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Crisis Capital:

Industrial Massachusetts and the Making of Global Capitalism, 1865-Present

A dissertation presented

by

Shaun Steven Nichols

to

The Department of History

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the subject of

History

Harvard University

Cambridge, Massachusetts

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Professor Lizabeth Cohen

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Crisis Capital:

Industrial Massachusetts and the Making of Global Capitalism, 1865-Present

Abstract

"Crisis Capital" offers a local history of global capitalism and a global history of local economic development, exploring how the global movements and political struggles of industry, labor, and capital created, destroyed, and repeatedly reconfigured the southeastern industrial core of Massachusetts. By dissecting the succeeding rise and fall of the whaling, textile, garment, electronics, and high-tech industries over the past one-hundred-fifty years, it challenges one of the master narratives of modern economic development: the oft-repeated story of how nineteenth-century industrialization, urbanization, and capitalist expansion collapsed into twentieth-century de-industrialization, globalization, and urban decay. Industrial Massachusetts, it argues, did not simply "rise" in the nineteenth century only to "fall" in the twentieth, but was made and un-made over and over again—besieged and begot by the swirling global movements of migrant labor and mobile capital. From migrating Azorean seamen, British weavers, and Quebecois farmers to globetrotting whalers, New York mobile manufacturers, and Asia-bound garment producers, "Crisis Capital" explores the industrial development of Massachusetts as a function of myriad actors' attempts to navigate the tempests of economic globalization.

In so doing, "Crisis Capital" highlights the seemingly paradoxical ways Massachusetts business, government, and labor leaders discovered they could use economic crisis to reorder the global geography of capitalism to their advantage. From the lure of low rents and free factory space to the appeal of cheap labor and abundant industrial financing, crisis became a crucial

means for pulling and pushing both capital and workers across the continents. Moreover, “Crisis Capital” explores how these strategies of crisis exploitation have since been adopted by states and nations around the world. By analyzing the global history of industrial Massachusetts, “Crisis Capital” thus provides not only a new take on the classic “rise-and-fall” narrative of industrialization, but a sense of how global capitalism was historically pulled together: namely, through the meshing of myriad local economies, like Massachusetts, each seeking to use crisis itself to entice capital from competing locales. The so-called “race to the bottom,” it argues, is no contemporary bugaboo, but a structural facet of how industrial capitalism has expanded over the last two centuries.

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To my grandparents:

Mémé, Pépé

Vovó, Vovô

Introduction

This dissertation offers a local history of global capitalism and a global history of local economic development. In so doing, it explores the economic history of what was once America's richest city—indeed, a city widely thought to be the wealthiest in the world—as well as the nation's fourth largest maritime port.[1] It is also the story of a place that was, at various points in time, the United States' most productive whaling center, its leading producer of cotton cloth, and home to its largest dress manufacturer; a place that launched both well-known multi-national billion-dollar companies like Berkshire-Hathaway as well as lesser-known conglomerates like AVX, one of the globe's leading producers of electronic capacitors.[2] In sum, this dissertation traces the story of a place that was once central to America's global industrial ascendance, but has since been largely forgotten.

Yet, if one is looking for lessons on the consequences and course of modern economic development, there are few places in the world that offer such an expansive timeframe for analysis than the cities of New Bedford, Fall River, and the southeastern industrial core of Massachusetts. Just as Fall River was once on the forefront of the global industrial revolution, the city of New Bedford was perhaps the first in the world to transform itself from a primarily trade and maritime economy into a sea of iron, concrete, and mass production. Yet, despite these places' centrality to American economic history, they are now shrouded in relative obscurity. Today, as some of the poorest cities in Massachusetts, there is little public support for historical

[1] Frederick Douglass, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (Courier Corporation, 2012), 145; Dorothy Denneen Volo and James M. Volo, *Daily Life in the Age of Sail* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 20–21; Zephaniah W. Pease, *History of New Bedford,* Vol. 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1918), 30.

[2] "Top Capacitor Vendors Show Mixed Results In March 2010 Quarter | Passive Component Industry," accessed September 30, 2014, http://www.passivecomponentmagazine.com/top-capacitor-vendors-show-mixed-results-in-march-2010-quarter/; AVX, "Tantalum Capacitors," accessed Apr. 27, 2016, http://www.avx.com/products/tantalum/.

preservation.[3] There is no manufacturing archive in either city, and, as a result, the records of many of these earliest textile mills, garment plants, and electronics factories have been permanently lost.

Figure A: The Massachusetts South Coast/ Southeastern Industrial Massachusetts

Faced with this lack of obvious archival data, many historians have simply projected our most ready-set narrative of industrial development onto the economic trajectory of Massachusetts: namely, the oft-repeated story of how nineteenth-century industrialization, urbanization, and capitalist expansion collapsed into twentieth-century de-industrialization, globalization, and urban decay.[4] Industrial Massachusetts has become just another example of

[3] New Bedford is the third poorest city (with a population over 75,000) in Massachusetts; Fall River is fourth. See Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, "Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section: DOR Income and EQV per Capita," accessed July 21, 2015, https://dlsgateway.dor.state.ma.us/DLSReports/DLSReportViewer.aspx?ReportName=IncomeEQVperCapita&ReportTitle=DOR+Income+and+EQV+per+Capita

[4] On Massachusetts, New England, and the "de-industrialization" narrative, see David Koistinen, *Confronting Decline: The Political Economy of Deindustrialization in Twentieth-Century New England* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014); Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (Basic Books, 1982); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Revised (Princeton University Press, 2005), 127; Beth English, *A Common Thread: Labor, Politics, and Capital Mobility in the Textile Industry* (University of Georgia Press, 2006); Robert Forrant, *Metal Fatigue: American Bosch and the Demise of Metalworking in the Connecticut River Valley* (Amityville, NY: Baywood Pub. Co., 2009), 9-13. On the larger narrative of nineteenth-

the well-worn tale of "frost-belt" decline: a place that flowered in America's industrial heyday only to be left to rust as the industrial epicenter of the United States shifted southward, and ultimately, out of the United States altogether. So seemingly ironclad has the connection drawn between Massachusetts and "de-industrialization" become that, for many scholars, the real contribution of the Bay State to our historical understanding of economic development is in exemplifying why one must de-couple "de-industrialization" from late-twentieth-century "globalization."[5] Massachusetts, after all, is said to have begun "de-industrializing" as early as the 1880s, as textile mills were lured not to third-world countries, but to the cheap labor, anti-union American south.

By following how the global flows and struggles of capital, labor, and industry shaped the long history of economic development in Massachusetts, this dissertation tells a very different story. Indeed, it shows that industrial Massachusetts did not simply rise in the nineteenth century only to collapse in the twentieth. Dichotomizing economic development in this way, although conceptually neat, ignores the more troubling reality of how deeply interconnected crisis and prosperity have been over the past two centuries of capitalist growth

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century industrialization and twentieth-century de-industrialization, see Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Vintage, 1996); Judith Stein, *Running Steel, Running America Race, Economic Policy and the Decline of Liberalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); David Brady, Jason Beckfield, and Wei Zhao, "The Consequences of Economic Globalization for Affluent Democracies," *Annual Review of Sociology* 33 (January 1, 2007): 313–34; Quentin R. Skrabec, *The Fall of an American Rome: Deindustrialization of the American Dream* (Algora Publishing, 2014); Steven C. High and David W. Lewis, *Corporate Wasteland: The Landscape and Memory of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2007); Ruth Milkman, *Farewell to the Factory: Auto Workers in the Late Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Timothy J. Minchin, *Empty Mills: The Fight Against Imports and the Decline of the U.S. Textile Industry* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013).

[5] Koistinen, *Confronting Decline: The Political Economy of Deindustrialization in Twentieth-Century New England*; David Koistinen, "The Causes of Deindustrialization: The Migration of the Cotton Textile Industry from New England to the South," *Enterprise and Society* 3, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 482–520; William F. Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?: Unions and Economic Change in the New England Textile Industry, 1870-1960* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996).

and consolidation. In Massachusetts, it evades how mass textile industrialization in the mid-nineteenth century was actually borne out of the crisis of family farming and the collapse of the once thriving whaling industry. It evades how the disintegration of the textile industry in the 1920s did not spell the end of industrial Massachusetts—as it is so often portrayed—but instead, catalyzed the movement of a new wave of mobile garment factories arriving in Massachusetts to take advantage of the droves of unemployed left in the wake of the textile industry's southern migration. It similarly evades the fact that the later "de-industrialization" of the garment industry in the 1970s resulted from a wave of industrialization, unprecedented on a global scale, in places like Taiwan, South Korea, and Bangladesh. And finally, it evades how technological entrepreneurs in the 1970s were able to take advantage of the state's prostrate economic position to gain crucial political clout in achieving a series of favorable tax cuts, research grants, and taxpayer-funded loans that helped found the so-called "high-technology economy." Over and over again, cases of "industrialization" had supposed "de-industrialization" to thank for their existence.

From the perspective of Massachusetts, then, it was economic crisis that—by relentlessly intervening in and re-casting the global geography of capital and labor—fueled capitalist expansion from the very beginning. Industrial Massachusetts did not simply "rise" and "fall," but was made and un-made over and over again, both besieged and begot by the constant global scrambling of migrant labor and mobile capital into ever novel alignments.

Indeed, although scholars still routinely identify "industrial capital" as a characteristically fixed form of capital accumulation (since, theoretically, factories and machinery cannot be easily moved), such an assumption should perhaps be flipped on its head. In practice, what has most defined American industrial capitalism from both its economic successor and predecessor—

service capitalism and plantation agriculture—has been its very *mobility*. After all, while a job harvesting wheat or serving coffee at your local café cannot be relocated to South Korea, a job willowing cotton or stitching zippers (or *any* line of industrial work) most certainly can.

Crisis Capital, then, by examining Massachusetts as but a single node in a vast worldwide network of capital and labor in relentless motion, reveals how these constantly changing geographies of, and power struggles between, mobile capital, migrant labor, and state power made and un-made the Massachusetts economy over and over again. In so doing, *Crisis Capital* also aims to reveal how the changing fortunes of one seemingly very *local* economy were intimately bound to the broader dynamics of global capitalism, shaped by everything from textile industrialization in North Carolina to agricultural crisis on the Azorean islands to the explosion of export garment production in East Asia. As the title suggests, this dissertation shows how the continuously shifting geography of capitalist development has provoked chronic economic instability and crisis, de-industrialization and re-industrialization. Yet it equally uncovers how crisis itself has, somewhat paradoxically, fueled capitalist expansion and consolidation: how "crisis capital" was instrumental to making Massachusetts one of the great industrial centers of the United States.

***

As one of the critical epicenters of industrial revolution, an analysis of the longer trajectory of Massachusetts' economic development has many lessons to offer historians, social scientists, and policymakers alike. More specifically, *Crisis Capital* suggests three important modifications to our collective narrative of the makings of industrial capitalism.

First, as this introduction has already alluded, *Crisis Capital* shows the ways in which crisis and accumulation have acted as co-conspirators in the long history of economic

development. Over and over again, workers, capitalists, and state policymakers were surprisingly adroit in finding ways to turn dire economic straits into renewed industrial ascendance. From the vantage point of Massachusetts, "industrialization" and "de-industrialization" were neither passing historical eras nor mysterious, ethereal forces that coursed through local communities only to deposit or evaporate factories in their wake. Instead, they were merely components in broader, overlapping re-alignments in the global economy that took particular shapes within various locales.[6] *Crisis Capital* thus exposes the myth of "creative destruction" for what it really is: not an endogenous process of capitalist evolution and technological progress as outlined by Joseph Schumpeter, but waves of overlapping economic crisis and reconstruction structured by the interminable shuffling of capital, labor, and industry across the globe.[7]

Second, an understanding of the historical forces that have actuated the constant making and un-making of the Massachusetts economy also helps to de-center the role of "capitalists" in the history of capitalism. This is not to say that business owners, financiers, or local investors were peripheral to the development of the Massachusetts economy, but it is to suggest that they contended for economic power with a swirling variety of groups equally eager to manipulate the shape of industrial Massachusetts.[8] Portuguese and French-Canadian migrant working women,

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[6] In this way, I seek to flesh out Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott's suggestion that "deindustrialization and industrialization" might best be seen as "merely two ongoing aspects of the history of capitalism that describe continual and complicated patterns of investment and disinvestment." See Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, eds., *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2003), 15.

[7] I draw upon the work of geographer David Harvey in offering this critique. See Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (Martino Fine Books, 2010); David Harvey, *The Limits to Capital*, Updated (Verso, 2007); David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital: And the Crises of Capitalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

[8] In theory, the so-called new "History of Capitalism" equally encompasses both labor and business history. In practice, however, much of the literature it has engendered has focused much more on business owners and financiers than workers. For example, the excellent work going into the soon to be published volume, *The New History of American Capitalism*, edited by Sven Beckert and Christine Desan, focuses on the construction of markets, the dynamics of state formation, financial development, and the role of slavery as an institution in American capitalist development. Although tremendously important topics, it is striking how little workers

trade unionists, state policymakers, clergy, and middle-class consumer groups all joined capital owners as crucial actors in shaping and defining otherwise abstract processes of economic turmoil and transformation.[9] Massachusetts' workers were not simply innocent bystanders in the globalization of capital; neither did they simply "resist" an unstoppable capitalist juggernaut. Workers organized, migrated, and protested not only to resist, but to act as co-participants (however unequal) in the many makings and un-makings of industrial Massachusetts. What follows is as much a story of the material flows of capital and labor as it is one of the politics of labor, capital, and state battling over the trajectory of economic development.

Finally, *Crisis Capital* seeks to offer a very different appraisal of the normative consequences of industrial capitalism itself. Inescapably, historians' various appraisals of "industrialization" have revealed more about the historian than the history. After all, early historians of the "industrial revolution" in the late-nineteenth century invented the term in order to attack it. Intellectuals like Arnold Toynbee, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and J.L. Hammond used the "industrial revolution" concept in order to give a name to the social force they saw as

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themselves figure into the work of these thirteen leading scholars. See Program on the Study of Capitalism, "The New History of American Capitalism," Nov. 18-19, 2011, http://studyofcapitalism.harvard.edu/histcap

[9] All too often, groups like workers and immigrants are simply dismissed (or exalted) as either intransigent rebels or helpless victims, a tendency which has too frequently pushed them to the fringes of economic history. Not coincidentally, many of the so-called "New Social Historians" of the 1960s and 1970s have since been chided for their preoccupation with searching out working-class cultural perseverance as a form of political resistance, with little attention to what was being *resisted* (namely, the larger economic system in which these workers toiled). Similarly, emerging "Historians of American Capitalism" have criticized traditional labor history for treating workers as central and their context as peripheral—taking the story of resistance as somehow prior to the story of what was being resisted. In contrast, this dissertation seeks to synthesize labor, business, and economic history together, showing how workers, business owners, and state policymakers were instrumental to the shaping of both global and local economies. See Walter Johnson, "On Agency," *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 1 (October 1, 2003): 113–124; Lawrence T. McDonnell, "'You Are Too Sentimental': Problems and Suggestions for a New Labor History," *Journal of Social History* 17, no. 4 (July 1, 1984): 629–654; David Roediger, "What Was so Great About Herbert Gutman?," *Labour / Le Travail* 23 (April 1, 1989): 255–261; Sven Beckert, "History of American Capitalism" in Eric Foner, Lisa McGirr, and American Historical Association, eds., *American History Now* (Temple University Press, 2011); Seth Rockman, "Class and the History of Working People in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 25, no. 4 (December 1, 2005): 527–535.

driving spiraling poverty and urban misery all over nineteenth-century Britain.[10] Early-twentieth-century scholars, living amidst mounting global depression, began to emphasize the cyclical and often self-destructive nature of industrial development.[11] In a more prosperous postwar era, however, historians and social scientists like W.W. Rostow and T.S. Ashton began to paint a more triumphalist history of "industrialization" through which, in the words of David Landes, "the European economies…learned the secret of eternal growth and prosperity."[12] Oscillating back to earlier interpretations, New Left scholars of the 1960s and 1970s began to paint a more disturbing picture of industrial capitalism. Historians like E.P. Thompson, Sean Wilentz, and Alan Trachtenberg emphasized the deleterious effects of the "industrial revolution" on the lives of workers—how the process of de-skilling and proletarianization robbed artisans of their craft identities and customs.[13] Coming out of this same tradition, scholars like Eric Hobsbawn, David Harvey, and Kenneth Pomeranz have emphasized how industrialization, capitalism, and imperialism were mutually reinforcing processes: how the drive for raw materials and markets for finished products pushed Europeans abroad in a mad dash for economic hegemony.[14]

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[10] "The Industrial Revolution," as a concept, dates to Arnold Toynbee's 1884 *Lecture on the Industrial Revolution in England*. As historian David Cannadine argues, from the 1880s to the 1920s, intellectuals like Toynbee, the Webbs, and J.L. Hammond used the concept in order to describe the origins of the "unacceptable" social conditions prevailing in England. See David Cannadine, "The Present and the Past in the English Industrial Revolution, 1880-1980" in *The Industrial Revolution and Work in Nineteenth Century Europe*, ed. Lenard R. Berlanstein (Routledge, 1992).

[11] Ibid.

[12] David S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 498; W. W Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1960); T. S. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution, 1760-1830* (Oxford University Press, 1998).

[13] E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Penguin Books, 1991); Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (Oxford University Press, 2004); Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (Hill and Wang, 2007).

[14] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital: 1848-1875* (Vintage, 1996); Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (Vintage, 1989); Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: The Birth of the Industrial Revolution* (The New

Until quite recently, though, few questioned that Europe and America *were* the assumed hegemonic force. Since then, as America's industrial ascendance has seemed to slide from grasp, historians have had something of a rapprochement with the aspiration for "industrialization." Amidst so-called "de-industrialization," "industrialization" has come careening back into vogue. Historians like Judith Stein have since argued how short-sighted policymakers traded the "good" world of industrial capitalism for the "bad" one of finance.[15] Books like *Confronting Decline*, *The Fall of an American Rome*, and *Corporate Wasteland* show readers exactly how and why America tragically fell from its perch of industrial supremacy.[16] Even Thomas Piketty's concept of the "bell curve of global growth" that defines his magnum opus, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, only makes sense in the context of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century industrial era as *the* most exceptionally productive and fastest-growing moment in all of human history, and what follows as but a disappointing era of diminishing returns and skyrocketing inequality.[17] It is no exaggeration to say that industrial capitalism—a force that once inspired little but revulsion and disdain amongst scholars—has reemerged as an object of nostalgia and emulation.

A fuller understanding of the history of some of these first industrializing cities in the world, however, urges caution. The long, gently sloping graphs of ever-increasing productivity growth that continue to define our collective memory of the industrial past mask far messier realities. As the story of industrial Massachusetts shows, from the very beginning, industrial

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Press, 1999); Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*; Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Revised (Princeton University Press, 2001).

[15] Stein, *Pivotal Decade*.

[16] Koistinen, *Confronting Decline*; Skrabec, *The Fall of an American Rome*; High and Lewis, *Corporate Wasteland*.

[17] Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014), 99.

growth was riddled with wrenching economic devastations, spanning both geographic space and economic sectors. Just as the "cheap labor" fifteenth-century German cotton industry displaced Italian cotton producers only to be superseded by the British in the eighteenth century (who eventually toppled, and devastated, Indian textile producers), even the first glimmerings of the "industrial revolution" look little like the smoothly rising graphs of productivity growth that grace so many works in economic history.[18]

To put it simply, the story of global capitalism and local capitalism are inextricably linked, but fundamentally different. While the story of many local economies may add up to an aggregate story of economic growth, Massachusetts reminds us that this larger story is but an amalgamation of countless smaller stories of smaller economies amidst inter-linked waves of economic destruction and creation. Economic "winners" have historically emerged alongside economic "losers." Global capitalism is and was itself a process—an historical creation—that entailed the torturous meshing of myriad local economies, all seeking to outflank and outcompete one another in the race for mobile capital and migrant labor. And in this endeavor, Massachusetts has led the way. Its leaders, capitalists, and workers have repeatedly reconfigured the global economy by capitalizing crisis itself, a strategy that has since been adopted by states around the world.

[18] Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 29, 75.

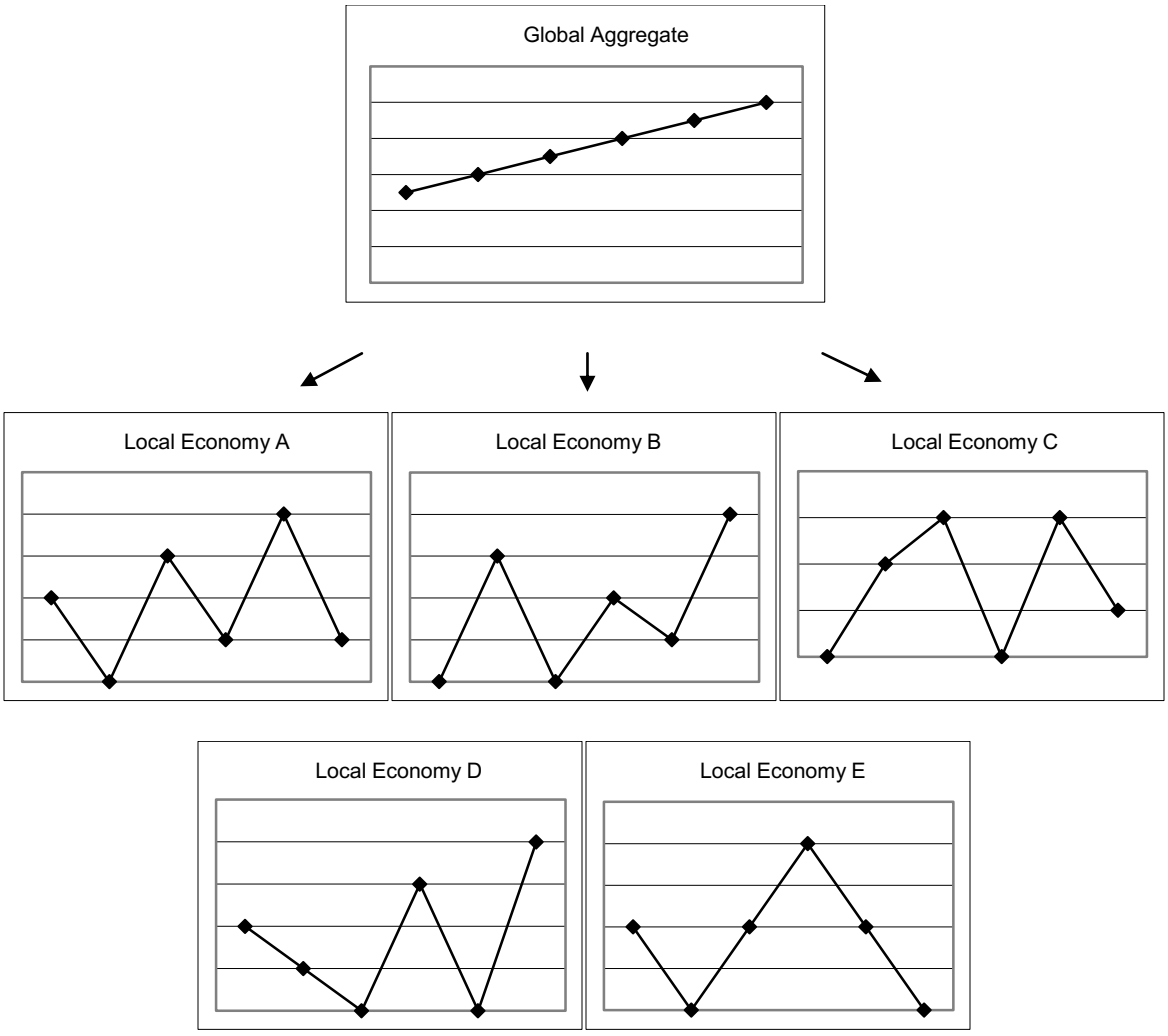

Figure B: Modeling Global and Local Economic Growth
Oftentimes, stories that look straightforward on the aggregate (global) level mask far messier realities on the local level. In the following model, we see a hypothetical trajectory of global economic growth as composed of far less linear economic patterns of constituent local economies.

I cannot claim this insight as uniquely my own. Countless economic theorists have also studied the cyclical process of capital accumulation and dispossession. In the 1858 *Grundrisse*, for example, Karl Marx laid out how the evolution of capitalism would spur a falling rate of profit, which would in turn fuel overproduction and, as such, recurrent crisis leading to capitalism's collapse: "the highest development of productive power together with the greatest expansion of existing wealth will coincide with depreciation of capital, [and the] degradation of

the labourer…These contradictions, of course, lead to explosions, crises, in which momentary suspension of all labour and annihilation of a great part of the capital violently lead it back to the point where it is enabled [to go on] fully employing its productive powers without committing suicide."[19] Joseph Schumpeter also argued that capitalism was prone to crisis and destined for collapse, but unlike Marx, he celebrated the former and lamented the latter. Crisis was, for Schumpeter, mere "creative destruction": revolutionary realignments of prevailing regimes of production to fit new organizational or technological paradigms.[20] Consequently, it was ultimately something of a travesty that governments would attempt to contain the baleful effects of these crises, for they were, in reality, flashpoints of capitalist development. Geographer David Harvey, on the other hand, has argued that crisis is not simply an endogenous process of technological transformation, but rather a product of capital's constant search to displace its internal contradictions across space. As capital seeks to maintain constant growth despite all limits, Harvey has argued, it must necessarily seek the expansion into and incorporation of all geographic regions, the discipline of labor by way of global capital mobility, and the creation of fictitious markets in everything from carbon pollution to money itself: all of which only exacerbate its tendency for instability.[21]

Moreover, a vast body of work on "de-industrialization"—focusing on particular communities, industries, and firms—has served as a source of great inspiration to this work, providing crucial context on the long swings of the Massachusetts economy within its global

[19] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy,* trans. Martin Nicolaus (Penguin Books, 1973), 750.

[20] Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*.

[21] Harvey, *The Limits to Capital*; Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital*; Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*.

context.[22] This dissertation is equally indebted to the countless labor historians who have unearthed the ways in which working-class activism shaped trajectories of economic growth.[23] By synthesizing these works over the long history of economic development in Massachusetts, it is hoped that *Crisis Capital* can provide new insights into how exactly trans-national and local forces have played off one another in the makings of global capitalism, unearthing the real social experiences underlying abstract concepts of "capital mobility" and "labor migration." By understanding how one region of the world navigated the tempestuous waters of economic globalization, *Crisis Capital* endeavors to offer a broader understanding of the forces that have forged industrial capitalism and continue to structure its hegemony.

As one of the central concepts through which this dissertation analyzes the historical evolution of industrial capitalism, my use of the term "crisis capital" deserves explanation. It is,

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[22] On de-industrialization and capital mobility, see Jefferson R. Cowie, *Capital Moves: RCA's 70-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (The New Press, 2001); Cowie and Heathcott, *Beyond the Ruins*; Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*; Stein, *Running Steel, Running America*; June C. Nash, *From Tank Town to High Tech: The Clash of Community and Industrial Cycles* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989); Bluestone and Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America*; Sean Safford, *Why the Garden Club Couldn't Save Youngstown: The Transformation of the Rust Belt* (Harvard University Press, 2009). On the de-industrialization of the textile industry in particular, see Beth English, *A Common Thread*; Koistinen, *Confronting Decline*; Laurence F. Gross, *The Course of Industrial Decline: The Boott Cotton Mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, 1835-1955* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*; Aviva Chomsky, *Linked Labor Histories: New England, Colombia, and the Making of a Global Working Class* (Duke University Press Books, 2008).

[23] Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2008); Steve Fraser, *Labor Will Rule: Sidney Hillman and the Rise of American Labor* (Cornell University Press, 1993); David Brody, *Workers in Industrial America: Essays on the Twentieth Century Struggle*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 1993); David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (Cambridge University Press, 1989); Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO, 1935-1955* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Kevin Boyle, *The UAW and the Heyday of American Liberalism 1945-1968* (Cornell University Press, 1998); Michael Kazin, *Barons of Labor: The San Francisco Building Trades and Union Power in the Progressive Era* (University of Illinois Press, 1988); Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activism, 1881-1917* (Cambridge University Press, 2006); Joseph A. McCartin, *Labor's Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Labor Relations, 1912-1921* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon* (Princeton University Press, 2003); Leon Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (University of Illinois Press, 1985).

in effect, the equivalent of "human capital" for geographic spaces; as such, it essentially inverts the human capital concept. Whereas humans accrue more valuable forms of labor productivity in a capitalist economy through self-improvement, "crisis capital" denotes the ways in which *places* often become more valuable through degradation. Indeed, it is important to remember that technology centers like Silicon Valley or Boston accumulate new industries *despite* the limitations attached to their geographic locale: namely, high rents, high energy costs, and high labor costs.

I thus use "crisis capital" in two related ways. First, I employ it as a sort of "human capital" complement for the perceived value areas suffering economic devastation amass in the eyes of investors or mobile capitalists. (Importantly, it is precisely the lure of cheap labor, low rents, and pliant and desperate state and city leaders that have made, and continue to make, places like Bangladesh, Cambodia's Phnom Penh, or even the city of New Bedford so attractive to mobile capitalists). I also use "crisis capital" to refer to the more tangible "phantom assets" that accompany investment in areas "in decline." In effect, the extra return on capital invested in New Bedford (rather than, say, Cambridge) due to the existence of the city's foreign trade zone or one-hundred-percent personal property tax exemption (a benefit received through the Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program, which has classified New Bedford as a "blighted, distressed, and underutilized" area) would, by my classification, be a return on "crisis capital." In sum, I have chosen to use the term "crisis capital" as it best highlights the often paradoxical process through which crisis and accumulation intermingle in the constant global restructuring of industrial capitalism.

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Crisis Capital is divided into three parts of three chapters each. The first part, "From Ship to Loom, From Farm to Factory," traces the emergence of the South Coast textile industry through an exploration of how economic crisis drove mass industrialization in Massachusetts. Chapter one, for instance, highlights the constraints and failures of early-nineteenth-century Massachusetts manufacturing. With Massachusetts' agricultural and mercantile economies still relatively robust—making capital scarce and labor itself a pricey commodity—early Lowell and Lawrence mills underperformed compared to their British counterparts. After the Civil War, lured by new opportunities out West, capital drained out of Massachusetts' textile mills, leaving the state's first industrial cities to stagnate.

Chapter two then shows how technological and environmental crisis in the whaling industry brought the city of New Bedford, once literally the richest city in the nation, to the brink of economic collapse. As capital and labor poured out of whaling ships and wharves, desperate municipal leaders sought to remold their city as a textile-manufacturing center. Whaling crisis thus not only fostered local governments eager to do almost anything to spur industrial development—slashing taxes, cutting welfare rolls, and building infrastructure—it also gifted textile capitalists with the massive labor force the peripatetic whale-ships of a generation previous had helped carry to Massachusetts. Chapter three then delves into how the economic and political crises of the late-nineteenth-century Atlantic world helped consolidate Massachusetts' industrial workforce, bringing throngs of workers from Britain, French Canada, and the Azores to cities like New Bedford and Fall River. The South Coast transformed from the nation's whaling center to its largest producer of cotton cloth.

Industrialization did not simply "rise like the sun at an appointed time," to quote the great historian E.P. Thompson, but was, from the very beginning, a political project spearheaded and

fought out by everyone from capitalists and religious leaders to unemployed workers and municipal policymakers, all seeking to turn economic calamity into industrial ascendance.[24] By forcibly "freeing" reserves of cheap labor and desperate capital, it was the crises of the mid-nineteenth century, I argue, that undergirded the rise of textile hegemony in Massachusetts.

Part two, "From Cloth to Clothes, From Crisis to Prosperity," traces the origins and consequences of textile de-industrialization. Chapter four scrutinizes how workers and business owners confronted the specter of capital mobility and inter-regional competition in the textile trade. It shows that, like the story of textile industrialization before it, this seemingly paradigmatic case of "de-industrialization" poorly fits our reigning models of industrial decline. Rather than a result of first-world affluence or the unintended consequences of workers' increasingly assertive collective action, this chapter shows how de-industrialization was a far more deliberative (and deliberate) process. Union leaders privileged short-term protections for particular crafts over engaging in broader organizational strategies that could have erased the glaring wage gaps that enabled capital mobility in the first place—despite the vocal protests of so many within the Massachusetts textile workforce. Similarly divided, elite textile capitalists ignored the complaints of local utility, retail, and merchant capitalists who condemned their refusal to curtail the menace of overproduction and its attendant market instability. Ironically, after the textile crisis, while the textile business and working-class elite simply left Massachusetts, it was those capitalists and unskilled workers who had actually fought to forestall textile de-industrialization who were left behind to pick up the pieces.

[24] I am of course drawing a parallel to the great E.P. Thompson's analysis of working-class formation in Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*.

Consequently, chapter five examines the oft-ignored story of how the very desperation left in the wake of textile collapse in the 1930s—the far-reaching crisis of capitalism as viscerally experienced by its workers—was itself packaged, marketed, and ultimately exploited by local capitalists' "development programs" in their efforts to attract mobile capital to the area once more. As a result, just as textile mills were fleeing the Massachusetts seaboard en masse, they were replaced by a wave of equally mobile garment and electronics firms from cities like New York City, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Lured by promises of newly unemployed Azorean women willing to work for rock-bottom wages, generous funding packages from those remaining elites desperate to see the economy revived, and a whole host of incentives from state leaders, ranging from free rent to tax clemency, these invading sweatshops turned local desperation into industrial development.

Finally, chapter six interrogates how the barriers to renewed Portuguese-American labor migration, erected in the early-twentieth century, were slowly eroded over the course of the 1950s and 1960s. It finds the origins of this postwar "free migration," however, in an unlikely source: the Portuguese fascist state and its emigrants abroad. Increasingly eager to strengthen its domestic economy, unload impoverished farmers, and consolidate its international power, fascist Portugal sought to conscript its emigrant communities as equal members of its global "empire." Such efforts, however, had the ironic effect of preserving Portuguese nationalism (and with it, a sense of connection between the Azores and Massachusetts), despite the seemingly irresistible pull of "Americanization" in a moment defined by resurgent xenophobia and immigration restriction. These social connections would prove immensely consequential as Azorean-Americans mobilized, both politically and socially, in the struggle to open the doors to industrial Massachusetts for their brethren back home.

With plentiful labor and an ascendant small manufacturing economy, industrial Massachusetts flourished. Textile crisis, in short, did not spell doom for industrial Massachusetts, but was effectively leveraged into an entirely new economic regime.

Part three, "From the Needle to High Tech, From Massachusetts to the World," traces the eventual collapse of the garment and small electronics industries and the rise of "high-tech" Massachusetts. Chapter seven analyzes the origins of free trade "globalization," but finds its genesis not in the designs of hungry capitalists or financiers, but in the political visions of workers. By looking to local garment unions' involvement in the international trade union movement, it shows how mid-century labor intellectuals once looked to create a new world order of peace and prosperity guaranteed by generous welfare states, free trade, and a global labor movement. Massachusetts workers were not simply "shocked" by the globalization of the American economy; they were active participants in this very process.

But, as *Crisis Capital's* final chapters reveal, "free trade" and "free migration" yielded unexpected results. As chapter eight shows, the loosening of America's immigration laws became a tremendous boon to Massachusetts manufacturers, bringing immense prosperity to the state's industries. It was, however, a prosperity with ironic consequences. As manufacturers thrived on new sources of cheap, immigrant labor, industry re-emerged as a profitable capital investment, catalyzing the oft-forgotten merger wave of the 1960s. Local manufacturing firms were hungrily brought into the fold of emerging corporate multinationals. Then, as chapter nine shows, in a sort of "remora capitalism," these local plants' profits were—time and time again—funneled into further conglomerate expansion abroad, leaving these factories to be run into the ground and shuttered once their infrastructures had been exhausted.

Ultimately, then, it was not the 1973 economic "shock" that catalyzed this latest wave of economic globalization in Massachusetts. In fact, it was the very profitability of Massachusetts' manufacturing firms that helped launch the multi-national conglomerates that would unceremoniously shut them down in the 1980s and 1990s. And, in a final ironic twist, Boston-area capitalists were soon leveraging the 1973 crisis into renewed commitments of state investment towards the creation of an entirely new economic regime: "high-tech" Massachusetts. Neither a story of "creative destruction," sudden shock, or long-term deindustrialization, the global restructuring of the Massachusetts economy in the 1970s was once more a story of how prosperity fueled crisis and crisis fueled subsequent accumulation: yet another undulation in the interminable drama of succeeding economic regimes in the state of Massachusetts.

Chapter 1

The Irrational Revolution: The Failure of Early Massachusetts Manufacturing

Figure 1.1: William Allen Wall, "Wamsutta Mills," 1853[1]

New Bedford native William Allen Wall's depiction of the city's first successful textile operation, the "Wamsutta Mill"—painted in 1853—presented New Bedford as a sort of apotheosis of the industrial-pastoral sublime. The Wamsutta, looking more like a Roman temple than some "dark, satanic mill," is no domineering industrial giant; it seems almost peripheral to the scene. A train moves rightward, but it is so tiny as to skew reasonable proportion. The painting reassures the viewer that the harmony between nature and commerce remains unbroken: that there is still a place for both culture and agriculture—with cows, factories, and smartly

[1] William Allen Wall, "Wamsutta Mills," 1853, painting, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts; Mary Jean Blasdale and Michael Lapides, eds., *American Landscape and Seascape Paintings* (New Bedford, MA: Old Dartmouth Historical Society, New Bedford Whaling Museum, 2010).

dressed Victorians peacefully comingling with one another—in industrial New Bedford. As Wall's painting reminds us, although we tend to look back on the so-called "industrial revolution" as a crucial turning point in world economic history, most people on the ground wanted something much more like Wall's halcyon scene—not the mass industrial regime that eventually overtook Massachusetts.

Indeed, the Wamsutta Mill was originally viewed with suspicion, if not disdain, by most citizens of New Bedford. In fact, when Thomas Bennett Jr. first approached local Quaker merchant Joseph Grinnell about bankrolling a textile factory in the 1840s, the plan was to build the mill in Georgia—where both land and labor were cheaper. Grinnell, however, believing New Bedford a less profitable but "much more reliable" site of capital investment, made his money contingent on a New Bedford location, to which Bennett hesitantly acceded.[2] The mill faced other obstacles as well. Despite the fact that New Bedford was the richest per capita city in the nation, raising capital proved remarkably difficult. Although Grinnell sported no shortage of wealthy connections, his hopes of raising 300,000 dollars for the Wamsutta were soon dashed; he had to settle on about half of that.[3] As a result, capacity plans for the first mill had to be reduced by about a third.[4]

And if local capitalists were not convinced that the Wamsutta Mill represented a viable future for New Bedford, local workers were outraged by the very idea. "The general sentiments of the citizens were in opposition to the introduction of manufacturers by incorporated

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[2] Thomas Bennett, "From Mem. And paper of Thos. Bennett, Jr….The Wamsutta Mills," Folder 1, Series E, Subgroup 4, MSS 9, Wamsutta Mills, 1882-ca. 1890, Thomas Bennett Jr. Papers, Bennett Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *BFP-NBWMRL*]**.

[3] Thomas McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City: New Bedford, Massachusetts, 1865-1900," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1976), 16.

[4] Bennett, "From Mem. And paper of Thos. Bennett, Jr.," Folder 1, Series E, Subgroup 4, MSS 9, Thomas Bennett Jr. Papers, *BFP-NBWMRL*.

companies...Particularly so were the mechanics who regarded the organized and disciplined labor and the longer hours of mill work as inimical to the labor interests," Thomas Bennett later reflected upon the beginnings of the mill.[5] Even amongst the city's elites, a near consensus emerged that the city had much to lose in industrialization and its attendant need for a settled working class. "New Bedford now is the best city in the State to live in," one concerned citizen wrote to the local newspaper in 1865: "Its neatly kept streets…its abundance of shade trees, its French Avenue for a summer evening drive…and last, but not least, its freedom, comparatively speaking, from the laboring classes of society, makes it all that anyone can ask for to reside in."[6] In short, the Wamsutta was celebrated only insofar as it conformed to Wall's fabulist conception. Otherwise, its construction faced either indifference or outright hostility.

Despite these limitations, the new mill achieved some fair degree of success. Opening its doors in 1849, its first 25 years of operation returned an annual average of 12 percent in dividend payments to its investors.[7] A second mill building was constructed in 1855; another followed in 1860.[8] By the end of the Civil War, the Wamsutta sported 45,000 spindles and 1,100 looms.[9] Yet, despite this growth, it remained something of an anomaly. Another mill did not come along in the city until 1871, some thirty years later.[10] Soon thereafter, industry positively boomed in

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[5] Ibid.

[6] A No Water Man, Letter to the Editor, *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), July 29, 1865.

[7] "Statement of Dividends…Jan 1, 1849 to Oct 1., 1880," Folder 1, Series D, Subgroup 4, MSS 9, Stocks and Dividends, 1847-1880, Thomas Bennett Jr. Papers, *BFP-NBWMRL*.

[8] Bennett, "From Mem. And paper of Thos. Bennett, Jr." Folder 1, Series E, Subgroup 4, MSS 9, Thomas Bennett Jr. Papers, *BFP-NBWMRL*.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Manuscript, Olga Louise Garth, "A Historical Account of New Bedford Rayon Division," Sept. 19, 1966, Folder 1, Series G, Subgroup 1: New Bedford Rayon, Inc., Records, 1926-1974, MSS 25, New Bedford Rayon, Inc. Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *NBRR-NBWMRL*]**.

New Bedford. In the 14 years after 1882, a new mill was incorporated, on average, every year in the city of New Bedford. Existing mills added buildings, spindles, and looms at a furious pace. New Bedford lurched forward into the industrial era.

Only with the gift of retrospect have early mills like the Wamsutta graduated from "anomaly" to "pioneer." Nevertheless, the Wamsutta project was buffeted by complications and hostilities that future mills did not face. Moreover, the obstacles the mill confronted—namely, a lack of capital, labor, and local support—were not simply "transcended" by future mills; they were erased by the events of the ensuing decades. By understanding how these impediments eventually disappeared, these first chapters seek to unearth the origins of mass industrialization in South Coast Massachusetts.

