Expanding Educational Empires:
The USA, Great Britain, and British Africa, circa 1902-1944

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ABSTRACT

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“Expanding Educational Empires” explores the interventions of American philanthropic foundations in educational programs for British Africa after the First World War. It reveals the extent to which a discourse of education – pedagogy and research – allowed American philanthropic groups, and the numerous governmental and nongovernmental organizations with which they cooperated, to shape the interwar British Empire, and institutionalize a colonial ideology that aligned with American corporate and cultural interests. American philanthropists portrayed these interwar colonial activities as benevolent, apolitical enterprises, glossing over the fact that their influence over the overlapping agencies with which they cooperated filtered easily into official organs of power.

By the 1940s, when the Anglo-American partnership no longer served the interests of American-based global capital, American philanthropists performed an effortless volte-face against a mercantilist British Empire. They now found it expedient to invoke both their nation’s ingrained hostility to colonialism and their expertise in native affairs, which had been attained primarily through support of interwar British imperialism, as justification for meddling in the postwar international arena, using education to construct a global community committed to corporate American preferences.

This project investigates the close collaboration between American and British agents in the formulation of interwar colonial education, exposing it as a comprehensive
program that entailed accumulating knowledge about British territories, particularly in Africa, and disseminating the findings worldwide, thereby establishing new ideological and economic international assumptions. It reveals that American interference in this ambitious project constituted an extension of the longstanding domestic state-building endeavors of early-twentieth-century American philanthropic foundation managers, and their partners. The “unofficial”, humanitarian framework of education allowed a web of American agents to smoothly and remarkably embed themselves in a foreign government’s operations with the ulterior motive of powering American international influence, a story that has significant implications today.
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early-twentieth-century British and American educators, she made the fruitful suggestion that I start by looking at the records of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, conveniently located in nearby Harlem. Tracing the preoccupations, movements, and correspondence of the directors of this small American philanthropic foundation played a crucial role in this study.

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INTRODUCTION

By his work in tropical Africa Doctor Jesse Jones has earned the gratitude of all who realize, however dimly, the pregnant significance of Africa to the modern world. The reports of the Phelps-Stokes Commissions, of which he was the chairman and leader, have left a deep mark on the minds of governments, missionary societies, planters, natives, and all who are concerned for the welfare of Africa. More than any other man, he has given a new turn to British administrative policy in regard to African native education.

Michael Sadler, 1926.¹

This dissertation explores the interventions of American philanthropic foundations, like the small, New York-based Phelps-Stokes Fund, in educational programs for British Africa after the First World War. It reveals the extent to which a discourse of education – pedagogy and research – allowed American philanthropic groups, and the numerous governmental and nongovernmental organizations with which they cooperated, to shape the interwar British Empire, and institutionalize a colonial ideology that aligned with American corporate and cultural interests. American philanthropists, and the array of governmental, academic, and missionary groups with which they collaborated, portrayed these interwar colonial activities as benevolent, apolitical enterprises, glossing over the fact that their influence over the overlapping agencies with which they partnered filtered easily into official organs of power, and molded a postwar global community committed to corporate American preferences.

Early-twentieth-century American actors understood education as a comprehensive term, encompassing two quite different but related areas of activity. One was pedagogic, focused on teaching disparate populations in schools, universities, and

colleges of further education, as well as outside formal educational institutions. The other involved sociological and anthropological research. Educational planners believed it was impossible to devise appropriate educational schemes for different demographics without an understanding of their cultures. Nor could people be trained to be productive citizens of their communities without awareness of their own social unit, and they could not be expected to co-exist peacefully with other ethnic groups without learning about them also.

American agencies saw education as a tool to define and strengthen the American state. At a time when powerful factions responded to the disruptive impact of industrialization, urbanization, and immigration with policies of exclusion, protection, and isolation, a network of organizations invoked education, an Enlightenment ideal, to impose a uniform American identity on an ethnically and culturally diverse, and potentially economically underperforming, nation. In a still globalizing world, far-flung territories constituted untapped commercial opportunities, and the educational engagements of early-twentieth-century American philanthropists and their partners inevitably crossed political boundaries.

Accordingly, after 1918, American philanthropists spearheaded a plethora of educational programs to research and teach the British Empire’s African subjects. In the face of increasing American political and economic isolation, they designed overseas educational schemes to allow corporate America to capitalize on developing export markets and raw materials. American planners anticipated that modeling colonial African educational policies on American cultural norms would draw as yet un-exploited African regions into an expansionist America, an empire in all but name. But American
organizers feared that African economic development would produce socially destabilizing, anti-capitalist forces, particularly perilous to American economic and cultural security due to the USA’s large population of black African Americans. Black Americans were especially disillusioned and angry after they failed to win the political and social rights they had anticipated after participation in the War. Earnest American philanthropic foundations, and the academics and social reformers they supported, could not imagine resolving these issues without studying black societies, yet domestic political concerns made this difficult to orchestrate at home. The foundations needed the support of a cooperative, stable British imperial presence in order to research black life, and further American cultural and economic interests abroad.

A faction of key British missionaries, educators, politicians, humanitarians, and civil servants welcomed American expertise and financial assistance in managing their African colonies. Economically drained by the costs of the First World War, they were convinced that their nation’s international competitiveness in the twentieth century relied increasingly on the Empire. But the War had expanded, divided, and indebted the far-flung British Empire. It had also given renewed currency to notions of an imperial “white dominion,” a vision that resonated with white settlers in Eastern and Southern Africa who boasted powerful friends in Parliament.2 Debates on white sovereignty for British African territories dismayed American groups concerned to appease racial strains in Africa, and relatedly, the USA. They equally horrified “liberal” British Empire builders (in contrast to those who favored policies of racial subordination and white supremacy), who were committed to transforming the Empire into a more centralized, productive whole, rather

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than a segregated, divided unit with power devolved to disparate white blocs that had proved to be lacking in commercial savvy. They took seriously Britain’s role as imperial trustee, and presciently feared that the policies of racial subordination underlining proposals for white dominion would incite black nationalist and communist fervor. This in turn would threaten relations with an increasingly disgruntled India, with significant populations of Indian immigrants residing in Eastern and Southern Africa. This band of liberal British Empire builders sought out American money and methods to consolidate and stabilize their preferred model of a colonial state.

African education served as the perfect rubric for these American and British agents, concerned to develop lucrative African regions to their fullest capacity, while pacifying international racial tension. Planners portrayed education as an “unofficial” social welfare concern, rather than a matter of politics or economics. But this was disingenuous – educational theory does not exist in a vacuum; it is inevitably rooted in political principles. In this pedagogical model, education constituted a political and economic mechanism for drawing hugely different, discrete regions into cooperation with one another. Educational architects ostensibly recognized cultural particularism, stressing the distinctiveness of “native” rural communities that should be researched in order to devise schemes that would reassert order and stability. They simultaneously endorsed homogenizing Protestant, capitalist values, drawing African communities into an expanding global market economy. This meant that they regarded educational principles based on broadly Protestant ethics, together with practical, agricultural, and technical skills, rather than a pointless, ‘elitist’, liberal arts education, as conducive to social order.

Instruction in the different nationalities that comprised these communities-in-the-making
was deemed necessary to regenerate, and strengthen, the fractured, secularizing, and increasingly pluralistic societies of the “West,” as well as those of “primitive Africa.” British and American educational organizers therefore promoted these back-to-nature pedagogical principles and techniques for domestic as well as colonial populations, in the hope of forging peaceful, productive, integrated societies.

This Anglo-American collaboration on interwar African education helped to standardize educational values within the Empire, and linked British colonies to an expanding American state. In the loosely configured British Empire, education, in the myriad of crown colonies, protectorates, and trusteeship territories that fell within the orbit of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, education had historically been a devolved mission, not a governmental, preserve. Immediately prior to and after the First World War, few colonial officials had any particular educational expertise.³

This changed in 1923, when, inspired by American philanthropic zeal, the Colonial Office formed its Advisory Committee on Education in British Tropical Africa (ACETA). Key members of the Colonial Office, missionary organizations, and educational societies warmly welcomed US intervention, and American philanthropy funded an array of educational experiments – “Jeanes” schools for the rural masses and institutions of higher education to train the native community in leadership – modeled on American paradigms.

The number of Africans directly involved in the government’s interwar educational schemes was minimal. By the 1930s, the colonial governments, guided by the ACEC and encouraged by American philanthropy, had only established Jeanes schools in

a handful of colonies: Kenya, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, and Southern Rhodesia. The British government had also founded institutions for post-primary education in the eastern Cape, northern Nyasaland, the Gold Coast, southern Nigeria, Uganda, and Sierra Leone. In the Gold Coast, a colony enriched by cocoa exports and whose governor Sir Gordon Guggisberg placed a primacy on colonial education, less than ten per cent of children were enrolled in government-assisted schools during the 1920s and ‘30s. In the larger territory of Nigeria, government expenditure on education was less than half that of the Gold Coast. Opportunities for post-primary education were even more limited; for example, in 1938, some 5,500 Africans were receiving secondary education in South Africa, and no more than this in tropical Africa. Furthermore, it is difficult to identify an ascendant British imperial educational approach, when interwar colonial civil servants and government officials – at both local and metropolitan levels – disagreed about how best to manage a fractured empire. 

Nonetheless, as the possibility of a global social and economic crisis increased during the 1930s, the influence wielded by this Anglo-American educational network grew. The plethora of educational commissions, research institutions, colonial educational bodies, and teacher training institutes financed by American philanthropy, along with the multitude of publications and circulars they produced and disseminated, sustained the Empire and championed ideals that became entrenched in colonial discourses. In 1929, the British government enlarged the Committee to include all colonies that sought its help, renaming it the more comprehensive Advisory Committee


on Education in the Colonies (ACEC). By the 1930s, this body, described by Clive Whitehead as responsible for ushering in “a new dimension to British colonial policy”, focusing on economic “development,” was financed by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.⁶

This imperial direction fostered new lines of communication for Africans. Although only a small number of African educational institutions offered post-primary instruction, those that did exist were attended by students from across the continent. In 1929, British missionary A. V. Murray commented that these boarding schools were “cosmopolitan place[s],” noting that there was “no guarantee in setting up a school ‘for a territory’ that it [would] really serve that territory” due to the fact that they attracted Africans from far and wide.⁷ Many of the alumni of these elite institutions, for example, Kwame Nkrumah, graduate of the Gold Coast’s Achimota college, subsequently furthered their education in Britain or the United States, often with American philanthropic assistance. If the interwar ACEC developed African bodies for higher education to produce future leaders, then arguably it succeeded, as many heads of newly independent African countries in the 1960s had been educated at the array of experimental colleges that the advisory committee had initiated.

Anglo-American planners were also concerned to reach the general “community” of Africans, not just those attending formal educational institutions. For example, in 1929, the transatlantic International Missionary Council, a group with prominent outposts in both Great Britain and the United States, created the International Committee on

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⁶ Whitehead, *Colonial Educators*, 81-82.

Christian Literature to make “adequate provision” for the “concerted development of Christian literature for the Continent of Africa.”

The British government endorsed the organization, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York offered funding. “Literature” for the ICCLA referred to an array of books, pamphlets, periodicals, and posters on a range of secular and religious themes. This reading material was published in vernacular and colonial languages. In 1932, the ICCLA launched Listen, a journal written in simplified English, and included sections that could be easily translated into African languages. Issues dealt with various “practical” matters, for example agriculture, African Christian family life, nutrition, sanitation, and childcare. In 1931, the missionary group established Books for Africa, a quarterly that publicized an assortment of colonial educational experiments, as well as various contemporary pedagogical initiatives from the outside world.

As colonial education became more standardized, so did teaching practices. By 1938, all prospective education officers needed a recognized teaching diploma or certificate, usually obtained from London’s recently-established, Carnegie-financed Institute of Education, and in 1940, the Colonial Office appointed an educational adviser to coordinate the educational schemes for all colonies. The practical education recommended by the British government for all its territories by the 1940s, designed to

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8 “Minutes of the Committee on Christian Literature in Africa,” March 16, 1929, box 1, Conference of British Missionary Societies/ International Committee on Christian Literature (hereafter CBMS/ ICCLA), Archives and Special Collections, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.


10 Ibid, 85.
economically develop colonial regions while promoting agrarian, ecumenical Christian values, mirrored the educational and theological doctrines of their American sponsors.

But by the 1940s, these American groups were no longer happy to be associated with the British Empire. The façade of informal, disinterested benevolence that they maintained had characterized their involvement in the education of interwar British Africa, despite their close connections with American and British governmental bodies, had served them well. By the time the USA entered the Second World War in 1941, the incentives that had originally enticed American philanthropic foundations to support British educational initiatives in Africa – pacifying racial unrest and creating export markets at a time of political and economic isolation – were no longer pertinent. American philanthropists performed an effortless volte-face against a mercantilist British Empire.

Politically, pan-African agitation against British and American racial injustice had strengthened during the 1930s, partly in consequence of the efforts of the Anglo-American alliance. Anti-American sentiment may therefore explain why British imperialism attracted greater opprobrium than that of other empires. As we shall see, their collaborative model of educational state-expansion created opportunities for the participation of marginalized black actors. Minority support legitimized educational schemes. Black scholars, primarily from British Africa and the USA, seized the chance to explore and celebrate their “African” culture as a means of protesting racial subordination. But black dissidents tied their political grievances, aggravated by enlistment in a war against fascist totalitarianism while blacks were still agitating for basic civil rights in the USA, and European colonies in Africa, to an equally radical
critique of capitalism. Liberal American philanthropists favored an end to political racial
discrimination, but not at the expense of a root-and-branch restructuring of the American
economic system. Wanting freedom for all did not mean that they were prepared to make
any financial sacrifice to attain it. Hence they distanced themselves from European, and
in particular British, colonialism, using their expertise in the African continent, even
though cooperation with British colonial enterprise was the source of their African know-
how, to rally widespread African American support for a postwar economic order of free
markets that could be dominated by corporate America.  

As the British Empire contended with acute social and economic tensions during
the Depression and Second World War, efforts to solidify an international community in
accordance with British ideological and economic preferences – that recognized and
strengthened the Empire as an efficient, self-sufficient economic unit – failed. British
officials, facing colonial and American anti-imperial rhetoric, and (partly due to their
own activities) an increasingly multi-racial, secularizing metropole, attempted to foster a
shared national identity for colonial and domestic “British” populations. The character of
this identity would be based on nebulous Christian principles and the idea of a unifying

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11 For postwar American claims of anti-imperialism, see: Alan Pifer, “A Lecture given before the
Philosophical Society, University College, Ibadan, on 16 November, 1958,” (Ibadan, Nigeria:
Ibadan University Press, 1958), file 3, box 669, Papers of Dame Margery Freda Perham (hereafter
MP), Commonwealth and African Studies, Bodleian Library, Oxford; and Melville J. Herskovits,
“Northwestern University Information for the Institute on Contemporary Africa,” 1951, file 3,
box 669, MP. I refer to the post-Bretton Woods economic arrangement as one of free markets.
This is a simplification. Its policies reduced trade tariffs, and broke up trading blocs (enabling the
United States to penetrate Britain’s imperial preference system); pegged fixed exchange rates (to
be mediated by the dollar) to gold, ensuring an international balance of trade; and enabled the
dollar (whose convertibility to gold was guaranteed by the US government) to become the
world’s reserve currency, in addition to other policies. This international organization of freer
trade will be discussed in chapter 6. See Mary Poovey, “Stories We Tell about Liberal Markets
The Efficient Market Hypothesis and Great-Men Narratives of Change,” in The Peculiarities of
Liberal Modernity in Imperial Britain, ed. Simon Gunn and James Vernon (Berkeley, CA:
social education that they had learned from former American partners. But institutional and ideological barriers blocked their attempts at home. And the wider imperial ambitions underlining their domestic educational proposals were ill fated. Interwar British colonial educational programs had rested on an alliance with American philanthropic foundations. These ventures had heightened American corporate clout, while permitting the USA to retain a veneer of disinterested altruism. Now an American, rather than a British, empire had been erected, held together by ideas, not political borders. It promoted a global model of free trade at a time when the USA was already the world’s most powerful creditor nation and economic leader, consolidating American dominance for the rest of the century.

This project undertakes a task not previously attempted by other scholars. It explores the close collaboration between American and British agents in the formulation of interwar colonial education, exposing it as a comprehensive program that entailed accumulating and circulating knowledge about British territories, particularly in Africa, and discreetly establishing new ideological and economic international assumptions. It reveals that American interference in this ambitious project constituted an extension of the longstanding domestic state-building endeavors of early-twentieth-century American philanthropic foundation managers, and their partners. The “unofficial”, humanitarian framework of education allowed a web of American agents to smoothly and remarkably embed themselves in a foreign government’s operations with the ulterior motive of powering American international influence, a story that has significant implications today.
This interwoven Anglo-American narrative also offers illuminating comparative insights into the British and American states. American and British actors cooperated closely with one another during the interwar period, and advocated shared educational principles and schemes. But educational policies designed by late-nineteenth-century American governmental and nongovernmental reformers to consolidate a cooperative, decentralized American polity failed to accord with the unitary British government’s plans for postwar reconstruction. This story highlights distinctions between the institutional contours of these two states and the role of philanthropy, religion, and nationalism within them.

**Historiography**

A rich corpus of recent historical literature focuses on the extent to which British colonial endeavors, especially in Africa, produced a body of enduring expectations that shaped the postwar international economic and ideological landscape. This scholarship indicates that the framework of ideas endorsed by post-Second World War international organizations like the United Nations – universal human rights, economic development, agrarian stability, expert planning, and state intervention – was circumscribed by the emphasis on capitalist expansion and racial hierarchy enshrined in the British imperial project. In *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism*, Joseph Hodge demonstrates that the demands of late British colonial initiatives established “state-centered ideologies and development structures” that became “deeply embedded in international policies and institutions in the decades
following the end of colonial rule.” Kevin Grant’s *A Civilized Savagery* emphasizes the imperial foundations of twentieth-century international government and labor law. Similarly, Mark Mazower reinstates British imperialism into narratives of the evolution of the United Nations in *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations.* Helen Tilley, in *Africa As a Living Laboratory*, argues that, imperial management and control, particularly in the wake of the Empire’s dramatic nineteenth-century expansion in Africa, forced British officials and other interested parties to grapple with competing interests, to establish new kinds of institutions and a new machinery of knowledge that long outlived the formal Empire.

In addition to acknowledging the exploitative nature of British imperialism, this literature also stresses that the complex, participatory character of new mechanisms for colonial knowledge production eventually challenged the status quo. Tilley argues that the dearth of British official expertise on the newly enlarged Empire forced the government to rely on innovative professional and advisory networks that often employed African savvy on the ground in colonial outposts. These research organizations, according to Tilley, “began to decolonize Africa by challenging stereotypes, destabilizing Eurocentric perspectives, and considering African topics on

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12 Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert*, 19


their own terms.” These scholars also highlight the close, reciprocal relationship between the British metropole and colonies during this period, a perspective that this project adopts.

Analysis of American intervention is largely absent in these works, although American philanthropy funded many of the colonial research institutions, surveys, conferences, and teacher training bodies on which they focus. For example, Tilley’s study centers on the African Research Survey orchestrated by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) for the British government during the 1930s. She acknowledges that the Carnegie Corporation of New York financed this study, but discussion of the motivation behind and influence of extensive American input lies outside the scope of Tilley’s fruitful and far-reaching narrative. Grant’s declared impetus for reinserting the significance of British imperial concerns into stories of the evolution of an international order that prioritized notions of “development” is to refute prevalent claims that Americans suddenly originated these hegemonic, global doctrines after 1945.

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Investigation of the earlier domestic activities of the philanthropic foundations that sponsored the academic and research projects spotlighted by Tilley and Hodge indicates that the intricate system of knowledge accumulation and circulation did not spontaneously emerge as a late colonial exigency. Nor did it arise after the Second World War in response to American Cold War strategic concerns. Tilley notes that the “cognitive frameworks” engendered by the later colonial program in Africa bore “a striking resemblance” to those that “emerged in Europe and North America in the second half of the twentieth century.”¹⁹ On closer examination, they also mirrored the elaborate domestic educational mechanisms orchestrated by their American patrons earlier in the century.

Foregrounding the American dimension of these stories reveals that these elaborate colonial structures of knowledge production functioned as instruments of unofficial American growth. Since the turn of the twentieth century, the same web of American actors that sponsored interwar British colonial schemes had coordinated an array of similar educational efforts to heal a fractured nation riven by inequality, racism, and xenophobia into an American nation. I build on recent historical literature in the field of American political development to reveal that education was a comprehensive, umbrella term for the array of religious, social scientific, and academic programs designed by these agents to learn about, and thus teach efficiently, an increasingly hybrid American population. For an interwoven group of organizations, this expansive notion of education had a significant state-building function. In a decentralized, federated state, philanthropic groups relied on finding inventive means to disseminate hazy, non-theological Protestant principles to unify and harmonize a far-reaching, diverse nation.

¹⁹ Tilley, Africa, 25.
into the cohesive workforce demanded by industry and business. Philanthropic foundation managers and their partners orchestrated numerous research commissions and surveys in the hope that studying the growing nation’s composite demographics and afflicted regions would provide the means of incorporating them into the body politic. They anticipated that the publication of their findings would lead to standardized values, thereby strengthening the American nation.\(^{20}\)

The present project explores the international vision of this web of American philanthropists, governmental officials, missionaries, and academics, eager to export American ideals and commerce. It unveils the network of American agents who instigated and coordinated new research institutions and professional networks for a struggling, but extensive, British Empire. Instigating Americanized research and pedagogical institutions for the interwar British Empire, with which they could cooperate and often discreetly guide, enabled these American planners to institutionalize in the international arena certain ways of thinking about race, community building, and economic development. This web of knowledge-production aligned with contemporary American – ultimately more than British – corporate concerns, and survived the post-war demise of the British Empire.\(^{21}\)


\(^{21}\) I am indebted to the work of several scholars who similarly explore the expansion of an American empire through the extension of ideas, and the creation of new “knowledge industries”, during this period. Robert Vitalis, in *White World Order, Black Power Politics*, brilliantly exposes that the development of the field of international relations in the early-twentieth-century USA centered on problems of imperialism and race relations. Academics in American universities and colleges provided the “intellectual rationales for the political class” to “preserve and extend white hegemony.” Their strategies transformed the USA into an imperial power long before the 1950s. Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of*
Understanding the interwar colonial educational programs against the backdrop of the earlier, domestic efforts of American backers also indicates that the incorporation of African agents was not a sudden contingency measure caused by British inefficiency, as Tilley suggests. In the American educational state-building structure, minority representation on all schemes was essential if, as white planners believed possible, America was to be healed through education. Foundation heads imagined that cooperative black agents would elicit the support of their communities, legitimizing the recommendations of their sociological surveys and anthropological studies.

This model of knowledge production restored agency to marginalized groups, predominantly women and black people, and challenged the agenda of organizers, contributing to an eventual outcome of political decolonization, as Tilley argues. White American and British elites hand-picked minority partners, selected for their moderation, to participate in programs. However, once involved, these participants were able to use the research and international contacts they had acquired to challenge the political, economic, and social status quo. This became especially true of black scholars during the 1930s. Anglo-American reformers redoubled their educational efforts at home and abroad. They confronted social, economic, and political problems, both domestic and colonial, creating an array of new educational institutions in Africa, America, and

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especially England – which lacked American-style political sensitivity surrounding research into black culture. These schemes introduced even more disaffected “native” scholars and educators to one another, and they began to create new research organizations, and political platforms, from which to protest the Anglo-American institutions that had brought them together.

However, fleshing out American philanthropic interactions with the black intellectuals drawn into, and emboldened by, colonial networks of knowledge production offers a more nuanced understanding of the terms on which Africans achieved decolonization. By turning against the British Empire, and agitating for political modernization, white American philanthropists succeeded in co-opting these black agitators into partnership, and gaining their support for a Bretton Woods economic order of international capitalism to be dominated by America, the world’s foremost creditor nation. Examination of this endeavor prompts a revision of the historical literature that regards the Second World War-era alliance of American liberals and African Americans against European colonialism as a radical moment in American history. On closer

See, Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997). In *Rising Wind*, Brenda Plummer analyzes the influence of black Americans on international affairs during this period, noting their success in turning the American government against European colonialism. But Plummer does not identify the subtle differences between black political demands and more radical economic claims. Mary L. Dudziak’s *Cold War Civil Rights* focuses on the influence of America’s engagement in the Cold War, particularly in the Third World, on the attainment of democratic rights for African Americans at home. Fighting under the banner of democracy abroad forced the American government to grant civil rights to black agitators at home who recognized this inconsistency. Dudziak fails to consider the changing meanings of the term “democracy” for black activists. By the 1950s and ‘60s, African Americans had achieved civil rights – enfranchisement – but had not won for themselves the social democratic rights that black intellectuals had fought for during the 1930s and Second World War. Analyzing the wartime negotiations between white philanthropists and black Americans sheds light on how this change came about. Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). Ira Katznelson argues that the structural inequalities black actors fought against during the 1930s and 40s actually worsened due
analysis, white American male corporate elites retained control of the reins of power in their wartime collaboration with black Americans, just as they always had done.  

The expansive, interwoven nature of this project also highlights distinctive British and American responses to shared historical processes. Scholars writing in the 1950s and ‘60s customarily dichotomized the vibrancy and robustness of British versus feeble and unenthusiastic American state social welfare ideals and welfare states, an approach challenged by most recent literature. A comparative stance that focuses on education – to the discriminatory nature of New Deal and wartime welfare policies, including the GI bill (thanks to white Southern Democratic influence in Congress). Katzenelson, When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2005), 17.

23 The gendered element of this account – how male elites in particular ended up, or continued to be, dominant – will also be explored in this dissertation. I look at how women became crucial to American and British religious, academic, and political interventions in Africa during this period, and their ultimate under-representation in postwar academic and political institutions. See Peter Mandler, Return from the Natives: How Margaret Mead Won the Second World War and Lost the Cold War (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2013), 180; Barbara Ransby, Eslanda: The Large and Unconventional Life of Mrs. Paul Robeson (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2013), 147.

24 Simon Gunn and James Vernon, “Introduction,” in Gunn and Vernon (eds.), Peculiarities of Liberal Modernity, 12. Gunn and Vernon lament that, although global histories “allow us to see the West as a product of world historical processes,” this approach “runs the risk of collapsing complexity and difference, and reifying a Western…story of modernity.” This approach is endorsed by Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen in the introduction to their edited volume, Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century (London: Routledge, 2005). Elkins and Pedersen advocate a “broad comparative analysis” for helping “us to understand particularities better.” (7)

in the broader sense understood by the protagonists of this story – engenders a more nuanced appreciation of the complexity of national political development in both.26

Tracing the actions of early-twentieth-century British educational policymakers alongside those of their American peers discloses a British faction that tried desperately to replicate American enterprises. It is instructive regarding the capacity of a federated (versus unitary) state, that British reformers like Scottish missionary, Joseph Oldham, were more successful in influencing educational policy for the sprawling Empire, where, like in the USA, education did not historically fall under the remit of the central government, than in the metropole, where education, although locally administered, was a national provision.

Methodology and Organization

This project tracks the growth and decline of a mutually beneficial alliance between American and British actors, and their numerous, often overlapping, governmental and nongovernmental organizations. I focus on the extensive personal correspondence and travel diaries of these men and women, who were connected by both their educational ambitions and the common findings of their myriad educational surveys, commissions, and conferences. Working in cooperation with their national governments, they disseminated their publications and memoranda via expansive networks. These

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analysis moved from Europe to the USA, not vice versa. Even Tracy Steffes’ story of American state-building through decentralized education, remorsefully concludes that while European nation-states responded to early-twentieth-century social change by providing “a social safety net for all citizens” through social insurance programs, the American answer was education and “individualism.” Steffes, School, Society, and State, 6. British contemporaries did not regard these educational policies as individualistic when they were proposed across the pond.

sources therefore represent a body of ideas more significant than the isolated and
disparate thoughts of a handful of individuals, who would have been unable to influence
policy making. They illustrate educational principles that filtered into American and
British official circles, and I examine the extent to which they subsequently defined the
broader ideological contours of the two nations by the mid-twentieth century.

I focus on interwar British Africa, rather than other European colonies in Africa,
because this was where the Anglo-American partnership concentrated its educational
activities after the First World War. Many of the “world” or “international” endeavors on
which they collaborated from the beginning of the twentieth century were in fact heavily
Anglo-American. These included, for example, the World Missionary Conference of
1910, and the resultant International Missionary Council, established in 1921. It is thus
unsurprising that when American philanthropists, deeply embroiled in this missionary
activity, chose to intervene in the education of Africa, they partnered with long-standing,
receptive British friends with whom there was no language barrier, and concentrated on
British-controlled areas.

‘British Africa’ is an imprecise geographical term; during this period, British
territories in the continent included colonies, tropical dependencies, protectorates,
trusteeship mandates, and a Commonwealth nation, and were constantly in flux. I
concentrate largely on educational programs for black people in Great Britain’s formal
African colonies in East and West Africa, most prominently Kenya and the Gold Coast,
because the Colonial Office exerted the greatest influence over these regions. However,
successive British governments aimed to use education as a unifying agent of their
economic and social objectives precisely because they lacked the political power to
achieve these objectives by more direct means. They attempted to extend their educational experiments to other areas of an Empire that spanned territories as disparate as India, Ireland, Canada and Australia, in the probably forlorn hope of embedding a homogenized cultural and economic unit. It is significant that although British imperial educational policies during the 1920s centered on Africa, by the 1930s, these policies had been extended to all British colonies, and that by the end of that decade, many of the same reformers were demanding their incorporation into domestic education. Study of the areas of British Africa on which these reformers themselves chose to focus, and the impact of their efforts on the British and American metropolises, reveals their far-reaching ambitions, and varied success.

I refer to “Africans,” and more contentiously still, to “natives,” in the homogenizing manner of early-twentieth-century Anglo-American educationalists who were indifferent to the fact that the African continent comprised a huge number of tribes, cultures, and languages. Educational programs ostensibly aimed to create and adapt strategies tailored for these varied cultures, but this was not reflected in the actions, or terminology, of their sponsors. Rockefeller money helped the British government found the International Institute for African Languages and Cultures in London in 1926, again international in name, but largely focused on the study of British African territories. When its leading anthropologist, Bronislaw Malinowski, pressed the need to train African scholars, the Institute, or rather its American benefactors, awarded grants to Kenyans and Nigerians, but also to African Americans, regarding these different demographics as identical. By the 1930s, amid the social, economic, and political upheavals of the Depression, Anglo-American agencies increasingly grouped all colonized peoples
together as a single alien “Other,” or “native.” Despite the lack of cultural specificity of these terms, the primary aim of this dissertation is to unveil the ambitions and discourses of these thinkers, and I have at times accordingly reproduced their terminology.

Moreover, many black residents of both the British Empire and the United States were in the process of internalizing a common identity as subjugated, black populations during this period, as demonstrated by the succession of Pan-African Congresses that they organized after 1900. By encouraging black citizens of British colonies to study alongside African Americans in new international educational institutions, particularly in the 1930s, white planners strengthened this pan-African identification.

The “empires” to which I refer in the title of this dissertation were formal (British) and informal (American), although both were state-centric. Even during the late-nineteenth-century “Scramble for Africa”, economic expansion and the development of low-cost influence in Africa was a primary incentive for the guardians of the “formal” British Empire. During the twentieth century, education became a useful tool for exploiting the Empire as a coherent economic unit for the benefit of the center, precisely because formal political structures seemed to be disintegrating, with ever louder colonial and metropolitan calls for political devolution. But international capitalism could not flourish unless states did certain things, and complex relations between private and state actors were integral to the functioning of these states.27 I therefore situate my examination of these American and British agents in broadly national frameworks.28

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27 See Gindin and Panitch, *The Making of Global Capitalism*, 3-5, for a discussion of the scholarly debate regarding the role of the nation state in international capitalism.

28 For the continued usefulness of organizing global historical studies along broadly national lines (albeit in a “complicating” manner), see James Vernon, “The history of Britain is dead; long live a global history of Britain,” *History Australia* 13, no. 1 (2016): 23, 26.
Perhaps reprehensibly, the early-twentieth-century planners whom I highlight were not overly interested in detail. In his comments on England’s 1944 Education Act, Sir Fred Clarke, Director of the Carnegie-financed, London-based Institute of Education, professed himself unconcerned with “a discussion of administrative details” or the intricacies of the many “practical interests” involved in the legislation. Clarke’s focus (like that of this dissertation) was on “something more broad and general, some indication of the spirit, the agreed purposes, and the guiding principles that…animate the complex [educational] partnership as a whole.”

I do not undertake to reconstruct every feature of the complicated, varied, and dynamic, primary, secondary and tertiary educational systems of the USA, British African territories, and Great Britain during the first half of the twentieth century. My focus is on theory rather than practice: I unearth the “spirit” that motivated an alliance of educational reformers, chart their practical efforts, and evaluate the extent of their success.

I investigate early-twentieth-century American proponents of this educational paradigm in Chapter 1. The chapter explores the ways philanthropists, and the missionaries, academics, educators, and governmental officials with whom they cooperated, harnessed their version of education in the cause of the unity and stability demanded by their corporate sponsors, faced with the social upheaval and fragmentation caused by late-nineteenth-century industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and scientific and technological progress. International activity was integral to this mission. In a country rapidly incorporating hugely diverse immigrant populations, instability

abroad threatened domestic peace. Educational planners, financed by American corporations, believed that the purpose of education was to consolidate compliant, docile, economically productive units. Their vision was an international one.

Chapter 2 focuses on a group of early-twentieth-century British thinkers who admired American expertise in using education as a means of state building, and attempted to import this model to the British metropolis and colonies in order to create imperial unity. Their efforts were thwarted at home; in England, since 1870, national education had fallen almost entirely under the purview of the central government. Americanized public relations campaigns for educational reform could not easily be exported to a country in which legislation had to be enacted in Parliament. Matters were made more difficult by the fact that Church of England leaders were strongly represented in the House of Lords. They could not condone the non-doctrinal, secularized version of Christianity promoted by American missionary heads like John R. Mott.

The colonies, however, were a promising laboratory for experimentation. As Mott incorporated Scottish missionary Joseph Oldham into his international missionary network after the 1910 World Missionary Conference, Oldham became convinced that American techniques should be implemented in British colonies. After Oldham’s wartime activities brought him to the attention of the British government, and the war left the Empire shaken, with new international responsibilities and a severe financial deficit, he sought American assistance for his educational work in India, a colony that appeared on the brink of insurrection.

Chapter 3 discusses the collaboration of these American and British groups in their educational activities for British Africa during the 1920s. After the First World War,
social tensions intensified in the USA, and business interests feared American international isolation after their country opted out of joining the League of Nations in 1919. African racial tensions spilled over to American shores, and the continent’s under-exploited raw materials attracted corporations that feared America would miss out on international opportunities. This fear was well founded. As early as 1910, in his ‘condition of England’ novel, *Howards End*, E. M. Forster had described the London offices of the “Imperial and West Africa Rubber Company”, adorned with a large map of Africa, “looking like a whale marked out for blubber”. As his heroine reflects, the Imperial side of the company is more salient than the West African. Fearing to miss out on the grab for blubber, American foundation heads, supported by their missionary, academic, and governmental partners, offered to assist the British Colonial Office in educating Africa – not India – and American money and ideas guided British educational schemes for Africa during the 1920s. British officials believed that an alliance with apparently disinterested American philanthropists would settle once and for all the contested political settlement of trusteeship of the Empire’s African territories, and enable Britain to economically develop, and prosper from, its African dependencies, whose importance had increased after the Dominions achieved legislative autonomy, while post-war India remained mired in nationalistic agitation. The cash-strapped Colonial Office relied on American money and expertise to orchestrate its African educational policies, hoping that this would aid Great Britain to remain an economic international competitor in the turbulent twentieth century. But American finance and agendas underlined the programs, indicating already that American, not British, economic clout would likely triumph from the collaboration.
Chapter 4 examines the expansion of these Anglo-American programs designed to research, and thus discover, how to teach, native populations whose Depression-era suffering had greatly exacerbated communal tensions. As economic nationalism impeded American corporate international ambitions, and the integrity of the British Empire became progressively imperiled, this Anglo-American network resorted to education even more eagerly, as a relatively cheap and easy means of protecting international commercial interests. They established and strengthened institutions designed to investigate native life in Africa, America, and especially, in the British metropole. Due to the strength of pan-African unrest, programs now, more than ever before, required black participation to legitimize them. But black intellectuals embraced the study of African culture only to challenge British imperialism and Western capitalism.

Chapter 5 focuses on the contributions of women to this interwar educational network. During the 1920s and ‘30s, British and American women, although politically enfranchised, remained excluded from many key streams of public life, particularly the fields of international diplomacy and foreign affairs. But mainly white, female missionaries and academics gave a voice to the distinctive needs of African wives, mothers, and homemakers that, they argued, could be met only by fellow women, thereby expanding their role within political and academic parameters. Men and women alike mined gender stereotypes to exploit female agents’ ‘feminine’ wiles and transform contentious educational principles into colonial norms. Yet by sustaining and reinforcing patriarchal gender standards, women arguably undermined the autonomy of the black women they claimed to help, and even the long-term prospects of white women. Both white and black women promoted a feminized, compassionate communal order that
uncritically accepted the cultural and constructed roots of gender difference, thereby
themselves contributing to the perpetuation of gender inequality.

Chapter 6 charts the dissolution of the Anglo-American partnership in African
education. When the alliance no longer served the purposes of its American architects
and sponsors, they distanced themselves from their former allies. This political *volte face*
seduced well-known African American leftist intellectuals into joining the variety of
highly publicized postwar educational commissions and conferences on the future of
Africa sponsored by American philanthropists no longer encumbered by their detested
British counterparts. Foundation heads thereby defused the revolutionary social and
economic demands of black Americans, winning their support for a postwar international
economic free trade order. They rationalized their dominance in this postwar world not
by the bald fact of America’s position as the world’s economic superpower, but partly by
America’s innocence of a history of empire-building, and partly by their own earlier
experience of native affairs.

Chapter 7 probes the intensified wartime British attempt, and ultimate failure, to
draw colonial and metropolitan subjects into common citizenship by reforming the
education of all. Institutional obstacles once again hampered these efforts. Imperial
consolidation was a major purpose of domestic educational reform but this had already
become a futile endeavor. American success in building a free-trade international order
with no room for the British Empire or its system of tariffs, partly on the back of its
interwar involvement in Britain’s African colonies, made the USA, not Britain, the new
global economic superpower.
During the early twentieth century, the educational policies of Great Britain and the USA bolstered economically exploitative practices with very limited tolerance of pluralism, despite supposedly enlightened reformers’ rhetoric of diversity. This study draws on their experience to highlight the potential role of education in building international communities of heterogeneous populations capable of harmonious coexistence. The expansion of global capitalism, calculated to raise levels of prosperity, accomplished its aim, but without achieving the equality sought by socialists. Yet fear-based demands for nativism, isolation, and immigration controls – policies that this liberal Anglo-American network tried to combat – made an ethically poisonous alternative, and ignored the new world of global technologies and geopolitical structures. Perhaps if our own powers-that-be returned to the ideals of these early-twentieth-century educational planners, of rigorous investigation, understanding, and creation of policies genuinely sensitive to the motley experiences, hardships, and adversity of others, we might take the small first steps toward the tolerant, inclusive world community to which they aspired.
CHAPTER 1:
IN GOD WE TRUST

*The ideal must be always and everywhere to make of these diverse elements one new nation, one not only in territory and institutions, but also in spirit.*

Samuel McLanahan, 1904

By the end of the nineteenth century, the USA had burst onto the world stage as a major industrial and political power. Corporations in several industries had grown to unprecedented size and geographical reach by exploiting new mass production technologies, and by consolidating national and international markets for their goods. The post-bellum industrial boom created remarkable fortunes. Industrialists like John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie controlled their respective business empires to the extent that by 1900, Rockefeller commanded 90 per cent of US petroleum financing, and Carnegie was the nation’s most powerful steelmaker. Over 13 million immigrants entered the USA between 1901 and 1915, some fleeing persecution in their countries of origin, but many of them economic migrants eager to take advantage of American employment opportunities. A nation of twenty-three million in 1850 had ballooned to nearly eighty million by 1900. American corporations looked overseas for raw materials

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and new export markets, and America acquired an empire in all but name after the Spanish-American war of 1898. In 1917, America’s entrance into the First World War strengthened the political influence of American industries, which made huge profits, and won a larger role in government.³

In this context, early-twentieth-century American philanthropic foundation managers, agents of these new industrial titans, sponsored a broad array of educational initiatives that served as the template for the British colonial organizations that they orchestrated after the First World War. Foundation heads promoted education as a means of binding together an expansive, composite American nation – at home and overseas – ripe for exploitation. They financed educational programs that foregrounded inclusive American citizenship and the educability of all races and cultures in core Protestant civic tenets: capitalism, morality, and self-help. This program catered to corporate demands for expanded foreign markets and a large, cheap, immigrant domestic labor force. Philanthropists hoped to silence nativist calls for an American identity founded in so-called racial homogeneity and closed borders, both of which harmed corporate interests. For American philanthropists, and the overlapping web of social scientists, educational experts, missionaries, and governmental officials they financed, the process of learning about different peoples was a masquerade, boasting superficial respect for cultural particularism while at the same time standardizing American mores across state and national borders. These planners embedded their ideas and personnel in American governmental operations, thereby guiding state growth. But once they ventured overseas,

they required the collusion of foreign governments, specifically that of the expansive British Empire.

**American Education**


The post-bellum failure of Reconstruction resulted in the entrapment of millions of former slaves in debt peonage in the cotton culture of the South. Economic historian, Gavin Wright, argues that for Southern white elites, retaining a racial paradigm of white supremacy trumped the economic potential to industrialize the South, and the predominantly rural South emerged from the catastrophe of defeat as a distinct province, poorer and less developed than the rest of the nation. Agricultural America languished; rural families worked brutally long hours, at the mercy of fluctuating international market prices for their corn, cotton and wheat. In Western rural areas, new giant agricultural enterprises relying heavily on

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irrigation and machinery arose to feed growing cities, displacing small-scale family farmers, who moved to the cities in search of more regular work. Many in the prosperous industrial states also suffered. Immigrants, most of whom hailed from peasant societies, and who were not easily assimilated into an American-born proletariat, crowded into newly enormous East Coast and Midwestern cities such as Chicago, New York, Detroit, and Boston. With heavy industrialization, laborers lost control over their jobs; walkouts, strikes, and other forms of worker resistance became rife. Participation in the First World War fractured American society further as wartime industrial demands brought an even greater number of rural (especially black) Americans into cramped cities, unleashing social tensions.

Americans responded to fears of social dislocation in two main ways. One reaction emphasized a version of American democracy premised on racial homogeneity, exclusiveness, and isolation. The second, examined below, sought the reconciliation of national differences, and international engagement, through education. The American Republic had always incorporated a conservative, exclusionary strain; in 1790, American citizenship had been restricted to “free white persons”. In economic terms, before the Civil War, Northern manufacturers had sought protectionist tariffs to promote industrial development, while Southern slaveholding planters wanted low tariffs to ensure the free flow of their agricultural exports. But April Merleaux notes that by the late nineteenth century, the tariff had become a more complicated issue as many came to understand that “foreign competition came in two forms: goods produced by ‘cheap labor’ living abroad and goods produced in the United States by ‘cheap labor’ from abroad”; in this context,
the “racial logics of immigration, empire, and trade increasingly informed each other.”

For example, Mississippi-born Democratic congressman and later senator for Nevada, Francis G. Newlands, vocally opposed imports, immigrants, and US imperial expansion, all of which he believed eroded the “American” standard of living, causing working men’s wages to decline, and degrading white civilization. In 1905, Newlands lamented: “Whilst we have been engaged in conquering other countries, monopoly has conquered our own.” In 1912, writer Aretas W. Thomas, asserted that an “open door” to “Asiatic immigration” was a “door shut to American labor.”

An alternative strand of American thought, as old as the Republic itself and rooted in idealistic Enlightenment rationalism, hoped to create harmony from diversity through education. America had always been a melting-pot society, with a population formed by successive waves of immigration (forced and voluntary) from around the globe, each group bringing to the mix its own distinct historical and cultural traditions. Many of the Republic’s founders and early settlers were indebted to eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment philosophy, forged in an era of international trade, travel, rising democracy and anti-authoritarianism, scientific and technological innovation, communal diversity, and popular dissent spread by a burgeoning print culture. To make sense of

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8 April Merleaux, “The Political Culture of Sugar Tariffs: Immigration, Race, and Empire, 1898-1930,” International Labor and Working-Class History, Number 81 (Spring 2012), 30.

9 Ibid, 30.


population diversity in a globalizing world, and in reaction to the forces of religious authoritarianism and soul-destroying industrialization, thinkers like Scottish moral philosopher, Adam Smith, emphasized the role of education. In the final section of The Wealth of Nations (1776), Smith made a plea for mass education; even the most benighted peasants, he argued, deserved to be lifted some way out of the darkness and drudgery of their lives by at least a minimal exposure to the enlightenment afforded by a moral education.\textsuperscript{12}

Enlightenment philosophers saw education in the broadest sense as the key to self-development. Perhaps the most influential educational philosopher of the eighteenth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, preached a child-centered education based not on book-learning and precept, but experience and example.\textsuperscript{13} Thinkers praised the heterogeneity generated by new technologies, and encouraged students to probe the wonders of the world through the burgeoning academic disciplines of history, geography, and moral and natural philosophies. Scottish Enlightenment intellectuals also contended that engaging with different groups of people developed moral character.\textsuperscript{14} The philosophical foundation of this credo was the associationist psychology of David Hartley, which was based on the theory that moral judgment evolved from developing, through association of

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\textsuperscript{14} Andreas Kalyvas and Ira Katznelson, \textit{Liberal Beginnings: Making a Republic for the Moderns} (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 25.
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sensations and ideas, the capacity to empathize with others. Since social interaction fortified moral character and judgment, Smith and other Scottish Enlightenment thinkers endorsed the forging of rich, associational civic lives, dependent on social bonds to other people and organizations.

An element of universality, albeit historically grounded, underlined Smith’s understanding of moral character. Andreas Kalyvas and Ira Katznelson assert that, for Smith, the broader developments that had engendered new kinds of markets, had also led to the acquisition of certain character traits, such as virtue, civility, industry, thrift, self-interest, and hospitality – values that Smith argued were “as deeply implanted in an Englishman as a Dutchman,” citizens of the two most capitalistic nations of the time. Refining these attributes assured moral development and social order in modern times. Furthermore, Smith proposed that both “nature” and “reasoning and philosophy” induced the conclusion that these “important rules of morality” were “the commands and laws of the Deity”; God had given humanity “moral faculties” to guide “conduct in this life.”

Following Smith’s lead, American founding father, Thomas Jefferson, in his Notes on the State of Virginia (1785), contended that all humans possessed the same innate moral sense: “all men were created equal,” and human nature was “the same on

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16 Kalyvas and Katznelson, Liberal Beginnings, 44.

17 Kalyvas and Katznelson quote Adam Smith’s Lectures on Jurisprudence in their book, Liberal Beginnings, 36. Kalyvas and Katznelson challenge the notion that Smith believed these traits constituted universal facts; rather, they were “social-historical” creations. In contrast, In Colonials to Provincials, Landsman argues that Smith believed in the universality of these mores, 78-79.

every side of the Atlantic.”19 This neatly synthesized the Biblical account of the common origin of mankind and the fashionable eighteenth-century ‘blank slate’ theory of human nature on which rested the age’s faith in the power of education to mold a better man and society. If exposed to specific environmental influences, particular mores would be cultivated, and a coherent community of citizens consolidated. Jefferson demonstrates that the two intellectual threads – exclusion and inclusion – often co-existed. Jefferson, a slave-owner, ostensibly extended his argument of the educability of mankind to the state of Virginia’s Native Americans, but not to women or African Americans.20 Regardless, Jefferson’s contention that at its core, all humanity possessed a moral sensibility with the potential to be civilized by certain social, economic, and cultural pressures remained a significant feature of the American intellectual tradition.21

In general, this inclusive American character, premised on the power of education, resonated with corporate giants. Exclusionary racial rhetoric and policies, which resisted immigration, empire, and international trade, harmed early-twentieth century American corporate ambition. Northern corporations opposed both immigration restrictions and Southern regional separatism. They demanded a large, cheap, domestic labor force to meet the needs of their factories and expanded markets.22 Although early nineteenth-century American industries had benefited from protection to consolidate their

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21 Landsman, *Colonials to Provincials*, 78-79.

power, by the end of the century, enormous firms like Rockefeller’s Standard Oil were transnational. They had started to, or at least believed that they had started to, saturate the American market for their products, and were determined to grow overseas and strengthen their international presence, to ensure their continued growth.23

Educational idealism had its value for corporate America. Late-nineteenth-century institutional developments allowed American corporate donors to propagate an enlightened version of national identity that emphasized egalitarian education and openness. Endowed charitable funds – recipients of financial and tax privileges – had participated significantly in American life, especially in the fields of religion, education, culture, and the arts, almost as soon as the United States Constitution had been formalized. The Church of England had played an integral part in the apparatus of American government until the end of the eighteenth century, limiting the number of colonial bodies devoted to religious, educational, and other charitable purposes. As new state governments began to withdraw state support from the Anglican Church (as Virginia did in 1785, Connecticut in 1818, and Massachusetts in 1833), they granted

23 Frank, *Buy American*, 42; Peter J. Hugill, “The American Challenge to British Hegemony, 1861-1947,” *The Geographical Review* 99, no. 3 (July 2009): 418. Sam Gindin and Leo Panitch contend that the vociferous arguments of corporate leaders and business economists, particularly during the economic crisis of 1893, that the domestic market was no longer able to sustain the enormous productive capacity of the corporations, were misleading. They nonetheless inspired corporate international ambitions. In this “internationalizing” environment, the character of tariffs changed. Changes to the 1890 McKinley Tariff Act in 1896, and then the passage of new minimum and maximum tariff duties under President Taft in 1909, were all identified by a bargaining flexibility. This transformed a protectionist mechanism into a level for bargaining with other states to assist in the expansion of US exports through selective reductions in duties on raw materials. Gindin and Panitch, *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (London, UK: Verso, 2013), 29, 35.
unprecedented powers of incorporation, creating space for increased religious diversity.\textsuperscript{24} Reform was driven primarily by technology. Wealthy donors and institution builders began to press for change in the face of the economic, technological, health, and social challenges of late-nineteenth-century industrialization and urbanization, coupled with increased migration, mass media, and production of consumer goods. A further incentive for change was parsimonious public spending; New York City provided extensive free public high school education only in 1900.

Broadly speaking, however, most early-nineteenth-century states discouraged the creation of multi-purpose charitable corporations, limited the size of their endowments, and looked unfavorably on charitable bequests if estates could instead be assigned to living relatives. The public was duly outraged in 1886, when state courts invalidated the multi-million dollar bequest of former Governor of New York, Samuel Tilden, designed to consolidate the underfunded Astor and Lennox libraries into a prominent New York Public Library. The courts awarded the funds instead to distant relatives on the grounds that the money was to go to an entity that had not yet been formally incorporated. In response to strong protest, the New York state legislature passed a law declaring that no “gift, grant, bequest or devise to religious, educational, charitable or benevolent uses” should be “deemed invalid by reason of the indefiniteness or uncertainty of the persons designated as the beneficiaries.” The “Tilden Act” also relaxed the restrictive approach to institutional endowments. While the states continued to apply different rules to various kinds of charities, the Act influenced other states, and soon after, in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Ohio,

Illinois, California, and other states, as well as New York, a foundation could take the new legal form of a general-purpose charitable corporation. Freed from the limitations of a single field, a general-purpose fund could distribute flexibly on an *ad hoc* basis, as its governors deemed fit. Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller, alongside other corporate giants, endowed foundations, designed to heal social wounds, unify a diversified America, and build an international society and economy, from which they too could benefit. The creation of the federal income tax in 1913, from which foundations and other charities were exempt, further incentivized philanthropic giving, especially after World War I occasioned dramatic tax increases.

The plethora of social actors and institutions sponsored by philanthropists saw education as the primary tool of social and personal identity formation. Since all men were created equal, it followed that nurture, not nature, was the agent of personality development and difference. Hence Welsh-born American social scientist and educational expert, Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, proclaimed in 1913 that good citizenship was “a matter of education.” Jones embodied the view that an understanding of God emerged from empathizing, and engaging with, one’s surroundings and community. He

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28 Holly Jackson, “‘So We Die before Our Own Eyes’: Willful Sterility in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*,” *The New England Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (June 2009): 266; “Schools and Social Service,” *Washington Evening Star*, July 20, 1913, attached to Thomas Jesse Jones to Anson Phelps Stokes, July 24, 1913, folder 1, box 44, PSF.
did not specify the causal relationship between empathy and epiphany, but since his views reflected his own education, they may have seemed self-evident: he possessed a Bachelor’s degree in Divinity from Columbia University’s Union Theological Seminary, and a doctorate in Sociology from the University. Jones had previously taught at Hampton Institute, a Virginia school for training black teachers, had been employed by the United States Census Bureau to supervise the collection of data on African Americans for the 1910 census, and from 1912 had worked as a specialist in the education of racial groups for the United States Bureau of Education (USBE). In 1917, Jones became educational director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund. A small philanthropic foundation, incorporated in 1911, the Fund aimed to improve housing for poor families in New York City and to enhance educational opportunities for “Negroes both in Africa and the United States, North American Indians, and needy and deserving white students.”

