the Emergence of State-Society Symbiosis in Postwar Japan

In comparison to the postwar histories of those countries operating within similar political and economic parameters, Japan's is anomalous in that it featured an ostensibly single-party state holding the reins of power for over five decades, despite the spasmodic protests of a restive and frequently confrontational citizenry. In consideration of this historical dichotomy, the historiography of postwar Japan features varied, and oftentimes disparate interpretations of how (or even whether) the state and society influenced one another. Although sporadic and frequently dissimilar, tangible manifestations of civil discontent invariably demonstrate that for decades after its establishment under the "1955 System," the governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) faced sustained opposition to its authority.

During the first three decades of LDP rule, nodes of opposition emerged among various segments of civil society, alternatively actualized in both violent and nonviolent forms. As we shall see, the legitimacy of popular protest against the LDP and the state in general relied upon the emergent concept of *shimin* (citizen). According to historian Simon Avenell, *shimin* "encapsulated a vision of individual autonomy beyond the outright control of the state or the established left and within an idealized sphere of human activity they called civil society (*shimin shakai*)."¹

That the LDP maintained, and in certain respects strengthened its political monopoly amidst moments of intense popular protest, demonstrates that the relationship between state and society in postwar Japan gradually became exceptionally symbiotic. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the LDP frequently reoriented its policies or

¹ Simon Andrew Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens: Civil Society and the Mythology of the Shimin in Postwar Japan*, University of California Press: 2010, p. 2

reorganized its leadership in response to a variety of popular movements. Thus the LDP's staying power relied upon its political and organizational flexibility. The historiographical implications of this revelation necessarily include a reappraisal of the extent to which various elements of civil society did in fact influence the behavior and conduct of the LDP. In consideration of this, the purpose of this paper shall be to demonstrate the ways in which "civil society"—however loosely defined—fundamentally directed and parameterized LDP policies and how in turn, the LDP shaped popular opinion in its favor.

The political structure and economic necessities of postwar Japan proved especially conducive to the development of an interlocking, and sometimes overlapping "power elite" composed of the most influential members of the LDP, the bureaucracy, and the business community. Although under postwar occupation, "democratization and demilitarization" permeated national discourse, following the "reverse course" in American foreign policy, purge of wartime bureaucrats and the reconstruction of *zaibatsu* reoriented public policy towards unfettered economic growth under the aegis of a single-party dominant state. In his introduction to *Creating Single-Party Democracy: Japan's Postwar Political System*, editor Kataoka Tetsuya argues that "as the 1955 system matured, traits that were only immanent in the original system—the LDP's factionalism, the ascendancy of a new breed of professional politicians, and the so-called money politics—were articulated and institutionalized."² Although the effects of these particular LDP characteristics on the relationship between the state and civil society would only become fully evident during the 1960s and 1970s, it is important to note that from its

² Kataoka Tetsuya, ed., *Creating Single-Party Democracy: Japan's Postwar Political System*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University: 1992, p. 13

formation, the party directed its efforts towards broadening its *jiban* (constituency), rather than seeking to circumvent or subvert its constitutional limitations. In this sense, party leaders were fully mindful—if not particularly appreciative—of the democratic values undergirding Japan’s postwar political structure.

Although the “1955 System” consolidated conservative rule at the highest echelons of political and economic power—even while, for nearly a decade, LDP dominance remained precarious—practical and constitutional realities limited the extent to which this emergent “power elite” could direct national policy without the consent of the governed. In practical terms, the LDP confronted intraparty factionalism, a viable albeit weakened political opposition comprised of the JSP and JCP, and a Japanese public that harbored an enduring distrust and sense of outrage towards the state. Especially in its formative years, the success of the LDP depended upon its ability to navigate these and other challenges to its authority. Although the predominance of the LDP precluded purely democratic governance from emerging, public sentiments as well as the legal contours set forth in the postwar constitution prevented the development of authoritarian government in turn.

Manifestations of public opposition, often through extra-governmental channels (i.e., rallies), could evidently have direct influences on the LDP, leading to alterations in the party’s policies and personnel. In this sense, and as we shall see, the Japanese *shimin*, or citizen, played a crucial role in postwar Japan’s political maturation, despite the predominance of the LDP throughout. Although the success of grassroots movements varied considerably, depending upon time and place, the emergence of *shimin* as a

political force in its own right reflects the extent to which military defeat and its aftermath reshaped the social, cultural, and ideological foundations of Japanese society.