After all, if the Wamsutta was so successful an industrial enterprise, what accounts for the thirty-year lag between textile production's first appearance in the area and its sudden takeoff in the 1880s? The answer, ironically, lies in a series of propitious economic catastrophes. Indeed, the mass industrialization of the late-nineteenth century was enabled by a curious confluence of events: a series of economic crises, in fact, that catalyzed labor and capital concentration in the factories of the South Coast. Three crises stood foremost in driving local industrialization: First, a capitalization crisis that drained labor and capital from northern Lowell and Lawrence mills, making way for insurgent textile industrialization on the South Coast. Second, a far-flung environmental and technological crisis that brought irreversible turmoil to the state's whaling industry, releasing the reserves of labor and capital these whaling ships had originally brought to the state's south coast. And lastly, a global agricultural crisis that was itself part and parcel of the industrial transformation overtaking the Atlantic world. Together, these three crises form the backbone of the three chapters that follow.

Massachusetts' earliest mills, such as the Wamsutta itself, were thus terribly constrained enterprises, desperate for labor and capital in an era in which so many other economic pursuits competed for these scarce resources. The coming economic crisis, however, would effectively evaporate the obstacles these factories had originally found so daunting, clearing the way for the scores of mills that followed.

Facing Working-Class Reluctance

The very earliest flickers of industrialization in the United States were not spared the problems that the early Wamsutta confronted. The very first factory ever constructed in America—the first building constructed primarily to quarter machinery, not simply house human labor—found attracting workers to be a similarly intractable problem.[11] Slater's Mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island—about seventeen miles northwest of Fall River—built in 1793 through a partnership between Newport merchant Moses Brown and illegally emigrated British spinner Samuel Slater, simply could not offer wages high enough to recruit local farmers without endangering the factory's profitability.[12] As a result, Slater was forced to hire local children. Indeed, although historians routinely single out the so-called "Rhode Island" labor system for its unique focus on "family" recruitment, Slater's hiring of entire families was merely a means to an end: getting children behind his stolen Arkwright water-frame technology.[13] Fathers were

[11] Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 69.

[12] Ibid., 139, 145–6.

[13] David J. Jeremy, *Transatlantic Industrial Revolution: The Diffusion of Textile Technologies Between Britain and America, 1790-1830s* (MIT Press, 1981), 211; Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (University of Illinois Press, 1997), 30; Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff, "Technology and Industrialization, 1790-1914" in *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States,* Vol. 2, eds. Stanley Engerman and Robert Gallman (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 373; James L. Conrad, "'Drive That Branch': Samuel Slater, the Power Loom, and the Writing of America's Textile History," *Technology and Culture* 36, no. 1 (1995): 5.

promised jobs not as spinners, but work in decidedly non-manufacturing pursuits, such as construction, transportation, overseeing, or simply farming.[14]

Recruitment advertisements made Slater's goal abundantly clear. "WANTED. At the Factory of Samuel Slater…one or two large FAMILIES, to work in the mill."[15] "Large" was the operative word: another advertisement for a nearby Dudley factory called for "12 Weavers and 2 Families with 5 or 6 children."[16] Consequently, the first mass-production factory labor force ever assembled in America was composed entirely of children: seven boys and two girls, all twelve years old or younger.[17] With adult labor too expensive in a time and place in which landlessness was not the norm, this was, simply put, the best workforce early American industrialists could afford. The American industrial revolution began, for all intents and purposes, on the backs of children.[18]

Such difficulties in attracting labor stemmed, in part, from the surprising resilience of New England agriculture. Although northeastern soils left much to be desired (as the oft-repeated eighteenth-century rhyme put it, in New England, "Nature out of her boundless store / Threw Rocks together & did no more"), in a market still only regionally integrated, it mattered little

[14] Barbara M. Tucker, *Samuel Slater and the Origins of the American Textile Industry, 1790-1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 86.

[15] *Massachusetts Spy* (Worcester), Oct. 30, 1822, quoted in Barbara M. Tucker, "The Merchant, the Manufacturer, and the Factory Manager: The Case of Samuel Slater," *The Business History Review* 55, no. 3 (October 1, 1981): 310.

[16] *Plebian and Milbury Workingman's Advocate,* Jan. 25, 1832, quoted in Ibid.

[17] Thomas Louis Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860*, 2nd ed. (Columbia University Press, 1981), 15.

[18] Claudia Goldin and Kenneth Sokoloff, "Women, Children, and Industrialization in the Early Republic: Evidence from the Manufacturing Censuses," *The Journal of Economic History* 42, no. 4 (1982): 741–74.

whether northeastern soils were poor, as long as they were universally so.[19] And although early-nineteenth-century New England farmers little resembled their now popular perception as rough and self-subsistent yeoman, transportation constraints nevertheless limited their capacity to engage fully in global agricultural markets. The average distance of selling trips by New England farmers, even armed with wagons and oxen, was only twenty to twenty-five miles in the early national period.[20] Even as the construction of the Erie Canal in 1825 accelerated national market integration—as well as competition with more fertile western farms—New England farmers responded by moving away from wheat production to more specialized crops and products that could little withstand long canal journeys: namely, milk and meat.[21] With no widespread agricultural crisis driving desperate farmers into the arms of manufacturers, workers had to be enticed to these factories, often from great distances and with relatively high wages.[22]

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[19] The adage comes from Rev. Isaac Stiles (1697-1760) as recorded by his son, Ezra Stiles. See *Extracts from the Itineraries and Other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles…1755-1794,* ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916), 173; Winifred Barr Rothenberg, "The Invention of American Capitalism: The Economy of New England in the Federal Period," in *Engines of Enterprise: An Economic History of New England*, ed. Peter Temin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 87. On the (lack of) integration of national markets, see Dublin, *Women at Work*, 3; Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860* (Cornell University Press, 1990), 70.

[20] Rothenberg, "The Invention of American Capitalism," 79. On market orientation of early American farmers, see Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism*; Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (Vintage, 2002); Adrienne D. Hood, *The Weaver's Craft: Cloth, Commerce, and Industry in Early Pennsylvania* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[21] Rothenberg, "The Invention of American Capitalism," 87.On resiliency of nineteenth-century New England agriculture, also see Hal S. Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind: Rural Society in Nineteenth-Century New England* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 29. One study of the introduction of western agricultural competition alongside "straw hat" manufacturing in Medfield, Massachusetts shows that neither dramatically disrupted the rhythms of rural life. Indeed, not until the 1890s did local manufacturing capitalists finally displace landowners in wealth. See Michael F. Cotter, "Harnessing Capital: Rural New England in the Creation of a Benign Industrial Order: 1801-1900 (Thesis, Harvard University, 2014).

[22] Ibid.; Dublin, *Women at Work*, 76. Even after the Civil War, the agent of Hamilton Company had to send labor recruiters all over northern New England and southern Canada to obtain labor. See Heidi Vernon-Wortzel, *Lowell: The Corporations and the City* (New York: Garland, 1992), 139.

Early mills were similarly frustrated by the longstanding, infamous American hostility to manufacturing itself. It is worth remembering that many of America's founders abhorred, in no uncertain terms, the prospect that their nation's virtuous stock of yeoman farmers could one day be degraded to the status of landless wage workers. As Thomas Jefferson famously put it in his 1781 *Notes on the State of Virginia*, "Those who labour in the earth are the chosen people of God," as they alone possessed the necessary independence and virtue to uphold the common good as citizens of a democratic state.[23] In contrast, Jefferson saw those who found themselves relying on either bosses or customers for their daily bread as neither truly independent nor free, and such "dependence," he feared, would only foster "subservience and venality, suffocat[ing] the germ of virtue."[24] "While we have land to labour then, let us never wish to see our citizens occupied at a work-bench," he concluded: "let our work-shops remain in Europe."[25] Many Americans shared Jefferson's revulsion for the drudgery of factory labor. Indeed, his ascension to the presidency on a wave of popular support in the so-called "Revolution of 1800" was heralded by him and his supporters as a devastating referendum on the pro-industrial, pro-growth, and pro-corporate policies of Alexander Hamilton and the American Federalists.[26]

In support of their anti-industrial proclivities, Americans like Jefferson needed only to cite the widespread, baleful reputation of the "dark, satanic mills" of old England.[27] The

[23] Michael Hardt, "Jefferson and Democracy," *American Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (March 1, 2007): 55; Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (London: John Stockdale, 1787), 274-275.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Drew R McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980), 185–188.

[27] William Blake, "And Did Those Feet in Ancient Time," 1804, in *Blake: Selected Poems*, eds. Mike Davis and Alan Pound (Heinemen Educational Publishers, 1996), 125.

"scourge" of industrial Manchester threw an unshakable pall over all debate on American manufacturing in the early-nineteenth century. Even supporters of industrialization had little good to say about the English factory town. A decade before he emerged as one of the key founders of the textile mills of Waltham and Lowell, for instance, Nathan Appleton assured his younger brother during an 1802 trip to England that although more consumer conveniences were available across the Atlantic, it came at a terrible price: "the debasement of the lower classes of society."[28] "For the happiness of our country at large," he added, "I could wish it long without them."[29] In fact, at the very moment Francis Cabot Lowell found himself across the Atlantic executing his covert plan to smuggle industrial textile machinery designs into the United States (suspicious British officials, worried of losing their global monopoly on mass textile production, searched his luggage twice for illicit plans or notes, but Lowell had simply memorized the power loom design) he nonetheless found British manufacturing an unsightly business.[30] "We found the manufacturing towns very dirty," he wrote in 1812, pointing to the "great corruption of the highest and lowest classes, and the great number of beggars and thieves."[31] Even those who supported industrialization had grave doubts about whether industrial England was really the model to which America should aspire.

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[28] William Appleton to Eben Appleton, July 24, 1802, Appleton Family Papers, MS N-1778, Nathan Appleton Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *MHS*]**, quoted in Robert F. Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite: The Boston Associates and the World They Made* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 12.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Nathan Appleton, *Introduction of the Power Loom and Origin of Lowell* (Lowell: B.H. Penhallow, 1858), 7; Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 6.

[31] Francis Cabot Lowell to William Cabot, Jan. 2, 1812, Francis C. Lowell Papers, MS N-1602, *MHS*, quoted in Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 12.

Not surprisingly, then, those who detested the factory and the creation of a wage labor class as antithetical to cherished republican virtues of independence and self-sovereignty were even more histrionic in their condemnation of the English factory town. By the 1820s, a sort of sub-genre of "shock" travelogues came into vogue in the United States, exposing the horrors that would greet the American visitor to "filthy" Manchester.[32] One American author, James Paulding, simply pretended to have visited England in his denunciatory 1822 *A Sketch of Old England, By a New England Man*: "No one, that has not seen [it]" firsthand, he declared—somewhat ironically—"can conceive the squalid and miserable looks of these people…the ignorant worthlessness of their characters."[33] Crucially, as Paulding's theatrics make clear, these Americans repudiated industrialization not simply because it was ugly, environmentally toxic, or entailed harsh work regimes, but rather because it presaged the inexorable debasement of the American people themselves. "Heaven forbid that America should ever be cursed with such a manufacturing system as that which is now the curse of England" another nineteenth-century writer concluded: "May the day never come" when "the labouring classes of America shall be taken from her broad fields and rich soil."[34] Industrialization was feared not for what it would unleash upon America, but upon Americans.

Consequently, when the first Massachusetts textile mills began humming to life in the nineteenth century, millowners were forced to jump through extraordinary hoops in order to circumvent industry's foul reputation. America's first water-powered spinning and weaving factory, The Boston Manufacturing Company of Waltham, Massachusetts, for instance,

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[32] John F. Kasson, *Civilizing the Machine: Technology and Republican Values in America, 1776-1900* (Grossman Publishers, 1976), 55-61.

[33] James Kirke Paulding, *A Sketch of Old England, by a New England Man* (New York: 1822), I, 144, 149, quoted in Ibid., 59.

[34] C. Edwards Lester, *The Glory and Shame of England* (New York: 1850), I, 47, quoted in Ibid., 60.

organized in 1813 by a group of wealthy Boston merchants (often referred to as simply the "Boston Associates") faced major obstacles in securing both its economic legitimacy and its labor force.[35] Deciding that the complexity of power-loom technology foreclosed the possibility of child labor, the Associates scrambled to find some way to affordably lure adult workers into the mills.[36] Their solution—targeting local farmers' daughters for labor recruitment—nevertheless proved a fraught enterprise.

Indeed, the Associates had to embark on a remarkable public-relations campaign to convince Americans of the merits of industrialization and persuade local farmers that sending their adult (but pre-marriage) daughters to the factory for a temporary bout of industrial labor would not "debase" their progeny.[37] To that end, the Associates concocted a complex system of moral codes and boardinghouses to attract, contain, and regulate their workers. Boardinghouses were policed, as Appleton put it, by "respectable women…at the cost of the Company," in order to oversee the moral maintenance of their young preserves.[38] Church attendance was made mandatory; liquor was banned entirely; and a 10:00 P.M. curfew was strictly enforced.[39] Boardinghouse keepers were instructed to essentially act as substitute parents, and would be, as

[35] As Appleton later noted, the fact that "the operatives in the manufacturing cities of Europe" were widely recognized as "notoriously of the lowest character and morals" cast grave suspicion over the Boston Manufacturing project. See Appleton, *Introduction of the Power Loom*, 15.

[36] Kasson, *Civilizing the Machine*, 71.

[37] Laurence F. Gross, *The Course of Industrial Decline: The Boott Cotton Mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, 1835-1955* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 9; Jonathan Prude, "Capitalism, Industrialization, and the Factory in Post-Revolutionary America," *Journal of the Early Republic* 16, no. 2 (1996): 253–254.

[38] Appleton, *Introduction of the Power Loom*, 16.

[39] Lawrence Manufacturing Company, *General regulations to be observed by persons employed by the Lawrence Manufacturing Company in Lowell*, May 21, 1833, Reel 2611, Kress Library of Business and Economics, Harvard University, http://id.lib.harvard.edu/aleph/007330061/catalog; Lawrence Manufacturing Company, *Regulations to be observed by all persons employed by the Lawrence Manufacturing Company*, circa 1842, Reel 2986, Kress Library of Business and Economics, Harvard University, http://id.lib.harvard.edu/aleph/007330061/catalog

the agent of the Middlesex Mills put it, "considered answerable for any improper conduct in their houses."[40] In this way, the Associates strove to insure local fathers that sending their unmarried daughters to the factory would not interfere with their maturation as honorable, republican mothers, and would serve as but a temporary stage before each moved on to "the higher and more appropriate responsibilities of [their] sex."[41]

As a result, the Associates had to absorb costs that future industrialists would have found laughable. The directors of the Merrimack Manufacturing Company—the first major textile mill in Lowell, founded in 1823—had to put aside monies "not exceeding" 9,000 dollars to build a church more than a year before declaring its first dividend.[42] Although there is no exact record of how much was expended on the construction of the Merrimack's many boardinghouses, they were later valued at around $18,000 in 1826.[43] Schools, boardinghouses, and churches were all paid for by the company, as well as the well-known *Lowell Offering*, a magazine that showcased the moral and intellectual progress of these young women under textile tutelage through "original articles on various subjects written by factory operatives" (such as "Woman's Proper Sphere" and "Divine Love").[44] The *Offering* was funded by its 6 ½ cent cost to the consumer

[40] Middlesex Company, "Regulations for the Boarding Houses of the Middlesex Company," circa 1850, reproduced in *The Lowell Offering: Writings by New England Mill Women, 1840-1845*, ed. Benita Eisler (Norton, 1977), 27. Similar stipulations can be found in *Handbook to Lowell* (1848), 45-46, reproduced in *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society,* VII, eds. John R. Commons, et al. (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1910), 137.

[41] John A. Lowell, "Patrick Tracy Jackson," in *Lives of American Merchants,* ed. Freeman Hunt, I (New York, 1856), 565, quoted in Kasson, *Civilizing the Machine*, 70.

[42] Merrimack Mfg. Co: Directors' Minutes, 1822-1843, 17, Vol. 1, MSS 442, Merrimack Mfg. Co. Papers, Baker Library Historical Collection, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *MMC-BLHC*]**.

[43] Estimate based on Dublin, *Women at Work*, 76.

[44] *The Lowell Offering*, no. 1 (Oct. 1840), Collection Development Department, Widener Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:4214878.

and, more importantly, through regular cash infusions from Boston capitalist Amos Lawrence.[45] Importantly, such expenditures were not purely philanthropic, but part of a broader public-relations strategy in the tense battle to conscript Americans (and especially fathers of potential workers) into the project of industrialization.

Lowell millowners were also forced to shell out relatively high wages to these migrant farm daughters. After all, it was not mass impoverishment that pushed these "farm girls" into these factories. Instead, citing the expanded freedom and pre-marriage earnings a spell of textile work might yield, these farm girls largely *chose* to go into the mills.[46] As such, they generally required decent wages to make the trip to the boarding rooms of Lowell worth their time.[47] All told, mill owners were forced to fork over some 84 percent over prevailing British pay scales.[48]

It could have been worse. Mill owners still received a sizable discount on their female laborers as compared to their American male compatriots. At the Lawrence Manufacturing Company in Lowell, built in 1833, the first extant payroll records reveal that their 20 card room drawers (of which 19 were women) averaged 48 cents a day in the five weeks ending December 14, 1833; their 37 filling spinners (all women) averaged 59 cents a day; and the factory's 52 piece weavers (all women) took home 77 cents a day.[49] Although men were few and far between

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[45] Gross, *The Course of Industrial Decline*, 11; Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 67.

[46] Dublin, *Women at Work*.

[47] Prude, "Capitalism, Industrialization, and the Factory in Post-Revolutionary America," 251–254; Peter Temin, "Product Quality and Vertical Integration in the Early Cotton Textile Industry," *The Journal of Economic History* 48, no. 4 (1988): 900.

[48] Rothenberg, "The Invention of American Capitalism," 102.

[49] With piece rates, pay could vary widely. In the spinning department, for instance, Calista Larabee produced 353 sets in 27.5 days, earning an average of 71 cents a day, while Harriet Hatch worked 22 days but only produced 128 sets, averaging only 32 cents a day. See Lawrence Manufacturing Company, Payroll Record, Dec, 14, 1833-Dec. 13, 1834, 2-11, Labor and Employment Payrolls Mill No. 1, Vol. GA-1, MSS 442, Lawrence Manufacturing Company Records, 1831-1955, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *LMC-BLHC*]**.

(in a factory of over 300 workers, there appear to have only been 10 male workers, most in oversight positions), their presence nevertheless testifies to the massive gender gap that existed in wages and bargaining power.[50] The two card room male overseers made 2 dollars a day—about four times the wage of the workers they oversaw, while one woman overseer made $1.25 a day.[51] One male operative, a drawer in the carding room, earned 22 percent more than the average wage in his department.[52] The slightly larger Hamilton Company looked much the same: of 1,030 workers, 86 percent were women, and they earned about 57 percent of what their male peers made.[53] Thus, although Lowell mills certainly had to expend more than their British counterparts, they still yielded substantial savings by relying on the lesser bargaining power of the young women who dominated their workforces.

The Associates, having no personal knowledge or experience in textiles, were also forced to compensate their mill managers with—by nineteenth-century standards—exorbitant salaries. John D. Prince, the overseer of the Merrimack Printworks, took home 5,000 dollars yearly.[54] For comparison, in 1830, Francis Cabot Lowell's unparalleled $80,000 investment in the Boston Manufacturing Company yielded him only 600 dollars more than Prince's annual income.[55] Across the board, despite their reliance on cheaper female labor, Boston capitalists had to pay dearly to secure their labor force.

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[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Dublin, *Women at Work*, 66.

[54] Dallzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 50.

[55] Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 50, 30; Boston Manufacturing Company, Dividend Record, Vol. 7, MSS 442, Boston Manufacturing Company Records, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *BMC-BLHC*]**.

Thus, although the Massachusetts countryside possessed some important advantages over its competitors in the global race for industrialization—its developed merchant class, its access to rudimentary mass-production technology, and its connection to a rapidly strengthening state apparatus willing to support industrial growth—in other ways, it is surprising that it emerged as one of the globe's crucial cradles of industrial transformation. Indeed, Americans' proliferating hostility to factory labor and the state's limited supply of available labor constrained Massachusetts' earliest enterprises, forcing industrialists to rely on young and temporary workforces. In fact, it might be wondered why, with so many obstacles that manufacturers had to overcome—especially vis-à-vis their British counterparts—these capitalists decided to open a textile factory in Massachusetts at all.

Irrational Revolutionaries

Indeed, it may seem odd that Massachusetts capitalists did not chase potentially greater returns with slave labor in the United States south, or far cheaper labor in China—where millions of pounds of cloth (many times British textile output) was already being produced.[56] After all, had these Boston capitalists been "rational," profit-maximizing economic actors, Massachusetts would have likely been low on their list of possible manufacturing locations. Simply put, Massachusetts' economy was far too *healthy* to allow for the creation of a sufficient class of pliable industrial laborers, willing to give up a life on the farm for the repetitive drudgeries of

[56] In 1750, for instance, China produced an estimated twelve times more cotton cloth than Britain manufactured of cotton, wool, and linen combined some fifty years later. See Kenneth Pomeranz, "Re-thinking the Late Imperial Chinese Economy: Development, Disaggregation and Decline, circa 1730–1930," *Itinerario* 24, no. 3–4 (2000): 31; Kenneth Pomeranz*, The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Revised (Princeton University Press, 2001), 139, 337.

factory labor. So—why Massachusetts? The answer lies at a curious (and temporary) confluence of culture, politics, and risk.

Most immediately, Boston capitalists were not simply looking to maximize profits. If anything, their experiences in the hurly-burly world of global finance and trade had left them yearning for security and stability, not outrageous capital returns.[57] After all, it was not, as it is often assumed, declining profitability in the Boston merchant trade that drove these capitalists towards industrialization, but rather a growing impatience with the increasingly "feast or famine" character of commerce itself.[58] The most proximate causal factor in pushing the creation of the Massachusetts textile industry, for instance, was the irritating 1807-1812 embargo against France and Britain, which nearly suspended American merchant trade altogether.[59] Coincidentally, in the same era, many of Boston's capitalists were receiving massive cash infusions from the federal government to compensate them for their substantial seaborne losses during the Napoleonic Wars—itself a provision of the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty for which elite Bostonians had fiercely lobbied—much of which was then pushed into the seemingly safer waters of textile manufacturing.[60] When Amos Lawrence was asked by a friend for investment advice in 1833, he, not surprisingly, pointed him away from more lucrative real estate or mercantile pursuits and towards "manufacturing stocks," where one would have "*reasonable*

[57] This claim is central to Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*.

[58] Lance Edwin Davis, "Stock Ownership in the Early New England Textile Industry," *The Business History Review* 32, no. 2 (July 1, 1958): 208–209. On the claim of "merchant" decline and rise of the textile industry, see Caroline F. Ware, *The Early New England Cotton Manufacture: A Study in Industrial Beginnings* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931), 141.

[59] Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 147.

[60] Lindsay Schakenbach, "From Discontented Bostonians to Patriotic Industrialists: The Boston Associates and the Transcontinental Treaty, 1790-1825," *The New England Quarterly* 84, no. 3 (Sept. 2011), 377-401; Temin, "Product Quality and Vertical Integration in the Early Cotton Textile Industry," 906.

assurance" of dependable returns.[61] Although many Boston elites continued to engage in mercantile affairs after the sea trade resumed in 1815, their manufacturing investments represented, in their eyes, a secure and conservative bedrock for their financial portfolios.

Some simply retired from trade altogether, citing the stress and anxiety saved by eschewing the frenetic world of nineteenth-century global commerce as just compensation for the slightly less astounding returns of local manufacturing. Few of these merchant-turned-textile-investors had anything good to say about the life of commerce. In fact, it appears that Lowell's plan to steal British weaving technology while abroad was but an opportune bonus amidst a trip that, for all intents and purposes, was planned as a two-year medical leave for Lowell to deal with health issues resulting from his mounting anxiety over his business affairs.[62] "The hazards of business are much greater now than they even were in my day," he wrote his brother-in-law from abroad, after the mercantile firm of Joseph and Henry Lee—relatives by marriage—failed, wiping out his brother-in-law's fortune in the process.[63] As Appleton put it in an 1850 diary entry, "I attribute much of my anxiety the last few years to my business," resolving to "lay it aside for a change. May I have less hazard & no misgivings of duty."[64] Commerce, as Amos Lawrence never tired of complaining, had a seemingly insatiable appetite for time and attention. In 1826, he grumbled over his "*overengagedness* in business," adding that "the quiet and comfort of home are broken in upon by the anxiety arising from losses and mischances of a business so extensive as ours…Property acquired at such sacrifices as I have been obliged to make the past

[61] Amos Lawrence to George Shattuck, July 2, 1833, quoted in Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite,* 67.

[62] Ibid., 10.

[63] Francis Cabot Lowell to Patrick Johnson, Nov. 16, 1811, Francis C. Lowell Papers, *MHS* quoted in Ibid., 8–9.

[64] William Appleton, *Selections from the Diaries of William Appleton, 1786-1862* (Merrymount Press, 1922), Dec. 1, 1850, 144.

year costs more than it's worth."[65] After developing what appears, in retrospect, a psychosomatically induced ulcer, Lawrence withdrew from his mercantile pursuits altogether, and simply lived off the dividends from his numerous manufacturing investments, spending the next 22 years giving thousands of dollars to rural colleges and academies.[66]

Other benefits came alongside passive investment in manufacturing, including, most importantly, increased time for political and cultural pursuits. As historian Robert Dalzell Jr. has pointed out, part of what likely drove Francis Cabot Lowell to embrace manufacturing so wholeheartedly was his lingering concern that, unlike his father before him—a member of the Continental Congress and chief justice of the First Circuit Court—the unwavering attention nineteenth-century commerce commanded kept him from the political, cultural, and philanthropic pursuits that had made the Lowell family so prominent in Boston in the first place.[67] For obvious reasons, abandoning the state of Massachusetts for economic opportunities elsewhere would have been an ill-advised course in achieving these aims.

Moreover, the Associates were able to use their locally situated political influence to bolster their economic power. Such influence, for instance, helped them command the original federal cash infusions that jumpstarted their textile mills in the first place. It also enabled them to lobby the federal congress on behalf of a stiff tariff on imported cotton cloth, passed in 1816, coming in at 6.25 cents a yard or 25 percent of the cloth's total value, whichever was higher.[68] Nathan Appleton and Amos Lawrence both became prominent figures in the Massachusetts

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[65] *Extracts from The Diary and Correspondence of the Late Amos Lawrence*, ed. William Lawrence (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1856), 81.

[66] Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 65.

[67] Ibid., 11–12; Chaim M. Rosenberg, *The Life and Times of Francis Cabot Lowell, 1775–1817* (Lexington Books, 2010), 41, 47.

[68] Rothenberg, "The Invention of American Capitalism," 101.

Whig Party.[69] Appleton and his brother William both became congressmen; so did Abbott Lawrence.[70] In sum, for these Boston merchants, despite its limitations, Massachusetts industrialization advanced their goals of security, political power, and cultural prestige. It is worth remembering that while capital may be infinitely mobile in the abstract, the reality is much more complex. After all, capitalists are human actors with real connections to real places.

And for all their efforts, the Boston Associates largely achieved what they sought. The original 1813 Boston Manufacturing Company in Waltham, 90 feet by 45 feet, rising a little over 3 stories with 3,000 spindles, was succeeded by a cavalcade of followers: the Hamilton (1825), the Lowell (1828), the Appleton (1829), the Middlesex (1830), the Suffolk and Tremont Mills (1832), the Lawrence (1833), the Boott (1835), and the Associates' last major corporation, the Massachusetts (1840).[71] By then, the Massachusetts Manufacturing Company was capitalized at 1.2 million dollars (three times the value of the Boston Manufacturing Company), had 64 boardinghouses, four mills, 28,288 spindles, 904 looms, and a workforce of 750 women and 60 men.[72] From these investments, the Associates reaped steady—though ultimately diminishing—returns.

Day-to-day management of the mills reflected the Associate's desire for safe and consistent returns. Foremost, they unwaveringly emphasized control over business expansion,

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[69] Richard H. Abbott, *Cotton & Capital: Boston Businessmen and Antislavery Reform, 1854-1868* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), 24; Daniel Walker Howe, *The Political Culture of the American Whigs* (University of Chicago Press, 1984), 96–108; Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite,* 165;

[70] Appleton, *Selections from the Diaries of William Appleton, 1786-1862*, Nov. 1, 1850, 142, Jan. 1, 1861, 234; Nathan Appleton, *Memoir of the Hon. Abbott Lawrence: Prepared for the Massachusetts Historical Society* (J.H. Eastburn's Press, 1856), 8–9.

[71] National Register of Historic Places Inventory, "Nomination Form, Boston Manufacturing Company," June 1977, http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NHLS/Text/77001412.pdf; Duane Hamilton Hurd, *History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts: With Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (J. W. Lewis & Company, 1890), 752; Gross, *The Course of Industrial Decline*, 5.

[72] Henry A. Miles, *Lowell, As It Was, And As It Is* (Lowell: Powers and Bagley, 1845), 56.

limiting business growth in order to maintain a total monopoly on the administration of their manufacturing assets amongst themselves and their relatives. The original Boston Company, for instance, counted only twelve investors.[73] The original Merrimack had only five.[74] Although the Associates could not control to whom stocks were later sold or transferred, they systematically eschewed expansion if it meant looking to broader capital markets or diluting the power of their closely intertwined and interrelated group.[75] Following in this same management strategy, the Associates maintained only a shallow commitment to re-investment, preferring to pursue maximal dividend payouts. In fact, almost every dollar of earnings in Lowell mills was pushed back into investor pocketbooks.[76]

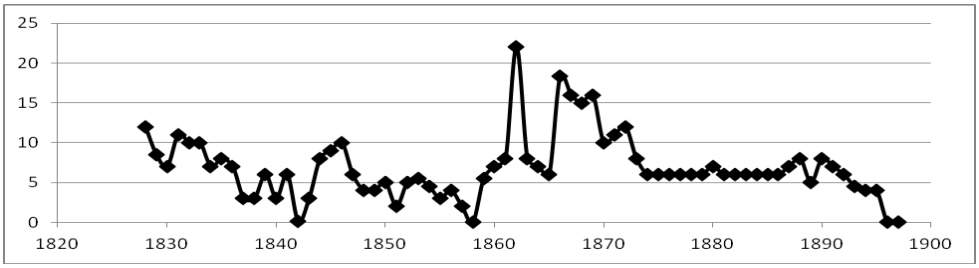

Figure 1.2: Boston Manufacturing Company Annual Dividends, in Percent of Invested Capital, 1828-1897

Dividends declined throughout the 1830s and into the 1850s. Although they did rebound in the Civil War, it was something of an illusory rebound based off selling stockpiled cotton at inflated prices (it also helped that American currency was itself rapidly inflating in this era). Moreover, Boston Company directors leveled stock assessments to fund improvements after the war: for instance, although they voted in Sept. 13 1866 to pay out a dividend of $133.33 per share, they also decided to lay an assessment of $83.33 per share to be paid in by the first of October, thereby nullifying about half of the massive 18 percent spike dividend in 1866, as pictured here.[77]

[73] Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 56.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 29, 56, 39.

[76] Ibid., 53.

[77] Boston Manufacturing Company, Dividend Records, April 15, 1828- October 16, 1852, Vol. 7, Series I, *BMC-BLHC*; Boston Manufacturing Company, Dividend Records, April 5, 1853- October 2, 1871, Vol. 8, Series I, *BMC-BLHC*; Boston Manufacturing Company, Dividend records June 15, 1889- April 28, 1905, Vol. 9, Series I, *BMC-BLHC*; Boston Manufacturing Company, Directors' Records, October 5, 1825- December 20, 1909, 81, Vol. 3,

High labor costs (both in terms of requisite infrastructure and wages), and a failure to reinvest or expand eventually spelled decline for Lowell and Waltham mills, especially the oldest of the cohort: The Boston Company. After 1828, Boston Company dividends both fell and became more erratic. Investors earned nothing in both 1842 and 1858.[78] Moreover, the par value of each share dropped from $1,000 to $750 in the mid-1830s.[79] Throughout the 1850s, the directors had to repeatedly vote to increase the mill's debt-carrying capacity, as well as the ability of the agent and treasurer to take out loans independent of directorial authority.[80] By 1857, the company carried a debt of nearly 400,000 dollars. That same year, five Lowell mills failed completely and several others slid to the brink of bankruptcy.[81] Although quick sales of stockpiled cotton at inflated prices helped investors rack up enormous profits and cut debts amidst the Civil War (despite the fact that production was shut down entirely), mill debt again skyrocketed in the postwar era. By 1881, the company's debt of 530,000 dollars equaled two-thirds of its paid assessments.[82] Despite even this dire situation, the company still pushed 60 percent of its profits into dividend payments.[83] By the end of the century, the Boston Company

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Series I, *BMC-BLHC*; "Boston Manufacturing Co.," *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* 36, no. 7, section 2 (Feb. 16, 1922), 524.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Boston Manufacturing Company, Directors' Records, October 5, 1825- December 20, 1909, 67, 77, Vol. 3, Series I, *BMC-BLHC*.

[81] Ibid., 74; Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 225.

[82] Clipping, Dec. 8, 1881, Vol. 3, Series I, *BMC-BLHC*.

[83] Report, June 27, 1881, Vol. 3, Series I, *BMC-BLHC*.

had racked up 800,000 dollars in debt.[84] The directors had no choice but to split the company in two and sell it off.[85] The Boston Company was not alone. Dividend profiles of the nearby Hamilton and Tremont mills reveal a similar profile: steady returns becoming increasingly more erratic and then declining over the course of the nineteenth century.

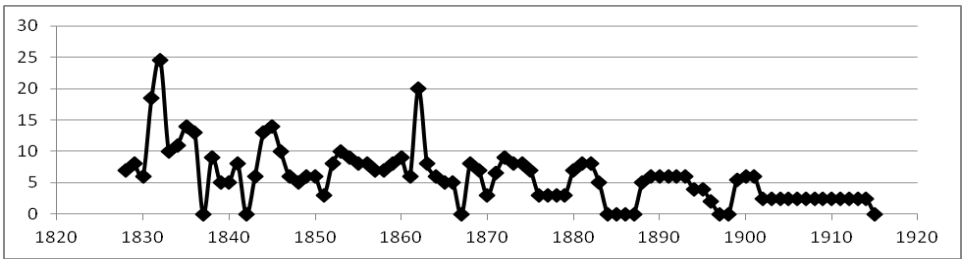

Figure 1.3: Hamilton Manufacturing Company Annual Cash Dividends, in percent of invested capital, 1828-1915[86]

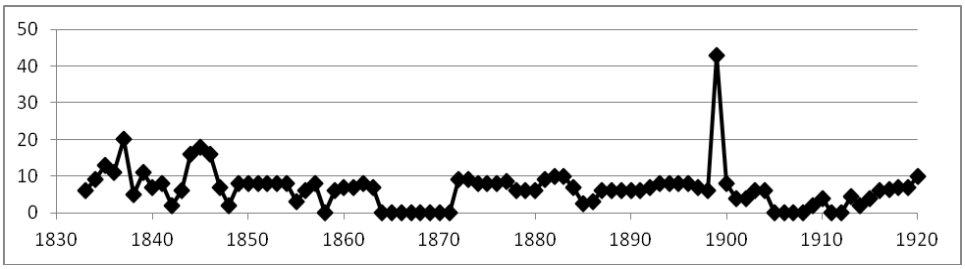

Figure 1.4: Tremont Mills Annual Cash Dividends, in percent of invested capital, 1828-1915[87]

Across the board, Massachusetts textile profitability slid in the 1840s. Peaking in the early 1820s at an average 27.5 percent annual return, Waltham-Lowell dividends on the Boston stock exchange slumped thereafter. Although from 1824 to 1831 they still averaged 17.36 percent annually, they had dropped to 11.53 percent annually in the era to 1838 (still a very

[84] Letter, "To the Stockholders of the Boston Manufacturing Company," Oct. 14, 1901, Vol. 3, Series I, *BMC-BLHC*.

[85] Ibid.

[86] "Hamilton Mfg. Co," *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* 36, no. 7, Section 2 (Feb. 16, 1922), 412

[87] "Tremont Mills," *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* 36, no. 7, Section 2 (Feb. 16, 1922), 447.

respectable capital return) before dropping to 5.16 percent annually up to 1846.[88] Although even a five percent return was no small feat, as stock ownership passed from the original Associates to their children and other inheritors, a new generation of Boston capitalists fast lost interest in the relatively modest returns of local textile manufacturing.

Facing Capitalist Resistance

The original Associates had embraced manufacturing as a means to steady returns—and, more importantly, cultural and political prestige—but their sons, realizing the limits of Massachusetts manufacturing, had entirely different plans. The next generation of Boston elites would largely shun manufacturing for the wild (and potentially very lucrative) world of western real estate and railroad investment. After all, by the time the mills of Lowell entered their 1857 distress, a generation had effectively passed. Most of the original Associates had either died or retired. Lowell had been dead forty years, Amos and Abbot Lawrence died earlier in the decade, and Appleton passed soon thereafter in 1861.[89] And despite Amos Lawrence's counsel that his son not enter commerce—"I have no wish that you pursue trade. I would rather see you on a farm, or studying any profession," he wrote his son in August of 1829—Amos Adams (A.A.) Lawrence remained undeterred.[90] He was resolved to become, as he put it in his senior year at Harvard, "a merchant," though, perhaps already thinking about ventures out west, he endeavored not to be "a plodding narrow-minded one pent up in a city, with my mind always in my counting

[88] Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite,* 38, 51.

[89] Ibid., 225.

[90] Amos Lawrence to Amos Adams Lawrence, Aug. 27, 1829, *Extracts from The Diary and Correspondence of the Late Amos Lawrence*, ed. Lawrence, 90.

room."[91] As sons succeeded fathers, they often inherited titular posts in the famous textile mills their fathers had founded, but they generally knew or cared little about them. They had their sights set somewhere else entirely.

The problem, of course, was not that mills were necessarily unprofitable, but rather that their modest profitability was being speedily eclipsed by a wave of new financial instrumentation and economic opportunities.[92] As historian John T. Morse Jr. reflected in 1920 on the Boston of his youth, "one had not to look back far to see one or two brokers running about State Street and trying to get someone to buy or sell a few shares of a cotton mill or one of the little New England railroads…But within a few years a new situation had developed. The lavish outpouring of bonds and stock by the new Western railroads…the flood of paper money, the issues of Government bonds with tempting fluctuations in price, and the speculation in gold…all combined to make a stock exchange which would have dazed the old-time broker."[93] "Why does Boston not grow like Chicago?," Henry Adams similarly mused to his brother in the 1860s: "The truth is Chicago rose as a colony of New England… [our] wealth and life are drawn irresistibly towards more promising markets."[94] As was all too clear to these Bostonians, an astounding wave of capital

[91] In fact, almost as common as complaints about the life of commerce in the correspondence of the Associates was the concomitant claim that they could not retire due to their sense of obligation to their trade-minded progeny. William Appleton continued his work in commerce to help along his sons-in-law and "aid them by my advice"; T.H. Perkins too resisted retirement "to give continuance and support to my sons-in-law, Mr. Cabot and Mr. T.B. Gary." See William Lawrence, "Memoir of Amos Adams Lawrence," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 12 (Boston: 1899), Jan. 1898, 131; Appleton, *Selections from the Diaries of William Appleton, 1786-1862*, Jan. 1, 1858, 208; T.H. Perkins to Joshua Bates, Oct. 10, 1831, quoted in Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 65.

[92] This is a central argument in Noam Maggor, "Politics of Property: Urban Democracy in the Age of Capital, Boston 1865-1900," (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2010).

[93] John T. Morse Jr., "Memoir of Henry Lee Higginson," in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, October 1919-June 1920*, Vol. 3 (Boston: 1920), 116 quoted in Maggor, "Politics of Property," 202.

[94] Henry Adams to Charles Francis Adams Jr., July 30, 1867, *The Letters of Henry Adams,* Vol. 1 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982), 541-46 quoted in Maggor, "Politics of Property," 201-201.

mobility was taking place in mid-nineteenth-century America. Boston money flooded out of Massachusetts manufacturing and into the American west and beyond.[95]

Amidst generational shift, the Associates found their desire to maintain steady returns come increasingly in conflict with their desire to retain tight, nepotistic control over their mills. The career of Thomas Jefferson Coolidge is a case in point. Having graduated from Harvard College and deciding that "Money…was the only real avenue to power and success both socially and in regard of your fellow-man," Coolidge made a smart and well-timed marriage to William Appleton's daughter in 1852, catapulting him into the Associates' inner circle.[96] When the Boott Cotton Mill found itself teetering on the edge of bankruptcy, Appleton offered to bail the company out on the condition that his new son-in-law was made treasurer.[97] The directors acquiesced, and the young Coolidge took control of the Boott Mill's finances, though it does not appear he found much success. The inexperienced Coolidge had to seek outside help for even the most rudimentary decisions about purchases. When Coolidge left the Boott, it was in about as abysmal financial condition as when he had arrived.[98]

Nevertheless, Coolidge became a wealthy man—but not through his (mis)management of local textile firms. His extant ledgers make the story all too clear. In 1858—the year he got his first executive position—he took out 8 shares of the Amoskeag Mill (valued at $6,900), 11 shares of the Stark Mill ($7,177.50), 5 shares of the Hamilton ($4,262.50), 3 shares of the Dwight Mills, 100 shares of the Lyman Mills, 5 shares of the Boston Company ($2,500), and 19

[95] Maggor, "Politics of Property," 194-195.

[96] Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, *Autobiography of T. Jefferson Coolidge: Drawn in Great Part from His Diary and Brought Down to the Year MDCCCC* (Merrymount Press, 1901), 9–10.