Jones, steeped in the theory of environmental influence, argued for an end to the “fetish” that the black man belonged “unchangeably to a child race and must be helplessly subordinate”, citing in evidence the inspiring fact that “five million American negroes, stranded and embarrassed by newly-won freedom, [had] steadily grown in sturdy self-respect, economic independence and responsible citizenship of a great State.”

The key to the transformation of America’s hugely diverse communities, according to Jones, was education. But it was unclear how exactly this laudable aim could be achieved; should, for example, the Christian message be imparted to immigrants?

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29 “Will of Caroline Phelps Stokes (1909),” folder 3, box 1, PSF.

30 Kenneth MacLennan (quoting Dr. Jones), “Education in Africa,” The Socialist Review, May, 1923, 220, folder 18, box 34, PSF.
in their native vernacular or in English?\textsuperscript{31} Liberal elites were in no doubt, however, as to the importance of inculcating the values of self-help, economic independence, thrift, and morality in these peoples. They drew on a long tradition of American Protestantism compatible with the doctrine of the separation of Church and State, and respectful of individual ethnic traditions while ensuring acquiescence in American cultural and economic norms. Legal historian, Philip Hamburger, argues that these liberal Protestants were so convinced of the unifying nature of these mores that it was they, and not immigrants, who foregrounded the First Amendment, Jefferson’s “separation between Church and State” in the early twentieth century, as a means of ensuring that public schools banned Catholic teaching, insisting instead that the USA’s hybrid population assimilated a standardized Protestant culture.\textsuperscript{32}

A small group of philanthropic foundations supported these non-denominational, practical Christian educational recommendations for varied demographics – black

\textsuperscript{31} This is the primary question that McLanahan’s volume, \textit{Our People of Foreign Speech} (1904), grapples with, folder 3006, box 178, JRM.

\textsuperscript{32} Philip Hamburger, \textit{Separation of Church and State} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 364. It was only in the late nineteenth century, according to Hamburger, that “separation of Church and state” (a quote from Jefferson’s 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptist Association) began to be employed as a constitutional tenet, first by “anti-Christian secularists” (162), and then in the early twentieth century by liberal Protestants, who regarded it as a Protestantizing tool. Michael O’Brien similarly argues that at the inception of the Republic, the Constitution made no mention of “churches, separation or walls.” The Constitution only mandated that “no federal official could be required to pass a religious test, that Congress could neither establish a religion nor abridge religious freedom.” Primarily, American Founding Fathers like Jefferson were concerned to establish a republic with a federal (not necessarily local state) government that lacked the coercive features of the English state, with its privileges for the established church, as will be discussed in the next chapter. See, Michael O’Brien, “The American experience of secularisation,” in \textit{Religion and the Political Imagination}, ed. Ira Katznelson and Gareth Stedman Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 135-136.
students, white college attendees, rural populations, and the urban working classes.\textsuperscript{33} Northern philanthropic assistance of black education in the South was particularly urgent. Restrictions on black voting made it easy for Southern whites to divert resources into white schools to the detriment of black educational institutions.\textsuperscript{34} And these Southern whites, committed to white racial supremacy, operated as a “solid South” in Congress, due to the region’s one-party system.\textsuperscript{35} If corporate agents wanted to forge a unified economy, creative, decentralized philanthropic mechanisms would have to be employed. Anson Phelps Stokes, nephew of the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s benefactress, Caroline Phelps Stokes, controlled the Fund from soon after its inception. Heralding the power of education, Stokes directed the charity’s attention away from an initial emphasis on housing to the field of, primarily black, education.\textsuperscript{36} Stokes, who had a Bachelor’s degree from Yale University, and a Bachelor’s of Divinity from the Episcopal Theological

\textsuperscript{33} Gale L. Kenny, in her analysis of early-nineteenth-century American evangelicals, notes that many of the practical educational tenets that subsequently became associated with black industrial education in the twentieth century in fact originated in the Antebellum North, and were not intended to subordinate black Americans. She writes that, “[m]anual-labor education” constituted “a new social order compatible with the democratic impulses of evangelicalism” and the “moral rigor found lacking in the anything-goes capitalism of the market towns.” See, Kenny, \textit{Contentious Liberties: American Abolitionists in Post-Emancipation Jamaica, 1834-1866} (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 28.


Seminary, served as Secretary of Yale from 1899 until 1921. Reflecting a commitment to associational activities, the Phelps-Stokes Fund cooperated with other philanthropic groups like the General Education Board (GEB), an umbrella foundation created in 1902 and backed by Rockefeller wealth, to study and support the material needs of black schools and colleges, and the Negro Rural School Fund (the Jeanes Fund), the 1907 bequest of Anna T. Jeanes, a Quaker philanthropist from Philadelphia, to train black teachers and supervisors of teachers in the South to improve African American education.

In 1912, the Phelps-Stokes Fund, the GEB, the Jeanes Fund, and a host of other charitable and missionary bodies, collaborated with the United States Bureau of Education (USBE) to commission its employee, Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, to conduct an educational study of African American education in the USA (primarily the South). In Jones’s 1917 two-volume report of the investigation, entitled *Negro Education*, he advised that the humanist education focused on classical languages like Latin and Greek, which had traditionally served white elites, was no longer appropriate for twentieth-century American whites or blacks. African American education should be “vital” and “spiritual,” and directed to ensuring a “healthful and moral” existence. Appropriate education prepared for “community necessities such as health, home comforts, civic responsibilities and rights, and teachers with knowledge and vision.”

37 By 1919 the Phelps-Stokes Fund appointed Jones as its Educational Director.

US foundations supported educational initiatives for white college students. John R. Mott, national secretary of the intercollegiate Young Men’s College Association of the

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USA and Canada (YMCA), a group financed by the Rockefeller family, asserted in a 1903 tract (reprinted in 1917) that the religious life of a (white) college student should be “characterized by reality, virility, open-mindedness, breadth of sympathy with men, and loyalty to Christ.”

George Albert Coe was Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy at Northwestern University from 1892-1909, and active participant in Mott’s student movement. In 1904, Coe asserted that modern education, which was “essentially a Christian idea”, conceived of “life broadly”: “Life is more than knowledge; it is sympathy with other life.” Mott disdained a narrow literary education for American college men, considering physical education and hygiene important in creating strong, virile, independent Christians to counter the effeminizing consequences of wealth. He praised the “prominent and scientific attention” that the Association Movement for Christian students had “given to body building and to the formation of right habits for the care of the body”.

Women were not excluded from these educational efforts. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), authored by English Enlightenment philosopher, John Locke, had argued that a child’s mind was a “white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas” that needed to be furnished through sensation and experience from a young age. This authoritative treatise had led to the development of a new educational function

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38 John R. Mott, The Students of North America United (New York: International Committee of Young Men’s Christian Associations, 1903), 21, folder 2376, box 144, JRM.

39 Transcribed excerpt from George Albert Coe, Education in Religion and Morals (1904), folder 3254, box 203, JRM.

40 Mott, Students of North America, 22, folder 2376, box 144, JRM.

for women as mothers, with whom infants spent most of their time.\textsuperscript{42} The Scottish Enlightenment had added to Locke’s “blank slate” the concept that all people possessed an innate moral sense, even as infants, that should be cultivated to enhance a person’s relationship with God, and relatedly, other people. This had awarded women with a significant religious educational function, too. In 1787, Scottish-educated physician and founding father, Benjamin Rush, argued that, “young girls acquired this kind of [moral] knowledge more readily than boys,” since the “female breast [was] the natural soil of Christianity.”\textsuperscript{43}

American women at the turn of the twentieth century embraced their pedagogical functions. Grace Hoadley Dodge, whose father, William Earl Dodge, was a first cousin of Anson Phelps Stokes, had jointly inherited the wealth accrued through a successful mining company by their grandfather, Anson Greene Phelps. William Dodge had helped to develop the YMCA in 1877 as a national movement, and Grace Dodge co-founded the female equivalent, the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) in 1895. Grace Dodge wanted to educate New York City’s working class in a “live and practical” manner. For Dodge, this did not mean “technical training”, but “training the sense perceptions, developing the whole man or woman,” and endowing them with skills that would make the house and home “self-supporting.”\textsuperscript{44}


\textsuperscript{44} Grace Dodge, “Closing Exercise of St John’s,” May 23, 1890, in Grace Dodge’s Personal Work, Papers and Addresses, Pocket Knowledge (hereafter PK), online archive of Teachers
Dodge’s Columbia University’s Teachers College was born of these social reform programs, and benefited from the generosity of affluent benefactors. As contemporary legal interpretations of the First Amendment required all state institutions to be secular, reformers considered teacher training and the moral development of teacher and pupil alike to be crucial; if the state prohibited direct religious indoctrination, teachers must lead by practice rather than precept.\textsuperscript{45} Mabel Carney, a teacher in rural Illinois, who joined the faculty of Columbia’s Teachers College as Professor of Rural Education in 1917 and was deeply involved in the YWCA, agreed with Dodge that “above all, well and specially trained teachers” were integral to the “reorganization of the rural educational system.”\textsuperscript{46} Carney was convinced that the country school fulfilled a spiritual role by “demanding neither creeds nor doctrines and preaching religion in terms of country life.”\textsuperscript{47}

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45 John Mott, “The Work of the Association,” (1889), folder 2376, box 144, JRM. Again, historians Philip Hamburger and Michael O’Brien contend that “separation of Church and State” had not always comprised a constitutional tenet. Its popularity during this period was partly a result of the efforts of these reformers who wanted their liberal, ecumenical version of Christianity to prevail nationwide. See Hamburger, \textit{Separation of Church and State}, 364; O’Brien, “The American experience of secularisation,” 135-136.


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Since moral character derived from an individual’s capacity to identify with other people, sociological observation was a key feature of this educational model.\textsuperscript{48} One of Jefferson’s first activities as governor of Virginia had been to collect vocabularies and other ethnological information from Native American groups, arguably one of the first examples of ‘applied anthropology’, employing anthropological investigations to resolve practical problems of policymaking and administration.\textsuperscript{49} Jones had an ideological commitment to sociology. He believed that disunity between disparate social groups was to blame for contemporary America’s moral turpitude; the blame did not lie exclusively with black people. Jones’s sociology doctoral dissertation at Columbia had addressed the experience of Italian and Jewish immigrants in New York City, and he argued that his broad “educational creed” informed the educational schemes he proposed for black schools, rather than vice versa. Accordingly, Jones proposed that, by learning about their own distinct ethnic communities, students could become exemplary citizens of those units: white high-school students in Salt Lake City, Utah, should be taught social science, a new discipline that included the “observation and study of such topics as community health, housing and homes, pure food, public recreation, good roads, parcels post and postal savings, community education, poverty and the care of the poor.” This would give a pupil a “clue to the significance of these matters to him, and to his

\textsuperscript{48} Kalyvas and Katzenelson, \textit{Liberal Beginnings}, 25.

community, and to arouse in him a desire to know more about his environment,” and therefore a desire to live “civically.”

This group proposed that social studies and surveys also created empathy and cohesion between different demographics; studying other populations in addition to one’s own was held to engender an understanding of the broader social unit, and how discrete entities fit together in a multicultural society. Dodge advocated that “working girls’ clubs” were not only important to assist impoverished working classes. Undertaking the numerous reports and commissions that the organization of associational club activities warranted, enabled “the so called women of leisure” to conform to “the golden rule, putting one’s self in another’s place.” Learning about varied populations – “younger and older, from different lines of work and interest” – fostered in individuals the “Republican, national, American ideals” of “co-operation, self-government, [and] self-reliance.”

Mabel Carney encouraged rural educational experts to investigate farm and village populations with a view to fostering in elites a sense of “sympathetic appreciation of country life,” encouraging them to feel a social duty towards otherwise isolated

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50 “Social Study New Movement is Outlined: Government Expert Tells of Modern Trend in History and Civics,” Salt Lake Evening Telegram, July 10, 1913, attached to letter from Jones to Stokes, July 24, 1913, folder 1, box 44, Phelps-Stokes Fund Records (hereafter PSF), Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library.


regions.\textsuperscript{53} In 1913, Thomas Jesse Jones argued that American public high schools should teach the “principles of citizenship”, which he interpreted as “a sense of responsibility of each unit for the welfare of the whole.”\textsuperscript{54} In 1914, Andrew Carnegie funded a graduate department of anthropology at Columbia University. Franz Boas, a German American who had fled anti-Semitism, served as a professor of anthropology at Columbia University from 1899. Rejecting the biological determinism of nativists, Boas advocated investigating the “genius of a people,” or their culture, in order to understand “their whole concept of the world”. Since cultures could be subjected to comparative analysis, the understanding of one culture might provide insight into the inter-relationship of humanity, a program that would help all societies to co-exist peacefully.\textsuperscript{55}

Eric Yellin, claims that Jones’s belief in a civilized ‘brotherhood of man’, in which all groups could develop their potential regardless of their starting point, was confused. On the one hand, Jones asserted that all humanity shared a universal ‘ladder of progress’. Contradicting himself, Jones argued on the other that black people had discrete


\textsuperscript{54} “Schools and Social Service,” \textit{Washington Evening Star}, July 20, 1913, attached to letter from Jones to Stokes, July 24, 1913, box 44, folder 1, PSF.

\textsuperscript{55} Patterson, \textit{Social History}, 46; Cerroni-Long, “Benign Neglect?,” 441. Scholars do not commonly group Boas with Jones due to the extent to which Boas cooperated with African American sociologist, W. E. B. Du Bois, who condemned Jones’s work on “Negro education” as anti-integrationist. But, in many respects, Boas and Jones shared a commitment to exploring the social institutions of distinct ethnic or racial groups, and through this process, they hoped to understand the inter-relationship between disparate social units. The similarities between the two were particularly close with regard to their influence on British African investigations during the 1920s. Both received funding from the same spectrum of philanthropic foundations.

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identities that warranted particular investigation and analysis.\footnote{56} Jones’s argument that only careful investigation of an ethnic or racial group could establish that group’s true educational needs, and identify an appropriate educational system, controversially bolstered the case for racial segregation, the legal norm for Southern schools throughout this period, and the \textit{de facto} educational context in the North.

Jones argued, however romantically, that distinctive composite units – rural communities, white Christian men, black Southerners, working class women (or, for Dodge, all women) – could be taught to live harmoniously and productively in a wider society by learning about, and thus sympathizing, with one another. And, in spite of heralding localized ethnographic investigations into particular groups, studies generally found that the same underlying principles should be applied to \textit{all} American populations. Jones’s 1912 study of African-American education covered “nearly 1000 educational institutions,” and his suggestions for each locale were almost identical. In a 1923 educational pamphlet, Jones argued that the same educational ideals were appropriate for the American “Negro and Indian”. Jones insisted that his suggestion that these “young races” should not waste time on archaic languages like Latin and Greek reflected the latest educational developments in “the high schools of a progressive State like Massachusetts.”\footnote{57}

Jones’s qualification – that black pedagogical recommendations resembled changes in white high schools – may have been offered to appease black readers. Many black Americans opposed the practical, industrial educational programs advocated by


\footnote{57} Jones, \textit{Social Studies}, 4; Jones, \textit{Negro Education}, 23.
Jones in his 1917 report, *Negro Education*. They (rightfully) interpreted Jones’s claim that a liberal arts education was inappropriate for African Americans as an attempt to subordinate black people, and transform them into profitable workers. But Jones equally wanted to use education to transform other populations into the useful citizens that a modern society demanded; the educational programs he endorsed for black communities reflected changing national trends. Since the nineteenth century, educational reformers had become more interested in the practical applications of knowledge, and developed manual-training programs alongside an emphasis on more “useful” disciplines like science and math for emerging high school curricula. An education in Latin and Greek would not equip citizens of any class or race to participate in an industrialized democracy.

The techniques that educational planners employed encouraged standardization. Mabel Carney researched her 1912 “Study of the Agencies of Rural Progress” by interviewing numerous “state superintendents, country superintendents, country teachers, and rural life workers” to account for the “democratic and diverse” nature of America’s rural areas. Carney used the investigation to highlight the “unity” of “the rural problem,” drawing on “representative” communities like the Clear Creek community “for purposes of illustration.” Educational historian, Tracy Steffes, shows that school surveying

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departments introduced by university departments of education during this period, most famously Teachers College’s Division of Field Studies, established in 1921, created national educational principles by encouraging imitation, and forced insular regions to situate themselves in a wider context.\textsuperscript{61}

If educational proposals were to reach a national audience, reformers believed, it was essential that their formulators should include representatives of various national bodies. This endowed final reports with widespread legitimacy. It also allowed reformers to harness the countrywide networks that had been created to disseminate publications and debate ideas; like their eighteenth-century predecessors, these thinkers exploited modern technology. In \textit{Students of North America United}, John Mott proudly described the intricate intercollegiate national network he had helped forge, “the territory of which cover[ed] a continent reaching nearly four thousand miles from sea to sea and the constituency of which [was] constantly changing.” Mott’s American missionary infrastructure comprised a plethora of provincial, state, national, and even international conferences, supervisory committees, training meetings, and printed publications coordinated by leaders.\textsuperscript{62} His missionary web was closely involved in the activities of philanthropic and educational groups, all of which had parallel networks.\textsuperscript{63} Similarly, the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s 1912 investigation into “Negro Education in the United States”

\textsuperscript{61} Steffes, \textit{School, Society, and State}, 36-44.

\textsuperscript{62} Mott, \textit{Students of North America United}, 11-13, folder 2376, box 144, JRM.

was the result of a joint suggestion of the American home missionary boards and several cooperating philanthropic foundations. Missionary, philanthropic, and educational entities did not function as isolated units, but operated as members of a network of overlapping, and tightly coordinated agencies, all funded by the same bodies.

This web of liberal reformers won the cooperation of state and national American governmental organizations. In 1907, Boas worked with President Theodore Roosevelt’s US Immigration Commission to oppose immigration restriction. Boas’s study of 17,821 subjects attempted to prove the behaviorist theory of human nature – the “greater plasticity of human types,” and the “adaptability of the immigrant.”

Cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations was especially crucial for educational schemes for African Americans in the South. Restrictions on black voting limited public spending on black education in this region. On the state level, the GEB created the new position of state agents for Negro schools. By 1914, the GEB was funding state agents in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Virginia. The state formally appointed the agent, but, in providing the salary, the GEB controlled who was selected and monitored their work. This was particularly significant for turn-of-the-twentieth-century decentralized American government, where the governing political party staffed administrative functions at all levels. The agent for Negro schools was an officer of the state department of education,

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64 “Plan of Cooperation between the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the US Bureau of Education for the Study and Improvement of Negro Education,” enclosed in letter, Jones to Stokes, November 14, 1912, folder 1, box 44, PSF.

65 Patterson, Social History, 49.

66 Steffes, School, Society, and State, 45.
but a private foundation appointee. Agents made arrangements to collect data, necessary for devising, realizing, and imitating programs, thus promoting standardization.\(^{67}\)

Philanthropists also cooperated with the federal government. Dr. Hollis B. Frissell, President of Hampton Institute, a black college in Virginia, insisted that the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s investigation into “Negro Education” should be undertaken through “cooperation between the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the US Bureau of Education.” Anson Phelps Stokes selected Jones, an employee of the United State Bureau of Education (USBE), to direct the 1912 educational survey after Frissell advised him to choose someone working for this group, since the national scope of his office placed him “in far better position to do this work, than one connected with a Church board, or closely associated with a particular school”.\(^{68}\) The USBE lacked the coercive authority of European national ministries of education. But by fulfilling its primary function of gathering and disseminating information it allowed each state to place itself in a national context.\(^{69}\)

Minority representation on educational programs was also imperative if, as white planners believed possible, America was to be healed through education. Foundation heads imagined that employing black agents would co-opt the support of their distinctive communities. The GEB appointed Jackson Davis to serve as its initial state agent for Negro education in Virginia, and he commissioned the first Jeanes teacher, African American female educator, Virginia Randolph, in Henrico County in 1909. By 1912, 108

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\(^{67}\) Malczewski, *New Educational State*, 53-55.

\(^{68}\) Hollis B. Frissell to Stokes, November 25, 1912, folder 1, box 44, PSF.

Southern counties employed Jeanes teachers. These educators were responsible for overseeing the efforts of rural black teachers, collecting reports from them, and organizing communal meetings and social clubs, where they shared pedagogical ideas with one another, homogenizing their approaches in the process. In order to receive Jeanes Fund money, the foundation stipulated that Jeanes teachers must also receive part of their salary through the county tax funds. Both the state agent and the foundation approved each appointment. This cooperative program incorporated African Americans, often women, into local administrations and philanthropic efforts, and encouraged the support of Southern blacks. Jeanes Fund President, James H. Dillard, boasted in a 1912 magazine article, entitled, “Training the Lowly,” that Jeanes teachers coordinated and sustained “social contact and community co-operation” for black rural educational schemes.

Jones was determined to secure an African American assistant for his 1912 study of Negro education, despite the fact that the USBE where he worked, as a federal government agency, was segregated at the time. This fact caused numerous “color complications” for Jones, but did not deter him from his resolve. A majority of the information that his resultant two-volume 1917 report was based upon relied on the local data that black Jeanes teachers had generated, transmitted to Jones via the state agents for

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72 Jones to Stokes, February 14, 1913, box 44, folder 1, PSF.
Negro education. Northern foundations paid the salaries of both of these bodies of educational deputies.\textsuperscript{73}

**International Education**

During the early twentieth century, American educators extended their endeavors abroad. Liberals were convinced that learning about different societies and cultures forged social cohesion; it was ignorance that bred fear and hostility. Studying foreign peoples therefore strengthened their domestic effort in a country composed of so many disparate ethnicities, races, and nationalities. By the same token, inculcating stabilizing’ Christian values in overseas populations would also help secure domestic peace because international tensions might easily incense Americans. These reformers were committed to capitalist development, but whether in order to further the progress of humanity in the righteous spirit of the Protestant work ethic, or to enhance the commercial opportunities of their corporate sponsors is unclear; probably both factors were salient. Corporations, seeking new markets and raw materials to exploit, wanted to educate, research, and thereby incorporate overseas territories into their national economy.\textsuperscript{74}

Mott was as dedicated to foreign missions as to domestic evangelizing. He helped create the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) in 1886, and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMC) in 1893, tightly federated domestic structures for international missions that mirrored the YMCA’s machinery for Christian activity on the

\textsuperscript{73} Malczewski, *New Educational State*, 59.

\textsuperscript{74} Tyrrell, *Reforming the World*, 101.
home front. By 1910, the SVM boasted “a full corps of secretaries and a special literature for the purpose of arousing interest in all educational institutions and among students throughout the US and Canada in the work of foreign missions.” In 1910, Mott organized a World Missionary Conference (WMC) in Edinburgh, Scotland, to bring together all the national foreign missionary bodies. The meeting was a propaganda feat. It enabled new missionary periodicals, like *The Student World*, to report optimistically that the WMC’s success indicated that all of “the various Christian bodies, nations and races” could live in harmony with one another, as part of an “effective union based upon larger acquaintance, heightened respect, and deepening friendship.” In reality, the overwhelming majority of Conference delegates were white, British or American, and confessionally on the Protestant spectrum, with a few Anglo-Catholics. But the meeting was symbolically, and organizationally, significant. Mott established an international Continuation Committee in its aftermath.

As at home, study of indigenous peoples abroad emphasized the integrity of distinct groups, but – in a superb and characteristic demonstration of doublethink – ultimately stressed the universal (viz. ‘superior’) values of Protestantism and capitalism. Henry Ford’s 1909 remark to the effect that a customer could have any color car he

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75 *Ibid*, 62-64.

76 Dr. Barton, “Co-operation at Home: American Section,” (undated), Commission VI, folder 4, box 25, series 1, MRL 12: World Missionary Conference Records, 1883-2010 (hereafter WMC), the Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

77 “Editorial,” *The Student World*, Volume III, Number 4 (October, 1910), 146, folder 2335, box 143, JRM.

wanted as long as it was black, was apparently playful. The ambivalent assertion that native peoples could have any religion or culture they wanted as long as it was Protestant was made entirely without irony. The 1910 WMC was based on a multitude of questionnaires disseminated by a plethora of educational commissions to mission fields across the globe. But each Commission had a single Chairman, who retained full responsibility for authoring the reports based on commission findings. All documents were submitted to a Central Advisory Committee in New York for approval before being accepted as official Conference materials.79

The work of Paul Monroe typified the extent to which domestic educational movements also co-operated on global research and education during this period. Monroe, professor of education at Columbia University’s Teachers College, was closely affiliated with the American foreign missionary organization, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. In a 1912 article in the *Publications of the American Sociological Society*, entitled, “Influence of the Growing Perception of Human Interrelationship on Education,” Monroe exemplified the conformism underlining the American, and world, foreign missionary movement’s homogenizing agenda. Monroe praised a “cosmopolitanism of learning,” but clarified that this “new conception of education” would be the “means of raising backward nations to full membership in the family of nations” and would bring “about the assimilation of … alien peoples” within America’s own borders.80

79 John Mott to George Robson, January 11, 1909, folder 21, box 13, series 1, WMC.

Philanthropic foundations spearheaded international missionary education. The Rockefeller family contributed to the International Committee of the YMCA from the 1890s, and after 1902, awarded Mott $10,000 a year for his foreign work. In 1911, the Hartford Theological Seminary, Connecticut, founded the Kennedy School of Missions. After the Rockefeller Foundation was incorporated in 1913, these endowments increased. Academic institutions, funded by philanthropists, embraced the new scholarly discipline of “Missiology,” which, according to WMC reports, endowed young people with “a wide and accurate grasp of the world’s problems,” and consciousness of “a world citizenship,” preparing them “intelligently to participate in all great world movements.”

Unsurprisingly, given their common donors and the overlapping nature of their educational projects, American reformers were a close-knit group. Grace Dodge, founder of Columbia University’s Teachers’ College, was heavily involved in the planning of Mott’s 1910 WMC, and served as an educational expert at the international missionary convention. Mott consulted Jones on how best to conduct the social surveys for the WMC’s preparatory educational commissions, and submitted evidence to its Commission on “the evangelization of the world in this generation.” In 1914, Jones attended a

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81 Tyrrell, Reforming the World, 69-70.

82 Ibid, 228.

83 “Commission VI, The Home Base, American Draft Notes,” folder 4, box 25, series 1, WMC. See also, Tyrrell, Reforming the World, 63.


85 King, Pan-Africanism, 50.
YMCA conference in Atlanta, chaired by Mott, calling it a privilege “to observe the Christian sympathy and broad statesmanship of Dr. Mott in the management of the entangling questions of black and white in the South,” and praising Mott’s decision to involve himself in issues so dear to Jones’s heart.  

In 1919, Mott endorsed the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s plan to launch an educational commission to Africa, and advised Anson Phelps Stokes that Jones was the man “to undertake this important service.” In 1926, Jones arranged for the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation to finance Teachers’ College’s Professor of Rural Education, Mabel Carney, to undertake an educational tour of British African colonies and Liberia, accompanied by Canadian-born British missionary, Margaret Wrong.

International educators, missionaries, and their philanthropic funders cooperated with the US government. In 1910, President William Taft (a close friend of Mott’s) hosted a conference at the White House on the “World-Wide Expansion of the Young Men’s Christian Association,” attended by key missionary leaders, philanthropists, and educational experts. Taft noted that, although the State Department desired “to communicate to every other nation a sympathetic feeling with respect to its moral as well as its physical improvement,” the government was constrained by “strict limitations” that did “not exist with regard to a body like the Young Men’s Christian Association.”

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86 Jones to Stokes, May 26, 1914, folder 2, box 44, PSF.
87 Mott to Stokes, October 16, 1919, folder 8, box 26, PSF.
88 Jones to Dr. W. S. Richardson (potential donor), January 12, 1926, box 26.7.20, International Missionary Council Archives (hereafter IMC), Microform, Record Group No. 85, Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.
89 Conference on the World-Wide Expansion of the Young Men’s Christian Association: Proceedings, October 20, 1910, folder 3079, box 186, JRM.
The First World War increased the importance of these reformers in the eyes of the US State, eager to exploit their educational expertise and, by now, extensive international connections. Mott, Jones, and Phelps Stokes were involved in the “War Work Council of the YMCA.” Jones spent three months overseas “advising with both the officers of the Association and of the army headquarters as to the welfare of the colored troops in France and England”. Stokes served as the home representative of this Council.90 Even before the USA entered the war, the War Department of Washington had sent Mott to Europe “in capacity of General Secretary of the YMCA” so that he could do “similar work” in their armies as he had done in the Association.91

Mott, Jones, and Stokes exerted an influence on the new international organs that emerged in the wake of the War. In 1918, the Continuation Committee of the 1910 World Missionary Conference announced that its members, having witnessed the international disruption and devastation caused by World War, believed that “national policies should be framed with an eye to their effect on the world at large.”92 On the War’s conclusion, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America sent Mott to Paris to lobby for concessions favorable to German missions in Germany’s former African colonies. Mott helped to ensure that the Versailles Treaty, and the revised 1885 General Act of Berlin relating to Africa, included provisions for religious freedom and freedom for missions.


91 War Department of the USA in Washington to the ministers of War in Europe, September 28, 1914, folder 2540, box 152, JRM. See also, transcription of interview between Mott and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace, London, April 5, 1918, folder 2554, box 153, JRM.

92 Extracts from “The Round Table,” September, 1918, box 26.00.01, IMC.
The efforts of Mott and his American missionary allies were particularly responsible for ensuring that these provisions applied not just to mandates over former German territories, but to the entire African continent, and elsewhere in the world.  

These internationalists were therefore deeply dismayed and indeed, disgusted, by American post-War isolationism and nativism. In 1919, the US opted out of the new League of Nations; in 1922, Congress passed the protectionist Fordney-McCumber tariff; and in 1921 and 1924 it imposed immigrant quotas. The reformers and their sponsors responded with heightened fervor by creating new international educational organizations.

In 1919, Nicholas Murray Butler, co-founder with Grace Dodge of Teachers College, and President of Columbia University from 1901, established Teachers College’s Institute of International Education (IIE). Stephen P. Duggan, Professor of Political Science at the College of the City of New York, the IIE’s first director, described the organization’s aims in 1920 as “enabling our people to secure a better understanding of foreign nations and of enabling foreign nations to obtain accurate knowledge of the United States, its people, institutions, and culture.”

The Carnegie Corporation of New York financed the IIE, embodying an academic/philanthropic partnership that dated back to the prewar period. Butler, a close friend of Andrew

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93 Keith Clements, Faith on the Frontier: A Life of J. H. Oldham (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), 166-167. Much of the information detailed in the reports of the Emergency Committee on Cooperative Missions of the IMC bolsters his claims. For example, see Mott’s country-by-country survey of former German African colonies, outlined in the “private and confidential” minutes from the Committee Meeting of May 2, 1919, box 26.11.24, IMC.


International educational programs promoted the circulation of people as well as ideas. Stephen P. Duggan, former US Secretary of State, immediately used his contacts at the State Department to create a new category of non-immigrant student visa in order to bypass the quotas set by the 1921 and 1924 Immigration Acts. Before the First World War, Nicholas Murray Butler had already been involved in international programs bringing foreign educators to America, and taking American educators abroad. In 1903 and 1906, Butler had helped British industrialist, Alfred Mosely, who had made his fortune in the gold mines of South Africa, arrange for groups of British teachers to tour the USA and report on its educational achievements for 1903, a scheme endorsed by the Board of Education for England and Wales. In 1908, Butler sent 1,000 American and Canadian teachers to tour educational institutions throughout the British Isles. Butler’s aim was to promote American education, a system Mosely admired and wanted to imitate in Great Britain. Butler also hoped to help strengthen social ties and trading interests between the USA, Canada, and Great Britain, whose enormous Empire included the Dominion of Canada.

Student and teacher exchange schemes were major concerns of the IIE from its inception. In 1924, Stephen P. Duggan hailed its international exchange program, which allowed citizens of the new states created after the First World War to “become familiar

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with American institutions and ways of looking at life.”  

Duggan proposed that foreign participants be educated in “technical, professional and research work.” They should also be “educated” and financially secure, to prevent their becoming “denationalized.” 

Duggan saw educated students as “the elect of their country,” the future “leaders of public opinion.” Conversely, the presence of foreign students in New York, and of American students abroad, fostered in Americans an admiration of other countries’ “spiritual contributions to human welfare.” This might have been true in particular cases, but Duggan, although an intellectual, offered no logical reason why it must invariably be so. Equally plausible was the possibility that American students might find alien, non-industrial cultures and societies repugnant – and vice versa.

The international missionary community initiated by Mott at the 1910 World Missionary Conference was also enshrined in a permanent international body in 1921, the International Missionary Council (IMC). Mott was named its Chairman. While the Continuation Committee Mott formed after the World Missionary Conference (WMC) had been organized primarily by subject of investigation, rather than by nation, the War had clarified for Mott and his allies that national divisions could not be eradicated, and that a “government of the world” remained impossible “as yet.”


98 Ibid, 4.

99 Ibid, 5.

100 Ibid, 4.

101 Ibid, 3.

102 Extracts from “The Round Table,” September, 1918, box 26.00.01, IMC.
Since the early twentieth century, liberal Americans like Butler and Mott had allied with Great Britain to evangelize, educate, and forge trading relationships with its vast Empire. Of the WMC’s 1,215 official delegates, 509 were British, and 491 North American.\textsuperscript{103} Scottish missionary, Joseph H. Oldham, had served as WMC Secretary in 1910. Mott’s wartime activities had strengthened his relationship with Oldham, and it was in large part thanks to Oldham’s political connections that he was able to exert some influence at the peace conference.\textsuperscript{104} Oldham became co-secretary of the IMC alongside an American, Dr. Warnshuis, in 1921.

But the British missionary movement Mott had encountered at the WMC did not equal America’s efficient missionary infrastructure, which was interwoven with American governmental, educational, and philanthropic agencies. In 1909, Mott expressed his frustration at British missionary delays and disorganization in submitting preparatory material for the Conference.\textsuperscript{105} If a progressive post-War Anglo-American partnership were to bear fruit, Mott believed, British reformers would have to modify their activities along American lines.

Oldham and his British allies took a similar view, in terms of both inferior British intellectual dynamism and organizational prowess. British reformers were acutely aware of their nation’s declining significance as a world power, as they observed the USA and even a bankrupted Germany emerge as major economies, while the costs of running a far-flung Empire became increasingly onerous. They were convinced that Great Britain could

\textsuperscript{103} Stanley, \textit{World Missionary Conference}, 12.

\textsuperscript{104} Clements, \textit{Faith on the Frontier}, 167.

\textsuperscript{105} Mott to George Robson, January 11, 1909, folder 21, box 13, series 1, WMC.
compete in this environment only if it harnessed the full resources of its Empire. British educators admired American expertise in employing an intricate network of collaborating agencies to disseminate educational ideals ubiquitously, in the absence of political centralization, and were eager to forge a British system based on this model. The following chapter explores the extent to which these American thinkers guided British agencies eager to mimic American educational practices, thereby entrenching American principles and interests in the fabric and operations of the British Empire.
CHAPTER 2:

AMERICANIZING BRITISH EDUCATION

...the problems of mission education are the problems of education at home.

Michael Sadler, 1921

This chapter explores a group of British intellectuals that attempted to implement educational programs modeled on American paradigms for British populations – in the metropole and colonies – in the hope of reviving a struggling Empire. Institutional obstacles prevented educational experts like Michael Sadler from reforming domestic education along what he perceived as innovative American lines in the early twentieth century, but British missionary avenues appeared more promising. The 1910 World Missionary Conference introduced its Scottish missionary organizer, Joseph Oldham, and other British attendees, including Sadler, to American educational principles, methods, and funds they could draw on to prop up the Empire. The First World War highlighted both the commercial and military importance of the Empire, and its instability, and heightened the importance to the government of internationally minded experts like Oldham and Sadler. By the end of the War, both men were poised to integrate American educational techniques and money into British imperial operations in an attempt to transform the British Empire into an economically productive, coherent, and non-denominational Christian unit.

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British Attempts to Imitate American Education in the Metropole

At the turn of the twentieth century Great Britain was a socially stratified, culturally diverse, and increasingly democratic nation. The “United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland” was a political union of nations, not all of which were happy with the arrangement, although the Reform Act of 1884 had established for the first time uniform electoral qualifications throughout the Union. While most English laws applied to Wales, Scotland had a separate state church and educational system. Irish nationalists campaigned and fought for independence from England after a failed Home Rule Bill in 1886, stimulating a similar desire for self-determination in the other “Celtic” nations, Scotland and Wales. In Ireland, above all, the rise of the Home Rule movement and the Irish Republican Brotherhood at the end of the nineteenth century marked the start of an era of growing bitterness and violence in Anglo-Irish relations, which was only partly resolved in 1922 with the creation of the independent republic of Eire, and the retention of Ulster (Northern Ireland) in the United Kingdom.²

From the late nineteenth century, Britain’s fortunes were in decline, its industrial pre-eminence increasingly challenged by the rapidly expanding industrial power of Germany. The Empire, encompassing about a quarter of the globe’s land surface, was far more expensive to maintain than those of Russia and Austria-Hungary, which incorporated adjacent territories.³ At the end of the nineteenth century, British home industries and agriculture suffered severe depressions. Britain ran a significant trade deficit in “visible” goods, and imports far exceeded exports, despite colonial captive

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markets for British goods. In reality, “invisible” trade reduced this deficit; “invisible trade” included revenue generated by financial services like insurance and banking, along with profits from shipping. But British reliance on international trade was a source of anxiety. As an island nation, Britain was vulnerable to siege, a situation made all the more worrying by the fact that industrialized Britain was by now a greater importer than exporter of grain. The Anglo-German naval arms race of 1898-1912 further exacerbated fears of encirclement. The embarrassing British defeat at the hands of the tiny Boer army in the South African War of 1899-1902 did nothing to allay British fears. Britain looked to her emerging rivals, the more populous and self-sufficient Germany and the USA, for inspiration.

One popular response to British apprehension was renewed demand for economic protectionism and exclusion, similar to that of the USA. The American McKinley Tariff of 1890 strengthened calls for the protection of British industries and agriculture from unfair competition. This countered a deeply cherished Victorian attachment to free trade and negative liberty. Freedom from state-sanctioned favoritism was enshrined in legislation that appeared to advantage sectional interests; for example, the protectionist Corn Laws had privileged the farming industry, one of the mainstays of Conservative governments. It took the approximately 2.5 million deaths in the Irish famine of the 1840s to persuade Prime Minister Peel to repeal these laws, an act which split the Conservative Party for a generation.

Immigration was another cause of concern. Although the level of foreign immigration to the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth century was minimal in

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comparison to American figures, Britain’s immigrants, particularly Eastern European Jews, were concentrated in overcrowded inner-city enclaves, provoking hostility and alarm, especially in recessionary times. In his 1892 book, *The Alien Invasion*, W. H. Wilkins expressed the Englishman’s “certain amount of envy at the energy and firmness, which the American Government [had] displayed in excluding undesirable aliens,” and deplored the British *laissez faire* policy that allowed his “little British Islands to be overrun by the class of foreigner which America so rigorously exclude[d]”. Wilkins commended the white settler populations of Canada, New Zealand, and the Australian colonies, which had similarly “shut out the destitute, the unfit and the undesirable” by immigration legislation. In 1905, the British Conservative government passed the country’s first Aliens Act in response to this pressure, which had mounted largely in response to the flood of Jewish refugees from persecution in Russia and Eastern Europe.

The issue of immigration, like that of tariff reform, proved deeply contentious. British liberals (whether or not formally identifying with the governing Liberal Party, which came to power in 1906) were horrified by the Act. Since the seventeenth century, British liberalism, indebted to philosophers like John Locke and John Stuart Mill, had striven to temper the excesses of an overbearing state. Early twentieth-century descendants of this liberal position saw the Aliens Act as an infringement of individual liberties, and an obstacle to the free movement of people and goods that they continued to

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7 Philip Harling describes the Victorian attachment to “negative liberty” and a “disinterested” state as a cross-class, almost apolitical set of values. Harling, “Powers of the Victorian State,” 30, 32.
revere as the route to British international economic success. They saw the two issues as
two parts of a single issue; the free movement of goods and services was inseparable
from the free movement of labor and people. Alison Bashford and Catie Gilchrist point
out that Liberal influence in parliament ensured that the 1905 Act included an asylum
clause exempting from its limitations political or religious refugees fleeing persecution, a
qualification absent from contemporary American measures. 8

Critics saw protectionism and immigration restrictions as economically incoherent
and morally repugnant in equal measure. Even radical intellectuals repelled by British
imperialism, like the political economist J. A. Hobson, could not conceive of England
abandoning its Empire in an era of emerging autarchic superpowers. Rather, Hobson
censured an unprincipled Empire, and called idealistically for an enlightened and
disinterested authority to develop colonial estates in the interests of both the indigenous
populations and the wider world economy, though without explaining why any genuinely
disinterested authority would take the trouble to involve itself in so costly and time-
consuming an activity. 9 “New Imperialists,” like Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain,
took a more constructive, interventionist approach to imperial federation, and in 1903
controversially proposed preferential imperial tariffs in order to finance domestic social
reform.10 For both groups, any restriction on migration and trade within the Empire (and,
for Hobson, anywhere in the world) would harm the British economy. Bashford and


9 Nicholas Owen, “Critics of Empire in Britain,” in Judith Brown and Wm Roger Louis (eds.),
University Press, 1999), 190.

Gilchrist argue that this sentiment prompted the choice of the term “alien” in the Aliens Act rather than “immigrant,” as the former applied exclusively to those who were neither citizens nor subjects of Great Britain.\footnote{Bashford and Gilchrist, “Aliens Act,” 426.}

Education had always been a tool of political and social engineering. Opponents of exclusion and “little Englandism” believed that if Britain were to function more coherently, peacefully, and productively, it must be taught to do so. A community of philosophers, social scientists, and political thinkers embraced citizenship education. Like their American counterparts, and inspired by the same Enlightenment ideals, and by the more recent political philosopher, T. H. Green, and economic historian, Arnold Toynbee, British idealists promoted the teaching of certain ethical, civic, and moral values to foster collective loyalty.\footnote{Susan Pedersen, *Eleanor Rathbone and the Politics of Conscience* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 45-48. For the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment on Oxford-educated idealists, particularly those from Scotland, like Edward Caird, see, Cairns Craig, “Scotland’s Migrant Philosophers and the History of Scottish Philosophy,” *History of European Ideas* 39, no. 5 (2013): 670-692.} Academics, particularly at Oxford University, were most vociferous in promoting this creed. Intellectuals like Bernard Bosanquet, Hubert Llewellyn Smith, and J. S. Mackenzie involved themselves in a host of “schools of civic virtue,” such as (respectively), the Charity Organization Society, the settlement houses, and the Civic Education League. Spending time with the poor, and engaging in social investigation, especially if undertaken through associational activities, constituted important mechanisms for understanding different populations, and solidifying individual and national moral character. These activities would heighten social sympathies between all
citizens, and (some reformers proposed) empower the state to devise appropriate practical solutions to social ills.\textsuperscript{13}

In this framework, the state could potentially play an active role in enhancing communal wellbeing. Improved educational provision, went the reasoning, would enhance moral character, independence, and compassion. Some saw no contradiction between this active state function and the Victorian ideal of “negative liberty.” In the new paradigm, the state, shorn of illiberal features like the Corn Laws, did not intervene to privilege the special interests of a select few. Rather, it would help to develop the capacities of all to their fullest potential, molding decent citizens for the common good.\textsuperscript{14}

This idealism was mainly confined to an academic elite; government and industry was more concerned that British education lagged behind that of the nation’s economic competitors. The arcane field of classics largely defined the culture and curriculum of the intellectual classes. Nearly all entrance scholarships to Oxford and Cambridge were devoted to classics, and only those who had benefited from a classical education in the public schools – and could afford the fees – gained entrance before 1914.\textsuperscript{15}


\textsuperscript{14} Pedersen, \textit{Eleanor Rathbone}, 47-48.

\textsuperscript{15} Public schools in England and Wales do not correlate with the American educational institutions of the same name. The English schools belong to the private sector, and were traditionally all-male boarding schools.
curricula of these ivory towers of academia – mostly devoid of science, mathematics, or living foreign languages, let alone the applied social sciences that had begun to proliferate in Germany and the USA – created fears that Britain would be unable to produce the kinds of leaders who could cope with social disorder, or contend with the rising economic superpowers on the world stage.\textsuperscript{16}

Turn-of-the-century British civil servants, educators, and industrialists therefore decided that overseas models should be studied for guidance, and launched a plethora of educational commissions in order to learn how education could create a “spirit of national sufficiency”. W. P. Groser, representative of the Parliamentary Industry Committee on a 1903 British educational commission to the USA, thought American education exemplified how to create national prosperity, and also offered a formula for creating unity out of London’s “increasing alien population”.\textsuperscript{17} One of the slew of newspaper reports covering the 1903 American educational commission of which Groser was a member observed that, given Britain’s “own growing conceptions of an Imperial position and an Imperial destiny, and with the multitude of nationalities over which the flag of England wave[d],” the USA offered educational lessons “which not only this country, but all the King’s dominions beyond the seas, might profitably lay to heart and initiate in practice.”\textsuperscript{18}


\textsuperscript{17} W. P. Groser, “What can we learn from America?” Western Press (Bristol), November 4, 1903, box 67, Personal Clippings, NMB.

\textsuperscript{18} “The Mosely Educational Commission, V,” London Times, December 21, 1903, box 67, NMB.
Education could protect and strengthen the Empire. A retired British industrialist, Alfred Mosely, organized and privately funded the 1903 educational commission in which Groser participated. Mosely had made his fortune at the end of the nineteenth century, in South Africa’s gold and diamond mines, where he had seen American engineers transform “unremunerative” industries into “the richest heritages owned by Great Britain.” Mosely had initially decided to send an industrial commission to the USA to investigate commercial and industrial education, but by 1901, he had become convinced that there was so much to learn from America that two separate commissions were necessary. The first, conducted in 1902, researched American systems of employer-employee co-operation. The second, formed in 1903, carried out a general educational survey of “the form of education given in the United States”, which Mosely believed, underlay the country’s great success.

Senior British civil servants planned the Mosely survey, and endorsed its subsequent findings. Mosely extensively consulted Lord Reay, Chairman of the London School Board. He also conferred with Arthur Balfour, Conservative Prime Minister; and Michael Sadler, “Director of Special Inquiries and Reports” at the Board of Education.

Progressive British educational reformers were already drawing inspiration from America. Sadler’s division at the Board of Education – a new sub-department of educational research and publication – was closely modeled on the United States Bureau

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20 Mosely, “Preface,” VI-VII.

21 *Reports of the Mosely Educational Commission*, 10-11.
of Education (USBE).\textsuperscript{22} In 1939, Sadler recalled a conversation he had had in Philadelphia in 1892, with Dr. W. T. Harris, then director of the USBE, who had convinced him that “a new organ of inquiry and report, if attached to the Education Department in Whitehall (as it was then called) in London, might prove useful in stimulating public opinion.”\textsuperscript{23} The Department of Education (renamed by an 1899 Act of Parliament the Board of Education) had appointed Sadler as its research body’s first director in 1895. He had previously been heavily involved in adult education through the Oxford University Extension Delegacy (teaching local working-class students) and the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA). The late-nineteenth century idealism that had flourished at Oxford while Sadler had been an undergraduate there had sparked the establishment of these citizenship-building bodies. Through his participation in these groups, Sadler had formed extensive American contacts. After his 1892 Philadelphia visit in support of his university extension work, Sadler deplored the “academical” character and “want of touch with life” that characterized English education. But he added the important qualification that a purely technical education lacked “spirituality.”\textsuperscript{24} As “Director of Special Inquiries and Reports,” Sadler authored and commissioned a host of comparative investigations into how education might most effectively consolidate the nation administratively and ideologically. President of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler, wrote one of Sadler’s initial reports for the Department of Education, and

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arranged for Sadler to revisit the USA in 1902 to speak at an educational convention in Chicago chaired by Butler. Sadler was responsible for Butler’s cooperation in planning the 1903 educational commission. Mosely had initially intended to launch the commission in September 1902, but its organizers pressed for delay until the new Education Bill became law. Commission planners hoped the Local Education Authorities proposed in the Bill would, under the new legislation, have powers very similar to those of American School Boards and might, if the Commission’s impact proved sufficiently strong, be persuaded to imitate some of the better plans of their American counterparts.

Admiration for American-style practical education led to increasing criticism of an antiquated public-school classics curriculum. All 26 members of the Mosely Commission, even the sole public-school delegate, Herbert Branston Gray, who had previously expressed satisfaction with England’s classical public-school curriculum, unanimously applauded what they saw as a dynamic American education in contrast to the “comparative apathy” of British education. Commissioners observed the “enormous growth of public secondary schools.” They reflected on the “admirable technical instruction provided” at the “great technological schools” of major Northeastern and Midwestern American cities, which had no British counterparts. Reports stressed the predominance of “modern” versus “classical and literary training.” Commissioners were

25 Grier, Achievement in Education, 56; Higginson, Sadler’s Studies, 42.


28 “The Mosely Commission,” The Morning Post (London), April 9, 1904, box 67, NMB.
surprised at “the doctrine of the equality of the sexes that [ran] through the whole of American education”, with both sexes taught together, even at secondary level. They commented on the American proclivity for “training of teachers, generally recognized as necessary” and “agricultural education, which receive[d] much more attention than in England.”

Henry Coward, President of the National Union of Teachers, the trade union for schoolteachers in England and Wales, was amazed to find that in the American public schools, the son of the “corner grocer” studied alongside “the son of the President, and their status [was] exactly the same.”

Another major difference was organizational. Commissioners remarked on the inventive ways American public and private educational bodies cooperated. The American government spent generously on education, while in England “every penny spent on education [was] often grudged.” It also cooperated enthusiastically with wealthy benefactors, who gladly endowed professorships and schools, and harnessed the academic expertise afforded by educational funding to seek ways of making the country more productive. For example, the United States Department of Agriculture was “a busy hive of research,” constantly discovering “good things for the farmer,” and seeking to “bring home science to the citizen for his use and benefit.”

Coward noticed that


30 Henry Coward (President of the National Union of Teachers, “With the Mosely Commission to America – V,” *The Schoolmaster*, November 7, 1903, box 67, NMB.


religious organizations, like Sunday schools, churches, and Christian agencies like the YMCA, were “admirably organized, in strong contrast to the slipshod carelessness and well-meaning inefficiency” of their English counterparts. Commissioners were impressed by the “system and co-ordination” that linked these private and public agencies, and concluded, however incorrectly, that while “there [was] no single education authority in America exercising control over all the States, and in the details of education there [was] considerable difference between one State and another…it [was] surprising to find that the school system [had] become fairly uniform throughout all the States.”

The apparent homogeneity of American education was also due to pedagogical emphasis on civics and social studies. New York taught Groser that if “alien” populations were “not to be excluded they must be absorbed.” He admired the way New York’s public schools assimilated the city’s diverse population through “direct instruction in the history of the country they inhabit[ed], and their part and share therein.” Groser noted that this instruction was not confined to immigrants; all students, nationwide and at every level, were taught “a sense of national duty and responsibility” and “a knowledge of the Constitution and the theory of Democracy,” issues that could not be “understood instinctively”, and must therefore be actively taught. By contrast, British education at

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35 “How they Teach in America,” *The Morning Advertiser (London)*, April 9, 1904, box 67, NMB.

36 W. P. Groser, “What can we learn from America?” *Western Press (Bristol)*, November 4, 1903, box 67, Personal Clippings, NMB.
every level was driven by the theory that rote-learning of facts was the only way of instilling knowledge.\textsuperscript{37}

Commissioners found that educating all students in non-doctrinal Christian ethics helped forge national unity. Coward observed that in America, a land whose Constitution (unlike that of Great Britain) enshrined the separation of Church and State, “the whole public system, from primary school upwards, “was “avowedly secular”, adding that secularism was not synonymous with amorality or anomie: American secularism was infused with “a genuine desire to make the school training conducive to the moral well-being of the scholars from the point of national well-being.” Coward blandly observed that “[t]he Bible [was] read without note or comment at the opening of every school,” apparently failing to note anything anomalous or contradictory about this difference between theory and practice.\textsuperscript{38}

Commissioners argued, with however little justification, that these educational approaches even appeased stark racial differences, although institutionalized educational segregation might have struck more critical observers as a cruel mockery of the stated aims of the program. In “Washington, and generally through the more Southern States, the coloured children [were] not yet allowed to attend the same schools as the whites,” Coward noted. “Not yet” is something of an understatement; it was another half-century before the controversial ruling in \textit{Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka} (1954) legislated for the right to integrated schooling. Nonetheless, Coward contended that “the


\textsuperscript{38} Coward, “With the Mosely Commission – IV,” \textit{The Schoolmaster}, Oct. 31, 1903, box 67, NMB.
policy [had] been adopted of thoroughly educating the coloured folks, giving them in their own schools, under coloured teachers, exactly as good an education as [was] given to the whites." This neat doublethink allowed the visitors to applaud a system that simultaneously promoted both equality (of education) and inequality (by racial segregation). Coward’s demeaning terminology speaks of this racial condescension; black Americans were “folks” in a way white Americans were not.