In *Making Japanese Citizens: Civil Society and the Mythology of the Shimin in Postwar Japan*, Simon Avenell observes that the importance of *shimin* rested upon “the way leading activists actively constructed the mythology of the *shimin* around ideas of spontaneous action, individual autonomy, and democracy, and, more important, how their use of this mythology inspired and mobilized participants in public actions with a stamp of authenticity.”³ Thus although popular movements sometimes misappropriated *shimin* to bolster their own legitimacy, the “mythology” surrounding citizen action reflects the ubiquity of democratic ideals amongst the Japanese populace.

The balance struck by the LDP, between its own interests and those of a public enraptured by an almost “mythological” conception of *shimin*, reflects both the party’s inherent flexibility as well as the evolution of *shimin*-inspired movements from the 1950s and 60s to the 1970s. The LDP manifested this flexibility in two distinct ways: through occasional policy changes and leadership depositions, and more frequently, through political and economic rewards to supportive or otherwise acquiescent constituencies.

Andrew Gordon’s *Postwar Japan as History* features a number of essays examining LDP longevity despite various obstacles, including Gary Allinson’s “The Structure and Transformation of Conservative Rule, Sheldon Garon’s and Mike Mochizuki’s “Negotiating Social Contracts,” and J. Victor Koschman’s “Intellectuals and Politics.” Taken together, these essays shed light upon the political, social, and economic forces at play in the party’s consolidation of power, and the policies it initiated in pursuit of broader public support, or at the very least, public quiescence.

³ Simon Andrew Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 4

According to Garon and Mochizuki, “from the dawn of the postwar era the conservatives had to reconcile their objectives for rapid, often wrenching economic growth with the tasks of maintaining social stability and a strong electoral base.”⁴ To accomplish this the LDP, in conjunction with the bureaucracy and big business, negotiated a number of “social contracts”—defined by Garon and Mochizuki as “a political exchange relationship between the state and social groups that is mediated by interest organizations and that establishes public-policy parameters that endure over time”⁵—with certain segments of the Japanese populace.

For example, after Ishida Hirohide’s 1963 “[warning] that the LDP would lose its parliamentary majority as a result of rapid urbanization and industrialization unless the party appealed to wage earners,” the party “adopted Ishida’s proposed ‘Labor Charter,’ which committed the ruling party to full employment, improved working conditions, and the promotion of social security.”⁶ Furthermore, as Allinson observes, “by the 1960s, and certainly during the 1970s and 1980s, organized societal interests had become a far more influential political force than ever before.”⁷ Before “organized societal interests” and “social contracts” characterized the relationship between the state and civil society, however, more “spontaneous,” or rather grassroots forms of civil action—behaviors that conformed, or rather was intended to conform to the *shimin* ideal—emerged as the norm.

Although the latter form of civil protests did not necessarily have a direct effect on the specific ways in which civil society would interact with the LDP and the

⁴ Sheldon Goren and Mike Mochizuki, “Negotiating Social Contracts,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., (University of California Press, 1993), p. 145

⁵ Goren and Mochizuki, “Negotiating Social Contracts,” p. 145

⁶ Goren and Mochizuki, “Negotiating Social Contracts,” p. 160

⁷ Gary Allinson, “The Structure and Transformation of Conservative Rule,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., (University of California Press, 1993), p. 142

bureaucracy by the 1970s and 1980s, *shimin*-inspired movements imbued the Japanese people with a fundamental awareness of their natural and constitutional prerogatives as citizens. In this regard, the anti-ANPO movement of 1960 was a watershed in the evolving relationship between the state and society. Although protesters failed in preventing the passage of the controversial security agreement between Japan and the United States—seen by many as a dangerous turn towards remobilization—their actions did have two important, long-term effects on how the LDP interacted with civil society.

The first effect, the resignation of Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, who after being depurged during the “reverse course” played a crucial role in the establishment of the “1955 System”, was important in that it demonstrated that the party leadership could ultimately be held accountable for violations of the public’s trust. The second effect, the politicization of civil society, was arguably of greater consequence in that it galvanized ordinary Japanese men and women into lobbying the government on their own behalf, especially in the absence of a sufficiently strong political opposition to LDP predominance. Although, as Koschmann observes, “movement supporters were by and large not prepared to endanger their livelihood or take serious risks on behalf of the cause,” the anti-ANPO movement nevertheless “marked the beginnings of political action by ordinary citizens who sometimes acted outside existing organizational contexts...”⁸

In *Organizing the Spontaneous: Citizen Protests in Postwar Japan*, Wesley Sasaki-Uemura argues that among the factors that spurred the ANPO protests were “the specter” of the Second World War “still prominent in people’s minds,” “new channels for involvement” that emerged “during the 1950s that helped socialize people in political

⁸ J. Victory Koschmann, “Intellectuals and Politics,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., University of California Press: 1993, p. 407

activities,” “the increasing presence of women,” and “the development of a citizen ethos that placed the citizen rather than the proletariat as the subject or agent of historical change.”⁹ How then did the emergence of *shimin* “mythology” recast—either directly or indirectly—the relationship between the state and civil society from one in which the latter had little influence on the behavior of the former, as was certainly the case in the prewar period, and to a lesser extent, during the immediate postwar period, to one wherein both acted in relative symbiosis with one another?