[97] James Cook Ayer, *Some of the Uses and Abuses in the Management of Our Manufacturing Corporations* (Lowell, MA: C.M. Langley & Co., 1863), 9; Gross, *The Course of Industrial Decline*, 29.

[98] Ibid., 30–33.

shares worth $8,887.50 in his own Boott Mills.[99] Yet, with striking swiftness, he liquidated his textile interests in the 1860s. His shares in the Hamilton were sold off in 1861, his shares in the Dwight Mills were sold off by 1863 at a loss of 915 dollars, all but one of his shares in the Stark Mill were sold by 1872, and his 100 shares of the Lyman Mills were gone within four years.[100] Not coincidentally, beginning in the 1860s, a new set of interests absorbed Coolidge's attention: the Northern Railroad, the Chicago Burlington Quincy Railroad, the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad, the Union Land Co. of St. Paul, Missouri State Bonds, the Union Stockyard And Transit Co., the New England Telephone Co., the Chicago Cattle Yard, International (Guam) Telegraph, the Mexican Telegraph Co., the Oregon Transcontinental Railroad, lands all over the south and west, as well as a nearly 100,000 dollar investment in the Lake Shore and Michigan Railroad.[101] He also became president of the Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad as well as director of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad.[102] In effect, Coolidge went from textile manufacturer to emerging prophet of the transport and telecommunications revolution overtaking the United States.

Amos Lawrence's son, A.A. Lawrence, also made good on his promise to escape provincial mercantile pursuits, as, in 1854, he became treasurer of the "Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society."[103] Founded to push anti-slavery northerners into Kansas in order to shift political

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[99] Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, Stock Ledger, 1858-1898, 20-27, Vol. 22, MSS 8993, Coolidge Family Business Records, 1857-1938, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *CFBR-BLHC*]**.

[100] Ibid., 217, 341, 219, 219, 23, 24, 26.

[101] Ibid., 34, 36, 44-45, 44, 46, 46, 51, 52, 56, 65, 68, 26, 260, 275

[102] *The Amoskeag Manufacturing Co. of Manchester, New Hampshire: A History* (Amoskeag Manufacturing Company, 1915), 216–218.

[103] William Lawrence, "Memoir of Amos Adams Lawrence," 132.

power away from pro-slavery voters amidst the Kansas sectional crisis, it was no accident that the company happened to push migrants onto lands owned by (and with implements sold by) the railroad companies of its originators, Boston magnates Eli Thayer, Nathaniel Thayer, John Murray Forbes, and, of course, A. A. Lawrence.[104] Lawrence, Kansas now bears his name, and a bust of Lawrence sits in the Spencer Museum of Art at the University of Kansas in Lawrence—itself founded on Lawrence money.[105] Nathaniel Thayer's investment firm—John E. Thayer and Brother—followed suit. By the early 1860s, it too had wiped all textile investments from its ledgers, turning its attention and its capital to its countless western railroad ventures.[106]

Declining interest and declining mills became a positive feedback loop. As mills underperformed due to deterioration and high labor costs, investors divested, repairs were foregone, and directors increasingly focused on maintaining profits in the short term. The reaction of Lowell mills to the Civil War reveals this destructive circularity all too well. Most mills responded to cotton's sudden paucity by simply shutting down and selling off stocks of cotton at inflated prices, taking advantage of the chance to siphon bonus earnings into investor's pockets. The Lawrence Company treasurer, for instance, sold off some 3,256 bales of stockpiled

[104] Scott Reynolds Nelson, *A Nation of Deadbeats: An Uncommon History of America's Financial Disasters* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 140; Daniel Serda, "Boston Investors and the Early Development of Kansas City, Missouri," Presented to the Midwest Research Institute, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 23, 1992, http://shs.umsystem.edu/kansascity/mcp/Serda-1-23-92.pdf.

[105] Henry Dexter, "Bust of Amos Lawrence," circa 1871-1876, Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, http://collection.spencerart.ku.edu/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=1746&viewType=detailView; Chaim M. Rosenberg, *The Great Workshop: Boston's Victorian Age* (Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 119.

[106] Stock Ledger of J.E. Thayer, 1836-1858 and N. Thayer, 1858-1869, Vol. 2, MSS 783, Kidder, Peabody & Co. Papers, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *KPC-BLHC*]**.

cotton in late 1861 for a quick return of 200,000 dollars.[107] At the same time, textile production was slashed from 6.34 million pounds of cloth for the year ending February 1861 to 1.36 million the year ending 1863.[108] No cotton whatsoever was produced during the year ending February 1864, as the mill was shut down completely in late 1862 for a period of 15 months (only to be shut down again in August of 1864).[109] Nevertheless, over the course of the war, $585,000 was distributed to stockholders—yielding a 15-percent return in 1863 alone, a year in which no actual cloth was produced—while only $200,000 was reserved for repairs.[110] This left the Lawrence Company in an unenviable position at the war's terminus, struggling to afford necessary repairs, re-attract a now dispersed labor force, and re-enter a cotton market forever transformed by the events of the 1860s.

The Lawrence Company was not alone. Almost every Lowell mill found itself in deplorable condition after the Civil War, having all issued balloon payments to investors. As an 1881 report from the Boston Manufacturing Company put it, the Company's "condition in 1872 was a very low one…the machinery, and the buildings were all insufficient, and the concern could be run only at great Expense. The styles of goods were all bad, neither popular in the market, nor Economical to make."[111] The Boott Mill, as Coolidge put it in 1865, was "old, having been run very hard…the goods produced cost high, the waste is too large, the yarn

[107] Investigating Committee Report, June 11, 1867, Folder: "General Administrative Records," AO-1, MSS 442, *LMC-BLHC*.

[108] Report, "The Product of the Mills in the Year Ending…" circa 1867, AO-1, MSS 442, *LMC-BLHC*

[109] Ibid.; Investigating Committee Report, June 11, 1867, 3, 21, Folder: "General Administrative Records," AO-1, MSS 442, *LMC-BLHC*.

[110] A report from 1867 concluded that, although "no doubt the best interests of the Stockholders was had in view in these sales," it was a "fundamental mistake that should not have been made." See Ibid, 3, 4-15.

[111] Report, June 27, 1881, Vol. 3, MSS 442, *BMC-BLHC*.

uneven, the cloth not what is should be."[112] One turn-of-the-century consultant determined it best to simply demolish the mill and start again.[113] The machines in the Suffolk Mills had been repaired so many times, a mill agent wrote in 1862, they were "more than worthless for use by the improvements introduced into modern built machines."[114] Most mills had to embark on long, costly conversion plans. The Lawrence switched from making cloth to hosiery (from 1865 to 1870, dividends averaged only 2.17 percent annually), three other mills switched over to woolens, and the Lowell Mill eventually became a carpet company.[115]

By the outbreak of the Civil War, moreover, these vertically-integrated corporate behemoths were beginning to face new competition from countless smaller mills, popping up in isolated communities all over the Northeast.[116] New technologies like steam engine production disrupted the monopoly of river-adjacent towns like Lowell on mass textile production, only throwing their labor and capital constraints into more visible relief.[117] Indeed, by the mid-nineteenth century, emerging textile operations located everywhere from Philadelphia and

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[112] Gross, *The Course of Industrial Decline*, 35.

[113] Ibid., 45.

[114] John Wright to Henry V. Ward, Feb. 8, 1862, Tremont and Suffolk Letters, Vol. FA-4, Series V, MSS 442, Tremont and Suffolk Mill Records, 1831-1936, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *TSMR-BLHC*]** quoted in Vernon-Wortzel, *Lowell*, 82.

[115] Investigating Committee Report, June 11, 1867, 3, 21, Folder: "General Administrative Records," AO-1, MSS: 442, *LMC-BLHC*; Vernon-Wortzel, *Lowell*, 113; Fidelia O. Brown, "Decline and Fall: The End of A Dream," *Cotton Was King: A History of Lowell, Massachusetts* (New Hampshire Pub. Co., 1976), 155.

[116] Alfred D. Chandler Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977), 57.

[117] Nathan Rosenberg and Manuel Trajtenberg, "A General-Purpose Technology at Work: The Corliss Steam Engine in the Late-Nineteenth-Century United States," *The Journal of Economic History* 64, no. 1 (2004): 61–63. Steam powered textile mills began opening in Rhode Island as early as the 1820s. In fact, the inability of Lowell's mills to meet the increasing cloth demands East African consumers made on Salem's merchants was in great part the impetus for the first fully steam-powered textile mill in the United States, the "Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company" in Salem, founded in 1847. See Conrad, "Drive That Branch ," 27; Jeremy Prestholdt, "On the Global Repercussions of East African Consumerism," *The American Historical Review* 109, no. 3 (2004): 755–81.

Springfield to Providence and Fall River began to chip away at the Merrimack Valley's industrial hegemony.[118] These new mills were not necessarily unmitigated successes: they too suffered from similar capital and labor shortages. Many of these mills were eventually forced to appeal, ironically, to Boston investors for support.[119] And while these smaller mills could pay out lower wages than their Merrimack competitors, their inability to access larger labor pools placed hard constraints on their growth.[120] Nevertheless, their increasing presence only further dimmed investors' confidence in textile production's future in the Boston area.

The final straw for Boston investors, however, was the increasing organization of local shareholders. Although the original Boston Associates had maintained tight control over their investments, as their children and inheritors pulled their money out of Lowell's mills, the authority of the next generation of Boston investors was increasingly challenged by the mounting strength of these factories' other investors. The Merrimack Mill, for instance, had gone from five stockholders at its 1823 founding to nearly 400 by 1842.[121] In particular, a local doctor by the name of J.C. Ayer—infuriated after losing a fortune when two mills in which he was a major investor collapsed—assembled his own circle of "anti-Boston" shareholder reformers to directly take on Boston's community of capital.[122]

Ayer soon generated a number of humiliating reports exposing the ineptitude, disinterest, and heartlessness of the next generation of Boston mill directors. It was Ayer, for instance, who

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[118] Francois Weil, "Capitalism and Industrialization in New England, 1815-1845," *The Journal of American History* 84, no. 4 (1998): 1334–54; Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacture at Philadelphia, 1800-1885* (Cambridge University Press, 1984); Conrad, "Drive That Branch."

[119] Weil, "Capitalism and Industrialization in New England," 1348.

[120] Temin, "Product Quality and Vertical Integration in the Early Cotton Textile Industry," 898.

[121] Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite*, 56.

[122] Brown, "Decline and Fall," 143.

first exposed Coolidge's clumsiness in managing the Boott Mill through his incendiary 1863 pamphlet, *Some of the Uses and Abuses in the Management of Our Manufacturing Corporations*.[123] He similarly skewered the appointment of the Hamilton Company's treasurer's son to purchase cotton in the south (the "inexperienced youth" bought "a quantity of miserable trash filled with sand [and] stones…which was piled up in a heap by the side of the picker-house at the mill" at a loss of 50,000 dollars).[124] The handling of the Civil War—and the concomitant dismissal of nearly 10,000 operatives—was a particular point of criticism.[125] "How would the great men who founded the factory system of Lowell regard this ruthless dismissal of hundreds and thousands of operatives, dependent on their day's wages for their day's bread?," one of Ayer's colleagues, historian Charles Cowley asked in 1868.[126] Unfortunately for the new owners of Massachusetts' mills—the "brainless cousins and nephews" of the original founders—"This crime…this blunder, entailed its own punishment…When these companies resumed operations, their former skilled operatives were dispersed, and could no more be recalled than the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel."[127] New opportunities may have lured Boston money out of Lowell textile mills, but it was Ayer and his compatriots that actively pushed Boston elites out of their vaunted positions of control and power.[128]

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[123] Ayer, *Some of the Uses and Abuses in the Management of Our Manufacturing Corporations*, 9.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Thomas Dublin et al., *Lowell: The Story of an Industrial City: A Guide to Lowell National Historical Park and Lowell Heritage State Park, Lowell, Massachusetts* (Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1992), 67.

[126] Charles Cowley, *Illustrated History of Lowell* (Lee & Shepard, 1868), 60–61.

[127] Ibid., Charles A. Cowley, Reminiscences of James C. Ayer…(Lowell: 1879), 42, quoted in Vernon-Wortzel, 24.

[128] The organizational power of smaller stockholders soon began to pay dividends. The state of Massachusetts responded to their protests by passing "An Act to Equalize Shares in Corporation," which limited the power of directors to use "proxy" votes to outmaneuver organized groups of small shareholders. When mill treasurer Henry Ward had a pamphlet commissioned to argue that textile companies should be exempt from the new law, Ayer fired back with another pamphlet, accusing "the moneyed opposition" of fighting the law simply to maintain "a system of

Ayer's group also successfully took the reins of management in many local mills. Indeed, an observer of a Hamilton Company 1862 stockholder meeting noted the presence of a new, organized group of disaffected stockholders, determined to insure "that these officers shall not appropriate the profits and emoluments of these properties to themselves, their relations, and their friends."[129] Ayer even got himself elected president of the Tremont and Suffolk Mills in 1869, thereafter embarking on a major merger and renovation plan.[130] As a *Boston Traveller* editorial summed up the situation, "Those who originally gave [the mills] birth" and "controlled and made them subservient to their own ends," had "become too puny to control the giants they [had] begotten," left to be "crushed" by the organized many.[131] Ayer and his cohort were fast undermining the economic control and cultural prestige which first attracted Boston capitalists to the idea of local manufacturing in the first place, only hastening their departure from the industry entirely.

Conclusion

Bereft of any adequate labor pool, weighed down by costly renovation needs, and pushed out by the organized power of smaller stockholders, Boston money drained from Lowell textile factories to more fruitful—and risky—ventures out west. As Nathan Appleton summed up the situation at the dawn of the Civil War, it was "inadequate capital" that spelled the decline of

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favoritism which is doing more harm to the interest of the shareholders than any legislation which is likely to be adopted." See Vernon-Wortzel, 98; *Considerations for Legislators in Relation to Proxy Voting and the Equalization of Shares in Corporations,* n.p., n.d, 15 quoted in Vernon-Wortzel, *Lowell*, 100.

[129] *Lowell Citizen & News*, June 25, 1862 quoted in Ibid., 102.

[130] Ibid., 182-3

[131] *Boston Daily Evening Traveller* [sic]*,* July 29, 1863, quoted in Ibid., 108

Lowell area mills.[132] More accurately, perhaps, it was the reluctance of capital and labor to embrace industrialization that doomed these mills from the start. If subsequent events had not intervened, it is not improbable that industrial Massachusetts might have simply burned out at the end of the Civil War.

Early industrial textile manufacturing in Massachusetts was, in some sense, an odd and ill-fitting phenomenon. Early mills were starved for both capital and labor. They were founded by men who sought neither capital maximization nor long-term stability, but security and the entrenchment of their own cultural and political power. Not surprisingly, then, these mills were ultimately abandoned by the next generation of Boston investors, who—accurately seeing these mills as a poor path to profits—summarily divested these factories in the 1850s and 1860s.

Moreover, these constrained enterprises simply paled in size and scope to what came next. In the twenty-five years from 1836 to 1860, spindle capacity had tripled in Lowell.[133] In Fall River alone, spindle capacity quintupled in just the decade after 1865. While Lowell stagnated, by 1875, Fall River had amassed over three times Lowell's prewar productive capacity. Fall River spindleage again doubled by 1900.[134] Long before the American South displaced New Bedford and Fall River textile factories, they themselves "played south" to another set of Northern mills. Simply put: Lowell's de-industrialization enabled South Coast industrialization. Just as Fall River mills were later out-competed by cheaper labor mills in places like Gastonia, North Carolina and Macon, Georgia in the 1920s, Lowell mills were out-gamed by much the same in the 1920s. The South Coast rose precisely because Lowell declined.

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[132] Appleton, *Introduction of the Power Loom*, 30.

[133] Dublin, *Women at Work*, 133; *Manufactures of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eight Census* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1865), xix

[134] *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries,* pt. 3 and pt. 4, 61st Congress, 2d Session, Document 633 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 38.

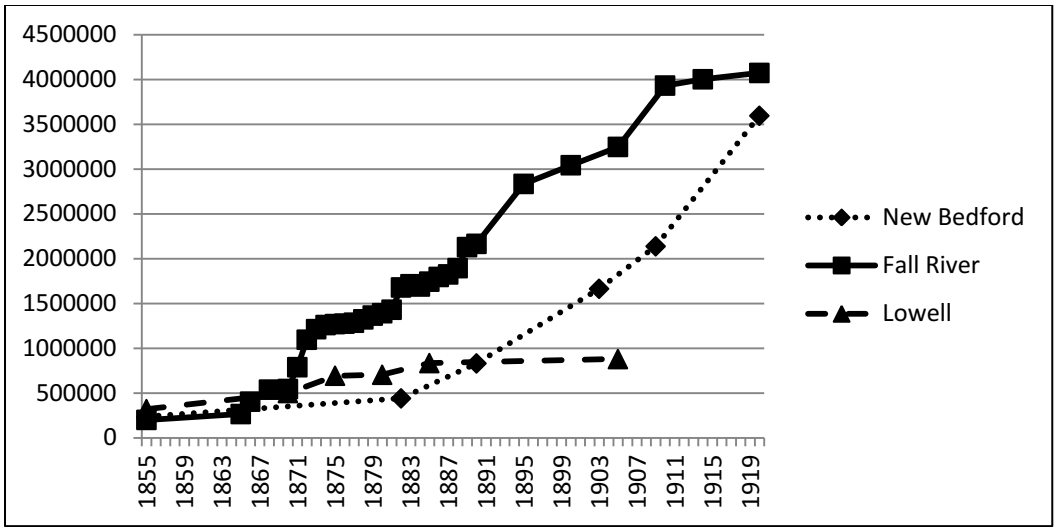

Figure 1.5: Cotton Spindles: Lowell, New Bedford, and Fall River, 1855-1920
While Lowell stagnated, the Massachusetts textile industry positively boomed in late-nineteenth-century Southeastern Massachusetts.[135]

To understand why South Coast manufacturers were so flush with capital and labor—the very things Lowell mills so desperately lacked—it is necessary to understand the collapse of its own particular industry: namely, deep-sea whaling. Indeed, while Lowell textile production, even at its peak, represented only a fraction of what came out of British or Chinese looms; in whaling, America found the first industry in which it unquestionably dominated the world. Its downfall would help catapult these cities and the nation to a domineering position within the global textile market.

[135] Henry H. Crapo, "The Story of Cotton and Its Manufacture into Cloth in New Bedford," *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketches*, no. 67 (November 1937); John Michael Cudd, *The Chicopee Manufacturing Company, 1823-1915* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1974), 107; McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change," 21; "A Prosperous City," *The Evening Standard* (New Bedford), Dec. 31, 1902; Thomas Russell Smith, *The Cotton Textile Industry of Fall River, Massachusetts: A Study of Industrial Localization* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1944), 12, 40; Philip Thomas Silvia, "The Spindle City: Labor, Politics, and Religion in Fall River, Massachusetts, 1870-1905" (PhD diss., Fordham University, 1973), 577; Henry H. Earl, *Fall River and Its Manufactories, 1803-1890* (Fall River: Goerge E. Bamford, 1890), 8; "Cotton Mills Busy to Full Capacity," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Jan. 21, 1907 in *Victorian Vistas: Fall River, 1901-1911: As Viewed Through Its Newspaper Accounts*, ed. Philip T. Silvia (Fall River: R.E. Smith Printing Co., 1992), 440-446; Patrick M. Malone, *Waterpower in Lowell: Engineering and Industry in Nineteenth-Century America* (JHU Press, 2009), 189; Dublin, *Women at Work*, 133; Lord & Nagle Company, *A Directory of the Textile Establishments in the United States and Canada* (Lord & Nagle Company, 1905), 128–130.

Chapter 2

Economies in Motion: Crisis and Industry in the Whaling City

Whaling-era New Bedford little resembled its future as a mass industrial city. "The town itself is perhaps the dearest place to live in all New England," Herman Melville described the city in *Moby Dick*: "Nowhere in all America will you find more patrician-like houses; parks and gardens more opulent, than in New Bedford."[1] New Bedford was "a city of palaces," in the words of one travel handbook: "lined with stately old residences of the marine aristocracy."[2] The city had "a cosmopolitan air always blowing over its strata," another writer put it: "On the vessels fitting out for their long and adventurous cruise you may hear all the modern languages spoken…you will distinguish Portuguese or French descent in the smart black-haired girl…Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Norwegians, and Scotch have also pitched their tents here."[3] Whaling had not only made New Bedford the richest city in the United States, but an exemplar of American cosmopolitanism and high culture.[4]

But the whaling industry was not long for the world; its collapse over the course of the 1860s would send New Bedford into a spiraling crisis. And as panicked workers, religious leaders, municipal policymakers, and desperate capitalists sought to reconstruct the city's economy, they brought textile industrialization to the Massachusetts South Coast.

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[1] Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (New American Library, 1892), 36.

[2] M. F. Sweetser, *New England: A Handbook for Travellers. A Guide to the Chief Cities and Popular Resorts of New England, and to Its Scenery and Historic Attractions: With the Western and Northern Borders, from New York to Quebec, with Six Maps and Eleven Plans*, 7th ed. (Boston, 1883), 91.

[3] Jan. 27, 1872, *The Boston Journal*, reproduced in Elias Nason, *A Gazetteer of the State of Massachusetts* (Boston: B.B. Russell, 1874), 363.

[4] Frederick Douglass, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (Courier Corporation, 2012), 145; Dorothy Denneen Volo and James M. Volo, *Daily Life in the Age of Sail* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 20–21; Zephaniah W. Pease, *History of New Bedford, Vol.* 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1918), 30.

Industrialization, however, catalyzed immense controversy amongst those who deplored the drudgeries of factory labor, the specter of a massive working-class presence, or who simply saw wage labor as running perpendicular to the ideals of freedom and self-sovereignty to which the American republic was committed. Industry was no natural outcome of economic progress. It was a hard-fought political project that initially generated nothing but consternation in the whaling city. Economic crisis, however, quickly eroded such public opposition. Indeed, as crisis threw whaling workers onto the streets of New Bedford, it helped inaugurate a completely new economic regime.

Making Whaling Hegemony

Like its rise to textile manufacturing prominence some fifty years later, New Bedford's ascent to whaling hegemony was similarly founded on the misfortune of others: in this case, the island of Nantucket. As early as the mid-seventeenth century, American colonists had begun shoreline whaling along Long Island and Buzzards Bay, using small, six-men crews to harpoon and drag whales back to shore, boiling down the blubber harvested from their catch to produce oil for candles and lubrication.[5] Nantucket was particularly well situated for coastwise whaling enterprise, though, like early Lowell, securing labor remained a vexing issue.[6] Early whalers, finding it difficult to lure English colonists off their landed independence, instead depended on local Wampanoag Indians, who whaling merchants quickly sought to chain in place through coercive labor contracts underpinned by cycles of indebtedness.[7] As eighteenth-century

[5] Margaret S. Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 16.

[6] Daniel Vickers, "Nantucket Whalemen in the Deep-Sea Fishery: The Changing Anatomy of an Early American Labor Force," *Journal of American History* 72, no. 2 (September 1985): 277–96.

[7] Ibid., 286–287.

London—the oft-described "best-lit city in the world"—developed a nearly insatiable appetite for whale-derived illuminants, Nantucket emerged as the center of the American whaling industry.[8] By the late-eighteenth century, Nantucket whale oil brought in half of all sterling earned in New England through its exports to Great Britain.[9]

Figure 2.1: John Knight, "Buzzards Bay and Shoals of Nantucket," Map, 1778
The map indicates the location of Buzzards Bay (left), Martha's Vineyard (bottom center) and Nantucket (bottom right). The City of New Bedford would eventually be incorporated on the left flank of Buzzards Bay.[10]

But as voyages increasingly left the Massachusetts coast for destinations throughout the Atlantic, Pacific, and, by the 1820s, Indian Oceans, Nantucket's location became more hindrance

[8] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 19. This description of London also appears in Tim Hitchcock, *Down and Out in Eighteenth-Century London* (Hambledon and London, 2004), 25, 59; P. D. Smith, *City: A Guidebook for the Urban Age* (Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2012).

[9] Edward Byers, *The Nation of Nantucket: Society and Politics in an Early American Commercial Center, 1660-1820* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987), 144.

[10] John Knight, "Buzzards Bay and the Shoals of Nantucket," Map, 1778, G3762.B8 1778 .K6, Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, Washington, DC, http://lccn.loc.gov/gm72003569.

than convenience. As early as the 1760s, Nantucket's shallow harbor and low labor supply began to push whalers back onshore.[11] Joseph Rotch, a prominent Nantucket merchant, was first to make the move. In 1764 he purchased a ten-acre parcel of land outside of Dartmouth on Buzzards Bay at the foot of a large farm owned by Joseph Russell. Rotch later suggested the name "Bedford" for the new community—an allusion to the Duke of Bedford, who shared Russell's surname.[12] Upon discovering another "Bedford" village northwest of Boston, "New" was added to the name and "New Bedford" was formally incorporated in 1787.[13]

Although members of the Russell family were already engaged in whaling, Rotch brought business acumen and, more importantly, capital to the fledgling town, establishing New Bedford's first formal whaling firm.[14] The area grew rapidly thereafter. By 1771 New Bedford had 321 homes, 123 barns, and 30,684 feet of wharfage for 71 shipowners.[15] By 1807, some 90 to 100 ships called Buzzards Bay home.[16]

In contrast, Nantucket whaling steadily declined in the early-nineteenth century, a process only exacerbated by the depredations of the War of 1812. As an 1813 petition for relief to the federal congress by the "Town and County of Nantucket" lamented, the island had

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[11] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 23; Christine A. Arato and Patrick L. Eleey, *Safely Moored at Last: Cultural Landscape Report for New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park*, Vol. 1, Cultural Landscape Publication 16 (National Park Service, 1998), 7.

[12] Ibid.; John M. Bullard, *The Rotches* (New Bedford: 1947), 12-13.

[13] Daniel Ricketson, *The History of New Bedford, Bristol County, Massachusetts: Including a History of the Old Township of Dartmouth and the Present Townships of Westport, Dartmouth, and Fairhaven, from Their Settlement to the Present Time* (New Bedford: Published by the Author, 1858), 23–24.

[14] Zephaniah W. Pease, *History of New Bedford,* Vol. 1 (New York: The Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1918), 14, 58.

[15] Bullard, *The Rotches,* 15.

[16] "Notes on New Bedford [Note Added July 24th, 1807]," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* Vol. 2 (Boston: 1815), 19.

"realized losses by war in a very extensive degree; a number of valuable ships with full cargoes of oil have been captured and totally lost…several of the owners, that were heretofore in opulent circumstances, are now reduced to indigence."[17] "The whale fishery, which has constantly been considered the staple of Nantucket," the missive added, "must inevitably decline…[compelling] hundreds of people to remove to the continent."[18] But Nantucket's collapse was New Bedford's good fortune. By 1823, New Bedford dominated the American whaling industry, and America dominated the world in whaling.[19] By its peak, just before the Civil War, New Bedford had amassed 320 ships, generating 4.8 million dollars in earnings and nearly 200,000 barrels of whale and sperm oil each year.[20]

Manning these voyages was not necessarily any easier than staffing the mills of Lowell, but New Bedford whalers had a number of crucial advantages over their labor-market competitors. Foremost, they used coercive labor contracts to bind workers to particular voyages. Through a system known as the "lay," prospective mariners were not paid in wages, but instead promised a share of the voyage's net return, generally ranging from 1/15 for the captain to 1/90 for midshipman (harpooners, boatsteerers, and watchmen) to 1/189 for unskilled "foremast hands," the last of which did everything from greasing masts to cleaning.[21] Not only did the "lay" keep workers committed to the city's increasingly lengthy whale hunts (average voyage

[17] Petition, "To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, the Petition of the Town And County of Nantucket," Nov. 26, 1813, reproduced in Obed Macy, *The History of Nantucket* (Boston: Hilliard, Ray, and Co., 1835), 176-177.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Lance Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan: Technology, Institutions, Productivity, and Profits in American Whaling, 1816-1906* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 19.

[20] Ibid., 6–7, 379.

[21] Ibid., 14; Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 28–30.

duration increased from 2.6 years to 3.6 years in the twenty years after 1840), it also used the voyage's potential payout to discourage idleness.[22] After all, the traditional coercive mechanism of wage labor (namely, employment termination) was of little use in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Instead, under the lay, potential windfall earnings at the end of the journey along with a system of harsh shipboard discipline, fines, and state-backed jail-time for desertion were designed to insure a captive and diligent workforce.[23]

The "lay" system of labor had other benefits to ship-owners as well: most importantly, it foisted a considerable amount of whaling's risk onto its laborers. Indeed, a failed voyage could bring ruin to seaworkers of all classes. When seaman Richard Boyenton set down his earnings to date in his diary in February of 1834, for instance, he could not help but muster a bit of humor. After months at sea with little to show for his labors, Boyenton's careful accounting recorded only 6 ¼ cents in earnings: "I have not yet concluded," he mused sarcastically, "whether to give this as a donation to the sabath school union [sic] or to the education foreign mission or temperance society."[24] Even higher-ranking workers were not spared. From 1840 to 1858, New Bedford captains yielded an aggregate average monthly income of $98.31 in 1880 dollars. But, in truth, their incomes ranged from a high of 345 dollars to a low of 66 cents for a month's work.[25]

On the flipside, the potential for bonanza payouts was itself an important lure in attracting labor, making whaling work seem less like "wage labor" and more like a potential

[22] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 158, 15.

[23] Ibid., 173, 194; Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 93–95, 144; Donald Warrin, *So Ends This Day: The Portuguese in American Whaling, 1765-1927* (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2010), 131–136.

[24] Diary of Richard Boyenton, *Bengal*, Feb. 28, 1834, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, **[hereafter *PEM*]** quoted in Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 46.

[25] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 15.

stepping stone to bigger and better things. Stories abounded amongst sailors of cash cow voyages, such as the 1853 32-month excursion of the *Montreal*, which netted $136,000.[26] Some indeed got very lucky. Azorean Frank Joseph took in $518.20 for his 1/120 lay on New Bedford's *Golconda* in 1832. Promoted to boatsteerer, his 1/80 lay on his next journey brought him $797.66 after only 11 months of service.[27] It would have taken an average Lowell spinner of the same era over four years to earn that amount, not including the saved room and board costs that came with shipboard labor.[28]

Thus, in a society that still found the prospect of living one's life for wages utterly abominable, a whaling voyage seemed a fair and temporary trade for a future of landed independence. Such dreams loomed large in sailors' fantasies of what their lump-sum earnings might bring.[29] One 1841 sailor was "quite shure that I shall get enuf…to turn my attention to farming [sic]"; another left shore in 1847 with the ambition of "bying A farm [sic]."[30] The men of the 1859 voyage of the *Gratitude,* one sailor recorded, similarly forestalled boredom with tales of what their whaling work might bring them: "All hands…are going to either Turn farmers or Storekeepers the latter seems to be the Favorite if they ever do land in [sweet] Amerika."[31] Finding independence and securing wives often went hand in hand in sailors' minds. "There will

[26] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 47.

[27] Warrin, *So Ends This Day*, 40.

[28] Lawrence Manufacturing Company, Payroll Record, 2-11, Labor and Employment Payrolls Mill No. 1, Vol. GA-1, MSS 442, Lawrence Manufacturing Company Records, 1831-1955, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *LMC-BLHC*]**.

[29] Vickers, "Nantucket Whalemen in the Deep-Sea Fishery," 295.

[30] Jared Gardner to Harriet Gardner, June 1841, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, quoted in Ibid., 48; Diary of Ambrose Waldron, *Bowdick*, June 1, 1847, Nicholson Whaling Collection, Providence Public Library, Providence, Rhode Island, quoted in Ibid.

[31] Diary of Lewis Williams, *Gratitude*, April 8, 1859, *PEM*, quoted in Ibid.

be more marriages take place and more farms bought than was Ever heard of before," one whaleman fantasized, imagining the coming "payday" he and his friends were expecting.[32] While toil behind the loom appeared a surrender to a lifetime of wage labor, whaling seemed, with luck, a truly transitory stage to an independent "competence."

Consequently, one of the crucial legacies of the whaling industry was that it turned the city of New Bedford (and, to a similar extent, Fall River) into a labor sink, bringing in workers from around the country in search of landed independence on the seas. "Shipping Agents" located all over the United States funneled young men into the welcoming arms of local whaling agents.[33] The letters of New Bedford whaling agent Jonathan Bourne Jr. testify to the far-flung nature of his crews: his correspondence is replete with letters from worried parents from all over the country—Virginia, Maryland, New York, and towns throughout New England—inquiring after (or seeking the contractual release of) sons on Bourne's vessels.[34] Although a "few Deaths occur," Bourne reassured one worried father, "[t]hese voyages are as a general thing very healthy"—though he also made sure to mention that if he did succeed in recalling his son back to Richmond, he would perforce "[forfeit] all his interest" in the voyage and be liable for $64.55 to "pay for his outfits."[35]

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[32] Diary of John Joplin, *Ann Parry*, April 25, 1848, *PEM*, quoted in Ibid.

[33] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 43.

[34] Jonathan Bourne Jr. [hereafter JB] to Edw. Fisher, pg. 28-29, Jan. 13, 1852, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, Jonathan Bourne Jr. Business Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *JBBR-NBWMRL*]**; JB to Thomas Beveridge, March 30, 1853, pg. 99, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Gilbert Hathaway, April 14, 1857, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Mary Haskell, June 4, 1855, pg. 344, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Frances Willard, Jan. 18, Oct. 28, 1857, pg. 154, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Abby S. Reed, Apr. 9, 1858, pg. 203, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[35] JB to Edw. Fisher, pg. 28-29, Jan. 13, 1852, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

New Bedford whaling jobs—alongside the racially progressive proclivities of its mainly Quaker proprietors—also made the city into a magnet for runaway slaves.[36] Frederick Douglass, for instance, assured that New Bedford "was a safe place," settled in the Whaling City in 1838 to seek work as a ship caulker—though he was furious to discover his race nonetheless relegated him to common-labor status.[37] Nevertheless, Douglass' decade amongst New Bedford's Quaker radicals gave him his first introduction to anti-slavery ideology.[38] All told, some 3,000 African Americans sailed on New Bedford ships during whaling's heyday.[39] Even the famed sea shanty "Blow Ye Winds, Heigh Ho" testified to the centripetal forces that brought throngs of laborers to New Bedford: "'Tis Advertised in Boston/ New York and Buffalo/ Five Hundred brave Americans/ A whaling for to go…They'll send you to New Bedford town/ That famous whaling port/ And hand you to some land-sharks there/ To board and fit you out."[40] All told, about 41 percent of New Bedford crews (as measured in 1837) came from outside of New England.[41] Whaling's reach—both on land and at sea—was far and wide.

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[36] Kathryn Grover, *The Fugitive's Gibraltar: Escaping Slaves and Abolitionism in New Bedford, Massachusetts* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

[37] Nonetheless, Frederick Douglass called it his "good fortune" to find a place that "pretty near approach[ed] to freedom on the part of the colored people." See Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom ...* (Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1855), 342, 346-347.

[38] William S. McFeely, *Frederick Douglass* (W. W. Norton & Company, 1995), 83–84.

[39] Tom Juravich, William F. Hartford, and James R. Green, *Commonwealth of Toil: Chapters in the History of Massachusetts Workers and Their Unions* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 34–35.

[40] The Almanac Singers, *Deep Sea Chanteys and Whaling Ballads*, with Woody Guthrie, Peter Hawes, Lee Hays, Millard Lampell, and Pete Seeger, Music Recording, General Album G-20, 1941; Ruth A. Barnes, *I Hear America Singing: An Anthology of Folk Poetry* (John C. Winston Company, 1937), 159.

[41] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 217.

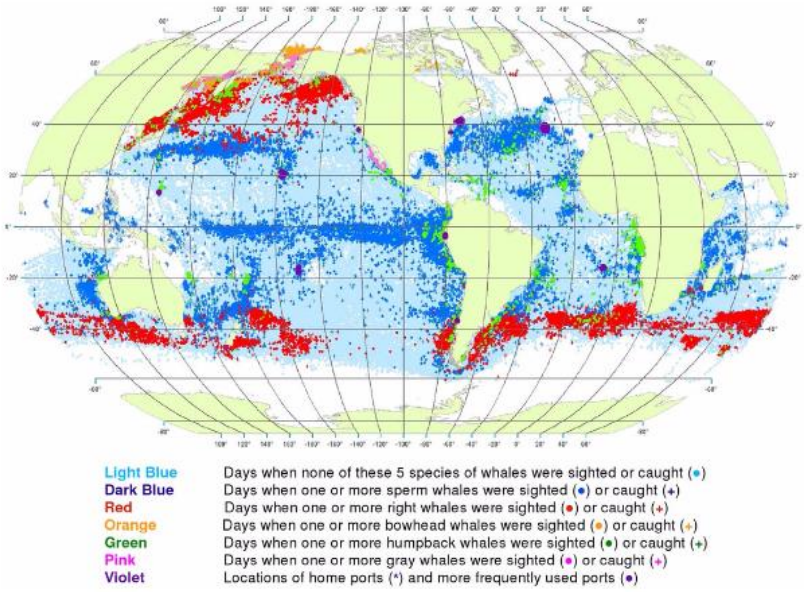

Figure 2.2: Global reach of American Whaling Ships, in aggregate, 1780-1920
American whaling ships traversed almost the entire globe, picking up workers as they traveled. Dots here represent varying observations of five species of whale—sperm, right, bowhead, gray, and humpback—providing a rough visual representation of where nineteenth-century whaling ships hunted. Map and data compiled and rendered by Tim D. Smith, Randall R. Reeves, Elizabeth A. Josephson, and Judith N. Lund.[42]

Moreover, the global reach of whaling ships themselves insured that New Bedford whalers were rarely desperate for workers. In particular, the Azorean and Cape Verde Islands of Portugal emerged as a frequent stop for both supplies and people. An Azorean stopover appeared as a sort of foregone conclusion, for instance, in Elisha Dexter's memoir of his time on the *William and Joseph*: "On the 2nd of September [1840] we ran into Fayal…for the required complement of men, and for the purpose of obtaining the usual supply of vegetables, which are there very cheap."[43] Another sailor on the *George and Mary* noted that an 1852 stop in Cape

[42] Tim D. Smith et al., "Spatial and Seasonal Distribution of American Whaling and Whales in the Age of Sail," *PLoS ONE* 7, no. 4 (April 27, 2012): e34905, http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0034905.

[43] Elisha Dexter, *Narrative of the Loss of the William and Joseph Whaling Brig, of Martha's Vineyard, and the Sufferings of Her Crew for Seven Days on a Raft in the Atlantic Ocean…* (Boston: Printed by Samuel N. Dickenson, 1842), 6, quoted in Warrin, *So Ends This Day*, 57.

Verde yielded them "18 pigs a lot of fouls Pumpkin Bananas and oringes, and 2 Portugues [sic]."[44] Indeed, one sailor made the connection between supplies and men all too cruelly explicit during an 1855 stop at the island of Fogo: "In an hour came off with 10 hogs, 4 goats, a dozen chickens and a bunch of bananas—capt. came back at 10 p.m. bringing three new Portoguese, to be added to the rest of the live stock! [sic.]".[45] By 1838, ships were even leaving New Bedford under Portuguese command, and by the 1860s a thriving Portuguese district existed on New Bedford's waterfront, containing four Portuguese-operated boardinghouses, as well as a variety of Portuguese shops, cigarmakers, and outfitters. [46] By then, thousands of Portuguese sailors made up a little over a quarter of New Bedford's whaling crews.[47]

[44] Joseph Silva, Journal, bark *George and Mary*, Oct. 5, 1852, Log 615, *NBWMRL*, quoted in Ibid., 44.

[45] Bark *Zone*, Fairhaven, Massachusetts, Oct. 17, 1855, Log 278, Kendall Collection, *NBWMRL*, quoted in Ibid., 61.

[46] Warrin, *So Ends This Day*, 115, 173–4.

[47] Ibid., 178.

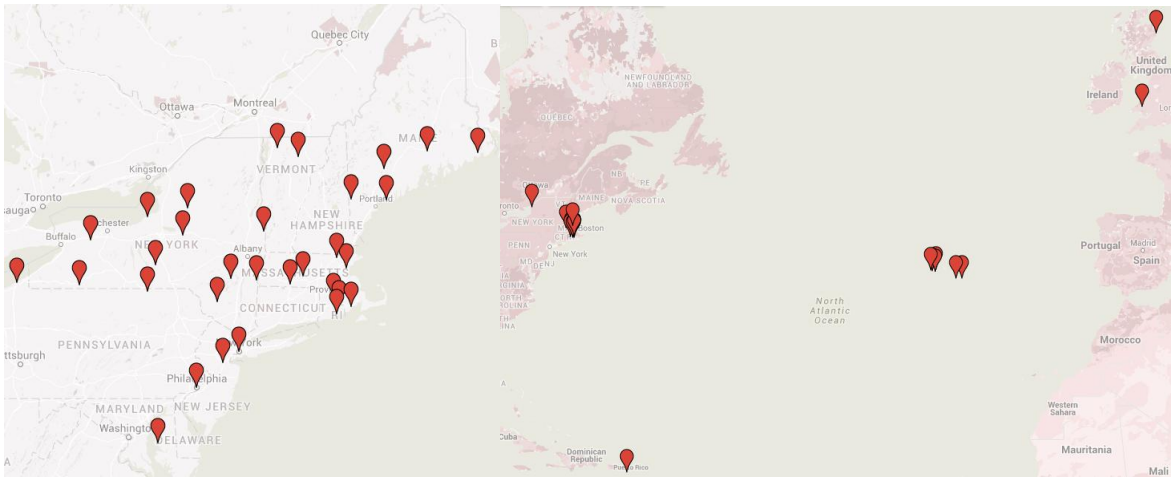

Figure 2.3: Southeastern Massachusetts as a Labor Sink: Crew Birthplaces of Two Fall River Whaling Vessels

On the left is a map of the birthplaces of the Sept. 22, 1852-April 14, 1856 crew of the Fall River ship *Caravan*, which did not pick up sailors while abroad, but did have sailors from all over the eastern seaboard. (One sailor, whose birthplace was listed simply as "Germany," is not included here) On the right are the birthplaces of the crew of the *Aerial* (May 12, 1851-June 1, 1852), which signed on workers throughout its voyage. Importantly, many of these sailors likely permanently settled in Fall River or New Bedford either before or after their voyage.[48]

Whaling ships from Fall River similarly helped turn southeastern Massachusetts into something of a labor magnet. Almost half of all Fall River whaling voyages after 1840 picked up sailors from foreign ports while at sea (generally the Azores, Cape Verde, or Hawaii), and about two-thirds sailed with recognizably Portuguese sailors on their crew lists.[49] Even journeys, like the 1852-1856 voyage of the Fall River ship *Caravan*, which included no foreign pickups whatsoever, had crewmembers from all over the nation (and even globe)—further evidence of whaling's power to draw workers into Southeastern Massachusetts (see Figure 2.3).[50]

[48] Maps produced by author with Google Maps. See Ibid.; National Maritime Digital Library, "Crew List for the Aerial, bark of Fall River. Voyage (1851 May 12-1852 June 1) to Atlantic, Indian," http://www.nmdl.org/frc/frcrew.cfm?voyage=309.