British educators admired the type of education offered by black schools, and believed British schools would do well to adopt elements of their curricula. After visiting Hampton Institute, the normal (teacher-training) and industrial college of Tuskegee, in 1902, Sadler pronounced that “agriculture should be made in a very large degree the basis for our work (in England)...the salvation of any race will largely rest upon its ability and willingness to secure and cultivate properly the soil...”  

Kenneth King interprets Sadler’s admiration for Southern black educational institutions as evidence of his, and more generally British, “approval for differentiating the education of Negro people from that of white, along Tuskegee lines”. Instead, Sadler thought that promoting agricultural education at home, where there were very few people of color, as well as in the colonies, could to some extent rectify Britain’s alarming reliance on agricultural imports. Sadler suggested that in Great Britain there were “considerable numbers of white people, and those by no means only the poorer classes, who would derive more advantage from a

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40 Quoted in Higginson, Sadler’s Studies, 39.

course of education in which practical training played a considerable...part, than from one which [was] almost exclusively literary or theoretical in character.”

Propaganda played a part in shaping the 1903 Commission’s favorable impression. Eager to promote America’s image abroad, President Butler carefully orchestrated the visit. He arranged for Commission members to attend a cocktail party with civic dignitaries in New York City; to participate in a guided tour of the capital conducted by a specially appointed “Entertainment Committee;” and even attend a reception at the White House hosted by President Theodore Roosevelt. But however filtered by bias the Commissioners’ report of their American experiences might be, British newspapers conveyed their enthusiasm for American education to a wide domestic readership of teachers, educational committees, and the general public.

However, hopes of changing British education in accordance with American models were crushed. In a 1917 treatise, America at School and Work, Gray, the Mosely Commission’s public-school delegate, lamented the “strangling efforts of red tape in almost every Government Department” in contrast to the “alertness and candour” of American officials, which placed their nation firmly ahead “on the road of progress.” Gray concluded that Whitehall had much to learn from Washington “in the cultivation of this attitude of mind.”

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42 Quoted in Higginson, Sadler’s Studies, 40.

43 Coward, “To America with the Mosely Education Commission – II,” The Schoolmaster, October 10, 1903; Coward, “To America with the Mosely Education Commission – V,” The Schoolmaster, November 7, 1903, box 67, NMB.

44 Coward, “To America – II,” The Schoolmaster, Oct. 10, 1903, box 67, NMB.

45 Herbert Branston Gray, America at School and at Work (London: Nisbet and Co. Ltd., 1918), ix-x.
British government attention was still almost entirely concentrated on the war in Europe. In 1918, the Fisher Education Act raised the school-leaving age to fourteen and considerably extended tertiary education, largely motivated by the need to train a better equipped workforce for the demands of a future, more technologically sophisticated war. However, Dennis Dean asserts that political considerations and compromise tempered this legislation, with its architect, H. A. L. Fisher, too concerned about the political survival of Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, to demand more fundamental change.\textsuperscript{46}

The relatively centralized nature of British, as opposed to American, education created insuperable bureaucratic stumbling blocks. Sadler’s grievances at the Board of Education exemplify the frustration of would-be reformers. After the 1870 Forster Education Act, the British government had taken responsibility for providing free, compulsory state education throughout England and Wales, supplementing, but not replacing, the parallel systems run by various private and Church schools. Arthur Acland, Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, a Cabinet minister in Gladstone’s Liberal ministry, had appointed Sadler as the Board of Education’s Director of Special Reports and Inquiries in 1895. Almost immediately, Unionist victory in that year’s General Election lost Acland his Cabinet position, and the influence he might have exerted on Sadler’s behalf.\textsuperscript{47} A political reconstruction following the General Election of 1902 tainted the contentious Balfour Education Act of that year, which integrated the


\textsuperscript{47} Wilkinson, “Office of Special Inquiries,” 275, 278.
management and funding of state and Church schools with partisan politics. By now, Sadler had become convinced that few of the country’s educational problems could be solved by statutory means. Instead, he placed his faith on developing mutual trust between all partners, educators, administrators, teachers and parents, and on developing an understanding of the spiritual values that should underpin the educational process. Frustrated, Sadler submitted his resignation to the Board of Education, and took up a professorship in the “History and Administration of Education” at the new Victoria University of Manchester, a post specifically created for him.

Early-twentieth-century British philanthropists faced more restrictions than their American contemporaries. Britain, like America, boasted a rich philanthropic tradition. The Elizabethan state, grappling with periodic famines, European warfare and grievous socio-economic distress, had passed a Statute of Charitable Uses (1601) to encourage private philanthropy. The aim of this statute was to supervise the administration of any property given for such “charitable and godlie [sic.] uses” as were listed in the statute’s Preamble. When the British government imposed an income tax in 1799, and again in 1842, it exempted from income tax “any corporation, fraternity or society of persons established for charitable purposes only”. The House of Lords’ decision in the watershed case, Commissioners for Special Purposes of Income Tax v Pemsel (1891), held that for the purposes of exemption from income tax, the purpose of the charity had to fall within the Preamble of the 1601 Act or its “spirit”, and a sufficiently large section of the public – including the public schools, which had originally been established as charitable

48 Ibid, 286-287.

49 Ibid, 287.
foundations for the education of talented poor boys – stood to benefit from it. The 1891 decision also formulated a set of four categories of charitable purposes. The USA had repealed the 1601 Charitable Uses Act after achieving independence. From the late nineteenth century onwards, most American charities were organized as nonprofit corporations, and the laws governing them developed alongside company law, which regarded corporations as rights-bearing persons. Therefore, fewer limitations inhibited American philanthropic endeavors. In Britain, charitable activities continued to rely on trusts, and their operations were more narrowly circumscribed by legal principles of equity.\(^5\)

Funding at the Board of Education for England and Wales was parsimonious. In the USA, educational experiments, like the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s 1912 investigation into African American education, consulted commercial, as well as governmental, representatives in order to encourage philanthropic foundations to help government agencies fund educational initiatives. Sadler’s comparative reports for the Board of Education at the end of the nineteenth century were exclusively educational, lacking financial or economic perspectives or representatives. Even the Mosely commission, set up to investigate how America used education to drive national prosperity, was solely composed of educational specialists, with no representatives from British business. In 1899, Sadler tried to obtain Treasury funds to recruit Philip Hartog, who went on to serve as Secretary to the Mosely Commission, as his scientific assistant and translator. But the

request was turned down with what Sadler described as the now familiar “inertia, the resistance and intricate red tape”. 51

The Church of England, whose bishops sat in the House of Lords, was a further hindrance. Its influence and long tradition of independent educational provision was antithetical to the type of inter-denominational school system the NUT’s Henry Coward had observed in the USA. Since 1894, moreover, Church leaders had proposed an ecumenical rapprochement with the Roman Catholic Church, which would have made Anglicans less amenable to a form of Christianity that privileged subjective inner virtue over specific ideology or practices, and would have strengthened their joint clout in national politics. 52 As it was, the 1902 Education Act highlighted the political influence of the Church of England. The Act abolished school boards and replaced them with Local Educational Authorities (LEAs), a development that the organizers of the Mosely Commission had hoped for. However, the Act made LEAs responsible for levying and granting rate aid to Church schools. This enraged both Nonconformists, who objected to funding schools to which they had conscientious objections, and “democrats”, who resented spending public money on semi-independent faith schools. 53 W. C. Fletcher, Head Master of the technical Liverpool Institute and member of the Mosely educational commission, commented that the Americans he had met during the 1903 survey were horrified by the religious implications of the 1902 Act, viewing it as a “deep-laid attempt on the part of the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY to do certain dreadful things,” a


52 Searle, New England?, 105.

53 Ibid, 331-332.
flagrant disrespect “for education as one of the first essentials of the national welfare,” and an expression of “not very scrupulous fanaticism.” By 1906, over 170 Dissenters had been imprisoned for refusing to pay local authority taxes to fund state schools as mandated by the 1902 Act.

Educational reform was, however, essential if Britain were to maintain its political and economic pre-eminence in the twentieth century. In The Public Schools and the Empire, written after his 1903 American tour, Gray concluded that Britain could not hope to compete with America’s vast natural resources except through exploitation of the Empire. Foreign, particularly American, competition must be met by radical reorganization of education throughout the Empire. The only corners of Great Britain identified by members of the Mosely Commission as matching America’s educational enthusiasm were what Ned Landsman calls the “provincial” nations, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and England’s provincial towns and secondary cities, such as Manchester and Newcastle. Since the late seventeenth century, these regions had been increasingly interconnected, through patterns of trade, in their common support for religious dissent and cultivation of a broadly Scottish Enlightenment culture. They had also been linked to the expanding eighteenth-century British Empire, notably, the American colonies, through the activities of luminaries such as scientist Joseph Priestley and the


Birmingham-based Lunar Society. Frustrated by limited British statutory educational reform, reformers like Sadler embraced the informal, missionary educational avenues that a Scotsman, Joseph Oldham, had suggested might forge a coherent and consistent Empire.

British Attempts to Emulate American Education in the Empire

Missionary activity thus became more proactive than public policy. In 1910, American missionary, John Mott, organized Edinburgh’s World Missionary Conference (WMC). Sadler became acting chairman of the Conference’s commission, “Education in relation to the Christianisation of National Life”, or Commission III. Oldham, the missionary who orchestrated British involvement in the Conference and acted as its Secretary, deemed Sadler “the ablest Educationalist in England.” After the Conference, Sadler predicted that the event would be of “great historic importance.”

Oldham was born in Bombay in 1874, to Scottish Congregationalist parents, and the family returned to Scotland when Joseph was a boy. In 1892, he matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford. Like many others of his generation, Oldham underwent an evangelical conversion at Oxford. British missionary societies had formed the ecumenical Student Volunteer Union in 1892, in imitation of the American Student Volunteer

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Movement established in 1888. Oldham joined the Student Volunteer Union, and soon met Mott through his international missionary activities.  

The WMC exposed further failings in British education in addition to those identified by the Mosely Commission. It revealed, unsurprisingly, that British education lacked the dynamic American missionary infrastructure; pragmatism had always been the guiding principle of British educational ideology – it had taken the Scottish Adam Smith to plead, in the final volume of *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), for a liberal education for all on purely humanitarian grounds. The British WMC papers commented on the lack of national “interest in the work of the Church abroad” and a “weakness in administration” characterizing home missionary societies. WMC reports recorded that the practice of British societies was so different that it was “impossible to compare one Society with one another.” While “Missiology” had become a popular academic subject in the USA, allowing students to learn about the value of a homogenous global humanity without embarking on the physical adventure of missionary work, British accounts noted that the foundation of missions was “not laid in our Day Schools or even by the Sunday Schools as represented by the denominational organizations.” This was also unsurprising. Sunday Schools had been founded in Gloucester in the late eighteenth century with the

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62 “Commission VI, The Home Base of Missions, Section VII, Problems of Administration: The British Section,” (undated), folder 3, box 25, series 1, WMC.

63 *Ibid*. 

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pragmatic aim of keeping working-class urchins off the streets on their only day off work.

The involvement of the Church of England proved extremely difficult for the ecumenical WMC. While the Conference invoked no legislation, Sadler saw that a gathering unsanctioned by, or without the co-operation of, the Church, would lack legitimacy.64 Particular tensions arose concerning the use of statistics. Mott’s organizational techniques relied on harnessing selected facts to substantiate his claims, a methodology that impressed Sadler immensely.65 The WMC’s Statistics Commission prepared for the Edinburgh Conference by calculating missionary conversions worldwide. American missionaries with a strong presence in South America included Catholic converts in their figures. The large number of Anglo-Catholics now associated with the Church of England resented the incorporation of these populations into the statistics of ‘converts’, as if a Catholic were not already a Christian. Because of this dispute, Church of England bishops threatened to withdraw from the Conference.66 Despite embracing apparently objective hard data, Mott’s interpretation of the data was predicated on the assumption that the only true Christianity was Protestantism. The Anglican Bishop of Southwark, Edward Talbot, advised Oldham that, for all the Church of England’s tolerance and comparative liberality, “perfect clearness on all sides” was necessary for ecumenical co-operation.67 American members eventually agreed to

64 Joseph Oldham to John R. Mott, March 10, 1909, folder 15, box 13, series 1, WMC.
65 Higginson, Sadler’s Studies, 49.
66 Oldham to Mott, March 10, 1909, folder 15, box 13, series 1, WMC.
67 WMC, Series 1, Box 13, folder 15, Letter Bishop of Southwark to Oldham, Feb 20, 1909.
exclude Catholics from conversion statistics, and the Church of England joined the Conference on its own terms.

The very fact that Church of England officials agreed to join the inter-denominational WMC, even under strict conditions, gave hope to Oldham and Sadler that missionary endeavors in colonial outposts might prove fertile ground for educational experiments. While some High Churchmen remained fearful, a number of Church representatives at the Conference were receptive to the progressive missionary enterprise. These included Archbishops of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, and of York, Cosmo Lang, both born in Scotland. Steven Maughan describes Davidson as the most “missionary-minded” man ever to have occupied the position of Archbishop of Canterbury up to that time. Lang had worked on Oxford University Extension lectures with Sadler at the end of the nineteenth century, and would become Archbishop of Canterbury in 1928. William Temple, who would be appointed Archbishop of York in 1929 and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1942, was an active participant in the controversial WMC.

Anglo-American co-operation at the Conference proved fruitful. Interaction in Conference preparations with Mott and other key American educators like Grace Dodge, co-founder with Butler of Teachers College, taught Oldham and Sadler new

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70 Grier, Achievement in Education, 9.

71 Stanley, World Missionary Conference, 5.
organizational methods.\textsuperscript{72} Oldham claimed he owed his understanding of the significance of the “making of practical provision for the things you want done” entirely “to the insight and driving power of Mott.”\textsuperscript{73} For American reformers like Mott, committees of investigation played a key role in legitimating, by incorporating, consulting, and surveying, all stakeholders, while an elite group retained authority over the composition of reports. Unlike the Mosely Commission, comprised exclusively of educational experts, the European (although largely British) Continuation Committee established by WMC officials after the Conference, boasted a special committee on education that included leading commercial groups, government officials, and religious figures, in addition to educators like Sadler, who was appointed Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University in 1911. Almost immediately, the committee launched a study of the expansion of Islam in Africa, consulting academics like Professor Diedrich Hermann Westermann, a German expert on African languages, and civil administrators, such as Sir Frederick Lugard, Governor General of Nigeria.\textsuperscript{74} A tightly organized centralized committee with a budget and secretary retained control over the recommendations of the WMC Continuation Committee’s investigatory groups, and soon orchestrated another international missionary conference in England in 1911. Despite its international claims, attendees were mainly Anglo-American white men. Participants established a periodical, the

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid, 171. Stanley notes Dodge’s participation in the WMC.

\textsuperscript{73} Oldham to Rev. A. M. Chirgwin, June 1, 1944, box 219, Conference of British Missionary Societies/ International Missionary Council (hereafter CBMS/IMC), Archives and Special Collections, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

\textsuperscript{74} Clements, \textit{Faith on the Frontier}, 112-113. The inclusion of Sir Michael Sadler and other English educational experts in the Educational Sub-Committee is mentioned in a letter from Michael Sadler to Oldham, March 13, 1911, box 26.00.12, IMC.
International Review of Missions (IRM), to disseminate their ideas worldwide. Oldham was the IRM’s first editor, and a British missionary, Georgina Gollock, its deputy editor. In 1913, Oldham formed the Conference of Missionary Societies in Britain and Ireland (CBMS), modeled on the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. The infrastructure created by the WMC had brought Oldham (a missionary), Sadler (an educator), and Lugard (an imperial official) into collaboration. They were also brought into contact with American educators, philanthropic foundation managers, and missionaries. Both American and British reformers hoped that vast areas of the world might be brought together by their collaborative educational efforts.

The First World War increased the importance of British missionary societies, and their affiliated academics and experts, in the eyes of the British government. Before the war, the WMC’s Continuation Committee had been organized on an international basis, with European missionaries constituting one group with national sub-sections. After the outbreak of war, this system became impossible, and the CBMS (a national body with headquarters in London) absorbed the Edinburgh-based British Section of the Continuation Committee. Oldham explained that during the War, the British government had utilized the “technical machinery” developed by the CBMS since the WMC to deal with various international and imperial questions, requiring the missionary body’s relocation to the metropole.75 After the War, Oldham, supported by Mott and the American missionaries, used his influence with the Foreign Office to ensure that a provision

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75 Joseph Oldham, “Private and Confidential: Memorandum on the Location of the Office,” in file entitled, “Future of Co-operative Work,” box 26.00.01, IMC; Oldham to Chirgwin. June 1, 1944, box 219, CBMS/IMC.
protecting religious freedom in Germany’s former African colonies was included in the postwar peace settlement.\textsuperscript{76}

The War highlighted the military and commercial significance of the Empire, especially of India, but also its extreme fragility. Nearly one and a half million Indians fought for the Allied cause, a largely self-financed burden. But the demands of total war in a European cause of no relevance to Indians engendered resentment and resistance in India, which was exacerbated by repressive legislation like the 1916 Defense of India Act. Nationalists revolted against British institutions, such as Christian missionary schools, which they viewed as extensions of colonial rule and destructive of national religion, Hindu and Muslim.\textsuperscript{77} The government assuaged agitation with reformist incentives, such as the Montagu Declaration of 1917, which promised “responsible government” as its ultimate goal for India. But the moderate Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 did not match nationalistic expectations, and tension ensued, especially after the emergence of the charismatic Gandhi, who had returned to India from South Africa in 1915, as the figurehead of Indian nationalism.\textsuperscript{78}

Radical ideological change ensued after 1918, with the new imperative of self-rule dictated in large part by America. The creation of the League of Nations after the

\textsuperscript{76} Clements argues that Mott and Oldham exerted this influence in treaty negotiations. \textit{Faith on the Frontier}, 165-168. Much of the information detailed in the reports of the Emergency Committee on Cooperative Missions of the IMC bolsters his claims. For example, Mott’s country-by-country survey of former German African territories is outlined in the “private and confidential” minutes of the Committee Meeting of May 2, 1919, box 26.11.24, IMC.


War signaled that Britain would have to change its approach to the Empire. The League of Nations was officially concerned with mandates, former territories of the defeated German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, several of which were acquired by Britain. But the League established a new international standard for colonial administration. In 1910 the WMC had divided mission lands into five classes, from most to least civilized. Since “races of low civilization” inhabited the “African Protectorates and colonies,” deemed by Western officials to lack indigenous culture, the WMC determined that missions and Government should co-operate closely. The elaborate mandate system created between 1919 and 1922 mirrored the WMC’s stages of civilization, categorizing mandates on a scale of ‘A’ to ‘C.’ ‘A’ referred to the most developed mandates, requiring the least intervention; ‘C’ signified regions so “primitive” that they constituted “integral portions” of imperial territory. No African regions were designated ‘A’ mandates, and the British government was committed to the welfare of all its African subjects, endowing them with rights such as freedom of religion. Oldham, reflecting official policy, was concerned to respect the League’s new international norms with regard to colonial subjects and mandates alike; he supported its ‘humane’, and thus legitimate, version of imperialism. He had even been involved in ensuring that freedom of religion was enshrined in the

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79 Conference participants decided that no region was at the very bottom of this ladder of civilization since by the early twentieth century, every corner of the world had experienced at least some minimal contact with Western civilization. See, Dr. Wann, ”Draft Report of Commission VII: Principles and Findings,” (undated), folder 6, box 31, series 1, WMC.


81 Ibid, 4.
post-war treaties drawn up at the Paris Peace Conference. But the ethical system Oldham and his ilk were eager to disseminate was fundamentally Christian in character.

Educational reformers now commanded greater government interest and respect. Oldham, Sadler, and their missionary, academic, and political colleagues, turned to America for inspiration as to how best to create an imperial education that fostered Christianity while (superficially) respecting national differences, and would also ensure that the Empire became a productive, homogenous economic unit. In 1917, British Secretary of State for India, Austen Chamberlain, asked Sadler to chair a Commission to enquire into the affairs of the University of Calcutta. Philip Hartog, Secretary of the 1903 Mosely Commission to the USA, participated in the Indian Commission. Sadler’s report, published in 1919, far exceeded its remit, and enthusiastically echoed American educational ideals, with which he was now well-acquainted. It foregrounded the importance of teacher training, of adapting education to Indian conditions, of increasing educational opportunities for women, and of using modern educational tools as the primary agent of national growth and stability.\(^\text{82}\)

America was the template for reform. For Oldham, African American educational experiments in the Southern USA provided particularly pertinent models for the British to emulate in India. In the April 1918 edition of the *IRM*, Oldham recommended that all British missionary administrators and missionary committees, concerned to ensure that Christian missionary education should “bear yet larger print in the years to come”, should

read the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s (PSF) 1917 “Report on Negro Education”.[83] Oldham had first visited the USA in 1911, and in 1919 he participated in a tour of educational institutions for African Americans in the South. That year, Oldham met with Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones (by now Educational Director of the PSF) in London. Like Austen Chamberlain, Oldham was primarily concerned with India, the colony of greatest commercial and military importance to the British Empire, and rife with nationalistic unrest. Oldham invited Jones to chair an educational commission to investigate the state of Indian village education.[84] His journey around the South in 1919 revealed that American philanthropic assistance was an important element of African American education; he witnessed there the great extent to which private foundations like Rockefeller’s General Education Board (GEB) were collaborating with the states to provide African American education. Britain, ravaged by war and strapped for cash, possessed far fewer financial resources than the big American foundations. Co-operation with the USA enticed missionaries and government officials alike, in the hope of financial support.

However, American reformers had their own, quite different concerns. The Phelps-Stokes Fund rejected Oldham’s suggestion that Jones should lead an Anglo-American educational commission to India. The American foundation instead proposed orchestrating a “similar mission” to Africa.[85] The following chapter explores the ways in

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[83] Extract from memorandum, attached to Thomas Jesse Jones to Anson Phelps Stokes, Feb 3, 1919, folder 6, box 4, PSF.

[84] Oldham to Jones, January 17, 1919, box 26.7.02, IMC.

which British and American interests converged on the African continent during the 1920s, as both parties tried to use education to create a stable, economically fruitful, and Christianized British Africa advantageous to both British and American interests.
CHAPTER 3:
AMERICANIZING BRITISH AFRICA

When I look back upon my own personal debt to Dr. Jesse Jones and his writings, I think I put first of all the fact that it fills one with hope and courage ... African minds working with Western minds can find an education which is good not only for the individual but for the community.

Michael Sadler, 1925.¹

During the 1920s, the American philanthropic foundation managers highlighted in chapter 1, and the British intellectuals and civil servants investigated in chapter 2, cooperated to build new educational institutions in the hope of forging a secure, profitable, Christianized, British imperial presence in the African continent. Inhibited by domestic politics and self-imposed international isolation, Americans hoped that studying African societies, and designing appropriate educational regimes for native populations, would pacify African discontent, appease postwar American racial tensions, and extend corporate American commercial ambitions into Africa. Facing powerful calls for a “white dominion” of imperial federation, founded on racial subordination and white sovereignty, an opposing faction of British empire-builders considered that an educational partnership with superficially altruistic American philanthropic groups would establish once and for all the contested political settlement of imperial trusteeship for its African territories, and enable Britain to develop economically, and prosper from, its African dependencies. The war-ravaged Colonial Office relied on American financing for implementing its African

¹ Transcribed speech, “Dr. Jesse Jones Honored. Entertained at Dinner by British Government,” March 26, 1925, Box 44, Folder 7, Phelps-Stokes Fund Records (hereafter PSF), Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library.
educational policies in the hope of establishing Great Britain as an economic competitor to the USA in the twentieth century. But American money and concerns guided the schemes as much, if not more, than British ones.

**American Interest in Educating Africa**

African American impatience for integration increased after the First World War. Black troops had endured the humiliation of segregation and social marginalization during their military service, fighting racism in the cause of global democracy, and anticipated that on their return home, they would win for members of their race equal political and social rights. The American government, however, failed to grant homecoming black veterans the social and political recognition they had anticipated, causing much disillusionment and anger.² Wartime demand had also drawn some 300,000 African Americans from the South into Northern industries, giving large numbers of black Americans the franchise for the first time.³ In the highly concentrated urban areas of the North, African Americans rioted in protest against their civic inequality and the insufferable socio-economic conditions to which they were condemned by a society for which they had fought.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 prompted American governmental fears that these industrial conflicts were a covert expression of “Bolshevism.” In 1919, the US Departments of Justice and Labor launched a “Red Scare,” purging from the USA, and

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² “Meeting on after the War Cooperation Held in Atlanta, Georgia (1919),” folder 7, box 16, PSF; Chad Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

creating files on, labor radicals or “un-American” (a synonym for ‘Communist’) activities. The declaration by the Communist International (Comintern), at its founding in 1919, of its commitment to the liberation of colonial peoples and people of African descent stoked American fears about the subversive implications of the new networks connecting discontented black people. If black agitation were not pacified, corporate America worried, the capitalist core of American society would be jeopardized.

African Americans resonated to the plight of subjugated black people abroad, and forcefully demanded improvement in the conditions of black populations worldwide. African American sociologist, W. E. B. Du Bois, who founded the American integrationist organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1908, had attended London’s 1900 Pan-African Conference, alongside black participants from the Caribbean, Africa, and the USA. Organizers and speakers protested against the hardship and injustice they endured at the hands of white rulers. The fact that the Phelps-Stokes Fund, incorporated in 1911, was dedicated to improving, among other social ills, “the education of Negroes, both in Africa and the United States,” arguably testified to white recognition of pan-African claims. Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association, formed in 1914, depended on and extended migratory patterns and channels of communication among people of African descent. The First World War strengthened contacts between black Americans and

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Africans, and a small number of African Americans, notably the YMCA missionary, Max Yergan, worked with African troops in British East Africa. In 1919, the NAACP sent Du Bois to the Paris Peace Conference, where, amid great publicity, he helped orchestrate another pan-African Congress. In Paris, Du Bois joined forces with black subjects of European colonies, who felt similarly oppressed by white rulers. In an article summarizing his Paris trip, Du Bois lambasted the presence at the talks of the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s educational director, Thomas Jesse Jones, “that evil genius of the Negro race”, affirming that the pan-African “fight for black rights [was] on!” In a 1927 speech, Jones commented on African Americans “giving increasing evidence of deep concern in the welfare of their hundred million relatives in Africa,” and that the “increasing self-consciousness of those who regard[ed] themselves as oppressed” had developed “a unity of appeal and demand.” This was especially threatening as “Moscow [had] given definite evidence of its determination to use African conditions for the advancement of its cause.”

Philanthropic foundations, and the reformers they sponsored, needed to persuade conservative white America of black educability (a useful euphemism for ‘pliancy’). This was especially important due to the remarkable influence of the “solid South” in Congress, a unified voting bloc dedicated to preserving the region’s white supremacist

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7 King, *Pan-Africanism*, 58.


9 Thomas Jesse Jones, “Word Peace and Racial Conditions in America and Africa” (1927), folder 10, box 47, PSF.
And, American corporations, dependent on cheap labor, became even more reliant on a suitably educated and subservient black workforce after Congress passed immigration quotas in 1924. But Southern educational programs for blacks relied on the benevolence of white elites, which became hostile to “bumptious” and “impossible” African American post-war behavior. In 1925, student protests broke out at Fisk University, the historic all-black college in Nashville, Tennessee, in protest at the institution’s white leadership.

American corporations were concerned to cement American commercial and strategic interests in the as yet relatively un-exploited African continent. American post-war isolationism, embodied in Congress’s decision to opt out of the League of Nations, and in the protectionist Fordney-McCumber tariff, raised concern among American companies about their international commercial ambitions. The Phelps-Stokes family had a long historical relationship with the American Colonization Society, and was involved in the establishment of the Republic of Liberia in 1847, a further source of the Fund’s dedication to assisting black people in the USA and Africa. Whether it was commercial interest, evangelicalism, or racism – or a combination of all three – that motivated the

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11 “Meeting on after the War Cooperation Held in Atlanta, Georgia” (1919), folder 7, box 16, PSF.

12 Jones to Anson Phelps Stokes, Feb 5, 1925, folder 11, box 16, PSF.

13 Attached to, Stokes to Henry Villard, September 3, 1943. “For the Press: August 18, 1943, Confidential Release for Publication at 10:00 A.M., E.M.T., Thursday, August 19, 1943,” folder 20, box 33, PSF; A 1938 “facsimile …sent to the President of Liberia” noted that “the original flag of Liberia was made in 1847 …on the Anson Phelps estate,” at the time occupied by the “father of Caroline Phelps Stokes, founder of the Phelps-Stokes Fund,” and “President of the New York State Colonization Society.” Quoted in, Jones, *Ten Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1932-1942.* (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1942), folder 10, box 47, PSF.
American Colonization Society’s intervention in this West African state is unclear. After the War, however, the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s links to corporations with commercial designs on Liberia, and elsewhere in Africa, became explicit. The Fund cooperated with its sponsor, the American Firestone Rubber Company, to develop the rubber industry in Liberia.\textsuperscript{14} Through a series of loan agreements made during the 1920s, the American government began to control Liberian finance, and after 1927 it protected the holdings of the Firestone Rubber Company. Rubber was a vital commodity for the motor industry, hence the particular interest in this commodity.

American finance and expertise played a considerable role in mining industries elsewhere in Africa. In 1917, J. P. Morgan and the Newmont Mining Company helped to establish the Anglo American Corporation in South Africa. Newmont and the American Metal Company acquired substantial interests in the development of large-scale copper mining in Northern Rhodesia, links that were strengthened in 1930. In 1925, the Phelps-Stokes Fund sent a memorandum to the Rockefeller organizations promoting American and European cooperation in Africa, underlining the continent’s “[g]reat physical resources awaiting development.”\textsuperscript{15}

American philanthropic foundations, and the academics and social reformers they supported, could not imagine resolving these issues without studying black societies, but political concerns made this difficult. The Carnegie-endowed graduate school of anthropology at Columbia University, established in 1914, focused on investigating

\textsuperscript{14} S. Donohugh to James Sibley, June 27, 1925; Jones to Donohugh, September 15, 1925, box 25, folder 6, PSF.

\textsuperscript{15} Jones, “Cooperation of America and Europe in Africa”, attached to, Jones to Colonel Arthur Wood, June 1, 1925, folder 1, box 31, PSF.
Central America. This was partly because of American strategic and commercial interests in Mexico. It was also due to the cultural relativism endorsed by Columbia anthropology professor, Franz Boas, and its implications for racial order in the South, a political economy that depended on the presumed inherent inferiority of black people. When Boas had attempted to establish an African American Museum in New York in 1906, the Bureau of American Ethnology had declined financial support, fearful of arousing “race feeling” in a Southern Democratic-dominated Congress, and of thereby jeopardizing the Bureau’s subsequent appropriations. African Americans also resented being labeled ‘primitive’ anthropological subjects. Although NAACP founder, Du Bois, welcomed anthropological studies of black people as proof of the innate equality of blacks, and as vindication of integration, others, like African American sociologist, Edward Franklin Frazier, began to reject the exceptionalist argument for the place of ‘savage’ African life in American society, feeling that it pandered to public perceptions of black inability to assimilate into American life. More fundamentally, reducing the black population of America to a subject of study and categorization was in itself a form of objectification and subordination, which placed knowledge (and therefore power) in the domain of white academics.

American foundations needed the support of a cooperative, stable British imperial presence in Africa in order to study black life and further American cultural and

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economic interests. In 1919, Anson Phelps Stokes proposed an educational commission to Africa to Joseph Oldham, leader of the Conference of British Missionary Societies (CBMS), in place of the Indian educational survey Oldham had initially floated. Stokes specified that Western Africa should be the site of the investigation, arguably to assist the Firestone Company’s commercial expansion into the region, and to train an industrious, docile, ‘Christian’ workforce for the company. The proposed African commission received the “earnest endorsement” of American missionary leader, John Mott, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, and senior faculty members of Columbia University’s Teachers College.19 Americans insisted that the enterprise should be an Anglo-American collaboration, but while the Fund agreed to finance Jones’s expenses, the CBMS would have to sponsor its own representative participant. Britain’s African territories had not been particularly restless during the War, and Jones’s motion for an African Commission to British missionaries in London was met with apprehension.20 Eventually, the CBMS found the money to appoint a Scottish missionary stationed on West Africa’s Gold Coast, Rev. A. A. Wilkie, to join the joint Anglo-American Commission.

**British Interest in Educating Africa**

Africa became even more important to Britain by the time the Phelps-Stokes Fund published its report on education in West, South, and Equatorial Africa in 1922. As other

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overseas dependencies began to sever formal ties with the mother country, civil servants began to regard Britain’s expanded postwar African Empire as a significant potential economic asset. The Balfour Declaration of the 1926 Imperial Conference outlined the principles defining the autonomy of the dominions of the British “Commonwealth”, a community of independent nations rather than an Empire ruled from a metropole. While the British government resisted assigning India dominion status, vigorous Indian nationalist unrest, spearheaded by Gandhi, signaled that Britain would not be able to rely indefinitely on its “Jewel in the Crown”.

Britain was determined to develop African dependencies to their fullest economic capacity, at the least cost to the war-stricken imperial center. The British general election of 1923 overwhelmingly defeated Conservative proposals to extend preferences to Empire imports. In the absence of an Empire tariff, the British government orchestrated public relations stunts, such as the British Empire Exhibition of 1924-25, held in the north London suburb of Wembley, to advertise “empire consolidation”, and to coax the British public – industrialists, investors, and homemakers – to invest in Empire and buy “empire products.”

The British government also had to persuade colonial African governments to develop export production. This had already proved fairly successful in West Africa. From 1911, the Gold Coast was the world’s largest exporter of cocoa, and by 1914,

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21 Matera, Black London, 4.


Nigeria was also a significant producer of cocoa and groundnuts. The Colonial Office resisted political demands from mining companies in the Gold Coast and Nigeria that would have threatened African cash-crop production. Instead, in a region in which issues of health and expense had hindered white settlement, the British developed West Africa on the basis of ‘native production.’ The political corollary of this had been ‘indirect rule,’ a system initiated by Frederick Lugard, Governor of Nigeria from 1912. This system depended on groups Lugard designated as Africa’s ‘traditional’ native rulers for the management of the colony. The arrangement had originally constituted an attempt to restrict the influence of Africans educated on Western lines. By the 1920s, however, the limited political opportunities for educated West Africans expanded as, for example, restricted franchises were introduced in urban areas on the West African coast. By 1925, William Ormsby-Gore, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, proudly commented on West Africa’s remarkable expansion of production and wealth since the early twentieth century, and outlined his intention to strengthen Britain’s hold over the region through continued partnership with native Africans.

Meanwhile, the stability, and thus productiveness, of parts of Southern and Eastern Africa were in jeopardy. In 1899, Sir Alfred Milner, then High Commissioner for Southern Africa, announced his intention to create a “self-governing white Community” for “a Greater South Africa.” Milner entered the British War Cabinet in 1916, and became colonial secretary in 1919. To combat Britain’s declining industrial pre-

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25 “From Press Association: Dr. Jesse Jones Honoured,” March 26, 1925, folder 11, box 44, PSF.

eminence, Milner sought to make the colonial empire into an engine for economic growth by promoting closer links between populations of British origin and culture around the world. He stressed the genius of the British for government, especially over other “races.” Strengthened notions of a “white dominion” for the British Empire underlined the emergent British Commonwealth. This vision, founded on policies of racial subordination, also resonated powerfully with white settlers in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, and South Africa’s expansionist leaders, and white populations in Kenya.

Britain’s East African Protectorate, which became the colony of Kenya in 1920, boasted a significant, if small, white settlement; whites owned one-fifth of Kenya’s useable land. In recognition of their participation in the War, the government offered settlers land concessions, higher African tax revenues, forced labor, and the franchise, favors that continued in the immediate postwar period. After the War, the Governor of Kenya, Edward Northey, based his entire economic policy on European settler production for export.27

Favoring Kenya’s white settlers did not prove economically advantageous for Britain. This was primarily because white settlers, even with the benefit of forced African labor, were not a particularly profitable demographic, and after the War their exports collapsed. African peasants had entered the markets faster than pre-War settlers, and sold more exports.28 Furthermore, Kenya could not survive economically without the commercial acumen of the region’s 50,000 British Indians, many of whom had been


brought over as indentured laborers to help build the Uganda Railway at the end of the nineteenth century, and were now successful traders, exporting African produce to the world market.  

Conditions were now ripe for conflict. The government’s decision to side with Kenya’s white settlers and support their discriminatory practices raised the ire of local and metropolitan groups for political and humanitarian reasons. The Kenyan crisis was connected to the volatile situation in India, and Kenyan Indians received strong backing from Indian nationalists, the colonial government of India, and the India Office in London. African dissenters formed protest groups such as the East African Association, led by Harry Thuku, whose arrest only exacerbated African discontent. British capitalists, missionary circles and vocal critics in London similarly dismissed government-endorsed white settler labor policies for Africans.

Joseph Oldham, enlisting Jones’s expertise, urged the government to commit to a new, supposedly humane colonial policy, to protect native interests in Kenya. This shift in approach, Oldham believed, would allow the colony to be developed into a productive and profitable resource, with improved public relations that would also pacify the region’s competing interests. In a 1923 memorandum entitled “Educational Policy in Africa,” Jones urged Oldham to co-opt “every possible agency” – missions, religious


31 Ibid, 261.

32 Berman and Lonsdale, Unhappy Valley, 111.
groups, humanitarians, governmental officials, and commercial interests – into legitimating an imperial program privileging native interests.\textsuperscript{33} Oldham consulted extensively with civil servants, many of whom had already adopted similar political and economic conclusions regarding imperial management. Oldham conferred with the new Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, William Ormsby-Gore, who had previously served as British representative to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations (PMC).\textsuperscript{34} Oldham also deliberated with Lugard, whose 1922 treatise, \textit{The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa}, had outlined, and endorsed, a program of compassionate British African policy that would, fortuitously, simultaneously develop colonial natural resources to their full potential. By the end of 1922, Lugard had become Ormsby-Gore’s replacement on the PMC.\textsuperscript{35} Oldham cooperated closely with religious

\textsuperscript{33} Memorandum attached to Jones to Oldham, 1923 (specific date not given), box 263, CBMS/IMC. Historians note Oldham’s involvement in the Colonial Office’s adoption of this policy. For example, see Andrew Roberts, “East Africa” in A. D. Roberts (ed.), \textit{The Cambridge History of Africa: Volume 7}, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 678-79.

\textsuperscript{34} See, Oldham to William Ormsby-Gore, March 13, 1923; May 10, 1923; May 9, 1923; May 29, 1923, box 263, CBMS/IMC.

\textsuperscript{35} Oldham circulated a memorandum entitled, “Educational Policy in Africa,” which he subsequently presented to the government after receiving feedback from Sir Frederick Lugard; Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Gordon Guggisberg; Governor of Nigeria, Sir Hugh Clifford; Governor of Sierra Leone, A R Slater; and Director of Education for Nigeria, Mr Selwyn Grier in April of 1923, box 263, CBMS/IMC. Susan Pedersen discusses Lugard’s commitment to ostensibly benevolent, but in reality economically exploitative, imperialism in, \textit{The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire} (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 107-111. Pedersen outlines the imperial backdrop to the new international order that the League of Nations embodied. This was especially evident in overlapping personnel embroiled in British imperial education and League activities. For example, Ormsby-Gore and Lugard were British representative to the Permanent Mandates Commission to the League of Nations, founding members of the British Colonial Office’s Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa (which became the Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies in 1929), and initiators of the International Institute for African Languages and Cultures, supposedly international, but very British-centric. American ideas and money influenced these colonial educational programs, and played some indirect role in this budding international scheme, in spite of America’s choice not to join the League of Nations.
leaders such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, with whom he had organized Mott’s World Missionary Conference in 1910.\textsuperscript{36} He also collaborated with educational experts like Michael Sadler, author of the acclaimed 1919 report on Indian education, and now Master of University College, Oxford; and John Hobbis Harris, president of the Anti-Slavery Society.\textsuperscript{37} In May, Oldham, and, quite remarkably, Jones, attended a preliminary meeting ahead of June’s Imperial Educational Conference, to present their “line of policy” to senior Colonial Office dignitaries and a number of African governors.\textsuperscript{38} In July 1923, the Duke of Devonshire, Secretary of State for the Colonies, issued a White Paper declaring that colonial policy for Kenya would prioritize native welfare and interests.\textsuperscript{39}

The prospect of an imperial federation for Africa, designed to protect white settler interests, had not been quashed, however. Prominent Conservative politicians and white settlers opposed the Duke of Devonshire’s 1923 memorandum. Inspired by Milner, Leo Amery, who became Colonial Secretary in 1924, devised a plan for closer economic cooperation between Kenya, Uganda, and the British mandate of Tanganyika, along with gradual extension of “responsible government” to white settlers.\textsuperscript{40} When the British South Africa Company’s charter expired in 1923, Southern Rhodesia, with lucrative gold

\textsuperscript{36} See, Oldham to the Archbishop of Canterbury, May 14, 1923; May 25, 1923; and June 6, 1923, box 263, CBMS/ IMC.

\textsuperscript{37} Oldham mentions consulting with Michael Sadler on his April, 1923, “Educational Policy in Africa” memorandum, and petitioning J H Harris to cooperate with him in a letter that Oldham wrote to Major Ormsby-Gore on May 10, 1923, box 263, CBMS/ IMC.

\textsuperscript{38} Oldham to Jones, March 23, 1922, box 263, CBMS/ IMC.

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{40} Pedersen, \textit{The Guardians}, 223.
and coalmines, received responsible government (with the imperial government retaining authority over foreign affairs and currency, and a veto over discriminatory legislation), and Northern Rhodesia, a profitable producer of copper by the 1920s, became a British “tropical dependency.” The Chartered Company continued to exercise influence over both territories, and mining interests and white populations retained important links with one another. The government’s Hilton Young Commission investigated the potential for Northern Rhodesia and the British Protectorate of Nyasaland to be integrated into the proposed union of British East African territories to the north. White settlers in Northern Rhodesia, vastly outnumbered by Africans, preferred the prospect of its incorporation, along with Nyasaland, into a “white South” with Southern Rhodesia, a territory that, now self-governing, implemented policies designed to ensure white social and economic domination, although the threat of the imperial veto did provide somewhat of a brake on draconian racial legislation, at least until the early ‘30s.

Oldham and his colleagues were appalled at the government’s backing of white settler domination. African education served as the perfect rubric for this faction of so-called liberal (in contrast to the white supremacy endorsed by Milner’s cohort) British Empire builders, who were able to portray it as an “unofficial” and “international” social welfare concern, rather than a matter of politics or economics. American assistance

41 Ibid, 548-549.
42 Ibid, 552-553.
44 These are the words employed by Secretary of the Advisory Committee for Education for Tropical Africa, Hanns Vischer, in a letter he sent to Oldham, May 22, 1925, box 219, CBMS/IMC.
strengthened the veneer of apolitical altruism attached to British imperial native educational schemes. At an “influential gathering” that the British government organized at St. James’s Palace in 1925 to honor Jones, the Archbishop of Canterbury highlighted that “Americans enjoyed a freedom from international rivalries and complications which would have been impossible if the investigations had been left to Europeans alone.”

Polish-born Bronislaw Malinowski, first chair of anthropology at the London School of Economics, became one of the figureheads of the International Institute for African Languages and Cultures (IIACL), an organization jointly founded in 1926 by Oldham, Lugard, the Colonial Office and the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund.

Malinowski coined the term “Practical Anthropology” in a groundbreaking, eponymous article published in the 1929 issue of the IIALC’s new journal, *Africa*. He claimed that the IIALC was designed to assist “various Colonial interests in their practical activities” but because its “theoretically trained specialists” concentrated “upon the study of the facts and processes which [bore] upon the practical problems and [left] to statesmen (and journalists) the final decision of how to apply the results,” all “political issues [were] eliminated from its activities”. But Oldham privately acknowledged the “the political aspects of the (educational) question.” He understood that if one were “to propose anything worthwhile in connection with native education, it [would] cost money, and this inevitably raise[d] the whole issue of whether the colony [was] going to be run primarily in the interests of the natives,” the policy Oldham and his allies “personally

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45 “From Press Association: Dr. Jesse Jones Honoured,” March 26, 1925, folder 11, box 44, PSF.

believe[d] to be the right one”, or “primarily for the benefit of the European community.”

This group of British Empire-builders and evangelists, and their American supporters, argued that their new forms of education suited African populations. This substantiated the need for a benign, reformist government to safeguard “native rights” at the expense of white settler sovereignty or African independence. Democracy and self-government were for the west; benevolent dictatorship was better suited to the native populations of the colonies. If white settlers governed the region freely, Ormsby-Gore argued, they would “impose upon the African native the rather out-of-date methods of Europeans,” thereby “doing ill by the Africans” who needed to learn how to become producers of cash and export crops. Extensive research into the best form of “Non-European Education” would prove to skeptics that these experts alone understood how to govern native populations, and develop them to full productivity and eventual political maturity. Simultaneously emphasizing that African culture was intensely spiritual and bucolic – qualities antithetical to the rationalism of the industrialized Western – conveniently signified that Africans were not yet suited to occidental forms of political sovereignty. They were, however, apparently developed enough for the market economy that British officials had forced upon them through the imposition of direct taxes payable only in cash.

47 Oldham to Hanns Vischer, April 10, 1924, box 219, CBMS/IMC.

48 “From Press Association: Dr. Jesse Jones Honoured,” March 26, 1925, folder 11, box 44, PSF.

49 Achimota School Pamphlet (1925), 2, box 311, Conference of British Missionary Societies (hereafter CBMS), Archives and Special Collections, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Note that this is a different collection than Conference of British Missionary Societies/International Missionary Council (CBMS/IMC).
Anglo-American Collaboration in the Education of British Africa

The Colonial Office, with American support and assistance, produced a host of Anglo-American African educational proposals. After the 1922 publication of Jones’s report on the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s educational commission to West, South, and Equatorial Africa, the Colonial Office established an Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa (ACETA) to investigate educational issues in the region. At the 1925 State dinner to honor Jones, Ormsby-Gore asserted that it was a “direct consequence” of the American’s “pioneering work” in the field of education that the Colonial Office had created the ACETA. Although the hope of attaining further American financing undoubtedly influenced British praise of Jones, the Colonial Office’s resultant policies closely resembled earlier American philanthropic educational tactics. Despite affirming the importance of localized studies, this body confirmed that the British government would treat the African continent, and its populations, as effectively homogenous. The ACETA outlined its commitment to coordinating the activities of a network of private and public associations to be involved in the “education and the wise development of the African peoples, considered as a whole” in its first major statement, Education Policy in British Tropical Africa, a treatise that the government subsequently published as a White

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51 “From Press Association: Dr. Jesse Jones Honoured,” March 26, 1925, folder 11, box 44, PSF.
Paper in March 1925. By the end of the decade, the ACETA had expanded its remit to include all issues of tropical education common throughout the Empire, and in 1933, the Carnegie Corporation of New York agreed to sponsor it.

After being impressed by the “particular value” of Jones’s first report regarding education in West Africa, Ormsby-Gore urged the Phelps-Stokes Fund to “undertake a similar mission to East Africa,” a site of great contestation at the time. In 1924, in his second survey of African education, Jones, supported by several British officials, was accompanied by Dr. James Dillard, President of the Slater and Jeanes Funds, the latter the philanthropic endeavor sending (primarily African American female) educational supervisors to influence black rural schools in the South; and by Homer Leroy Shantz, of the United States Department of Agriculture. The Phelps-Stokes Fund, the Colonial Office, the US Department of Agriculture, and Rockefeller’s International Education Board jointly sponsored this East African educational commission. Given the participation of Jeanes Fund president, Dillard, in the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s East African commission, it is unsurprising that its report, released in 1925, recommended the establishment of Jeanes schools for the African masses. The British government, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, subsequently founded Jeanes schools in

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54 Stokes, “Introduction,” to Jones, Education in East Africa, xxi, xxiv.
Kenya, in 1927, and in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1928, based on black teacher-training schemes in the Southern USA.55

The government also designed experimental schools for training future African leaders. Jones had advised the British government to build “at least one educational institution for the training of the native community leadership,” based on “the larger American schools – Tuskegee and Hampton, or by the smaller American schools, Calhoun and Penn schools.”56 In 1925, the Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Gordon Guggisberg, a Canadian-born engineer who had been highly impressed by Jones when they met during the initial Phelps-Stokes African educational tour, established the “first imperial secondary school that had ever existed in British West Africa,” the Prince of Wales College and School at Achimota.57 The Phelps-Stokes Fund and the Carnegie Corporation of New York subsidized Achimota College, and in 1930 Phelps Stokes composed the school’s constitution. Makerere College, Uganda; Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone; the Alliance High School, Kenya, and Fort Hare College, South Africa were later molded in Achimota’s image.58

One of the main motives for liberal American intervention in British African education was propagandist: to prove to African Americans that black people in other

55 Jones to Oldham, “Educational Policy in Africa”, March 1923, Box 263, CBMS/ IMC.

56 Ibid.

57 Sir Gordon Guggisberg to Anson Phelps Stokes, February 17, 1922, folder 1, box 47, PSF; “Report on Achimota College for the Year 1930”, box 311, CBMS.

58 It is difficult to determine the exact date any of these schools, including Achimota, were established since they were formerly government native training colleges, but the government and colonial governors radically transformed these institutions in accordance with new educational ideas during the 1920s and ‘30s.
countries fully supported their educational methods, and to convince the Southern whites that dominated Congress that black people, once appropriately educated, had the capacity for inclusion in the American polity. American philanthropists ensured that programs were interracial to achieve the first aim, and relished cooperating with the Colonial Office, imagining that the partnership would lend a gloss to their approach to race relations in the eyes of conservative Southern whites. An article in the *New York World* describing the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s East African Commission emphasized that the “investigation was made at the request of the British Government and actively supported by the British Colonial Office.” It proudly noted: “Representatives of the British Colonial Office are now in this country visiting Negro schools of the Tuskegee type and studying American methods.”

American and British parties both believed that what had (as Jones claimed) worked so well in America would work equally well in British African territories, and transform British Africa into a productive, stable political entity. African educational institutions blithely and inconsistently promoted a liberal, ecumenical Christianity in the hope of creating African bodies that simultaneously respected particularistic national traditions, as international norms now required, and ensured the supremacy of Christian morality, without apparently considering that this could be achieved only by the eradication of native culture and religion. The Phelps-Stokes Fund employed James E. K. Aggrey, a Gold Coast native with a doctorate in Sociology, in both of its educational commissions to Africa. Aggrey was Vice-Principal of Achimota College from its

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59 “East Africa Has Bright Future: Phelps-Stokes Fund Commission Chairman Reports on Eight Months’ Survey,” *New York World*, April 23, 1925, folder 18, box 34, PSF.

60 Jones, *African Travel Diary*, February 12, 1921, box 263, CBMS/ IMC.
foundation in 1925 until his premature death in 1927. At the 1924 High Leigh Conference, Aggrey controversially and provocatively asserted that Africans preferred “the personal companion God, and the God immanent in the various common activities of native life” to the doctrinal version of Christianity represented by the Church of England and its Thirty-Nine Articles. At that same conference, Lugard remarked that schools could embark on “the development of Christian character … in Moslem districts” since “Christian character” connoted “discipline, self-control etc.,” rather than any particular denominational article of faith. Even God barely figured in Lugard’s equation.

Native academic programs prioritized the professional science of teacher training, a field not yet fully developed in England. The 1924 High Leigh Conference insisted that “religion and character training [were] fundamental, and teachers should be filled with the sense of high vocation.” A 1930 Achimota College report documented the introduction of a “revised syllabus of Teaching Theory and Method.” The pamphlet explained that the “syllabus was designed to treat more fully the study of the child, and to give the students some knowledge of elementary psychology as a foundation for their study of method.”

African educational schemes concentrated on cultivating agricultural skills. But at the 1924 High Leigh Conference, British missionaries struggled to find English personnel

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61 “Notes” from High Leigh Conference, September 1924, box 253, CBMS/ IMC; Church of England officials at the High Leigh Conference were disgusted by Aggrey’s position, for example, see Stacy Waddy to Oldham, July 22, 1925, box 207, CBMS/ IMC.

62 “Notes” from High Leigh Conference, September 1924, box 253, CBMS/ IMC.