In this case, *symbiosis* can best be defined as the mutual benefits that both the state and civil society derived through *accommodation*—a relationship wherein, as Garon and Mochizuki observe, the “social contract became a central feature in the Japanese conception of democracy in the postwar era” because it enabled “the public [to accept] the hegemony of the conservative coalition as long as it seriously negotiated to accommodate the interests of various social organizations and as long as the pain of economic readjustments appeared to be shared equitably throughout society.”¹⁰ Under this arrangement, which by the 1970s fully characterized the relationship between the state and civil society, the LDP-led government proved more receptive to grassroots movements that, as Avenell argues, had shifted its priorities from ideology-driven protests to “proposal-style civic activism.”¹¹

For our purposes, it is important to note the direct causal relationship between earlier *shimin*-inspired movements and the subsequent development of more pragmatic—and for the LDP, more palatable—forms of civic action. Just as intellectuals had shaped

⁹ Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous: Citizen Protest in Postwar Japan*, University of Hawaii Press: 2001, pgs. 23-4

¹⁰ Garon and Mochizuki, “Negotiating Social Contracts,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon ed., p. 165

¹¹ Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 197

earlier conceptualizations of *shimin* as, among other interpretations, an agent of Marxist revolution or romanticized national “renewal”—those made manifest during the anti-ANPO and anti-Narita movements, for instance—so too did they redefine the “citizen” as an agent of gradual societal progress; at least once the relationship between the state and society had become sufficiently conducive for this reorientation.

As Avenell observes, “historical actors—movement intellectuals—intervened at this moment, articulating a bold new vision of the *shimin* idea as centered on notions of creative, engaged, and financially sustainable activism.”¹² According to Avenell, “movement intellectuals of the ANPO struggle contributed to the formation of a master frame of civic activism” by “[using] the *shimin* idea to articulate a new activist mentality that connected independent political action to private life, self-interest, and the postwar ethos of ‘peace and democracy,’” and by “[attaching] the *shimin* idea to two streams of collective action: one based on conscientious dissent and the other embedded in prosaic local activities.”¹³

Thus although Garon and Mochizuki “attribute the LDP’s remarkable persistence to ‘creative conservatism’—that is, the seemingly unfailing ability of the ruling party, bureaucrats and big business to promote popular policies from above, thus stealing the thunder of the opposition,” it is important to note that the evolution of the “citizen” played a crucial role in the LDP’s move towards accommodation.¹⁴ Although by the 1970s, “Japanese civil society organizations faced a strict regulatory regime under the Civil Code—a legal straightjacket,” increased state intervention into civil society,

¹² Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 197

¹³ Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 242

¹⁴ Garon and Mochizuki, “Negotiating Social Contracts,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., p. 165

especially after the ANPO protests, was in a certain sense, a victory for the latter.¹⁵ While opponents of the LDP had not succeeded in ousting the party from power, mass discontent spurred the party and the state apparatus into improving their relationship with those members of civil society who did not subscribe to New Left ideology, that is to say, those concerned with democratic ideals as well as “bread and butter” issues, as opposed to revolutionary action.

During the 1960s and 1970s, a number of political, social, and economic developments laid the groundwork for the emergence of a symbiotic relationship between the LDP and civil society. One of the most important of these developments was the LDP’s Income Doubling Plan, which “established what seemed to be highly ambitious goals for investment and employment levels, production increases, and export volumes.”¹⁶ As Allinson observes, “under the aegis of the Income Doubling Plan, Ikeda [the plan’s architect] and his bureaucratic cohorts then dominating the LDP pursued what we can call a politics of ‘induced compliance,’” a style of governance “with the twin purpose of fostering rapid economic growth and building a majority political coalition.” Thus under the Income Doubling Plan, initiated in late 1960, “paternalistic guardians of the commonwealth set the agenda with a technocratic style.” And although “haughty” and “[having their own interests in mind]” these “paternalistic guardians” were nevertheless “animated enough by a sense of public duty that they pursued policies with broad, national returns.”¹⁷ Although the plan succeeded, spurring Japan’s “economic miracle,” “by the late 1960s the costs of rapid growth had begun to outstrip its benefits in