[49] Percentages based on Fall River crew lists of reasonable completeness as found in National Maritime Digital Library, "Fall River Crew List," http://www.nmdl.org/frc/frcindex.cfm

[50] National Maritime Digital Library, "Crew List for the Caravan, ship of Fall River. Voyage (1852 September 22-1856 April 14) to North Pacific," http://www.nmdl.org/frc/frcrew.cfm?voyage=2360.

Admittedly, not every one of these recruits necessarily settled in Fall River or New Bedford on a permanent basis, but many did. For instance, about one quarter of the sailors on the *Caravan* who were born outside of the area had officially relocated to Southeastern Massachusetts by the time the ship set off, and it is not improbable that many others re-located after the voyage.[51]

Whalers did not have to look far for a captive workforce. Their ability to trawl the continents for workers, lure them with promises of a lucrative path to landed independence, and lock them into coercive labor contracts insured they would not struggle like their labor- and capital-starved Boston peers. Moreover, the ability for whaling to bring throngs of laborers to the Massachusetts South Coast insured that whaling's decline would eventually help New Bedford capitalists do what the Boston Associates could not: assemble a mass industrial labor force.

Fortune, Risk, Collapse

With a secure labor force and a near hegemony on the seas, South Coast whaling was a tremendously profitable affair. But, like the Boston sea trade, it was also a largely feast-or-famine enterprise. The life, career, and correspondence of famed New Bedford whaling agent Jonathan Bourne Jr. make all too clear the factors that made whaling such an attractive outlet for capital in the nineteenth century, as well as the many frustrations and forces that pushed whaling owners, quite suddenly, out of the sector altogether.

[51] Ibid.

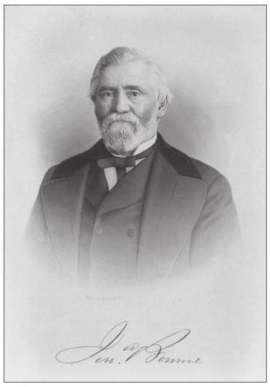

Figure 2.4: Jonathan Bourne Jr., 1811-1889[52]

Born tenth of eleven children in 1811 on a farm of about twenty-three acres of arable land in the Monument section of Sandwich (present-day Bourne, Massachusetts), there was likely little expectation that the younger Jonathan Bourne would follow in his father's yeoman footsteps.[53] Instead, Bourne left home at 17 to move to New Bedford and work in a grocery store, where he made a very wise marriage in 1834 to Emily Summers Howland, and, symbolically, the local maritime industry.[54] The next year, he had invested $750 to claim a 1/16 stake in the whaler *General Pike*.[55] The year after that, he had acquired a 4/16 stake in the 235-

[52] Gioia Dimock, *Bourne* (Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 12.

[53] Upon the death of Bourne's father, the younger Bourne described the estate as "about Twenty three acres of cleared land including two orchards and several loads of fresh meadow also one wood lot of about fourteen acres also one undevided half of a tract of wood land containing two hundred acres. [sic]" See JB to C.B.H. Fessenden, May 26, 1852, pg. 46, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; Thomas William Herringshaw, *Herringshaw's Encyclopedia of American Biography of the Nineteenth Century: Accurate and Succinct Biographies of Famous Men and Women in All Walks of Life Who Are Or Have Been the Acknowledged Leaders of Life and Thought of the United States Since Its Formation...*(American Publishers' Association, 1904), 132; Duane Hamilton Hurd, *History of Bristol County, Massachusetts: With Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (J. W. Lewis & Company, 1883), 144.

[54] The Howlands were one of the most prominent whaling families in the area. Emily's father was a "mariner and ship-master" who retired in 1816. See *Collections of the Old Colony Historical Society* no. 7 (Taunton, Massachusetts: The Old Colony Historical Society, 1909), 189; Z.W. Pease, "The Story of the Building of the Bourne Whaling Museum with Reminiscences of Old Counting Rooms," *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketch*, no. 44 (April, 1916).

[55] Hugh R. Noel, "Jonathan Bourne: Whaling Merchant/Tycoon," 3, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

ton *Roscoe*.[56] Within a decade, he had acquired interests in (or outright ownership of) ten local vessels, fast becoming the richest of New Bedford's whaling agents.[57] Bourne also became something of a fixture of the city's business class: he was elected director of the New Bedford Merchants Bank in 1853 before becoming president in 1876. He was a five-time delegate to the Republican National Convention (the first of the Massachusetts delegation to throw his support behind Abraham Lincoln at the 1860 convention), and in 1855 purchased an entire city block upon which he erected a stately mansion at the cost of 38,000 dollars.[58] From his first investments in 1836 to his 1889 death, he netted an average annual salary of $41,518. By the time of his passing, his estate was appraised at a whopping 2.5 million dollars (a princely 65 billion dollars or so in today's dollars).[59]

Bourne became a decidedly wealthy man, but he was no less immune to the ups and downs of one of the most chaotic of extractive industries. 1837, 1851, 1857, 1858, the entire Civil War era, 1869-1871, and 1876 were, for all intents and purposes, terrible whaling seasons across the board.[60] "Since writing the above a considerable news has come from the Arctic Fleet which is *bad! bad!*...Many of the first class ships have taken nothing the whole season," Bourne fretted in 1851.[61] Unfortunately for men like Bourne, whaling's spastic nature came from both "natural" and "economic" causes. Incidents such as the sudden whale scarcity Bourne faced in

[56] Ibid.; Pease, "The Building of the Bourne Whaling Museum."

[57] Noel, "Bourne," 4-5, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[58] Ibid., 5-6;

[59] Ibid., 15; Earl F. Mulderink, *New Bedford's Civil War* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 149.

[60] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 427–428; Mulderink, *New Bedford's Civil War*, 138–163, 187.

[61] JB to Elbridge G. Peirce, Dec. 4, 1851, pgs. 19-20, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL.*

1851, or the two Arctic ice disasters of 1871 and 1876 (the first of which left 1,200 men stranded on 34 iced-in ships and the second of which destroyed 20 ships and took the lives of some fifty men) exposed the ways in which whalers were at the mercy of nature for their riches.[62] Yet whalers were also subject to all the same economic swings that plagued any merchant or manufacturer. In 1858, for instance, the falling price of oil and bone left Bourne scrambling: "Not one ship in ten that is to arrive this year can make a dollar to their owners," he wrote the wife of one of his captains, adding, ominously, "many I fear…will be left nearly destitute."[63] Bourne was not far off. Of the 68 ships that returned to New Bedford that year, 44 arrived in the red, with losses estimated at about one-million dollars.[64]

And, like many other whaling shipowners, Bourne was no stranger to total loss. His ship, the *Kingfisher*, bought in 1853 sailed only once before getting run into by another ship and sinking near St. Helena with 1,700 barrels of oil onboard.[65] A new *Kingfisher* was built in 1856, but its second journey saw the captain cut down by a "foul line" and killed—it returned only 225 barrels of oil.[66] Bourne gave up and sold it off in 1861. Similarly, his 381-ton *Alex Coffin* was completely lost on only its third journey in the Okhotsk Sea off the coast of Russia in 1856.[67] Safe returns (in both senses of the word) could be hard to come by for New Bedford whalers.

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[62] Mulderink, *New Bedford's Civil War*, 187.

[63] JB to Mrs. John D. Willard, March 6, 1858, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[64] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 427–428.

[65] Joseph Dias, "New Bedford Whaling Ships, 1783-1906," 114, Series II, MSS 252, Account Books and Other Material Relating to the Whaling Industry Chiefly From New Bedford and Nantucket, Mass., 1774-1922, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ABNB-BLHC*]**.

[66] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 427–428.

[67] Joseph Dias, "New Bedford Whaling Ships, 1783-1906," 6, *ABNB-BLHC*.

Indeed, shipowners staked their capital and sailors staked their lives on an industry in which freak accidents could wipe away profits and people with the thrash of a fifty-ton whale or the slow and steady decay of a ship's life at sea. In fact, of the 763 traceable whaling vessels that called New Bedford home during the industry's heyday, 297 were forever lost to the sea, while an additional 70 were condemned at foreign ports—adding up to a nearly 50-percent loss rate.[68] Even on a per-journey basis, the average loss rates for New Bedford whaling ships hovered somewhere around 7.4 percent, with slightly better odds for smaller barks.[69] Such losses came in a swirling variety of forms. The 81-ton *Agate* vanished in a storm off Cape Verde in December 1844 on its sixth voyage; the 421-ton *Alexander* sunk on a reef near Sydney in 1858 with 1,300 barrels of sperm oil on board; the *Kathleen* and the *Ann Alexander* were both stove by whales.[70] The 166-ton *Marcella* was condemned at St. Helena in 1879 after departing New Bedford in 1876 on its fifteenth voyage.[71] Perhaps to help ward off questions from an angry ship owner, the U.S. consulate officer in St. Helena gave the captain an affidavit swearing his logbook "a true and faithful log" of the journey to take back with him to New Bedford.[72]

The *Marcella's* consular affidavit evokes another frustration and source of risk for whaling owners: the lack of information or control they had over their ships. Shipowners had to put a remarkable amount of trust in their captains, and, if Bourne is any guide, they were frequently left disappointed. Bourne was horrified, for instance, by the news that one of his

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[68] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 239.

[69] Ibid., 240.

[70] Ibid., 239; Joseph Dias, "New Bedford Whaling Ships, 1783-1906," *ABNB-BLHC*

[71] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 152.

[72] Affidavit, "Consulate of the United States of America at Saint Helena, Oct. 18, 1879," Logbook, *Marcella*, F 6870.53, Daniel B. Fearing Logbook Collection, 1816-1882, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts **[hereafter *DFLC-HLHU*]**.

captains had arrived in the Azores in 1860 "so much intoxicated as to be for some time wholly unfit for the duties of master of [the] ship."[73] "Fearing my property (haveing [sic] a large interest in the ship)…was to be sacrificed through misplaced confidence," he covertly conscripted the ship's second mate to act as a sort of proverbial "man on the inside," commanding him not to "for one moment entertain thought of leaving my ship" and ordering that "if Capt Weld takes rum at sea…remonstrate with him strongly and [if] he still continues, throw it overbord in my name. [sic]"[74] Although Bourne's drunken captain was perhaps an extreme case of misconduct, the more quotidian aggravations of dealing with a global industry in a world before telecommunication nevertheless frustrated him incessantly. Rumors of loss could send prices skyrocketing or investors panicking, much to his chagrin.[75] Bourne frequently reminded captains to "Write every opportunity" and was quick to admonish them if they did not.[76] It is no exaggeration to say that a good deal of Bourne's early correspondence is him simply haranguing his ship captains for actions that did not meet his high standards.[77] Indeed, in 1850, the ever-

[73] JB to Capt. F. A. Weld, Aug. 6, 1860, pg 375, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL.*

[74] Ibid., JB to Mr. Elridge, Aug. 6, 1860, p 381, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL.*

[75] See, for instance JB to Weston A. Briggs, April 10, 1849, 21, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Unknown, Oct. 21, 1851, 10-11, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to George Simmons, Oct. 22, 1851, 11, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[76] See JB to Capt. Z.A. Devoll, Aug 2, 1852, 398, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. John Willard, Jan. 19, 1857, 52, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[77] See JB to Capt. Augustus Hale, March 11, 1850, 61, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Augustus Hale, April 10, 1850, 66-67, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Augustus Hale, July 12, 1850, 80, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Martin Palmer, July 26, 1853, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. B.B. Lamphier, July 18, 1855, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Z.A. Devoll, Aug 2, 1852, 398, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. F.A. Weld, Aug. 6, 1860, 375, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

feisty Bourne wrote a long, defensive letter to one captain who complained his "feelings was hurt" by Bourne's salty demeanor.[78]

Moreover, striking a matter close to Bourne's heart, whaling also required an immense amount of financial trust in captains. No issue was more irksome to Bourne than that of taking "drafts" while at sea to pay for supplies—in essence, captains acquiring supplies using a sort of third-party check (issued by Bourne) to be sent back to him in New Bedford for payment. Bourne frequently upbraided profligate captains he found too spendthrift with his money.[79] In one particularly flagrant incident, he became convinced in 1849 that one of his captains was simply gallivanting around the Pacific on his dime. Captain Finch, he complained, left with a ship fit for 40 months at sea "but before she was 15 [months] out the Captain commenced drawing [taking drafts] & has continued at every Port I believe since where a draft could be negociated.[sic]"[80] "With great mortification," Bourne refused to honor payment for the third and fourth drafts, forcing him into a somewhat awkward standoff with a Hawaiian merchant.[81] He ended up firing the captain after he racked up some 10,000 dollars in foreign drafts.[82] "As soon as the ships arrive into the Sandwich Islands, the *Devil* is to pay with the crew and officers,"

[78] JB to Capt. Augustus Hale, July 12, 1850, 80, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[79] JB to Capt. Augustus Hale, March 11, 1850, 61, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to William & Barnes, Dec. 18, 1851, 21, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. John Holt, Jan. 6, 1852, 26-27, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. B.B. Lamphier, July 18, 1855, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[80] JB to James Hunewell, May 23, 1849, 31-32, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*

[81] Ibid.

[82] JB to R.L. Finch, Sept. 13, 1850, 87, Vol. 1, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

Bourne later complained, "consequently upon that follows Drafts the worst of all evils in this business."[83]

Of course, it did not take much to receive Bourne's wrath, a fact visible in a long stream of angry letters complaining of captains who too frequently docked at ports for breaks from sea, spent too much on supplies, shipped oil without his explicit permission, or paid off workers who needed to leave during the voyage. All the while, Bourne constantly implored captains to stay out at sea as long as possible ("now is the time to make a voyage and a year lost in comeing home is lost forever [sic]," he often reminded them).[84] Simply put, while whaling may have generated great wealth, it was also an industry awash with risk, loss, and lack of control, much to the frustration of New Bedford capitalists like Bourne.

Captains, for their part, did not ignore the pleas of their agents out of indolence or impudence. Their unfaithfulness often instead stemmed from the pressures they received from their crews and their attempts to balance the stipulations of owners with the demands of those they had to work with every day. After all, angry seaworkers had all sorts of ways to make life miserable for captains. They could slow down or stop work (sometimes by literally slowing the tempos of the shanties they sang while at labor).[85] All-out mutiny or desertion were other possibilities. Additionally, sailors could appeal to their wives or mothers back home to petition

[83] JB to Capt. John Holt, Jan. 6, 1852, 26-27, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*

[84] See JB to Capt. Martin Palmer, July 18, 1855, 355, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Richard Holley, Aug. 3, 1855, 376, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Martin Palmer, Aug. 4, 1857, 134, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. John Willard, Aug. 4, 1857, 135 Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. John Willard, Jan. 18, 1858, 176-178, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[85] Diary of William A. Abbe, *Atkins Adams*, Sept. 26, 1859, Jan. 14, 1859, Log 485, *NBWMRL*, quoted in Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 131.

captains' wives to urge their husbands to treat crews better.[86] Captain Cromwell of the *Reindeer*, for instance, found his wife Susan constantly imploring him to treat his sailors better due to complaints she was receiving from the local wives of his men.[87] And although physical punishment was one recourse captains had to maintain control, even this power diminished over the course of the nineteenth century. Pressured by both workers and reform societies, state and federal legislatures expanded protections for workers against physical discipline.[88] Even a few of Bourne's captains eventually found themselves hauled into court and successfully sued by workers for various violations of their labor contracts.[89]

And, not surprisingly—considering the nature of so much of Bourne's correspondence—one frequent demand workers made upon their captains was for more frequent port stops and better supplies. In fact, one captain complained that his organized crew had nearly complete control of his ship *Reaper.* They forced him to stop at port in the Indian Ocean for rest and even had him sleep onshore so they could bring women on to the ship: "I have tried to reason the case with them," the captain lamented, "but it is no use they have combined togeather [sic]."[90] In

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[86] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 98.

[87] Captains also had to worry about their own reputations on shore. One captain, for instance, refused to punish his inept second mate (who apparently frequently napped while on watch and even bragged about spying on the captain's wife in her changing quarters) because, as one boatsteerer hypothesized, he was "afraid" the second mate's "ma would feel bad or that some of the old grannies, and young misses in pantalets" back home "would say that Capt J was too strict and too severe and did not treat him well." See Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 98-99; Diary of Orson F. Shattuck (under pseudonym of Charles Perkins), *Eliza* Mason, Dec. 20, 1854, Dec. 18, 1855, Log 995, *NBWMRL* quoted in Ibid., 100.

[88] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 95.

[89] JB to Capt. Geo. M. Kimball, May 17, 1854, 237, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL* JB to Capt. Geo. M. Kimball, June 20, 1854, 248, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Rich Holley, June 5, 1857, 100, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Rich Holley, June 5, 1857, 101, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Willard, July 7, 1860, 356, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[90] Diary of Benjamin Neal, *Reaper,* March 11, 1839, *PEM*, quoted in Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 98, 133.

other words, working-class resistance was itself a crucial source of risk and potential loss to whaling capitalists.

Whaling indeed made men like Bourne fantastically rich, but it was a fraught enterprise. Bad seasons, freak accidents, or unresponsive captains (itself partly a product of the collective will of organized sailors) could lose them thousands of dollars. Although every owner wanted their captain to be like Samuel Winegar of the *Julian*, who justified nearly wrecking his ship and losing his crew in the Arctic to save a freshly caught whale by claiming that he would rather "go to the Devil with a whale…than go to New Bedford without one," whaling captains generally little resembled their Ahab caricatures.[91] Other forces beyond the prospect of returning to an angry agent back in New Bedford guided their decision-making, much to the frustration of whaling capitalists. Risk permeated the New Bedford whaling industry.

Ironically, then, just as Boston capitalists were fleeing the relative stability of local manufacturing to enter the risky (and potentially very lucrative) world of westward expansion, New Bedford capitalists were doing the exact opposite: beginning to anchor their chaotic and risk-prone whaling investments in textile manufacturing. As early as the 1820s, whaling capitalists began investing in water-powered mills in neighboring Fall River as a way to diversify their holdings with safer returns.[92] Indeed, one of Fall River's first mills—the Pocasset—was built in 1821 by New Bedford whaler Samuel Rodman.[93] Such early investments set a key

[91] Diary of Samuel Winegar, *Julian*, Sept. 9, 1859, David Wagstall Collection, Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut, quoted in Ibid., 85.

[92] Mary H. Blewett, *Constant Turmoil: The Politics of Industrial Life in Nineteenth-Century New England* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 24.

[93] Ibid.

precedent for how whalers responded to the increasing riskiness of whaling over the course of the nineteenth century.

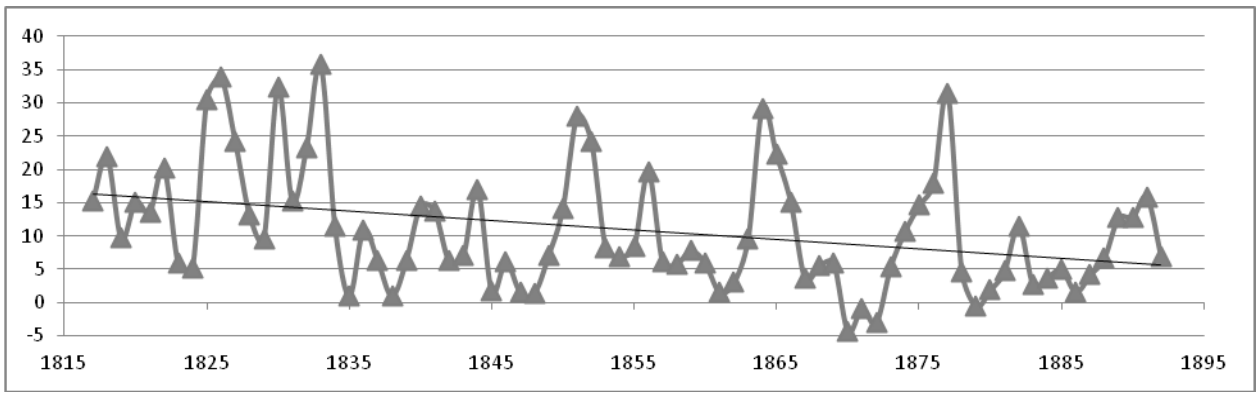

Figure 2.5: Mean Profit Rates of New Bedford Whaling Voyages, as measured in Annual Percentage Returns, 1817-1892, with linear trend line
Whaling profitability was both incredibly erratic (profitability peaked at a high of over 35 percent in 1833 before tanking to less than one percent in the space of two years) and displayed a marked downward trend over the course of the nineteenth century. Data here were compiled by Lance Davis, Robert Gallman, and Karin Gleiter.[94]

Indeed, as seasons got worse, and returns increasingly perilous, whaling agents slowly withdrew from the business altogether. "The present prospect of the whaling business together with the general prostration of all kinds of trade in the Country cast a gloom over the minds of those engaged in so precarious an enterprise as the whaling business," Bourne wrote one of his captains as early as 1858.[95] By the 1870s, even New Bedford's *Whalemen's Shipping List* had concluded that "the continued purpose to sell whalers…shows the judgement of those who have long and successfully been engaged in the business, viz: that it has become too hazardous, and its

[94] Note that the above graph represents the mean of two methods of computing vessel depreciation as a factor of profit returns in whaling: one in which ships are valued as if new, a second in which some attempt was made to factor depreciation into profit calculations. For clarity's sake—and because one method tends to overstate costs as much as the other tends to understate them—I have averaged the two profit returns here. See Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 436–440.

[95] JB to Capt. John Willard, Jan. 18, 1858, 176-8, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

results too uncertain to continue it, when capital is promised a safer employment, and surer rewards in enterprises on the land."[96]

Trouble in the whaling industry came from multiple directions. Firstly, an increasing scarcity of whales forced ship-owners to pursue longer journeys, increasing both the costs and risks of whaling, only exacerbating the control and information problems that so frustrated them.[97] Second, the Civil War (the "great Commotion at the south" which Bourne unconcernedly predicted would fizzle out and "end up in smoke") and the destruction it laid upon New Bedford ships brought tremendous losses to the industry—a chain of events eerily similar to the fate of the Nantucket whaling industry amidst the War of 1812 some fifty years earlier.[98] Indeed, half of all whaling ships were withdrawn from service during the duration of the war. Additionally, the federal government took some 40 New Bedford ships and simply loaded them with stones in order to sink them outside of Charleston harbor in a largely unsuccessful attempt to block Confederate trade. [99] Those whalers that did brave the seas faced ceaseless danger. Confederate raiders intentionally sought out Northern whaling vessels, and destroyed some 25 New Bedford ships over the course of the war, inflicting some two million dollars in economic damage.[100] "For

[96] "Review of the Whale Fishery for 1872," *Whalemen's Shipping Log and Merchants' Transcript* (New Bedford), Feb. 4, 1873.

[97] JB to Capt. Martin Palmer, July 18, 1855, 355, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Richard Holley, Aug. 3, 1855, pg 376, Vol. 2, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. Martin Palmer, Aug. 4, 1857, 133-134, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Capt. John Willard, Jan. 18, 1858, 176-178, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[98] JB to Capt. Alden Besse, Nov. 20, 1860, 407, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[99] Mulderink, *New Bedford's Civil War*, 139–141, 147; McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change," 12.

[100] Ibid., 146.

a time," local historian Leonard Ellis wrote in 1892, "it seemed as if the city was to experience the fate of Nantucket," and be left an "abandoned seaport."[101]

Moreover, the advent of modern petroleum drilling and refining, beginning with Edwin Drake's 1859 Pennsylvania well, sent prices and demand for whaling lubricants and illuminants spiraling. An ideal whaling voyage of three to four years might have yielded around four thousand barrels of oil—but that much oil could be pumped from a single Pennsylvania well in just over a day.[102] All told, by 1861, Bourne could not help but "confess" a "gloomy" view of the future of whaling in New Bedford.[103] "All those that have not tried the Kerosine [sic] or petroleum must do so," he advised a friend, adding, "and of course that very much prevents the consumption of whale, which is poor stuff at best as you know."[104] Some simply embraced the competition. In a brazen act of economic betrayal, Weston Howland—a member of one of the city's oldest and most prominent whaling families—built a refinery for Pennsylvania petroleum off the coast of New Bedford in 1860.[105]

Seeing the writing on the wall, New Bedford capitalists rapidly abandoned the whaling industry. From its peak in the late 1850s, with over 300 ships, the New Bedford fleet declined continuously thereafter. From 1855 to 1906, New Bedford shed some four percent of its ships each and every year, leaving only 23 still operating by the turn of the century.[106] The value of the

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[101] Leonard Bolles Ellis, *History of New Bedford and Its Vicinity, 1602-1892* (Mason, 1892), 374.

[102] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 363.

[103] JB to David G. Floyd, Feb. 4, 1861, 427, Vol. 3, Box 16, Sub-series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Earl Francis Mulderink, "'We Want a Country': African American and Irish American Community Life in New Bedford, Massachusetts, during the Civil War Era" (PhD diss., The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1995), 160.

[106] Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 36.

city's whaling catch was nearly halved in the decade after 1855, and by 1885 it was worth about a quarter of its 1865 valuation.[107] While Bourne's favorite ship, the *Lagoda*, had netted him massive returns before 1873 (at one point bringing him a 363 percent profit on a single voyage) it too became an increasing disappointment.[108] After 1873, it reaped a whopping 18,300 dollar *loss* over its next three voyages.[109] It was finally sold in 1886, and ultimately ended its days hauling coal in Japan.[110]

Reconstructing the South Coast

Whaling decline quickly metastasized into full-fledged economic crisis on the Massachusetts South Coast. As one local historian summed up the state of postwar New Bedford, "Our idle wharves were fringed with dismantled ships. Cargoes of oil covered with seaweed were stowed in the sheds…waiting for a satisfactory market that never came. Every returning whaler increased the depression. Voyages that in former times would have netted handsome returns…resulted only in loss."[111] The number of New Bedford residents on outdoor poor relief increased by nearly 80 percent from 1861 to 1870.[112] From 1865 to 1880, the city was consistently first or second amongst Massachusetts cities in relief expenditures.[113] One frantic 1861 city report bemoaned the fact that, in the wake of whaling's crisis, "[m]any houses are

[107] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change," 13.

[108] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 426–427.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid., 427; New Bedford Whaling Museum, "'Lagoda'—The Largest Ship Model in Existence," accessed Jan. 16, 2015, http://www.whalingmuseum.org/explore/exhibitions/current/lagoda,.

[111] Ellis, *History of New Bedford and Its Vicinity, 1602-1892*, 374.

[112] Mulderink, "We Want a Country," 121.

[113] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 70.

vacant, and shops and stores in great number are standing empty, and our mechanics and citizens are seeking employment elsewhere."[114] As Mayor Isaac Taber put it bluntly in 1862, whaling was "no longer profitable," demanding new measures to counteract the city's surging unemployment and relief costs.[115] Taber's successor, George Howland Jr. (the son of one of the city's wealthiest whalers), similarly could not help but grieve the "stagnation of the usual business of our city, and the general depression and gloom which overhang our land" as he was forced to slash 21,000 dollars out of the city's ever-tightening budget.[116]

Whaling collapse, however, became potent ammunition in the hands of pro-industrial boosters, as economic crisis swiftly extinguished anti-industrial sentiment in the city of New Bedford. After all, the city's residents were, in a nation already preoccupied with the deleterious effects of industrialization, particularly worried that manufacturing would undo the basis of what had made them so emotionally attached to New Bedford in the first place: namely, the fact that whaling's "underclass" never truly resided in the city. Perpetually at sea in search of flukes and riches, New Bedford's "working-class" only breezed through town between voyages, keeping, in the eyes of many locals, the city's streets free of the slums and urban misery they saw as endemic to "factory towns" like Manchester.[117] The origins of New Bedford's early wealth mark its urban geography to this day. Unlike so many other industrial towns, the mansions of New

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[114] City Document No. 4, "Report of the Joint Special Committee of the City Council of New Bedford on the Introduction of Water," Dec. 21, 1861, 5 in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1861-1862* (New Bedford: Fessenden & Baker, City Printers: 1862).

[115] City Document No. 1, "Address of Isaac C. Taber…January 6th, 1862" in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1861-1862* (New Bedford: Fessenden & Baker, City Printers: 1862).

[116] City Document No. 1, "Address of George Howland, Jr.,… January 5th, 1863," 4 in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1862-1863* (New Bedford: Fessenden & Baker, City Printers: 1863)

[117] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change," 7-8.

Bedford's elite run right through the middle of town center—not some quaint outskirt—because, simply put, the relative lack of any sizable "working-class" district made New Bedford renowned as one of New England's most beautiful cities. With no "unskilled" resident working class, New Bedford citizens saw their city as a uniquely affluent, cultural center unparalleled on the American continent.

Anti-working-class and anti-manufacturing sentiment thus ran strong amongst New Bedford's whaling elite. Indeed, the largest riot in New Bedford's antebellum history was not an uprising of disquieted sailors or workmen, but an "organized mob" of the *wealthy*, who, in 1856, invaded a neighborhood "infested with a dangerous class of citizens"—as one nineteenth-century historian recorded—and torched two houses in New Bedford's small working-class "vice" district along Howland Street. Three-thousand strong, the mob then proceeded to prevent the fire department from extinguishing the flames.[118] Despite the steady decline of whaling, New Bedford's future as a mass industrial city was far from foreordained.

As economic crisis overtook the city, however, public consensus began to tear apart. Policymakers and local elites increasingly fractured into pro-whaling "conservatives" and pro-industry boosters.[119] While the conservative George Howland Jr., for instance, sought to use his mayoral tenure from 1862 to 1865 to fight increasing services that would have expanded local industry, his two successors took a different tack.[120] Andrew G. Pierce, a Wamsutta clerk, taking office in 1868, repeatedly called on the city council to "encourage the investment of capital in

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[118] Ellis, *History of New Bedford and Its Vicinity, 1602-1892*, 307; Mulderink, "We Want a Country," 29–30.

[119] Herbert L. Aldrich, "New Bedford," *The New England Magazine and Bay State Monthly* 1, no. 5 (May, 1886), 441.

[120] R.P. Coggeshall, "The Development of the New Bedford Water Supplies," *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketches,* no. 42 (April 1915), 11; City Document No. 1, "Address of George Howland, Jr.,… January 5th, 1863," in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1862-1863* (New Bedford: Fessenden & Baker, City Printers: 1863).

new enterprises" through tax cuts and pro-business infrastructure projects.[121] George Richmond, Pierce's successor, was even more ardent in his industrial advocacy. "There was a time, fresh in our memories…when all the enterprise and capital of New Bedford was centered in the whaling interest," he lectured the city council in 1870, but, "for reasons beyond our control the fleet has been rapidly dwindling, and the profits of the fishery do not…tempt to new investments."[122] Whaling decline left these councilors with but one choice, Richmond contended: to embrace "the music of the spindle and shuttle, the cheering sound of the hammer and anvil, and the noise of countless artisans" and make New Bedford "as thrifty in manufacturers, as it was in its palmiest day in whaling."[123] Political contests in New Bedford rapidly devolved into contests over the issue of industrialization itself.

The campaign to construct a citywide water system became a particular lightening rod for industrial controversy. After all, in the context of thirsty steam-powered textile industrialization, the municipal conveyance of water became something of a public referendum on whether or not New Bedford should encourage its own industrial revolution.[124] On the one hand, a significant contingent of New Bedford residents, including Mayor Howland, opposed the creation of a water system for precisely the same reason its supporters championed it: because it would encourage

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[121] City Document No. 1, "Inaugural Address of Andrew G. Pierce…January 6, 1868," 4 in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1867-1868* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, Printers to the City, 1868); City Document No. 1, "Inaugural Address of Andrew G. Pierce…January 5, 1869," in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1868-1869* (New Bedford: Fessenden & Baker, 1869).

[122] City Document No. 1, "Inaugural Address of George B. Richmond…January 3, 1870," 3, in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1869-1870* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, Printers to the City, 1870).

[123] Ibid., 5.

[124] Edmond Wood, "The Development of the New Bedford Water Works System," *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketch*, no. 48 (Oct. 1919).

industry.[125] "A No Water Man," for instance—a local capitalist who claimed to have "made all [his] money" in New Bedford—wrote into the local newspaper in July of 1865, arguing that creating a water system would mean giving up a whaling-economy New Bedford of evenings of "hundreds of young ladies, fully arrayed in silks and flowers, and the equally fashionably dressed young gents on our streets" for an industrial city "full of mechanics and operatives, which no humane mind would desire to introduce among us."[126] Another writer, "Main Street," ("a native citizen of the primitive stock" who "identified with the growth of the place from its early history") opined that New Bedford would do best to forget the water issue altogether and instead concentrate on the "cultivation of our tastes in the pursuit of useful knowledge, the fine arts, and the sciences."[127] Besides, "Main Street" added, "There are many objections also to becoming a manufacturing people," foremost among them, "the evils from poverty and degradation among the poorer classes of operatives."[128]

Economic turmoil, however, turned the tides of the water issue. While "old time men" of the "*old school*" held the city back, "Amor Patrie" wrote to the local newspaper on the water issue, "We can't live here now. There isn't anything for us to do in our native city." "Amor Patrie" openly mocked those who feared introducing "the poorer classes of operatives" to the city, suggesting that New Bedford could perhaps erect "a boarding netting around the town" to "keep from 'betwixt the wind and our nobility,' these *poor, degraded operatives*."[129] As Mayor Isaac Taber put it in 1862, "We have ceased in a great degree to be a producing people," leaving

[125] Mulderink, *New Bedford's Civil War*, 178.

[126] A No Water Man, Letter to the Editor, *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), July 29, 1865.

[127] Main Street, Letter to the Editor, "The Water Question," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), July 27, 1865.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Amor Patrie, Letter to the Editor, "The Water Question," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), July 29, 1865.

"laborers, cut off from their accustomed sources" of income, with no other choice but to appeal to the "army or navy, or public charity" for support.[130] For Taber, the water issue, though it would "undoubtedly call for an apparently large expenditure," promised the "encouragement of industrial enterprise" and nothing less than the "future prosperity of our city."[131] Another pro-water-system report similarly argued the water system necessary if the city would "desire and intend to prosper."[132]

Crisis in the whaling industry formed the backbone of growing support for a municipal water system. Proponents made the choice and its consequences seem stark indeed. In an 1861 city report on introducing water to the city, its "sanitary" benefits took a backseat to the argument that it was a "great *mechanical necessity.*"[133] Citing the "stagnation and decay" of whaling, the report bluntly stated it "useless to wink the great fact out of sight,—our city is in a critical position."[134] It was, the report claimed, thus the duty of city government to take the reins of economic revitalization: "Cities, like men, flourish and prosper only by their own exertions."[135] Those who could "comprehend the present crisis in our affairs" would see the solution: "Encourage the introduction of machinery,—foster manufacturers and the mechanical arts…Water! water!! is our great desideratum, an ample supply we must have or cease to

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[130] City Document No. 1, "Address of Isaac C. Taber…January 6th, 1862" in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1861-1862* (New Bedford: Fessenden & Baker, City Printers: 1862).

[131] Ibid.

[132] *Report of the Joint Special Committee of the City Council of New Bedford on the Introduction of Fresh Water* (New Bedford: City Printers, 1865), 6.

[133] City Document No. 4, "Report of the Joint Special Committee of the City Council of New Bedford on the Introduction of Water," Dec. 21, 1861.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

prosper."[136] New Bedford's economic crisis of the 1860s was fast amassing political capital in the name of a new industrial regime.

One of the city's leading ministers, Unitarian William J. Potter, also joined the fray, using the pulpit to provide a spiritual undergirding for industrialization. In a series of published sermons on the "Business Interests of Our City," delivered in January of 1863, Potter urged the faithful to act in the face of crisis: "Three years ago, when I first came to your city, I found everywhere depression and gloom…Your ships were lying idle…A large class of working people were out of employment; poverty and beggary were increasing; homes were vacated…laborers were beginning to move away."[137] "What was to become of New Bedford?," Potter asked, rhetorically.[138] The answer, he insisted, was industrialization: "All commercialization, all improvement in the arts…all commerce and manufactur[ing]…in short, all material interests [and] prosperity [and] progress," Potter argued, "have for their object the welfare of the soul, [and] culminate in the development of this,…[the] spiritual part that [is] called the laws of political economy."[139] Turning opponents' arguments on their heads, industry, Potter contended, was not antithetical to virtue. It was, in fact, "the prop of all the virtues," and "stagnation in the business of a community" was the cause of "intellectual [and] moral stagnation."[140] Finally, weighing in on the water issue, Potter waxed that if "water is wanted before new business can be further introduced," then the city need only tap into its "vast sleeping

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[136] Ibid.

[137] William J. Potter, "A Pulpit View of the Business Interests of Our City," 3-4, Jan. 18, 1863, Sermon 98, Box 1, William J. Potter Sermons, New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *WPS-NBFPL*]**.

[138] Ibid., 4.

[139] Ibid., 9.

[140] Ibid., 15.

ponds" in the north, "which are only wasting to be touched with the spirit of the age in order to fly into steam [and] be set to lifting hammers or humming spindles. They are sleeping now, like our city, in violation of the law of the nineteenth century."[141] For Potter, arguments that industry would herald the spiritual and moral decline of the city had it all wrong. Crisis and stagnation were the true progenitors of social collapse.

When a vote was finally taken on the issue in April of 1864, 781 outvoted 594 in favor of the new water system.[142] Construction began, and the system was finally completed in November 1869 at a cost of about $500,000.[143] Although a massive sum for the era, the water system did help to encourage an outpouring of steam-powered mills. The Wamsutta brought in a Corliss steam engine the very next year.[144] A cavalcade of new mills followed, beginning in 1871.[145]

Municipal water was just the beginning. Following the whaling crisis, a series of new municipal enactments helped push the city headlong into the industrial era. The city issued grants to establish a street railway in 1872, revamped the city charter in 1875, and continued to rack up debt (skyrocketing to 854,000 dollars by 1870) in order to cut taxes and fund improvements.[146]

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[141] William J. Potter, "A Pulpit View of the Business Interests of Our City," 13, Jan. 25, 1863, Sermon 99, Box 1, *WPS-NBFPL*.

[142] Address of George Howland, Jr…January 2d, 1865," 13 in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1864-1865* (New Bedford: Fessenden & Baker, City Printers: 1865)

[143] *Forty-Fourth Annual Report of the New Bedford Water Board to the City Council* (New Bedford: 1914), 64; Pease, *History of New Bedford,* 203.

[144] Ibid., 204.

[145] Henry H. Crapo, "The Story of Cotton and Its Manufacture into Cloth in New Bedford," *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketch*, no. 67 (Nov. 1937).

[146] *Ordinance and Rules and Orders of the City of New Bedford* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, 1884), 96; Pease, *History of New Bedford,* 205; City Document No. 1, "Inaugural Address of George B. Richmond…January 3, 1870," *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1869-1870* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, Printers to the City, 1870); "1872—City Document No. 1, Inaugural Address of George B. Richmond… Jan. 1, 1872" (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, 1872); "City

Although the city's escalating debt situation, one mayor argued in 1876, was "sanctioned by our own experience of nearly twenty years, and highly commended by many experienced capitalists and bankers," he was nonetheless dismayed that an anxious Massachusetts legislature had rebuked New Bedford by passing a cautionary "Act to Regulate and Limit Municipal Indebtedness" in 1875.[147] Regardless of the actions of the legislature in Boston, by the 1880s, the city was slashing relief rolls in order to balance the books on its pro-industry, low-tax crusade. In 1885 alone, the city completely severed relief payments to 54 percent of families while reducing allowances for an additional 28 percent of recipients.[148] Even in the 1880s, welfare cutbacks and pro-industrial development marched in lockstep.

Nevertheless, the importance of policy shifts in areas like water delivery cannot be understated. After all, although declining profit returns in whaling certainly forced New Bedford ship-owners to search out safer repositories for their capital, it was not a foregone conclusion that they would necessarily find them in their own city. Early on, many New Bedford capitalists had actually followed Boston's lead and had begun looking out west. Henry Howland Crapo invested in western railroads and was eventually elected governor of Michigan.[149] Whaler Charles Morgan bought an iron works in Pennsylvania.[150] Members of the Rotch family came to invest in railroads, toll roads, banks, insurance companies, and real estate.[151]

Document No. 1, "Inaugural Address of Alanson Borden…January 1, 1877," in *New Bedford City Documents* (New Bedford: Mercury Publishing Company, City Printers, 1877)

[147] City Document No. 1, "Inaugural Address of Abraham H. Howland, Jr.…January 3, 1876," 11 in *City Documents of New Bedford*, 1876 (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, Printers to the City, 1876).