63 Ibid.

64 “Report on Achimota College for the Year 1930,” box 311, CBMS.
adequately trained to staff African educational programs aiming to develop what Jones called “a civilization and culture…primarily based on agricultural and rural life.”\(^6^5\) British conference attendees wistfully observed that American missionary societies were “much keener” in this respect, “largely because in America education [was] much broader, and the American boy [was] much more familiar with the new outlook.”\(^6^6\) They might have noted also that there was little need for agricultural training in a country that was now a net importer of agricultural products; British education was primarily focused on training children for the jobs in offices, shops, and factories to which most were destined. Nevertheless, enthusiastic British reformers resolved to forge the new African educational bodies along American lines. The Colonial Office, with American philanthropic assistance, sent instructor Fred Irvine to study rural educational techniques in the USA before he became director of agricultural teaching at Achimota in 1927.\(^6^7\) At Achimota, Irvine prepared an Americanized practical agricultural educational syllabus including, for example, utilizing a farm for demonstration work.\(^6^8\)

New African educational institutions emphasized social studies at a time when the social sciences remained relatively undeveloped in English higher education.\(^6^9\) On his first African tour of 1920, Jones advised native leaders to engage in “local and intimate observations” of their communities’ “health, manner of making a living, their recreation,“

\(^6^5\) “Notes” from High Leigh Conference, September, 1924, box 253, CBMS/ IMC.

\(^6^6\) Ibid.

\(^6^7\) James Dougall to Oldham, March 21, 1925, box 244, CBMS/ IMC.

\(^6^8\) “Report on Achimota College for the Year 1930,” box 311, CBMS.

their housing and family life, their moral conditions, and their attitude toward white people.”

The 1924 High Leigh Conference defined “school as the place where citizenship [was] taught.” A 1925 school pamphlet defined Achimota’s educational objective as encouraging students to “understand the present position of their own people and the new forces which [were] affecting them” in order to create “capable and unselfish citizens”. This was considerably more soothing than “understand that they were under British domination and were required to accept their subordination meekly and gracefully”. The Jeanes school in Kenya similarly aimed to “act as a community centre, and direct education to the benefit of the neighbour.”

An Americanized form of social education, as recommended by Jones, aimed to align Britain’s African colonies more closely with the imperial center. Jones’s diary from his first African survey noted oddly that “living in close proximity to a people [did] not give a proper understanding of their life, customs, and needs.” Instead, white statesmen and students needed to study black communities; this alone would enable them to end racial tension in Africa. Jones did not explain why first-hand observation of alien societies, the primary tool of anthropology, did not deliver satisfactory data. How else could a community be ‘studied’? A. G. Fraser, a Scottish missionary who had previously been Head of Trinity College in Ceylon, was the first Principal of Achimota, the Gold

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70 Jones, *African Travel Diary*, March 1, 1921, box 263, CBMS/ IMC.

71 “Notes” from High Leigh Conference, September 1924, box 253, CBMS/ IMC.

72 *Achimota School Pamphlet* (1925), 10, box 244, CBMS/ IMC.

73 “Jeanes School, Kabete – Its Origins and Aims,” 1926, box 244, CBMS/ IMC.

74 Jones, *African Travel Diary*, March 1, 1921, box 263, CBMS/ IMC.
Coast school designed to create African leaders. In 1919, in advance of Fraser’s educational commission to India, Jones had taken him on a tour of the African American educational institutions of the Southern USA. Jones impressed Fraser as a great philosopher.\textsuperscript{75} In 1930, Fraser ambitiously proposed that Achimota’s overarching aim was to forge the “united thought of African and European together”, a process that entailed taking “time to know one another, to become able to speak frankly before one another”.\textsuperscript{76} Achimota required its students to first study the language, and musical, artistic and historical culture of their own people, and then the cultural traditions of Europe.\textsuperscript{77} At best, this might conceivably have resulted in the creation of a dual or hybrid identity; how two such different cultural traditions could be fused into a single cultural identity is less obvious. James Dougall, Principal of the Jeanes school in Kenya, Scottish missionary and Phelps-Stokes Fund East African survey participant, typified those who extensively debated the vernacular language in which students should be taught, as the hybrid, polyglot cultures that ignored artificial colonial boundaries bore no relation to the homogenized “African culture” of the colonial imagination.\textsuperscript{78} Nonetheless, African educational bodies encouraged some sort of native, and in the institutions for more “developed” leaders, European, cultural education, in the hope of engendering socio-cultural cohesion under imperial auspices.

\textsuperscript{75} A. G. Fraser to Stokes, July 19, 1919, folder 8, box 16, PSF.

\textsuperscript{76} “Speech by the Principal (A. G. Fraser) at the First Meeting of the Achimota Council,” in “Report on Achimota College for the Year 1930,” box 311, CBMS.

\textsuperscript{77} Achimota School Pamphlet (1925), 8-9.

\textsuperscript{78} For example, Dougall to Oldham, February 8, 1925, box 244, CBMS/IMC.
Crucially for American sponsors, this educational philosophy stimulated metropolitan research. If colonial education had a social function, and its aim was to promote the “life, health and progress of the individuals and of the society” ruled by the Empire, as an Achimota college pamphlet asserted, then those entrusted with the task should also engage in exploring the indigenous cultures of Britain’s colonial possessions.  

79 British missionary societies and the government jointly organized the 1924 High Leigh conference on African education, at which Jones was the keynote speaker. On Jones’s advice that an “appeal to the Native mind” could not be “effectively made without the adequate use of the Native language,” conference participants voted to establish an ethnological and linguistic African bureau in London to enable colonial officials, administrators, educators, and missionaries to teach “the peoples of Africa through their own forms of thought.”  

80 Anthropologists connected to the resultant IIALC, founded in 1926 primarily thanks to Rockefeller funding, endorsed this aptly titled “functional anthropology.” Malinowski, one of the Institute’s most celebrated academics, was strongly influenced by the applied social anthropology pioneered by Franz Boas at the beginning of the century. Both believed that social institutions and customs served particular functions, and that only by studying them was it possible to understand the structure and needs of the social organism as a whole.  

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79 “Speech by the Principal (A. G. Fraser) at the First Meeting of the Achimota Council” in “Report on Achimota College for the Year 1930,” box 311, CBMS.


Anglo-American co-operation was close and productive. Facilitated by the Colonial Office, Americans worked with British colleagues to promote the ‘civilized’ features of native culture, and offer the American public a positive impression of Africans. The Carnegie-funded International Institute of Education at Teachers College, together with the Rockefeller Foundation, paid for its Professor of Rural Education, Mabel Carney, to tour the British African colonies and Liberia in 1926 alongside Margaret Wrong. Carney’s report of her 1926 tour, *African Letters*, commented that observing native Africans had shown her the “amazing possibilities, educability, and progress of African peoples,” and disproved false notions “of the permanent inferiority of colored races.” As part of a myriad international educational exchange programs sponsored by American philanthropic foundations during the 1920s, the Phelps-Stokes Fund and Carnegie Corporation devoted “considerable money and thought to the planning and guiding of African students, missionaries and colonial officials for their study and travel in the United States,” thereby creating “a kind of Cook’s Tourist Agency for such visitors.”

Joseph Jones was concerned that “only the most thoughtful type of American or English Negro” should participate in exchange programs, in order to present a positive image of black people to white Americans, and suppress any subversive pan-African unrest while African students visited the USA. Interestingly, he preferred the term

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83 Jones, *Ten Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1932-1942*, folder 10, box 47, PSF.

84 Jones, *African Travel Diary*, February 4, 1921, box 263, CBMS.
‘thoughtful’ to ‘intelligent’. It was evidently more important to think the right thoughts than to think.

Enthusiasm for integrating American educational principles into established colonial discourses drove cooperation. To this end, Jones encouraged the adoption of American bureaucratic techniques. On his advice, the Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa (ACETA), formed by William Ormsby-Gore in 1923, aimed to incorporate Colonial Office representatives (Ormsby-Gore and Lugard), the Board of Education, educational experts (Sadler), missionary societies (Oldham), Church of England leaders (the Bishop of Liverpool), and merchants (Sir James Currie, Director of the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation and Director of Education in the Sudan). This diversity would allow for the dissemination of the Committee’s ideas across a wide spectrum of public opinion. Oldham first sent the ACETA’s memorandum, Education Policy in British Tropical Africa, enshrined in the 1925 parliamentary White Paper, to all African governors for their comments, before presenting it to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in order to make “them feel that they were being carried along with the Commission.”

British organizations dedicated to African education overlapped, strengthening their collective influence. In 1924, Oldham, a member of the ACETA, accepted a position on a Parliamentary Commission organized by Ormsby-Gore to explore the question of trusteeship in East Africa and to provide “a link between the two

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86 Oldham to Vischer, October 8, 1924, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.
committees,” thereby ensuring that the Parliamentary Commission would not “trench on the province of the Advisory Committee.”

For American sponsors, it was crucial that all educational commissions and schemes were interracial if they were to have the propagandist effect that the philanthropists intended. The Phelps-Stokes Fund repeatedly vaunted its cooperation with Aggrey, a “talented, fair-minded and universally respected Native of Africa who [had] recently completed his scholastic work for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Columbia University,” a degree financed by the Fund. Jones insisted that the moral and practical education he proposed did not preclude black people from eventually acquiring higher education, as critics like Du Bois claimed. And of course, “educated Africans” such as Aggrey strongly supported Jones’s policies. Although Jones’s recommendation that “the native people” should be represented on the Colonial Office’s ACETA did not bear fruit, white reformers went to great lengths to include token black participants whose views they anticipated would not differ substantially from their own. Aggrey and the African American Foreign Secretary of the Colored Work Department of the YMCA, based at the Native College at Fort Hare in South Africa, Max Yergan, spoke alongside acclaimed officials like Lugard at the 1924 High Leigh Conference on African education. After Aggrey’s sudden death in 1927, the demographics of the governing

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87 Oldham to Vischer, April 10, 1924, box 219, CBMS/IMC.

88 Dr. Carter G. Woodson’s Criticisms – Confidential Memorandum for the Trustees of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1924, box 26.7.020, IMC.

89 “Notes” from the High Leigh Conference, September 1924, box 253, CBMS.
committee for Achimota College, where he had served as its first Vice-Principal, proudly continued to embody “the union of both races.”

At a time of worsening economic depression, when white settlers in Kenya boasted important Conservative friends in Parliament, liberal imperialists used American philanthropic finance as bait to encourage government support for their schemes, just as the American foundations had done in their work in the American South. Dougall participated in a yearlong tour of American educational institutions before becoming the Kenyan Jeanes School’s first principal in 1927. In 1925, Dougall explained to the Director of Education of the Kenya colony that the Carnegie Board, with which he had consulted in the USA, was prepared to make grants to the school “to encourage further effort on the part of the body receiving the grant.”

According to Oldham, Anglo-American collaboration also made educational schemes more likely to succeed from the African perspective. He assumed, somewhat naively, that Africans, suspicious of the Empire, and resentful of programs that appeared “to be run by the Government,” would view private, voluntary, liberal enterprises more favorably. This assumed that Africans were alive to official exploitation but not to private or commercial exploitation, an odd assumption given Africa’s long history of both. In 1925, Oldham informed the principal-elect of the proposed Jeanes school in

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90 “Speech by the Principal (A. G. Fraser) at the First Meeting of the Achimota Council” in “Report on Achimota College for the Year 1930,” box 311, CBMS.

91 “Memorandum to the Director of Education regarding Carnegie Grant,” enclosed in letter from Dougall to Oldham, December 9, 1925, box 244, CBMS/IMC.

92 Oldham to Jones, November 24, 1928, folder 1, box 22, PSF. Oldham was discussing the creation of a hostel in London for African students, “Aggrey House,” a project that I mention in the following chapter.
Kenya, James Dougall, that “the cooperation of America might have a very valuable psychological influence” on African students, serving as a reminder that the “education of the natives of Africa” was a “world concern”, not a narrow imperial one.\textsuperscript{93}

Despite consulting a wide range of sources, British reformers almost always settled on the American stance. Hanns Vischer, Swiss-born Chairman of the Colonial Office’s ACETA and member of the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s East African educational survey, complained to Oldham that despite the commission’s representative membership, only Jones’s contributions, “not the Commission’s considered reports,” were preserved in the final account.\textsuperscript{94} Oldham reminded Vischer that “the view of independent American observers carry[d]…greater weight than a British report”, instructing the ACETA’s general secretary to align with Jones.\textsuperscript{95} The Commission’s interracial, international composition was an empty shell, preserving the framework of racial and national comprehensiveness while actually comprising only those who could be relied on to share Jones’s position.

British educationalists soon began to emulate American publicity techniques. Far from promoting diversity, the aim was to culturally homogenize far-flung imperial territories.\textsuperscript{96} In 1926, the Advisory Committee established a journal entitled \textit{Oversea Education} to meet an unfilled need: “the help needed by people in Africa” was “not merely to be kept in touch with other territories, but also with educational thought at

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\textsuperscript{93} Oldham to Dougall, 2 April, 1925, box 244, CBMS/ IMC.

\textsuperscript{94} Vischer to Oldham, May 1, 1924, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.

\textsuperscript{95} Oldham to Vischer, January 14, 1924, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.

\textsuperscript{96} Vischer to Oldham, April 8, 1924, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.
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home.” Accordingly, from 1928 onwards, the IIALC published a quarterly journal, *Africa*. In 1927, the Colonial Office transformed its Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa into the more general Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies (ACEC). Arthur Mayhew, the advisory body’s new co-Chair, alongside Vischer, announced that the ACEC would examine problems of Empire-wide tropical education, and disseminate its findings to “all workers in the field, official and non-official, irrespective of nationality.”

In a catch-22 paradox, British imperialists embarked, in both the colonies and the metropole, on American-style educational programs designed for Africa, in an effort to ensure British competitiveness with the autarchic US economy – but relied heavily on American funding. The schemes thus embodied American interests as much as British ones. Prompted by American partners, the interwar Colonial Office and colonial governments created advisory bodies and educational institutions, representing a wide range of missionary, academic, educational, native, and commercial groups. These units swayed the Colonial Office’s management of interwar educational programs for Africa, and by the 1930s, for all colonies, thereby shaping the fabric of British imperial identity. Sadler, who believed that the ACETA was so dynamic a body that he pledged to “never miss one of these meetings if [he could] possibly help it”, was attracted to its schemes for the same reason he had been interested in American education earlier in the twentieth century: from a sense of British economic inferiority. But during the 1920s, American

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97 Oldham to Vischer, June 9, 1926, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.

98 Arthur Mayhew to Oldham, re: Carnegie Corporation grant, June 8, 1933, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.

99 Oldham quotes Michael Sadler in a letter to Vischer, May 1, 1924, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.
educationalists like Jones, and even government officials, like the US Department of Agriculture’s Dr. Shantz, participated in a number of these so-called unofficial educational institutions. More significantly, almost all these educational organizations, and even the educational wing of the Colonial Office itself by the end of the decade, were dependent on American finance. American interests, indirectly and discreetly, guided the micro-operation of the Empire.

American benefactors thus called the tune. In 1926, Oldham acknowledged that the IIALC’s “real crux” was “to maintain the interest of America”, which was “giving the bulk of the finance”. Before the 1920s, Malinowski had never conducted any substantial field research in Africa; his great fieldwork had been in Melanesia. The prospect of Rockefeller funding determined Malinowski’s subsequent scholarly direction. In designing the Colonial Office’s newly expanded ACEC’s “scope and functions,” Mayhew first inquired into which issues interested Dr. Fred Keppel, President of the Carnegie Corporation. Mayhew then tailored the ACEC’s program of research to match American interests, in the successful hope of winning Carnegie sponsorship. Mayhew wanted to stress to Keppel the extent to which the ACEC was “in close touch with missions and with tropical educational research in the USA, academic and otherwise.”

100 “First Meeting of the Executive Council of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, held at the Colonial Office, London,” October 11, 1926, folder 4, box 1, IAI.


102 Mayhew to Oldham, June 8, 1933, box 219, CBMS/ IMC.
When American and British interests conflicted, American demands trumped British ones. The Carnegie Corporation, Phelps-Stokes Fund, and Rockefeller’s General Education Board, deemed it vital to bring African students to visit the Southern USA’s African American educational institutions. On his 1925 American tour, Dougall was “disposed to question the value of a visit to Hampton by Africans”, noting that “the younger generation of educated negroes [was] restive, aggressive, and less appreciative of the work of the whites even in such a school as Hampton”. Despite these reservations, the Colonial Office cooperated with the American foundations in arranging for British Africans to study in the USA.

By and large, however, during the 1920s, the British and American national concerns that underscored these collaborative schemes were largely compatible. It was in the interests of both to bolster a stable British Empire that promoted selected Protestant values (self-discipline seems to have figured much more prominently than freedom of conscience), hard work and capitalist enterprise, especially in the face of political threats from the new USSR. In the 1930s, amid global economic and social upheaval, and new economic protectionism, Anglo-American liberals worked even harder to create cooperative international educational networks, as much in the troubled US and British metropoles as in Africa. Simultaneously, black participants, crucial for the legitimacy of native educational schemes, began to harness liberal scholarly discourses to reject the American and British socio-economic and political status quo. As black intellectuals

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103 Dougall to Oldham, March 1, 1925, box 244, CBMS/ IMC.
104 Jones, *Ten Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1932-1942*, folder 10, box 47, PSF.
increasingly fused hatred of capitalism with hostility to the Empire, partnership with the
British state seemed less attractive to the programs’ American corporate sponsors.
CHAPTER 4:

ADVANCING AFRICAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Whether we trade with the African, govern him, or teach him, we must first understand him...

The Rev. Dr. Edwin W. Smith, 1937

During the Depression of the 1930s, fearing the demise of international trade and the collapse of the Western socio-economic order, American philanthropic foundations and their British Empire-ruling colleagues fell back on their faith in the power of education to harmoniously bind together the world’s diverse populations. These groups jointly invested in strengthening the institutions for the study and education of Africans that they had begun to erect in the previous decade. The foundations sponsored new academic departments devoted to African studies in the USA, and expanded the programs they had already created in Great Britain, in both cases with British official assistance. At a time when pan-African unrest was strong, these programs included black participants to give them legitimacy and a better hope of achieving their goal of healing social ruptures. Black intellectuals harnessed the study of African culture, and the numerous connections they made through their academic endeavors, not to support, but to challenge, British imperialism and Western capitalism, both of which the British government and American corporate foundations had intended their collaboration to safeguard.

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Extension of Native Investigations

The British Empire and its economy weakened during the ‘30s. The 1931 Statute of Westminster codified the legislative independence of the self-governing dominions, ratifying and affirming the Balfour Declaration, principles that the British government had outlined at the 1926 Imperial Conference.\(^2\) The Union of South Africa, a dominion since 1910, had not needed to adopt the Statute of Westminster to achieve legislative independence from the British Empire, but it nonetheless passed two Status Acts in 1934 to re-affirm its autonomy. India did not win the dominion status that its Viceroy, Lord Irwin, hopeful of pacifying nationalist discontent, had promised Indian nationalists in 1929. The 1935 Government of India Act granted India a series of constitutional concessions, which did little to appease the nationalists. But establishing India as a Commonwealth trading partner, rather than a dependent colony, now appeared only a matter of time, despite the fierce opposition of reactionary Conservatives like Winston Churchill, who were horrified at the prospect of the break-up of the Empire.\(^3\) Britain had always acknowledged that it did not possess sovereignty over its “civilized” League of Nations mandates in the Middle East, although it was committed to reaping financial rewards from them.\(^4\) Desirous to take strategic and economic advantage of Iraq without spending money and resources on formal occupation, the British declared Iraqi

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independence in 1932. Inspired by this feat, Zionists in the British mandate of Palestine struggled for self-rule, to the consternation of the region’s Arab residents.

Political problems also brewed regarding the sovereignty of British African territories. Controversy regarding a prospective British East African federation came to a head in the late 1920s. In 1927, the government organized the Hilton Young Commission, in which Oldham participated, to investigate the question of “closer union” between its East African territories. The Commission, returning in 1928, resisted a political amalgamation that would be dominated by Kenya’s white settlers, but favored more cohesive administration of these territories. After the Labour party came to power in 1929, the government endorsed the doctrine of “native paramountcy,” but also issued a 1930 White Paper mandating the appointment of an East African High Commissioner and enhanced bureaucratic consolidation of the region. White settlers only wanted a union that would grant them indiscriminate control over the area’s land and resources. The Colonial Office coordinated a cross-party committee to debate the proposition, comprised of, among others, Frederick Lugard, William Ormsby-Gore, and colonial secretary and Lord Milner disciple, Leo Amery. Germany, now a League of Nations member, disdained any union binding the mandate of Tanganyika closer to British colonies. The subsequent condemnation of the plan by the League of Nations’ Permanent Mandates Commission (PMC) resolved the question of closer political union by 1931. However, liberal colonial

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5 Ibid, 269, 369.
6 Ibid, 359-393.
7 Ibid, 226.
8 Ibid, 228-229.
officials and missionaries continued to employ tactics to attain the political and economic goals that they desired: “native paramountcy” and economic coherence. Among other techniques, the imperial government sanctioned the 1934 appointment of James Dougall (participant of the 1924 Phelps-Stokes Fund East African educational commission, and now principal of the Jeanes school in Kabete, Kenya) to a new post of Director of Mission Education for Kenya and Uganda, in the belief that this role would protect African interests, and promote closer ties between the two territories. The Carnegie Corporation sponsored this position.⁹

Imperial debates regarding the political status of the Rhodesias, and inadvertently, the legality of their racial orders, attracted the interest of the Union of South Africa’s white leaders. South Africa’s rulers were unified in a commitment to racial segregation and white supremacy, and many of them were also ardent believers in Milner’s dream of a white-controlled Greater South Africa. Union politicians, notably General J. C. Smuts, South African Prime Minister from 1919-24, and 1939-48, had hoped that South Africa would absorb the neighboring British High Commission Territories of Bechuanaland, Basutoland, and Swaziland, and the Rhodesias (South Africa shared a border with Southern Rhodesia), alongside its League of Nations mandate of South West Africa, during this period. They did not achieve their grand goals. Moreover, South Africa’s treatment of black African residents of South West Africa during the 1920s and ‘30s

⁹ See, Joseph Oldham to Fred Keppel, January 30, 1930, folder 1, box 281, series III A 4, CCCNY; Oldham to Keppel, October 10, 1933; Oldham to Keppel, July 21, 1936, folder 2, box 281, series III A 4, CCNY.
attracted much criticism from “humane” British imperialist PMC representatives like Lugard.  

Black resistance against inclusion in oppressive, white supremacist systems rapidly spread throughout Southern Africa. Colonial frontiers were porous. By the early twentieth century, the disparate societies of Southern Africa had been drawn into a single political economy, directed, although unevenly, by British and South African capital, driven by mining and African labor, and connected by road and rail. Despite the imposition of various migration bars for Africans, fluctuating state borders did not confine capital, labor, or dissent. Africans protested the prospect of white-controlled federation, preferring the limited protection that British rule afforded them.

But British discord with an independent commonwealth nation of South Africa threatened imperial economic interests. South Africa was extremely important for the British and wider international economy, producing one half of the world’s supply of gold by the 1920s. The severe deflationary crisis following the Wall Street Crash had forced Britain to come off the gold standard in September 1931. By the first half of 1932, a sterling bloc, “a very loose and informal arrangement,” was in de facto

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13 The British had abandoned the gold standard in 1919, but then returned to it in 1925. See, Jose Harris, “Society and the state in twentieth-century Britain,” in The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950, ed. F. M. L. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 76.
existence. The sterling area covered the greater part of the Empire and a number of other countries, the “chief factor binding them together” being “the belief that it was in their best interests to maintain their currencies at a fixed rate with sterling.” The voluntary nature of the sterling bloc meant that non-center countries (including the Dominions) were under no obligation to hold their monetary reserves in London. Great Britain depended on South African gold, but to demonstrate national independence, South Africa initially resisted following Britain off the gold standard. In 1933, paralyzed by the effects of the Depression, and dependent on Britain as both client and financier, South Africa eventually left the gold standard. But the South African government remained at liberty to convert its sterling assets into gold or other non-sterling assets, a grave threat to British economic stability. The British government had to devise ways to pacify political and racial disagreements, and to induce outlying members of the Empire to voluntarily align with the center.

Political developments during the 1930s also threatened American corporate ambitions abroad. In 1930, the USA passed the protectionist Smoot Hawley Tariff; in response, at the Ottawa conference of 1932, Dominion members of the British Commonwealth, which had recently confirmed their autonomy, introduced a retaliatory system of imperial tariffs. Under this new system, colonies were obliged to diffuse Empire-wide any preferences allocated to individual countries, and to grant Empire imports a preferential margin over foreign goods. Intra-empire free trade was promoted through a reduction in tariffs between Empire members, thereby prejudicing external


trade. \(^{16}\) This arrangement withdrew one-third of the world’s goods from normal trading channels and particularly hurt the USA because Britain was its biggest export market. \(^{17}\) American money was also heavily invested in Northern Rhodesia’s copper mines, and in fruit production and aluminum industries in the British Caribbean. The decision of these dependencies to enact imperial preferential tariffs alarmed American corporations desperate to maintain trade with these regions. And maintaining a good relationship with gold-producing South Africa was also important for the USA.

The economic benefit of imperial preference even to the British metropole was questionable. After Ottawa, British imperial tariffs advantaged the Dominions at the expense of the British center. The British government promised the Dominions that almost all British dependencies would return them whatever preferences they gave Britain, but Britain did not obtain the general reduction of Dominion preferential rates for which she had hoped. \(^{18}\) There was also a huge balance of trade deficit with the USA, and British exports badly needed a revival of demand from their chief trading partner. \(^{19}\)

Adding to these woes, pan-African discontent grew during the 1930s, as noted above. In the Caribbean and on the West African coast, the effects of the Depression pushed earnings down as the prices of sugar, cocoa, palm oil, and other exports


plummeted, while unemployment and the cost of staple goods rose steeply. In the mid-to-late 1930s, a rash of major strikes and demonstrations erupted in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanganyika, the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia, and throughout the British Caribbean. Colonial governments increased censorship in these regions, and the South African administration introduced a draconian pass system in 1924, and Southern Rhodesia enacted similar legislation in 1934. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, and the pusillanimous response of Britain and the League of Nations, signaled the early death throes of the League and precipitated a storm of anger from blacks around the world.

In the USA, export agriculture collapsed. Southern Democrats, dominating Congress, ensured that the government’s response to Depression-era hardships favored white over black Americans. The first Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 favored (almost exclusively white) landowners, by paying commercial farmers a subsidy for not planting basic crops. But this economically rational response to the problem of over-production displaced thousands of sharecroppers and tenants (many of whom were black), who did not own their own land. Labor legislation, embodied in the National Labor Relations Act (1935), explicitly excluded agricultural and domestic workers from its remit, the areas in which most African Americans were employed. The case of the

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23 For a description of the immense poverty that African Americans experienced during the 1930s, and the ways in which the government’s New Deal welfare policies and labor legislation favored white over black Americans, again largely due to the influence of Southern Democrats in Congress, see Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold History of Racial*
Scottsboro Boys – the nine black youths accused and hastily convicted, with all but one sentenced to death, for raping two white women on a train en route from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Paint Rock, Alabama in 1931, despite one of the ‘victims’ rescinding her accusation – triggered an international campaign in their defense.²⁴

Communism offered a political rallying cry for disaffected blacks. From its inception in 1919, the Third International espoused anti-imperialism, and in 1928, the Sixth Congress of the Comintern reaffirmed its commitment to the liberation of colonized populations worldwide, including the subjugated black masses of the American South, giving international expression of black solidarity a particularly subversive and threatening tone.²⁵ In 1934, Harold Moody, a Jamaica-born physician who had founded the London-based League of Coloured Peoples in 1931, organized a conference in London to discuss the status of the “Negro in the World To-day”. The meeting resolved that surveying “the position of the Negro in Africa, the American Continent, and in Great Britain” confirmed that the black race was “under political and social domination of the white races” worldwide, and declared that this subjugation must end.²⁶

British and American thinkers concerned to strengthen the global presence of their respective nations sought inventive, inexpensive techniques to bind together their international commercial interests. The same network of Anglo-American reformers that

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had focused its collective attention on Africa during the 1920s responded to the immense socio-economic and political disruptions of the 1930s by enlarging and strengthening the spectrum of native educational schemes it had crafted during the previous decade.27

This collection of British and American intellectuals worked to adapt their theological ideas to changed world social and economic conditions by making them more inclusive of the many national voices that now vigorously protested the political, social, and economic status quo. John Mott and Harvard University’s William Hocking jointly directed a Rockefeller-funded American Foreign Missions Enquiry, that was published in 1932, under the title, *Re-thinking Missions: A Laymen’s Inquiry After 100 Years*.28 The controversial study, which impressed Joseph Oldham, promoted, according to one critic, “an almost silent infiltration of the non-Christian mind by Christian living and practical

27 These reformers did not restrict their efforts to native investigations. The patent susceptibility of Western countries to fascism and communism during the 1930s made this group equally worried about their own societies, and they extensively investigated how best to educate these, too, as will be elucidated in chapters 6 and, even more so, 7. One pertinent example of this cohort researching Western education, that this dissertation does not explore, is the International Examinations Enquiry that missionary and Teachers College Professor, Paul Monroe, launched in 1930, financed by the Carnegie Corporation. Its members included Michael Sadler, Philip Hartog (Secretary of the Mosely Educational Commission and participant in Sadler’s Calcutta University Commission of 1919), and Isaac Kandel (Professor at Teachers College, and a former student of Sadler’s at the University of Manchester). Fred Clarke (who features prominently in the remainder of this study) was also involved in the 1935 publication of the survey’s findings, *An Examination of Examinations*. See: Isaac Kandel, Memorandum, “The International Examinations Enquiry,” 1935; Michael Sadler to Fred Keppel, December 28, 1934, folder 12, box 318, series III A, Carnegie Corporation of New York Records (hereafter CCNY), Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries.

28 John Mott was inspired to undertake this far-reaching study after the International Missionary Council Meeting of 1928, which had focused much time on discussing the wide “problems” and thus need for new “educational aims and methods” of “India, China, Japan, and other countries.” Frederic L. Fay to Dr. Warnshuis, January 12th, 1929. IMC. Box 26.17.01.
service, without a definite and unremitting preaching of the Gospel.”

Although shorn of doctrinal Christian teachings, there was still little room for genuine diversity in this new liberal Christian worldview that continued to espouse the basic tenets of Protestant morality, capitalist development, and bolstering rural communities to prevent the spread of the dangerous communistic precepts that accompanied industrialization. Promoting homogenized, if vaguely inclusive, educational principles, and studying different demographics, reformers thought, could tie together the world’s diverse, discontented populations relatively cheaply, in accordance with the expansionist corporate aims of certain elements within the two countries.

In this uncertain context, this cohort of reformers established the London-based Institute of Education (IOE). Under the influence of Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, the British Colonial Office had grouped together its educational efforts for the entire African continent in its Advisory Committee for Education for Tropical Africa (ACETA) in 1923. When the ACETA expanded its operations to include all colonial territories in the late 1920s, by becoming the Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies (ACEC), it lumped all native peoples into a single category. In 1934, the ACEC, by now funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, helped to transform the London Day Training College into the IOE, a post-graduate school of education housed on the University of London’s new Bloomsbury site. According to Fred Clarke, the IOE’s Adviser to Oversea Students, ACEC member, and, within two years, overall Director of the IOE, the Institute should constitute “a great educational laboratory for the Empire, with unique opportunities of attacking the diverse problems of education in relation not only to the

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English speaking peoples but to the needs of the various native races in Asia and Africa, all at varying stages of civilization and progress.”

Clarke was impressed by American educational principles. The Oxford-educated Clarke believed that his working-class origins had obstructed his professional opportunities in elitist English academic circles. Clarke had spent the first twenty years of his career teaching education at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, followed by a brief stint at McGill University, Montreal. While working in what he defined as the “New Countries” of South Africa and Canada, Clarke, blinding himself to the Union’s racial bars, had become affected by the “ubiquitous expression” of “social solidarity” and the “massive cohesion of professed equals” he had observed there, in contrast to the social hurdles he had struggled to overcome in his native land. According to Clarke, dynamic American educational theory had inspired the methods of social engineering he had witnessed in these “newer” societies, and he particularly admired Jones’s “philosophy of education” as an agent of social cohesion. Clarke’s 1922 essay, ‘The Juvenile and Colour,’ written in South Africa shortly after the first Phelps-Stokes educational commission’s visit there, approvingly quoted the Phelps-Stokes Report’s findings that in the volatile South African environment, “an achieved, objective spiritual

30 Fred Clarke to the Right Hon. Viscount Willingdon, Government House, Ottawa, Canada (Confidential), 30 January, 1931, FC/ 1/ 60.

31 “Fred Clarke obituary,” FC/ 1/ 16; Harold Butler to Fred Clarke, September 6, 1928. Butler responded to Clarke’s allegations about Oxford’s prejudices against academics with working class roots. FC/ 4/ 13.


33 Ibid.
order,” or “civilization”, could not be taken for granted; it must be instilled. And to do so successfully, the “present conditions” of native peoples had to be investigated to determine the likely “character of their response” to educational programs. In the ‘30s, Clarke proposed the establishment of a University of London “Department of Post-Graduate Educational Philosophy, working closely with the schools of Anthropology, Oriental Studies and Tropical Medicine and analogous Schools”. This would allow the imperial center to explore native “present conditions,” and thereby function as “a worthy centre for the teachers of the Empire”, allowing them to develop, and unify, the Empire’s many peoples.

The resulting IOE appointed Dr. W. B. Mumford, then studying at Yale, as Director of its Colonial Department, and “Lecturer upon Comparative Education with special reference to Primitive Peoples”, to cooperate closely with Professor Bronislaw Malinowski, chair of Anthropology at the London School of Economics and leading scholar of the Rockefeller-financed International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (IIALC). Malinowski’s IOE classes were designed to highlight “the bearing of anthropology upon general native administration.” He argued that earlier scholarship had been characterized by romantic, escapist analyses of “prehistoric times”, descended from Montaigne’s theory of the ‘noble savage’, which implicitly contrasted ‘innocent’ primitive societies to the assumed intellectual and racial superiority of the West,


35 Clarke to the Right Hon. Viscount Willingdon, Government House, Ottawa, Canada (Confidential), 30 January, 1931, FC/ 1/ 60.

36 T. P. Nunn to Fred Keppel, May 28, 1934, folder 4, box 205, series III A, CCNY.
approaching these societies “by the circular route via classical antiquity”. Now, with Western and Eastern societies engulfed in inter-related political and economic crises, Malinowski contended that, “romance was fleeing anthropology as it [had] fled many human concerns.” Academics ceased depicting remote societies in patronizingly static terms, and became interested in a dynamic “anthropology of the changing African, and in the anthropology of the contact of white and colored, of European culture and primitive life.”

Initially, the IOE’s architects intended to keep its Colonial Department, dedicated to researching and training teachers for native populations (of color), separate from its Dominions Department, devised “to foster a common understanding among educated workers in England and the self-governing Dominions,” thus solidifying cultural and economic links between (white) Commonwealth nations. However, from the outset, it was difficult to retain clear-cut educational differentiations along these implicitly racial lines. Mumford immediately acknowledged the “inapplicability” of maintaining such a “rigid distinction between Colonial and Dominion students” for the IOE, since “almost all the Dominions” had what he would “describe here as ‘Colonial Problems’, (e.g.,


38 Malinowski, “Rationalization of Anthropology,” 408.

39 Malinowski, “Practical Anthropology,” 22.

40 Sir Trevor Percy Nunn (Institute’s initial Director) to Keppel, May 28, 1934, folder 4, box 205, series III A, CCNY. Recent historiography has noted the distinction between the creation of a “white” Dominion identity during this period, and an “Oriental” colonial identity. See Felicity Barnes, “Bringing Another Empire Alive? The Empire Marketing Board and the Construction of Dominion Identity, 1926-33.” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, no. 1 (2014): 75.
South Africa with her native schools, New Zealand with her Maori Schools and her mandated territories, Canada and her Indian Reserve Schools, etc.)”

Imperialism had not carved up the globe into neat geographical territories that possessed homogeneous populations; in fact, it had done quite the opposite. If the world’s grave economic, political, and social cleavages were to be healed effectively, according to Mumford, all races must mutually investigate one another, and be inculcated in standardized educational values.

The IOE was an Americanized institution, ideologically and financially. Clarke modeled his vision for an “Imperial Institute of Education” on the International Institute of Education founded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York as part of Columbia University’s Teachers college after the First World War. At McGill, Clarke had met, and impressed, Fred Keppel, President of the Carnegie Corporation. Clarke was vocal in his opinion that the American and British tariff experiments of the early ‘30s were absurd and parochial; he was convinced that the two countries, “being born of the same tradition”, should freely trade with and support one another. For Clarke, the appropriate response to the economic nationalism and social instability of the 1930s was not isolation, but increasing “the range and depth and facility of cultural intercourse”

41 Dr. Mumford, “Some suggestions for discussion with Professor Clarke and Sir Percy Nunn with regard to arrangements for the Col Dept.” 1934, Institute of Education Archive (hereafter IE), University College London Institute of Education Library, IE/ COL/ 3/ 8.

42 Memorandum of Interview, John Russell and Fred Keppel, October 26, 1931, folder 4, box 205, series III A, CCNY.

43 Clarke to Mr. Parkin, November 27, 1932, FC/ 1/ 60.

44 Clarke to Lionel Curtis, January 15, 1933, FC/ 4/ 6; Clarke, “The British Idea in Education,” given at the Conference in NEW Ideals in Education, Oxford, April 1935, FC/ 1/ 19;
throughout the Empire and the USA, a view that chimed with American corporate concerns. Keppel agreed to finance the IOE on condition that Clarke would shortly replace Sir Trevor Percy Nunn, current Principal of the London Day Training College, as its head. Under Clarke’s leadership, Keppel felt confident, the IOE was “likely to be a very important link in [the Corporation’s] British Empire activities”.

The IOE was one of several educational institutions cooperatively strengthened by American philanthropic foundations and British colonial bodies during the ‘30s, all devoted to conducting inquiries into native life in the hope of generating social harmony through education. The idealism of this belief may seem naïve but it is very much in keeping with the spirit of an age in which the sinister threats of rising fascism and impending war were met by various peace and antiwar activities throughout the decade, and by the growing ideological appeal of communism in Britain, Western Europe, and the USA. The Carnegie Corporation of New York funded the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), another interwar Anglo-American research initiative, to undertake an African Research Survey in the 1930s, a project in which Oldham was instrumental. Chatham House appointed Sir Malcolm Hailey, a colonial Indian official and Lugard’s replacement on the PMC from 1935, to direct the Survey

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46 Keppel expressed his “doubt” regarding T. P. Nunn’s appropriateness for the position of Director in a letter to Isaac Kandel, July 1, 1932; Memorandum of telephone interview between John M. Russell and Dean William F. Russell, May 9, 1934: “Nunn told WFR confidentially that Clarke would succeed him within two years time if he (Clarke) is there.” Folder 4, box 205, series III A, CCNY.

47 *Memorandum of Interview*, Keppel and Robert M. Lester, December 28, 1934, folder 9, box 104, series III A 2, CCNY.
after the American former Director of Rockefeller’s General Education Board (GEB), Whitney Shepardson, declined the post. In the 1930s, Shepardson, who had specialized in agricultural and biological research at the GEB during the 1920s, headed the transport arm of the United Fruit Company, a transnational American corporation with Caribbean and Central and South American interests. British eagerness to employ Shepardson, who embodied the inter-connectedness of matters domestic and international, commercial and philanthropic, in the American educational framework, indicates the eagerness of British colonial administrators to replicate American education.

Even the ancient University of Oxford was involved in these progressive activities. In 1935, it appointed Margery Perham, a noted expert on Africa, to the post of research lecturer in colonial administration, a position funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. In 1931, Perham had been among the IIALC’s first batch of scholars, when the Institute had awarded her a grant to investigate East Africa and the Sudan, in preparation for which she attended Malinowski’s anthropology seminars. In 1937, Perham became a member of the Executive Council of the IIALC. By 1939, Perham had become Reader in Colonial Administration and a founder-fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford. Like Nuffield College, Oxford’s new colonial studies division, spearheaded by

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48 Memorandum of Interview, Keppel and Oldham, December 7, 1932: “Oldham is pressing Whitney Shepardson…,” folder 1, box 281, III A 4, CCNY. For Hailey’s involvement in the League of Nations, see Pedersen, The Guardians, 316.

49 Minutes of the tenth meeting of the Executive Council of the IIALC, October 13 and 15, 1931, folder 3, box 1, IAI.

50 Meeting of the Executive Council of the IIALC, July 2, 1937, folder 25, box 1, IAI.

51 “Report Presented to the Rockefeller Foundation on the Work of the Institute, July 1, 1931-June 30,” (1939), folder 4, box 8, IAI.
Perham with American funding, focused on the social sciences, and offered broader, American-style subjects such as colonial history, colonial economic geography, anthropology, native languages, and tropical hygiene.\(^{52}\) With a Rockefeller grant, Perham organized summer schools on colonial administration in 1937 and 1938.\(^{53}\) Speakers included Malinowski, Fred Clarke and Lord Hailey, Director of the African Research Survey.\(^{54}\) Lugard, ACEC member, founder of the IIALC, and British representative on the PMC, delivered the first conference’s inaugural address, proclaiming that it was “impossible to over-estimate the usefulness of the study of native life” to the British Empire’s operation and future.\(^{55}\)

By the 1930s, American philanthropic foundation managers’ fears of racial, economic and political upheaval superseded their fear of upsetting domestic political (particularly Southern Democratic) sensitivities regarding African or broader native investigations, and with British official assistance, they also funded new schemes based in the USA. In 1931, Yale University appointed Charles T. Loram, former Superintendent of Native Education for the Natal, South Africa, and participant in both Phelps-Stokes African educational commissions, to staff its new post of Sterling Professor of Comparative Education. Loram designed the first Yale course in applied social

\(^{52}\) *Memorandum on Colonial Service Training*, file 1, box 244, MP; “Practical suggestions for the study of Colonial Administration at Oxford, 1937” file 2, box 244, MP.

\(^{53}\) “The Colonies at Oxford: Topics Discussed at the Oxford University Summer School on Colonial Administration and the Fifth Empire Summer School,” *Crown Colonies*, September 1937, file 3, box 244, MP.

\(^{54}\) “Oxford Colonial School Lectures on Administration.” *East Africa and Rhodesia*, June 10, 1937, file 3, box 244, MP.

\(^{55}\) “The Colonies at Oxford,” *Crown Colonies*, September 1937, file 3, box 244, MP.
anthropology to “estimate the effects of western civilization on indigenous peoples, with a view to determining how far the agents of western civilization [were] proceeding wisely in imposing or seeking to impose their culture upon other groups,” and to “offer leadership and training to western groups attempting this task.” In 1933, Yale established a Carnegie Corporation-funded department of culture contacts and race relations, appointing Loram to its chair. The following year, the Carnegie Corporation and Rockefeller’s General Education Board helped Loram organize a conference on Education and Culture Contacts at Yale. Carnegie sponsors insisted that a contingent of indigenous British Caribbean educators attend the 1934 Yale conference.

American cultural anthropologists whose studies focused on Africa began to secure philanthropic financing for the first time. Columbia University anthropologist, Franz Boas, had supervised the dissertation of a young Jewish scholar, Melville Herskovits, on eastern and southern African herding societies in 1923 but Herskovitz had subsequently failed to gain foundation funding for his proposed cultural anthropological investigation into black American life. The foundations had been wary of financing controversial new research fields that foregrounded the dynamism, strength, and inherent equality of American and African cultures, which would undoubtedly offend influential

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56 “Procedure Adopted on the Course in Acculturation or Applied Social Anthropology at Yale University,” attached to Charles T. Loram to Leslie Moss, March 5, 1931, folder 2, box 5, series 2, Emory Warren Ross Papers (hereafter ER), Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 1, the Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries, at Union Theological Seminary.

57 Charles T. Loram to Keppel, October 8, 1932, folder 2, box 379, series III A 9.

58 Memorandum of Interview, Keppel and Mr. Arthur Mayhew, London, June 15, 1933; Mayhew to Mr. Macmillan, January 27th, 1934; Keppel to Mayhew, August 20, 1934; Memorandum of Interview, Keppel and Mayhew, Yale University, New Haven, CT., August 13, 1934, folder 13, box 214, series III A 5, CCNY.
Southern conservatives, whose carefully crafted socio-economic order rested on the supposed biological inferiority of African Americans.\textsuperscript{59} By the late 1920s and ‘30s, however, the foundations had changed their tune. Herskovits now received funding, primarily from the Rockefeller Foundation, but also from Columbia University’s Social Science Research Council and the Carnegie Corporation, for field research into black culture in West Africa, South America, and the Caribbean.\textsuperscript{60}

American missionaries, previously reliant on the African organizations of their British counterparts, spearheaded new USA-based associations dedicated to studying and educating Africa, the two prongs of Jones’s model of social education. Between 1929 and 1932, the Committee of Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America held a series of meetings to create an Africa Committee to develop within America “a strong worldwide African consciousness.” Fred Keppel, Thomas Jesse Jones, John Mott, Charles Loram, Mabel Carney, and Joseph Oldham, cooperated to create the American missionary Africa Committee, dedicated to the broad program of simultaneously educating Africa and helping Americans understand what was “valuable in African culture and institutions.”\textsuperscript{61} In 1936, the missionary Africa Committee appointed former Secretary of the Belgian Congo Continuation Committee, Emory Ross, as its head.

\textsuperscript{59} Jerry Gershenhorn, \textit{Melville J. Herskovits and the Racial Politics of Knowledge} (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 28, 70, 131.

\textsuperscript{60} Gershenhorn, \textit{Herskovits}, 71, 79, 81, 84, 86.

\textsuperscript{61} “Draft of the Report of the Africa Committee to the Committee of Reference and Counsel,” (undated, but summarizing activities from 1929-1932), folder 2, box 5, series 2, MRL 1, ER.
Black Agency

White planners relied on black participation to legitimate Depression-era native investigations. The early twentieth-century American educational framework proposed by Jones, Mott, and Carney had always assumed that the involvement of disaffected individuals was necessary if they were to have any hope of resolving social problems. Both Phelps-Stokes Fund educational commissions to Africa highlighted the role of the African Aggrey. Paradoxically, the plethora of Anglo-American attempts to research Africa as a single administrative unit, beginning with the creation of the ACETA in 1923, and now embodied in studies like Hailey’s 1938 sweeping *African Survey*, had encouraged black intellectuals to think of the similarities between their circumstances.62

During the 1930s, black cooperation became especially important. Boas had always valued understanding a “culture through first-hand experience with living peoples and how they understood their conditions of existence.”63 His disciples, Malinowski and Herskovits, took this a step further, revising and extending the technique of obtaining information through a personal informant by introducing the methods of participant-observer and participatory field research. Malinowski penned the ‘Introduction’ to the 1938 monograph based on the PhD thesis of his student, Jomo (formerly the Anglicized Johnstone) Kenyatta, a Kenyan scholar and nationalist whose research into his own Kikuyu people produced one of the first anthropological studies by an African.64


Malinowski warned that the “educated, intellectual minority of Africans, usually
dismissed as ‘agitators,’” were “catalyzing an African public opinion.” British colonial
administrators had ignored educated elites in favor of white settlers in southern and
eastern Africa, and traditional rulers in West Africa. Malinowski cautioned that treating
these individuals “with contempt” would drive “them into the open arms of world-wide
Bolshevism.” The corollary, Malinowski predicted, was that giving Africans a voice to
explore and present their own social customs would constitute a conciliatory gesture from
the West that would encourage Africans, co-opted into partnership rather than driven to
antagonism, to “develop a balanced and moderate view of economic, social and political
issues.” Kenyatta could provide the indispensable “inside knowledge of an African”,
providing “illuminating sidelights” unknown to Western observers, allowing both parties
to better understand, and resolve, the immense changes taking place in the contemporary
world.

If their observations were to have scientific validity, black participants needed
professional training to distance them from the cultures they were scrutinizing. American
philanthropic foundations sponsored black African and black American scholars whom
they judged capable of immersion in native life at a level beyond the reach of white
academics, to study in the new research institutions they had helped to create.
Malinowski emphasized Kenyatta’s academic credentials and “full competence of a
trained Western scholar.” Appropriate training had imbued Kenyatta with the lens of

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65 Matera, Black London, 250.

66 Bronislaw Malinowski, “Introduction,” in Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya (New York:
Random House, 1965 [1938]), ix-x.

67 Ibid, x.
detachment that enabled him to analyze his own society in an authoritative manner, as both insider and outsider.\textsuperscript{68}

But despite some progress, African studies in the USA before the Second World War remained poorly developed and mired in controversy, compared to British achievements. This was all the more surprising given the extent to which general American Anthropology (i.e., not concerning Africa) had advanced further than the British field.\textsuperscript{69} When American foundations tried to establish new university faculties in African Studies, they employed British scholars who had gained their experience through involvement in the field. In 1939, the Kennedy School of Missions at Hartford, Connecticut, attempted to create a new African department by recruiting Dr. Edwin Smith, a British anthropologist, missionary, ACEC member, and one of the founders of the IIALC, to its faculty.\textsuperscript{70} When the General Education Board decided to sponsor an African Studies school at all-black Fisk University, Tennessee, in 1943, intending it to be the “first comprehensive school of the kind in this country”, it selected Smith as director.\textsuperscript{71} When Smith arrived at Fisk, black students, determined to distance themselves

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\textsuperscript{69} See, Adam Kuper, Anthropology and Anthropologists: The British School in the Twentieth Century (London: Routledge: London, 1983), 70. Kuper notes the “puzzle” that historians of British anthropology ponder over: the British discipline’s almost exclusive “concentration on Africa,” at least until 1950 (110). Identifying the preferences of American philanthropists, who bolstered the subject in England while it remained controversial in the USA, helps to explain this situation.

\textsuperscript{70} “Report on Current Situation in the Work of the Africa Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference,” May 18, 1937, folder 2, box 5, series 2, ER.

\textsuperscript{71} Rev. E. W. Smith to Hanns Vischer, March 18, 1943, file 3, box 669, MP.
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from an Africa that had “long been associated in their minds with everything…brutal and savage,” were hostile to the British African scholar.\textsuperscript{72} Similarly, Herskovits claimed to be detached from politics, believing that cooperation with political agencies compromised a scholar’s integrity. But Northwestern University, where Herskovits had taught anthropology since 1927, had what a General Education Board representative described as a “conservative character” that hampered Herskovits’s ambition to experiment with newer subjects like Negro ethnology, West African linguistics, and West African archaeology. In 1939 Herskovits joined the executive board of London’s IIALC (by now renamed the International African Institute), a government-established administrative institution.\textsuperscript{73}

Given the continued contentiousness of African studies in the USA (for both Southern whites and African Americans), American philanthropic foundations enabled a remarkable number of black African and American scholars to study at the network of academic departments they had designed with the British government to explore native societies, many of which were based in the imperial metropole and had been set up to assist colonial administration. Kenneth King argues that blacks in America and Africa strongly resisted the condescending liberal educational programs devised for them by American philanthropic foundations and their British allies.\textsuperscript{74} However, this reading of black people’s response to educational efforts on their behalf ignores the extent to which

\textsuperscript{72} E. W. Smith to Dr. Thomas E. Jones, President, Fisk University, May 1, 1944, file 3, box 669, MP.

\textsuperscript{73} Gershenhorn, \textit{Herskovits}, 129.

Depression-era black intellectuals gladly harnessed the opportunity afforded by US philanthropy to study anthropology, sociology, and political science.\textsuperscript{75}

Throughout the 1930s, American-funded black scholars researched “the anthropology of the changing African”.\textsuperscript{76} After speaking alongside the IOE’s Fred Clarke at a Rockefeller-sponsored 1934 conference in South Africa, entitled, ‘Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society,’ Malinowski toured East Africa and became convinced of the need for a trained Kenyan to participate in anthropological field research to help resolve the political conflicts that continued to ravage the colony.\textsuperscript{77} In 1934, a Nigerian, Nathaniel Akinremi Fadipe, enrolled at the LSE as Malinowski’s doctoral student. Fadipe had been an LSE undergraduate between 1925 and 1929 until the Phelps-Stokes Fund endowed him with a two-year scholarship to study and travel in the USA. He spent the first year as a graduate student at Columbia University, where he obtained an M.A. degree in Sociology. Before the two-year program ended, Fadipe joined the faculty at Achimota College in the Gold Coast as its sole African instructor.\textsuperscript{78} He eventually completed his doctoral thesis, “The Sociology of the Yoruba” (his own

\textsuperscript{75} Marc Matera brilliantly explores the community of black intellectuals that sprang up in London during the interwar period, attracted by the new departments of colonial studies, anthropology, and political science fostered by the Colonial Office during this period. I supplement his enlightening study, by emphasizing the significance of American philanthropists – providing the blueprint and finances – in the creation of British colonial studies during this period. Matera, \textit{Black London}, particularly the chapter entitled, “Black Intellectuals and the Development of Colonial Studies in Britain,” 238-279.

\textsuperscript{76} Malinowski, “Practical Anthropology,” 22.