¹⁵ Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 199

¹⁶ Allinson, “Conservative Rule,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., p. 135

¹⁷ Allinson, “Conservative Rule,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., p. 135

the eyes of many, and the groundwork for a new era in Japanese politics was laid.”¹⁸

During this “new era” the LDP once again refashioned its policies and reshuffled its leadership in an effort to retain power, replacing “induced compliance” with what Allinson terms “competitive negotiation”:

“The bureaucratic elites who presided over the dramatic expansion in the Japanese economy unwittingly and paradoxically contributed to their own demise in many ways. Rapid economic growth had the effect of promoting materialist consumer values on a broad basis in the midst of an ebullient market economy. During the 1960s and after, the values and market orientations of the private sector endowed political relations themselves with the character of a massive, multifaceted exchange relationship. More societal groups found themselves with the resources to organize and bargain politically. Politicians in general and the ruling party in particular had to heed the appeals of such interests.”¹⁹

Although the LDP’s economic policies, initiated in an effort to expand its support, ironically strengthened pragmatic “societal groups” seeking to extract rewards and concessions from the government, the party’s actions cannot alone account for their emergence. Although improvements in affluence and educational attainment, both partial consequences of LDP policy, “significantly increased the ability of societal interests to organize, develop expertise, conduct lobbying, and pursue their political objectives,” the party’s inattention to a variety of pressing matters, from environmental degradation to elderly care, combined with the demise of the New Left, compelled the Japanese public to petition for increased state intervention.²⁰ While the fundamental conceptualization of the *shimin* as an agent for positive social and political change did not diminish, its purposes changed drastically as Japan’s rapid economic progress produced both affluence and discord.

¹⁸ Allinson, “Conservative Rule,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., p. 136

¹⁹ Allinson, “Conservative Rule,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., p. 141

²⁰ Allinson, “Conservative Rule,” *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed., p. 142

According to Avenell, the “politics of proposal” did not only require an intellectual reappraisal of the citizen’s role within the body politic, it also depended upon increased cooperation between the state and civil society. For veterans of the mass protests of the 1950s and 1960s, “radicalism had simply failed and needed to be replaced by strategies that took civic groups inside the state-business nexus from where they could launch a guerilla-style program for fundamental social change.”²¹ For its part, the state—herein defined as the LDP, the bureaucracy, and big business—began to recognize its stake in these societal interest groups. As Avenell observes: “in the hands of shrewd officials [citizen participation] also had the potential to become a legitimizing ideology and method for the incorporation and domestication of civic energies.”²² Thus “attitudes of bureaucrats and corporate elites toward certain forms of activism underwent change at the same time” as civic activists began to adopt more pragmatic, and conciliatory objectives.²³ Hence, while “the new civic movements benefitted greatly from corporate logistical and financial support... state and corporate actors helped to shape civic activism... through a combined strategy of prevention on the one hand and carefully guided empowerment on the other.”²⁴ Although “state and corporate actors” had ulterior motives in encouraging civic activism, their support nevertheless demonstrates an increased awareness of their obligations to the Japanese public.

Thus although the LDP remained the predominant political force into the 1990s, the inroads it made into civil society after the ANPO protests, including its negotiation of a variety of “social contracts” with labor unions, small businesses, and other “societal

²¹ Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 196

²² Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 193-4

²³ Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 196

²⁴ Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, p. 196

interest groups” coalesced, along with the evolution of the *shimin* from revolutionary to pragmatist, into a symbiotic relationship between the party and the Japanese public—the LDP could now claim itself to be the “big tent” party despite its faltering election returns, as acceptance of LDP rule did not translate into active support, while the Japanese people could count on the government to foster material prosperity and maintain its ostensibly democratic integrity.

Although the emergence of this accommodative relationship did not necessarily portend the steady decline of the LDP, it was nevertheless symptomatic of a broader trend in modern Japanese history—the transition from state imperiousness and civil acquiescence, to a far more equitable, and ultimately more sustainable arrangement. Although Japan has experienced its share of economic fragility (i.e., the “lost decades” of the 1980s and 1990s) and political instability (i.e., the Recruit Scandal) since the mid-1970s, the emergence of a more symbiotic relationship between the state and civil society established channels of trust and cooperation that contained the adverse consequences of social, political, and economic upheaval within the contours of a stable, albeit imperfect democratic polity.

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