[148] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change," 82.

[149] Ibid, 18.

[150] Letterbook, 1833-1837, Vol. 4, MSS 252, Charles W. Morgan Business Records, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *CMBR-BLHC*].**

[151] Mulderink, "We Want a Country," 153.

But such capital mobility only redoubled city leaders' resolve in fostering local industrial development. As Mayor George Richmond put it in his 1870 inaugural speech, New Bedford needed to face the fact that its whaling days were over. "Capital," he reminded the city council, "has sought other investments," but it had "found most of them, I regret to say, abroad … I am by no means inclined to despair of our commercial prosperity, but the great hope for the future must rest upon the multiplication and growth of manufacturing enterprise."[152]

Luckily, access to cheap municipal water paired with the railroad Panic of 1873 helped convince New Bedford capitalists that their investments might be safest close to home. And, as men like Bourne pulled their investments out of whaling, they established a new industrial regime upon the ruins of whaling ascendancy. As early as 1851, whaler Charles Morgan invested 20,000 dollars into New Bedford's first (failed) textile concern, and the Wamsutta was itself primarily funded by a similar cast of characters: a whaling merchant, two whaling captains, a West Indian rum merchant, and an oil broker.[153] The Potomska Mill, erected in 1871, had James Robinson (oil merchant) as its first president, and William Rotch (whaler), Charles L. Wood (captain), Matthew Howland (whaling shipping agent), William Watkins (whaler and candlemaker), and Andrew Pierce as directors—only the last of which had no connection to New Bedford's maritime past.[154] The Acushnet Mill, organized in 1881, had Horatio Hathaway as

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[152] City Document No. 1, "Inaugural Address of George B. Richmond…January 3, 1870," 4 in *City Documents: Mayor's Address to the City Council; City Government; and Reports of Committees…For the Year 1869-1870* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, Printers to the City, 1870).

[153] Ledger Clipping, "New Bedford Steam Mill," Folder 11, Box 1, MSS 252, *CMBR-BLHC*; Henry Beetle Hough, *Wamsutta of New Bedford, 1846-1946: A Story of New England Enterprise* (New Bedford: 1946), 9, 19; New Bedford Board of Trade, George A. Hough, *New Bedford, Massachusetts: Its History, Industries, Institutions and Attractions* (Mercury Publishing, 1889), 62.

[154] Crapo, "The Story of Cotton and Its Manufacture into Cloth in New Bedford"; *Representative Men and Old Families of Rhode Island*, Vol. 3 (Chicago: J.H. Beers and Co., 1908), 1459; Hurd, *History of Bristol County,* 131; *America's Successful Men of Affairs* Vol. 2, ed. Herny Hall (The New York Tribune, 1896), 372; Matthew Howland Letter Book, 1858-1879, Series II, MSS 252, *ABNB-BLHC*; Pease, *History of New Bedford,* 244. Crapo also

president, and had as its directors William Crapo (an admiralty lawyer), Francis Hathaway, (a merchant trader of a large and wealthy whaling family), Loum Snow Jr. (whaler), Gilbert Allen (whaler), Thomas Brayton (a Fall River textile manufacturer), and none other than Jonathan Bourne Jr. as directors.[155] New Bedford eventually went from the globe's largest whaling port to its largest producer of fine cotton cloth.[156]

Bourne, for his part, fully embraced textile industrialization. After the American Civil War, although Bourne continued to invest in whaling voyages, these interests clearly took a back seat to the investments he was making in mills all over New Bedford and Fall River, including the "Bourne" Mill on Fall River's southern border, built in 1881.[157] As whale oil prices continued to freefall, typical became Bourne's instructions to Captain Fisher in 1887: "Sperm oil is now selling at 60 cents… I would advise selling at very low prices [to] pay bills, rather than making drafts."[158] Yet, by then, Bourne was by no means panicking: "Although the whale fishery is declining," Bourne reminded Fisher, "manufacturing has taken its place…and there never was more [business] doing in New Bedford than now."[159]

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mentions a "Henry F. Thayer" as director, but there is no record of a Henry Thayer in the New Bedford City Directory of 1871.

[155] Crapo, "The Story of Cotton…in New Bedford"; Crapo, Clifford, and Clifford Records, MSS 118, *NBWMRL*; Loum Snow Business Records, MSS 70, *NBWMRL*; Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 77.

[156] House of Representatives, *Hearings on General Tariff Revision before the Committee on Ways and Means,* Part IV (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1921), 2278.

[157] JB to E.L. Anthony, Sept. 1888, 193, Vol. 4, Box 17, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Wm. Geo. F. Morgan, Nov. 2, 1888, Vol. 4, Box 17, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to J.A. Baker, March 30, 1889, 350, Vol. 4, Box 17, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*; JB to Maj. Durfee, April 8, 1889, 351, Vol. 4, Box 17, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[158] JB to Capt. Fisher, Nov. 11, 1887, 13, Vol. 4, Box 17, Sub-Series 2, Series G, MSS 18, *JBBR-NBWMRL*.

[159] Ibid., 15.

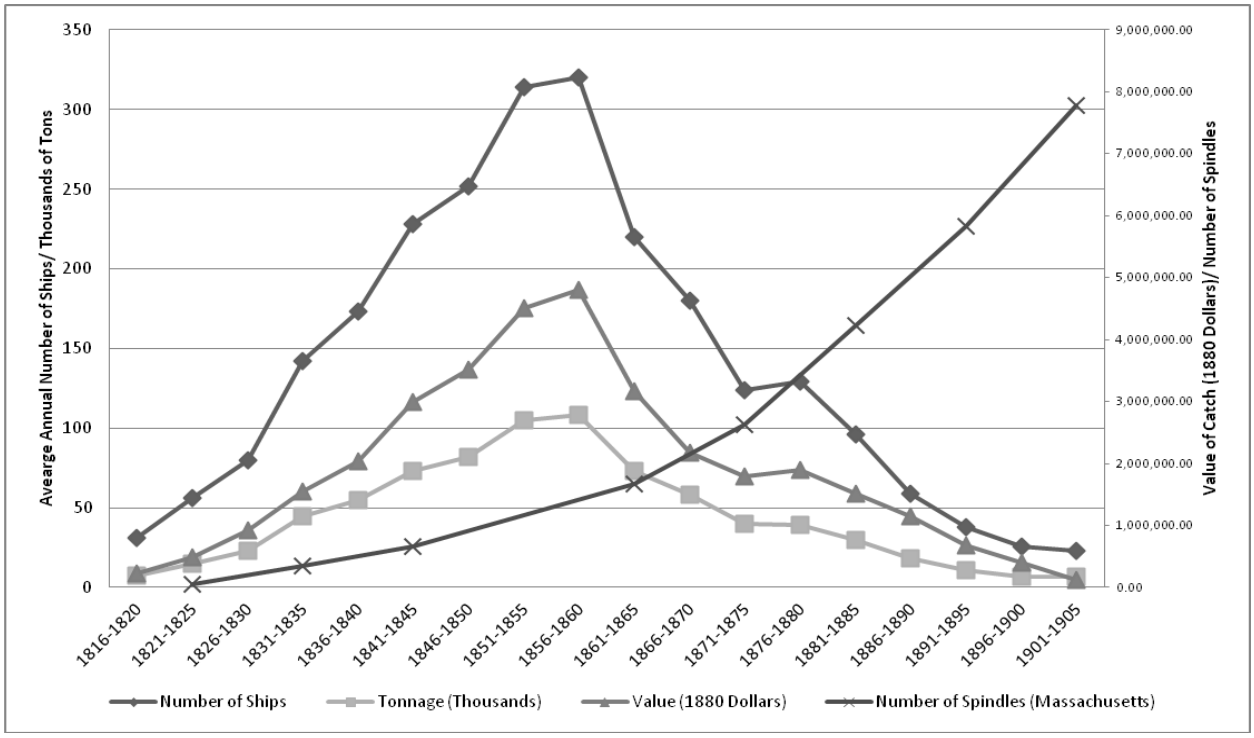

Figure 2.6: The Rise and Fall of the New Bedford Whaling Industry and the Rise of Massachusetts Textile Production, 1816-1905

Note that textile spindleage in the state of Massachusetts grew slowly until the postbellum era, at which point it re-centered in Southeastern Massachusetts and took off. The whaling industry is measured here in the annual average of New Bedford ships and tonnage (left y-axis scale) and the dollar value of its catch (right y-axis scale). The rise of the textile industry is measured in spindleage (right y-axis scale).[160]

Indeed, Bourne's ships were mostly withdrawn over the course of the mid-nineteenth century. He sold off his bark *Pantheon* in 1853 (it was burned by its crew the very next voyage); his ship *Stephania* was condemned in Sydney in 1868; Bourne sold off his 478-ton ship *Marengo* in San Francisco in 1874 (it was abandoned in the Arctic Ice two years later); Bourne's 453-ton *Hunter* sailed its last journey in 1882, bringing back only 120 barrels of oil; and his barks

[160] Davis, *In Pursuit of Leviathan*, 6–7; Victor S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States, 1607-1860* (Washington DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1916), 544; United States Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries*, pt. 3 and pt. 4, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910, Doc. 633 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 7.

Northern Light and *Napoleon* were both sold off in 1883.[161] As whaling ships were offloaded, Bourne transformed himself into a whole new type of capitalist. By his 1889 death, Bourne was the director of eight local textile mills, president of the local bank, and the director of three local utility companies.[162]

Desperate Capital, Desperate Labor

Beyond freeing local reserves of capital and coaxing pro-industrial state policy, the collapse of the whaling industry made one last contribution to South Coast textile industrialization: "liberating" the large workforce it had amassed over the course of some five decades. Unlike Lowell mills, South Coast firms would not have to pay to bring workers to them, nor would they necessarily have to pay to house them. As a result, South Coast textile firms became far more male (and foreign) dominated than any competing American mill. Alone, this would mean little, except that the production of "fine" textiles on mule spinning machines—a water frame and spinning jenny hybrid that produced stronger and finer yarn than the water frames used in Lowell—required great strength to operate and was considered unfit, at least in the nineteenth century, for women.[163] Whereas Lowell mills produced simple, coarse yarns and fabrics, only mule-spinning men could produce the fine cloths that had brought Britain hegemony over the global textile market.[164] Not coincidentally, the first mulespinning machines

[161] Joseph Dias, "New Bedford Whaling Ships, 1783-1906," 90, 154, 166, 165, 202, 179, *ABNB-BLHC*.

[162] Noel, *Bourne,* 27.

[163] Harold Catling, *The Spinning Mule* (David & Charles, 1970), 154–157.

[164] Barbara Hahn, "Failures and Fairytales: Innovative Losers of the Industrial Revolution," Conference Presentation, Joint Meeting of the Business History Conference and European Business History Association, June 26, 2015, Miami, Florida. It has been argued that Lowell's focus on "coarse" production was a product of the United States' tariff structure, which protected coarse cloth most heavily. Importantly, though, the only reason coarse cloth was so heavily protected in the first place was because Lowell millowners lobbied to set it that way. As economic

ever successfully brought to the United States came by way of Bradford Durfee and William Davol of Fall River for use in their Annawan Mill.[165] "From this date forward the progress of mule spinning in the 'Southern district' of Massachusetts and Rhode Island was very rapid," one historian of the cotton industry noted in 1879, and it was decades before these mills faced any serious American competitors.[166] After all, it is arguable that few other factories in America could have afforded male labor on such a large scale. In effect, the whaling crisis helped give the South Coast of Massachusetts a near hegemony in America on fine cotton-cloth production.

Not surprisingly, then, an analysis of the payroll of Fall River's Annawan Mill reveals a very different labor profile than that which prevailed in Lowell. In April 1858—the first month for which full records exist—the Annawan spinning room had only 4 women out of 25 workers (a near inversion of Lowell's female-dominated workforce).[167] Moreover, unlike Lowell mills, where many women worked inconsistent or part-time schedules to complement their other economic activities, only two Annawan spinners worked less than 24.5 days that month (a 26-

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historian Peter Temin has pointed out, "American firms found it profitable to spin and weave number 14 and 20 yarn [coarse fabrics] because Francis Lowell, the founder of the Boston Manufacturing Company, designed the relevant part of the Tariff of 1816 for that end." Thus, chalking up the preference for coarse cloth to the tariff only begs the question: why lobby to shape the tariff that way in the first place? Divergent access to affordable, male labor appears to be the most obvious answer. See Peter Temin, "Product Quality and Vertical Integration in the Early Cotton Textile Industry," *The Journal of Economic History* 48, no. 4 (1988): 897; Douglas A. Irwin and Peter Temin, "The Antebellum Tariff on Cotton Textiles Revisited," *The Journal of Economic History* 61, no. 3 (2001): 777–98.

[165] Samuel Webber, *Manual of Power for Machines, Shafts, and Belts: With the History of Cotton Manufacture in the United States* (D. Appleton, 1879), 53; E. Everton Foster, *Lamb's Textile Industries of the United States: Embracing Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and a Historical Resume of the Progress of Textile Manufacture from the Earliest Records to the Present Time* (James H. Lamb, 1916), 61; William Lazonick, *Competitive Advantage on the Shop Floor* (Harvard University Press, 1990), 26; Mary H. Blewett, *Constant Turmoil: The Politics of Industrial Life in Nineteenth-Century New England* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 35–26.

[166] Webber, *Manual of Power for Machines, Shafts, and Belts*, 53.

[167] Annawan Mill Payroll Record, 1858-1870, April 1858, Vol. G-1, MSS 5, Annawan Manufactory Series, Fall River Iron Works Collection, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *AMS-FRIW-BLHC*]**.

day month meant working full days every day except Sunday).[168] And, most importantly to mill owners, these spinners made 54 cents a day. For comparison, the Lowell female spinners of 25 years *previous* had earned *more* than the male spinners of the Annawan Mills in 1858.[169] Even in unskilled departments like carding, men made up more than a third of the workforce.[170] Moreover, those workers who did live in corporate-owned houses found an average of $4.60 taken from their monthly paychecks for rent, leaving a male carder—who earned an average of 47 cents a day—with only $7.15 to show for a month of 25 days work.[171] Even by nineteenth-century standards, these were paltry wages: less than a third of what American artisans like blacksmiths or carpenters took home each month.[172]

Postbellum Lowell mills sought to adapt, but New Bedford and Fall River mills remained uniquely staffed with largely male, immigrant, and comparatively cheap workers—an enduring gift of both the rise and fall of the South Coast whaling industry. In 1860, for instance, although more immigrants were entering the doors of Lowell's Lawrence Manufacturing Company than ever before—thanks in large part to the Irish Potato Famine of the 1840s—the factory still maintained a majority female workforce.[173] Of 289 total workers, only 52, or 18 percent, were men.[174] For the month ending September 1860, Lawrence Manufacturing Company warp

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[168] Ibid.

[169] Ibid.; Lawrence Manufacturing Company, Payroll Record, 2-11, Labor and Employment Payrolls Mill No. 1, Vol. GA-1, *LMC-BLHC*.

[170] Annawan Mill Payroll Record, 1858-1870, April 1858, Vol. G-1, *AMS-FRIW-BLHC*.

[171] Ibid.

[172] Clarence D. Long, *Wages and Earnings in the United States* (Princeton University Press, 1960), 94.

[173] Dublin et al., *Lowell: The Story of an Industrial City*, 66.

[174] Dataset developed from Lawrence Manufacturing Company, Payroll Record, May 14, 1850-Apr. 13, 1861, Sept. 8, 1860, Labor and Employment Payrolls Mill No. 1, Vol. GA-18, MSS: 442, *LMC-BLHC*.

spinners—all of which were women—earned an average daily wage of somewhere between 46 to 55 cents a day, placing them within the range of prevailing Fall River wages for men.[175] In the carding department, women made up over half the operatives, and earned an average daily wage of 64 cents, 36 percent higher than male workers in Fall River's Annawan carding department.[176] Almost across the board, Lowell millowners had to shell out more for their (female) workers. And, as mule spinning became the new standard in textiles, Lowell's inability to access cheap male labor only exacerbated its downfall.

Over time, unionization pushed wages up in South Coast textile mills, but even the benefits of collective bargaining tended only to accrue amongst those in the highest echelons of the labor hierarchy. Mills still reaped tremendous financial rewards from the immense pool of unskilled, immigrant laborers they had on tap. South Coast mills soon took on their most enduring form, with a few skilled male workers dominating payrolls and labor systems, backed by armies of unskilled, subservient operatives. In the Fall River Metacomet Mill, for instance, 22

[175] The range in wages is a function of three different methods of tabulating the number of days each operative worked —itself a result of the ambiguity of this nineteenth-century payroll record, containing little or no legend to guide those not aware of the accounting system being employed. By each worker's name there are two columns, the first one is clearly the number of days worked, the second one is more ambiguous, with values ranging from as little as ½ to as much as 40. If it is counted as a second column of days worked (perhaps in another department, or unpaid days from the previous month), it can change the overall days worked dramatically. If only first column values are employed to tabulate days worked, Lawrence Mills paid its warp spinners an average daily wage of 55 cents a day. If both second and first column values are added, the daily wage would be more around 46 cents a day. Alternatively, a function can be developed to tabulate days worked based on each worker's monthly pay, pieces produced, the piece rate, and the daily base pay:

$$f_x = \frac{monthly\ pay - pieces\ produced * piece\ rate}{daily\ base\ pay}$$

This usually produces a value somewhere in the middle. If the predicted days worked based on monthly pay are used to generate each worker's daily wage, it yields a 49-cent average. Because there is so much uncertainty about the best way to tabulate average wages, I have simply given a relevant range. See Ibid.

[176] Ibid.

spinners (all male) earned average daily wages of $1.42 for the week ending January 8, 1881.[177] That same week, however, the mill's 6 male doffers took home an average of 67 cents daily, its 2 roving hoisters earned 55 cents daily, its 14 back boys made about 50 cents, and its 5 "tubers" made a measly 25 cents a day.[178] In the Annawan Mills, productive "weft" mule spinners like William Holmes could take home as much as $62.10 for 30 days of work—producing 4,296 pounds of cloth at 1.45 cents a pound—while spoolers made about a third as much, some 75 cents a day.[179] Cheap labor made mass industrialization possible, and whaling crisis made cheap labor plentiful.

Indeed, although it is difficult to place those workers who made the transition from whaling to textiles—as few immigrant whaling workers left any real archival trail—it is clear that New Bedford whaling workers, amidst economic decline, either found a place in New Bedford's mills, or, as voyages became fewer and far between, bounced back and forth between increasingly infrequent whaling voyages and stints of textile work. When Charles Nordhoff described the crew of a New Bedford whaling ship he joined in the mid-nineteenth century, for instance, he noted four Azoreans, "two lawyer's clerks, one professional gambler, one runaway…one New York 'butcher-boy…six farm boys" and "six factory hands" on board (Nordhoff also confessed the crew was "as wretchedly ignorant as ever I met"; only one of the factory hands could read, and even he remained "more stupid than his fellow laborers").[180] Nevertheless, Nordhoff's observations suggest that it was not unheard of for workers to go back

[177] Dataset developed from Metacomet Mill, Payrolls, 1881, Week ending Jan. 8, 1881, Vol. KE-1, Case 13, MSS 5, Metacomet Series, Fall River Iron Works Collection, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *MS-FRIW-BLHC*]**.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Annawan Mill Payroll Record, 1858-1870, Jan. 3, 1870, Vol. G-1, MSS 5, *AMS-FRIW-BLHC*.

[180] Charles Nordhoff, *Whaling and Fishing* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1895), 46-47.

and forth between a collapsing whaling industry and the rising textile industry.[181] As Cape Verdean Captain Joe Antone recalled in 1939, by the time he shipped onto his first New Bedford whaler in the early 1890s with seven other Cape Verdeans, "whalers had to come to the islands to get a crew. The American seamen wouldn't ship on them because of the conditions" and because they "found they could make out better in the mills."[182]

The lasting importance of Azorean and Cape Verdean workers to New England textile production was itself a testament to the key importance of these labor pools to mass industrialization. As New Bedford's Portuguese newspaper noted decades later, when "the use and commercialization of petroleum…launched New Bedford into a worsening crisis," there was "great apprehension" among the Portuguese of "the maritime classes" concerning this "irreparable blow" to the New Bedford economy.[183] But, the paper noted, the city's strength remained in its labor force. After all, New Bedford "offered advantageous conditions" for textile industrialization: "an abundance of arms, and well-used arms that did not hesitate in the face of the most grave difficulties of life."[184] Indeed, the enduring ability of the South Coast to amass thousands of laborers from abroad over the course of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries—based partly on the networks established during whaling's heyday—would become one of the key ingredients to consolidating industrial supremacy in Massachusetts.

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[181] Ibid.

[182] Nellie Coombs, "Captain Joe Antone, Cape Verdean Seaman," *Spinner: People and Culture in Southeastern Massachusetts* 4 (1988), 126-127.

[183] "A Industria Textil de New Bedford," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), May, 5, 1942. Original Text: "O uso e comercialização do petróleo na segunda metade do século passado, lançaram New Bedford numa crise progressive."

[184] Ibid. Original text: "New Bedford oferecia condições vantajosas á indústria têxtil: abundância de braços e de braços que estavam habituados a não hesitar perante as mais graves dificuldades da vida."

Conclusion

"In a more perfect manner, probably than any other American seaport, New Bedford connects the commercial era that…has passed away, with the manufacturing era that now is," the *New Bedford Semi-Centennial Souvenir* proudly announced in 1897.[185] "These two great phases of industrial life have been manifested in her experience during the past fifty years, and she has thereby been… an epitome of the industrial progress of the times."[186] As the New Bedford experience reminds us, industrialization in nineteenth-century Massachusetts was no natural outgrowth of economic or institutional maturity, but a grueling and hard-fought transition between two very different economic regimes. From the perspective of the South Coast, neither Americans' "popular culture of enterprise" nor the unique New England "synergy between the skill of industrial leaders and of the educated, hard-working machine operators" drove mass industrialization.[187] Instead, it was economic crisis that furnished cities like New Bedford and Fall River with the reserves of cheap labor that allowed them to undercut competing mills in the north, whose capital investors were fast being lured to opportunities in the west and abroad. Lacking, for most of its early history, a comparable labor pool of cheap, migrant labor, Lowell mills remained limited enterprises: it was not until workers could be affordably brought into the factory and put behind heavy fine spinning machinery that Massachusetts found itself in a position to challenge British textile ascendancy.

Importantly, crisis also helped crack the bedrock of popular opposition to industry in Massachusetts. As whaling decline threw former seamen onto New Bedford's streets, popular

[185] "New Bedford: A Review of the Origin, Life, and Growth of the City," *New Bedford Semi-Centennial Souvenir*, Oct. 1897.

[186] Ibid.

[187] Joyce Appleby, "The Popular Sources of American Capitalism," *Studies in American Political Development* 9, no. 02 (September 1995): 457; Peter Temin, "The Industrialization of New England, 1830-1880," 110.

anti-industrial sentiment rapidly disintegrated. Desperate city leaders felt they had little choice but to embrace the new industrial order.

Tangled up in the odd genealogies of crisis and capital, nineteenth-century New Bedford seems eerily close to the present. Indeed, as if only to augur larger developments in industrial America one-hundred years down the road, New Bedford responded to economic crisis in the seventies by cutting taxes and running up debts to encourage industry—only to have to slash welfare rolls in the eighties in order to balance budgets. Then, as now, savvy industrial and political leaders knew that crisis, properly employed, could act as midwife to economic growth.

Ironically, then, as Boston investors leapt from their "safe" investments in manufacturing to pursue precarious but potentially lucrative western ventures, New Bedford capitalists abandoned the tumultuous world of whaling to consolidate their assets behind "safe" manufacturing undertakings—assets made "safe" by the massive global reach of their labor recruitment efforts under whaling's sway.

The "industrial revolution" in the South Coast, then, was no endogenous productive boom, nor the natural evolution of a "maturing" economy. Even in the nineteenth century, so much of what marked the industrial transition in cities like New Bedford came from the very mobility of industrial production and its factors: the ways in which capital and labor could easily course through the nation and globe, shifting factories and industrial capacity in order to take advantage of transitory productive openings. Rather than simply a story of flourishing productive growth based on industrially conducive ideologies, state power, or innovative technology, the story of industrial revolution in South Coast Massachusetts is a tale of economies in motion: how a series of political and economic crises helped to re-center both labor and capital into the textile factories of Southeastern Massachusetts.

Chapter 3

Labor in Motion: The Peopling of Industrial Massachusetts

"Why is it that the working people of Fall River are in constant turmoil, when at Lowell and Lawrence they are quiet?"[1] This question, posed by a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1881, launched the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor into a full-scale, multi-city comparative investigation of what exactly was wrong with the city of Fall River.[2] Six months and hundreds of interviews later, the answer was clear: the British were to blame. When the Fall River mills had gone through a spastic burst of growth in the immediate aftermath of the whaling crisis, the Bureau concluded, they had grown faster than their accompanying labor pools, forcing millowners to make wholesale importations of English and Irish help from Lancashire.[3] This proved an enormous miscalculation.

What made British immigrant workers so problematic? First, the investigators concluded, they had brought with them a stubborn "old world" antagonism to the "capitalist" class that proved difficult to dislodge. As one Fall River manufacturer bluntly put it, "The whole trouble consists in the fact that they brought their habits with them."[4] "The one great trouble with Fall River," another interviewee reported, "as compared with Lowell and Lawrence, is the existence of so much English help…they come here with air of their old English ideas, which they had best

[1] Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor **[hereafter MBSL]**, Public Document No. 15, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882* (Boston: Rand, Avery, & Co, 1882), 195.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., 201-202.

[4] Ibid.

leave behind them."[5] Another treasurer was even more forthright in his assessment: "We have the scum of the English and Irish in our midst; they brought their antagonistic notions with them."[6] So whereas Lowell hired a "better class of help"—namely, American farm girls from the hinterland—Fall River's reliance on "antagonistic" British workers, so many interviewees contended, doomed the city to industrial turmoil.[7]

But these workers' disdain for their bosses was only half the trouble. Equally problematic was the fact that the British constantly battled against an array of other immigrant working people who apparently shared little of their confrontational outlook, most notably, their seeming polar opposites, the French Canadians. As the Bureau summed up the situation, Fall River's interminable industrial warfare was a result of the conflict of "the American and the English style of accomplishing work" and the "mixture of English, Irish, and French help" that "so confuses matters as to keep antagonistic feeling uppermost about all the time."[8] French Canadians, in particular, "were ostracized by all," because "they would accept the lowest wages for their work…and also because they would not join strikes."[9] In other words, English dreams of labor reform constantly foundered on the shoals of French obstinacy.

This was not an altogether unexpected finding by the Bureau. Only a year earlier, the agency had cited the "presence of the Canadian French" as itself a major obstacle to getting

[5] Ibid., 206.

[6] Ibid., 341.

[7] Ibid., 201

[8] Ibid., 206.

[9] Ibid., 206-207.

meaningful ten-hour reform legislation passed in Massachusetts.[10] The French Canadians, after all, were, in the eyes of the Bureau, "the Chinese of the Eastern States": "docile" and "indefatigable…a horde of industrial invaders, not a stream of stable settlers."[11] They had but one mission: "To earn all they can by no matter how many hours of toil, to live in the most beggarly way so that out of their earnings they may spend as little for living as possible, and to carry out of the country what they can thus save."[12] In other words, ten-hour reform could never take root with such lowly and desperate workers present in high volumes. In the eyes of the Bureau, it was this infelicitous amalgamation of belligerent British workers and pliant French transients that insured Fall River's factories would be forever at war with themselves.

Thankfully, the situation had a silver lining. "Assimilation," the bureau pointed out, was just on the horizon. English, French, and Portuguese workers, under the hale sway of Americanization's inevitable march, were beginning to work together. As immigrants became Americans, dropping their "antagonistic" attitudes and former "socialistic" ideas, the Bureau foresaw eventual labor unity, and, with time, labor peace.

The Bureau's interpretation of industrial conflict in Massachusetts is, in some ways, hardly surprising. After all, the narrative juxtaposition of unfeeling manufacturers and an ethnically and racially divided working class yielding naught but abortive, interminable industrial conflict is, arguably, one of the oldest narratives of American labor history.[13] Even the

[10] MBSL, Public Document No. 15, *Twelfth Annual Report…January, 1881* (Boston: Rand, Avery, & Co, 1881), 469.

[11] Ibid., 470.

[12] Ibid.

[13] For a sampling on works highlighting how America's "divided" working-class foreclosed the possibility of meaningful labor reform, see David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American*

trope of "Americanization" as promising renewed hopes for labor unity has become a staple of the literature.[14] There is much truth to this narrative, but, from the perspective of late-nineteenth-century Massachusetts, it does little to account for how these workers actually experienced and sought to shape the industrial economy they encountered. Rather than beginning with the question of industrial conflict, this chapter asks a more foundational question: what forces brought these migrant workers to Massachusetts in the first place?[15]

At first blush, the question is not hard to answer: it was the global crises of the nineteenth-century Atlantic world that pushed a generation of peasants and otherwise migratory workers into the factories of the Anglo-American core.[16] Crisis—and the subsequent realignment of the global economy—catalyzed mass labor migration.

Working Class (Verso, 2007); Herbert G. Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815-1919," *The American Historical Review* 78, no. 3 (June 1, 1973): 531–88; Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2008), chs.1-2; Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (University of California Press, 1975).

[14] James R. Barrett, "Americanization from the Bottom Up: Immigration and the Remaking of the Working Class in the United States, 1880-1930," *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 3 (December 1, 1992): 996–1020; Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960*, 2nd ed. (Princeton University Press, 2001); John T. Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America: Work, Leisure, and Struggle in Two Industrial Cities, 1880-1930* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979).

[15] In this, I am partly inspired by the work of Hebert Gutman and, in particular, his pointed critiques of *Roll, Jordan, Roll*. "Suppose one was writing a book on ironworkers and steelworkers in Pittsburgh called *Roll, Monongahela, Roll: The World the Steelworkers Made*," Gutman asked, rhetorically, during a 1983 interview. "How would that book begin? It is not a book about the steel industry…It is subtitled *The World the Steelworkers Made*… If one writes about the world the steelworkers *made*, the book should begin with the men before they were steelworkers and study how they *became* steelworkers." In this same vein, he argued that a fuller account of "the world the slaves made" would have to start with slaves' backgrounds and experiences as *free Africans*: "What did the slaves encounter when they arrived here? Who bought the slaves?...And what did it mean to the slave?". It is partly with Gutman's counsel in mind that I seek to unearth the origins of how workers shaped industrial Massachusetts by looking to their various contexts in (and migrations from) Portugal, Canada, and Britain. See "Interview With Herbert Gutman" in Herbert Gutman, *Power & Culture: Essays on the American Working Class,* ed. Ira Berlin (New York: The New Press, 1987), 350-353.

[16] This is central to the argument of John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Indiana University Press, 1985).

But economic crises do not operate in any one, undifferentiated way. Indeed, these British, French-Canadian, and Portuguese migrations across the continents and oceans to the factories of Massachusetts were hardly reducible to an impoverished periphery venturing to a rapidly industrializing core in search of economic riches. Each came from a very specific set of social and economic circumstances—and were thus freighted with very different goals and ideologies—setting the stage for the ethnic conflict that made cities like Fall River such havens of industrial turmoil. In short, an understanding of the global context of the mass labor migrations that consolidated industrial hegemony in Massachusetts shows that it was not some primordial ethnic antagonism that made working-class organization so difficult in the nineteenth century. Instead, it was a very particular, peculiar, and ever-changing set of conditions, centered in these migrants' *sending* states, that powered mutual hostility amongst Massachusetts' workers.

"Antagonistic" British Immigrants

As the disruptions of the American Civil War rippled across the world, the shattering of the international cotton trade reordered the global economy. The American south spiraled into increasing economic obsolescence as new opportunities for industrial cotton cultivation emerged in places like India, Brazil, and Egypt.[17] Whaling New Bedford disintegrated, leading to the steady relocation of America's remaining whaling fleet to San Francisco and the safer waters of

[17] Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 242–273.

the Pacific.[18] And the British cotton industry, which relied on the U.S. South for nearly three-quarters of its cotton, was plunged into havoc.[19]

The cotton famine brought irreparable damage to Britain's massive industrial base. By the outbreak of the war, the industrial districts of Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire had accumulated 2,270 factories with over 440,000 workers, a little over 11 times the size of Massachusetts' textile workforce.[20] But, as civil war interrupted American cotton exports, it took only a year to see two-thirds of these mills cease operation, leaving nearly half the population of cotton towns like Preston on poor relief. [21] As the chief medical officer of one Lancashire poor house put it in 1862, "I have daily experiences of the prevailing misery and want…the poor people have neither money nor credit, and are destitute of the common necessaries of life."[22] This crisis, however—and the subsequent slow recovery of the British economy after the war—would prove opportune for Massachusetts manufacturers.

After all, not only did the "cotton famine" help cut down Massachusetts industrialists' most potent competitor on the global stage, it also offered them an entirely new pool of available labor. Notified by a state department circular that numerous unemployed English workers were available for recruitment ("in consequence of want of employment…which prevails among [them]") Massachusetts manufacturers founded the so-called "Foreign Emigrant Society," while

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[18] Herbert L. Aldrich, "New Bedford," *The New England Magazine and Bay State Monthly* 1, no. 5 (May, 1886), 439.

[19] William J. Phalen, *The Consequences of Cotton in Antebellum America* (McFarland, 2014), 167; Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 246–248.

[20] Art. IV, Review, *The British Quarterly Review*, Vol. 41 (Jan.-Apr. 1864), 363; United States Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries*, pt. 3 and pt. 4, 61st Cong., 2d sess., 1910, Doc. 633 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 7.

[21] Art. IV, Review, 363; "How the Distress is Relieved in Preston," *The Quiver,* March 21, 1863, 443.

[22] Art. X, "Lancashire in 1862," *The National Review* 16 no. 31 (Jan. 1863): 229-230

Connecticut interests created the "American Emigrant Company," in order to raise money to send recruitment agents to Europe and extend upfront costs to import British workers on labor contracts.[23]

Sure enough, manufacturers found their biggest successes in the hardest hit locales. For instance, in a series of letters one recruitment agent, John Williams, sent back to the states for publication (in an attempt to stoke support for the investment of *public* funds into immigration), it was clear that recruitment efforts proved most successful in the most miserable places. "Here in Manchester I have excited quite a lively interest amongst the mechanics and mill hands," he recorded, for unlike other English towns, where "all was bustle, employment, and comparative prosperity," Manchester overflowed with "groups of men walking about in listless idleness; stout boys hanging around the street corners, with vacant, hopeless countenances…eagerly rushing in famished crowds for the slightest chance of a penny job."[24] These workers, Williams argued, could help ameliorate the complaints he was getting "every day" from American manufacturers, faced with demands for "increased rates of payment…by some special class of operatives."[25] In other words, Manchester's crisis could be the solution to America's high wages, high prices, and low labor stock.

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[23] The State Department was itself notified of the situation by Peter Sinclair, a Scottish emigrant it had enlisted to spread pro-union propaganda in Britain, who reported back in 1863 that the desire "to emigrate to the United States" pervaded "the very best classes of English workmen." See F.W. Seward to Lorenzo Sabine, Secretary of the Board of Trade, Boston, reproduced in Boston Board of Trade, *Tenth Annual Report of the Government…On the 13th January, 1864* (Boston: T.R. Marvin & Son, 1864), 16; Charlotte Erickson, *American Industry and the European Immigrant, 1860-1885* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 8-9; R. J. M. Blackett, *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War* (LSU Press, 2001), 136; Letter to the Editor, "American Emigrant Company," *New York Times*, Sept. 6, 1863; John H. M. Laslett, *Colliers Across the Sea: A Comparative Study of Class Formation in Scotland and the American Midwest, 1830-1924* (University of Illinois Press, 2000), 67.

[24] John Williams, *Immigration: A Letter to Peter Cooper, Esq.* (New York: 1864), 7.

[25] Ibid., 2.

With no public funds forthcoming, however, manufacturers were generally hesitant to take on the full cost of labor importation. As a result, wartime overseas labor recruitment was never terribly successful. Nonetheless, spurred by the 1864 "Act to Encourage Immigration," which promised federal enforcement of labor importation contracts, the Foreign Emigrant Society and the American Emigrant Company (AEC) had, by the war's end, directly imported about 400 workers.[26] Included in these recruits were some 120 Scottish operatives bound for the American Linen Company of Fall River, which eventually signed a long-term recruitment contract with the AEC.[27] But, despite such modest direct recruitment figures, these efforts did help establish an initial migratory connection between Lancashire and South Coast Massachusetts. More importantly, these early experiences also taught American manufactures that they had an unlikely partner on the other side of the Atlantic, willing to take up the cause on their behalf: namely, British trade unions.

Pretty soon, manufacturers no longer needed to fund labor recruitment: the British union movement was doing it for them, putting its own considerable organizational strength behind the emigration cause.[28] Union-controlled "emigration" societies sprung up all over Britain.

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[26] Erickson, *American Industry and the European Immigrant*, 11, 17, 19.

[27] Isaac Cohen, *American Management and British Labor: A Comparative Study of the Cotton Spinning Industry* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 98.

[28] Indeed, it is worth remembering that British cotton districts sported some of the most tightly organized and powerful working-class organizations in the world, itself a product of the slow evolution of the British textile industry from a handicraft industry of semi-independent artisans into to a factory system of proletarian production

Beginning in the late-sixteenth century, merchants of Manchester, Bolton, and Blackburn would circulate raw cotton—through middlemen agents known as "manufacturers"—to rural farmers throughout the area who desired to bring in cash alongside their agricultural pursuits. These "manufacturers" could develop tremendous workforces: one 1736 Lancashire "manufacturing" firm had a workforce of 3,000. By 1713, a petition to the House of Commons recorded 60,000 linen producers in Lancashire, and by 1770, ninety percent of fathers in nearby Saddleworth were engaged in textile production. Even into the late-eighteenth century, as mule production was beginning to appear in Britain, as one of Britain's leading manufacturers reflected in 1815, "the mules were turned by hand, and were confined chiefly to the garrets of cottages." "Handicraft Associations" appeared all over Britain—in Stockport beginning in 1786 and Oldham in 1796—and by the end of the eighteenth century, nearly every town in Lancashire

Manchester operatives, for instance, formed an "Emigrant Aid Society" in April of 1863; Preston spinners followed with a similar scheme, levying a fee of 1 penny per week per worker.[29] An 1864 meeting of the Associated Operative Cotton Spinners of Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, and Derbyshire likewise ordered each "individual member of this association…to promote to the utmost of his power the emigration movement [amidst] this important crisis," and that "each locality" develop "its own system of emigration, experience having proved that it is only by emigration that the position of the working classes can be improved."[30] Blackburn's spinners funneled £500 into their own emigration society; 1,000 workmen applied for benefits in its first

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boasted a spinners' combination. As Parliament attempted to restrain these associations, they simply reorganized as "box clubs," "boxes," and, of course, "friendly societies." By 1815, a Parliamentary inquiry estimated nearly one million friendly society members in Britain.

A generation later, these independent handicraft "friendly societies" had morphed into industrial trade unions—fighting hard to preserve many of the artisanal freedoms they had once possessed as independent home-workers. Lancashire cotton spinners, for instance, assiduously fought for the rights to hire, fire, and train their own help, physically discipline their assistants, maintain wage minimums, provide sickness and unemployment benefits, and insure that only club-members were hired in local firms, under threat of the "turn out." "These clubs," an 1825 Parliamentary report noted, were "composed of persons working at the same trade" conspiring to use "combination for raising wages" and other "unlawful" activities. As one Fall River operative recalled wistfully to the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor in 1882, "I was brought up in England, where a strike was as natural as a day's rest on Sunday."

Since many British unions had already directly coordinated with American industrialists in order to facilitate emigration, they were well positioned, both financially and organizationally, to use emigration as a powerful weapon in their market manipulation tactics.

See Mary B. Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values: The British and American Cotton Industries Since* 1750 (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 24–27; Stanley Chapman, *The Early Factory Masters: The Transition to the Factory System in the Midlands Textile Industry* (Newton Abbot, 1967), 15-17; Cohen, *American Management and British Labor*, 4, 10-16, 63; John Kennedy, "Observations on the Rise and Progress of the Cotton Trade in Great Britain," Presented to the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, Nov. 3, 1815, in Miscellaneous Papers on Subjects Connected with the Manufactures of Lancashire (Manchester: 1860), 17; Webb Manuscript on Trade Unionism, vol. 34, 116, quoted in Cohen, 15; Great Britain, House of Commons, *Report from the Select Committee on the Law Respecting Friendly Societies* (House of Commons, July 1825), 6-8; "A Contrast: Between Fall River and Lancashire Spinners," Dec. 23, 1887, Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, in *Victorian Vistas: Fall River, 1886-1900: As Viewed Through its Newspaper Accounts*, ed. Philip T. Silvia, Jr. (Fall River: R.E. Smith Printing Co., 1988), 118-119; Sidney and Beatrice Webb, The History of Trade Unionism (London: 1894), 31; MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report*, 240.

[29] Charlotte Erickson, "The Encouragement of Emigration by British Trade Unions, 1850-1900," *Population Studies* 3, no. 3 (1949): 255.

[30] John Watts, *The Facts of the Cotton Famine* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1866), 215.

month of existence.[31] Darwen weavers created a per-loom fee to pay for the emigration of five men per week.[32]

Although these sums may seem rather low, these efforts ultimately yielded thousands of new emigrants. Most unions disbursed about £5-£7 per successful applicant for emigration: enough to comfortably cover steerage passage to the United States.[33] With steerage rates so low, even a single union could send off hundreds of workers. For instance, the most complete extant records of a British emigrant society—those of the Operative Cotton Spinners' Association of Lancashire—report some £370 disbursed to fund workmen to emigrate from 1852 to 1870, and £3,106 disbursed from 1879 to 1893. In other words, the Lancashire spinners alone spent enough to send off over one-thousand workmen to the United States.[34] And, by 1869, emigration had become a standard benefit of almost every British textile union.[35]

As a result, British emigration to Massachusetts thrived in the wartime and postbellum era. From 1862 to 1885, about 10,000 spinners left the United Kingdom destined for the United

[31] Erickson, "The Encouragement of Emigration by British Trade Unions, 1850-1900," 257.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 266.