\textsuperscript{77} Berman and Lonsdale, “Custom, Modernity,” 182.

people), for which he also received IIALC funding.\(^{79}\) In 1936, Malinowski successfully petitioned the Rockefeller-funded IIALC to grant Kenyatta funding for anthropological research into his Kikuyu origins.\(^{80}\) In 1937, the IIALC’s periodical, *Africa*, published Kenyatta’s essay, “Kikuyu Religion, Ancestor-Worship, and Sacrificial Practices.”\(^{81}\)

Another black scholar who contributed to the legitimization of ethnographic studies of black peoples was Ralph Bunche, an African American political scientist at Howard University, who had received his Harvard doctorate in 1934. His thesis had focused on the impact of French colonial administration on Africans in Dahomey (a French colony) and Togoland (a League of Nations Mandate administered by France). When Bunche announced his intention to return to South, East, and West Africa to study the impact of colonial rule and Western culture on Africans in 1937, the Rockefeller-financed Social Science Research Council decided it would fund the visit only if he first spent two years studying anthropology under Herskovits at Northwestern University, with Malinowski in London, and a further period at the University of Cape Town under the supervision of Isaac Schapera, who had completed his PhD in Anthropology under Malinowski at the LSE.\(^{82}\) Under the rubric of anthropological scholarship, Bunche became the only African American until the 1950s to be funded by a private foundation

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\(^{79}\) “Report Presented to the Rockefeller Foundation on the Work of the Institute, July 1, 1931 – June 30,” (1939), folder 4, box 8, IAI.


to conduct research in Africa. While in London, Kenyatta taught Bunche Swahili and the two Malinowski students forged a close relationship.

Cautious Anglo-American planners kept tabs on black students during their sojourn in the British metropole, in order to pre-empt their radicalization. Already by the late 1920s, Oldham noted that “London alone” housed “over a hundred…African students,” and if the “West Indian students” were added, “the number would be considerably greater.” Oldham confided to his close friend Jones his worry that these colonial students were “practically without help” despite being “the class of students” needing “the most guidance.” On Oldham’s recommendation, the Colonial Office’s Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies (ACEC) formed an “unofficial” sub-committee aimed at facilitating these visitors’ inclusion into English student life. In 1934, the ACEC established Aggrey House as “a Club and social centre for coloured students in this country (Great Britain).” The House, financed jointly by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Colonial Office, would, ACEC Secretary, Hanns Vischer, hoped, facilitate “the peaceful progress of our various relations with the African people,” and especially improve communications with the black “young men” who would

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84 Oldham to Thomas Jesse Jones, November 24, 1928, folder 1, box 22, PSF.

85 “An Extract from a Memorandum by the Director of Colonial Scholars, 1927, on the Supervision of Colonial Government Scholars and Other Students from the Colonies,” box 226, CBMS/IMC.

86 John Maffey to Fred Keppel, September 26, 1935, folder 9, box 5, series III A 1, CCNY. See Matera, Black London, 55-57, for more information on Aggrey House.
subsequently attain positions of “influence and prestige when they return[ed] to their own countries.”

The aims of most white organizers of academic schemes remained the same as in the 1920s: preserving imperial stability by fostering a non-doctrinal ‘Christian’ civilization – albeit in a manner that superficially respected national differences and ‘native paramountcy’ – and strengthening capitalism in the face of a growing communist threat and the apparent failure of the old economic order. Malinowski, charged with teaching African culture to many of these black scholars, claimed that “present-day academic anthropology” must be “mobilized for the task of assisting colonial control.”

Kenyatta, a well-known Kenyan nationalist, was general secretary of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) from 1928, an organization founded by Kenyans in 1924 to win the return to Africans of land that had been appropriated for European settlement, and the release from imprisonment of Kenyan political leader, Harry Thuku. Kenyatta had toyed with Communism, spending the year 1932-1933 in Moscow. In order to gain financial assistance from the IIALC, Malinowski had to first convince Lugard of the non-sequitur that Kenyatta’s “political bias” had “been entirely eradicated by the constant impact of detached scientific method on his mental processes”, which he somehow managed to do, assuring Lugard that Kenyatta’s “considerable influence on Africans, and also on educated Africans in Kenya” would be a boon to colonial administrators, and

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87 Hanns Vischer to Keppel, September 25, 1935, folder 9, box 5, series III A 1, CCNY.

88 Malinowski, “Rationalization of Anthropology,” 408.

would help avert the “black bolshevism” they feared.\(^9\) Charles Loram endorsed Bunche’s application for a visa to tour South Africa, stressing the African American’s moderation: “I realize that it is not wise to encourage all and sundry of the American Negroes to visit South Africa, but I have every reason to believe that Dr. Bunche will…refrain from saying or doing anything which might make the position of the South African Government in any way more difficult than it is.”\(^9\)

Black scholars depicted traditional African societies as discrete units that were inherently different from, and ill-suited to, Western acculturation, mirroring the premises of Jones’s early-twentieth-century proposals for specific ethnic social organization and education. In the published version of his doctoral thesis, *Facing Mount Kenya*, Kenyatta depicted a Kikuyu culture in which no one was an “isolated individual”. Kenyatta emphasized that Kikuyu “outlook [was] essentially social” with “certain mutual claims which [were] generally assumed”; “first and foremost [the Kikuyu man was] several people’s relative and several people’s contemporary”. A European, literary education was inappropriate for this “complex community life”. Instead, the Kikuyu boy received a “social education”, “not just exercises for his own improvement, but real contributions to the needs of the group life”.\(^9\) Fadipe’s 1938 dissertation, *The Sociology of the Yoruba*, emphasized that the “co-operative spirit” of the Yoruba directly contrasted with the


\(^{91}\) Quoted by Robert R. Edgar, “Prologue” to *An African American in South Africa*, 16.

\(^{92}\) Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, 297-301.
“English practice” of individualism. Yoruba education did not center on books, but embodied a training in “the strength of kinship and neighbourly solidarity”.\footnote{Fadipe, \textit{Sociology of the Yoruba}, 303.}

African Americans similarly embraced a proud affiliation with black culture. African American singer and actor, Paul Robeson, of \textit{Show Boat} fame, who performed in London during the 1930s, required no philanthropic assistance to take advantage of the metropole’s new academic bodies. Robeson’s “first step” in the British capital had been to visit the academic institutions collaboratively formed during the interwar period by American philanthropic foundations and the British Colonial Office, where he had experienced a “home-coming”. There, studying African languages, Robeson had “penetrated to the core of African culture” and realized the essentially spiritual, cohesive, and social nature of black life.\footnote{Ibid, 311.} His wife, Eslanda Goode Robeson, attended Malinowski’s anthropology seminars at the LSE in 1934, and embarked on a 1936 visit to Africa to carry out field work to “see and meet and study and talk” with her “people on the home ground.” In her 1945 account of her African exploration, \textit{African Journey}, Eslanda Robeson describes her indignant response to being labeled “European” at anthropology lectures in London during the early ‘30s. To her British contemporaries, Robeson was “educated and cultured,” which reduced her “primitive,” “African” identity in their eyes. But she insisted otherwise: “What do you mean I’m European? I’m \textit{Negro}. I’m African myself. I’m what you call primitive. I have studied my mind, our minds.

\footnote{Paul Robeson, “Negroes – Don’t Ape the Whites.” (1935), file 3, box 667, MP.}
How dare you call me European!” The seeds of the black pride movement had been sown.

Contrary to the intentions of the colonialist academic institutions that hosted them, black intellectuals reveled in exploring pre-colonial African culture as self-sufficient, integrated social entities, in order to denounce the disruption caused by European imperialism, and to substantiate claims for Africa’s capacity for self-government. Kenyatta insisted that European appropriation of Kenyan land had taken “away not only [Kikuyu] livelihood, but the material symbol that [had held] family and tribe together”, and cut “away the foundations from the whole of Gikuyu [sic] life, social, moral, and economic”, creating a still unresolved chaos. To create order out of this social dislocation, the African would have to regain self-determination: “The African is conditioned, by the cultural and social institutions of centuries, to a freedom of which Europe has little conception, and it is not in his nature to accept serfdom for ever.” The final chapter of Fadipe’s dissertation, entitled, “Social and Cultural Change,” outlined the devastating impact of Western colonialism, which had destroyed all the “[s]ocial cohesion, mutual tolerance, co-operation and team work, disinterested social service and public spirit” that had previously characterized Yoruba life. If the Yoruba reclaimed autonomy and the power to control social change, “equilibrium” could be restored,


97 Pedersen, “National Bodies,” 652-654. Pedersen demonstrates that increased European, and African, attention to traditional rituals like female circumcision radicalized nationalistic groups like the KCA.

argued Fadipe.\textsuperscript{99} Eslanda Robeson’s \textit{African Journey} described the intricate “customs connected with the rites of initiation into adult life” that had flourished prior to the white man’s arrival and had constituted “inculcators of important virtues like bravery, tribal solidarity and respect for social authority.” Since colonialism, Africans had been taught instead “to know their place, or, as it [was] often more unctuously put, to be content with the station in life to which it [had] pleased God to call them.” Socialization to European norms subjugated black Africans, and upset a delicate African social order.\textsuperscript{100} The attempt to justify this subjugation by a suave and hypocritical appeal to religion – the white man’s burden – merely added insult to injury.

But although disdainful of white culture as a manifestation of imperialism, black anthropologists invoked Christian discourses in their privileging of African norms. The Church of Scotland Mission had attacked the practice of female circumcision (clitoridectomy) in Kenya in 1929, and in 1930 the House of Commons debated its legality. Liberal colonialists, in the midst of political debates regarding the legality of an East African federation, and now counting in their ranks some prominent new Labour Members of Parliament, continued to voice commitment to “native paramountcy,” and thus humane British trusteeship, in the face of white settler interests, by endorsing traditional African rituals like clitoridectomy. British feminists such as Eleanor Rathbone, whose numbers in Parliament had increased following the 1929 General Election, protested the custom’s savagery, and intervened to protect African women, emphasizing

\textsuperscript{99} Fadipe, \textit{Sociology of the Yoruba}, 326-327.

\textsuperscript{100} Robeson, \textit{African Journey}, 170.
the commonality of women’s interests across national lines.\textsuperscript{101} Kenyatta, called on by a cross-party parliamentary committee investigating the issue, drew on an entirely different culture and ideology. He argued that the custom had preserved the Kikuyu’s strict values, acquainting the newly circumcised with “all necessary rules and regulations governing social relationship between men and women”.\textsuperscript{102} The practice had de-sexualized women, preventing girls from developing dangerous “sexual feelings”.\textsuperscript{103} This was, he believed, a self-evidently desirable objective and compatible with Protestant ideals of chastity.

Ralph Bunche was dubious but resented the methods used by European officials to ban the Kikuyu \textit{Irua} (circumcision ceremony). In his 1941 essay describing the custom he had observed in Kenya, “The Irua Ceremony among the Kikuyu of Kiambu District, Kenya,” Bunche quoted the opinion of a Senior Chief of the Kikuyu, that the “circumcised girl was more careful about going around with men, because she knew that one day…the woman at whose hut the ceremony [was] being performed would drive away any uncircumcised girl who had been known to have had sexual relations…”\textsuperscript{104} Fadipe argued that the Yoruba custom of polygamy, which Christian missionaries were determined to eradicate, had prevented the emergence of “a class of people who would like the indulgence of sexual intercourse without its responsibilities” and a “class of girls


\textsuperscript{103} Kenyatta, \textit{Facing Mount Kenya}, 156.

\textsuperscript{104} Ralph J. Bunche, “The Irua Ceremony Among the Kikuyu of Kiambu District, Kenya,” \textit{The Journal of Negro History} 26, no. 1 (January 1941): 64.
now very familiar in Lagos”, who enjoyed “extra-marital association with men, especially men of fashion or means.”

The cultural assumption was that women were the sexual property of men.

Black thinkers fused their anger at the political colonization of Africa with critiques of Western capitalism at a time when it had failed so comprehensively. Bunche disapproved of racial chauvinism, and in his 1936 monograph, *A World View of Race*, argued that class, rather than race, should be the rallying call for social change, a view that would have triggered fears of a Communist agenda. Bunche nonetheless venerated African culture as a paradigm for utopian collective living. Bunche emphasized that, prior to alienation from their native lands under colonialism, the Kikuyu had shared their agricultural lands as a cooperative “group-unit.”

The alternative, Soviet synonym was of course “collective farm”, a term that would have struck a chill in the hearts of both British and American political leaders. Bunche’s speeches and diary entries from his African tour demonstrate that he valued black kinship. In 1937, Bunche addressed the students of the Native College of Fort Hare, South Africa, encouraging them to enhance their racial “self-confidence and pride.” Kenyatta stressed that every Kikuyu’s “personal needs, physical and psychological, [were] satisfied incidentally while he play[ed] his part as member of a family group.”

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Fadipe described the control of land in Yoruba territory as communal, underlining that in this agricultural community, “[n]o adult member of the community who [had] need of land [went] without it.” All that was missing was a reference to “each according to his ability” and “each according to his need”. Eslanda Robeson, whose husband was a prominent Communist sympathizer, remarked that “individual and private ownership of land” was “wholly foreign to African thought.” 109 Every member of the community had “a right to share” in the land’s “bounties” provided he carried out “his social and political obligations.” “Under this system no member of an African community” was “ever in want.” 110 What she was describing was a pre-urban, pre-capitalist, pre-industrial society determined to retain its cultural integrity. Paul Robeson’s African anthropological investigations impressed on him the artistic similarities between “Negro music” and Communist Russian and Chinese songs and poems, suggesting that in his view the political arrangements for these cultures should also align. Robeson was indeed an unabashed and vocal Communist. 111

The burgeoning community of black intellectuals brought together through their African research formed organizations to promote further studies, and raise public awareness of African matters. They formed a closely-knit network, mirroring the tight links that bound together the interwar field of anthropology more generally, an arena described by Adam Kuper as one that was “concerned with the movements of a handful


110 Ibid, 55.

111 Paul Robeson, “Negroes – Don’t Ape the Whites,” (1935), file 3, box 667, MP.
of people, who were very closely involved with one another." Kenyatta joined forces with Afro-Trinidadian, George Padmore, and other prominent pan-Africanists in London to create the International African Service Bureau (IASB) in 1937. Padmore had studied medicine at Fisk University, Tennessee, during the 1920s, and was now living in London after a brief stint in the Soviet Union in the early ‘30s, where he had become disillusioned with Communism. Bunche, a close friend of Kenyatta’s, attended one of the planning meetings for the IASB, and noted the breadth of the institution, which was “centered on” developing a “program for Africa”, and enhancing general understanding of the continent’s problems. In this respect, the IASB’s stated aims did not differ substantially from those of the American missionary “Africa Committee”. The IASB disseminated literature about the African continent, publishing a newsletter, *Africa and the World*, and a journal, *International African Opinion*.

Black Americans latched onto, and fostered, these international pan-African connections originating in African studies and interventions. Max Yergan, the African American Foreign Secretary of the Coloured Work Department of the YMCA, had been stationed at the Native College at Fort Hare in South Africa since 1922, and had been recruited by Jones to speak at the Colonial Office’s 1924 High Leigh Conference on Africa to provide a native perspective alongside Aggrey. In 1931, on a return trip to South Africa from the United States, Yergan spent a month in London, where he

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113 Quoted in Matera, *Black London*, 81.
befriended Paul Robeson.\textsuperscript{114} Eslanda Robeson stayed with Yergan during her African tour of 1936, and the following year she organized a meeting between Yergan and Ralph Bunche at her London home.\textsuperscript{115} Two days later, the Bunches hosted Yergan, together with Kenyatta, Padmore and several other pan-African sympathizers living in London, to discuss how black agitators around the world could develop their links with one another, and deepen global engagement with Africa. According to Matera, as a result of these meetings, the Robesons became key policymakers and financial patrons, and Bunche became an active member of the International Committee on African Affairs (ICAA) established that year by Robeson and Yergan in the USA, and which became the Council on African Affairs (CAA) in 1941.\textsuperscript{116} In 1938, Yergan summarized for Fred Keppel the ICAA’s concern with “those policies and programs affecting Africa which, in the broadest sense, will promote the progress of the African people.” The memorandum, co-signed by Robeson, affirmed that “social and economic cooperation,” unlike the individualism of Western capitalism, was “a traditional African institution.” In addition to questioning the justice of European control of Africa, the ICAA dedicated itself to challenging the “unequal distribution of raw materials, unequal access to and control of

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\item\textsuperscript{115} Robeson, \textit{African Journey}, 46.
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\end{footnotesize}
natural resources and insecurity in standards of living.”\textsuperscript{117} The battle was not merely ideological.

This internationalist pan-Africanism focused on British colonial crimes, more so than those of other European imperial powers, and fused them into a critique of American political and economic racial abuses. Penny Von Eschen, points out that the “African American anticolonial politics” that emerged during the 1930s had “a decided bias toward the Anglophone world.” Von Eschen notes that African American journalism, political organizing, and direct political support was almost exclusively related to British Africa, the Caribbean, southern Africa, and the USA. This was in part because African Americans regarded the French colonial model of assimilationism – educating African populations in the French language and culture to consider themselves part of the French state – as a more benign imperial paradigm than British indirect rule.\textsuperscript{118} Von Eschen also argues that shared language and culture bound black Americans, British Africans and Afro-Caribbeans together.\textsuperscript{119}

American philanthropists and British authorities had paradoxically helped solidify this “Anglo-American” black alliance during the 1930s, by encouraging black citizens of British colonies to study alongside African Americans in new educational institutions in the British metropole. The Rockefeller-sponsored International African Institute (IAI) was supposedly an international organization, as its name suggested, but the collusion between American philanthropic funders and the British government in its establishment

\begin{itemize}
    \item[117] Max Yergan to Fred Keppel, January 19, 1938, folder 4, box 185, series III A 4, CCNY.
    \item[118] For Bunche’s favorable impression of French, rather than British, modes of colonial rule in Africa, see Pedersen, \textit{The Guardians}, 324.
\end{itemize}
made it a largely Anglo-American, rather than for example, a French, organization, a fact reflected in the demography of its black student body.\textsuperscript{120}

Significantly and pragmatically, at this stage, British African and Afro-Caribbean activists, formulating political associations via imperial frameworks, did not demand a complete severing of ties with the Empire.\textsuperscript{121} In 1939, the Afro-Jamaican, Dr. Harold Moody, articulated “the position” of his London-based League of Colored Peoples to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Malcolm MacDonald, as “seeking to establish [their] spiritual, cultural and mental equality, as members of the British Empire, with every other member of that Empire and to embody the term ‘British Citizen’ with some meaning and some reality.”\textsuperscript{122} British Africans and Afro-Caribbeans desired a reformed, multiracial federation based on egalitarianism, akin to the rights now afforded to commonwealth nations like Canada.\textsuperscript{123}

American foundations had initially embraced an educational partnership with the British Empire as a means of advancing American corporate interests. But on the outbreak of the Second World War the alliance lost value for American concerns, and American philanthropists began to see advantages to themselves of an end to the British Empire, a narrative that will be taken up in Chapter 6. A separate, and sometimes overlapping, group that seized the opportunity to educate and research Africa for its own

\textsuperscript{120} American philanthropists noted the Anglo-American dominance of the IAI by the 1940s. See, for example, Memorandum of Interview, Jackson Davis, JHW and RFE, December 22, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, General Education Board Archives (hereafter GEB), Rockefeller Related Collections, Rockefeller Archive Center.

\textsuperscript{121} Matera, \textit{Black London}, 2.

\textsuperscript{122} Harold Moody to Malcolm Macdonald, December 7, 1939, file 2, box 742, MP.

\textsuperscript{123} Matera, \textit{Black London}, 59.
ends was women. The situation of white and black female educators and anthropologists differed from that of the predominantly male black scholars explored in this chapter, but as fellow outsiders, many women involved in researching Africa also began to use their investigations to challenge the norms and discourses of a society that excluded them.
CHAPTER 5:
WORLDLY WOMEN

I think a good deal of nonsense has been talked about the danger of women travelling alone... My own opinion on the subject is that it is wise to press for the appointment of women in medical service and educational posts. In both these spheres men will never be able to do as good work with women in many of the African communities as could women. It is becoming increasingly clear that unless the women are reached, policies of Government with regard to social amelioration will be held up.

Margaret Wrong, 1934.¹

Women, mainly white, participated extensively in the native research and training programs coordinated by British and American institutions between the wars. These female educators and scholars insisted that only their innate maternal and moral sensibilities could effectively cater to the unique educational needs of African women, children, and, by extension, all African populations, whom colonial rulers routinely identified as infantile. This was partly a ploy to secure recognition for women in an international diplomatic community from which they remained excluded in spite of interwar domestic political advances. Male politicians also chose to delegate the operation of colonial educational commissions, surveys, and interventions to women, in an effort to minimize the controversy contentious schemes would otherwise engender, by emphasizing these educators’ unthreatening, feminine charm. At the same time, Anglo-American female missionaries and academics were not just tools in a patriarchal order; ¹

¹ Margaret Wrong, Chair of the International Committee for Christian Literature in Africa, to Miss Sheepshanks, Council of Women Civil Servants (higher grade), February 2, 1934, box 10, International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa (hereafter ICCLA), Archives and Special Collections, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
they endeavored to transform social attitudes to women and black populations. Female educators’ pleas for a more compassionate socio-economic order proposed that the powerful in society should assist them, and pay attention to hitherto ostracized, struggling and oppressed groups, a far cry from the homogenizing, gender-blind rhetoric of some of their male peers.

Separate Education for African Women

Questions of co-education and equal educational opportunities for girls were at issue in Africa, as in England and the USA. Male colonial educators largely favored co-education for African populations. In 1924, Rev. A. G. Fraser, head of the Gold Coast’s new Achimota College and an admirer of Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, told Hanns Vischer, permanent Secretary of the Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa (ACETA), that he could not create an “educated community” without “the girls also.”

Achimota girls would “get exactly the same chances as boys…” In the same year, Dr. James E. K. Aggrey, the “Gold Coast Native” who had participated in both Phelps-Stokes Fund Educational Commissions, and served as Achimota’s Vice-Principal, advocated “co-education with the right kind of teacher” since it made for “progress.”

In 1927, Aggrey went further: “segregation during the school years” was “altogether

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2 Rev. A G Fraser to Major Vischer, November 15, 1924, box 207, CBMS/IMC.


4 “Notes from High Leigh Conference: The Education of Women and Girls,” September 11, 1924, box 207, CBMS/IMC.
Jones praised the “advantages” of “co-education”: there must “never be complete separation” between the education of boys and girls.” The education of “African woman” should “develop on parallel lines and simultaneously with that of her husband.” The reference to her “husband” is revealing; the implication is that educating African women was intended to benefit their menfolk rather than empowering themselves. But female Africans required “professional education,” and conversely “Home Education” did “not mean women and girls only. Boys and men should have teaching in it too.”

Male reformers argued that their appeal for educational gender parity complemented the reverence African societies traditionally showed women. Admittedly, they got this idea from contemporary reports on African gender discourses that were rarely written by indigenous people. Instead, they were authored by Western observers, blinkered by their own agendas and ideologies. Yet it seems clear that African cultures really did lack the nineteenth-century western gender binary between male providers and female homemakers, doubtless because African societies were structured on a more equal division of labor than in the industrialized west. Aggrey reported to the 1924 High Leigh Conference on African education: “Society in many parts of Africa is matrilineal. The mother has more control than the father, the children belong to her…African women have much power, can lead armies, etc.”

Jones’s 1924 report, *Education in East Africa*,

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5 “Notes of a Meeting of the Group on the Education of African Women and Girls,” May 27, 1927, box 207, CBMS/IMC.

6 Notes of interview with Dr. Jones, January 7, 1925; Excerpts from Thomas Jesse Jones, *Phelps-Stokes Commission, East and South*, Chapter 16, “The Education of Women and Girls,” box 207, CBMS/IMC.

7 “Notes from High Leigh Conference: The Education of Women and Girls,” September 11, 1924, box 207, CBMS/IMC
argued for the “importance of women’s education” precisely because “in many tribes she
wields far-reaching influence; in religious matters she often leads. Her work in household
and in field is notable…The Queen Mother of Swaziland was a ruler as potent as Khama
himself.”

White male thinkers’ preference for co-education also emanated from their desire
to distinguish African from English social norms or to vindicate contemporary American
pedagogy. As early as 1903, the British members of the Moseley Educational
Commission to America had remarked with astonishment that “the education of women”
was “exceptionally well provided for, as might be expected in a country where women
ha(d) equal rights and opportunities with men, and receive(d) especial deference.” Of
course this was untrue of a continent in which women lacked basic political and
economic parity, but nor could the Old World boast such equality. During his 1925 tour
of the educational institutions of the American South, James Dougall, head of the Jeanes
school in Kabete, Kenya, observed in amazement that “[n]obody here believes in the
male teacher for Jeanes work and so far I have not found this work done by men
anywhere.” Although the philanthropic foundations and counties that jointly paid the
salaries of female African American Jeanes teachers ostensibly charged these educators

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8 Excerpt from Jones, *The Education of East Africa*, chapter 16, box 207, CBMS/ IMC.

2014), 67-68. Koven remarks that British thinkers in the 1890s saw private co-educational
schools as “American,” although English state primary schools were co-educational. Gale Kenny
identifies the religious impetus for revolutionary early-nineteenth-century American educational
institutions like Oberlin that offered the same curriculum for its male and female students. Kenny
notes that Oberlin did, however, reinforce an ideology for separate spheres, as these colonial
officials did too. See Kenny, *Contentious Liberties: American Abolitionists in Post-Emancipation

10 James Dougall to Oldham, March 1, 1925, box 244, CBMS/ IMC.
with developing a “suitable” (i.e., industrial) curriculum for rural schools, the breadth and depth of their supervisory positions were much more significant. The Jeanes teachers served as de facto superintendents of rural black schools, and exercised considerable leadership over an array of communal, religious, and educational institutions, coordinating their activities with local school and political officials.\(^{11}\) The notion that this important role was almost exclusively filled by black women was relatively emancipated by conservative English standards.

Aggrey vociferously endorsed co-education for African students. He argued that in African colonies it was ludicrous to keep “the girls and boys…separate” as was the norm in private English education: “In Africa you say that our ideas are not the same as the ideas here (in England).” To create “a culture where the man and wife will be equal they should be trained together.”\(^{12}\) “Equal” in this context meant economically productive; in the wealthier and more developed UK, it was still the norm for middle-class married women to exit the workplace and become full-time home-makers. By contrast, most African wives could not afford to give up work. In 1927, when the Northern Rhodesian Jeanes school was established, it was “for the training both of boys and girls as teachers.”\(^{13}\)

By contrast, female reformers, most of whom hailed from backgrounds in social welfare institutions like the settlement houses, or missionary groups like the Young


\(^{12}\) “Notes from High Leigh Conference: The Education of Women and Girls,” September 11, 1924. Box 207, CBMS/ IMC.

\(^{13}\) Miss Betty Gibson to Oldham, March 17, 1927, box 244, CBMS/ IMC.
Women’s Christian Association (YWCA), expected African women to be educated distinctively, and studied as a separate anthropological category from men. Dr. Sara Burstall, retired Headmistress of the famous Manchester High School for Girls and first female member of the British government’s Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa, recommended that for African girls “hygiene and housecraft” were “vital matters.” The African woman would “naturally become a wife and mother and have a home to care for,” and preparing for that should be the “one aim” of her education.\(^\text{14}\) The “work among women and girls in an African village,” even more than for men, should “be carried out in the vernacular,” since women were unlikely to leave the local environment.\(^\text{15}\) Cause and effect was slightly confused here. Men might learn English and find enhanced employment prospects in the cities; women, stranded in remote villages, enjoyed no such opportunities. Burstall apparently found this an entirely satisfactory state of affairs. Female missionary, Margaret Wrong, opined romantically, “the mother tongue speaks to the heart as a foreign tongue can never speak,” terminology that firmly situated women as nurturers of young children and denied them the opportunity to learn a language that might lead to their economic, political and social empowerment.\(^\text{16}\) Wrong took it upon herself to decide which language best suited the infantilized female population of Africa. In the same spirit, and without irony, the


\(^{16}\) Margaret Wrong, “Notes for a speech to be given in NYC in 1934,” box 10, ICCLA.
unmarried Wrong pronounced that marriage fell “within the purview of the school” for African women.17

The aim, conscious or not, was to strengthen the traditional family ties that, these white activists declared, formed the bedrock of stable societies, thereby excluding African women from other career possibilities. While her husband, William McGregor Ross, served as Director of Public Works in the East Africa Protectorate, Isabel McGregor Ross coordinated the East African Women’s League in 1917, and was instrumental in obtaining the vote for European women in elections to the Legislative Council of Kenya in 1919. After the couple returned to England in 1922, they became involved in emergent Labor party politics, and an array of international, especially African, causes.18 In 1925, Isabel Ross wrote a pamphlet for the Conference of British Missionary Societies regarding the “Education of the East African Native, especially the Women.” Ross argued that, because it was “upon them [the women] that the future of the race [would] chiefly depend, they should be trained especially to be good mothers and home-keepers.”19 According to English missionary, Mrs. Fisher, the “strenuous duties that devolve[d] on [African] women,” including “the entire production of food for the household; for the drawing of water; gathering of firewood; cutting grass for thatching

17 Margaret Wrong to Fred Keppel, August 12, 1937, box 376, folder 1, series III A 9, CCNY; Margaret Wrong Broadcast talk for the BBC, “Schools and Education,” transcribed in East Africa, March 8, 1934, box 10, ICCLA.


19 Isabel McGregor Ross, “Notes on the Education of the East African Native, especially the Women,” 1925, box 207, CBMS/ IMC.
the huts and the flooring; taking their produce to the markets for exchange or barter; and cooking the daily meal,” left “but small opportunity for schooling.” This unpaid housework was a cruel betrayal, according to Mrs. Fisher, who believed that African women should be educated to “stimulate moral consciousness,” and to “fit the girl and woman for their life’s avocation as wife and mother…” Better a Stepford Wife than a resentful slave. But even Mrs. Fisher showed no awareness of the link between education and economic development for the nation as a whole.

Other schools tried to reproduce home roles. Mabel Shaw, one of the first two women missionaries whom the London Missionary Society sent out to Central Africa in 1915, opened a school for girls at Mbereshi, Northern Rhodesia. Shaw’s students addressed her as “Mama,” and she divided the school into different houses, on the model of an English boarding school, with each house mother responsible for keeping her “home” clean and orderly. Each year a “new family” was written into the “House Book.” The “home” promoted an array of occupations, and female missionaries set themselves to train African women in vocations such as “elementary teachers, instructors

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20 Mrs. Fisher, “Education of Women” (undated), box 207, CBMS/ IMC.

21 Edward Shillito, “Foreword” in Mabel Shaw, God’s Candlelights: an educational venture in Northern Rhodesia (London: The Livingstone Press, 1932), 7, file 29, Mabel Shaw Papers, (hereafter MS), MS 380319, Archives and Special Collections, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

22 Mabel Shaw, God’s Candlelights, 127. Seth Koven demonstrates that this educational trend for inculcating in students a sense of “corporate domesticity” prevailed in early-twentieth-century British schools, ranging from the progressive Scottish boarding school for girls, St. Leonard’s, to proposals for cottage households that social reformers like Henrietta Barnett proposed to replace former Poor Law schools with. Match Girl, 71.
in native handicrafts, drill, dancing and games mistresses, midwives, nurses and teachers of hygiene, health and child welfare.”

Black women also emphasized the distinctiveness of the woman’s sphere. Eslanda Robeson catalogued the unique customs of African women, ordinarily “well in the background and usually out of sight”, in *African Journey* (1945), the account of her 1936 anthropological tour of Africa. As a woman, Robeson relished her rare ability to enter the women’s private “courtyards,” and bring to light these women’s experiences. She investigated African “women’s work” such as “[m]edicine plants and medical knowledge,” about which “Royal women especially” knew “a great deal,” and studied the “customs” of the herdswomen of the Kingdom of Toro, in Uganda, by learning how they “managed” the combination of “husband, home, and children.” Robeson shared “gales of laughter” with the herdswomen after enjoying girl talk – “a lot of gossip” together, and examining “each other’s hair, skin, clothes.” And they bonded over questions of “how they brought up their children, how their men treated them, how they dressed, whether they went to school with men.” African men might debate questions of politics and economics, or, for that matter, history, science, and the meaning of life. The women were comfortable, according to Robeson, in the domestic domain, discussing motherhood and fashion.

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23 Mrs. Fisher, “Education of Women,” box 207, CBMS/IMC.


British and American women’s domestic political rights expanded during the interwar period. After a bitter, protracted battle for female suffrage, the 1918 Representation of the People Act finally gave the franchise to British women over thirty who met minimum property qualifications. Unmarried British women gained admission to the lower grades of the British Home Civil Service in 1919. The Equal Franchise Act of 1928 awarded the vote to all women over the age of twenty-one on equal terms with men, causing the number of female Members of Parliament to rise from four to fourteen in the General Election of the following year. American women (excluding female African American residents of the South) also won their lengthy crusade for suffrage after the First World War when Congress ratified the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1920. The 1920s constituted a decade in which many American women – single and married – enjoyed new political and economic opportunities.

But British and American women found that their international diplomatic choices remained limited in spite of domestic political advances. This was especially true during the 1930s, when economic contraction led women to lose newly acquired domestic posts. In 1930, Elsie Tosterin wrote to Margery Perham, her former tutor in “Modern Greats” at St. Hugh’s College, a women’s college at Oxford University. Perham became a Research Lecturer in the emergent field of Colonial Administration only in 1935. Oxford introduced the degree of “Modern Greats” (Philosophy, Politics, and Economics)

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as an alternative to the classical “Greats” course during the 1920s to better train male and female members of the Civil Service to facilitate British competitiveness on the world stage. Tosterin thanked Perham for encouraging her to study PPE instead of History, as she had initially intended, and praised Perham for guiding her inquiries in the “valuable” field of “Local Government,” and preparing her for a career in public service. Since the late nineteenth century, local government had constituted an arena for female activism, in part because of women’s pedagogical roles. Women who paid local rates (mainly widows) had been able by the late Victorian era to vote in local elections for Boards of Guardians, school boards, and city councils, and had been eligible to be elected as School Board members or guardians if they were ratepayers. The 1918 Representation of the People Act had quadrupled the female local government electorate. Working with Perham had inspired Tosterin to choose her final “schools paper” on two topics in which she had become “especially interested”: the “City Manager” and “English Local Government from 1834 to 1929.”

By the time Tosterin graduated, her ambitions as a civic-minded British woman did not have to be restricted to local governmental activities, but her choices were still limited by her gender. She proudly informed her mentor that she was “now a Civil Servant of the administrative grade,” allowing her to “be in the public serving & to help govern the Country, to help draft & administer legislation.” Yet while her male peers “elected to go into the Foreign Office, the Indian & the Irish Services,” Miss Tosterin

30 Pedersen, Eleanor Rathbone, 44. Already in the late nineteenth century, Pedersen argues, Oxford had been tailoring its “Greats” degree to improve its international strength.

31 Pedersen, Eleanor Rathbone, 92.

32 Ibid, 150.
deplored finding herself in “not at all the department” she wanted (the Foreign Office) on account of her sex.\footnote{Elsie Tosterin to Miss Perham, October 13, 1930, file 1, box 9, MP.} In the 1919 parliamentary discussion of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill dealing with female civil appointments, even the emancipated Liberal peer Lord Haldane noted the “many appointments into which nobody wishes to put women,” citing as examples, dangerous “appointments in India, and others of a special kind.”\footnote{Quoted in Helen McCarthy, \textit{Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat} (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 89.} The resulting legislation denied overseas posts to women, a principle upheld in 1930 in the belief “that women could not go to very many places, primitive, unhealthy places among natives such as West Africa.”\footnote{Miss Sheepshanks to Margaret Wrong, February 6, 1934, box 10, ICCLA.} This was despite the example of Gertrude Bell’s important exploration of Iraq in 1909, to mention only one intrepid female traveller of this period.

Overseas options were little better for American women. The US Foreign Service exam had theoretically been open to all, regardless of sex, since 1883. But while a number of American women in the 1920s passed the preliminary written test, only a handful convinced the board of examiners, during the final interview, of their suitability for overseas service. In 1936, the first female American diplomat, Ruth Bryan Owen, stationed in Denmark since 1933, became engaged to a Dane. Many male diplomats had married foreigners without arousing concerns about pillow talk, but the State Department pressured Owen to resign. Marriage remained off limits to female career diplomats in the US Foreign Service until 1971.\footnote{McCarthy, \textit{Women of the World}, 103-104.}
Black American women faced even more severe restrictions. A large number of African American men and women in the South remained disenfranchised throughout this period. Opportunities for international travel, let alone diplomacy, were limited for Eslanda Robeson on account of her race and gender. She faced numerous obstacles trying to secure visas for her tour of South Africa, Uganda, and the Belgian Congo in 1936. When South Africa refused to grant Robeson the requisite papers for her trip, she refused to cancel, and was forced to seek a letter of introduction from a white man to vouch for her character and ambitions in undertaking the tour. J. D. Rheinallt Jones, the Welsh-born founder of the South African Institute for Race Relations, a group sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund and Carnegie Corporation, wrote the necessary letter of recommendation for Robeson.37

Female education in Africa, and anthropological research in the continent, provided fertile opportunities for ambitious white, and a handful of elite black, women. Designing “certain special schools…only for girls, e.g., marriage training schools”, or emphasizing that the needs of African women warranted separate inquiry, necessitated “a greater proportion of women on the staffs” of African “schools, as well as on the staffs of the Departments of Education in the inspecting and administrative branches.”38 As a headmistress, well acquainted with female education in “English schools,” Burstall believed she should “seize the opportunity of addressing…the great work which [lay]...


38 “Conclusions and Recommendations from Sub-Committee on Education of Women and Girls (SCWG) Meeting of the ACEC,” December 4, 1939, file 3, box 718, MP.
before English women of this generation in ministering to their sisters in Africa.”

In 1925, McGregor Ross proposed that “on all the committees…created here [England] and in the colonies connected with education of any sort…at least two [white] women should be appointed.”

British women were only granted entry to the Foreign Office in 1946, but in 1925, the year of its creation, the Colonial Office’s Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa appointed Burstall as a member. By 1939, three of the thirteen members of what had become the more general Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies (ACEC) were women. That year, partly as a result of the outbreak of war, the ACEC established a Sub-Committee for the Education and Welfare of Women and Girls (SCWG). The “Main Conclusions and Recommendations” of the SCWG meeting of December 1939 advised, “more European women should be employed in the appropriate branches of Government service,” and that women should be “appointed at once to responsible posts in the Department of Education and in those parts of the Department of Health which [came] into direct contact with the public.” The Recommendations suggested “a further inquiry or survey at the earliest possible time” into the question of African female education, specifying that it “should be conducted by two or three women with wide educational experience accompanied by a sociologist.”

A November 1939 SCWG Memorandum proposed that more teaching “be given on agriculture, health and domestic science” to African women, adding that “so far as girls’

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40 Ibid.

41 “Conclusions and Recommendations from SCWG Meeting,” December 4, 1939, file 3, box 718, MP.
education [was] concerned the teaching could probably best be given by women teachers.”

Margaret Wrong’s life illustrates the extent to which the rubric of educating African women afforded white women new options. Wrong was born in Canada in 1887, and after attending Havergal College in Toronto, read History at Somerville College, Oxford. The university at that time was a fertile ground for philosophical idealism, and the all-women’s college allowed Wrong to identify with other women equally committed to progressive social improvement and feminist ideals. After graduating from Oxford in 1914, she became involved with the YWCA, the World Christian Student Federation, settlement houses, and in 1926, the British Student Christian Movement appointed Wrong as a secretary. That year, the Phelps-Stokes Fund commissioned her to undertake an educational survey of Africa alongside Mabel Carney, Professor of Rural Education at Columbia University’s Teachers College, and the two subsequently became close friends. By the time of Wrong’s death in 1954, recalled Carney, her life since that initial African visit had been “crammed with travel, writing, speech making, fund raising, and of course sitting on committees.” In 1929, the British and American missionary societies had jointly created the International Committee on Christian Literature for

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42 “Recommendation by Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire,” November, 1939 meeting of the SCWG, file 3, box 718, MP.

43 Pedersen, Eleanor Rathbone, 45-51.

44 Agnes Wrong Armstrong, “There’s Too Much Waiting to be Done,” Eulogy for Margaret Wrong, Food For Thought (periodical of the Canadian Association for Adult Education), March, 1956, box 10, ICCLA; Thomas Jesse Jones to Dr. W. S. Richardson (potential donor), January 12, 1926, box 26.7.020, IMC.

45 Armstrong quotes Mabel Carney in, “There’s Too Much Waiting to be Done,” box 10, ICCLA.
Africa (ICCLA), appointing Wrong as its head.\textsuperscript{46} In her eulogy on Wrong, Carney noted that this position had “multiplied endlessly” the number of “[c]onference committees, government committees, mission committees” Wrong sat on “on both sides of the Atlantic.” She “was a member of the Colonial Office Commission on Mass Education, and of the Linguistic Commission of the International African Research Institute”. On the outbreak of war, she was appointed “West African consultant in the Ministry of Information and the BBC asked her assistance in the preparation of scripts for Africa.”\textsuperscript{47}

Although not all men agreed that African women required particular research or treatment, both men and women recognized that the gender of female educators and researchers of native life could be exploited as a means of avoiding controversy, allowing for the implementation of contentious colonial policies. According to Joan Malczewski this calculation had been a significant factor in the election of foundation managers to employ women, rather than men, as Jeanes teachers in the South: “they were perceived as nonthreatening by local whites.”\textsuperscript{48} In 1925, Joseph Oldham warned Jones that the danger that must be “guarded against” was to avoid creating “the impression that Africa [was] being over-commissioned.” Oldham advised that, given the “psychology” of “the British official world,” British administrators and civil servants would “feel a good deal humiliated” if an “international authority” were given “the last word on rural problems and women’s education.”\textsuperscript{49} Jones reassured Oldham that Carney would be able to

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\textsuperscript{46} “Minutes of meeting of Committee on Christian Literature in Africa,” April 26, 1929, box 10, ICCLA.

\textsuperscript{47} Armstrong quotes Carney in, “There’s Too Much Waiting to be Done,” box 10, ICCLA.

\textsuperscript{48} Malczewski, \textit{Building a New Educational State}, 84.

\textsuperscript{49} Oldham to Jones, December 15, 1925, folder 1, box 22, PSF.
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investigate African conditions without raising opposition: “Miss Carney’s personal appearance, her modesty, and her sympathy” would “tend to allay any suspicions.”

Carney observed that although Wrong was “a comparative or absolute stranger to everyone” in Africa, being “a young woman of rare charm,” her “alert observation, tactful questioning, and sprightly conversation” made everyone “eager to meet her,” and she was soon “deluged with inquiries about speaking, requests for personal interviews, and invitations to tea and meetings of various types.”

Intelligence was evidently neither expected nor required of women, who seem to have been viewed as a bridge – the ‘missing link’ – between highly evolved, civilized white men and a less evolved sub-group of homo sapiens.

Women celebrated their gendered civilizing mission, infantilizing non-Europeans in the process. Margaret Read was a Malinowski-trained anthropologist, acting head of the Colonial Department of the Institute of Education from 1941, its official chair by 1945. She was also the British delegate to the 1946 and 1947 General Conferences for UNESCO, the newly formed United Nations agency devised to promote international collaboration through education, scientific, and cultural reforms. Paradoxically, given Read’s eventual political role in UNESCO, she argued in 1936 that female educators and social anthropologists responsible for researching and training natives should not intervene politically; they performed their traditional duty of nurturing a society that

50 Jones to Oldham, December 23, 1925, folder 1, box 22, PSF.

51 Armstrong quotes Carney in, “There’s Too Much Waiting to be Done,” box 10, ICCLA; Mabel Carney, 1954 Tribute to Margaret Wrong on the 25th Anniversary of the ICCLA, “As Unknown and Yet Well-known in memoriam Margaret Christian Wrong,” box 10, ICCLA.
British officials considered “still in its infancy.”52 Read wrote from the Msandili Reserve in Northern Rhodesia that it was “no good being scientific with these village people unless you (were) friends first,” and female compassion was an asset in the field.53 The Times Literary Supplement’s 1932 review of Margaret Read’s study, From Field to Factory, praised the book’s “warmth of feeling.”54

Men and women underlined the femininity, and unthreatening nature, of female interlocutors of native societies all the more strongly as colonial and American opposition to the British Empire and American racial injustice increased. Educational projects were now directed more frequently at “non-primitive” audiences. Despite the post-World War I creation of international organizations like the League of Nations, it remained contentious in the interwar period for a foreign entity to attempt to influence the internal affairs of another country; one of Wilson’s main aims at the Paris peace talks had been to ensure autonomy for all nations. This principle allowed the British government repeatedly to refuse to condemn edicts such as the Nuremberg Laws of 1935; the reality was that there was no appetite in England for an expensive and potentially disastrous confrontation with Germany over its domestic affairs. But the policy came under increasing strain as totalitarian fascist and communist regimes gained strength and popularity during the 1930s, threatening the European balance of power.55 The British

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52 Margaret Read, “The Study of Emigrant Labour and its Affects [sic.] on Tribal Life,” (first draft of an article or for a chapter in a book, sent to Margery Perham), 1936, box 254, MP.

53 Circular letter written by Read from the Msandili Reserve, May 12, 1935, Margaret Read Archive (hereafter MR), University College London Institute of Education Library, MR/ A/ 1.

54 Clipping from Times Literary Supplement, May 19, 1932, MR/ B/ 1.

were especially cautious about offending the USA, given America’s “abnormal sensitiveness to any suspicion, however false, of foreign interference.” When Great Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939, it became critical to mitigate American hostility to colonial rule and win US support for the battle against Nazi Germany and its allies. The British government commissioned a number of women to visit the USA and British territories overseas to win support and improve the optics of Empire. According to Mary McCarthy, “these women were selected to perform an unmistakably public form of diplomacy which focused primarily on winning hearts and minds, rather than the more conventional diplomatic work of influencing power-brokers in government.” The British government clearly believed women to be particularly suited to this form of “soft” diplomacy.

Margery Perham’s wartime activities typify this ‘female’ diplomacy. In 1944, the British government’s propaganda agency, the Ministry of Information, and its American outpost, the British Information Service (BIS), sent Perham, Oxford University’s Reader in Colonial Administration and member of the SCWG, on a tour of the United States and the West Indies. The BIS briefed Perham – rather condescendingly – “that the success of their show arose from the avoidance of all overt propaganda.” Contrary to McCarthy’s contention that women were not involved in policy making or political negotiation, Perham’s trip included meetings with a number of traditional “power brokers in


58 Transcribed diary of Margery Perham’s West Indies trip (that included a visit to the USA), entry for Monday, June 5, 1944, file 6, box 51, MP.
government,” including one at the State Department in Washington with Henry Villard and Ralph Bunche of the African Affairs Department. Perham played up her feminine charm to disarm opposition and distrust. When faced with a “demonstration of disbelief and hostility” from an audience at the University of Chicago’s Anthropology Department, Perham “was not propagandist, of course,” reacting instead with “the utmost courtesy and good humour.”

Her unvarying “restraint and courtesy” throughout her visit is contrasted in her diary with descriptions of the aggressive “lions” – “radio men” with whom she had to contend. It is significant that Perham chose to cite her feminine charm, rather than the strength of her case, evidence and arguments, as the most important weapon in her armory.

Playing the same card, Eslanda Robeson used gendered literary tools to soften her insubordinate writing. Robeson, a black woman engaged in anthropological work usually undertaken by “white students and teachers,” authored a tome that petitioned to “bring the facts” of the “shameful treatment” Africans “have received and are now receiving at the hands of the white man…clearly and directly before the people of Europe, in Europe,” pleading for the “simple honest man in England, France, America, or elsewhere” to intervene. She defused the strength of her appeal as a black woman to white men by recounting her African visit in muted terms that modestly downplayed her role and skills. Robeson had addressed a Ugandan Chief “the best” she could, in spite of her not being “wordy”. It was, after all, a woman’s place to be seen and not heard. In her

59 Diary of Perham’s West Indies trip, Friday, June 2, 1944, file 6, box 51, MP.
60 Diary of Perham’s West Indies trip, Monday, June 5, 1944, file 6, box 51, MP.
61 Robeson, African Journey, 11.
place, Robeson insisted, her husband, Paul “would have made a perfect speech”, due to his “stature.”62 Apparently contrasting the public speaking skills of a single couple, the self-deprecating comment implicitly defined men as the only legitimate public voice. And she ventured on her tour not as an anthropologist or other professional, but as a tender “Mamma,” accompanied by her “beloved only child,” harnessing powerful religious imagery of the Madonna and Jesus.63

But to some extent, Anglo-American female reformers enhanced their autonomy at the expense of the African women they claimed to assist. Training African women “in marriage and matters of morality” was urgent, according to the missionary Mrs. Fisher, as a means of controlling the “new liberty” which African women “too often prostituted” in the absence of former, pre-colonial “restraints on social and communal life,” and in the face of “new temptations” with which they were “unfit to cope.”64 The corollary of this argument, of which Mrs. Fisher appears unaware, is that African women had fared better before the interference of white missionaries like herself. But for puritanical reformers like Mrs. Fisher, ‘education’ was clearly a euphemism for ideological and social control. By positioning African women in the home, white female educators helped to ensure that African men were more likely than their female counterparts to have “direct contact with the language...of colonial power.”65 Robeson was forced to talk to the African women

62 Ibid, 123.
63 Ibid, 14.
64 “Notes of Meeting on the Education of Women and Girls,” June 24, 1927, box 207, CBMS/IMC.
she encountered “through an interpreter,” while many of the male Africans she met, such as the Ugandan “Moshaloga,” spoke “English perfectly.”

In the second half of the twentieth century it was African men, and not women, who achieved eminence in political spheres, despite pre-colonial female agency in these arenas.

White and African-American women also disadvantaged themselves and their African activities by dutifully subscribing to patriarchal discourses. White male financial sponsors already derided their white female colleagues. Charles Dollard, philanthropic fund manager of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, cynically accused Margaret Wrong of being “out to get what she can,” and thought social anthropologist, Laura Boulton, “[c]onsiderably more charming than the women RML (Robert Lester) usually passe[d] off on CD (Dollard).”

The Carnegie Corporation’s archives are peppered with financial requests from men like Joseph Oldham and Fred Clarke, who are never accused of being overly forceful or lacking in subtlety. By appropriating gendered norms, female educators did nothing to challenge or alter these perceptions of women. Despite Perham’s extensive input in both academia and international relations, by 1945 she was forced to write to Henry Clay, Warden of the supposedly progressive Nuffield College, of which she was the first fellow (male or female), requesting “an improvement in…status and salary.” Perham underlined the “contribution” she had made to her “subject…in books and articles and in other ways,” feats that had “indeed been recognised outside Oxford, as

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68 *Memorandum of Interview*, Margaret Wrong and Charles Dollard, January 8, 1940, folder 1, box 376, series III A 9, CCNY; *Memorandum of Interview*, Charles Dollard and Laura Boulton, June 12, 1939, folder 15, box 60, series III A, CCNY.
for instance, by honours from Societies,” and by being given “important responsibilities by the Colonial Office.” Nonetheless, Perham had “lately seen very young men…beginning their careers given almost the same salary” she received. For Perham, salary represent[ed] status…as much as money,” and it was “especially important to a woman who [had] many more obstacles to meet in doing a job” like hers than Clay might “probably realise.”

Clay responded by suggesting that Perham minimize her workload, a proposal that angered her, evidenced by her scribbled, “No – hardly that,” across Clay’s letter.

Georgina Gollock, British editor of the missionary movement’s periodical, the *International Review of Missions*, was regularly compelled to request money from the Phelps-Stokes Fund, since she was “dependent on” their “generous gift[s].” Most of the female protagonists of this narrative encountered similar hardships.

**A Call for Change**

Female reformers did not regard their broad and compassionate gender profile as an impediment, but as enabling them to deal sensitively with indigenous peoples. An open, liberal transatlantic print culture had emerged in the eighteenth century, collapsing neat distinctions between the domestic and public spheres. And the related, strengthening of philosophical and religious notions of an innate female maternal nature and moral sensibility had only multiplied, not contracted, the communal, civic, opportunities

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69 Margery Perham to Sir Henry Clay, February 1, 1945, file 1, box 255, MP.

70 Clay to Perham, November 13, 1947, file 1, box 255, MP.

71 Georgina Gollock to Thomas Jesse Jones, July 7, 1930, folder 9, box 20, PSF.
available to women. These women did not perceive instructing other women about liberal Christianity or motherhood as confining them to a sterile life of drudgery within the home. At a 1939 SCWG meeting, Perham “emphasized (fellow member) Miss Oakden’s remarks…that the obsession for teaching domestic science should be shown up as doing positive harm rather than good.” Miss Oakden conceded it was “important to produce better wives and girls capable of being trained as teachers or workers in the medical field,” but wanted to ensure that African women retained their powerful “emotional drive.” Oakden “deprecated…English suburban respectability,” despairing of men who demanded wives who “could pour out tea when a European came to visit them.”

Female aid and education workers wanted to celebrate the qualities that distinguished them from a tainted patriarchal order. According to the Institute of Education’s Colonial Department, the entire field of applied social anthropology rested on the idea that to create a coherent imperial whole, officers “must have an understanding of the special” and “different patterns of thought and language” in the colonies.