[34] Ibid., 267.

[35] Charlotte Erickson, in her unparalleled study of British union support for emigration, found emigration benefits amidst the rules of all the following textile unions: The Friendly Associated Operative Cotton Spinners and Self-actor Minders of Hyde and Vicinity (1866, 1872); Amalgamated Association of Cotton Spinners, Self-actor Minders, Twisters, and Rovers Provincial Association of Oldham and Surrounding districts (1870, 1873, 1880, 1883); Associated Operative Cotton Spinners, Blackburn and District (1871, 1882); Friendly Associated Operative Self-actor Minders of Rochdale and Neighbourhood (1873, 1891); Associated Operative Cotton Spinners and Self-actor Minders of Mossley District (1874); Self-actor Minders, Hand-Mule Spinners and Twiners' Association, Atherton and Tyldesley Branch (1872); Operative Self-actor Minders' and Hand-Mule Spinners' Association of Bolton and its Neighbourhood (1876); United Cotton Spinners' and Self-actor Minders' Association, Bolton District, (1875, 1880); Operative Cotton Spinners' Association of Manchester and Vicinity (1880, 1884); Self-actor Mule Spinners of Ashton and Neighbourhood (1886); Operative Cotton Spinners' and Twiners' Association of Stockport and Neighbourhood (1890); Operative Cotton Spinners' and Twiners' Association of Bradford (1890); Bury and Elton Operative Cotton Spinners' Association (1891). See Ibid., 265.

States.[36] Correspondingly, the decade after 1865 saw a fivefold increase in the number of English residents in Fall River, from 1,800 to 8,700.[37] By 1875, Fall River had the most foreign-dominated workforce in Massachusetts, with over 50 percent of its workers coming from Britain alone.[38] Similarly, by 1875, about 65 percent of New Bedford's population had immigrated from the United Kingdom.[39] Even in popular discourse, Fall River soon became widely known as the "Manchester of America" and New Bedford as its "Bolton"—a reference to both these cities' industries and their people—and both soon sported numerous English fraternal clubs and societies, such as the Odd Fellows and the Foresters.[40] There were 88 such clubs in Fall River alone by the end of the nineteenth century.[41] So thoroughgoing was the British takeover of the city of Fall River that one Lancashire writer felt himself immediately transported back home during an 1888 visit: "I soon forgeet wheere I wur, an' fancied I're i' England, an' wur th' only Yankee i'th' company. I towd 'em I wouldno' forget 'em when I geet back to Ameriky. [sic]"[42]

And importantly, because British unions played such an outsized role in structuring British-American emigration, their influence privileged the movement of only their most

[36] Cohen, *American Management and British Labor*, 91.

[37] Ibid., 98.

[38] Mary H. Blewett, *Constant Turmoil: The Politics of Industrial Life in Nineteenth-Century New England* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 197–198.

[39] Thomas McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City: New Bedford, Massachusetts, 1865-1900," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1976), 32.

[40] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil,* 149; Cohen, *American Management and British Labor*, 96; Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 149, 157.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ben Brierley, *Ab-o'th'-yate in Yankeeland: The Results of Two Trips to America* (Manchester: Abel Heywood & Son, 1885), 135. Brierley's book also testified to the importance of chain migration in facilitating British emigration. As Brierley noted on his passage to America in 1885, "down among the steerage passengers" was a congregation of families whose accent quickly stood out to him as his own: "'Wheere dun yo' come fro?' I axt 'em. 'Owdham an' Mossley,' they said. 'Wheere are yo' goin to?' 'To Fall River.' 'Han yo' shops to go to?' 'Nawe, but we'n friends theere.'[sic] See Ibid., 19.

established and most militant members. Blacklisted workers, for instance, were always first in line for emigration benefits, and generally received more money than their peers.[43] As the labor correspondent for the United Kingdom's governmental "Board of Trade" reported to Parliament in 1889, emigration benefits were generally set aside "for members who have become marked men, or as the society terms them 'victims,' for taking an active part in the society's business."[44] Older workers, having contributed more to the general fund, made up the other primary recipient of emigration funds. Overall, then, the emigrants unions sent to America tended to be militant, older, and well-versed in union principles. In short, the very institutional basis from which British emigration sprang insured that New Bedford and Fall River millowners were soon hungrily taking in workers with some very unexpected ideological baggage.[45]

Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that almost every late-nineteenth-century South Coast labor leader got his or her start in the British trade union movement, often having been forced out for their radical activities. Thomas Evans (widely known around Fall River as "the old labor agitator," a moniker which even marks his grave) was the Chartist secretary of the Bolton weavers before getting blacklisted after an 1853 strike; he migrated to the United States, where his penchant for debate, labor reform, and attempts to organize the Fall River weavers got him again blacklisted in 1888.[46] John Norris, indicted by a Fall River grand jury for his strike activities, was forced to admit that he had also "incurred the displeasure of the manufacturers"

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[43] Erickson, "The Encouragement of Emigration by British Trade Unions, 1850-1900," 266.

[44] Parliamentary Papers, 1889, X, *Report from the Select Committee on Colonization*, 92-93, quoted in Cohen, *American Management and British Labor*, 100.

[45] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 201.

[46] "A Good Send-Off," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Mar. 23, 1893 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 378-380; John Thayer Lincoln, *The City of the Dinner-Pail* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1909), 54-56; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 1; Philip T. Silvia Jr., "The Spindle City: Labor, Politics, and Religion in Fall River, Massachusetts, 1870-1905 (PhD diss., Fordham University, 1973), 464.

back home in England, inciting his departure for Fall River just a few months previous.[47] Thomas Webb had to flee Ireland due to his involvement in the Chartist-linked Irish independence rebellion of 1848; he eventually became a leading figure of the Fall River weavers, founded the *Trades Union and Fall River Weavers' Journal*, and was elected state senator as part of the Fall River "Labor Campaign Club" in 1879.[48] John Golden, blacklisted in Lancashire, left for Fall River in 1884; he eventually became treasurer of the Fall River Mule Spinners' Union before becoming president of the United Textile Workers, a position he held for nearly two decades.[49] Robert Howard, an officer of the Stockport Spinners' Society in England, was blacklisted and forced to emigrate in 1873; he became a spinner at the Flint Mills before becoming secretary and de facto leader of the Fall River Mule Spinners' Union, a position which catapulted him to eight terms as state senator from 1886 to 1892.[50]

British emigrant workers soon developed a richly deserved reputation for union radicalism, acting as the principal architects of numerous labor strikes. It was British workmen who led the Fall River strikes of 1868, 1870, 1875, 1879 as well as the New Bedford strikes of 1867 and 1877.[51] Similarly, the successful 1874 struggle for a 10-hour law in Massachusetts was widely credited to British activism. "Were American agitators for this measure[?]," labor

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[47] John Norris to the *Voice of Industry*, Apr. 7, 1848 quoted in Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 85

[48] "Meeting of the Weavers at City Hall," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 1, 1868 in *Victorian Vistas: Fall River, 1865-1885: As Viewed Through its Newspaper Accounts*, ed. Philip T. Silvia, Jr. (Fall River: R. E. Smith Printing Co., 1987),123-127; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 130, 279; Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 157.

[49] "John Golden Dead After Breakdown," *New York Times*, Jun. 10, 1921; Cohen, *American Management and British Labor*, 102.

[50] "The Troubles Of Labor: Testimony Before The Senate Committee Yesterday," *New York Times*, Aug. 26, 1883; "Big Success," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, July 11, 1892 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 323-326; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 311.

[51] Cohen, *American Management and British Labor*, 102.

reformer Jennie Collins wrote shortly after the bill's passage, "No! I am ashamed to confess it. The men who have worked and struggled for this law…were of British birth, born under monarchy," adding, derisively, "no graduates of Harvard came to help these men."[52] Rumors began to fly around millowners that it was actually their manufacturing competitors in Britain (and not its unions) that had conspired to send them their most belligerent and obstinate workers.[5354]

"Unassimilated" British workmen became synonymous with Fall River and New Bedford labor radicalism. Such complaints were of course rampant in the report the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor eventually filed on Fall River. "We built many mills in 1871-72, and imported operatives rapidly," one Fall River manufacturer reported, adding that "The whole trouble consists in the fact that they brought their habits with them…It is with this unassimilated material that all the trouble originates."[55] A Fall River clergyman similarly complained of "foreigners" bringing "their Old World ideas and prejudices…laboring under a hereditary feeling of discontent…filled with communistic notions" and never "satisfied with fair wages."[56] One citizen similarly wrote to the newspaper to complain that "the leading agitators in this movement seem to look at the laws and customs in this country with an intention of turning them upside

[52] *Lawrence Journal and Citizen*, May 9, 1874 quoted in Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 134.

[53] Rowland Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America, 1790-1950* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 96.

[54] "A Working Woman's Observations Among the Operatives," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Oct. 6, 1875, in *Victorian Vistas… 1865-1885*, 267-269.

[55] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 195.

[56] Ibid., 369.

down suddenly with one fell swoop."[57] Indeed, as historian Mary Blewett has noted, so widely recognized was the "Lancashire" penchant for labor radicalism that, when Fall River's Lizzie Borden was first confronted by police concerning her possible role in the infamous 1892 double murder of her parents, she quickly fabricated a story about an argument between her father—Andrew Borden, one of Fall River's wealthiest textile industrialists—and one of his English workmen the morning of the murder.[58] Although Lizzie later dropped the frantic lie, it is nonetheless telling that the always frosty relationship between Fall River millowners and their British workers gave the young girl her first scapegoat.[59] Her defense would later fight to insure that all Lancashire men were left off the jury.[60]

More to the point, British workers imported many of the labor protest methods that had made their unions such a force to be reckoned with back home. Amidst the Fall River "Long Vacation" of 1875, for instance, Fall River workers put on an old-fashioned "bread riot," marching down the street bearing bobbins and stolen loaves of bread tied to poles (a Lancashire tradition), shouting "Bread!" and "Tyranny!". One "vacationing" woman ultimately struck Fall River's mayor in the head with a loaf of bread.[61] The British penchant for public mockery was certainly on display in an 1878 parade of 20,000 workers, which saw one of Fall River's

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[57] "Saxon," Letter to the Editor, Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 3, 1875 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 252-3.

[58] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 307.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., 308.

[61] Ibid., 133, 220; "The Fall River Strike: Riotous Demonstrations By The Dissatisfied Operatives The Militia Called Out Quiet Restored Meetings Called In Boston To Denounce The Oppression Of The Employers," *New York Times*, Sep. 28, 1875; "Importation of Social Troubles," *Globe* (Toronto), Oct. 25, 1875; "Labor Riots: Fall River Ablaze With Excitement….Communistic Principles Rampant Throughout The City…," *Boston Daily Globe,* Sept. 28, 1875.

principal mill agents denounced as another "Lord Leitrim"—an infamous English landlord in Ireland—and featured signs that ranged from "If cheap labor be the basis of prosperity, why is China not the head of civilization?" to "[Fall River] Board of Trade—Qualifications for membership: Fools in business management, asses in statesmanship, idiots in political economy and traitors to Republican institutions."[62]

Bursts of real and mock violence towards strikebreakers and owners were also widely cited as representing another classically Lancashire method of enforced labor solidarity.[63] During an 1889 strike, for instance, unionists burned mill superintendents in effigy and, confronted with a group of strikebreakers, "followed the [fleeing] weavers," a newspaper reported, "surrounded [them]… and proceeded to pound [them] unmercifully."[64] Fall River unionists also attempted to shame strikebreakers by sending their names to unions back home in England.[65] Even organizationally, Massachusetts textile unions were self-consciously modeled on their "sister" unions back in England, which workers frequently used as a model to guide action.[66] New Bedford textile workers, for instance, set up a cooperative store on the English "Rochdale"

[62] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 252–253.

[63] See, for example, "Disgraceful Disturbance of the Peace," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Aug. 24, 1870 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 181; "The Shooting Near Slade Mill," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, July 28, 1879 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 350-1; "A 'Knobstick' Assaulted," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Aug. 11, 1879 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 355; "Shameful Outrage," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Sept. 18, 1879 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 366-367.

[64] "The First Disturbance," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, March 23, 1889 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900,* 160

[65] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 256.

[66] "Meeting of the Weavers at City Hall," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 1, 1868 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 123-127; Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 166.

model: its annual meetings took the form of "old fashioned English tea meetings" with food, entertainment, and rousing choruses of "God Save the Queen."[67]

Unfortunately, this distinctly "British" approach to labor activism also made these unions notoriously insular and, ironically, unyieldingly xenophobic. Years later, New Bedford worker Jack Rubinstein recalled this particular aspect of British labor activism, relaying an especially egregious conversation he overheard from a group of British operatives: "they were talking about the bloody foreigners, the bloody this and the bloody that…they were talking about the French Canadians who had probably…been living in and around New Bedford for several generations…whereas these people themselves had not even acquired American citizenship 'cause the English didn't readily give up their citizenship."[68] Moreover, the hierarchical division of mill labor itself, with skilled British mulespinners and weavers possessing the best jobs, helped reinforce these xenophobic predilections. As Rubinstein noted, "the general attitude that skilled English speaking [workers] have to non-skilled foreigners, [is] as an inferior group," adding "their whole group was made up primarily of Anglo-Saxons and they have the better jobs."[69] Job hierarchies—as well as the very different goals and ideologies with which French Canadians and Portuguese workers arrived—would make interethnic harmony a difficult project in South Coast Massachusetts.

Importantly, though, as Rubinstein's observations attest, British workers' commitments to trade union radicalism had little to do with a more thoroughgoing commitment to staying in

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[67] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 214.

[68] Jack Rubinstein, interview by Daniel Georgianna, Dumont, NJ, Sept. 2, 1980, transcript, Folder 8, Box 1, MC 9, New Bedford Textile Worker's Strike of 1928 Oral History Interviews and Research Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *NB1928-UMASSD*]**.

[69] Jack Rubinstein, interview by "Gale," Aug. 19, 1980, transcript, Folder 8, Box 1, MC 9, *NB1928-UMASSD*.

Fall River (a trait often invidiously compared to the "sojourner" status of other ethnic groups, such as the French Canadians or the Portuguese). Indeed, during strikes, or if wages in America dipped, emigrant British workers were equally quick to return to England.[70] In fact, amidst labor struggles, American unions often explicitly offered provisions that "if any discouraged persons…wish to return to the old country, we can find a way to send them back."[71] Similarly, during an 1875 Fall River strike, just as they had in Lancashire, workers decided "the best system of fighting the battle was by thinning the labor market by emigration," resolving to spend surplus strikes funds on "sending home to England such persons as are willing to go."[72]

For these British immigrants, labor migration was just another tactic workers had at their disposal to exact as much as they could from their circumstances. After all, from the beginning, British unions had employed emigration not as an end in itself, but as a labor market manipulation tactic to drive English wages up. Rates of British emigration were thus incredibly volatile, rising and cresting with the ups and downs of the British and American economies.[73] (See Figure 3.1) Information on prevailing wages, labor conditions, and unemployment was ceaselessly sent back and forth between Fall River and Lancashire workers.[74] When conditions in

[70] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 242, 320; McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change," 235.

[71] "Meeting of the Weavers at City Hall," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 1, 1868 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 123-127.

[72] "The Fall River Strike," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 6, 1875 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 253-255.

[73] Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America, 1790-1950.*, 19–20.

[74] See, for example, "Meeting of the Weavers at City Hall," Feb. 1, 1868, Unidentified Fall River Newspaper in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 123-127; Charles Bradlaugh, "Hints to Emigrants to the United States," in *Miscellanies* (London: A. and H. Bradlaugh Bonner, 1899), 21; McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change," 221; Cohen, *American Management and British Labor*, 178.

America declined, emigration was halted, and workers were quick to return home.[75] As one Fall River weaver (formerly of Darwen) explained to an English visitor, "This is the right side of the water," adding that although "I would sooner live in England, and if I can save enough to keep me out of the mill, I'll go home before I die," Fall River was, simply put, "better for making money," at least at that moment.[76]

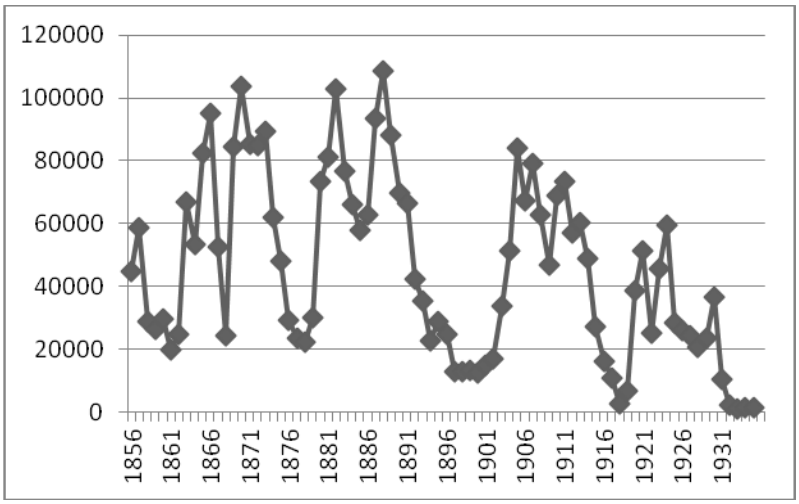

Figure 3.1: English Immigration to the United States, by year, 1855-1935
Immigration rates were hugely sporadic, mapping on to the ebbs and flows of both the British and American economies. Amidst rapid expansion of the Fall River textile industry, 1870 saw 103,677 English immigrate to the United States. Five years later, less than half that number came. By 1878, only 22,150 immigrated, before springing back up to 103,991 once more, five years later.[77]

[75] For instance, when one English worker was asked about emigration amidst an 1887 recession, his response revealed how closely British workers kept tabs on the American market: "There has been no inducement to go to Fall River. I read the American returns regularly, and they are worse off than we are, and through the same cause." See Gold and Silver Commission, *Second Report of the Royal Commission* (Eyere and Spottswoode: 1888), 97.

[76] T.M. Young, *The American Cotton Industry* (London: 1902), 17-18 quoted in Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America, 1790-1950*, 138.

[77] Robert Barde, Susan B. Carter, and Richard Sutch, "Immigrants, by country of last residence – Europe: 1820–1997," Table Ad106-120 in *Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition*, eds. Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

British workers were deeply committed to labor reform and trade unionism. But their commitment had little to do with "the antagonistic spirit that is in [their] blood," as one millowner put it, nor any unique dedication to staying on American soil.[78] Instead, British labor radicalism emerged from the institutional context of their very migration to the United States and the ways in which a tightly organized British union movement explicitly encouraged the emigration of its most militant members.

British labor militancy would have crucial consequences for the development of the state's textile industry. But it also ensured that British workers would face off against another group of workers who came from an entirely different social context with entirely different ideas about how to go about reshaping industrial Massachusetts: namely, the French Canadians.

"Docile" French Canadians

There is no clear consensus on any single event or factor that set the foundation for the massive influx of French Canadians to New England in the late-nineteenth century. Key precedents were likely set by the Acadian expulsions of the 1750s, in which England, apprehensive over its seemingly tenuous hold on the former French colonies, forcibly scattered the people of Acadia (covering the Gaspé Peninsula as well as present-day New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and the northern fringes of Maine), dispersing them all over North America.[79] Incidentally, it was this expulsion which gave rise to the "Cajun" community of New

[78] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…1882*, 206.

[79] Robert G. Leblanc, "The Acadian Migrations" in *French America: Mobility, Identity, and Minority Experience Across the Continent*, eds. Dean R. Louder and Eric Waddell (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 164; Mason Wade, "The Acadian Background" in *Steeples and Smokestacks: A Collection of Essays on the Franco-American Experience in New England*, ed. Claire Quintal (Worcester, MA: Assumption College, Institut Français, 1996), 20.

Orleans (a corruption of the name "Cadien," derived from "Acadian"); but at least a quarter of these Acadian resettlements took place in Massachusetts.[80] The Canadian government, for its part, would point to the fallout of the failed independence rebellions of 1837 and 1838 as first pushing French Canadians southward.[81] Surely the most proximate cause, however, were the attempts of Massachusetts manufacturers to import struggling French Canadian farmers as strikebreakers in order to undercut British union organizing efforts.[82]

It is no coincidence that French Canadians would become the target of ceaseless English vitriol: they were imported precisely to serve as a foil to their pugnacious workmates. Indeed, the origins of "French Village" in Fall River date to the first major importation of French Canadians to the city: the attempt of Fall River's American Linen mills to introduce French Canadians in order to break an 1879 strike, putting migrants up in tenements on Broadway, Division, and Bay Streets.[83] As one agent of the Boston and Albany Railroad confessed at an 1881 Massachusetts

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[80] Carl A. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877* (University Press of Mississippi: 1992); C. Ray Brassier, "Cajuns" in *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jan Brunvand (Garland, 1996), 222.

[81] Legislative Assembly of Canada, *Rapport du Comité Spécial de L'Assemblée Législative nommé pour s'enquérir des causes et de l'importance de l'Émigration qui a lieu tous les ans du Bas-Canada vers Les États-Unis* (Montréal: 1849), 5, Loc. S406, Canadien Collection, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montréal, Canada **[hereafter *CC-MCGILL*]**.

[82] Importantly, some South Coast and Lowell manufacturers had sought to bring French Canadians to the United States to solve Civil War labor shortages, but their numbers were never tremendous. "There were but few French Canadians [in Lowell] prior to 1865," historian Charles Cowley reflected in 1881, but this all changed when Samuel P. Martin was "employed by some of the manufacturing companies to visit his native Province of Quebec to present to the people the advantages to be derived from a change of base." Millowner Thomas Borden of Fall River similarly dispatched E.J. Fay to northern New York and French Canada in 1865 to search out labor: he contracted out seven women to be sent back to Fall River. Ultimately, though, it was not until manufacturers found themselves locked in "constant turmoil" with their British workmen that French Canada emerged as a place of great labor recruitment opportunity. See Earl F. Mulderink, *New Bedford's Civil War* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 161; "The Foreign Colonies of Lowell, by Charles Cowley…Read Feb. 15, 1881," in *Contributions of the Old Residents' Historical Association*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Lowell: 1882), 175; Silvia, "Spindle City," 56.

[83] Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 7, 173; John T. Cumbler, "The City and Community: The Impact of Urban Forces on Working Class Behavior," CRSO Working Paper #143, http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/50918/143.pdf?sequence=1

Bureau of Labor hearing, the past two years had seen "no less than one hundred superintendents or agents of mills" apply "for French help, one mill asking for as many as fifty families."[84]

Coming largely as strikebreakers, these migrants made few friends with their working-class peers upon their arrival in Massachusetts. When the Stafford and Crescent Mills of Fall River imported some 70-80 French Canadians in 1879, they were greeted at the train station by, as the newspaper reported, "a crowd of women, children, and a few men…Rocks were thrown in perfect showers, and one of the men…was so roughly assaulted that a man who witnessed the whole affair said he did not expect to see him come out of it alive."[85] By the late-nineteenth century, the word "knobstick," originally a Lancashire term for strikebreaker, had become simply another word for "French Canadian" in Fall River.[86]

With the exception of the mere fact that millowners first set the wheels of migration turning in Canada, however, French Canadians' collective journey to Massachusetts could not have been any different from their British forerunners. Foremost, in stark contrast to British institutional support for emigration, Canadian state and local officials roundly condemned the practice.[87] As early as 1849, the Canadian legislative assembly had convened a special committee to investigate the "calamity" of emigration.[88] It was a "mutilation of the homeland,"

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[84] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report*, 13, 17.

[85] "Shameful Outrage," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Sept. 18, 1879 in *Victorian Vistas...1865-1885*, 366-7; MBSL, Public Document No. 15, *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor, January, 1880* (Boston: Rand, Avery, and Co., 1880), 55.

[86] Yves Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England: Dreams and Realities* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion, 2004), 59.

[87] Marcel Hamelin, *Les Premières Années du Parlementarisme Québécois (1867-1878)* (Les Presses de l'Univeristé Laval, 1974), 73-117.

[88] Legislative Assembly of Canada, *Rapport du Comité Spécial de L'Assemblée Législative…*, 3-4, *CC-MGILL*. Original Text : "une véritable calamité pour le Bas-Canada."

Canadian journalist and future senator Laurent-Olivier David put it in 1871.[89] Catholic leaders were even more vehement in their opposition to emigration: "How many of our compatriots will have lost their language, perhaps even their faith, to become Canadian in name only[?]," the Bishop of Trois-Rivières, Louis-François Richer Laflèche, asked in 1866.[90] Instead, Laflèche suggested it better to encourage farmers to simply be "contented with what they have. And if there is not enough, let us suffer—suffering has its merit."[91] As the Premier of Canada East, George-Étienne Cartier reputedly put it, "c'est la canaille qui s'en va"—"it is the scoundrel that goes."[92]

The issue, of course, was that emigration ran counter to the very heart of what so many Franco-Americans saw as their abiding mission on the North American continent: ousting the English in order to reclaim a French national territory in the New World.[93] Such feelings of betrayal were even more acute for Acadian leaders hoping to retake the lands from which they had been forcibly expelled. "How I regret, how I feel my heart beat with pain," Rev. M. F. Richard declared at the first National Acadian Convention in 1881, "seeing our Acadian youth," upon "reaching the age they could render such grand services to the fatherland, voluntarily take

[89] Laurent-Olivier David, "Triste Bilan," *L'opinion Publique* (Montréal, Québec), Nov. 2, 1871 quoted in Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 30.

[90] Nive Voisine, *Louis-François Laflèche. Deuxième évèque de Trois-Rivières* (Saint-Hyacinthe, Edisem, 1980), 106 quoted in Ibid., 32.

[91] Adélard Dugré, "Mgr. LaFleche: Le Patriote," *L'Action Française* (Sept. 7, 1924) 171; Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 41. Original Text: "Que l'on se contente de ce que l'on a. Et si l'on n'a pas assez, sachons souffrir, la souffrance a son mérite."

[92] Robert Rumilly, *Histoire Des Franco-Américains* (L'Union Saint-Baptiste D'Amérique, 1958), 41; J.L.K. Laflamme, "Les Canadiens Aux États-Unis," *La Revue Canadienne* 37 (June 1901), 487.

[93] Pierre Anctil, "The Franco-Americans of New England," in *French America*, 35.

the path of exile, and turn their backs to the church."[9495] "If Acadians worked half as hard on their farms as they have to in a foreign land," Father Camille Lefebvre put it dismissively in 1889, "they would soon become rich and independent…Why then emigrate to the United States?."[96]

Despite the immense social pressure to stay in Canada, most serious observers knew the answer to Lefebvre's question: more often than not, French Canadians left precisely so they could save their farms back home. After all, the economic changes of the mid-nineteenth century were an unmitigated disaster for Canadian agricultural producers. Most immediately, Canadian farmers were, over the course of only decades, suddenly forced to compete with the far more productive farms of the American West, whose produce could now be daily taken to the industrial East on the very same railroads the Boston Associates had bankrolled in the 1850s and 1860s.[97] Wheat production was hardest hit: one farmer estimated in 1880 that Québec and Ontario soils generally yielded only half as much as competing lands in the western prairies.[98]

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[94] *Conventions Nationales des Acadiens*, comp. Ferdinand J. Robidoux, vol. 1 (Shédia, NB: 1907), 123. Original Text: "La première occupation de nos ancêtres a été défricher le sol et au retour de l'exil ils ont recommencé sur de nouvelles terres le travail ardu."

[95] Ibid. Original Text: "Que mon âme s'attriste lorsque je considère notre jeunesse, arrivée à l'âge de pouvoir rendre de si grands services à la patrie, prendre volontairement le chemin de l'exil et tourner le dos à l'église."

[96] *Le Moniteur Acadian*, Jan. 4, 1889, quoted in Fernand Arsenault, "Acadians and Emigration" in *Steeples and Smokestacks*, 31.

[97] John McCallum, *Unequal Beginnings: Agriculture and Economic Development in Quebec and Ontario until 1870* (University of Toronto Press, 1980), 35-38, 51-52; Alfred D. Chandler Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977), 209–215.

[98] *Reports of Tenant Farmers' Delegates on the Dominion of Canada As a Field for Settlement* (Department of Agriculture of the Government of Canada, Turner and Dunnett, Printers, Liverpool, 1880), 45, Lawrence Lande Collection of Canadiana, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montréal, Canada **[hereafter *LLCC-MCGILL*]**; Bruno Ramirez, *Crossing the 49th Parallel: Migration from Canada to the United States, 1900-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 6.

The American Civil War, too, had an enormous impact on the Canadian countryside. As southern secession brought pro-industrial American Republicans to power, it catalyzed the passage of a number of stiff new tariffs designed to encourage domestic industry. As a result, Canada's reciprocal trade treaty with the United States was quite suddenly quashed in 1866, leading to a collapse in agricultural prices and a sharp economic contraction.[99] Poverty became endemic on Canadian farms. "My parents talked about how little they received in Canada for a barrel of potatoes or fish," one Massachusetts French-Canadian remembered in 1983: "when they would come to sell it they were paid so little that it was hardly worth selling, so they put it on the ground to use as fertilizer on their farms. They never made much of a living there because they were always working for nothing."[100] In a world of interconnected capital, the market for Canadian agricultural goods was undermined by the very same transformations that had devastated textile production in Lowell while simultaneously catalyzing the buildup of the New Bedford textile industry.

Such market disruptions only compounded the larger structural issues that beset French Canadian agriculture: namely, poor soil, lack of land, and lack of market access.[101] Indeed, when Canada paid to tour a delegation of potential British farmers throughout the Canadian countryside in an effort to induce them and their countrymen to immigrate, although astounded by the productivity of the Canadian Midwest, they had little good to say about Québécois farmland. "There is nothing in this district which makes it a desirable one," one reported: "Some

[99] Neil Boucher, "Acadians and Emigration: The Case of the Acadians of Southwest Nova Scotia," in *Steeples and Smokestacks*, 56.

[100] Zoël Richard, oral interview, Fitchburg, Dec. 12, 1983 quoted in Paul D. LeBlanc, "From Farm to Factory: Acadians in Fitchburg, Massachusetts (1880-1910)," in *Steeples and Smokestacks,* 182.

[101] Roger Bernard, *Le Travail et L'Espoir: Migrations, Développement Économique et Mobilité Social, Qubec/Ontario, 1900-1985* (Le Nordir, 1988), 77-78.

of the land is marshy, and some stony and a good deal still uncleared."[102] The land was "quite unsuited for agricultural purposes," another recorded.[103] And, as if already realizing the fate of these communities, another noted that the journey from New England to Canada took one "through the great cotton manufacturing towns of America, and also through a very miserable farming country."[104]

Not only were soils poor, but farms themselves were often small and poorly platted. It was the French "fondness for society" and the desire to stay near kin, another British observer concluded, that ensured that most farms were arranged in "long narrow strips" of "small holdings," sometimes only wide enough "for a house and stretching back a couple of miles."[105] The narrow plotting of French Canadian farms also made it nearly impossible to divide land amongst inheritors. As one state report put it, a significant class of emigrants consisted of "young people from good farming families" who were forced to leave due to the "difficulty for the parents in procuring land with which to establish their children."[106] As emigrant Elmire Boucher would later recall, her family ventured to Fall River in 1899 because their farmland in Bic, Québec—"rather rocky, in the mountains"—was "too small for the family": two parents and 16 children.[107]

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[102] *Reports of Tenant Farmers' Delegates,* 5, *LLCC-MCGILL.*

[103] Ibid., 132.

[104] Ibid., 83.

[105] Ibid., 39, 83.

[106] Legislative Assembly of Canada, *Rapport du Comité Spécial de L'Assemblée Législative…*, 12, *CC-MGILL*. Original Text: "Jeunes gens appartenant à de bonnes familles de cultivateurs" leaving because of "difficulté pour les parents de se procurer des terres pour y établir leurs enfants."

[107] "Elmire Boucher: 'C'était le besoin qui faisait travailler les femmes'," 1981-1982 in Jacques Rouillard, *Ah les États!: Les Travailleurs Canadiens-Français dans l'Industrie Textile de la Nouvelle-Angleterre d'après le témoignage des Derniers Migrants* (Boréal Express, 1985), 87. Original Text: "C'était une terre plutôt rocheuse, c'était des montagnes. La terre, 16 arpents sur 40, était trop petite pour la famille."

Moreover, for those who attempted to make do in French Canada, overcoming such constraints required capital, and with little to go around, most farmers found themselves quickly locked into cycles of debt and poverty. Credit through local storekeepers and merchants became the source for everything from mechanical equipment and land to seeds and livestock.[108] With a captive audience, however, moneylenders often attached brutal terms to credit. Loan terms were often unworkably short. "What do you want a farmer to do with your money, due in three months?," a local by the name of "M. Ossaye" wrote to the *Gazette des Campagnes* of Québec in 1861: "The land does not pay us for a year…How can we pay when we have nothing to sell?"[109] Moreover, interest rates were often injuriously high. The "ruin" of the farmer was ensured "by his falling into the greedy hands of men whom the love of profit drives to dishonest speculations," Samuel Gendron complained to the Canadian assembly: "How can a farmer pay 10%, 15%, or 20% interest[?]," he asked, adding that it was "the plague of usury which gnaws at the countryside…[forcing] the *habitant* to leave the field…and take the road to the United States."[110] Many early migrants to the United States came under just these circumstances, hoping a bout of factory work might help settle debts back home before the new harvest.[111]

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[108] Yves Roby, "The Economic Evolution of Quebec and the Emigrant (1850-1929)," in *Steeples and Smokestacks,* 11; Pierre Anctil, "The Franco-Americans of New England," 49.

[109] "Credit Foncier," *Gazette Des Campagnes* (Kamouraska, Bas-Canada), Dec. 2, 1861; Yves Roby, "The Economic Evolution of Quebec," 11. Original Text: "Que voulez-vous qu-un fermier fasse de votre argent remboursable à trois mois. La terre ne nous paie qu'à un an et souvent dix-huit mois de crédit. Comment rembourser quand nous n'avons rien à vendre."

[110] Yves Roby, "The Economic Evolution of Quebec," 12

[111] As one French Canadian put it at an Oct. 25, 1881 Massachusetts hearing, "My impression is, so far as I have been able to observe, that there are farmers, who, owing to bad crops or to various other things, get a little involved: they are obliged to borrow money; and they mortgage their property, and then they come here with a view of earning enough money to go back, and take up the mortgage, and settle down again." See MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report*, 60.

And, despite the best efforts of Canadian authorities, once French Canadians developed social connections in the United States, a process of chain migration set in, constantly drawing migrants southward.[112] The classic 1913 French Canadian nationalist novel, *Maria Chapdelaine*, by Louis Hémon, nicely evoked the lure of emigrant connections in America: "When I was a girl," young Maria's mother tells her, "Pretty nearly everyone went off to the States. Farming did not pay as well as it does now, prices were low, we were always hearing of the big wages earned over there in the factories, and every year one family after another sold out for next to nothing and left Canada."[113] One oft-repeated migration story tells of a baker, Napoléon Lord, of St. Hilaire, who, after noticing that all his customers were gone, decided to simply give up and follow them to Massachusetts.[114] Oral histories of French Canadian immigrants almost always

[112] My approach to chain migrations has been heavily shaped by Charles Tilly, "Transplanted Networks," in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, ed. Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (Oxford University Press, 1990).

[113] Louis Hémon, *Maria Chapdelaine*, trans. W.H. Blake (Macmillan, 1922), 73-74.

[114] Jacques Ducharme, *The Shadows of the Trees: The Story of French-Canadians in New England* (Harper & Brothers, 1943), 47-48; Frances H. Early, "The Settling-In Process: The Beginnings of the Little Canada in Lowell, Massachusetts, in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Steeples and Smokestacks,* 91.

Having social connections in the United States also ensured that somebody would be waiting to greet potential emigrants upon arrival. "The annual spring hegira of French Canadians to this country has begun," one Fall River newspaper reported matter-of-factly in 1887, adding that the "greetings between friends are of the most effusive character, and everything is done by those residents here to assist the immigrants." Further testifying to the importance of chain migration is the fact that emigrants from particular Canadian locales predominated in different New England cities. As historian Yves Roby points out, "Maine was populated by Beaucerons and Rimouskois; the residents of Woonsocket and Southbridge were, for the most part, natives of Saint-Ours and Sorel; those of Worcester came from the Richelieu Valley, Montreal and Saint-Hyacinthe; their compatriots in Salem and Fall River were natives of Rimouski and Sainte-Flavie." See Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England Dreams and Realities*, 20; "Arrival of Immigrants," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Mar. 24, 1887 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 59; Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship Between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 114–116; Ramirez, *Crossing the 49th Parallel*, 76.

record the presence of receptive families and friends waiting in New England as an important precondition of the emigration process.[115]

The last four decades of the nineteenth century ultimately saw some 327,000 French Canadians leave for New England.[116] In 1860, Fall River and New Bedford together had 10 French Canadian residents; by 1900, New Bedford had 24,800 and Fall River had 33,000.[117] By the early-twentieth century, Fall River, Massachusetts had become, with the exception of Montréal, the largest concentration of French speakers on the American continent.[118] All told, from 1840 to 1930, nearly one million French Canadians left for the United States.[119]

But, driven as they were by the vagaries of agricultural indebtedness, French Canadians remained a peripatetic bunch. Immigration to New England spiked in moments of prosperity, such as the eras of 1865-1873, 1879-1882, 1882-1888, and 1891-1893. Similarly, moments of recession sent migrants packing back home, such as the panics of 1873, 1884, 1890, and 1893.[120] As Jos Morin, an 81-year-old emigrant, put it in an 1978 interview, "[French Canadians] would make a little bit of money to pay their debts, then return…they moved for three to four years in

[115] Family connections, for instance, loom large in immigrants' explanations as to why they came to Massachusetts in a series of surveys conducted by Josephine Perrault in the early 1980s. "Shop Operator" Martha Cayer's family came to Fall River because "they had other relations in Fall River"; textile operative Maria Bernier's family came to New Bedford around 1904 because they had "relatives living in this area"; and Roland Pion had "friends in area" when he came in 1918. See Martha J. Cayer, oral history survey by Josephine Perrault, Nov. 3, 1981, Oral History Project Coordinated by Josephine Perrault, 1981-1984, French Institute, Emmanuel d'Alzon Library, Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts **[hereafter *OHJP-FIAC*]**; Marie Delina Bernie, oral history survey by Josephine Perrault, Apr.3, 1984, *OHJP-FIAC*; Roland Aime Pion, oral history survey by Josephine Perrault, Aug. 25, 1983, *OHJP-FIAC*.

[116] Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England Dreams and Realities*, 12.

[117] Ibid., 24.

[118] Yukari Takai, *Gendered Passages: French-Canadian Migration to Lowell, Massachusetts, 1900-1920* (Peter Lang, 2008), 24.

[119] Stephen Brooks, "Canada-United States Relations," in *The Oxford Handbook of Canadian Politics,* eds. John C. Courtney and David E. Smith (Oxford University Press, 2010), 381.

[120] Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England Dreams and Realities*, 19.

one direction, three to four years to the other; they practically had no place to call home."[121] Joseph Maltais's childhood displayed this affinity for constant motion all too well: born in 1876 in a small village on the Gaspé Peninsula, his family left Canada when he was five years old for the United States before returning to Québec the next spring. He returned again to Fall River to work at the Kerr Mill at age seven; his family then moved to New Hampshire to work at another mill for three years before moving to New York, returning to Fall River by the time Maltais turned ten.[122] Not surprisingly, demographic studies of French Canadian emigrants have shown turnover rates in certain communities as high as 50 percent every three years.[123] Indeed, although the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor's infamous analogy of the French Canadians as the "Chinese of the Eastern States" was relentlessly repeated and criticized, less frequently quoted was the Bureau's justification, which had little to do with either race or politics: "their purpose is merely to sojourn a few years as aliens, touching us only at a single point, that of work, and, when they have gathered out of us what will satisfy their ends, to get them away to whence they came." [124] It was for this reason the Bureau classified them as "invaders" rather than "stable settlers." The choice of words may have been extremely offensive, but on this point, at least, the Bureau was not entirely incorrect.

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[121] Jos Marin, interview by Pierre Anctil, Jan. 16, 1978, quoted in Pierre Anctil, "Aspects of Class Ideology in a New England Ethnic Minority: The Franco-Americans of Woonsocket, Rhode Island (1865-1929)," (PhD diss., New School for Social Research, 1980), 65. Original Text: "Y faisaient un peu d'argent pour payer leurs dettes, pis y retorunaient…ça voyageait trois-quatre ans d'un bord, trois-quatre ans de l'autre, ça avait quasiment pas de chez eux. "

[122] Joseph Maltais, interview, Aug. 9, 1964, J. Tape 17-B, Purrington Oral History Collection, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *POHC-NBWMRL*]**.

[123] The 50 percent figure comes from Biddeford, Maine. Another analysis of Lewiston, Maine found that 67 percent of French Canadians present in the 1879 census were gone ten years later. See Yves Frenette, "La Genèse d'une Communauté Canadienne-Française en Nouvelle-Angleterre : Lewiston, Maine 1800-1880" (PhD diss., Univerité Laval, 1988), 164 cited in Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England Dreams and Realities*, 86; Michale J. Guignard, "The Franco-Americans of Biddeford, Maine," in *Steeples and Smokestacks*, 128.

[124] MBSL, *Twelfth Annual Report…January, 1881*, 469.

Although few records are left to illuminate these late-nineteenth-century migrations from the perspective of emigrants themselves, oral histories of older French Canadians taken in the 1980s, describing the early-twentieth century, confirm how frequently French Canadians zigzagged back and forth across the American continent in search of landed independence. Beatrice Mandeville, for instance, was brought by her parents to the United States in 1900, "because they were poor and there was no way to escape their lives…My parents had a farm, but it was not large enough to support the whole family."[125] At age twelve, her parents brought her back to Canada. After her marriage, Mandeville and her husband obtained a farm, but soon found themselves 11,000 dollars in debt. By 1922, they had emigrated back to Massachusetts, only to again return to Canada in 1925 to reestablish their farm.[126] Similarly, Alma Ouelette's parents came to Massachusetts in 1908 because "they were not able to make a living on their land," with her father insisting that "In four years…we will find enough money to [come back and] repair the house. Then we will work on the earth"—a promise he eventually made good on.[127]

Such narratives also highlight the ways in which return migration was a distinctly *male* affair: women, preferring the freedom that came from working alongside their husbands as equals in the textile mills, were generally far more reluctant to head back to Canada and to the hardscrabble life of the farm. Évelyne Desruisseaux, for instance, emigrated as a child in 1901;

[125] "Béatrice Mandeville: 'Aux États-Unis, il y avait de l'argent ...; au Canada, c'était la pauvreté'," 1981-1982 in *Ah les États!*, 121. Original Text: "Mes parents sont partis parce qu'ils étaient pauvres et qu'il n'y avait pas de moyens de réchapper leur vie...Mes parents avaient une ferme, mais elle n'était pas assez grande pour faire vivre toute la famille."

[126] Ibid., 123. Similarly, Rose-Anna Bellemare, born in 1905 to an emigrant family in Taunton, Massachusetts—twenty miles north of New Bedford—returned with her family to Canada in 1918. Her family then came back to the United States in 1920, and then her and her husband went back to Canada in 1930. See "Rose-Anna Bellemare: 'J'aimais mieux travailler aux États que par ici'," 1981-1982, in *Ah les États!.*

[127] "Alma Ouelette: 'Peu importe où on est on fait notre chez-nous'," 1981-1982, in *Ah les États!,* 139. Original Text: "Ils n'étaient pas capables d'en gagner sur leur terre...La maison avait besoin de grosses réparations. Dans quatre ans, dit mon père, on va se trouver assez d'argent pour faire réparer la maison. Ensuite, on s'arrangera sur la terre."

after marrying, her husband insisted they return in 1923 to St. Sylvère.[128] "He always had the idea of returning to Canada. He was born in the land of his father and he loved Canada. Myself, I never understood working the earth and I loved the United States…but I thought 'He must have his turn.' We came back to Canada."[129] Béatrice Mandeville similarly "liked the United States, better than Canada," because it "was easier to make a living," but found her husband of a totally different mind: "His profession was to be a farmer. He liked that. When you are in town and you work outside, you are not your boss. My husband was Canadian and he liked to have a farm."[130] Ironically, as Mandeville's observations show, these French Canadian men largely wanted all of the same things their British compatriots desired—some semblance of control, independence, and subsistent incomes to support themselves and their families—but they saw it as impossible within the confines of the textile factory. For these migrants, true independence was only available back home on the farm.

But what often escaped observation was the fact that the penchant for French Canadians to return to Canada during moments of American economic depression was not merely a

[128] "Évelyne Desruisseaux: 'Ils nous conseillaient tous de s'en aller aux États-Unis ...'," in *Ah les États!*.

[129] Desruisseaux soon found, however, that life did not improve on the farm: "We were poor and we had debts to pay. The second year of our marriage, hail destroyed all our crops. Oh, it was terrible!" Despite her husband's protests, the couple eventually returned to the United States. See Ibid., 107, 111. Original Text: "Il avait toujours l'idée de retourner au Canada. Il était né sur la terre de son père et il aimait le Canada. Moi, je ne connaissais pas l'ouvrage de la terre et j'aimais les États- Unis. Je l'ai retenu assez longtemps, mais je me disais: 'Il faut qu'il ait son tour. ' On est revenus au Canada." "On était pauvres et on avait des dettes à payer. La deuxième année de notre mariage, la grêle a détruit toute notre récolte."

Rose-Anna Bellemare also "preferred to work in the United States than here [Canada]. I hated working here because there were those who were so self-important." See "Rose-Anna Bellemare: 'J'aimais mieux travailler aux États que par ici'," 116. Original Text: "J'aimais mieux travailler aux États qu'ici. Je haïssais le travail ici, parce qu'il y en avait qui s'en faisaient trop accroire [accroître?]."

[130] "Béatrice Mandeville: 'Aux États-Unis, il y avait de l'argent ...; au Canada, c'était la pauvreté'," 129. Original Text: "Sa profession, c'était d'être cultivateur. Il aimait ça. Quand vous êtes dans les villes et que vous travaillez à l'extérieur, vous n'êtes pas votre boss, tandis que chez nous, on s'organise comme on veut. Mon mari était canadien et il aimait avoir une ferme."

manifestation of their thin investment in the United States, but a product of explicit Canadian state policy. Indeed, since the very beginnings of the "emigration menace," the Canadian government had engaged in a vigorous campaign of "repatriation," explicitly appealing to the nationalist sentiments of French Canadian émigrés in hopes of luring them home. In 1870, for instance, the provincial government of Québec created three "repatriation" offices, giving agents a broad mandate to tour cities all over New England, offering various incentives to emigrants should they agree to return home.[131] The Canadian government passed its own repatriation act in 1873, dispersing numerous agents all over New England in order to, as the chairman of the Commission on Immigration and Colonization put it, "bring back to our country a population so justly entitled to our affection and esteem."[132] Another repatriation act was passed in 1875, setting up a special repatriation colony—"La Patrie" (The homeland)—reserved for French Canadians.[133] The 1875 law also put Ferdinand Gagnon, a prominent Worcester journalist, in charge of repatriation. When Gagnon came to Fall River in February 1875, he was greeted by "a large and enthusiastic" crowd, as he offered "each head of a family who have emigrated from Canada, and who will return and become permanent settlers, one hundred acres of land, with house thereon, and betterments of the land to the amount of $200."[134] Within only a year, 182

[131] Robert G. LeBlanc, "Regional Competition for Franco-American Repatriates, 1870-1930, " *Quebec Studies* 1 (April 1983): 112; Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England Dreams and Realities*, 38.

[132] *Canada: Journals House of Commons 1874*, vol. 8, appendix no. 7, Report of the Commission on Immigration and Colonization, 3 quoted in Leblanc, "Regional Competition," 113

[133] J.I. Little, *Nationalism, Capitalism, and Colonization in Nineteenth-Century Quebec* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 158-173; Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains*, 77.

[134] "Meeting of French Residents Yesterday," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, March 1, 1875 in *Victorian Vistas...1865-1885*, 225.

French Canadian emigrant families had left for the new colony.[135] Gagnon later reported that, "without exaggeration," he had repatriated 2,000 French Canadians with just a year of work.[136]

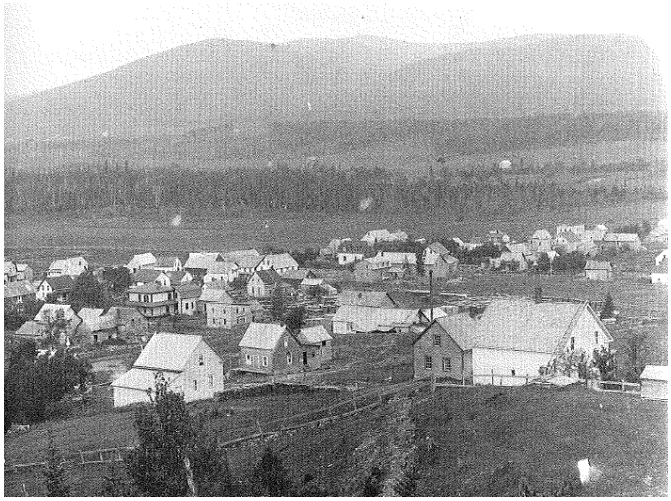

Figure 3.2: "La Patrie": Canada's colony for repatriated French Canadians, circa 1900[137]

Agents and representatives of both the Canadian and Québécois government—seeking both repatriates and new emigrants—also put out no shortage of pro-repatriation propaganda, making all kinds of outrageous claims about the fecundity of Canadian agriculture. In *Dominion of Canada: A Handy Book for Emigrants*, for instance, the Canadian Department of Agriculture attempted to sell the infamously frosty fields of Québec as possessing a "snow…most favourable to agricultural operations. The ground enjoys rest for at least five months of the year, and winter

[135] *General Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture and Public Works of the Province of Quebec, For the Year Ending on the 30th of June 1876* (Quebec: Charles Françis Langlois, 1876), 8.

[136] Ferdinand Gagnon to Pierre Garneau, July 1, 1875, Reproduced in Rumilly, *Histoire des Franco-Américains,* 78.

[137] Little, *Nationalism, Capitalism and Colonization*, xvii.

imparts to the soil that vigour which promotes a sudden and full vegetation."[138] In particular, Canada hoped to turn repatriates into western colonists, reserving five Manitoba towns for French returnees.[139] Pamphlets like *Manitoba: True Stories of Success in Farming*, *Successful Farming in Manitoba: 100 Farmers Testify*, and the French-language *The Grand Canadian West* ("A marvelous spectacle…Such a prodigious fertility and such a great expanse") were widely circulated, extolling fables of farmers who came "with no capital and no knowledge of farming" and had earned literally thousands of dollars. [140] Indeed, when a group of furious local French Canadian leaders convened an official hearing to challenge the Bureau of Labor's damning assertions that the French Canadians were mere sojourning "industrial invaders," they were nonetheless forced to sheepishly confess that most of them had been, or still were, on the Canadian government payroll, touring Massachusetts to offer emigrants "great inducements" to return home.[141]

Pro-repatriation rhetoric not only focused on the productiveness of Canadian agriculture, but on how repatriation would further the broader project of French nationalism. "Ah! Poor

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[138] *Dominion of Canada: A Handy Book for Emigrants* (Ottawa: Department of Agriculture, 1880), 58, Loc. (AED1643) FC 42 D 64 1880, Arkin Collection of Western Canadiana, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montréal, Canada **[hereafter *ACWC-MCGILL*]**.

[139] Peter A. Russell, *How Agriculture Made Canada: Farming in the Nineteenth Century* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 172; Andrew W. Hamilton, "Migration of Population Between Canada and the United States" (master's thesis, McGill University, May 1930), 55.

[140] See for instance, *Dominion of Canada: A Handy Book for Emigrants*, Loc. (AED1643) FC 42 D 64 1880, *ACWC-MCGILL*; *Canada's Centre is Manitoba: The Famous Wheat Growing and Cattle Raising Province of the North-West* (Winnipeg: Department of Agriculture and Immigration, 1901), Loc. 01337, *LLCC-MCGILL*; *Manitoba: True Stories of Success in Farming, told by the Men Themselves* (Department of Agriculture and Immigration), Loc. 1338, Manitoba Collection, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montréal, Canada **[hereafter *MC-MCGILL*]**; Le Département de l'Agriculture, *Puissance du Canada: Le Grand Occident Candien…Informations Pour Ceux Qui Vuelent Emigrer* (Ottawa: 1881), 5. Loc. FC3358.2 P85 1881, *ACWC-MCGILL*. Original Text: "…le Far West a été un spectacle merveilleux…Quelle prodigieuse fertilité et quelle immense étendue. "

[141] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 26-32

Canadians of the American emigration, your fate is sadly different from that of your steadfast brothers loyal to the fatherland!," declared one of repatriation agent Jean-Baptiste Chartier's widely circulated 1871 pro-repatriation pamphlets: "Have you felt the sadness grab your soul, the discouragement climb in your heart?".[142] Ferdinand Gagnon's tactics of repatriation were even less subtle. Citing God's scattering of man after Babel at an 1871 convention in Worcester, Gagnon argued that it was no less than the Almighty who "forced [man] to separate and form nations," and, "giving to each people its part of the globe…instilled in the heart of man the love of the native soil and national institutions." Gagnon thus reminded French Canadians of their duty to "love the soil of the motherland," and to "keep intact our institutions, our morals, our faith, our language."[143] And, in a happy coincidence, thanks to new state programs, it was now easier than ever to fulfill God's will. "Colonization…demands strong arms," Gangnon exhorted audiences: "The government [of Canada] offers real benefits. Land is cheap and conditions of sale and obligatory use are easy."[144] Simply put, "Patriotism" made it a "duty to repatriate."[145]

[142] J.B. Chartier, *La Colonisation dans les Cantons de l'Est* (St. Hyacithe: 1871), 79. Original Text: "Ah! Pauvres Canadiens de l'emigration aux Etats-Unis, que votre sort est tristement different de celui de vos freres demeures fideles a la patrie!...Qui pourra debarrasser le sol de ces troncs seculaires?... Et vous avez senti la tristesse s'emparer de votre ame, le decouragement vous monter au coeur?"

[143] Ferdinand Gagnon, "Discours sur la Naturalisation et le Rapatriement, Prononcé à Worcester, Mass., en Septembre, 1871," in *Ferdinand Gagnon: Sa Vie et Ses Œuvres* (Worcester : 1886), 64-82. Original Text: "Dieu a jugé bon d'assigner à chaque nation sa part de terre. Voyant les hommes s'agglomérer près de l'antique Babel, Il changea leurs langages, ce qui les força de se séparer et de former les nations…Dieu, en donnant à chaque peuple sa part du globe, a en même temps inculqué au cœur de l'homme l'amour du sol natal et des institutions nationales. Cet amour, il trouve place immédiatement après notre amour pour Dieu et pour notre mère. C'est le patriotisme, un des plus beaux sentiments du cœur de l'homme…Nous devons aimer le sol de la patrie, nous devons le défendre, conserver intactes nos institutions, nos mœurs, notre foi, notre langue."

[144] Ibid. Original Text: "La colonisation, qui fait les peuples et les pays, demande des bras vigoureux. Le gouvernement offre des avantages réels. Les terres sont à bas prix et les conditions de vente et d'exploitation obligatoire sont faciles. "

[145] Ibid. Original Text: "Le patriotisme nous fait donc un devoir de nous rapatrier."

Despite this nationalist façade, the reality was that the Canadian government consistently bulked up repatriation programs whenever economic crisis struck the United States. Canadian authorities, for instance, shut down their repatriation efforts in the prosperous early-1870s only to restart again after the 1873 panic. [146] After the 1893 panic, Canadian authorities again rekindled their repatriation efforts, in hopes that, as a Montréal immigration officer put it in 1894, emigrant "experiences in recent times" had helped "these people realize their mistake as they never did before…They will find the plow and the harrow less irksome and more certain of reward for their labor than either lathe or loom."[147] Since even privately founded colonization societies could receive government funds, they sprung up everywhere in late-nineteenth-century Canada; there were so many that they had even convened their own congress by 1898.[148] Some were wildly successful. *La Société De Rapatriement du Lac-Saint-Jean*, working with a $14,000 annual grant from the Canadian government, ultimately distributed 18,658 colonization tickets.[149]

But French Canadians remained difficult to pin down, much to Canada's constant frustration. Gagnon's earliest repatriation efforts, for instance, were only half successful, as 50

[146] Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 132.

[147] Canada: Sessional Papers, 28, 9 (1895). Report of the Department of Interior (1894): 87 quoted in Robert G. LeBlanc, "Colonisation et Repatriement au Lac-Saint-Jean (1895-1905)," *Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française* 38, no. 3 (1985): 390.

[148] La Société Générale de Colonisation et de Rapatriement de la Province de Québec, Map, "Plan de la Paroisse Saint Rodolhe-Monty en Projet dans le comté de Labelle," Sub-sub-series 2, Sub-series 1, Series 171, CA601, Fonds Cour supérieure, District judiciaire de Montréal, Greffes d'arpenteurs, Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales Québec, Viex-Montréal, Montréal, Québec; La Société Générale de Colonisation et de Rapatriement de la Province de Québec, *Relevé de Fermes à Vendre ou a Louer…1912* (1912); LeBlanc, "Regional Competition," 117.

[149] LeBlanc, "Colonisation et Repatriement," 383, 389. Even into the twentieth century, Canadian authorities sought to repatriate French workers during economic downturns and labor strikes. See Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time*, 317.

percent of those repatriated eventually returned to the United States.[150] Canadian authorities fretted constantly about migrants "using" Canada as a mere way-station to endure cyclical economic crisis, rather than a place of permanent settlement.[151] As one annual immigration report lamented three years after the 1902 recession, "When the crisis came to the United States …a larger number than one would believe of our emigrated compatriots returned to Canada," but, "in spite of attempts to retain them, a larger number of those who had come back to us returned…to take advantage of the reopening of the American manufacturies. [sic]"[152] Whether or not they bought the nationalist rhetoric, French Canadian migrants smartly used these "repatriation" programs in order to navigate the recurrent swings of the Massachusetts economy.

Moreover, available evidence suggests that this inherently migratory outlook was in large part responsible for so much of what infuriated British communities and native populations about these French migrants: namely, their insularity, lack of concern for local politics, and their infamously anti-union outlook. For instance, British workers complained endlessly about French abuses of their children: failing to educate them properly and faking documents in order to put them to work below the legal age minimum.[153] But for French Canadian immigrants, this

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[150] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 32.

[151] As deputy Sir Richard Cartwright complained in the House of Commons in March of 1888, "In these 25 years, one in every four of the native-born population of Canada has been compelled to seek a home in a foreign country, and that of all the emigrants whom we have imported at great cost, three out of four have been compelled to follow in the track of that fraction of the native-born population…380,000 [dollars] had made Canada a mere place for transit at our expense." See Hamilton, "Migration of Population Between Canada and the United States," 38-39.

[152] *Canada: Sessional Papers*, 29, 10 (1896). Report of the Department of Interior (1895): 54-56 quoted in LeBlanc "Colonisation et Rapatriement," 392.

[153] "Child Labor," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Sept. 27, 1887 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 85-95. Fall River's George Gunton also frequently denounced the fact that "non-English speaking operatives" used their "ignorance of our language, and the indifference of the authorities" to "flagrantly [evade]…by willful misrepresentation" the ages of their children in order to get them to work: "I myself known parents who actually changed the ages of all their children in their Bible…in order to evade the law and get their children into the mill two years early." See George Gunton, *Wealth and Progress: A Critical Examination of the Wages Question and Its Economic Relation to Social Reform* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1890), 362.

"family" labor strategy made sense in the context of their larger plans to eventually repatriate to Canada. "We are here for two or three years at most and we shall send our children to school in Canada when we return home," was a constant refrain.[154] As one Massachusetts factory owner put it, "We have considerable Canadian-French help," but "many families [come]… with the intention [to] remain only a few years at most, and then [return] to their homes in Canada, and they regard it as time thrown away to send their children to school, as they…do not understand our language, and do not want to learn it; as they will not use it when they return to Canada."[155]

Similarly, these Canadians' infamous anti-union stance likely sprang from much the same source.[156] Although French Canadians indeed rarely participated in nineteenth-century strikes, it is worth remembering that their short timeframes in the states would have ensured they were unlikely to accrue any real benefits from drawn-out labor conflict; and, being generally excluded from local unions anyway, they had no access to strike funds in the interim.[157] As a result, most French Canadians simply left during strikes.[158] During the 1898 strike in New Bedford, for instance, labor reformer Eva Valesh was surprised by "the exodus of French Canadians," seeing "hundreds…going back to Canadian farms."[159] As one French Canadian put it during that same

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[154] Arthur Baribault, ed., *Congrès Nationaux: Histoire et Statisques des Canadiens-Américains du Connecticut, 1885-1898* (Worcester : 1899), 203 quoted in Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 88.

[155] MBSL, *Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor…From August 2, 1869, to March 1, 1870…* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1870), 248.

[156] MBSL, *Twelfth Annual Report…January, 1881*, 469-470; MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882,* 206-207; Philip T. Silvia, "Neighbors From The North vs. Trade Unionism in Fall River, Massachusetts," in *Steeples and Smokestacks*, 151-160.

[157] Ibid.; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 356–357.

[158] As New Bedford's *Evening Standard* put it amidst an 1877 strike, "nearly all the single help has left town." See McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 217.

[159] Eva Valesh, "Strike Inquiry Now Assured," Jan. 20, 1898, Scrapbook, 1898 Textile Strike in New Bedford, Massachusetts, Vol. 1, Henry Beetle Hough, Widener Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts **[hereafter *HBH-WLHU*]**.

1898 strike, "I am poor. I cannot stay idle. I do not belong to any union, and therefore cannot expect them to look out for me…I am not a citizen of New Bedford… [but] I can go home now and get work."[160]

Even the French penchant for ethnic insularity—again, a cultural aspect that often deeply disturbed other groups in the South Coast—seems to have been driven by the demands of priests and community leaders who were, more often than not, either Canadian repatriation agents or repatriation sympathizers.[161] As numerous historians have argued, French ecclesiastical leaders preached an ideology of "la survivance," encouraging French Canadians to, as Gérard Brault put it, "lock out the enemy" and maintain French culture and language at all costs.[162] French Canadian emigrants took this rhetoric very seriously, and indeed sported a very vibrant, if not insular, community. As Thérese Bealieu of New Bedford, a machine inspector whose family emigrated from St. Hyacinthe, reflected on her childhood in an 1983 oral history, "We sang French songs and read French newspapers…Franco-American community life was close and heart warming. Everything was in French—plays—parish entertainment, whist party—bazaara—etc."[163] Nothing was a more powerful testament to the power of the "survivance" ideology than the fact that hardscrabble families nonetheless paid to send their children (including Bealieu herself) to parochial French schools, in hopes of keeping their culture and language alive.[164] But it is also no coincidence that many of the most ardent advocates of "survivance," such as Gagnon

[160] Jan. 26, 1898, Boston Traveler, Vol. 1, *HBH-WLHU*.

[161] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882,* 12,

[162] Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 73. On ideology of "la survivance" amongst workers, see Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism*; Ronald Arthur Petrin, *French Canadians in Massachusetts Politics, 1885-1915: Ethnicity and Political Pragmatism* (Philadelphia: Balch Institute Press, 1990), 18, 26-74.

[163] Thérese Bealieu, oral history survey by Josephine Perrault, Aug. 23, 1983, *OHJP-FIAC*.

[164] Ibid.; Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England*, 102, 190–194.

himself, were also doubling as agents of the Canadian government, working in the background to encourage repatriation.[165]

Such cultural practices, however, had very real consequences for these workers' incorporation into the mills of Massachusetts. While mill owners lavishly praised their French Canadian recruits as "steady," of "general good behavior," and "not given to drunkenness" (clearly an underhanded comparison to their British workmates), they faced interminable harassment and exclusion from their fellow workmen.[166] Violence against French strikebreakers was a frequent occurrence.[167] Skirmishes (sometimes violent) over access to Catholic Church services broke out constantly between Irish and French immigrants.[168] Quotidian bursts of conflict often devolved into violent (and sometimes bizarre) struggles. In 1894, a local paper reported that 25 Fall River families were advised not to send their children to the Eastern Avenue School "for fear they would be injured in a race war," or what we might more properly classify an "inter-ethnic" war, after a schoolyard squabble degenerated into a massive stone fight involving 200 students. "Clannish and apt to entertain race prejudices…each side took refuge behind its own pile of rocks, and the air was full of missiles," leaving multiple children and onlookers injured.[169] In another horrifying incident, a group of textile doffers decided to haze

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[165] Henri D'Arles, "Ferdinand Gagnon et la Survivance Fraçaise Aux États-Unis," *L'Action Française* 3, no. 4 (April 1919).

[166] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 44-45.

[167] "Shameful Outrage," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Sept. 18, 1879 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 366-367; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 275–277.

[168] "Religious Meeting Disturbed," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Aug. 19, 1872 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 207; "We Regret to Hear…," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, May 12, 1873 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 220-221; "A Scene in Church," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Mar. 13, 1887, *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 56-57; Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism,* 40; Silvia, "Spindle City," 381-428.

[169] "Row in the School," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, May 10, 1895 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 509-510.

Alphonse Farland, just arrived from Canada, putting him on "trial" for "being a greenhorn," convicting him of "being too green to live among civilized people," and ultimately carrying out the penalty of hanging.[170] Tying poor Farland to a mill elevator, they rose the elevator until he was "black in the face" before cutting him down.[171] Although esoteric arguments about French nationalism and ethnic insularity may seem very far and away from the factory floor, they could have very real consequences for these migrant workers.

British and French Canadian conflict was not simply a natural outgrowth of ethnic hostilities, racial prejudice, or an elaborate conspiracy of divisiveness orchestrated by manufacturers. French Canadian emigrants were ideologically and socially very different from their British peers, stemming in large part from both their migratory experiences and the continuing involvement of Canadian authorities. Indeed, French Canadians' frequent movement across the North American continent, itself ideologically justified and often materially supported by the Canadian state, insured they had little abiding interest in union activism or local politics. Not coincidentally, it was not until frustrated Canadian authorities and local leaders largely abandoned repatriation that French Canadians—especially French Canadian women, who had already long felt most committed to a life of industrial labor—began to manifest a much more thoroughgoing desire to shape the politics of industrial Massachusetts.

[170] "Court Chronicles," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Dec. 28, 1894 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 498-499.

[171] Ibid.

The "Poorest" Portuguese

The Azores and Massachusetts have long existed in peculiarly close economic orbit.[172] After all, migrant Azoreans began venturing to Massachusetts in sizable numbers with the beginnings of the whaling industry itself, as early as the 1760s.[173] Nevertheless, despite these longstanding migratory connections, Portuguese workers would not come to numerically dominate textile workforces in the South Coast until the early-twentieth century.[174] The reason behind this oddly gradual ascent of Portuguese textile operatives, again, has much more to do with events in the state of Portugal and the Azorean islands than in Massachusetts.

As in French Canada and Britain, Azorean emigration emerged as a result of local crisis. Indeed, these emigrants were very much aware they were departing a nation in immense disarray.[175] By the nineteenth century, Portuguese self-rule had effectively collapsed. A series of French invasions in 1807 sent the royal family packing for Brazil, leaving Portugal a British dominion until the 1820s.[176] A protracted civil war followed in the wake of the royal family's return to Portugal in the 1830s, which was in turn followed by a chaotic seventy-year period of

[172] Indeed, plenty of prideful Portuguese immigrants still insist that landmarks such as "Dighton Rock"—purportedly covered with an inscription from a failed 1511 voyage to the future New England— conclusively prove that the Portuguese were, in fact, the first European group to reach Massachusetts' shores. See Edmund Burke Delabarre, *Dighton Rock: A Study of the Written Rocks of New England* (New York: 1928); Joseph D. Fragoso "O Emblema da Ordem de Cristo Gravado na Pedra de Dighton," *Mundo Lusiada* 1, no. 8 (1951): 207-208; Manuel Luciano da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock: The First Chapter in American History* (Bristol, RI: 1971).

[173] *A Ilha no Mundo: Exposição a Emigração Açoriana (*Região Autónoma dos Açores: 1989).

[174] Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Forty-Third Annual Report...1912* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1913), 36-38.

[175] Douglas L. Wheeler, *Republican Portugal: A Political History, 1910-1926* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 5; John Charles Chasteen, *Born in Blood & Fire: A Concise History of Latin America* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 104.

[176] Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 7, 21.

"rotativismo" in which Portugal's parliament was formally "dissolved" some thirty times.[177] By the early-twentieth century, the Portuguese economy was in shambles, illiteracy hovered around eighty percent, and the state was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1892, and again in 1902.[178] Dissent and disarray, paired with the 1908 assassination of the Portuguese king and his son in the streets of Lisbon, led to the collapse of the Portuguese monarchy and the rise of the First Republic.[179] Stability remained fleeting: during its sixteen-year tenure from 1910 to 1926, the First Republic would see 9 presidents, 44 ministries, 25 uprisings, 3 interludes of military dictatorship, and some 325 bomb incidents.[180]

Interminable instability drove ceaseless waves of emigration. Annual Portuguese emigration rose from 14,000 in 1886, when the first emigration statistics were recorded, to an annual average of 28,000 in the 1890s, cresting at 301,000 *annually* throughout the 1910s and 40,000 in the 1920s, not counting the additional, unrecorded numbers of emigrants who escaped official appraisal.[181]

As in Canada, "the emigratory problem" emerged as one of the most vexing social issues of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Portugal.[182] Most Portuguese policymakers,

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[177] Kathleen C. Schwartzman, *The Social Origins of Democratic Collapse: The First Portuguese Republic in the Global Economy* (University Press of Kansas, 1989), 30; Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 26, 30.

[178] Ibid., 28. Schwartzman, *The Social Origins of Democratic Collapse*, 31.

[179] Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 24.

[180] Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1970), 26.

[181] From 1890 to 1921, some one million Portuguese would emigrate, mostly to Brazil. But, whereas 16 percent of Portuguese emigrants settled in the United States, more than 80 percent of Azoreans left for the United States. See Ministério do Interior, *Boletim da Junta Da Emigração* (1969), 12-15, Biblioteca Nacional De Portugal, Lisbon, Portugal **[hereafter *BNPL*]**; Jerry R. Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams: A History of Azorean Immigration to the United States* (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture, 2005), 25-26.

[182] *Problema Social Emigração: Discurso proferido na camara dos dignos pares do rein em sessão de 4 de julho 1891 pelo Conde do Casal Ribeiro* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1891), Loc. SC 7731, *BNPL*; Thomaz Riberio, *Questões sobre Emigração: Projecto de Lei* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1891), Loc. SC 7563, *BNPL*.

however, tended to view emigration as a cause, rather than effect, of Portugal's decline.[183] As a result, the state responded by passing a sequence of emigration restriction laws in 1873, 1880, 1886, 1892, 1895, 1896, 1898, and 1903, ultimately creating a nineteenth-century "border patrol" of sorts: the "Policia Repressiva De Emigração Clandestina," or the Police of Clandestine Emigration.[184] As illegal *emigration* emerged as a critical issue for Portuguese policymakers, there emerged a near universal consensus for using the power of the state to restrict or re-channel emigrant flows.[185]

What made the "emigration" problem such a potent issue in the nineteenth century was that it united so many different Portuguese interest groups. For state leaders, restriction promoted key policy goals: first and foremost, the furthering of Portugal's imperial ambitions. Policymakers, for instance, hoped emigration restriction would aid in the struggle to channel emigrants into Portuguese colonial Africa. Almost as soon as Portugal began restricting emigration abroad, it began offering potential African colonists "free tickets," land grants, and "a subsidy, paid at time of boarding" of 30,000 réis "in cash, to the head of the family and 5,000

[183] Wheeler, *Republican Portugal*, 7.

[184] See *Regulamento da Policia de Emigração Clandestina: Decretos de 3 de Julho de 1896 e 3 de outubro de 1903 e Regulamento geral da policia para o transito no continente e ilhas, approvado por Dereto de 7 de abril de 1863* (Angra do Heroismo: Imprensa Municipal, 1904); *Annuario da Direcção Geral de Administração Politica e Civil* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1896), 431-433; "Emigração para os Estados Unidos do Norte," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada, Azores), May. 7, 1892; Rebekah Fairbank, "Iberian Emigration Law: A Comparison Study of Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Emigration Law of Spain and Portugal" *BYU Family Historian* 6, no. 1 (2007): 43-55; *Annuario da Direcção Geral de Administração Politica e Civil* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1897), 448; Miriam Halpern Pereira, "Algumas Observações Complementares Sobre a Política de Emigração Portuguesa," *Análise Social*, Terceira Série, 25, no. 108/109 (January 1, 1990): 736.

[185] Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa, *Programma dos Trabalhos da Commissão D'Emigração* (Lisboa: 1894), 9, Box 84, Item 11, Fundo Particular de Eugenio Da Canto, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, Portugal [**hereafter *FPEC-BPARPD***]; J.P. Oliveira Martins, *Projecto de Lei de Fomento Rural* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1887); "A Questão Imigratoria," *Diario Dos Açores* (Ponta Delgada), Oct. 7, 1912; "Emigração," *Diario Dos Açores* (Ponta Delgada), Nov. 6, 1912; "As Miserias da Emigração," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), June 4, 1892.

[réis] more for each [added] person."[186] Similarly, emigration restrictions were explicitly crafted to crack down on those who might use migration to evade Portugal's mandatory military conscription laws, which required an exceptionally onerous eight years of service from each Portuguese male (itself a consequence of the feeble nation's attempt to keep its oversized global empire from unraveling).[187] Indeed, as one English traveler put it in 1886, "The Azorean islander flies from the recruiting sergeant as he would from the Evil One."[188] Consequently, many of Portugal's emigration restriction laws were thinly veiled conscription edicts. One 1880 law, for instance, required all emigrants to deposit the equivalent of £40 into state coffers before they could be permitted to leave the country, so as to hire a military substitute in case they did not return before turning thirty-six.[189]

Moreover, despite the inevitable paeans to Portuguese national pride that accompanied almost all anti-emigration exegeses, most observers understood that there were clear material interests at stake. For the Azores' powerful agro-export interests, for example, emigration threatened the one advantage that helped offset the many disadvantages that came from producing agricultural goods in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean: namely, that the very "captivity" of the Azorean people ensured a ready supply of cheap labor with few alternative

[186] The "real" [plural "réis"] was Portugal's currency from 1430 to 1911. After the Republican Revolution, it was replaced by the "escudo." "Emigração para o Ultramar," 1881, Cota 1.2.27, Doc. 0746, Fundo Particular de Ernesto Rodolfo Hintze Ribeiro, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, Portugal [**hereafter *FPER-BPARPD***].

[187] Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams*, 15; Sonia Patricia Da Silva Pacheco, "É Para Sair De Portugal A Todos Os Custos!: The Policia Repressiva De Emigração Clandestina (1896-1911) And The Politics Of Azorean Emigration To The United States" (master's thesis, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2015), 23-31.

[188] Ibid.; Walter Frederick Walker, *The Azores: or Western Islands…a political, commercial and geographical account …* (London: 1886), 111.

[189] Ibid., 107.

sources of employment.[190] As one Azorean put it in the early-twentieth century, interest in emigration "repression" was driven by the desire to maintain "cheap arms for their fields, for their crops, and to thus keep [Azoreans] chained down for very little money": "The property owner, especially the greedy one, makes war without truce against emigration…because it benefits him to have at his service a super cheap worker or operative."[191]

Similarly, many Azoreans likely stoked fears of the "emigration crisis" in an effort to legitimize calls for increased state aid for economic development. After all, Azoreans were constantly frustrated by Lisbon's lack of concern in protecting Azorean economic interests.[192] Even those who may not have had any particular stake in keeping their compatriots from leaving the archipelago likely found it useful to sustain the "emigration crisis" narrative in hopes of getting Lisbon to change course on issues such as the high tariffs and alcohol production prohibitions that retarded Azorean economic development.[193]

Despite the state's best efforts, however, New Bedford whaling ships' nearly insatiable need for labor made clandestine emigration an alluring option. Special laws were passed to target

[190] Fátima de Sequeira Dias, "A Economia ao Sabor das Circunstâncias: Produções, Agentes e Intercâmbios," in *Historia Dos Açores: Do Descobrimento ao Século XX*, eds. Artur Teodoro de Matos, Avelino de Freitas de Meneses, and José Guilherme Reis Leite, Vol. 2 (Angra do Heroísmo: Instituto Açoriano de Cultura, 2008), 35.

[191] Ruy Moraes, "A Emigração," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jan. 12, 1918. Original Text: "Mas quem assim procede, não obedece a um impulso generoso de consceincia, ao ver expatriarem se estes ou aqueles por lhe mereceram partiuclar estima ou afeição, porque o interesse que teem na sua repressão, é para não faltarem braços baratos para os seus campos, para as suas lavouras e assim tel-os acorrentados por muito pouco dinheiro aos diferentes trabalhos que aqui se executam!...O proprietário, especialmente o ganancioso, faz uma guerra sem treguas é emigração, pois que, para comodidade e economia da sua algibeira, muito lhe convem ter ao serviço um trabalhador ou operario baratinho."

[192] For example, see "Por Portugal e pelos Açores: Verdades Amargas," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jan. 25, 1919; "Inauguração de um Caminho de Ferro na Ilha de S. Miguel," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Dec. 15, 1900; Carreiro da Costa, *Para a História da Emigração do Distrito de Ponta Delgada* (Ponta Delgada: 1972), 27.

[193] For example, see "Industria Michaelense," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), June 22, 1901; "Triste!," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), July 8, 1893; "Os autonomista dos Açores," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Dec. 1, 1894; Carlos Enes, "Uma Economia em Tranformação mas uma Pobreza que Persiste," in *Historia Dos Açores: Do Descobrimento ao Século XX*, ed. Artur Teodoro de Matos, Avelino de Freitas de Meneses, and José Guilherme Reis Leite, Vol. 2 (Angra do Heroísmo: Instituto Açoriano de Cultura, 2008), 201.

whaling ships, but it was of no use: hundreds of Azorean and Cape Verdean men were fleeing each and every year, using New Bedford whale ships as a covert means to escape Portuguese state control and obtain free passage to the United States.[194] Indeed, as one defeated state official noted in 1880, the stationing of emigration police at Brava, Cape Verde, had ultimately solved nothing. "Not even the police are a guarantee as agents of authority in these matters," he pointed out, "because it has happened that they have been the first to embark, leaving their swords on the beach as a testimonial."[195] Typical became stories like that of Antonio Fortes, born in São Nicolau in Cape Verde in 1890, who shipped out on the New Bedford whaler *Pedro Varela* in 1908. After nine months at sea, he settled in New Bedford and got a job at a local factory until he landed a spot on the same whaler in 1910. He continued shipping out on various vessels until 1921.[196] Manuel Sylvia of Faial simply stowed away on a whaling ship at age twelve to make the journey to Massachusetts in 1905.[197] Although most personal accounts such as these come from oral histories of those who entered the whaling industry in the early-twentieth century, clandestine emigration via whaling labor likely peaked in the 1850s and 1860s with the industry itself.

While most Americans had lost interest in the harsh discipline and long durations of whaling voyages, for these landless peasants, whaling work was a welcome escape from Portugal's declining island economy. The Azores, for instance, had begun as a profitable wheat

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[194] Directive, Alfândega de Ponta Delgada, October 15, 1874, Cota 1666.35, UI 0090, Series 7, Arquivo do Governo Civil do Distrio de Ponta Delgada, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal **[hereafter *AGCDPD- BPARPD*]**.

[195] "Report of 2 September 1880 (205) of the Administrator of the District of Brava," in Carreira, *Migrações das Ilhas de Cabo* Verde, 253 in Donald Warrin, *So Ends This Day: The Portuguese in American Whaling, 1765-1927* (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2010), 105.

[196] Leo Pap, *The Portuguese-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), 38.

[197] Manuel Sylvia, interview Apr. 21, 1981, Tape 26, *POHC-NBWMRL*.

outpost to feed mainland Portugal as early as the fifteenth century.[198] But, like many other European nations, as the islands faced new competition from cheaper and more productive sources of wheat agriculture in the New World, the economy tanked.[199] With the industrial revolution, however, Azoreans found a way to sustain their agricultural economy without relying on cereal crops: namely, by producing oranges as a cheap export food for industrial Britain.[200] By the 1850s, nearly 200,000 boxes of oranges were exported each year, soon constituting about half the ships leaving Ponta Delgada.[201] The orange craze, however, only exacerbated the monopolization of the island's lands by a wealthy elite (as orange groves were a particularly capital-intensive enterprise) leaving the archipelago dependent on global markets for its economic livelihood and a net importer of cereal and food crops.

Unfortunately for these islanders, as the American Civil War worked its market-altering magic across the globe, the Azorean economy was sent tumbling. War in America meant closed-down factories in Britain, which soon entailed empty ports in the Azores.[202] As one Azorean newspaper reported with a bit of dark humor in 1862, "The news coming through Lisbon from England is a little terrifying, in respect to the profits obtained from sales of our orange," causing a "scarcity of almost everything" except "poetry," which could be found at a "negligible

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[198] Victor Pereira Da Rosa and Salvato Trigo, *Azorean Emigration: A Preliminary Overview*, trans. Margaret Butler (Porto: Fernando Pessoa University Press, 1994), 43.

[199] Dias, "A Economia ao Sabor das Circunstâncias," 37; Scott Reynolds Nelson, *A Nation of Deadbeats: An Uncommon History of America's Financial Disasters* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 169.

[200] Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams*, 11; Carreiro da Costa, "Tradições, costumes e turismo: Do Antigo Comércio da laranja nos Açores," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Mar. 3, 1970.

[201] Ibid.; Dias, "A Economia ao Sabor das Circunstâncias," 40.

[202] A Sociedade Promotora da Agricultura Micaelense, Meeting Minutes, Feb. 9, 1874, Atas da Direção, 1873-1887, Item 6, Arquivo da Sociedade Promotora da Agricultura Micaelense, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, Portugal **[hereafter *ASPAM-BPARPD*]**; "Communicado: Ponta-Delgada 24 de Janeiro," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jan. 25, 1862.

price…perhaps due to its poor quality."[203] A series of poor harvests, storms that interrupted travel and hurt crop yields, and a fatal orange blight that hit the island of São Miguel in 1877 only exacerbated the island's economic woes.[204] Hunger, riots, and misery followed.[205] The popularity of low-quality poetry indeed reflected the depression which overhung the islands. Poems written by locals for inclusion in the Azorean "popular" almanacs of the late-nineteenth century included uplifting selections such as "Misery" ("Defeated children, homeless…/ Room without light, table without wheat/ Who knocks at my door? — The snow!"), "Abandoned" ("Without bread and without shelter! Bewildered! / Through the streets, walking pensively…"), as well as useful investigations into the spreading scourge of suicide.[206]

Due to the prevailing land tenancy regime, landless farmers were hit particularly hard by the crises of the mid-nineteenth century. Island lands were distributed by a system of

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[203] "Communicado: Ponta-Delgada 23 de Maio," *Açoriano Oriental*, May 24, 1862. Original Text: "Não obstante ter havid carestia de quasi tudo, a poesia tem andado por um preço insignificante, o que é talvez devido á sua pessima qualidade" "As noticias vindas por Lisboa da Inglaterra são um pouco aterradoras, respeito aos lucros obtidos com as vendas da nossa laranja."