Learning about a “social environment” was important in creating a sympathetic

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74 “Notes from SCWG Meeting,” November 17, 1939, file 3, box 718, MP.

75 “Aims and Activities of the Colonial Department, Institute of Education,” 1935, IE/ COL/ 3/ 1.
community and a sense of belonging.\textsuperscript{76} Wider educational schemes, professed to recognize, albeit superficially, the vibrant particularism of native life. Similarly, these white women did not want to eradicate their unique, gendered contribution to society. Women should be investigated to assure that their distinctive needs were honored, and catered for.

Female reformers argued that their humane tenderness could wield social change in a ruthless, patriarchal order. Their religious and educational writings reflected changing ideals. The First World War had shattered respectable Victorian conventions, and interwar psychologists and writers now discussed sex frankly.\textsuperscript{77} The religion promoted by missionary, Mabel Shaw, was a non-doctrinal, organic, vaguely feminized one, “in harmony with life in all its manifestations,” (whatever that meant), as opposed to the rigid Christianity “of the white man’s wisdom and cunning.”\textsuperscript{78} In her book, \textit{God’s Candlelights: an educational venture in Northern Rhodesia} (1932), Shaw described herself as “not greatly concerned with…the standard set up (and not always lived up to) by the Church in the West…to put it mildly.” Instead, closely echoing the ideas of the writer D.H. Lawrence and of the progressivist movement of the 1920s that had produced schools like Summerhill, Shaw taught that “sex life” was part of the “life more abundant,” allowing “the very growth and development of the body” to become “a normal and happy thing for which we give thanks.”\textsuperscript{79} She derided “forms and

\textsuperscript{76} “Strictly Private and Confidential: The Education of African Peoples: Report of Conference of Directors of Education in East Africa,” Tanganyika, 1933, box 253, CBMS/IMC.

\textsuperscript{77} Pedersen, \textit{Eleanor Rathbone}, 171-173.

\textsuperscript{78} Mabel Shaw, \textit{God’s Candlelights}, Author’s preface, 11.

conventions,” the material “trappings of a modern missionary,” and resented “the coming of motor cars and steamers and aeroplanes, and the springing up of European towns and settlements everywhere.” Shaw idealized the African “men, women, children, all…in the garden,” where there was “rich glad life everywhere” that seemed “so very much more attractive.”

Female educators and anthropologists admired the collective, and – what they perceived as – less brutal, African forms of economic organization. Perham embraced Christian compassion to “control economic forces…in the interests of society,” at “home,” and “in Africa.” Unlike Shaw, Perham did not romanticize “the noble savage,” but distrusted the “economic fatalism” of free markets that “paralyses criticism, and lulls conscience.” Eslanda Robeson also disdained “the believer in the noble savage,” but her Communist sympathies led her to admire the communal, inclusive African lifestyle, which had taught her “a great deal about the very important business of living,” and consequently “rearranged” her “sense of values to some considerable extent, in accordance with the “leisurely approach, the calm facing of circumstances and making the most of them” she observed, “very different from the European hustle and hurry and drive, and worry and frustration.”

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80 Ibid, 93, 175.
81 Perham to Philip Kerr, undated but responds to Kerr’s letter of February 11, 1930, file 5, box 9, MP.
82 Ibid.
83 Robeson, African Journey, 55, 128.
Female missionaries praised the ideal of monogamous Christian marriage as intellectual and spiritual companionship, or “co-partners in the home,” but many opted not to marry, and respected other such women.\textsuperscript{84} These female reformers had come of age in the late nineteenth century, when many “new women” had chosen to eschew restrictive marriages in favor of purposeful lives of public service.\textsuperscript{85} Out of all of these women, Robeson stressed deference to a husband the most, perhaps as a black woman needing to prove her conformity to bourgeois morality more than her white contemporaries. Although interwar experts – now regarding sex as central to physical and psychological health – viewed with concern the older generation of ‘frustrated’ women who had chosen to remain celibate, these female missionaries and anthropologists defended the decision of African women not to marry, thereby vindicating their own life choices.\textsuperscript{86} Shaw wrote affectionately of “Chungu,” a woman from Mbereshi, whose “first marriage” had been a “failure.”\textsuperscript{87} According to Shaw, although many men had subsequently “sought” Chungu “in marriage,” and she believed “that for her family’s sake she must marry,” she was “afraid” to marry again, spurning the proposal of “quite a nice man” she met in Elizabethville, Northern Rhodesia. Instead, Chungu found refuge in Shaw’s school for girls, her “home since [she] was a little untamed girl,” and as a result of devoting her life

\textsuperscript{84} “Conference on the Education of African Women, “ (1925), box 207, CBMS/ IMC.

\textsuperscript{85} Pedersen, \textit{Eleanor Rathbone}, 163; Seth Koven, \textit{Match Girl and the Heiress}, 66.

\textsuperscript{86} Pedersen, \textit{Eleanor Rathbone}, 173. Pedersen discusses changing societal attitudes to sex during the interwar period, and the tendency for commentators to now view celibacy with suspicion.

\textsuperscript{87} Shaw, \textit{God’s Candlelights}, 85.
to “the Chief” (God) and teaching, she came to wield “great influence in the village,”
eventually gaining the honorific title of “deacon of the Church.”88

These ‘sensitive’, community-minded women were not so sensitive as to
distinguish the ethnic groups of one continent from another. The entire African continent
was populated by a homogenized ‘African’. Margaret Read’s notes in her 1932 work,
*From Field to Factory*, describe the life of the Indian peasant. ‘Indian’ – not ‘Hindu’ or
‘Muslim’.89 By the 1930s, white and black foreign aid workers increasingly grouped all
colonized peoples together as a single, alien ‘Other’. By 1936, Robeson had come “to
realize that the Negro problem was not even limited to the problem” of “black people in
Africa, America, and the West Indies, but actually included” the problem of “Indians in
India, the “Chinese in China, as well as the problem of all minorities everywhere.”90

Regardless, these female scholars applauded resistance to patriarchal mores in
their anthropological accounts. Read mentioned a woman she had encountered in India,
named “Jethi.” When asked “why she was not married like her younger sister,” Jethi
responded “in a tone that forbade further questioning” that she had a husband. Read
concluded that “a tragedy hid deep somewhere.” Jethi’s “father was the idler,” and “her
younger brother the ubiquitous mischief maker,” but Jethi “was the worker and the wit.”
She “had a thoughtful and enquiring side,” and “[w]riting was a never-ending mystery to
her.” Somewhere “in Jethi” lay “a spirit that would have made her a leader…eager,

88 Shaw, *God’s Candlelights*, 85. This is the argument that Julia Allen makes in her article,
“Indigenous Women in the Early African Church,” *Women’s History Review* 19, no. 1, (February

89 Margaret Read, “Notes – Indian trip,” (undated), MR/ C/ 1.

fearless, alive, looking out at life under those long curving eyelashes, unconscious of her own personality, and yet impressing it on others by its very vitality.” Read felt her interest was in her “as fellow women.” Jethi’s national, economic, and cultural background was immaterial. She was a woman and that was all that concerned Read.

Women educationalists perpetuated patriarchal discourses by privileging gender in programs they devised for and about minorities. In so doing, they fostered a web of connections of “fellow women” that mirrored that of their male contemporaries, Joseph Oldham, Thomas Jesse Jones, and Anson Phelps Stokes. Like many “new women,” Wrong and Read chose not to marry, preferring to lead fulfilling civic lives dedicated to substantive social work, scholarship, and activism. They formed close, emotional partnerships with other women, devoted to mutually bolstering their careers. These friendships were not usually overtly sexual, and a misguided, untestable focus on a putative, perhaps unconscious, eroticism, fails to appreciate their real significance. Wrong and Read shared a house from 1926 until Wrong’s death in 1956. The house was located in Hampstead Garden Suburb, an early-twentieth-century housing development launched by female social reformer, Henrietta Barnett, to create an ideal community of all classes. Seth Koven, notes that it was so common for well-to-do, socially conscious Victorian women to be repelled by the inhibiting prospect of marriage that, prior to her

91 Read, “Notes – Indian trip,” (undated), MR/ C/ 1.


eventual marriage, Barnett had always imagined herself “committed to spinsterdom as a social vocation.”

The expansiveness of life as a spinster enjoying intimate female friendships is indicated in Wrong’s eulogy that emphasized that the doors of her home with Read were “always open to an endless stream of visitors from all over the world.” Prominent international female guests included their friend Mabel Carney. Read and Wrong both served on the Colonial Office’s Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies with Perham, and glowingly reviewed Margaret Mead’s studies in numerous periodicals.

Female links were partly strengthened by male concerns about women travelling alone; women accompanied one another on their educational tours. Wrong and Carney first met on their joint visit to Africa in 1926, and Wrong was accompanied on her 1936 Carnegie-financed visit to South Africa by “Miss Read [and] Miss Gordon.” But women themselves embraced, and cultivated, these female contacts, enriching, and broadening their lives in the process.

A few members of this female network were black. In 1927, Jones notified Jackson Davis of the General Education Board that “two African native women teachers” were “on their way to spend a year of observation and practice at Penn School,” stopping first at Hampton to meet Miss Virginia Randolph, the famous African American Jeanes

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95 Armstrong, “There’s Too Much Waiting to Be Done,” box 10, ICCLA.

96 Cutting, Margaret Wrong, “Review of Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies,” Health and Empire, (March, 1936), box 9, ICCLA.

97 Confidential circular letter from Margaret Wrong, June 1, 1936, folder 1, box 376, series III A 9, CCNY.
In 1934, the Agricultural Missions Foundation granted the African-American Susie W. Yergan, YMCA Secretary Max Yergan’s wife, a “study fellowship of $290 for study at Teachers College, Columbia University” due to her leadership in “rural community work for Bantu women” at Fort Hare College, South Africa since 1922. The Carnegie Corporation of New York, Phelps-Stokes Fund, International Missionary Council, and the State College of Agriculture at Cornell University, inter alia, had created the Agricultural Missions Foundation in 1929 to fulfill America’s moral obligations to less favored groups whose life centered on the soil and in the farm home and about the community.” On her *African Journey*, Eslanda Robeson noted Mrs. Yergan’s impressive “social service work among the women”. Robeson “had long talks with Miss Soga,” a “fine Xosa” who had “been working with Susie Yergan,” and was “doing a great deal to organize the women” of her community. Additionally, prominent European women like the Governor of Uganda’s wife, Mrs. Mitchell, hosted Mrs. Robeson. Rebecca Davis, the African-American Jeanes teacher sent by Jones to Liberia in 1928, stayed with the English missionary, Georgina Gollock, in 1929. Miss Gollock found Davis a “really remarkable woman.”

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98 Jones to Jackson Davis, September 21, 1927, folder 5, box 19, PSF.

99 Agricultural Missions Foundation Fellowship grants, period covering September 1933 to November 1934, folder 11, box 5, series III A, CCNY.

100 “Minutes from the first meeting of the American Foundation for Agricultural Missions,” May 10, 1929, folder 3, box 24, PSF.


104 Georgina Gollock to Thomas Jesse Jones, August 16, 1929, folder 9, box 20, PSF.
Lines of race, class, and nationality divided this community of women. While white reformers arguably feminized their depictions of African society, Robeson was less interested in women, foregrounding African “inherent vigour, expressed visibly for all to see in the magnificent physique of so many of the tribe,” and their “virile and prolific” nature. 105 Robeson’s attention was more riveted on Africa’s fertile he-men, for whom she evidently had an admiring eye. Her idea of being “of course firmly against patriarchy” was, irrationally, represented by her belief that the office of Governor of Uganda “should be held by an African” (man). 106 Similarly, airbrushing women out of the polity, Robeson called for “freedom” to be “granted to all men!” 107 Gollock judged the African-American Rebecca Davis on “the full standard of Anglo-Saxon capacity,” worrying that in Liberia, Davis would have “more sense of fellowship with the white people than with the black Liberians” on account of her civilized nature. 108 However, Davis foregrounded the plight of her race over that of her class. Davis forcefully rebuked an English audience “that race prejudice was not confined to America, but that on the contrary, she had had several “unpleasant incidents” to happen to her right here in London, on account of her color.” 109

Black and white female reformers, all objects of different forms of social prejudice, forcefully demanded social change. 110 In 1925, Mrs. McGregor Ross argued

105 Robeson, African Journey, 173, 64.
106 Ibid., 166-167.
107 Ibid., 78.
108 Gollock to Jones, August 16, 1929, folder 8, box 20, PSF.
109James Sibley to Jackson Davis, November 24, 1928, folder 17, box 22, PSF.
110 Jones to Oldham, December 11, 1931, folder 1, box 22, PSF.
that education alone was insufficient to improve the lives of female Africans: “The emancipation of women should be political.”111 Discussing the plight of the Indian peasant man and woman, Read insisted that only “public opinion in England,” not just education, would prove “an indispensable factor in securing real reform and progress,” calling on readers to end their apathy.112 Oakden announced at a 1939 SCWG meeting, “experience in this country (England) had shown that, however well trained a teacher might be, she could not oppose a wrongly conceived, popular demand unless she was supported by a strong and clearly defined Government policy.”113

Female anthropologists recognized the structural roots of the hardship faced by so many, thereby acknowledging that reform would be no easy process. Read wrote with sensitivity and subtlety about the “migrant labour situation” in Northern Rhodesia, bemoaning the “effect on the women and children left in the villages…of the continued absence of large numbers of adult males”, who had migrated to the cities in search of educational opportunities and better paid work. She understood that the “recent policy of land development and growing crops for export” was too simple a solution to the problem of male migration to the cities: “a generation of men had grown accustomed to earn wages which include[d] free food, and where education for two generations [had] been related to the earning of money and not to the performance of routine agricultural work.”

112 “Review, Common Room,” (March 1927), MR/ B/ 1.
113 “Notes from SCWG Meeting,” November 17, 1939, file 3, box 718, MP.
Read gave a nuanced account of the dynamic “composite culture” emerging in colonial Africa, refusing to conform to a facile narrative of “West” meeting “East.”

By the postwar period, Robeson understood the interwoven discrimination along lines of race and gender against which many women battled. In her *African Journey*, which although published in 1945, had been written earlier, she lamented “the infinitesimal wages paid to Africans for exactly the same work” as Europeans, even if “better trained and more efficient at the job.” Robeson’s anthropological African expertise, and involvement with the Council on African Affairs, the pan-African organization that she and her husband had helped establish in the late 1930s, led the body to choose her as one of its two representatives at the 1945 founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco. While there, Robeson’s biographer, Barbara Ransby, notes that she expressed, or perhaps developed, “pro-feminist sensibilities.” Shocked by the paucity of women at the conference, Robeson made an effort to meet women from all over the globe, speaking different languages, and to find common concerns with them. She attended an all-day forum for official and unofficial female participants entitled, “Women’s Share in Implementing the Peace,” and was a guest at a cocktail party hosted by Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, an Indian activist and diplomat, and sister of future Prime Minister Nehru, who would become the first female president of the UN General Assembly. After this experience, Ransby points out, her writings distinguished between “American women,” a term representing white middle-class women, and another

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114 Margaret Read, first draft of an article or chapter on, “The Study of Emigrant Labour and Its Affects [sic.] on Tribal Life,” (1936), file 6, box 244, MP.


demographic of “women,” encompassing poor and working-class women, black women, and women under colonialism, all suffering various forms of overlapping inequalities.\textsuperscript{117}

The romantically minded Jones believed African life represented a model of bucolic “society in its simpler forms.”\textsuperscript{118} Female observers brought to these discussions an acknowledgement of the messy reality of particular identities, and an understanding of the ways in which cultural traits intersected with affinities engendered by the shared experience of discrimination. One solution – education – could not alleviate all societal ills, as Jones naively maintained. Those in power should pay attention to the huge diversity of individual experience. During her 1929 visit to the USA, Perham “pondered this race business”: “That a people, abruptly torn from their…environment for a century or two of slavery, and then living through three different generations, only half citizens, socially outlawed, can have produced what [she] expect[ed] from [her] reading – that [was] the marvel.” Perham urged her contemporaries “to put [themselves] into the position” of someone who lacked “a full stake in the country in which he lives, never able by any effort to earn respect…”\textsuperscript{119} Wrong regarded Margaret Mead’s 1935 book, \textit{Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies}, as a “stimulating study.” Her review of the book lauded Mead’s conclusions “that human nature is malleable by social training and pressure to a very great extent,” and urged “society to break away from categories such as sex, race, age, hereditary position, and so on…”\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Ibid}, 147-148.

\textsuperscript{118} Jones to Oldham, December 11, 1931, folder 1, box 22, PSF.

\textsuperscript{119} Diary of Perham’s West Indies trip, July 5, 1929, file 5, box 35.

\textsuperscript{120} Margaret Wrong, “Review of Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies, by Margaret Mead, 1935,” \textit{Health and Empire} (March, 1936), box 9, ICCLA.
Anglo-American women involved in interwar African education stressed the distinctive needs of native women as mothers, wives, and home-makers. Perhaps not coincidentally, their projects enhanced the opportunities of primarily white, female missionaries, educators, and scholars within Western political and academic tracks that had long excluded them, often at the expense of the autonomy of the black women they claimed to champion. But these female educators rejected gender-neutrality to agitate for something deeper, too: a more compassionate, feminized communal order that would take account of inherited social inequalities. Eslanda Robeson was forced to “always ask for the women,” thereby luring them out of the “background” during her *African Journey*. Without particular consideration, certain groups in society would remain invisible. However, Robeson identifies herself in her book first and foremost as a “Negro”, and frames the black struggle primarily as an endeavor to win “freedom for all men.”

The next chapter details how white American planners, encountering forceful pan-African protest during the 1940s, successfully used education to establish an international order of “freedom for all men.” White American philanthropists like Anson Phelps Stokes ignored the interwar pleas of female missionaries like Mabel Shaw for tenderness and humanity, perhaps seeing these ideals as an end rather than a means. He advocated instead an international arrangement of free trade and the end of political imperialism in order to win black support for a universalistic postwar settlement unconcerned with kindness towards historically ostracized, needy groups, and intent rather on establishing the dominance of corporate America.

…the general picture…is of America drawing herself aside from the contamination of an Imperialism of which Britain is the main exponent… Nations shape their character by pressure against something external, and that something is often the character of another nation.

Margery Perham, 1942.¹

During the Second World War, the network of American philanthropic foundation managers, missionaries, educators, and social scientists that had supported the enterprise of the interwar British Empire found it more convenient to distance itself from that Empire. British imperial preference tariffs, the inauguration of a liberalized American government encouraging global trade, and a strengthening of pan-African protest during the 1930s, in addition to the peculiar political and economic conditions of wartime, radically transformed the international context. By the time the USA entered the War in 1941, the attractions that had initially enticed American philanthropic foundations to support British educational endeavors in Africa – pacifying racial unrest and creating international export markets for corporate America at a time of isolation – were no longer salient. Economically, there was no point trying to break into British-dominated African markets if America was now shaping a postwar economic system based on globalized free trade. Politically, African Americans resented fighting in a war against fascist totalitarianism while blacks were still agitating for basic civil rights in the USA and

¹ Margery Perham, “America and the Empire,” The Times, November 20, 1942, file 1, box 327, MP.
Europe’s African colonies. They targeted their anti-colonial ire against Britain. Leftist African Americans also tied their political grievances to a more fundamental critique of capitalism. Liberal American philanthropists favored an end to black disenfranchisement, which would cost them nothing, but did not condone a radical restructuring of the American economy, which would. They turned against the British Empire, a convenient, easy scapegoat, and used their expertise in African studies, (much of which had been acquired through co-operation with British colonial activity), to rally widespread African American approval for a postwar economic order of free markets that could be dominated by corporate America.

Anglo-American Rupture

The international trading prospects of American corporations had already improved by the end of the 1930s. In 1933, after Franklin Delano Roosevelt assumed the American presidency, his government, concerned to create export markets for US goods to stimulate domestic industry and increase employment, immediately embarked on dismantling Depression-era economic protectionism and creating an environment favorable to American international commerce. In 1934, the US devalued the dollar. That year, Congress also passed the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act (RTAA), allowing the executive branch to negotiate with other governments for mutual tariff reductions and most-favored-nation status. In 1938, escalating unease in Europe encouraged the British government to agree to what proved to be, for Great Britain, a disastrous bilateral trade

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agreement with the USA. It had little impact on commerce between the two nations in the brief spell before war began, and stood to benefit America, by then the world’s largest creditor nation, considerably more than it did Great Britain.\textsuperscript{3} With war on the horizon, John Balfour, of the Foreign Office, emphasized that the political gains of the Anglo-American Trade Agreement outweighed the financial cost: “To my mind the conclusion of the Agreement might well have a powerful effect on influencing opinion in the USA with regard to the interpretation of United States neutrality legislation, assuming that the worst comes to pass.”\textsuperscript{4}

The outbreak of the Second World War bolstered America’s economic clout. Following the signing of the Lend-Lease bill in March 1941, an agreement that dispensed (still neutral) American aid to Allied territories and powers, US State Department officials felt it unreasonable that their government should provide aid to London while American exports remained disadvantaged throughout the British Empire. By the summer of 1941, the precarious war situation made British officials eager to enter into discussions with their US counterparts, who might be persuaded to enter the war as full belligerents in order to safeguard the European balance of power, in spite of American perceptions (which were even more potent in the post-war era) that Germany was a vital bulwark against the USSR. Following talks between top-level officials, the Atlantic Charter was issued on August 14, 1941, a joint Anglo-US declaration of ‘certain common principles’, most notably the principle of self-government, on which the two governments professed to ‘base their hopes for a better future for the world’. Article IV stated that the two


\textsuperscript{4} Quoted in Whitham, “Seeing the Wood,” 43.
governments would endeavor to “further the enjoyment by all States, great and small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity”.\textsuperscript{5} After the USA lost the bargaining chip of neutrality when it entered the War in December 1941, wartime demand for American goods continued to bolster the economic advantage of the USA on the international stage.\textsuperscript{6} In 1943, Henry S. Villard, Assistant Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs of the Department of State, announced that war had “created an insatiable demand for minerals, lumber, [and] foodstuffs”; Villard and his countrymen “would not be American”, he maintained, with unusual candor in the circumstances, if they “were not interested in that.”\textsuperscript{7}

But British imperial preference remained an obstacle to American free trade ambitions. Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, had successfully sought protection for British imperial tariffs in the Atlantic Charter. Article IV, promoting free trade, was qualified – and arguably contradicted – by the statement that British and American attempts to liberalize world trade would be restricted “with due respect for their existing obligations”.\textsuperscript{8} Respect for “existing obligations” might easily be interpreted strictly as a demand for the continuation of the status quo. In September 1941, Churchill assured Parliament that at the Atlantic meeting he had had “in mind primarily the extension of the


\textsuperscript{7} Attached to Anson Phelps Stokes to Henry Villard, September 3, 1943. “For the Press: August 18, 1943, Confidential Release for Publication at 10:00 A.M., E.M.T., Thursday, August 19, 1943,” folder 20, box 33, PSF.

\textsuperscript{8} Seddon, “Origins and Limitations of the Atlantic Charter,” 70.
sovereignty, self-government and national life of the states and nations of Europe now under the Nazi yoke”, not the “regions whose peoples owe allegiance to the British crown”, i.e., British colonies. As in America, the British view was that all peoples were equal, but some peoples were more equal than others. Churchill’s was indeed a demand for the return of the pre-1939 status quo – in practice, it constituted little more than a demand that the Allies defeat Nazi Germany.

This did not escape the attention of black activists. The War exacerbated another major threat to American corporations: African Americans fused calls for an end to black political subordination with strident protests against capitalist exploitation. In November, 1941, the British Foreign Research and Press Service (FRPS) quoted a “characteristic” African American-authored editorial in the Chicago Tribune: “Here we are, summoned by our Administration to make stupendous sacrifices to establish Mr. Roosevelt’s four freedoms everywhere in the world; and here we are in a country in which a very substantial proportion of the Negroes are not enjoying freedom from want and fear, freedom from racial discrimination, or freedom of educational and economic opportunity.” The FRPS noted that the article “proceeded to attack Mr. Roosevelt for not having intervened on behalf of the ‘many millions’ of black people under British rule in Africa, who were the ‘victims’ of the most galling of discriminations and the most savage of oppressions’.”

W. E. B. Du Bois discussed “the issue of the use of Negroes in war”

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9 Quoted by the Committee on Africa, the war, and peace aims, The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint: a study by the Committee on Africa, the war, and peace aims (New York: Africa Bureau, 1942), 31.

10 “The Impact of the War on the Negro Problem,” Foreign Research and Press Service: Royal Institute of International Affairs, June 25, 1942, file 3, box 667, MP. See also, Ira Katznelson for the growing strength of the black press during the 1930s and ‘40s. Katznelson, When Affirmative
in *Foreign Affairs* in 1943. He condemned President Roosevelt for not “thinking of
Africa when he mentioned freedom of speech, freedom from want and freedom from
fear”. Du Bois criticized the Atlantic Charter for being “so obviously aimed at European
and North American conditions that Winston Churchill frankly affirmed this to be the
case, although he was afterward contradicted by President Roosevelt.” Du Bois went on
to plead idealistically for the “rivalry of dominant European nations for colonial profit” to
be replaced by “a more equitable distribution of raw materials and labor.”

But this was an age of *Realpolitik*. British colonial officials and entrepreneurs
were no longer useful allies to corporate America. As mentioned in Chapter 4,
internationalist pan-Africanism of this period focused on British colonial misrule, more
so than that of other European imperial powers, though the brutality of the French in
Algeria and the Belgians in the Congo was particularly notorious. American
philanthropic foundations had originally partnered with official and unofficial British
African educational programs, partly in order to secure American corporate access to
export markets and raw materials, and partly to pacify black dissent to liberal programs.
Now, American economic revival, resulting from the policies of a liberalized
administration and wartime exigencies, obviated the need for this philanthropic-colonial
alliance. In fact, association with the British Empire imperiled both. The imperial

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12 On a 1944 tour of the USA, Margery Perham, Director of Nuffield College’s Colonial Administration Department, observed, “that the conventional and wholly uninstructed attitude of the negroes to the British Empire [was] one of the deepest hostility.” Margery Perham to Colonel Stanley, July 17, 1944, file 1, box 51, MP.
preference trade barriers enacted by the British government during the Depression harmed American commercial goals. And black protests associated the British Empire with the capitalist structures on which American corporations depended.

Liberal philanthropists opposed the barriers encountered by African Americans at home. In 1939, when the Daughters of the American Revolution denied black opera singer, Marian Anderson, access to Constitution Hall on account of her race, Anson Phelps Stokes protested, penning a treatise entitled “Art and the Color Line.” Stokes also spearheaded a Committee on Negro Americans in Defense Industries (CNADI) in 1941 to combat industrial racial discrimination.\(^\text{13}\) What Stokes and his cohort did not countenance, however, was a total overhaul of the economic foundations of the capitalist order. Reform, not revolution, was the philanthropic aim.

Stokes thus turned his attention to Africa, as well as the USA, in the hope of defusing the radicalism of pan-African protests, and bolstering support for a postwar economic arena of liberalized trade. He resorted to his well-worn tactic of commissioning research and educational conferences to combat contemporary social ills. Predictably, and somewhat naively, the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s Educational Director, Thomas Jesse Jones, claimed in the *Ten Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1932-1942*, that investigating excluded groups remedied the social “strife” that was usually “a result of misunderstanding.” Participating in educational commissions or reading results of social surveys, he asserted without deigning to produce any evidence, corrected hostile whites’ “narrow view of life,” engendering “mutual sympathy and cooperation for the general

good.”¹⁴ This was particularly important now that Stokes and his cohort were beginning to entreat Congress – a body that was dominated by unsympathetic Southern Democrats – to correct the domestic mistreatment of African Americans.¹⁵ Following prewar patterns, Stokes’s CNADI to investigate the unequal treatment of blacks in wartime industries comprised an assortment of representative religious, business, labor, and educational leaders.¹⁶

Similarly, in August 1941, the same month that the Atlantic Charter was signed, Stokes assembled a broadly constituted “Committee on Africa, the War and Peace Aims” to research African problems.¹⁷ Prominent members of these two committees – one to address the domestic situation of African Americans, and the other to deal with conditions of Africans in an entirely different continent – overlapped: Stokes; Jones; Frederick Keppel, former Carnegie Corporation President; and Mabel Carney, Columbia University Teachers College’s Professor of Rural Education joined both groups.¹⁸ This interchange typifies the way liberal Americans ostensibly acknowledged the huge diversity of local experience, but in practice lumped all black people together as identical victims of slavery and discrimination.

¹⁴ Thomas Jesse Jones, Ten Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1932-1942 (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1942, folder 10, box 47, PSF.

¹⁵ Katznelson, When Affirmative Action Was White, 18-23.

¹⁶ Magat, Unlikely Partners, 82.


Stokes had grand ambitions for his Africa Committee. He intended the report it produced, published in 1942, entitled *The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint*, to correct “the woeful ignorance of Africa in this country.” In his “Introduction” to the Report, Stokes expressed his aim that the document should form “a basis for study in college, high school, church, and other groups” that concerned “themselves with international and interracial affairs”. He hoped also that it would “help to focus public opinion” more generally on the “constructive treatment of Africa’s problems at the Peace Conference.” Stokes’ great ambition was for the Report’s recommendations to influence the postwar settlement, and help create an “enduring basis for world peace.”

The Phelps-Stokes Fund’s trusty American missionary and academic allies organized additional African colloquia. In 1943, the Africa Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, headed by Dr. Emory Ross, organized a Church Conference on African Affairs at Otterbein College, Ohio. Stokes personally presented the *Atlantic Charter and Africa* report to the Otterbein conference, where it was warmly received. The missionary conference consequently created an African Study Group to undertake “continued basic study of conditions and developments affecting Africa’s peoples,” formulate “more creative educational programs in Africa,” facilitate a “more effective interchange of experience and ideas between different parts of the continent,”

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19 “Conference on Proposed Study Outline Based on ‘The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint,’” August 12, 1942, folder 4, box 37, PSF.


21 “Recommendations from Church Conference on African Affairs, Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio, June 19-25, 1942”, folder 4, box 37, PSF.
That year, Stokes collaborated with Northwestern University Anthropologist and International African Institute (formerly International Institute for African Languages and Cultures) Board Member, Dr. Melville Herskovits, to host an African conference in Washington with the “purpose of exploring the possibilities of setting up” a “center in this country where all material regarding Africa [was] brought together”, to act as an American branch of the London-based International African Institute (formerly the International Institute for African Languages and Cultures). Conducting “careful studies, based on all available data…of the economic, political, social and human problems of Africa” would constitute a “basis for discussion in considering proposals advanced for the post-war role of the peoples of the continent.” These investigations paid lip service to the many different nations and tribal regions of Africa, but ultimately betrayed their essential ethnocentric arrogance by assuming that all colonized peoples, or “natives,” were identical, and the conclusions of these reports lacked cultural specificity.

The reports resulting from these conventions proposed a socio-economic international order of homogenizing liberal Protestantism and free markets patently modeled on American capitalism and the Protestant work ethic. The *Atlantic Charter and Africa* advised that all “social and political institutions must be brought into conformity”

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22 “Informal Group called by Dr. Jackson Davis to consider an African educational survey,” February 20, 1943; “Africa Study Group Convergence meeting,” April 29, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.

23 Stokes to Melville Herskovits, February 2, 1943; Herskovits to Stokes, February 8, 1943, folder 6, box 32, PSF.

24 Melville Herskovits to the Members of the Organizing Committee for an International Conference on Africa, October 22, 1943, folder 6, box 32, PSF.
with a “moral order,” a thinly veiled hint that the new world order was to be structured on American – not Soviet – lines. A fundamental right was “toleration of and freedom for all religions, both native and foreign,” but “religion” was of “vital importance” for “developing and maintaining ethical standards”; “faith in the Divine Order” was non-negotiable. Agnostics and secularists would presumably enjoy short shrift; there were clearly limits to toleration. A “loyalty to the faith and ideals of the Christian religion” was especially significant. Jews and Muslims, on this account, might consider themselves privileged to be merely “tolerated;” meaningful pluralism does not seem to have been on the agenda and for all the lip-service paid by these thinkers to Enlightenment values, their proposals did not envisage the ushering-in of a new Age of Reason. The Otterbein Conference advocated “[f]resh theological formulations consonant with African life and thought,” but ultimately adhered to “the great doctrine of the spiritual unity of the (Christian) Church.” All this showed a manifest disregard for the varied cultures and religions of Africa and was oddly discordant with the First Amendment of the American Constitution, which set out the principle of the separation of Church and State. What these reformers were proposing was arguably little short of a benign theocracy. For all their hostility to the British Empire, their proposals merely suggested the substituting of British colonial imperialism with American cultural imperialism.

Conference findings stressed the importance of free trade. *The Atlantic Charter and Africa* advised that the USA had a unique role to help “other nations and peoples to

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26 “Recommendations from Church Conference on African Affairs,” folder 4, box 37, PSF.
attain the same freedom” of “economic life” enjoyed by its own citizens.\textsuperscript{27} The unspoken corollary of this position was that the suppression of freedom involved in a socialist-style command economy was un-American and undesirable. The “preservation and development of individuality” (the American way of life) was the “ultimate test of freedom.”\textsuperscript{28} But the Report also demanded “a much sharper differentiation” between “commerce and trade development on the one hand, and exploitation on the other.” The “former category” was of course “legitimate,” and included “the activities of businesses large and small which provide[d] Africa and Africans with needed supplements to their food supply, implements of labor, books, motor cars…as well as with needed utilities and public works”, all of which began to be serviced by American companies after Lend-Lease.\textsuperscript{29} Like the British, these thinkers envisaged Africa as a huge, untapped market for their manufactured goods. The Otterbein Conference recommended that African labor should be “treated fairly as to methods of employment, wages, living conditions, etc.” with all “industrial color bars removed,” a necessary condition, given that the vast majority of the African labor force was black, but “North American financial and business interests” should continue to invest in Africa.\textsuperscript{30} If the natives were handled carefully, there were good economic reasons for investing in Africa.

Unsurprisingly, American reports now condemned European imperialism. \textit{The Atlantic Charter and Africa} contended that the “changed world situation” constituted “an

\textsuperscript{27} Stokes, “Introduction” to \textit{Atlantic Charter and Africa}, 4.

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Atlantic Charter and Africa}, 66-68.

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid}, 52.

\textsuperscript{30} “Recommendations from Church Conference on African Affairs,” folder 4, box 37, PSF.
inspiring challenge to the white peoples to give up all that remain[ed] of imperialistic ambition, and to fit themselves not only for the more democratic political and economic life of their own free nations but for helping other nations to attain to the same freedom.”  

The nineteenth-century ‘Scramble for Africa’ had been driven by “selfish motives…to acquire influence in areas which produce[d] raw materials and to find markets for manufactured goods.” It was now of “vital importance” that European colonial powers take “prompt steps to give colonial peoples a larger and more responsible share in the government of their country.” The goal of “self-government should be definitely accepted in every colony”. In short, Americans preached emancipation for Africa in order that the newly liberated states might be free to negotiate bilateral trade deals favorable to the US. Like late nineteenth-century Germany, the US found it unfair and potentially alarming that other nations should have empires unless it had an empire of its own. Since this was hardly feasible, better that no one should have an empire.

These African reports acknowledged the self-evident fact that different European powers ruled over African empires. But mirroring the focus of pan-African agitators, liberal pamphlets concentrated on, and reserved their harshest critiques for, the British government, despite the brutality of the French and Belgian regimes, perhaps because these latter had fallen under Nazi control during the War. It is also possible that American educational planners knew that their Protestant agenda would make little headway in

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33 Ibid, 104.

34 Ibid, 105.
colonies governed by the stridently secular French state, whose main religion was in any case Catholic. Nor were the fascist regimes of Salazar and Franco likely to heed protests about the brutality of Portuguese or Spanish rule in Africa. *The Atlantic Charter and Africa* recognized that “the Africa south of the Sahara,” with which it was concerned, was controlled by “Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Free French, Portugal, and Spain,” and that the “points of view of the home governments named differ[ed] greatly.” The pamphlet asserted blandly that “the most fundamental difference” between the colonial powers in Africa was between the British, who stood “very largely for ‘indirect rule’ by native chiefs,” and the assimilationist French, who stood “for highly centralized rule and the purpose of making Frenchmen of Africans.” Of these binary models of colonial governance, the French “practice[d] the least racial discrimination, and [gave] a striking example in their educational system and their Civil Service of European and African studying and working together.” This conclusion allowed them to celebrate the fact that French assimilationism obviated the need for racial discrimination by exterminating differences through peaceful cultural means. That Africans could fail to rejoice in their transformation into civilized Frenchmen – or Americans – seemed impossible. The other European powers, like Belgium, fell “somewhat between that of Great Britain and France,” the Report claimed.

In contrast to exploitative, inequitable European colonialists, American reports, priding themselves without irony on their impartiality, portrayed the American nation as

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an objective, disinterested arbitrator with no conventional imperial interest and in-depth expertise in African affairs, and therefore asserted that their independent country should play an important postwar role in ensuring that its universal, color-blind international order of “freedom” be implemented. This “in-depth expertise”, gained through a clutch of recent anthropological surveys, was held to surpass the knowledge and experience of the British, while ‘color-blind’ could only make sense as a synonym for ‘blind to anti-black discrimination’. But with British rule at an end, it would be possible to reap the benefits of imperial economic exploitation without incurring the odium of the label “imperial”. Unsurprisingly, Stokes agreed with British officials regarding the political and economic immaturity of African peoples. *The Atlantic Charter and Africa* asserted that achieving its goals would “require a long period of education.”\(^38\) Comments like this, which echo nineteenth-century British attitudes to Indian independence, stretched the definition of “education” to the point where it became implicitly synonymous with “indoctrination” and, arguably, “subjugation”, though “education” was of course a far more gratifying term, which allowed for the “educators” to pose as enlightened humanitarians bringing civilization to childlike, undeveloped peoples.

But instead of British trusteeship, a “specially heavy responsibility” now rested on “the people and Government of the United States, to help plan and carry out some effective method to prevent the international economic rivalries of the past and to assure collective security.” Since Africa could not possibly run its own affairs, the American government, now shouldering the nineteenth-century “White Man’s Burden”, could

\(^{38}\) *Ibid*, 62.
“never again be selfishly isolationist.” It “should stand ready to unite with other nations in some world organization,” with the USA at its helm, to “promote collective security and see to it that the provisions of the Atlantic Charter [were] duly implemented so as to protect the interests of Africa.” Put another way, once Germany, the great bulwark against the USSR, was disabled, nothing would stand between the two super-powers, ripe for a confrontational replay of the nineteenth-century ‘Scramble for Africa’.

Leading participants in these investigations and conferences premised their intervention in African matters on nothing more than their academic expertise in the continent, while distancing themselves from European, and in particular British, colonialism, even though cooperation with British colonial enterprise was the source of their African know-how. Stokes wrote in the “Preface” to The Atlantic Charter and Africa that the committee that had led to its publication, composed solely of Americans, was qualified to opine on African affairs because of its participants’ “long experience in Africa or in dealing with African problems.” The pamphlet proposed that America had a “special interest in Africa” because Americans had “for many years maintained philanthropic, educational, and religious activities in many parts” of the continent. Understandably, he did not add that America had further special knowledge of, and interest in, Africa, after centuries of the most brutal exploitation of tens of millions of African slaves that more than vied with British ‘injustices’ in the region. Stokes also

39 Ibid, 62.


41 Ibid, vii.

asserted that the group was uniquely authorized to intercede because America “had no territorial interests in Africa…and no political axes to grind there,” allowing it to “approach its problems with more detachment” than could “European powers directly concerned with its government.”

This was disingenuous. America might have had no direct political ambitions in Africa. This did not mean that it had no indirect political ambitions, such as ensuring that the continent did not fall prey to the Red Peril after the war. And of course there were still powerful economic incentives. Critically, Stokes and his American allies had directed and financed a plethora of agencies – state and private – to orchestrate British imperial educational schemes before the war, which had been quietly incorporated into the operations of the British Empire. If British educational programs for colonial Africa, which emphasized “native cultures, traditions, languages, and ideals,” discriminated on racial lines in comparison to the French model, as *The Atlantic Charter and Africa* contended, then these American philanthropists were largely to blame. But now Stokes simultaneously cited expertise gained from interwar partnership with the British government in Africa and the USA’s complete independence and neutrality from British imperialism, as justification for meddling in Africa.

American educational groups focusing on Africa now dissociated themselves from British personnel and academic bodies affiliated with the Colonial Office, a stark about-turn. In advance of the 1943 Washington Conference to consider the establishment of an American arm of the London-based International African Institute (IAI), Wrong


urged Stokes of the “need of co-operation on study of African languages and cultures to get the maximum of result with the minimum of duplication.” Wrong was aware of the growing American and colonial hostility that had arisen since the 1930s against the British Empire, and pleaded that academic “collaboration on an international scale in the non-political sphere” with the USA was urgent. This was idealistic but naïve. Americans were not apolitical, though crucially, they were able to portray themselves as such. Some, like Jackson Davis, President of the General Education Board, agreed with Wrong about the usefulness of Anglo-American cooperation on African studies. Davis proposed that, “[i]nterest on [the American] side would help to make the organization less British and more international”, which was necessary due to the “very close association with the British Colonial Office” that had been enjoyed by the IAI’s founding members. However, organizers of the 1943 Washington Conference rejected the creation of an American wing of the IAI. Herskovits asserted that the IAI was “too much of a British organization and reflected the British official attitude”. The Conference decided that wartime ties between the Washington conference and the London-based International African Institute should be “informal” and “quietly sustained.”

It was known, but perhaps not openly acknowledged, that the IAI owed its existence, and agenda to American money. From the start, Oldham had acknowledged that the “real crux” of the International Institute for African Languages and Cultures had

45 Margaret Wrong to Stokes (confidential), January 25, 1943, folder 6, box 32, PSF.

46 Memorandum of Interview, Jackson Davis, JHW and RFE, December 22, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.

47 Ibid.

48 “Meeting of the Organizing Committee of the International Conference on Africa at the Washington Office of the SSRC, October 15, 1943,” folder 6, box 32, PSF.
been to “maintain the interest” of its American sponsors, primarily Rockefeller groups.\textsuperscript{49} Oldham had designed the Institute’s 1931 “Five-Year Plan of Research” as an “Appeal to the (recently reconfigured) Rockefeller Foundation for Increased Financial Support”.

Oldham had tailored the aims of the Depression-era IIALC – to study “those aspects of native society making for social cohesion, the economics of communal life, the ways in which African society (was) being disrupted by the infusion of Western ideas and economic forces” – to American corporate concerns.\textsuperscript{50} Americans hostile to the British Empire criticized the IAI because of its British orientation, ignoring the body’s American source of funding, and the implications of this financial leverage.\textsuperscript{51}

British officials were outraged at the ‘disloyalty’ of their former American partners. Both before and during the War, British thinkers across the political spectrum were promoting a “new imperialism” that, like \textit{The Atlantic Charter and Africa}, argued for the eventual self-government of colonial peoples, and the ultimate incorporation of the former colonies into the British Commonwealth of Nations, which had been founded in 1931. Indeed, by the 1930s, the Dominions were already self-governing, and independent in all but name. The inconclusive 1942 Cripps Mission to India had dangled the prospect of home rule at some vague indeterminate date before India’s nationalist Congress Party in return for support in the war effort. However, the timeline British

\textsuperscript{49} “First Meeting of the Executive Council of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, held at the Colonial Office, London, October 11, 1926,” folder 4, box 1, IAI.

\textsuperscript{50} “Appeal to the Rockefeller Foundation for Increased Financial Support,” 1931, folder 3, box 1, IAI; “A Five-Year Plan of Research,” (“Unrevised proof, strictly confidential.”) Attached to letter, Oldham to APS, October 8\textsuperscript{th}, 1931, folder 2, box 22, PSF.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Memorandum of Interview}, Jackson Davis, JHW, and RFE, December 22, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.
officials had in mind was more cautious than that of their American counterparts, especially for the African populations they perceived as less civilized than those of India. As late as 1949, Labour Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, a member of the Colonial Office’s Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies since 1936, warned the House of Commons that the British should not “proceed fast with political development” in their remaining colonies (they had just lost India) until they had adequately “expand[ed] the social services and the conditions of good living.”

American insistence on swift movement toward self-government, backed by economic threats against a financially crippled country, angered British politicians of all political stripes. After reading the draft Report of The Atlantic Charter and Africa, Lord Lugard informed Stokes that he disagreed with its assessment of British policy in Africa, and found its suggestions “absolutely impracticable.” Dr. Edwin Smith, the British missionary and anthropologist who had helped Lugard and Oldham found the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, and had been a dependable ally of the Phelps-Stokes Fund throughout the 1920s, angrily conveyed to Stokes his opinion, as an “Englishman,” of the draft of the Atlantic Charter and Africa. Smith told his erstwhile benefactor that it had left him aghast; the Report did “less than justice to what

52 “Summary of July 1949, House of Commons debate,” file 2, box 698, MP.

53 Lord Lugard to Stokes, December 7, 1942, folder 2, box 37, PSF.

54 In 1929, Thomas Jesse Jones had commissioned Smith to prepare a posthumous biography of the Fund’s black hero, James Aggrey. See, Edwin W. Smith, Aggrey of Africa: A Study in Black and White (London: Student Christian Movement, 1929). Smith had accepted the micro-management of Fund directors in his portrayal of Aggrey, to the annoyance of some of his British colleagues, like Miss Georgina Gollock. See, Jones to Smith, January 29, 1929, folder 13, box 25, PSF.
[his] country [had] done and [was] doing in Africa.”⁵⁵ British International Missionary Council (IMC) secretary, Basil Matthews, considered Stokes’s 1942 African Report “disastrous,” and criticized American hypocrisy. Matthews, quite justifiably, complained that the document “damned…European governments for the sins of international financiers,” and “damned…capitalists as though they were European and no Americans or African capitalists had ever benefitted financially from Africa.”⁵⁶

But turning against – or peacefully appropriating – the British Empire enabled Stokes to mastermind these moderate African educational committees in order to fulfill the primary role he intended for them: to politically neutralize the subversive economic claims of violently angry black agitators. Since the early twentieth century, philanthropic educational surveys had relied on minority representation for legitimization among alienated sectors of society in both Africa and America. For Stokes, the most important element of his 1941 Africa Committee, which produced the 1942 *Atlantic Charter and Africa* report, was that “just over a quarter of the membership…was made up of Negro Americans.” What was innovative about Stokes’s wartime group, in contrast to, for example, Aggrey’s inclusion in the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s interwar African educational commissions, was the participation of black men and women who “may have been rather radical in the past”, and did not share the white, liberal “point of view”. Stokes deemed this collaboration the most “significant” aspect of the entire project in a private letter to Britain’s Minister in Charge of Information Services in Washington, Harold Butler.⁵⁷

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⁵⁵ E. W. Smith to Stokes, March 9, 1942, folder 2, box 37, PSF.

⁵⁶ “Statement from Basil Mathews,” January 6, 1942, folder 2, box 37, PSF.

⁵⁷ Stokes to Harold Butler, July 17, 1942, folder 1, box 37, PSF.
A large number of what Stokes classified as black radicals joined his wartime African research programs, arguably because of the veiled anti-British agenda of the schemes. Du Bois, who had previously reviled Jones as an “evil genius of the Negro race”, agreed to join Stokes’s 1941 Committee on Africa, the War, and Peace Aims.\(^5\) Du Bois was Vice-President of the Council on African Affairs (hitherto the International Committee on African Affairs) formed by Paul Robeson and Max Yergan in 1937. The Council on African Affairs (CAA) provided links to the Communist party and international anticolonial networks, and proposed a radical redistribution of the world’s wealth.\(^5\) Claude Barnett, Director of the Association Negro Press, a syndication service which made international reporting widely available to small black newspapers that would not otherwise have had the resources to carry reports on African, Caribbean, and international affairs, also joined Stokes’s 1941 group.\(^6\) Barnett, a prominent black leader, had close ties with African American insurgents, of whom several were on his staff.\(^6\) Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, a Howard University sociologist, also joined Stokes’s Africa Committee. Bunche had lauded Marxist economics in his 1936 tract, \textit{A World View of Race}, and forged international pan-African alliances while living in London in 1937, helping Yergan and Robeson create the CAA. Stokes emphasized to the black


\(^6\)Max Yergan to Fred Keppel, January 19, 1938, folder 4, box 185, series III A 4, CCNY; Penny Von Eschen, \textit{Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism 1937-1957} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 19. Von Eschen notes that the CAA’s links to the Communist party were indirect, but nonetheless existent.

\(^6\)Von Eschen, \textit{Race Against Empire}, 8.

participants of the 1941 Africa Committee that he “would have been quite willing to have seen” Max Yergan, the CAA President associated with the Communist Party, join the body. Stokes told Barnett that he was “very fond” of Yergan, believing “fundamentally in his character and purposes” and valuing his “long experience in South Africa”. It was, he pointed out, the black, rather than the white, members of the Committee, who opposed including Yergan, on account of his having been “a fellow traveller in the days when the (YMCA) youth movement was rife with some of the Marxian theories.”62 In 1943, the rehabilitated Yergan attended Stokes and Herskovits’s Washington Conference to discuss the creation of an American wing of the International African Institute, alongside Du Bois, Barnett, and Bunche.

These wartime American conventions on African affairs also incorporated left-wing, nationalist African scholars, allowing liberal philanthropists to cultivate connections with individuals who would eventually preside over independent African nations. During the 1940s, Kwame Nkrumah was head of the American African Students Association while simultaneously studying for a Bachelor of Theology degree at Lincoln University, a black college in Philadelphia, and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy and a Master of Science degree at the University of Pennsylvania. Nkrumah had trained as a teacher at Achimota College, a school that promoted the study of African “tribal origins and history,” and was subsidized by American philanthropic foundations.63 Achimota’s vice-Principal and the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s African hero, Aggrey, had mentored Nkrumah at Achimota. Nkrumah served as a “foreign adviser” to both the

62 Stokes to Barnett, September 9, 1942, folder 6, box 32, PSF.
63 “Notes from 1946 Fabian Colonial Conference,” (1946), file 7, box 698, MP; “Achimota School Pamphlet” (1925), box 311, CBMS.
In 1957, Nkrumah led Ghana to independence from Britain, and served as its first prime minister and president.

The decision of American philanthropists to collaborate with individuals they considered radicals, or erstwhile radicals, is partially explained by the increased willingness of the latter to cooperate with liberals in a climate of growing anti-Communism and race baiting, especially during a war in which America was, paradoxically, fighting on the same side as Russia. In the late 1930s, Du Bois had already agreed to collude with Stokes on a Phelps-Stokes Fund-commissioned *Encyclopaedia of the Negro*. This had signaled to Stokes that his former enemy had “mellowed in an extraordinary way in the last few years.”

Dr. Carter Woodson, fellow long-term antagonist of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and editor of the *Journal of Negro History*, criticized Du Bois for working with white liberals like Stokes, Jackson Davis, and Jones on the *Encyclopaedia* project, fearing that it gave credence to their moderate stance.

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64 “African Consultants to the Committee on Africa and Peace Aims,” September 8, 1941; “List of Conferees and Advisers for Meeting on Africa,” Washington, March 15, 1943, folder 4, box 37, PSF. For the Washington Conference, Nkrumah was joined by Robert Kweku Attah Gardiner, also of the Gold Coast.

65 Stokes to Joseph Oldham, May 27, 1936, box 26.7.020, IMC. The Encyclopaedia was a projected publication that never materialized, but of which Du Bois was named editor after expressing consternation at his initial exclusion. See, ‘Preliminary Report on the ‘Encyclopaedia of the Negro’ Project – Confidential,” December 9, 1931, folder 130, box 179, series III, group 299, Anson Phelps Stokes Family Papers MS 209 (hereafter APS), Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University Library; Jones, *Ten Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1932-1942*, folder 10, box 47, PSF.

66 After Stokes invited Woodson to the Washington African Conference, Woodson responded with what Stokes termed “one of his rather unfortunate comments, namely, ‘I never join the oppressor to strengthen his control of the oppressed.” Stokes to Herskovits, March 5, 1943, folder 6, box 32, PSF.
Bunche also seemed to “mellow” from the more extreme position he had taken in the 1930s. When Yergan became President of the National Negro Congress (NNC) in 1940 after an acrimonious split with former leader, A. Philip Randolph, who had resigned over the NNC’s political and financial affiliations with the Communist Party, Bunche had defected from Yergan’s International Committee on African Affairs (which became the CAA the following year). Bunche feared being tied to a Communist organization, and the damage this would do to his career. That year, Bunche also contributed, as researcher and writer, to the Carnegie Corporation’s landmark study of racial dynamics in the USA that Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal directed. The survey was published in 1944 as a two-volume treatise entitled, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*.68

Despite these conciliatory gestures, the majority of the left-wing black intellectuals with whom Stokes partnered during the War remained fiercely critical of capitalism (as the label left-wing connotes). This is why Von Eschen regards this period

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68 If an American approach initially influenced British colonial educational investigations, then Myrdal’s study indicates that the inverse was taking place by the 1930s. In 1936, Keppel, then President of the Carnegie Corporation, informed Joseph Oldham of “his idea for a man of the Hailey type for a study of negro conditions in the United States.” (Keppel was referring to Hailey’s *African Survey* that the Colonial Office and Chatham House commissioned during the 1930s, and the Carnegie Corporation sponsored.) Two years later, he launched Myrdal’s project. See: *Memorandum of Interview Oldham and Keppel,* November 23, 1936, folder 1, box 281, series III A 4, CCNY. Even the Carnegie Corporation’s famous insistence that *An American Dilemma* should be conducted by a “foreigner” from a “nonimperialistic country”, thus explaining the choice of the Swede, Myrdal, echoed the (unsuccessful) British attempt to employ an “independent” American observer in the form of Whitney Shepardson to direct their African Survey. See: Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy (Volume 1)* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009 [1944]), 1xviii; Oldham to Keppel, December 20, 1932, folder 1, box 281, series III A 4, CCNY. However, American philanthropy financed both British colonial and American enterprises during the 1930s, so perhaps this national distinction is superficial.
as a “golden age” in which American liberal institutions respected and supported radicals who sought to thoroughly redefine basic American social and economic rights. Du Bois privately addressed Stokes’s 1941 Africa Committee, lambasting “the relation between European capital and colored labor involving high profit, low wages and cheap raw material.” He deplored the fact that the “strong motive of private profit” was “placed in the foreground of…interracial relations, while the greater objects of cultural understanding and moral uplift lurk[ed] in the background.” Capitalism was in fact structurally inimical to the socio-economic and racially equalizing spirit of left-wing political ideology. Du Bois made an appeal for “curbing and guiding the activities of industry and limiting the profits of private enterprise in the interest of the laboring masses.”

By enticing token blacks such as Du Bois and other black progressives into African educational programs under the rubric of political anti-colonialism, white planners cooled the incendiary economic embers of black protest. From this perspective, the wartime partnership of black radicals and white liberal philanthropists, academics, and politicians did not constitute a remarkably progressive moment in American history, as Von Eschen claims. It exposes the skill with which the white ruling class turned against British colonialism in order to extinguish or redirect black

69 Ibid, 5.

70 Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, “Memorandum for Committee on Africa and Peace Aims,” November 1941, folder 4, box 37, PSF.

71 Harold Cruse describes the “sellout” of the “Negro left” that he argues had occurred by the late 1930s, when “middle-class professional” intellectuals like A. Philip Randolph and Ralph Bunche harnessed “bourgeois” economic demands, precluding “a vital confrontation with the economic group essentials of American society.” See: Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual (New York: The New York Review of Books, 2005 [1967]), 177, 171, and 174.
insurgency. Since the beginning of the century, the educational surveys sponsored by philanthropic foundations had maintained a façade of democratic representation, while white organizers retained control of the content of final reports. Similarly, Stokes’s 1941 Africa Committee was comprehensively representative of all white and black Americans “especially interested in Africa.”  

An elite Executive Committee was responsible for authoring the eventual publication. Du Bois and Claude Barnett were not part of this Executive group; the familiar personalities – Jones, Ross, Davis, and, of course, its Chair, Stokes – were. Du Bois granted that the “final report” of the “Committee on Africa, the War, and Peace Aims” did not “adequately emphasize…the fact that Africa [was] organized today chiefly for the profit of Europeans” (by which he meant white people), but he nevertheless considered it to have “reached a commendable and unusual unanimity of thought.” Stokes boasted to Harold Butler that radical “Negro Americans…all took a fine part in our debates, with the result that we had a unanimous report.” He lamented that this had

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73 This philanthropic technique – of basing reports on the investigations and perspectives of a widely representative committee but ensuring that a small elite committee controlled eventual writing – similarly explains how Bunche’s leftist stance was masked in the published version of Myrdal’s An American Dilemma. Ralph Bunche, Jr., and Ernest Allen, Jr. comment on the “selective narrowness of black worldviews presented and analyzed” in the “final, grand product” of An American Dilemma, that “represented…assimilationist, reformist-oriented views.” In contrast, the “original memoranda” that Bunche and his staff had collected in 1940 reflected the “rich diversity of African American opinion and Bunche’s reflective insights” as a man who “believed that the destiny of African Americans…was to be found in the success of the labor movement.” These ideas were nowhere to be found in the published volume. See: Bunche, Jr., and Allen, Jr, “Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem” Contributions in Black Studies 9 (1990): 70.

74 Du Bois, “Review of The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint; A Study by the Committee on Africa, the War, and Peace Aims, (New York: Africa Bureau),” NY Herald Tribune, Jan 10, 1943, folder 9, box 37, PSF.
been “no easy thing” given members’ “different types and points of view,” but his leadership brought about “harmony and fair and constructive results.”

Yergan praised the statement of Stokes’s “national committee of American citizens interested in Africa” as “exceedingly interesting,” and was “confident that the Council on African Affairs” would “rejoice” in all its “constructive achievements which may help the African people.”

Stokes organized a masterful publicity campaign to ensure that *The Atlantic Charter and Africa* was widely circulated “both at home and abroad,” and reviews emphasized its interracial, representative character. The pamphlet ended with a full “List of Members of Committee” who had contributed to its production, alongside the various associations with which they were affiliated. Stokes carefully arranged for Barnett to give out “releases regarding the Report” to the “leading journals of Negro public opinion” and “the daily press” in order to “stimulate interest on the part of Americans in general and Negro Americans in particular in Africa and its problems” and “make a contribution toward changing the situation” in a direction favored by Stokes.

Barnett agreed to use “interesting excerpts from the report every week or two,” and asked the leading African-American members of Stokes’s Committee “each to do a brief

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75 Stokes to Harold Butler, July 17, 1942, folder 1, box 37, PSF.

76 Max Yergan to Stokes, June 12, 1942, folder 1, box 37, PSF.

77 Quoted by Jones in, “A Brief Summary of the Current Educational Activities of the Phelps-Stokes Fund,” Confidential for Trustees, April, 1943, folder 10, box 47, PSF.


79 Stokes to Barnett, September 9, 1942; Stokes to Barnett, July 29, 1942, folder 1, box 37, PSF.
A queue of “reviewers and publicists” praised the report, arguing that “it should have important effects on the future of the continent.” They observed that the document had been based on the deliberations of a committee that represented “forty well-known Americans who [had] specialized in one or more aspects of the network of African problems,” noting approvingly that these experts were “both white and coloured.”

As with their prewar predecessors, the organizers of wartime American research bodies liaised closely with American official agencies to ensure recommendations had both a national and international reach. And by now, the New Deal had enhanced the number, and capacities, of administrative agencies attached to the state, making these connections increasingly significant. The planning committee for Stokes and Herskovits’s 1943 African conference argued that “informal but sustained contact should be maintained with persons in Washington and elsewhere, associated with the American and other governments…interested in and responsible for policies and actions relating to Africa.” This allowed the conference’s studies to “benefit from such facts and points of view” as Washington connections “might be able to give.”

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80 Barnett to Stokes, August 15, 1942, folder 1, box 37, PSF.

81 Quoted by Jones in, “A Brief Summary of the Current Educational Activities of the Phelps-Stokes Fund,” Confidential for Trustees, April, 1943, folder 10, box 47, PSF.


84 “Meeting of the Organizing Committee of the International Conference on Africa at the New York Office of the SSRC, April 8, 1944,” folder 6, box 32, PSF.
links influenced conference planners’ choice of the national capital as their venue.

Planning a 1944 African educational survey, Davis believed it crucial to have “someone on [his] board from Washington who would have entrée in the State Department.”

The surprising power of this cabal of liberal philanthropic foundation managers, missionaries, and academics to shape policy led to the establishment of new governmental departments, and influenced their inter-racial make-up. The *Atlantic Charter and Africa* recommended that the State Department establish a “separate Division with most of its personnel having African experience, to deal with African-American affairs.” The pool of talent would thereby be restricted almost exclusively to members of the network already engaged in educational work in Africa, who could be relied on to sympathize with its objectives. For the same reason, the “system of the past”, by which Africa was the remit of the Near East Division or of the West European Division, seemed “inadequate for the present and future”. The Otterbein Conference reaffirmed this demand. To follow it up, in November 1943, Ross submitted a letter to Edward R. Stettinus, Jr., Acting Secretary of State, on behalf of the “private groups, unusual in number for America,” who had “been carrying forward studies of African problems and of America’s possible relationships to them”, building on what had been “done, as for two generations past, by missionary bodies and philanthropic groups in this country.”

Conveniently ignoring the colonial roots of these philanthropic and missionary research surveys, members of the State Department agreed with Ross that philanthropic

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85 *Atlantic Charter and Africa*, 108.

86 Emory Ross to Mr. Secretary, Edward R. Stettinus, November 5, 1943, folder 20, box 33, PSF.
and academic expertise would drive “America’s advance in general world concerns, in global racial relationships, in international shaping of broad colonial policies designed to contribute to world order, and in the desirable program of development of Africa and Africans for responsible participation in that world order.” Stokes co-signed Ross’s letter to Stettinus, supplementing it with his own additional entreaty. Ross and his allies believed it “a matter of importance that African Affairs as such should have the special consideration of an African Division, or other section in the Department”. It was “wholly desirable that the Africa staff as at present serving should gradually be increased and strengthened by the addition of other officers, white and Negro, of African experience and specialization,” which included “domestic matters related to Africa” and “international relations involving Africa.” In 1944, the US State Department created a Division of African Affairs in its Office of Eastern and African Affairs. Stokes expressed to Stettinus his “appreciation of the Department’s recent appointment of (African-American) Dr. Ralph Bunche to a position in the Division of Territorial Studies,” praising Bunche’s valuable contribution to his 1941 Africa Committee. He could rely on Bunche to work for their mutual aims.

American research groups continued to profit from the expertise and connections of the British Colonial Office, although rather more discreetly. Stokes and Herskovits’s Washington Conference on Africa needed a chairman “whose position and reputation” ensured he would “carry weight” with “the British Foreign Office,” due to the need to

87 Ibid.

88 Ross to Stettinus, November 5, 1943; Stokes to Stettinus, November 5, 1943, folder 20, box 33, PSF.

89 Stokes to Stettinus, January 21, 1944.
“maintain friendly relations in these quarters.”\textsuperscript{90} Jackson Davis, more favorable to the British Empire than Herskovits, maintained his educational survey was necessary because Herskovits’s project was “too much concerned with (anti-imperial) political elements.”\textsuperscript{91} But Davis’s supposedly apolitical program enlisted “the active interest of leading colonial personalities,” not to mention US State Department representatives.\textsuperscript{92} However, the Survey was careful to choose only members who would “predispose” black thinkers to a “favourable reception of the project.”\textsuperscript{93} This precluded anyone with formal connections to the British government. Davis chose Margaret Wrong to participate in his 1944 African commission, because of her attachment to an “unofficial” missionary body, albeit one “in very intimate and close touch with the Colonial Office.”\textsuperscript{94} Distinctions between “political” and “apolitical” personnel were slippery in a governmental system in which members of overlapping agencies seamlessly, and almost invisibly, filtered into, cooperated with, and influenced, official organs of power.

This façade of informal, disinterested benevolence, however illusory, was crucial for the success of wartime philanthropic educational surveys and recommendations for Africa. Stokes was able to claim that “lack of political involvements” had enabled his 1941 Africa Committee “to view African problems with some independence of

\textsuperscript{90} Stokes to Herskovits, May 3, 1943, folder 6, box 32, PSF.

\textsuperscript{91} Memorandum of Interview, Jackson Davis, JHW and RFE, December 22, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.

\textsuperscript{92} “African Educational Survey – Tentative Scheme of Work,” March 18, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{94} “African Educational Survey – Tentative Scheme of Work,” March 18, 1943; Memorandum of Interview, Jackson Davis, JHW and RFE, December 22, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.
judgment”. Lack of overt political involvement did not, as noted above, preclude other ideological, practical, or covert political motives, but Stokes chose not to dwell on these. He may have genuinely believed his own assertion. In any case, to state that lack of political interest necessarily entailed independent judgment was a non sequitur, but nevertheless, a widely accepted one. The *Washington D.C. Star* reported that Stokes’s 1941 African group had comprised “scholars and sociologists motivated by the same altruistic purposes”. There was “nothing not idealistic in the best meaning of the phrase attache[d] to the enterprise in which they jointly [were] engaged.”95 The parade of objectivity misled even astute social critics like Du Bois. He proposed to replace colonialism with a post-war “international Mandates Commission” to be controlled by independent “philanthropists of the highest character, with the collaboration of unprejudiced and rigorously tested science.”96 But alas, there was no such thing as unprejudiced science. Scientific enterprise was, and still is, dictated by contemporary ideologies, needs and agendas, and perhaps most importantly, money.

**A Post-War American Settlement**

The Bretton Woods Agreement created the framework for a postwar global capitalist system based on a free international flow of goods and investment, and an acknowledgement of the United States as the world’s financial leader. According to economic historian, R. A. Mundell, the Agreement introduced a currency arrangement

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96 DuBois, “Memorandum for Committee on Africa and Peace Aims,” November, 1941, folder 4, box 37, PSF.
that confirmed the USA’s “asymmetric” role in the international order. It reestablished the link between the dollar and gold. And because the dollar was the only currency tied to gold, “the United States fixed the price of gold whereas other countries fixed their currencies to the dollar.”

The Agreement also created two American-dominated financial institutions. While the proposed International Monetary Fund (IMF) would make loans to developing nations on stringent conditions designed to align their economic structures with those the United States, the new World Bank, bankrolled by the world’s wealthiest nations, was intended to play a more truly philanthropic role, in alleviating poverty in its most deprived regions. In reality, however, the World Bank’s lending role was secondary to its primary purpose of encouraging private capital investment abroad by underwriting the risks of private investors. Additionally, its mandate included “development,” i.e., capitalist development, as well as “reconstruction.”

Significantly, Bretton Woods boasted that colonial peoples would have “the opportunity for sound and constructive economic development as distinguished from their ruthless exploitation” under European imperial rule. What the conference did not mention was that the agent of this economic development, the IMF, would insist on strict one-size-fits-all conditions of every loan, regardless of local history, conditions,

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99 Panitch and Gindin, Making of Global Capitalism, 75.

100 “Bretton Woods Proposal to Aid Colonial Peoples,” New Africa 4, no. 3 (March 1945), file 6, box 668, MP
culture or circumstances. Those strict conditions included drivers of free enterprise such as crackdowns on public spending, removing price controls, and privatizing state-owned businesses, all of which characterized the American way of economic life.

Stokes urged American authorities to make peace conferences racially inclusive in order to win black American approval of their terms. In September 1944, he advised Stettinus that arrangements should “be made by which colored people of the world should have an opportunity to present their views to the Peace Conference or Peace Conferences, and that in keeping with this plan there should be one or more representative Negroes attached in some official capacity to the US delegation to the Peace Conference immediately following the war.”

Like all his colleagues, Stokes conceived of black representation as a sop to black sentiment rather than a natural human right. Had he thought of black representation in democratically proportional terms, he would have demanded the presence of considerably more than “one or more representative Negroes” at the Peace Conference. Although no black people attended Bretton Woods, in 1944, Treasury and State Department officials held a conference in Washington of representatives of “all sections of the American people” to consider its proposals. The art of marketing was by now highly developed in the US, and the elaborate and sophisticated public relations campaign that the American government, in particular the Treasury, launched to win support for the Bretton Woods Agreement

101 Stokes to Stettinus, September 13, 1944, folder 20, box 33, PSF.

mirrored the techniques that American philanthropic and educational groups had long practiced.  

Major African American organizations endorsed the Bretton Woods Agreement, despite its affirmation of international capitalism. The US government invited the Educational Director of the CAA, Dr. W. A. Hunton, to its Washington conference to debate the financial agreement, where he praised the accord on behalf of his left-wing organization.  

CAA Chairman, Paul Robeson, subsequently issued a statement declaring that the Agreement constituted “a wonderful thing for Negro-white relations in the United States,” allowing Africans to “show what they can do”; “never again” could “colonialism be what it was.” Presumably he was referring to the establishment of the World Bank, whose mission was “to end extreme poverty within a generation and boost shared prosperity”, though in fact the World Bank made its first loan (in 1949) to that struggling, impoverished Third World nation, France. An editorial in the CAA periodical, New Africa, praised the 1944 Bretton Woods agreement for confirming “the threshold of a new world order of democratic collaboration” and “international cooperation”. As economic agreements were “the foundation for political agreement,” the author of the New Africa article agreed with President Roosevelt that “establishing the principle of economic cooperation as the foundation for expanded world trade” was “the basic task of the hour.”  

Elizabeth Borgwardt notes that by 1945, a representative of the US Treasury  

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103 Panitch and Gindin discuss the US Treasury’s masterful public campaign to get Congress to approve of Bretton Woods. See Making of Global Capitalism, 79.  

104 “Bretton Woods Proposal to Aid Colonial Peoples,” New Africa 4, no. 3 (March 1945), file 6, box 668, MP.  

105 “Editorial,” New Africa 4, no. 3, (March 1945), file 6, box 668, MP.
Department was able to inform British Foreign Office officials that “the American left” was solidly behind the Bretton Woods program.\textsuperscript{106} The wartime and postwar strategies of liberal American philanthropists had helped secure this consensus.

High-profile black intellectuals attended the San Francisco founding conference of the United Nations in 1945. Eslanda Robeson and Max Yergan represented the CAA, Du Bois acted as an agent of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peopled (NAACP), and Bunche served as the State Department’s official expert on trusteeships for US delegate Harold Stassen at the meeting.\textsuperscript{107} These leading African Americans were troubled by the results of the meeting, but on the grounds that it did not do enough to end European imperialism, or address the political and legal rights of African Americans in the USA.\textsuperscript{108} For Stokes, these were legitimate battles. The more extreme, economic element of black demands had been removed, anticipating the tone and direction of the civil rights movement of the 1950s.

Eslanda Robeson was most angered by the San Francisco conference’s lack of female, rather than black, representation. She complained that despite women’s important role in the anti-colonial struggle, and against fascism during the war, very few were present at the meeting. She denounced the fact that “[o]fficialdom” had retained “a

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\textsuperscript{106} Elizabeth Borgwardt, \textit{A New Deal for the World} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 128.


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nineteenth century attitude in thinking and behavior toward women in the fast moving, radically changing twentieth century.” After all the global suffering men had caused, it was astonishing that they retained charge of designing the new postwar order.\(^{109}\)

Peter Mandler, similarly argues that women were inadequately represented in postwar anthropology. Their prior proliferation in American anthropology ended as the 1944 GI Bill, supporting the college education of veterans, made the field more male-dominated than it had been previously. Female anthropologists had tried, not always successfully, to identify the specificity of different cultural experiences, and questioned how their findings could be applied to improve the material circumstances of disempowered populations. Now, with women replaced by men, and emergent Cold War demands for scientific knowledge and planning, social science shifted to focus increasingly on universal principles, and ‘pure’ research.\(^{110}\) Women had intervened in the pedagogy and anthropological research of colonial populations by assuming the traditional roles dictated by patriarchal discourses. Having failed to dismantle subordinating attitudes “in thinking and behavior” toward them, women continued to be excluded from social instruments of power.

A postwar commitment to constructing a color-blind America, ostensibly free of prejudice, failed to rectify past structural inequalities, and managed to discreetly institutionalize new racialized inequities. Ira Katznelson identifies that black Americans


were largely excluded from the array of benefits – including money for university and vocational education – that the GI Bill dispensed to veterans. Although the Bill did not explicitly preclude blacks or authorize racial discrimination, Southern Democrats, committed to white dominance, made sure that members of the federal Office of Education (before 1929 referred to as the Bureau of Education) did not craft its educational provisions.\footnote{Katznelson, \textit{When Affirmative Action Was White}, 128, 125.} Instead, Southern politicians engineered the Bill, and guaranteed that the federal funding that it awarded was administered on a local and state level, allowing white district officers to execute the law on a discriminatory basis.\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, 123-124.} The vast majority of black veterans were thus unable to share in the remarkable expansion of educational benefits that the Bill engendered for white returning soldiers.\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, 116, 121-122.}

American philanthropic foundation managers, and the network of commercial interests, missionaries, academics, and governmental groups with whom they cooperated, entered the second half of the twentieth century as they had entered the first, heralding respect for difference and diversity, provided it took a recognizably American form. The US government took account of the abundance of wartime studies undertaken by bodies like the Phelps-Stokes Fund, collecting data from a multitude of sources.\footnote{Melville Herskovits to the Members of the Organizing Committee for an International Conference on Africa, October 22, 1943, folder 6, box 32, PSF.} The administration subsequently created new governmental divisions that gave “special consideration” to African affairs, departments that employed an interracial staff with a
wealth of “African experience and specialization.” Stokes backed African American appeals for black delegations at the peace conferences, a demand that was recognized in the founding conference of the UN. In 1946, Bunche moved from the State Department to preside over the Department of Trusteeship of the UN. Because of America’s long-standing philanthropic, missionary, and educational expertise with “non-whites”, both in the US and Africa, American liberals argued that their country had a “more legitimate voice in colonial affairs”, enabling it to “establish yardsticks for measuring the virtues and defects of the colonial policies of other powers.” The centuries-old philanthropic, missionary and educational activities of the British and other European Empires were apparently not the same thing at all, amounted to no special expertise, and gave them no authority to meddle in America’s new playground.

President Truman’s 1949 inaugural speech articulating the American “principles of…faith” mirrored the shared, albeit broad-based, national ideals of individualism, free enterprise, and liberal Protestantism, that Stokes and his colleagues had promoted before and during the Second World War. These principles supposedly celebrated individual autonomy, but only in so far as it slotted into a “cooperative economic program”

115 Ross to Stettinus, November 5, 1943; Stokes to Stettinus, November 5, 1943, folder 20, box 33, PSF.
116 Stokes to Stettinus, September 13, 1944, folder 20, box 33, PSF.
118 Meeting of the Organizing Committee of the International Conference on Africa at the Washington Office of the SSRC, October 15, 1943,” folder 6, box 32, PSF; “New U.S. Plans to Strengthen the Free World, Mr. Truman’s ‘Bold Programme’,”The Times, January 20, 1949, file 8, box 669, MP.
designed to “foster capital investment in areas needing development.” This was a far cry from the CAA’s 1938 plea to both colonial Africa and America, urging them to respect the “traditional African institution” of “economic cooperation,” a euphemism for communist collectivism and a comprehensive redistribution of wealth.

But the CAA approved of the postwar economic order. For Truman, American democracy was “based on the conviction that man” possessed “the moral and intellectual capacity” to “govern himself with reason and justice.” Individual autonomy was only tempered by “God’s help,” which was necessary to secure “a world of justice, harmony, and peace.” And, of course, all nations that “desire[d] self-government and a voice in deciding their own affairs” should be set “free.” This was a neat way of reconciling the principle of autonomy with the Truman Doctrine – nations that professed to prefer the Communist way of life clearly did not know what they were about, and might be forcibly brought back to the ways of true democracy. Truman’s speech reflected Margaret Wrong’s appeal for an end to racial discrimination. However, it lacked Wrong’s plea for positive discrimination in favor of sectors of society that had been historically disempowered and oppressed, and still suffered from institutionalized discrimination.

Truman, like Stokes, was enthusiastic for the human rights of the oppressed black

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119 “New U.S. Plans to Strengthen the Free World, Mr. Truman’s ‘Bold Programme’, ” *The Times*, January 20, 1949, file 8, box 669, MP.

120 Yergan to Keppel, January 19, 1938, folder 4, box 185, series III A, CCNY.

121 “New U.S. Plans to Strengthen the Free World, Mr. Truman’s ‘Bold Programme’, ” *The Times*, January 20, 1949, file 8, box 669, MP.

122 Ibid.

123 Margaret Wrong, “The African Woman’s Work and Education,” *West Africa* (October 26, 1935), 1250, box 10, ICCLA.
citizens of Britain’s African Empire, but – unlike Wrong – unconcerned about alleviating the social and economic ills afflicting the oppressed black African Americans in America’s own back yard.

American planners harnessed “education”, in its vast, ambiguous glory, buttressed by the new economic order, to establish their desired international economic order in 1945 as they had done in 1900, this time with the added agenda of preventing the insidious creep of Communist ideology into the newly liberated territories. Nor can it have escaped their attention that education was not only a powerful means of winning hearts and minds, but also had the benefit of being considerably cheaper than Marshall Aid. Education had the further merit of appearing apolitical and altruistic. A British report on Truman’s 1949 “Free World” speech regarded his internationalist focus – “not of his duties to his country, but of his country’s duties to the world” – as “something quite new.”

John R. Mott had likewise attempted to assume American responsibility for global wellbeing at the World Missionary Conference of 1910. Both Mott, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946, and Truman invoked homogenizing liberal dogmas, the antithesis of atheist Communist authoritarianism – freedom, morality, a God of justice – and employed a host of cooperating philanthropic, missionary, and educational agencies to disseminate these doctrines to diverse parts of the world where America hoped to establish a post-war presence. The only significant difference was that, in his role as President, Truman made this ideal an official American policy. Stephen B. Jones, a fellow at Yale University’s Institute of International Studies, established in 1935, and financed primarily by the Rockefeller Foundation, wrote in 1945 of the national need

\[124\] “New U.S. Plans to Strengthen the Free World, Mr. Truman’s ‘Bold Programme’,” *The Times*, January 20, 1949, file 8, box 669, MP.
to “set up and participate in every feasible mechanism” to increase America’s “knowledge of colonial areas.” This would allow the USA to “press effectively and upon the basis of sound information” for “democratic solutions.” In so doing, Americans could spread their “way of life,” and by extension, trade. The corollary was that in so doing, they would also prevent the spread of communism to Africa, where it had a dangerously attractive appeal because of its similar communitarian values. Yale’s Institute of International Studies sent hundreds of copies of its studies, like Jones’s treatise on “African and American Security,” to officials in relevant areas of government, where they found a welcome audience.

In this way, American philanthropists, educators, and statesmen collaboratively controlled the circulation of ideas to consolidate the homogenized global economic arena they sought. As a British observer remarked after hearing American anti-colonialist, Wendell Wilkie, speak in 1942: “Ideals do not harvest themselves. They are the fruit of cooperation and careful organization.” The British commentator was impressed that Americans recognized that a “world order, political and economic, to which the minds as well as the hearts of men [were] turning spontaneously,” did “not arise spontaneously, but only as the reward of hard thinking, self-restraint, and hard work.” Truman’s inaugural speech trumpeted that Communism “decree[d] what information” individuals received; Willkie’s portrayal of American democracy sounded suspiciously like a


127 “A Legacy from the League,” *British Empire Essay*, October 30, 1942, file 3, box 668, MP.
The following chapter explores the last, desperate attempts of British officials, inspired by American models, to use education to shape an integrated global order that recognized the British Empire. The British endeavor did not prove quite as successful as American efforts.

128 “New U.S. Plans to Strengthen the Free World, Mr. Truman’s ‘Bold Programme’,” *The Times*, January 20, 1949, file 8, box 669, MP.
CHAPTER 7:
GOD’S ENGLISHMEN

Is it too much to hope that a voice might be heard from this country with the ring of leadership proclaiming a clear plan of advance that would catch the imagination of the common man in Britain and in the Colonies and give them the sense of working together to achieve it?

Margery Perham, 1942.¹

With unprecedented determination, British officials and intellectuals in the 1940s once again harnessed education to bind together and bolster a fragmented Empire. The prospect of fighting a War in the name of democracy while remaining subjugated under British rule angered colonial populations, and as American critiques of the British Empire grew more vocal, British colonial authorities promoted colonial development with increasing vigor. They assumed greater responsibility for ensuring the “progress” of the colonies, a largely socio-economic program that rested on upgrading the education of imperial peoples, but conveniently sidestepped discussion of substantive political reform. British politicians, missionaries, and academics, many of whom had refined their civic educational ideals in the colonial context, attempted to sustain cohesion and efficiency in a far-flung Empire at a time when colonial subjects increasingly inhabited the imperial center, by revolutionizing the education of all British citizens – colonial and metropolitan. Prominent colonial educators turned their attention to devising metropolitan educational schemes to match those they had long proposed for the colonies; these

¹ Margery Perham, “America and the Empire – An Outline of the British Position: The Need for Definitions,” The Times, November 21, 1942, file 1, box 327, MP.
schemes advocated a broadly inclusive version of ethical Christianity, citizenship education, and more practical-based instruction for all “British” students.

But these reformers encountered the same institutional and ideological obstacles that had plagued their predecessors. Pleas for the government to espouse universalistic, democratic, inclusionary (albeit essentially Christian) educational values did not find expression in the Butler Education Act of 1944 for England and Wales. S. J. D. Green defines this Act, which was widely supported at the time, as a sectional “Anglican triumph,” a far cry from the utopian dreams of missionaries like Joseph Oldham.² Additionally, for these planners, the purpose of domestic educational reform was to enable the British nation to retain, and strengthen, a cohesive, autarchic Empire, and by extension, its status as a world power.³ The Labour Party enjoyed a landslide victory in the General Election of July 1945, supposedly reflecting postwar national unity. However, the wider Empire did not emerge from the War unified, as Margery Perham had romantically hoped; the fate of the Empire had already been sealed.

**Colonial Educational Reform**

By the outbreak of War, the British Empire was in a weakened state. It constituted a splintered collection of states and territories at very different levels of political

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development and with very little in common, except a loose connection to England. The culture of the Gold Coast had little in common with that of Northern Ireland, Tristan da Cunha, or St. Helena. The cost of administering the Empire had grown prohibitive. While the growth of the Empire in the nineteenth century had been powered by domestic industrial, technological and commercial expansion, Britain’s share of world trade had been steadily declining since the 1870s. The First World War had not helped, and in the 1930s, Britain’s balance of payments went into serious deficit. The 1926 Imperial Conference had affirmed the Balfour Declaration, which asserted that the Dominions were autonomous communities within the British Empire, and the 1931 Statute of Westminster had ratified the principle. In dividing the polity into the “white” members of a Commonwealth of Nations (Australia, New Zealand, Canada, etc.), all of which had legislative equality, and an Empire of colonial dependencies and protectorates (Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, etc.), the Act effectively partitioned the Empire along racial lines.\(^4\) If “equal status” and “free association” were good enough for Australia and Canada, then Indians, Africans, and Afro-Caribbeans wanted it too.

War imperiled this already vulnerable arrangement. In 1943, the Colonial Office’s Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies (ACEC) reported on the “political aspirations which [had] emerged in some parts of the Colonial Empire in vigorous form,” and were “spreading over far wider areas.”\(^5\) Colonial populations protested the ideological inconsistency of fighting under the banner of freedom and democracy while they themselves remained subjugated. This was the theme of Gandhi’s Quit India


\(^5\) *Mass Education in African Society, 1943* (CO Cmd. No. 186), FC/ 1/ 54.
movement, launched in 1942, while in August 1941, the Nigerian Eastern Mail asked:
“What purpose does it serve to remind us that Hitler regards us as semi-apes if the Empire for which we are ready to suffer and die, for whom we poured our blood and drained our pockets in 1914 and for which we are draining the same today, can tolerate racial discrimination against us?” The socio-economic strains of war also created civil unrest. Riots broke out in the Northern Rhodesian Copper Belt in March 1940 and in the Bahamas in June 1942. The police and military responded to these incidents with shootings, aggravating local disaffection. In a series of articles for The Times in 1942, Perham wrote of the harsh reality that even Great Britain’s “allies [were] turning anxious and critical eyes upon the Empire they [were] helping…to defend.” The “most friendly papers and journalists” in the USA spoke “from the common substratum of American anti-imperialism.”

Under attack from former American colleagues and colonial populations, British politicians adopted a new language of development, based on supposedly universal standards of progress but, critically, not of meaningful political reform. Albert Viton, a Lithuanian economist who had emigrated to the USA in his teens, observed from across

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9 Matera, Black London, 300.
the Pond that wartime exigencies had even caused leftist British “liberal and labor organizations” that had previously advocated a “rather barren ‘anti-imperialism’” to suddenly “speak about Britain’s responsibility for developing the resources, human and material, of the dependent areas.” Viton remarked that, in wartime, a complete spectrum of society, from members of the British left to financiers, industrialists, and Colonial Office representatives, had come to appreciate more than ever before the great potential of the Empire, “with its 65,000,000 inhabitants and its reserves of raw materials”, which offered a “potentially large market for British industry” and a “source of vital raw materials, payment of which need not be made in foreign currency.”

Aware of the economic benefits, quite apart from the enormous geopolitical advantages, of an integrated, efficient Empire, and trying to ward off American criticism, this “new imperialism” questioned the conventional ‘pay your way’ model of colonial governance. “Development” and “welfare” became colonial buzz words, enshrined in the 1940 Colonial Development and Welfare Act, and renewed with additional funding in 1945. Rule by experts and “partnership” with educated Africans in the development project should complement, but not entirely replace, the traditional colonial paradigm of indirect rule through native “chiefs.”

Viton commented that British authorities on the Empire now conceded that self-government was a long-term goal for the colonies, but “within the framework of the British commonwealth of nations,” not under “any system which would diminish Britain’s authority.” And even so, they increasingly argued that

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11 Matera, Black London, 300.

12 Viton, “Britain’s New Imperialism,” file 7, box 698, MP.
progress in the colonies, and, by extension, the legitimacy of British rule, should be judged by levels of economic development and social welfare, not by steps taken towards democracy and political independence.  

This revised imperial mandate of “development” privileged measures for the educational progress, and productive output, of colonial populations. Education appealed to colonial officials because it offered an ideal, indirect, and cheap method of control. Fred Clarke, Director of the Institute of Education and ACEC member, advised the British government in 1941 that it must do something “systematic” to provide for the advanced education of those colonial subjects who would eventually “carry the main burden of local self-government.” The ACEC also assembled a sub-committee to investigate the “mass education” of African colonial populations, and its 1943 report commented on the “grave urgency” of this task in the current political climate. Well-known colonial educators participated in the mass education study. Its staff included Clarke; Perham; Margaret Read; Margaret Wrong; educator and ACEC member, Miss E. C. Oakden; and former ACEC Secretary, Arthur Mayhew.

By the 1940s, these officials were wary of, if not hostile to, American collaboration. The General Education Board’s Jackson Davis was an American who, unlike most of his countrymen, remained favorably inclined to the idea of Empire. Nonetheless, when Davis discussed a prospective “Survey of Education in Africa” with Wrong in 1943, she initially declined his proposal for Anglo-American collaboration.

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Davis “sensed the British fear of American agitation” in her response.\textsuperscript{15} Wrong eventually agreed to cooperate, but attempted to divert Davis from British colonial affairs by advising him to restrict his project to the less controversial “other territories” in Africa (i.e., French, Belgian, and Portuguese African territories).\textsuperscript{16}

Despite distancing themselves from their American counterparts, British colonial educators continued to respect the American educational templates they had faithfully emulated in the interwar period. G. C. Turner, Principal of Uganda’s Makerere College since 1938, agreed with Perham in 1941 that the form of education needed to save the British Empire should not “imitate the superficial forms of a collapsing European order.” Turner condescendingly dismissed African calls for a Western-style, liberal arts education as an egotistical attempt to “feed his [African] self-esteem”, rather than a manifestation of valid concerns regarding future employment opportunities.\textsuperscript{17} Colonial educators maintained that the traditional English pedagogical style was outdated, and should be adapted to contemporary African demands. Fred Clarke insisted that “there should be a popular interpretation in scholastic terms of the Africans’ own social and economic needs,” an imperial approach that Clarke dated back “[w]ell before the outbreak of war” to the establishment of the ACEC of which he was now a proud member.\textsuperscript{18} Secretary of State for the Colonies, Malcolm Macdonald, gave a radio address

\textsuperscript{15} “Conference Meeting Minutes of the Africa Study Group at which Margaret Wrong was present,” April 29, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.

\textsuperscript{16} Memorandum of Interview, Jackson Davis, JHW and RFE, December 22, 1943, folder 2988, box 286, subseries 2, series 1, GEB.

\textsuperscript{17} G. C. Turner to Perham, May 5, 1941, file 1, box 515, MP.

\textsuperscript{18} “ACEC Meeting regarding ‘Achimota College and Education in West Africa,’” January 14, 1943, file 2, box 718, MP; Clarke, “Higher Education in the British Colonial Empire,” FC/1/22.
in 1940, entitled “The Support of a United Colonial Empire,” in defense of the proposed Colonial Development and Welfare Bill. Macdonald asserted that colonial education should be rural, since “[m]ost Colonies [were] agricultural lands, under whose tropical or semi-tropical sun” grew many “exotic foodstuffs, which may be essential to the welfare of mankind, but [had] ceased for a long time past to make fortunes for their producers” due to inadequate training.  

Even for planned colonial universities, “a great deal of attention” should be “devoted to the practical side” of education. Sir Donald Cameron, Governor of Nigeria and Oldham confidant, described the Higher College of Yaba, as formed “to afford the youth of Nigeria the opportunity of equipping himself in Nigeria to fill those posts in his own country to which he [was] reasonably entitled to aspire in the near future.”

Broad-based Christian ideals, along the lines endorsed by John Mott’s International Missionary Council (IMC), prevailed. The ACEC’s 1943 *Mass Education in African Society* pamphlet, which resulted from the committee’s prior investigations, claimed that a practical, rather than academic, style of learning was not synonymous with a purely technical education. The Report asserted that ever since the ACEC’s first memorandum on educational policy in 1925, the group had “recognized that the first task of education” was not just to raise the “efficiency of the bulk of the people,” but more

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20 Copy of a speech delivered by Sir Donald Cameron at the opening ceremony of the Higher College, Yaba, January 19, 1936. Sent to the De La Warr Commission on Higher Education in East Africa, November 20, 1936, file 2, box 718, MP.
importantly to elevate their “character.”21 The Conference of British Missionary Societies, whose key leaders, such as Joseph Oldham and Margaret Wrong, also sat on the ACEC, submitted a memorandum to the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Lloyd, in 1941. The missionary body maintained, somewhat paradoxically and with no supporting evidence, that “allegiance to Christianity” and “Christian ethics” were “not inconsistent with” the Government’s respect for “religious liberty for all,” since “Christians, Moslems or Pagans” could “neither understand nor respect individuals or Governments with no religion.”22 Presumably this sweeping generalization was intended to apply only to the colonies. The Conference made it at a time when Britain and the USSR were allied in a war against Nazi Germany; Britain appeared to have no great difficulty understanding and co-operating with its aggressively atheistic Soviet partners. Nevertheless, Clarke contended that “the staffing of the growing colleges with a sufficiency of men and women of the right quality” was “a first concern of policy” to strengthen the moral fiber of colonial society.23 Employing Christian teachers precluded the need for schools to disseminate specifically Christian doctrines; the righteous character of instructors would infiltrate into students almost through a process of moral osmosis, or evangelism through the back door.

Citizenship education was a critical element of this pedagogical model. Mass Education defined “the keynote of all progress within the colonies as well as in their political relations with the people of Britain” as giving “reality and expression” to the

21 Mass Education in African Society (1943), FC/ 1/ 54.

22 “Memorandum from Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and Ireland to Lord Lloyd, Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 17, 1941,” file 1, box 738, MP.

23 Clarke, “Higher Education in the British Colonial Empire,” FC/ 1/ 22.
“conception of a common citizenship.” This was a difficult task, given that the colonies had so little in common with one another, let alone the metropole. As previously, wartime colonial debates reflected confusion regarding the definition and parameters of this common citizenry: should it comprise the local community, the colony, the continent, or the wider Empire? Perham concurrently advised that the African should “study the history and customs of his own country,” but also be taught to sympathize with the white man’s burden – to “understand us (the British) and our difficulties in governing Africa.”

Either way, the ACEC resolved in 1943 that “social studies”, whatever that meant, should be a core part of all colonial education.

British colonial educators also argued that a federated system of overlapping organizations should be employed in educating the Empire. Luckily, precise political definitions became less significant to the circulation of broadly Christian ideas, and educators mirrored American bureaucratic techniques. Mass Education recommended “the closest co-operation among all departments” of British and local colonial governments in this task, with “many agencies, in addition to administrative departments” being “called upon to contribute their share” to the education of colonial populations. In particular, the Churches had “a special contribution to bring,” being in

24 Mass Education in African Society, FC/ 1/ 54.

25 Perham to G.C. Turner, March 10, 1942, file 1, box 515, MP; “Evidence of Miss M Perham to the De La Warr Commission, on Higher Education in East Africa,” February 5, 1937, file 1, box 516, MP.

26 “ACEC Meeting regarding ‘Achimota College and Education in West Africa,’ January 14, 1943, file 2, box 718, MP.
“the best position to infuse into the changing outlook that sense of spiritual values without which inspiration die[d]”.

Colonial officials promoted student exchange programs within the Empire as a means of integrating the unit, but with qualifications. The strengthening of protest by people of African descent in the metropole and colonies during the 1930s had made the British authorities realize the need to integrate the Empire more cohesively. But officials remained wary of bringing young colonials to the imperial center to study, fearful that they would be radicalized there. A 1941 meeting of the ACEC conveniently determined that “undergraduate education in a university of Great Britain ill-befit[s] men from the Colonies for service in their own country.” It apparently led them to “compare what they saw in Great Britain with what they [found] at home, and whereas before leaving their country they were satisfied, they now tend[ed] to find dissatisfaction…” These fears contributed to the government’s growing investment in colonial higher educational institutions.

Regardless, many British intellectuals, including Clarke, agreed on the value of “bringing able Africans to England for post-graduate work.” Clarke alleged that more mature students who had already proved that they were “proud of the culture of their own land” would be sufficiently stable to develop the “powers of leadership needed to inspire a new Africa…through closer contact with the best in our [British] civilization.” The ACEC recommended that, if the new colonial universities were to “exert a profound

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27 Mass Education in African Society, FC/ 1/ 54.

28 “ACEC Meeting,” January 18, 1941, Discussion of Memorandum by Professor H. J. Channing, file 2, box 718, MP.

29 Clarke, “Higher Education in the British Colonial Empire,” FC/ 1/ 22.
unifying influence on the Empire as a whole,” and “bring nearer the aims of its members for the development of all its peoples”, they must become part of a wider “imperial university system.”30 The Colonial Development and Welfare Act facilitated the entry of more students from the colonies, including 200 Africans, into British universities during the last two years of the war. The number of Caribbean students in Britain rose more dramatically, from 166 to 1,114 between 1939 and 1950.31

But if colonial education were to be revolutionized, and increasingly blended into the metropole, domestic education would have to change too. The government now demanded that British institutions should train large numbers of British experts and technocrats, whom the Colonial Office could recruit to work alongside educated colonial populations. In 1937, Perham pointed out to the Colonial Office’s Commission on Higher Education in East Africa, that for “[n]ew standards of conduct” to “be communicated along with the new training” in the Empire, “the best teachers England [could] supply” were needed in the colonial field. But Britain did not yet possess young men and women adequately educated for this task.32 In 1935, Joseph Oldham had similarly complained about “things to be done in Africa” for which he lacked the trained English personnel to “do in sufficient numbers.”33

30 “ACEC Meeting,” January 18, 1941, Discussion of Memorandum by Professor H. J. Channing, file 2, box 718, MP.

31 Matera, Black London, 243.

32 “Evidence of Miss M Perham to the De La Warr Commission on Higher Education in East Africa,” February 5, 1937, file 1, box 516, MP.

33 Joseph Oldham to the Rev. A. L. Warnshuis, January 5, 1935, box 26. 11. 33, IMC.
Educational programs for the metropole also converged with colonial strategies, due to the large number of former colonial subjects now on home shores in part because of these reformers’ efforts. Creating harmony in a pluralistic society was no longer the sole concern of far-flung colonial outposts and the mixed-race USA. In 1942, the *Crown Colonist* reported that “[n]ever before were so many of His Majesty’s Colonial subjects to be found in the United Kingdom.” In addition to “the students and the seamen who in normal times [were] temporarily domiciled here,” there were “today a thousand or more men and women from widely separate parts of the Colonial Empire in training or in service with the Army and the Royal Air Force, engaged in war production or related jobs, and more Colonial seamen than usual in our ports.”34 That year, the Secretary of State for the Colonies appointed a “Welfare Officer” to assist “coloured Colonial people to take a full part in the work and life of this country.” These people had “a lively sense of the injustice of prejudices which so often single[d] them out for special treatment for slights and insults just because they [were] of a different appearance from the majority of the people in these islands.” The British public had “a human duty as well as an urgent political interest to be generous and reasonable in…dealings with our fellow citizens from the Colonial Empire who for one reason or the other [were] living and working in this country.”35

In 1943, former Principal of Achimota College, Rev. A. G. Fraser, assisted by Margaret Wrong, investigated the “conditions of the coloured population in the Stepney area”. The group was “seriously concerned for the welfare of the coloured

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35 J. L. Keith (Welfare Officer at the Colonial Office), “Welfare of Colonial People in the United Kingdom,” September 1942, file 1, box 696, MP.
people” in the London neighborhood. It was “true that the war…intensified the differences of the coloured people in the area, and added to their numbers coloured visitors serving in the Forces, the coloured people constituted a real social group in Stepney before the war and [would] continue to do so after it.”

A “Survey of the Colour Question in some Aspects of English Education”, published by the pan-African League of Coloured Peoples in 1944, asserted that “the race problem in the British Empire” had “assumed a new urgency since the war…brought so many of our coloured fellow-subjects to England, where to their anger and surprise they [found] one hotel and boarding-house after another barred to them.”

### British Educational Reform

Colonial development could not be approached separately from that of what Perham called “the White races.” In 1941, she argued that a revised educational approach was needed to ensure “full equality to all those within the Empire…not only in the Colonies but in this country,” too.

The Depression and political upheavals of the 1930s had already destroyed the illusion of the superiority of the Western socio-economic order, and models of governance, and education. Colonial educators fully acknowledged that domestic lessons could be learned from imperial experiments. In 1931, Clarke had proposed that “some of the winds of change in English education may blow from Africa,”

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36 “Report of meeting held on November 3, 1943, regarding Social Survey of Stepney,” file 2, box 742, MP.

37 Edith Ramsay to Perham, March 10, 1944, file 2, box 742, MP.

38 Perham, “A Proposed New Colonial Policy,” *West Africa* (December 27, 1941), file 5, box 692, MP.
anticipating Prime Minister Harold MacMillan’s historic 1960 “Winds of Change”
speech.\(^{39}\) When International African Institute board member, Bronislaw Malinowski,
introduced the 1938 monograph of his former social anthropology PhD student, Jomo
Kenyatta, he asserted that “Anthropology begins at home” had “become the watchword
of modern social science.” Only if a native, like Kenyatta, investigated African society,
could its problems be resolved. Similarly, Malinowski explained, Britain must research
its own civilization. He praised recent attempts to do this, such as the 1937 founding of
the social research organization, Mass-Observation, designed to employ the tools of
anthropology traditionally used to study foreign cultures, to explore British society.\(^{40}\)
Anthropologists and social scientists, acting in this idealist tradition, investigated interwar
British society with the hope of identifying policies to improve and unite it.

The attention of colonial educators and experts thus increasingly shifted away
from imperial peripheries to the center. In 1935, convinced that the “question of
education” was “a living and burning issue at the present time in almost every country,”
not just in colonial outposts, Oldham began planning a World Conference on “Church,
Community and State” to be held in Oxford in 1937.\(^{41}\) London’s Institute of Education
had just poached Professor Clarke from McGill University, Canada, and the two quickly
became “trusty allies,” as they embarked on assembling a “real group” to “make a

\(^{39}\) Clarke, “A Central Institute for the Study of Education in the Empire,” British Association,

\(^{40}\) Bronislaw Malinowski, “Introduction,” to Jomo Kenyatta, \textit{Facing Mount Kenya} (New York:
Random House, 1965 [1938]), vii; For Mass Observation, see Ross McKibbin, \textit{Parties and

\(^{41}\) “Programme of Work in Preparation of the world Conference of Churches in 1937,” Volume
76, Papers of Cosmo Gordon Lang (hereafter CGL), Lambeth Palace Library.
combined shove” to paint the “full imaginative picture” of what education should constitute throughout the Empire.\textsuperscript{42} Prominent imperial educators like Clarke and Lord Lothian (erstwhile South African administrator and Secretary to the Rhodes Trust since 1925), along with English educators like Cambridge University political scientist, Ernest Barker, and High Master of St. Paul’s School, Walter Oakeshott, delivered addresses at Oldham’s 1937 Oxford conference. Speeches were both published and broadcast over the radio. Clarke conceded in his essay, ‘The Crisis in Education’, that his ideas were “modified by experience in two oversea Dominions, where non-British elements…had to be considered, where community-life [was] still weak, being new, unformed, widely-scattered, often mobile, and lacking in homogeneity.” In these regions, the “State necessarily” played “a much larger originative and directive part” as “the prescriber of the content of school education and even of the techniques to be adopted.” Clarke was now converted to the belief that the proper function of the “State in education” should be to create a “unity in the common life” and “an organic order in society” underlined by “religion.” Vitally, the character of this religious model was neither divisive nor institutional, but an amorphous, woolly “religion of Love,” a “revitalized and regenerated Christianity.”\textsuperscript{43} James Dougall, Scottish missionary participant in the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s 1924 East African educational commission, first principal of the Jeanes school in Kabete, Kenya, and by now chair of the United Free Church of Scotland, noted to his old friend, Oldham, that the Oxford conference represented his colleague’s attempt to “create

\textsuperscript{42} Transcribed, Clarke to Mrs. Clarke, February 13, 1935, FC/ 4/ 40.

\textsuperscript{43} Clarke, “The Crisis in Education,” Research Department for the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, April, 1937, FC/ 1/ 13.
a distinct type of life in common” at home, as existed “in the best mission schools in Africa and the East.”

Much work needed to be done in the British metropole. After the Oxford Conference, Oldham established a select “Moot” discussion group to debate how a “life in common” might be fostered on domestic soil. Clarke was a key member of the Moot, along with fellow Oxford conference participants, Ernest Barker and Walter Oakeshott, and a number of other distinguished British educational and political figures. In 1939, Clarke remorsefully described to a “Congress on Education for Democracy” convened by Columbia University’s Teachers College, the sentiment that remained “widely prevalent in England, namely, that formal courses in civics [were] at best a waste of time and at worst positively harmful to the achievement of a vital and enlightened citizenship,” a position these planners believed must be abandoned.

The experience of the Second World War encouraged a range of social commentators to envision a new society for Britain. Jose Harris argues that the War caused British social policy framers across the political spectrum to become “inseparably bound up with ‘reconstructing’ a society whose traditional values and institutions had been transformed or shattered by the impact of world war.”

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44 James Dougall to Oldham, September 27, 1937, box S14, CBMS.

45 Clarke, “Education for Citizenship in the British Dominions,” Address to the Congress on Education for Democracy, held at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, August 15-17, 1939, FC/ 1/ 22.

46 Jose Harris, “Political ideas and the debate on State welfare, 1940-1945,” in War and Social Change: British Society in the Second World War, ed. Harold L. Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 234.
identified wartime literature on reconstruction masked the wide “diversity of values and goals” of planners.\textsuperscript{47} Harris classifies William Beveridge’s social insurance scheme as a liberal program, reinforcing a “highly traditional role for the State as a merely instrumental protector of private satisfactions,” an arrangement that operated on a “limited and contractarian basis.”\textsuperscript{48} In contrast, Harris highlights the educational plans of the Conservative Reconstruction Committee (CRC), chaired by R. A. Butler, who became President of the Board of Education in 1941, as exemplifying radical attempts to integrate the British state.\textsuperscript{49} Harris suggests that Great Britain’s sprawling, multi-cultural imperial constitution prevented the latter vision from taking root in the metropole, where politicians struggled to conceive of society as a cohesive, unified entity.\textsuperscript{50}

These revolutionary educational plans had in fact originated in a diverse, pluralistic Empire. It was in colonial outposts that many of these educational planners had first developed a view of education as key to cohering a “consciously integrated organic State”.\textsuperscript{51} The outbreak of War in September 1939 merely hardened the belief of Oldham, Clarke, and their colleagues in the urgency of aligning an old-fashioned English education with what they considered radical, colonial guidelines, in order to maintain the coherence and efficiency of the Empire. Lord Hailey, former Indian official, and Director

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{47} Ibid, 238.
\bibitem{48} Ibid, 249.
\bibitem{49} Ibid, 242.
\bibitem{51} Harris, “Political ideas,” 242.
\end{thebibliography}
of the Carnegie-sponsored, British Colonial Office-endorsed *African Survey* of the 1930s, opined in 1941 that the “functions of the State in regard to the dependencies” were “of the same order as those which it had for backward and less developed areas in Great Britain itself.” Conversely, the educational innovations proposed by the state for the colonies should be applied in the metropolis, where outdated educational notions promoting “suburban respectability” continued to reign. In October 1939, Oldham released the first issue of *The Christian News-Letter*, a periodical publicizing the Moot’s “common thinking” on how “an adventurous Christian faith” might bring “hope and renewal to a decaying civilisation.” He was not referring to Nazi Germany.

In June 1940, Oldham wrote to Henry Brooke, founder of the Conservative Research Department (CRD), describing “the bones of the thing.” Oldham insisted that the British nation needed “a living faith in order to come through.” By this, he meant a Christian faith. Presumably Churchill’s wartime speeches were insufficiently inspiring. Christianity, he wrote vaguely, just weeks before the beginning of the Blitz, must connote “the introduction of a new order of things,” and unless faith “challenged and permeate[d] the whole life of society religion cease[d] to have any important significance for life as it [was] actually lived.” That month, Oldham met with R. A. Butler, Under-Secretary of

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52 “New Policy for the Colonies – Lord Hailey on Further State Aid,” *The Times* (October 29, 1941), file 5, box 692.

53 “Advisory Committee for Education in the Colonies, Sub-Committee for Women’s Welfare and Education Meeting, October, 1939. See also, Minutes from meeting on November 17, 1939, file 3, box 718, MP.


55 Oldham to Henry Brooke, June 22, 1940, CRD 2/28/1.
State for Foreign Affairs and chair of the CRD, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Gordon Lang (who had cooperated with Oldham on the 1937 Oxford conference, and earlier, on the 1910 World Missionary Conference). Dialogue centered on preparing for the post-war period (this was a few weeks after the end of the phoney war), both “negatively by uniting Christian forces against the new paganism with which the world [was] threatened and positively by indicating the principles of a Christian society.” Specifically, these talks addressed how the British government might “help to get a movement of this kind started.” Secular concepts such as equality and democracy did not seem too figure largely in the thinking about the post-war utopia.

   Imperial and domestic personnel in British ruling circles intertwined. Butler was born in India. In 1929, as a newly elected young Conservative M.P., he participated in a cross-party parliamentary “Committee for the Protection of Coloured Women in the Crown Colonies” alongside former Colonial Under-Secretary, William Ormsby-Gore. In 1923, Ormsby-Gore had set up the Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa, and requested that the Phelps-Stokes Fund to organize, and help fund, a commission to investigate education in East Africa. Butler served as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the India Secretary, Samuel Hoare, from 1931 to 1938, helping to

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56 Archbishop of Canterbury (A of C) to R. A. Butler, June 6, 1940, CRD 2/ 28/ 1.


58 For Ormsby-Gore’s involvement in initiating the Advisory Committee for Education in Tropical Africa, as well as the Phelps-Stokes Fund’s East African educational commission, see, Anson Phelps Stokes, “Introduction” to *Education in East Africa: A Study of East, Central and South Africa by the second African Education Commission under the auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, in cooperation with the International Education Board* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1970 [1925]), xix-xx.
orchestrate the Round Table Conferences for Indian Home Rule during the 1930s. From these activities, Butler was familiar with the International Missionary Council’s acclaimed 1931 Report on “Christian Higher Education in India,” based on a joint Anglo-American educational commission initiated by Oldham. Master of Balliol College, Oxford, A. D. Lindsay, chaired this commission, and also helped to found Nuffield College, Oxford’s progressive, more practical postgraduate college, whose first fellow was Margery Perham. Lindsay later became a key “Moot” member and Christian News-Letter contributor. The Indian Report, based on Lindsay’s Indian Commission, dealt with the challenge of instilling Christian (i.e., Anglican) ideas in a diverse nation whose cash-strapped wartime government was unwilling to fund explicitly Christian institutions. Its resolutions were recognizably ecumenical in character, proposing, for example that Christian colleges should emphasize values that were “implicit in Christianity,” rather than definite Christian dogma.59

Social commentators worried about the decline of the Christian character that had, they believed, historically united Great Britain. The problem seemed to be exacerbated by a growing, diverse colonial population in certain parts of the country. These observers became convinced of the need to regenerate British society, in part as a result of the Mass Observation findings. The results of surveys taken in the 1930s began to be published during the Second World War; one of their most worrying findings was the secularization of English society. Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree was a Quaker sociologist who had been raised in the nonconformist religious tradition that saw a direct connection between social

conditions, research, and education. Social investigation could prompt solutions to social problems, and strengthen the bonds of sympathy required by an organic, moral community. Rowntree had carried out a groundbreaking study of York in the late nineteenth century, and in 1936 he undertook another survey of the city, publishing his findings in a 1941 book, Poverty and Progress. His observations, widely reported in contemporary newspapers and periodicals, identified a marked decline in religious observance, with the proportion of York’s adult population attending church services halving between 1901 and 1935. The evacuation of British children during the war prompted criticism of the dearth of “religious knowledge” that “town children” received, and the influx of thousands of Jewish refugee children into the country worsened anxieties about Britain’s religious character.

Officials embraced colonial educational models to redress the nation’s moral fiber in a more multi-cultural, secularizing Britain. In 1940, Butler discussed Oldham’s “movement” to implement ecumenical Christianity in England with Foreign Secretary and Oxford conference participant, Lord Halifax, and “both agreed to its prime importance.” In preliminary educational plans for the postwar period, Fred Clarke formed his own group to investigate the creation of a “youth service” as part of Butler’s scheme. Clarke was aided by important colonial figures like Earl De La Warr, the first

60 Green, Passing of Protestant England, 188.

61 Ibid, 199.

62 Ibid, 219. Green quotes a famous leader in The Times from 17 February, 1940, that highlighted the lack of religion that “town children” were exposed to.

63 Butler to the Archbishop of Canterbury, June 7, 1940, CRD 2/28/1; Oldham to the Archbishop of Canterbury, July 1, 1937, mentioning work with Halifax, Volume 76, CGL.
hereditary peer to join the Labour party, who had previously held the position of Under-
Secretary of State for the Colonies and President of the Board of Education. In the late
1930s, De La Warr had conducted the Colonial Office’s Educational Commission to
investigate Higher Education in East Africa. The man responsible for the 1940 Colonial
Development and Welfare Act, former Under-Secretary of State for the Dominions, then
Colonial Secretary, and current Health Minister, Malcolm MacDonald, also assisted in
Clarke’s postwar educational plans.64 In the summer of 1941, Prime Minister Winston
Churchill appointed Butler President of the Board of Education, a move that thrilled
Butler, much to Churchill’s surprise, since he had intended the assignment to be
something of a snub. But Butler viewed education as one of the two critical contemporary
problems “most needing solution” facing the British government, the other being
“India.”65 S. J. D. Green deems this combination – India and education – unexpected, but
in fact it was not surprising.66 Since the 1920s, imperial and domestic educators had
interacted on educational bodies like the Advisory Committee for Education in the
Colonies, and the problems they grappled with – how to forge Christian unity from
diversity – seemed equally applicable to both societies. Imperial experience in this
project was now especially relevant to an increasingly pluralistic, secularized England.
Oldham and Clarke played substantial roles in the early discussions from which the

64 “Minutes from Meeting of Professor Clarke’s Group,” April 16, 1940; “Notes on a Meeting,”
August 4, 1940, CRD 2/28/1.

65 Quoted by Green, Passing of Protestant England, 223.

66 Ibid, 223. Green writes: “The other (major problem), interestingly, was ‘India.’”
educational sub-committee of Butler’s Conservative – although “in general temper…not partisan” – Reconstruction Committee emerged in 1941.67

These organizers proposed that constructive educational principles could unify and revitalize a stratified, faithless nation. In 1941, Oldham recommended to Butler’s educational sub-committee that Britain would only be able to “hold together” through these perilous times if its “educational system” and “cultural agencies” inculcated a “positive doctrine of society.” Now, in a “mixed society such as ours,” in which that firm tradition had supposedly “disintegrated,” it was necessary to create “common ground” between schools, and seek out a “unifying principle of national education.”68 In 1940, Clarke directed plans for a youth service for the CRC, emphasizing that the “traditional educational system must be thrown open to all” through a “common idea of educational treatment” rather than a “common school system.”69 Clarke deplored the lack of a “popular philosophy of education in England,” differentiating it from the United States. He insisted that the “unity not only of this country but of the whole Commonwealth and Empire” needed “a real and powerful bond of community pervading it throughout, at a level much deeper than that of political machinery, and able to withstand even strongly-conflicting forces of economic interest.”70

67 Geoffrey Faber to Fred Clarke, August 18, 1942. Faber pointed out that the group was “not a ‘strong party’ committee in the old sense of the phrase.” The author of its second report and Oldham’s ally, Walter Oakeshott, “was not a party man at all.” CRD 2/32/11.


69 “Minutes from Meeting of Professor Clarke’s Group,” April 16, 1940; “A Programme for the Future,” ca. 1940, CRD 1/28/1.

A broadly ethical Christianity was a critical component of this national educational program. American missionary leader, John Mott, had acted as Chairman of the Business Committee for Oldham’s 1937 Oxford conference. In 1940, Oldham advised Butler’s postwar educational planning group that, given “the present state of society, where only a small minority remain[ed] attached to the Church and a considerable number deliberately and consciously reject[ed] the Christian tradition,” it had become impossible to claim that what should be “taught in our schools as a basic social philosophy should be specifically Christian.” Instead, schools should emphasize principles that were “compatible with the Christian understanding of life” and allowed “the possibility of being to an indefinite extent impregnated and leavened with Christian ideals and standards.” This would discreetly make society “in reality more and more Christian.”

Butler’s planning group subsequently determined that national coherence would emerge from a “greater insistence on the teaching of spiritual values by agreement between the different denominations.” The “place of religion” in Clarke’s youth service program called for “anxious and sensitive consideration.” What was necessary was the “wise knitting up of religious strands in the texture of community”; “[f]ormalism” and “blatancy” were the “enemies.” Faber conceded that the religious section of his educational sub-committee’s first pamphlet was its longest, but disingenuously stressed that it did not argue that religion should be “enlisted to serve the upholding of the status

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71 Transcribed excerpt of ‘CONFIDENTIAL’ letter by Oldham to the educational sub-committee, 1941, CRD 2/ 32/ 16/ 1.

72 “A Programme for the Future,” ca. 1940, CRD 2/ 28/ 1.

quo.” The Report radically asserted that the “gospel” and “revolutionizing message” of religion were more important than any formal “institution.” Theology was less important than social indoctrination; as long as pupils acquired ethical British ‘values’, they need not concern themselves with the Thirty-Nine Articles. Butler’s 1942 piece, *A Future to Work For*, aimed to “clothe with life the idea of an English community governed by Christian ethics.”

Like their colonial precedents, these wartime educational programs endorsed practical education. Clarke’s 1940 youth service committee for Butler, charged with designing a plan for “the entire youth of the nation,” emphasized that while the 1918 Fisher Act had purported “to extend the range of the State system of education,” a “plan for 1940 must have a wholly different character.” Evidence revealed “the ill-balanced character of the secondary day-school regimen, and of the deleterious and softening effects of its overdriven scholasticism,” failing to engender in students “harmonious growth of personality.” The aim of education should be to “give an all-round training and to secure adaptability, thus helping the individual to realise his full capacities and raising the productive power of the population as a whole.” The British State should also “make greater provision for research in medical and the natural and social sciences,” the more “useful” disciplines. Showing little awareness of contemporary British economic realities, but perhaps inspired by the “Dig For Victory” campaign, Butler’s planning group advocated that “schools both urban and rural” should emphasize to students that

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74 Geoffrey Faber, “Getting it Wrong: A Reply to ‘Seeing Through It,’” *The Surrey Teacher* 133 (March, 1944), CRD 2/ 32/ 9.


agriculture should be “the basis of life”, and teach them farming and horticultural skills. This would allow the community to return “to a simpler way of living, to assuming again more personal responsibility in the affairs of our district and nation.” It would also ensure that Great Britain would never again be threatened with starvation by an enemy fleet blocking imports of grain, as was nearly the case during World War II, when rationing had to be introduced.

According to this educational template, learning about one’s society produced an engaged, sympathetic, and patriotic British citizenry. Butler’s educational planning committee proposed that students should study “local government, political theory, and simple Economics”, as well as key parts of British history and geography, to foster in them a “sense of responsibility.” Again, disagreements raged regarding what constituted the British polity. Conservative Lords and members of Harold Moody’s pan-African League of Coloured Peoples alike, a curious alliance, agreed that schools should teach pupils about the Empire. The League’s “Survey of the Colour Question in some Aspects of English Education” asked that, “in place of ‘British History,’ schools should teach the ‘History of the British Empire,” treating “the Empire as an integral whole, in which the history of Britain, though an extremely important element, [was] not regarded as more than a part of the whole.” At the House of Lords debate on Butler’s Educational Bill, former Governor-General of New Zealand, Lord Bledisloe, recommended that “knowledge of the British Commonwealth and Empire” should be included in English

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77 “A Programme for the Future,” (1940), CRD 2/ 28/ 1.


79 Edith Ramsay to Perham, March 10, 1944, file 2, box 742, MP.
educational curricula. Earl De La Warr supported Bledisloe’s motion, adding “that unless children were educated as to what the British Empire meant they could not expect to play their part in its future development…” Butler saw his domestic educational proposals as embedded in the task of imperial development and cohesion. Butler urged readers of his 1942 pamphlet, “A Future to Work For,” that “[o]ur nation must be a community and our Empire a Commonwealth.” Improved citizenship education organized “the nation as a disciplined, yet free, community” with a “singleness of purpose,” allowing Great Britain to remain an autonomous “world-wide Power.”

Planners asserted that the State should play a significant role in obliging schools to propagate this homogenizing ethos. In “A Future to Work For,” Butler acknowledged that the State had previously “been wary of interfering with the content of our national education.” Without clarifying what he meant by “the State,” Butler advocated that it was now this institution’s duty to provide “[d]irection in a way of living.”

However, focusing on education, and a nation bound together by ideology, rather than by clearly defined political borders, was useful because it moved attention away from defining the boundaries of the state. Geoffrey Faber, chairman of the CRC’s educational sub-committee, argued that education should promote the “national ideal,” but remained ambiguous about what defined the nation’s political boundaries: England, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, or the Empire. It was unimportant, as the same elusive Christian ethics would unite all “British” populations.

80 “Transcript of House of Lords Debate, June 20, 1944,” file 6, box 699, MP.
82 Ibid.
Concentrating on religion also directed public attention away from more substantive, controversial educational questions. For many contemporary Britons, religion was already relatively insignificant, far less meaningful to them, they believed, than more material questions like the payment of fees in state-maintained grammar schools, or the school-leaving age. Conservatives like Butler were anxious about the future of the country’s public (private) schools, and the democratizing impact of the war.\(^83\) A cynical reading of Butler’s religious program was that it enabled him to create a supposedly “egalitarian England” while retaining the culture of deference to social superiors that had characterized British society for centuries.\(^84\)

This may have been true of Butler, but it was not true of Clarke. Clarke was conscious of his working class roots, and disdained England’s “aristocratic tradition,” and commitment to an “Old system and Old ideas” (although he accepted a knighthood in 1943). He blamed Britain’s class prejudice for his inability to find good teaching positions in England for the first twenty years of his career, forcing him to teach instead in the “New Countries” of South Africa and Canada.\(^85\) And, even if Butler’s commitment to a façade of national unity, rather than to redistributing social resources, underlay his attachment to civic Christianity, this was equally true of his peers in the USA.

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\(^85\) These issues come up in Clarke’s papers in 1928, when he applied for a job as Director of Training at University of Oxford, that he was rejected from, leading him to accept the position at McGill University. Michael Sadler had written Clarke’s letter of recommendation, and apparently Clarke understood the rejection as symptomatic of the “prejudice against the elementary school at Oxford.” See, Harold Butler to Clarke, September 6, 1928, and John Dove to Clarke, October 18, 1928. Both of these correspondents quoted Clarke in their responses to him. FC/ 4/ 17.
Clarke did not contribute to the CRC’s final published reports in 1942, despite being a key participant in preliminary planning stages. He praised the resultant pamphlets for starting “in [him] something very like excitement,” and standing “alone in an attempt to state a living philosophy as the inspiration of its proposals.” Clarke nonetheless critiqued the Reports’ loose use of “the terms ‘State’ & ‘nation’” as though they were “interchangeable.” He considered this “confusion…especially mischievous where English education [was] concerned since all through its history it [had] been very much an affair of the nation & very little until recently of the state.” However, Clarke similarly neglected to specify what constituted the slippery “nation” with which he believed English education had been historically concerned – a complete misunderstanding of the complex history of education in England, which had always been sharply differentiated on lines of class and gender. Was the state a local or national organization? Clarke’s involvement in so many local, national, and imperial political units through his various educational activities unsurprisingly made him veer away from intricate discussion of political realities. Instead, he fixated on amorphous and illusory “common beliefs and ideals.”

Political control over education in the separate nations of the United Kingdom, let alone the Empire, was not centralized, so to achieve unity, planners relied on federated, co-operative methods. Initial proposals to the Research Department’s educational group in 1940 underscored that “[a]t all points the provision and working of

86 Clarke to R. A. Butler, August 4, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 11.
87 Clarke to Geoffrey Faber, August 19, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 9.
88 Clarke, “Private and Confidential Memorandum addressed to Butler,” September 6, 1940, CRD 2/ 28/ 1.
the scheme must be kept as free as possible from politics, and the rigidities of
departmentalism.” The “fullest use” should “be made of voluntary organisations and the
enthusiasm of devoted and discerning individuals,” establishing “effective links of co-
operation” between “voluntary bodies.” The national educational “project must be given
the character of a generously inspired and well-led movement, rather than that of yet one
more departmental scheme.” Nonetheless, the “[c]o-operation of various departments of
Government – especially of the Board of Education” was “essential.”89 In 1941, Clarke
pleaded that England should not “turn to Parliament” for the “settlement of an
educational question,” since “the clash of interests” there would be “revealed at its
height.”90 If Clarke’s ideas were to be successfully implemented, “preliminary work”
would have to “be done by small co-operating groups acting in close touch with one
another,” such as the numerous task forces he led. Clarke conceded that it would “not be
possible to give full effect to a scheme of adequate national scope without cordial co-
operation by Government,” but this was to be achieved by first creating “a common
mind” through “widespread public advocacy.”91 Getting a population of what George
Orwell called, in his 1941 essay, ‘England Your England’, ‘forty-six million individuals,
all different’, to forge a common mind would have been quite an achievement.92 But

FC/ 1/ 42.
91 Clarke, “The Home Front – Educating Ourselves for the Task,” All Souls’ Group, 1940,
FC/ 1/ 4.
92 George Orwell, England Your England: Part I (1941), accessed on April 1, 2017:
http://orwell.ru/library/essays/lion/english/e_eye
then, Churchill had done it by talking of fighting on the beaches. The war was having a strongly unifying impact on the public mood.

But Parliament controlled English state-sponsored education. The same political obstacles hindered these wartime reformers as had impeded Sir Michael Sadler and his peers at the turn of the century. In 1942, the Conservative Party Central Council bemoaned the fact that parliamentary involvement in educational matters since the nineteenth century had paradoxically prevented a “national purpose of national education” from taking shape in the country. The “long series of (educational) Acts from 1870 onwards” had entailed an “immense amount of earnest effort” on the part of government, a “great deal of it directed to ‘keeping the peace’ between the various parties, religious and political, interested in education.”93 Political compromise and pragmatism had created educational statutes, and they had therefore not constituted the visionary statements of national goals that these policy makers desired. Clarke may have been solely interested in broad educational ideas, not administrative particulars, but where specific parliamentary legislation was concerned, details and intricacies had to be defined and examined.94 In 1944, when the House of Lords debated whether Butler’s Education Bill should mandate that British schools instruct students about the British Commonwealth and Empire, the Earl of Selbourne, Minister of Economic Warfare, agreed that “particular attention should be paid, in the teaching of history and geography and of all methods of political theory and science, to the development of the facts about


94 Educational Aims: Being the First Report of the Conservative Sub-Committee on Education (Central Committee on Post-War Reconstruction set up by the Conservative and Unionist Party Organization: September, 1942), CRD 2/ 32/ 16/ 2.
the British Empire.” However, Selbourne regretfully added, there was “very great difficulty in picking up individual subjects of education, however right and necessary they were, and putting them into a Bill.” An “Act of Parliament was an instrument that lawyers had got to operate,” and “if undue emphasis [were] put, in one part of the Bill, on certain subjects,” it “really would not be a workmanlike piece of legislation, and it would be rather confusing to anybody who was trying to interpret the Act.”95 It was not the business of Parliament to micromanage the curriculum.

The Church of England also thwarted reform. The established Church, represented in the House of Lords, could not condone Oldham’s broad-based “dynamic Christian faith” as a replacement for the teaching of formal Christian dogma in Church schools. Church leaders resisted the abolition of the ‘dual system’ of English education – one provided in part by the state, and the other by voluntary organizations, especially the Church of England – and argued that the Anglican Church should retain educational autonomy, despite the inadequacy of its schools in contrast to their ‘provided’ (or state) counterparts.96 The Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Gordon Lang, sympathized with Mott’s inclusive Protestantism, after having participated in the 1910 World Missionary Conference (WMC), and having helped Oldham to organize the 1937 Oxford Conference. The Archbishop of York, William Temple, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in February 1942, was a supporter of the international missionary movement. Temple had addressed the controversial WMC, and hoped that wartime educational reform would achieve a regeneration of Christian English life. The Archbishops’ Five

95 “Transcript of House of Lords Debate, June 20, 1944,” file 6, box 699, MP.

Points, outlined by the two English Primates in *The Times* in February 1941, insisted that “[i]n all schools a Christian education should be given to all the scholars.” 97

However, Church officials were in no doubt that doctrinal Protestantism, and Church independence, could not be sacrificed. The Archbishops’ Five Points asserted categorically that a Christian education involved disseminating certain principles that had always been “the chief characteristics of the Church schools.” 98 The Archbishops made a concession to pluralism with the qualification that “so far as any parents may wish to withdraw their children” from compulsory Christian education, “they should be allowed to do so, thereby directly contradicting their other tenet, the importance of universal Christian (i.e., Protestant) education.” 99 For Oldham, this sort of liberal “toleration” was only successful when “behind the apparent freedom of thought there existed a fundamental conformity.” 100 Freedom of thought was to be tolerated in principle but not in practice. In the troubled, war-torn 1940s, Oldham sought a positive “social philosophy” that was “compatible”, but not synonymous with, the “Christian understanding of life” to serve as a “unifying conception” for education. A system in which parents could remove their children from religious education (aka Christian

97 Transcript of “The Archbishops’ Five Points of Religious Teaching,” February, 1941, CRD 2/ 32/ 16/ 1.


100 Oldham, “The Need for a Fresh Approach to Christian Education,” CRD 2/ 32/ 16/ 1.
indoctrination) classes undermined the “integrating purpose” of Oldham’s commitment to Christian education.\textsuperscript{101}

Hence, Church officials rejected plans for a national curriculum and remained committed to a modified ‘dual system’, even though virtually all contemporary educational authorities were in favor of a Christian society; educators in secular or non-Church schools were simply opposed to doctrinal Christianity and corporate worship as a compulsory part of the school day. When meeting with Butler to discuss his educational proposals in 1942, the newly appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, relayed the exception taken by “Church circles” to “any proposal for a national agreed syllabus which should operate everywhere.”\textsuperscript{102} In contrast, the President of the National Union of Teachers, Sir Frederick Mandler, was convinced of the “need for a national syllabus”. In 1942, Mandler described all teachers as “generally” and “overwhelmingly in favour of religious instruction in their schools,” and committed to retaining all that was “in the best sense religious inherent in the educational process” in both the “provided” (state) and “non-provided” (Church) schools.\textsuperscript{103} Similarly, Clarke had asserted in 1941 that “[a]ny one who [was] in touch with the elementary teachers, especially as represented by the N.U.T., [knew] there [was] very little opposition to religious instruction as such, and indeed much support for it in principle.” What excited “suspicion

\textsuperscript{101} Transcribed excerpt of Oldham’s letter to educational subcommittee, 1941; Oldham, “The Need for a Fresh Approach to Christian Education,” CRD 2/32/16/1.

\textsuperscript{102} “Interview with President of the Board of Education,” May 1, 1942, Volume 19, Papers of William Temple (hereafter WT), Lambeth Palace Library.

\textsuperscript{103} Sir Frederick Mandler, “The Religious Instruction Controversy,” (Reprinted from articles appearing in \textit{The Schoolmaster} and \textit{Woman Teacher’s Chronicle}, January-February, 1942.) Attached to Mandler to A of C, June 18, 1942, Volume 19, WT.
and apprehension” was when the “teacher felt that he and his school were being ordered through the religious organization of the country as instruments of a social discipline exercised in the interest of a dominant ‘class’…”

This was not sufficient for the Church of England, which could not equate an education that was “in the best sense religious,” a version of Christianity framed as a code of morals rather than theological dogma, with true religious education. Compulsory Christian education and corporate worship for all schools was enshrined in Butler’s Education Act, as was the option for parents to remove their children from it. This did not please Oldham, who had insisted that attendance at religious education lessons (of the ethical, inclusive variety) should be compulsory. Mandler lamented this “segregation” as “destructive of the very sense of unity in a school which religious instruction should be designed to create.”

British thinkers across the political spectrum were also wary of a program of educational reconstruction that instructed schools to educate students how and what to think about their country. Continued British support for negative liberty, and fears of an overbearing state in the sphere of education, were all the more surprising given that the country was engaged in war, a time when other modes of “state planning” won popular

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104 Clarke, “The Public Schools and the Nation,” The Journal of Education (March, 1941), FC/ 1/ 42.

105 Butler insisted that, for the provided state schools, this Christian education should be non-sectarian. But, it was not the ethical version of Christianity that Oldham by now preached, and would have incorporated Roman Catholics and Jews, as well as Protestants, into its midst. On Butler’s preference for non-denominational Christianity, see Green, Passing of Protestant England, 236-237.

106 Mandler, “The Religious Instruction Controversy,” attached to Mandler to A of C, June 18, 1942, Volume 19, WT.
approval. Nonetheless, with Parliament involved in framing educational legislation, opponents of Butler’s proposals saw this as a threatening over-reach of state intervention. The Conservative educational sub-committee’s first interim report, “Educational Aims,” promoted an amorphous national education that echoed American norms. Education should improve the “moral quality of its citizens,” “awaken the child’s religious sense,” and “develop a strong sense of national obligation in the individual citizen,” leading not to “jingoism or world-dominion,” but allowing the student to contribute to “the world’s common history.”

H. Raymond King, Headmaster of Wandsworth School, under the London County Council, criticized the pamphlet’s attempt “by artificial means to teach values” that were “not current in the social system.” The fact that “[l]oyalty to the nation [would] have to be taught” proved that it was not a nation worthy of “devotion and obligation.” For King, the fact that English education was shaped by national government, meant that forcing schools to teach students about citizenship negated the progressive internationalism promoted by the League of Nations, and now the emergent United Nations, even though

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107 British objections are all the more remarkable when compared to the forcefulness of contemporary American citizenship education. Ira Katznelson, in the “Epilogue” to Fear Itself, provides a revealing counter-example from the USA. In 1940, the Supreme Court of the United States made an 8–1 majority ruling in Minnervsville School District v. Gobitis, decreeing that public (state) schools could force Jehovah’s Witnesses to salute the American flag and recite the Pledge of Allegiance, although this practice constituted idolatry for the religious sect. Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote the Court’s opinion, arguing that “national unity” was the “basis of national security.” And this was before the United States entered the Second World War. Admittedly, Katznelson notes, the decision was subsequently reversed three years later. But, the divergence between this American legal ruling and the British inability to countenance its government instructing children what to think about the nation, even in wartime, remains striking. See, Katznelson, Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time (New York: Liveright, 2014), 481.

108 Educational Aims: Being the First Report of the Conservative Sub-Committee on Education (Central Committee on Post-War Reconstruction set up by the Conservative and Unionist Party Organization: September, 1942), CRD 2/ 32/ 16/ 2.
the values of both corresponded with the national ideology expressed in the Conservative pamphlet. King asserted that the document’s propagation of “Patriotism” was at odds with the reality that “education for the coming age” should be an “education for a world of mutually interdependent nations”; it should not be “national.”\(^{109}\)

Robert Birley, Headmaster of the independent boys’ school, Charterhouse, denounced the educational sub-committee’s second interim report, “A Plan for Youth,” noting that its “stress on the State was at the moment a tactical error.” While he understood that the Report did not mean “the same thing by the State as the Nazis,” the “word Community, for instance, might have been safer.”\(^{110}\) Walter Oakeshott, High Master of St. Paul’s School and an active member of Oldham’s “Moot” group, wrote “A Plan for Youth.” Oakeshott’s Report corroborated the first Report’s definition of the “purpose of education” as helping “future citizens understand the reasons for and the nature of the national obligations they [would] be required to discharge.”\(^{111}\) Birley agreed with King that this seemed to counter the “amount of internationalism which [would] be necessary in the future.”\(^{112}\)

The poet, L. A. G. Strong, “an ex-teacher” and “a man who still [had] quite a bit to do with young people,” did not believe that either Geoffrey Faber (Chair of the

\(^{109}\) Quoted by Geoffrey Faber in “Getting it Wrong: A Reply to ‘Seeing Through It,’” \textit{The Surrey Teacher} 133 (March, 1944), CRD 2/ 32/ 9.

\(^{110}\) Robert Birley to Walter Oakeshott, October 2, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 9.

\(^{111}\) Geoffrey Faber to Fred Clarke, August 18\(^{th}\), 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 11; \textit{A Plan for Youth: Being the Second Interim Report (the 14 to 18 Age Group) of the Conservative Sub-Committee on Education} (Central Committee on Post-War Reconstruction set up by the Conservative and Unionist Party Organization: September, 1942), CRD 2/ 32/ 16/ 2.

\(^{112}\) Birley to Oakeshott, October 2, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 9.
Conservative educational sub-committee and author of “Educational Aims”) or Oakeshott (author of “A Plan for Youth”), nor “anyone in our walk of life” knew “better than Bill Snooks what [was] good for him, or [had] any right at all to direct him on the subject of his good.” Strong maintained that “national machinery” should not be used “to put across views of country, patriotism, service, etc., which emanate[d] from one section only.” The documents induced a “violent reaction” that “shocked & alarmed” Clarke, who incidentally felt their “pervading weakness” to be that they did not go far enough in delineating “a purged and regenerated patriotism.”

British educational planners did not demonstrate the same expertise in employing bureaucratic and publicity techniques to gain widespread approval for proposals as their American contemporaries had done. Anson Phelps Stokes went to great lengths to coat his wartime report, *The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint*, with a democratic veneer by masterfully emphasizing and publicizing the representative nature of its preliminary committee, which was composed of liberals and radicals alike. This masked the fact that an elite, like-minded Executive Committee controlled the content of the eventual pamphlet, and secured the endorsement of otherwise hostile Americans of its conclusions. In stark contrast, the “much-criticised interim reports on education” that “Mr. Butler’s Unionist Post-War Problems Committee” published kept the membership of the “sub-committee responsible for them…a secret.”

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114 Clarke to Faber, October 11, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 9; Clarke to educational sub-committee, August 13, 1942, 2/ 32/ 11.
sub-committee, Geoffrey Faber, was released only after the reports had been published.\footnote{115} Faber privately assured Clarke that although the educational sub-committee was “appointed by the party organization (in effect by R. A. Butler…)” it was not “a ’strong party’ committee in the old sense of the phrase.”\footnote{116} But the identities of the Committee’s non-Conservative participants, such as Oakeshott, who Faber described as “not a (Conservative) party man at all,” were not publicly disclosed.\footnote{117} Another of Faber’s correspondents was “disturbed by the lack of interest shown by parents and teachers and also by the Press and the B.B.C. in the future of our Nation,” even after the Reports were published. J. Sisson warned Faber he would find his “greatest difficulty” in getting the “leaders and teachers” on board.\footnote{118} Stokes included agents of concerned groups in his Committee, and broadcast their cooperation widely. Unsurprisingly, the press engendered by Faber’s two reports was of a “violent,” critical nature.\footnote{119}

But arguably, the success with which American authorities, helped and guided by philanthropic support, had already been able to create an international platform for their own ideological and economic preferences, doomed any British efforts, however skilled. For British planners, the purpose of using education to establish a unifying “British” identity was to enable the Empire to function as a self-sufficient economic unit to parallel the twentieth century’s superpower, the USA. Underlying Butler’s proposals to create “a

\footnote{115} “London Letter: Unionist Reconstruction Reports,” \textit{Birmingham Post} (September 22, 1942) CRD 2/ 32/ 17.\footnote{116} Faber to Clarke, August 18, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 11.\footnote{117} Faber to Clarke, August 18, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 11.\footnote{118} J. Sisson to Faber, September 22, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 11.\footnote{119} Clarke to Faber, October 11, 1942, CRD 2/ 32/ 9.}
Christian Civilisation” was the “vast task of the reconstruction of the Empire.”\textsuperscript{120} By the 1940s, most officials in the country from which Butler and his peers drew inspiration realized that the British Empire in its present form was economically unviable; Great Britain was financially crippled by the cost of war, surviving only thanks to American loans. Hubert Henderson, an Oxford University economist who had participated in the Colonial Office’s 1938 West India Royal Commission, noted in a 1945 letter to \textit{The Times} that “nearly half (British) exports before the war” had gone to captive “Empire markets.” Now, the Bretton Woods agreement had banned imperial preferences as “discriminatory”, promoting global free trade at a time when the USA was already the world’s strongest creditor nation and economic power. This international free market economy, which ostensibly created an equal playing field, in fact solidified the dominance of the USA. According to Henderson, the accord had forced Great Britain to “drift towards the position of an economic Little England” while crystallizing America’s global sovereignty for the rest of the century.\textsuperscript{121}

Women remained subordinate in the English and Welsh “educational reconstruction” of 1944. Margery Perham and Margaret Wrong had been significant players in the formulation and popularization of the civic Christian educational ideals that underlined the push for metropolitan educational reform during the 1940s. But they, alongside their American colleagues, had intervened in the pedagogy and anthropological research of colonial populations by embracing their traditional functions mandated by

\textsuperscript{120} R. A. Butler, “Establishing a Christian Civilisation,” \textit{The Listener}, January 2, 1941, CRD 2/ 28/ 1.

\textsuperscript{121} Hubert Henderson, “The Washington Agreements, Conditions of Loan, and Consequences for Empire Trade,” \textit{The Times} (December 12, 1945) file 8, box 669, MP.
patriarchal frameworks: mothers inherently suited to life in the home, not the wage-earning work force. The Education Act was similarly gendered. In March 1944, the government was defeated on a vote in the House of Commons for the only time during the War. The issue was an amendment to the Education Bill, mandating equal pay for women teachers. The controversial provision was subsequently struck out of the Education Bill, and the resultant legislation – affirming female subservience in the teaching profession – attained the broad support of the two main political parties.122

And, as male soldiers returned from war, and the Cold War created urgent scientific demands, men began to dominate British social science university faculties, even though female scholars, missionaries, and social workers had spearheaded the fields of sociology and anthropology during the early twentieth century through their tireless activism in settlement houses, and home and overseas missions.123 Sociologist, Ann Oakley, daughter of Richard Titmuss, who served as Professor of Social Administration at the London School of Economics from 1950 to 1973, describes the manner in which her father, “a prominent social policy expert,” succeeded, along with his male colleagues, in substituting “(male-led) social policy for (female-led) social work” in the postwar period.124 As in the USA, this shift in personnel spawned a deeper transformation in scholarly preoccupations. Between the wars, a vibrant transatlantic community of female


123 Great Britain is not usually regarded as a protagonist in the Cold War. However, Jordana Bailkin claims that the Cold War was a crucial backdrop to postwar British politics and social science developments. See Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012): 34.

reformers had emphasized the significance of undertaking social investigations in order to identify the distinctive needs of underprivileged populations, toward assisting them in a meaningful manner.\textsuperscript{125} Now, universalistic discourses of ‘pure’ science and individualistic, color and gender-blind “rights” supplanted the rhetoric of “needs” that female practitioners of “applied” anthropology and sociology had previously employed.\textsuperscript{126}

During the Second World War, intellectuals like Fred Clarke tried to use their imperial expertise to transform British education, and foster a shared national identity for colonial and metropolitan “British” populations. Clarke believed that this was Britain’s only hope for retaining a global economic presence in the postwar period. But Clarke, who helped author the Board of Education’s 1944 McNair Report on “Teachers and Youth Leaders,” failed.\textsuperscript{127} His ambition to force all English schools to indoctrinate students in nebulous Christian principles, to mask the material socio-economic, national, and racial cleavages that were beginning to divide contemporary British society, were hampered by institutional and ideological opposition.

Moreover, Clarke’s grandiose ambition of forging a “new and greater Empire of influence” through improved education to replace Britain’s “earlier Empire of Power”

\textsuperscript{125} Oakley describes the transatlantic nature of this network of female reformers, that this dissertation also outlines. Oakley, “History of Gendered Social Science,” 164.


\textsuperscript{127} In 1942, Butler appointed Clarke to the McNair Committee to consider the supply, recruitment, and training of teachers. See McCulloch, \textit{Educational Reconstruction}, 30.
had already been dashed by the actions of former American partners. Earlier British efforts to create an expansive “Empire of influence” through education had relied on alliance with American philanthropic foundations. These endeavors had elevated American corporate influence, while allowing the USA to retain a façade of detached, benevolent interest. Now an American, not British, “Empire of influence,” ostensibly free of tainted “imperialistic ambition,” had been successfully erected, poised for the role of “the world’s policeman”, to oversee altruistically that all “nations and peoples…attain the same freedom” of a “democratic and economic life,” just as Stokes demanded in his *Atlantic Charter and Africa*. And that none would be tempted by the lure of equality dangled by the USSR and its equally powerful empire.

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In 1935, Fred Clarke, then Director of Oversea Education at London’s Institute of Education, protesting Depression-era economic nationalism and totalitarian dictatorship, emphasized that the United States and Great Britain belonged to “the same tradition,” a “lofty spiritual kinship” built upon “inclusiveness and universality.” Clarke asserted that the “instrument” through which “to explore, consolidate, and maintain” this tradition “in the face of challenge” must be “cooperative action in **education** in the full sense of that over-scholasticized word.”¹ Clarke belonged to a network of Anglo-American planners, embedded in the governmental operations of their particular nations, who purported to use education – pedagogy and research – to combat the forces of nationalism, xenophobia, and exclusion, and to build instead an inclusive community of “world citizens.”

But this project’s investigation of the early-twentieth-century union of Anglo-American educational organizers indicates that their collusion did not rest on a lofty “spiritual kinship,” as Clarke proposed.² Anglo-American organizers were united by the ambition to use education to develop prosperous economic empires no matter what the cost to indigenous populations. British participation was premised on the goals of solidifying British imperial integrity and strengthening the national economy, objectives whose fulfillment required American financial assistance and expertise. Americans intervened to enable American corporations to capitalize on new export markets and raw


² Ibid.
materials at a time of increasing political and economic autarchy, and to pacify domestic racial tension.

From this perspective, the Second World War constituted a rupture, and was not the origin of the mutually beneficial Anglo-American alliance about which some scholars nostalgically reminisce. Until the late 1940s, most African intellectuals continued to envision their future within a globalized, institutional framework of a reformed imperial federation, with citizenship rights and self-government, but not as independent nation-states. In part, the Empire dissolved because it ceased to be economically viable. It did not help that the British proved unwilling to concede to anything more than limited political devolution, to the outrage of colonial subjects.

American intervention was also significant. American groups that had financially bolstered the interwar British Empire with money, personnel, and ideas, now operating under a liberalized administration that encouraged overseas trade and resented British imperial tariffs, turned against the British Empire during the Second World War. A liberal American anti-colonialism defused the insurgent economic demands of African Americans and their British African partners, winning their support for a postwar global free-market capitalism, coordinated by supra-national organizations under American command. After spending the war in the USA, hobnobbing with Anson Phelps Stokes and co., African intellectual, Kwame Nkrumah, moved to Great Britain to study anthropology

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at the London School of Economics (from which he subsequently withdrew). By 1946, Nkrumah demanded “[c]omplete and absolute independence” for the Gold Coast.⁵

What transpired in the aftermath of the story I have told? The USA dominated a postwar United Nations Organization that strongly condemned British imperialism, and pressurized Britain to relinquish its colonies during the 1950s. By the time of the Suez Crisis of 1956, when Prime Minister Anthony Eden was forced to call off the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt, and received a slap on the wrist from President Eisenhower, the British Empire was dead in all but name. In 1957, Nkrumah became the first president of an independent Ghana (formerly the Gold Coast colony).

Interconnected American philanthropists, governmental actors, and academics – now embedded in an even tighter “state-philanthropy partnership” – grounded their international interventions on their country’s historic anti-imperialism.⁶ Links (which had been fostered in part by the interwar educational activities of Anglo-American liberals) connected the new leaders of African nations to American blacks, engaged in a bitter battle for legal civil rights, and to blacks in Great Britain, where no official color bar existed, but unofficial racism was endemic: ‘To Let’ signs were routinely captioned, ‘No Blacks’. Because of these strong pan-African connections, and the Soviet Union’s ominous tendency to capitalize on them, as well as the perceived strategic importance of West African regions, the USA and Great Britain concentrated much of their Third World

⁵ “Notes from Fabian Colonial Conference,” April 12-14, 1946, file 6, box 698, MP. Matera discusses the shift from black intellectuals’ endorsement of an expansive internationalism, to a more insular nationalism in the late 1940s. See Matera, *Black London*, 322.

“development” – a process that entailed even more research and education than it had during the era of the formal British Empire – on decolonizing African nations.7

American international planners distanced themselves from the British. In 1958, Alan Pifer, head of the British Dominions and Colonies department of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and future foundation president, gave a lecture at the University College of Ibadan in Nigeria, on the postwar “American discovery of Africa.” In Pifer’s narrative, the long-held, altruistic American desire for “self-determination for all African peoples” fueled American involvement in shaping an “independent, sturdy and united Nigeria.” Pifer added almost as a side-note that the United States had an “economic” and “strategic interest in Africa”; the USA needed the African “continent’s minerals and raw materials,” and an “unfriendly Africa would be a direct threat to [American] security.”8

According to Pifer, America’s sudden postwar encounter with Africa encompassed a number of significant developments. He noted that the State Department had created “an independent Bureau of African Affairs headed by an Assistant Secretary” that year. Pifer proudly pointed out that nine universities and one theological seminary had now established “formal or informal African studies programs,” focused on the social sciences, anthropology, political science, and economics, all of which, except for the Kennedy School of Missions at the Hartford Seminary Foundation, were “post-war creations.”9

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7 See, Jordana Bailkin, The Afterlife of Empire (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 5, 26, 31. Bailkin acknowledges that Britain is not usually recognized as a key player in the Cold War. However, she argues that the Cold War backdrop was entangled with British desires to retain international influences despite decolonization. Bailkin, Afterlife of Empire, 34.


9 Ibid.
1956, anthropologist, Melville Herskovits, formerly a board member of the London-based International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, founded a new African Studies Association (ASA). At its first meeting in 1958, Herskovits claimed that the ASA’s roots lay in an “ad hoc Committee“ that he had organized during the War to plan an “International Conference on Africa,” an endeavor that he had embarked upon in 1943 with Anson Phelps Stokes. Pifer acknowledged that “African studies” in the United States “concentrated on the British territories” of the continent, but commented that this was a matter of convenience because there “were no language differences there,” and offered no explanation as to why British colonies, more than those of other European empires, had historically “welcomed” American research workers. Pifer conceded that American commercial, missionary, and philanthropic interest in Africa had preceded the Second World War, but added that this had comprised the “independent” and “unpredictable” action of privately endowed groups, entirely unconnected to the American and British, states.

In 1960, Nigeria became an independent nation, presided over by another African anthropology student who had studied in the USA, Nnamdi Azikiwe. The relatively decentralized nature of the American state meant that private bodies, like philanthropists, missionaries, and academics, constituted crucial state actors. Philanthropic meddling in African education – research and pedagogy – had enhanced American influence abroad. But postwar Americans were able to successfully employ the fiction of an anti-imperial

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11 Pifer, “Lecture given before the Philosophical Society, University College, Ibadan.”
past to justify their neo-imperialism. By 1966, the ASA boasted, “the largest single national group represented in Africanist research [was] American.”

Without its Empire, hopes of a robust, autarchic British economy were quashed. Future British economic prosperity relied on good relations with the USA, with its entrenched superiority in the international economy. In a 1944 article for the Yearbook of Education, Clarke deplored Britain’s “contracting economy,” a situation caused most “seriously” by the world’s “adverse dollar-balance,” the result of the “many ramifications” of recent “United States policy;” Britain had lost its status as a “world Power” at the hands of the USA. The resentment of Clarke, an Empire-builder who had spent his career in education promoting closer union with America, was palpable.

In this 1944 piece, Clarke spelled out another problem for Britain: the British remained “powerfully ruled by tradition.” While Britain had abandoned “ideas of economic laissez-faire” in the new welfare state, it had failed to do the same in his own sphere of expertise: “educational planning.” The British desperately needed a “general education for all alike.” Its youth required “training both in democratic citizenship and in the cultivation of those personal tastes and aptitudes which may mean so much both to the maintenance of civilized standards and for the enrichment of personal life.”

The homogenizing educational mission was now more urgent than ever. The almost inevitable slipping away of the formal Empire, alongside the threatening backdrop

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14 Ibid, 142.
of the Cold War, made some naïve postwar British officials desperate to cling to a vision of empire as a loose, but intact, conglomeration, bound together by an elusive British citizenship and shared economic interests.\textsuperscript{15} The 1948 Nationality Act granted imperial citizenship with rights of settlement in the UK for all Commonwealth citizens, spawning a mass postwar migration of predominantly non-white colonial and Commonwealth populations to Great Britain.\textsuperscript{16} A web of British state actors, bolstered by aid from American foundations and the American-dominated United Nations, continued, and in fact expanded, their earlier efforts to use education – the broad, and interrelated, processes of teaching and researching “British” populations – to try to retain economic links with decolonizing nations, resolve tensions in an increasingly multicultural metropole, and make the nation economically productive.\textsuperscript{17}

Problematically, British schools lacked unified mechanisms to incorporate ethnically and culturally disparate peoples into the host society. American educational planners’ early-twentieth-century democratic and secular moral values, packaged as quintessentially “American,” were conformist, and engendered only an illusion of national unity. But this illusion remained significant for engendering sentiments of national belonging and attachment in a multicultural society. England’s 1944 Education Act had for the first time mandated a daily act of collective worship, of a “wholly or mainly” Christian character, in all maintained schools. However, it did not decree a unified set of

\textsuperscript{15} Bailkin, \textit{Afterlife of Empire}, 5.


\textsuperscript{17} See Bailkin, \textit{Afterlife of Empire}, 8-9; Matthew Hilton, “Ken Loach and Save the Children Film: Humanitarianism, Imperialism, and the Changing Role of Charity in Postwar Britain,” \textit{Journal of Modern History} 87, no. 2, (June 2015): 361.
broad, inclusive national principles acceptable to all ethnic and religious groups, the primary objective of religious education for many of its wartime proponents.\(^{18}\) The legislation included a vital provision that allowed students of other religions or Christian denominations to opt out of compulsory Christian education in the name of toleration, the ultimate death knell to the integrating function of a spiritual, ethical version of Christian education for evangelists like Joseph Oldham.\(^{19}\)

State educational institutions were thus ill equipped to deal with postwar cultural diversity. By 1963, the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Council (CIAC), established in 1962 to advise the Home Office on policy measures to promote the integration and welfare of Commonwealth immigrants in Britain, noted with unease the unprecedented volume and character of contemporary immigration. Immigrants who were “visibly distinguishable by the colour of their skin” were arriving “from societies whose habits and customs [were] very different from those in Britain”, creating immense problems for schools.\(^{20}\) The CIAC report envisaged schools in multicultural Great Britain as sites of confrontation between two or more distinct, racialized cultures, rather than as environments to foster and shape a shared, homogenized culture for all British citizens, regardless of race or nationality of origin. The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act set

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\(^{19}\) David Feldman notes the triumph of multicultural pluralism in Britain, in contrast to the assimilationism of other countries, in his chapter, “Why the English like turbans,” in David Feldman and Jon Lawrence (eds.), *Structures and Transformations in Modern British History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 281-302. Feldman dates the British abandonment of assimilation to the late 1970s, and this dissertation dates it to the 1940s.

new entry controls for migrants of color, restrictions that were fortified by additional exclusionary immigration laws in 1968 and 1971.

If Great Britain seemed to have retreated into exclusionary discrimination, contemporary American liberals enacted a domestic agenda that appeared to emphasize inclusive universalism. This group had always opposed illiberal racial barriers, believing them to impede American economic expansion, especially at a time when a booming economy was needed to combat the Soviet Union. Domestic racial and immigration obstructions were now also a source of great embarrassment to the supposedly democratic USA in an era of ideological warfare with the USSR, which mockingly crowed over the hypocrisy of a “land of the free” in which a large black population was anything but. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act was passed, followed in 1965 by the Voting Rights, Immigration, and Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Acts, which were ostensibly (at least partially) committed to ending discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, and sex; voting impediments; immigration restriction; and inequality between schools. The liberal consensus had apparently been achieved.


22 On the superficial, but not substantive, equality that these measures engendered, see: Robert C. Liebman, Shifting the Color Line: Race and the American Welfare State (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) for race; Alice Kessler-Harris, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001) for gender, particularly pages 239-289. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 only partially ended discrimination based on sex. See Mae Ngai, Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004) for immigration issues. The Immigration Act did not achieve formal equality. Although it abolished the system of national origins quotas, it retained a global immigration ceiling, including, for the first time, immigrants from the Western Hemisphere. Ngai notes that liberal elites had wanted Western Hemisphere populations to remain excluded from immigration restrictions, but the proviso was a concession to Southern Democrats in Congress. No Americans at that time endorsed open borders, however. Ngai, 227-264. Regarding education, Douglas S. Reed argues that the ESEA, the federal government’s first intervention in elementary and secondary education, helped to break down Jim
Examination of the actions of these networks of American philanthropic, missionary, academic, and governmental associations sheds light on the limitations of the postwar liberal order. Architects of the early-twentieth-century American “educational state,” at home and abroad, were never concerned to address structural, or resource, inequalities. They were obsessed with the facade of uniformity, to the extent that it would enable national economic growth. The British counterpoint demonstrates that a veneer of national unity is important for integrating diverse groups, and securing harmony, in a multicultural society. But a veneer is insufficient. Minority partners, crucial for the legitimization of the American educational enterprise, took their role seriously, advocating a more equitable restructuring of the American and international economy. However, white organizers manipulated them into accepting an arrangement committed to abolishing discriminatory barriers, even as they strengthened a ruthless, free-market capitalism without redressing fundamental inequities in the process.

The cultural pluralism of these planners was also circumscribed from the outset. Scholars highlight that early-twentieth-century cultural pluralists, like the anthropologists featured in this story, argued that culture, not biology, was the root of human difference, and emphasized mankind’s capacity for adaptation, unlike the social scientists of the Cold War era, writing at a time of an existential battle between the “good” liberal, capitalist, democratic USA and the “evil” of Soviet Communism. But the earlier intellectuals never

Crow schooling in the South and promoted greater racial integration in the North by using financial carrots and sticks, and also standardized educational goals, expectations, and pedagogies. However, it did not attempt to restructure an educational system that had generated enormous resource inequalities, particularly for African Americans and poor students. Reed, “ESEA at Fifty: Education as State-Building,” *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (May 2016): 368-374.

countenanced true difference. They merely had faith in the ability of diverse populations
to adopt their own conformist liberal, capitalist, and democratic values, which were
Protestant in origin, and which prevailed in America both before and after the Second
World War.

Against this backdrop, today’s political climate in 2017 is understandable. Large
sectors of Anglo-American and other western populations feel excluded from the immense
fruits of a global order that – they believe – was designed to advantage America and its
international partners. The educational planners of the early twentieth century never had
any intention of redressing the structural inequalities that accompany capitalism, and
worked hard to silence those who proposed doing so. In England, disenchanted and
culturally anxious groups target their frustrations on an elusive, threatening immigrant
“other” for which the British government has failed to create an adequate infrastructure
and inclusive national identity. By contrast, American historical actors endeavored to
create an all-encompassing American nationalism, but this was always underlined by
homogenizing Christian values. Hard-done-by Americans channel their grievances not
against the financial institutions and elites responsible for the 2008 global financial crisis
and its aftermath, but against more visibly “different” factions of society that they
perceive as rejecting the “American way of life” in favor of their own evidently distinctive
cultural and religious lifestyles. And it is no wonder that powerful political groups in

24 Many commentators (and the political leaders involved) interpret the late 2016 success of
“Brexit” in Great Britain (British withdrawal from the European Union), and Donald Trump’s
election as president of the USA, as populist rejections of globalization and immigration.
Historian, Ian Baruma, interprets both of these political movements as representing the
“dismaying” end of “a particular idea of Anglo-American exceptionalism,” one that was “based on
a liberal consensus” of “freedom, democracy, and internationalism.” See, Baruma, “End of the
Anglo-American Order.”
former British colonies have renounced the liberal, capitalist order, which swiftly exchanged the rule of one exploitative foreign power (the British) for the dominance of another (the USA).25

In a world of global technologies, fear-based demands for nativism and exclusion are ethically poisonous, and utterly futile. The educational planners featured in this story facilitated imperial exploitation. But they also serve as a model of how different groups coordinated effectively, and mobilized far-reaching communications networks, to influence politics, and create new global communities. If we matched their organizational techniques with the social democratic ideals they suppressed, we might revive the enlightened notion of “world citizens” they would have been so horrified to see rejected today.

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