[204] "The Foreign Demand for American Breadstuffs," *American Agriculturist* 21 (October, 1862), 296; Great Britain Foreign Office, *Reports from Her Majesty's Consuls on the Manufactures, Commerce, &c. of Their Consular Districts* (Harrison and Sons, 1864), 227;

[205] On market disruptions and reccureent crisis in the Azores, see "Communicado: Ponta-Delgada 7 de Fevereiro," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Feb. 8, 1862; "Communicado: Ponta-Delgada 7 de Março," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Mar. 8, 1862; "Ponta Delgada: 26 de Junho," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), June 26, 1869; "Ponta Delgada: 31 de Julho," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), July 31, 1869; "Communicado: P.D. 29 de Julho, *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), July 31, 1869; "Communicado: P.D. 27 de Agosto," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Aug. 28, 1869; "Ponta-Delgada," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), June 3, 1876; "Miseria," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Sept. 2, 1876; "Triste!," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), July 8, 1893; "Miseria," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Sept. 26, 1903; "Miseria," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Oct. 17, 1903; "Miseria," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Oct. 24, 1903; "Milho," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), June 11, 1904; "Crise," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Mar. 7, 1908; "Milho," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Apr. 25, 1908; "Milho," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jun. 27, 1908; "Crise," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jun. 27, 1908; "Farinha Americana," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), March 3, 1918; "Pão," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), May 18, 1918;

[206] "A Miseria" in Manoel J. Da Camara, *Almanach do Campeão Popular Para 1895* (Ponta Delgada: 1894), 11; J. Gomes Jr., "Abandonada," in Ibid., 21; Joaquim Candido Abranches, "O Suicidio," in Manoel Jaçintho Da Camara, *Almanach do Campeão Popular Por 1894* (Ponta Delgada: 1893), 17. Original Text: "Creanças rotas, sem abrigo.../A enxerga é podre, e a roupa é leve.../ Quarto sem luz, mesa sem trigo.../ Quem é que bate ao meu postigo?/ —A neve!" "Sem pão e sem abrigo! Desnorteada!/ Pelas ruas, caminha pensativa"

"arrendamento," a vicious regime of rural land tenancy in which poor farmers had to rent out land, cattle, and equipment from local elites.[207] Unlike sharecropping systems, in which risk is shared between owner and cropper, the cash tenancy system inherent in "arrendamento" placed almost all risks on the farmer. An 1862 income tax assessment of the areas around Lagoa, São Miguel, for instance, revealed how local farmers were systemically pushed underwater by the paired forces of economic crisis and "arrendamento." On hundreds of slips of paper, the state assiduously recorded the crops planted, their yields, and the rent paid, painting a somewhat disturbing picture. For instance, J. Carreiro grew 100 alqueires (alq.), roughly 7-20 acres, of wheat, taking in 27$000 réis on property he rented from Luis Rebello for 30$000 reis.[208] Another of Rebello's tenants grew 40 alqueires (3-8 acres) of beans, earning 7$600 réis, but paying 10$000 in rent; another grew 20 alqueires of beans, earning 3$800 reis, but paying 4$000 in rent.[209] Over and over again, the Lagoan tax assessment showed elite farmers, possessing extensive holdings, renting out overpriced lands to tenants. J. Michael De Medeiros Borges' own property, for instance, grew 80 alq. of corn, 80 alq. of fava beans, and 150 alq. of oranges, taking in 313$200 réis, while he rented out no less than 15 other properties, whose rents were on

[207] Carlos Enes, "Uma Economia em Tranformação mas uma Pobreza que Persiste," in *Historia Dos Açores: Do Descobrimento ao Século XX*, eds. Artur Teodoro de Matos, Avelino de Freitas de Meneses, and José Guilherme Reis Leite, vol. 2 (Angra do Heroísmo: Instituto Açoriano de Cultura, 2008), 190-191.

[208] Income Tax Assessment, Predio 394, Matriz 1052, St. Cruz, Verbetes de preço médio dos géneros para determinação do rendimento colectável, Verbetes de rendimento colectável 1862, Item 1743, Freguesia de Santa Cruz, Repartição da Fazenda Pública, Arquivo da Administração do Concelho de Lagôa, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores [**hereafter *VP-AACL-BPARPD***]. For basis of alqueires to acres conversion, see Walker, *The Azores,* 79.

[209] Income Tax Assessment, Predio 928, Matriz 1055, Verbetes de rendimento colectável 1862, Item 1743, *VP-AACL-BPARPD*; Income Tax Assessment, Predio 929, Matriz 1056, Verbetes de rendimento colectável 1862, Item 1743, *VP-AACL-BPARPD*.

average about 30 percent more costly than their net incomes.[210] Agriculture was essentially costing Azorean farmers money in 1862.

Importantly, unlike French Canada, the problem was not that Azorean soils were poor or suffered from adverse climate conditions: on the contrary, most observers fawned over the lushness of the island's fields and richness of its soils.[211] The problem, rather, was that the island was easily buffeted by changes in the international export trade, and such risks fell disproportionately on its sizable class of landless farmers. As one local writer put it in the early-twentieth century, "Little by little," this "blissful and blessed island…famed for richness (but only for one or two dozen men)" was being "converted into a land of hunger and misery, due to unbridled greed."[212]

As a result, most Azorean migrant men came to Massachusetts with an abiding faith that they were simply sojourning to the United States to gain the capital necessary to return to the Azores and establish their own landed independence. And although return migration statistics were not recorded until 1908, the impact returnees had on non-migrating Azorean certainly testifies to their importance. Indeed, as early as 1871, military captain Francisco José da Silva Jr. declared in *A Emanicipação dos Açores*—"The Emancipation of the Azores"—that the "enrichment of the island…is mainly due to its fabulous export, both regular and clandestine, of men for North America aboard American ships…and the not insubstantial reimportation of the fortunate ones, who at the end of many years of exile, return to the fatherland, bringing [savings],

[210] See Verbetes de rendimento colectável 1862, Item 1743, *VP-AACL-BPARPD*.

[211] See "Inauguração de um Caminho de Ferro na Ilha de S. Miguel," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Dec. 15, 1900; Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams*, 9.

[212] "A Fome," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Sept. 27, 1919.

that will successively enrich [the island]."[213] Similarly, one Portuguese newspaper article from the 1890s invidiously compared those emigrants returning from Brazil ("utterly devoid of good instincts…He is the embodiment of laziness") to the returning "Americano": "a man strengthened in frame…his modest capital is consecrated to the honest transactions of industry and commerce."[214] Not surprisingly, then, emigrants left the Azores "with big dreams of returning rich," as one daughter characterized her emigrating father's mindset.[215] And indeed, from 1908 to 1910, while 19,072 Portuguese entered the United States, 3,163 left for home (of which 72 percent had been in the United States for less than five years), adding up to a 6 to 1 return ratio.[216] Overall, the period from 1911 to 1921 would see nearly 30,000 Portuguese return to their homeland.[217]

A number of forces thus restrained any mass movement of Portuguese workers into the Massachusetts textile industry. First, Portugal's restrictive emigration laws ensured that whaling represented one of the few avenues for the average male farmer to even venture to the United States, tying Portuguese emigration rates to the health of the failing industry. Second, Portuguese

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[213] Francisco José da Silva Junior, *A Emancipação Dos Açores* (Lisboa: 1871), 16. Original Text: "O enriquecimento da ilha, porém, é principalmente devido á sua fabulosa exportação regular e clandestina de gente para a America do Norte e para bordo dos navios americanos...em absoluto não pequena reimportação dos mais felizes, que no fim de muitos annos de exilio regressam á patria, trazendo-lhe o producto do seu penoso trabalho convertido em maior ou menor peculio de economias, com que successivamente vão enriquecendo o Fayal."

[214] Reproduced in MBSL, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report...March, 1897* (Boston: 1897), 69-70.

[215] Oral History 47, interview by Olivia Silva, May 5, 1987, MC24/PAA, Oral History Project, 1987-1990, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Library, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *OHP-FMPAA*]**. Another Portuguese-American, born in 1912, remembers leaving New England for the Azores at age seven after his father decided to resettle the farm "permanently." See Oral History 39, interview by Christopher Arruda, Apr. 9, 1988, *OHP-FMPAA*.

[216] Pap, *The Portuguese-Americans*, 47.

[217] Ibid., 47.

immigrant workers, looking for a cheap and clandestine way to return to their homes, often remained more closely tied to the declining whaling industry than other ethnic groups. As the story of Antonio Fortes suggests, factory work often became merely a temporary means to sustain workers between voyages.

And since workers' sights were set on eventually returning to the Azores, these Azorean migrants initially had little interest in establishing themselves within the textile industry. As a result, to the extent the Portuguese are mentioned in conjunction with the Massachusetts textile industry in the nineteenth century, they are either referenced for providing an initial labor supply at the dawn of textile industrialization, or for simply holding down wages as a result of the fact that they "can do only the poorest work," and thus "naturally get the poorest wages."[218] Even into the twentieth century, one English worker would complain that "These Portagee workers…don't know what a union means. We couldn't get them to pay dues to the union after the strike is over unless we used guns."[219] As Fall River's John Golden, president of the United Textile Workers of America, put it in 1909, the inevitable effect of bringing in workers from "parts of Europe and the Western Islands [Azores]," was to "[keep] down the standard of the whole industry so far as wages, hours of labor, and working conditions are concerned," especially since Portuguese workers "have not taken, nor can they be expected to take, any active part in the...agitation of the older employees for shorter hours and better wages."[220] Although their inability to be quickly imported to break strikes, as a result of the restrictions placed on

[218] *Report of the Massachusetts Board to Investigate the Subject of the Unemployed* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1895), lvi.

[219] *Textile Worker* 16 (May 1928): 80 quoted in William F. Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?: Unions and Economic Change in the New England Textile Industry, 1870-1960* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 35.

[220] John Golden, "Pay of Labor in New England Cotton Mills," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 33, no. 2 (1909): 78.

emigration, may have insured that Portuguese workers were never treated quite as venomously as their French counterparts, they were generally portrayed as poor unionists with little understanding of the possibilities of labor activism.

As economic crisis in the Azores wore on, however, the character of its emigrants began to change dramatically. Indeed, as the social connections between Massachusetts and the islands deepened—as kin connections overspread the Atlantic ocean, as economic and social news from Fall River and New Bedford became ordinary features in Azorean newspapers, and as numerous steamship companies began offering regular transatlantic services between the islands and Southeastern Massachusetts—emigration grew increasingly attractive and ostensibly less risky.[221] And, as it turned out, there was one group in Azorean society on which Portugal's emigration laws had little effect: namely, women.

Consequently, by the last two decades of the nineteenth century and into the early-twentieth century, women came to make up an increasing portion of Azorean migrants.[222] In

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[221] After 1870, Azoreans had any number of steamship services to choose from. The *Moses B. Tower*, for instance, began making four yearly trips from the island to New Bedford in 1889. In 1902, the American White State Line established twice-monthly services to Boston, and in 1911, the *Venezia* also began offering monthly trips. Advertisements for steamship service to the United States were a regular feature of Azorean newspapers. See, for instance, Advertisement, "Para Boston," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jan. 2, 1875; Advertisement, "Empreza Insulana de Navegação," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jan. 27, 1900; Advertisement, White Star Line, "De Ponta Delgada directamente para Boston em menos de 6 dias," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Jan. 16, 1915; Advertisment, "Empeza I. De Navegação," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Feb. 4, 1905; Advertisement, "White Star Line: Vapores Para Boston," *Diario Dos Açores* (Ponta Delgada), Aug. 30, 1912; Pap, *The Portuguese-Americans*, 39; Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams*, 33.

It was easy for Azoreans to keep up with events in Fall River and New Bedford. Most newspapers carried regular columns to keep readers up-to-date on even quotidian events, such as festivals, deaths, and even the weather. See, for instance, "Noticias da America," *Diario de Açores* (Ponta Delgada), Nov. 16, 1912, Nov. 18, 1912, Dec. 4, 1912, Dec. 6, 1912, Dec. 9, 1912; "Fall River," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Aug. 9, 1913, Sept. 20, 1913, Oct. 4, 1913, Oct. 18, 1913; "Em Fall River," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), June 1, 1912; "Noticias de America," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), March 3, 1917, March 17, 1917, March 24, 1917, May 5, 1917, May 26, 1917; "Carta de Boston," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), May 6, 1893; "Boston," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Nov. 18, 1893.

[222] Maria Ioannis Benis Baganha, *Portuguese Emigration to the United States, 1820-1930* (New York: Garland, 1990), 332.

1886, for instance, of the 4,791 emigrants who left Portugal's islands, about half were women. Moreover, these were not simply wives venturing out to join husbands: 60 percent of these women migrants were single.[223] Extant administrative records from the processing of emigrants in remote rural hamlets paint an even starker image. Emigration records from the town of Povoação, São Miguel, for instance, taken in 1917, record 70 percent of its emigrants as women (and about half of those as single women).[224] In fact, the most common emigrant grouping leaving Povoação was not entire families, but groups of young women (especially sisters).[225] For instance, Maria (age 18) and Rosalina Cabral (age 17) left Lomba do Loução on January 20, 1917; it was probably not coincidence that Emilia de Lousa (age 18) and Maria Jacinto da Camara (14), also from the tiny village of Lomba do Loução, happened to leave that same day.[226] And, like their French Canadian brethren, these increasing numbers of female emigrants to Massachusetts had little interest in returning to the Azores, thanks in no small part to the incredibly repressive (and sexist) culture that prevailed there.[227] For every three men who returned to the Azores from 1908 to 1919, only one woman went back.[228]

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[223] Ministerio Das Obras Publicas, *Commercio e Industrial, Movimento Da População: Estado Civil – Emigração* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1887), 157, 176-179, Fundo Particular de Teófilo Braga, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Açores, Portugal.

[224] Administração do Concelho da Povoação, "No. 2: Registo de processos d'emigrantes De 3 de Janeiro de 1917 a [19 de Set. 1922]," Emigrant Register, Item 140, Arquivo do Administração de Concelho de Povoação, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Açores.

[225] Ibid.

[226] Ibid.

[227] See, for instance, Maria Candida Pereira, "Two Women Conversation with Mrs. Linhares & Mrs. Pereira," in *Portuguese Spinner: An American Story: Stories of History, Culture, and Life from Portuguese Americans in Southeastern New England* eds. Marsha McCabe et al. (New Bedford, MA: Spinner Pub, 1998); Bela Feldman-Bianco and Donna Huse, "The Construction of Immigrant Identity," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 64.

[228] Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams*, 45.

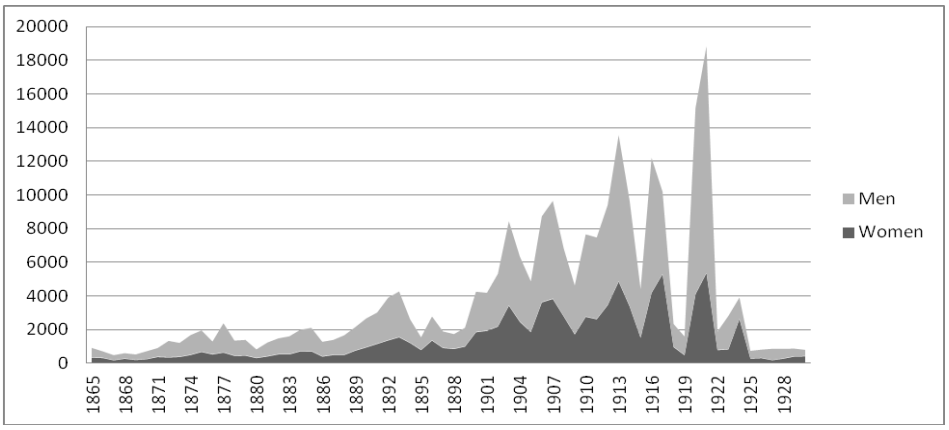

Figure 3.3: Portuguese Immigration to the United States, by Sex: 1865-1930[229]

All told, nearly 250,000 Portuguese arrived in the United States from 1880-1929.[230] And although women were by no means a majority of those who migrated, compared to other ethnic groups (and in light of men's far higher rates of return), their numbers were impressive. From 1899 to 1910, 41 percent of Portuguese immigrants were women, in contrast to only 5 percent of Greek immigrants or 21 percent of Italian immigrants in the same period.[231] In 1924, a full 68 percent of incoming Portuguese were women.[232] Portuguese women also tended to sport much higher rates of labor participation than other ethnic groups. In 1920, for instance, a Portuguese immigrant woman was twice as likely as her Italian peer to work.[233]

Portuguese workers eventually came to dominate South Coast textile workforces. And, with their sights set on making their permanent home in Massachusetts, these Portuguese women would soon begin to play a major role in shaping the politics of textile production (and especially

[229] Bagahna, *Portuguese Emigration*, Table B:9.

[230] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Washington, DC, August 2010), 6-9.

[231] Bagahna, *Portuguese Emigration*, 333.

[232] Ibid., 332

[233] Maria Gloria Mulcahy, "The Portuguese of the U.S. from 1880 to 1990: Distinctiveness in Work Patterns Across Gender, Nativity and Place" (PhD diss., Brown University, 2003), 152.

the coming garment trade) in the state of Massachusetts. In a striking reversal of roles, it would soon be British working men urging caution and restraint while migrant Portuguese women were calling for fundamental changes to the labor-capital relationship.

Conclusion

By the start of the twentieth century, South Coast mills looked very different from the Lowell mills of the early-nineteenth century. An investigation by the Bureau of Labor in 1912, for instance, revealed that native-born workers were a distinct minority: only 35 percent of Fall River's workforce and only 26 percent of New Bedford's (and, most likely, a significant number of these "native born" workers were the children of immigrants).[234] A substantial number of these workers were now women: about half of Fall River's foreign workers, and about 60 percent of New Bedford's.[235] And, in almost equal numbers, French Canadian, Portuguese, and British laborers worked side by side on the shopfloor.[236] Nevertheless, cooperation remained hard to come by; ethnic conflicts were legion.

[234] Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Forty-Third Annual Report...1912*, 36.

[235] Ibid.

[236] Ibid.

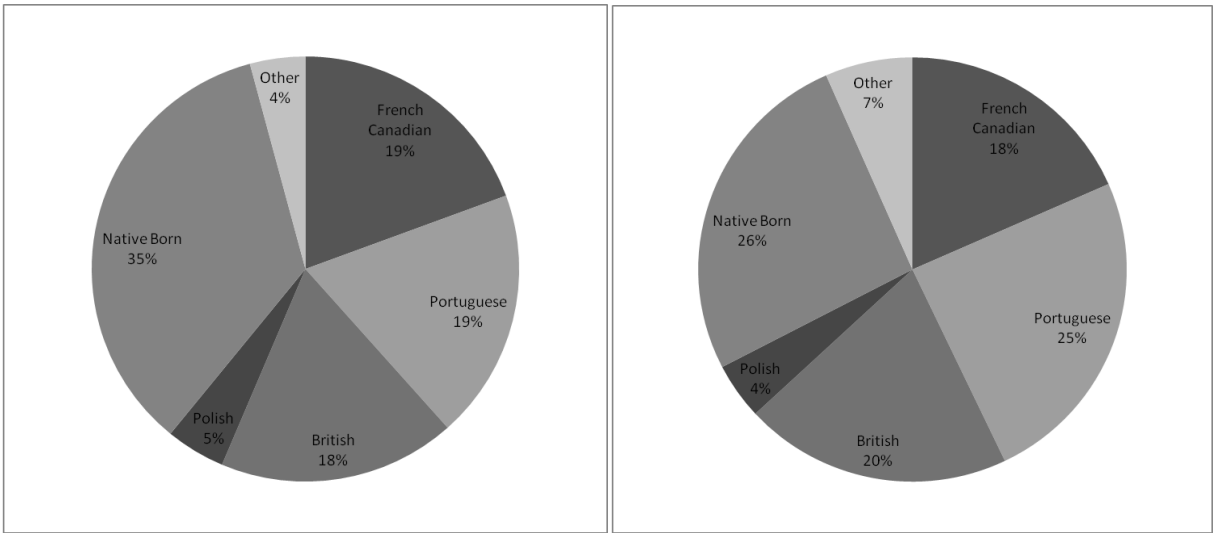

Figure 3.4: Ethnic Composition of Textile Workers in Fall River (left) and New Bedford (right), 1912[237]

Such tensions had deep roots in the cultures and ideologies of these various groups, but they were by no means inevitable. Indeed, they often sprung from the conditions of their very migrations to Massachusetts, especially the ways in which their sending states and institutions shaped how and why these migrants ventured to the South Coast in the first place. British immigrants, often conveyed by their powerful and tightly organized home unions, arrived with a strong commitment to reshaping the politics of industrial Massachusetts. French Canadians, on the other hand, under the sway of the persistent pleas (and incentives) of various Canadian authorities, urging them to remain in Canada—and repatriate quickly if they did choose to leave—had much less investment in shaping the political economy of textile industrialization, to the never-ending frustration of their British compatriots. Portuguese men, with most emigration options foreclosed to them by the Portuguese restriction regime, had no choice but to use

[237] Ibid.

whaling ships to make their way to and from Massachusetts. Factory work for them became but a mere stopgap means of subsistence between voyages (and the hope of a potential journey home).

Actuated as it was by these various migratory experiences, ethnic conflict was not immutable. After all, changing conditions abroad were equally responsible for the increasing interest in trade unionism and collective action immigrants began to display in the early-twentieth century. As the Canadian government, frustrated by the always fleeting successes of its repatriation efforts, largely gave up on the effort, French Canadians began organizing a much more robust presence in Massachusetts' mills—especially as textile mills transformed into garment factories. Similarly, as Portugal began sending more and more women migrants—women who had much less interest in returning to the repressive and hardscrabble role of farming wife—a generation of vocal female Portuguese laborers would come to make their presence known in Massachusetts.

Chapter 4:

Un-Making Industrial Massachusetts:

Labor and Capital Politics in an Age of De-industrialization

In 1953, long after most South Coast textile firms had either liquidated or headed for the U.S. South, Northeastern University conducted a survey of Massachusetts' sizable pool of ex-textile workers. Its results made for a stark contrast to the survey the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor had conducted on the "constant turmoil" in Fall River seventy years prior. Textile de-industrialization had not only sapped these workers' activist spirits, it had left them with an enduring sense of anger, betrayal, and frustration with the union establishment. As one 58-year-old Fall River worker put it, "Textiles have been very bad lately. There are no jobs here with any security. Unions have forced the mills out with their demands."[1] Another worker similarly lamented the loss of his former mill. It "was a grand company to work for...Don't think we'll ever have a nice concern like that to work for again…Surely was a sorry day for us when they moved out of town," he told researchers.[2] As one 38-year old worker summed up the situation, "The union became too powerful" and "The workers got away with murder."[3] Over and over again, unions took the blame for de-industrialization. In the eyes of the wider public and these former workers, it was pushy union leaders who had conspired to send the Massachusetts textile industry packing for greener pastures down south.[4]

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[1] William Miernyk, *Inter-Industry Labor Mobility: The Case of the Displaced Textile Worker* (Boston: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 1955), 104.

[2] Ibid., 105.

[3] Ibid., 104.

[4] William F. Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?: Unions and Economic Change in the New England Textile Industry, 1870-1960* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 1.

Historians have since attempted to revise this consensus, offering various counter-narratives in an attempt to shift the blame for textile de-industrialization away from its workers. Historian Mary Blewett, for instance, makes it clear that it was actually Massachusetts cloth manufacturers and their "[attempts] to rule their increasingly volatile market through sheer productive capacity"—using "self-defined fears of competitors" to legitimize "wage cuts and the glutting of an increasingly unstable market with cheap goods"—that drove textile collapse.[5] Other historians have since highlighted the ways in which unions actually sought to preserve the declining industry.[6] Similarly, a number of recent scholars point to the ways in which textile de-industrialization was hardly reducible to a story of greedy workers harrying well-meaning capitalists, but was in large part driven by the larger structural changes of the national and global economy.[7] The overall message, however, remains more or less the same: northern workers were more hapless victims than progenitors of northern textile collapse, and northern business leaders largely embraced capital mobility as a perfect means to continue their search for ever cheaper sources of labor.

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[5] Mary H. Blewett, *Constant Turmoil: The Politics of Industrial Life in Nineteenth-Century New England* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 14.

[6] For instance, William Hartford's excellent treatment of New England textile union politics, although arguing that manufacturers were not quite as hell-bent on their own self-destruction as Blewett's account might suggest, ultimately highlights that unions maintained numerous programs "to save jobs and shield workers from the consequences of economic change during a period of continuing deindustrialization." See Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 3.

[7] Importantly, these accounts generally do not leave workers blameless, but rather portray them as but one part of a larger process. For instance, Sven Beckert's recent work on the global history of the cotton industry rightly affirms that it was indeed "assertive northern [textile] workers" that "increased labor costs" and "made low-wage producers elsewhere competitive on global markets," but also shows how "politically sophisticated southern capitalists"—and the variety of inducements they offered to mobile capital—insured the global south would "[welcome] back home the world's cotton industry in the twentieth century, reversing a century-long departure." See Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 383, 392. In this same vein, see Beth English, *A Common Thread: Labor, Politics, and Capital Mobility in the Textile Industry* (University of Georgia Press, 2006).

Workers, however, were very much aware of the threat posed by the south—and although it is true that they certainly were not blindly pushing for more and more in an era of increasing market instability—both workers and business owners made crucial decisions that helped catalyze industrial relocation. More to the point, neither "northern textile workers" nor "northern business owners" spoke in one voice. In fact, politically, both groups increasingly developed two, contradictory political projects for "dealing" with de-industrialization. Workers, well aware of the ways in which lower wage rates in the south imperiled their future, increasingly divided in two: unskilled workers who generally advocated more expansive union organizing drives in the hopes of undercutting the lure of capital mobility, and elite craft workers and union leaders—wedded to hierarchies of skill, ethnicity, and gender—who refused to embrace such a capacious vision of union activism. Elite textile mill owners, for their part, realizing they could either liquidate their mills or move south, similarly refused to deal with the problem of escalating overproduction, market instability, and southern competition, despite the protests of those smaller millowners and local utility, retail, and merchant capitalists who were far more fixed to the local community.

Ultimately, the de-industrialization of textile manufacturing was no inevitable result of mounting global competition, taking workers and capitalists completely unprepared. It was, rather a much more deliberate, and deliberative process. Workers, motivated by a sense of righteous grievance stemming from the often inhumane conditions of textile work, fought to improve their lot with a full knowledge of the risks they were taking. Where Massachusetts' most highly skilled and tightly organized workers erred, however, was not in stubbornly demanding higher wages (which was hardly the case), but in their knowledge that other workers had so little bargaining power, and their refusal to do anything about it. Similarly, most business

owners, convinced that the collapse of the Massachusetts textile industry was a foregone conclusion, refused to take any of the evasive actions those for whom capital mobility was hardly an imminent possibility so often pushed. The result, by the 1920s, was a thriving southern textile industry and factories closing down in Massachusetts in droves, leaving behind rampant poverty, unemployment, and urban misery.

Life on the Mill Floor

It might be hard to believe that activist workers really understood the palpable threat that industrial capital mobility posed them. After all, why would workers continue to go on strike, or demand higher wages, if they knew their jobs—as well as the jobs of almost everyone in their communities—were at stake? Answering this question ultimately requires an understanding of how these workers experienced daily life amidst textile production. Working long hours in dangerous mills for unsteady pay with capricious employment terms, it is perhaps not quite so surprising that textile workers were willing to throw caution to the wind and challenge their employers in the name of better working conditions. Understanding labor politics in this era must thus begin with an understanding of factory life and work in these industrial communities.

For any young worker entering the textile mill, the first fact of life likely to be encountered was that "textile work" did not mean any one thing. Jobs came in a swirling variety of hierarchically (and ethnically) divided forms, pays, and duties.[8] An incoming French Canadian in the 1890s, for instance, would have likely been slotted into one of many unskilled or semi-skilled positions, such as warper, drawing tender, stripper, scrubber, or ring spinner, all of

[8] Louise Lamphere, *From Working Daughters to Working Mothers: Immigrant Women in a New England Industrial Community* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 33.

which varied in pay.[9] In 1897, warpers, for instance, took home around $7.09 weekly, strippers $6.54, and ring spinners $5.05.[10] Portuguese workers, in contrast, often found themselves doffing, assisting spinners, or relegated to the position of "picker hand"—the lowest paid male job in a textile mill. Picker hands earned about 5 dollars a week, constantly moving "laps" (flattened rolls) of cotton, each weighing anywhere from 35 to 75 pounds, between machines.[11]

But picker hands were hardly at the bottom of the mill hierarchy: that honor was reserved for children, who were left with dangerous and low-paid work as back boys and other machine assistants.[12] William Isherwood, for instance, whose parents emigrated from England in 1910, began work in New Bedford at fourteen as a "wireboy," stringing stop-motion wires into weaving machines. Paid by each thousand wires he strung, Isherwood earned only $4.39 for his first week of labor.[13] Even such small sums of money, however, became a crucial part of overall subsistence for many textile families. For the average French Canadian family in the early-twentieth century, for instance, children's wages generally made up about 33 percent of the

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[9] On textile production process, see Tamara K. Hareven and Randolph Langenbach, *Amoskeag: Life and Work in an American Factory-City* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 34–38; Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 69; U.S. Employment Service, Job Analysis and Information Section, Division of Standards and Research, *Job Descriptions for the Cotton Textile Industry* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1939). On French Canadians as textile workers, see John T. Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America: Work, Leisure, and Struggle in Two Industrial Cities, 1880-1930* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979), 124.

[10] Ibid.

[11] "Mill Life in this City," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Oct. 22, 1898 in *Victorian Vistas: Fall River, 1886-1900: As Viewed Through its Newspaper Accounts*, ed. Philip T. Silvia, Jr. (Fall River: R.E. Smith Printing Co., 1988), 671-676; Job Description, Picker Tender, 1st Floor, Folder 1, Sub-Series 1, Series D, Sub-group 1: Pierce Manufacturing Corporation Records, 1892-1944, MSS 3, Pierce Manufacturing Corporation Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *PMCR- NBWMRL*]**; Mary Alves, interview by Dora Bastarche, Aug. 31, 1981, Folder 12, Box 1, MC 9, New Bedford Textile Worker's Strike of 1928 Oral History Interviews and Research Collection, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Archives and Special Collections, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *NB1928-UMASSD*]**.

[12] "The Back Boy," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Dec. 31, 1885 in *Victorian Vistas: Fall River, 1865-1885: As Viewed Through its Newspaper Accounts*, ed. Philip T. Silvia, Jr. (Fall River: R. E. Smith Printing Co., 1987), 460-462.

[13] William Isherwood, Oral History, Jan. 23, 1980, Folder 9, Box 1, MC 9, *NB1928-UMASSD*.

family's overall income; for Portuguese families, it was 22 percent, and for the Irish, almost half.[14]

But not all textile parents required their children to work alongside them. As one 1875 survey conducted by the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor and Statistics vividly illustrated, while many skilled operatives had the money available to more or less keep their youngest children out of the mills, for unskilled workers, children's wages remained a crucial part of keeping the family afloat. For instance, one English family of seven, whose unskilled father earned only 395 dollars yearly, had its income supplemented by a 12-year-old daughter, earning $184.75.[15] Nevertheless, they lived in an "out of repair" tenement of five rooms, "situated in the worst part of the city…the drainage from the sink is choked up, causing a stench which is almost unbearable in wet weather."[16] The family was in debt, and the only ray of sunshine was that "Another one of the children will be able to work this summer, so the family is in hopes of doing better."[17] As early as 1867, of 4,804 Fall River youth ages five to fifteen, only 60 percent were enrolled in any type of schooling; the rest were already in the mills.[18]

Even as new legislation clamped down on the age children could enter mill work, such laws were easily evaded by French Canadian and Portuguese families, who could simply doctor or misrepresent birth documents in foreign languages.[19] French Canadian Joseph Maltais, for

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[14] These figures come from a 1911 congressional investigation of a series of New England textile cities, including New Bedford and Fall River. See *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries*, 61st Congress, 2d Session, Document 633, pt. 3 and pt. 4 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 114.

[15] Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor [hereafter MBSL], Public Document No. 31, *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor, March, 1875* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1875), 291.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Letter to the Editor, Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Sept. 25, 1867 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 110-111.

[19] Joseph Maltais, interview, Aug. 9, 1964, Tape 17-B, Purrington Oral History Collection, New Bedford Whaling

instance, began work in Fall River's mills at age ten, earning eight dollars a month by using his father's school card to circumvent Massachusetts' 1866 law requiring children ages ten to fourteen to "attend at least 6 months of school each year."[20] Despite the fact that Maltais' school card did not match his name, his boss was unfazed, simply instructing him that "When you see somebody come in…he dressed up nice…don't let him see you…get under the frame and watch the feet...when they are across on this side, you cross on the other side."[21] Even for those who followed the letter of the law, extant oral histories reveal that for almost every South Coast youth, there was every expectation that, at age fourteen, school would end and life in the mill would begin.[22]

At the other end of the labor hierarchy, English-dominated crafts like mule spinning and loomfixing offered much more money and far less danger. Mulespinning was not necessarily an easy job, of course. The average spinner traveled about 30 miles a day and expended immense physical effort moving spinning mule carriages in and out, over and over again.[23] But mule spinners had one of the best organized unions and some of the highest rates of pay: nearly 18

Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *POHC-NBWMRL*]**; U.S. Congress, Committee on Education and Labor, *Report of the Committee of the Senate upon the Relations Between Labor and Capital and Testimony Taken by the Committee*, Vol. 1 (Washington: 1885), 69; Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 124.

[20] Joseph Maltais, Tape 17-B, *POHC-NBWMRL*; Forest Chester Ensign, *Compulsory School Attendance and Child Labor* (Athens Press, 1921), 57.

[21] Joseph Maltais, Tape 17-B, *POHC-NBWMRL*.

[22] Oral History 67, interview by Patricia Hunter, circa 1987-1991, MC 24/PAA, Oral History Project, 1987-1990, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, Archives and Special Collections, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Library, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *OHP-FMPAA*]**; William Isherwood, Oral History, Jan. 23, 1980, Folder 9, Box 1, MC 9, *NB1928-UMASSD*; Mary Alves, Oral History, interview by Dora Bastarche, Aug. 31, 1981, Folder 12, Box 1, MC 9, *NB1928-UMASSD*.

[23] "Factory Life As Seen Here by Wool and Cotton Reporter," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Aug. 26, 1898, in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 666-668.

dollars a week in the 1870s.[24] Perhaps at the top of the labor hierarchy was each factory's small number of loomfixers, who earned up to 14 dollars a week, nearly double the wages of picker hands, and had an equally powerful union behind them, clamping down on potential workplace abuses such as unauthorized overtime, arbitrary promotions, and unwarranted job terminations.[25] There were also other, less tangible reasons workers coveted loomfixing positions. As one Portuguese operative made clear in describing his own journey from lunch carrier to loomfixer over the course of the 1920s, what made loomfixing so attractive was hardly just its material rewards: "All they did was sit down go to sleep and wait for a thread to break. And all the mothers were trying to marry their daughters off to a loom fixer because it was the highest paying job in the weaver's room."[26] In other words, from lifting heavy cotton rolls to crawling under dangerous machinery to sleeping and waiting around for threads to break and eager daughters to marry, there was hardly one "textile operative" experience in Massachusetts' mills.

Yet even high wages did not necessarily entail a life of ease. Indeed, one of the most frequent complaints of textile workers was the fact that the capricious nature of the cloth market itself made for unsteady employment, beset by constant production interruptions and concomitant bouts of joblessness. For instance, when mule spinner Thomas O'Donnell testified in front of a congressional inquiry on the relations between labor and capital in 1883, although

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[24] Ibid.; "Labor's Problems: Industrial Commissioners in this City Listen to Testimony of Union Secretaries at Mellen House," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 23, 1901 in *Victorian Vistas: Fall River, 1901-1911: As Viewed Through Its Newspaper Accounts*, ed. Philip T. Silvia (Fall River: R.E. Smith Printing Co., 1992), 68-84.

[25] In 1907, the Fall River Loom Fixers counted only 169 members. See Fall River Loom Fixers Association, Executive Committee Minutes, 1900-1901, 23, 25-26, 37, Box 1, MS 3, Loom Fixers Association Records, 1895-1917, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *FRLFA-UMASSA*]**; Fall River Loom Fixers Association, Executive Committee Minutes, 1911-1917, Box 1, 104-105, MS 3, *FRLFA-UMASSA*; Fall River Loom Fixers Association, Dues Book, 1907, Box 2, MS 3, *FRLFA-UMASSA*; MBSL, Public Document No. 15, *Forty-First Annual Report of the Statistics of Labor for the Year 1910* (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1911), 302.

[26] Oral History 9 and 10, interview by Leslie Fernandes, 1987-1988, Fall River, MA, *OHP-FMPAA*.

his earnings of $1.50 a day, with only six dollars due in rent each month, should have made for a decent living, the problem was that "since that strike we had down in Fall River about three years ago I have not worked much more than half the time, and that has brought my circumstances down very much."[27] O'Donnell estimated that he had made $133 over the course of the year—meaning he was employed around 30 percent of the time.[28] Although O'Donnell's case was likely somewhat extreme, extant production records from area mills reveal that his story was by no means entirely unique. In the decade spanning 1885 to 1894, for instance, the Metacomet Mill of Fall River was open a full schedule of 311 days only one year.[29] It averaged 285 annual operational days over the course of the decade, and some years it ran as few as 245.5 days, entailing nearly three months of lost wages for its operatives.[30]

Other unpredictable events, such as sudden curtailments, strikes, or fires could similarly kick workers off shopfloors and onto city streets. For instance, a fire at Fall River's American Print Works in 1867 left 500 workers unemployed; an 1874 fire at the Granite Mill forced 30 operatives (mostly children) to jump to their deaths while rendering 400 operatives idle; an 1876 fire at the American Linen Mill left 1,100 unemployed; and an 1877 fire at the Border City Mill rendered 450 jobless.[31]

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[27] U.S. Congress, *Committee on Education and Labor, Report of the Committee of the Senate upon the Relations Between Labor and Capital and Testimony Taken by the Committee*, Vol. 3 (Washington: 1885), 451.

[28] Ibid., 453.

[29] Record Book, "Insurance, Cloth + Cotton…1884-1895…Metacomet Manufacturing Co.," Vol. GE-1, Box 3, Metacomet Series, Fall River Iron Works Collection, MSS 5, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *MS-FRIW-BLHC*]**.

[30] Ibid.

[31] "From Our Extra This Morning: Another Terrible Fire," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Dec. 16, 1967 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 115-118; Arthur Sherman Phillips, *The Phillips History of Fall River,* Facsimile II (Fall River: Dover Press, 1945), 142; Chaim M. Rosenberg, *Child Labor in America: A History* (McFarland, 2013), 163; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 135; "Destructive Fire," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, June 30, 1876 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 289-291; "The Fire This Morning," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Nov. 17, 1877

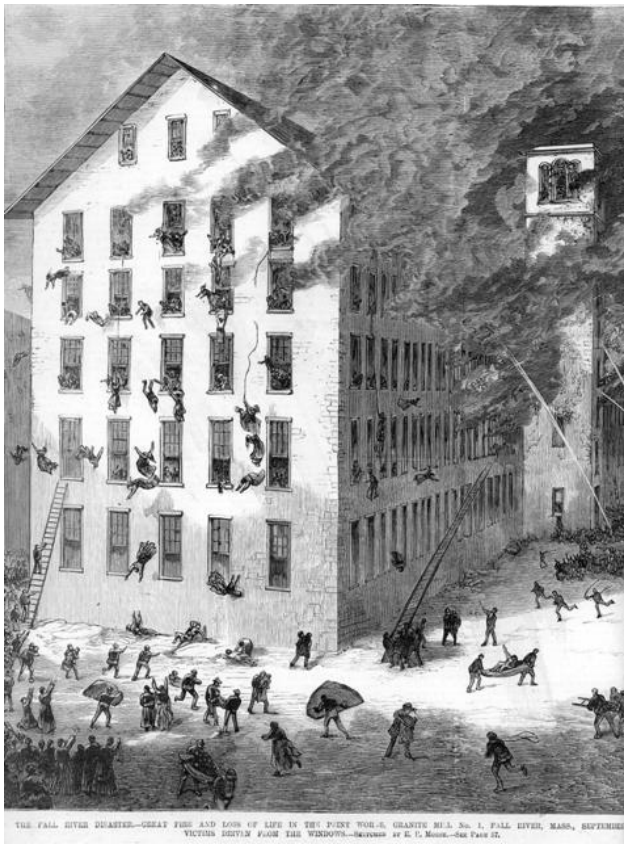

Figure 4.1: "The Fall River Disaster": The 1874 Fire at the Granite Mills[32]

Even amidst normal conditions, textile work was extremely dangerous, especially for young children, whose small stature often relegated them to jobs crawling in and around machinery.[33] Stories of industrial accidents in the mills became a constant and darkly colorful aspect of local newspapers. Take, for instance, the tale of eight-year-old Katie Lyon of Fall River, who, despite having "just been beaten for carelessness," got her dress caught in the gears of the Linen Mill's mule room, drawing her arm in: "the flesh was stripped from her arm in some

in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 311.

[32] "The Fall River Disaster - Great Fire And Loss Of Life In The Print Works, Granite Mill No. 1 Fall River, Mass., September 19th - The Victims Driven From The Windows," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, Oct. 3, 1874, Acc. No. 0000.1709.7, American Textile Heritage Museum, Lowell, Massachusetts, http://chace.athm.org/singleDisplay.php?kv=6980; American Textile History Museum, "Granite Mill Fire," http://www.athm.org/granite-mill-fire/

[33] Carolyn Tuttle, *Hard at Work in Factories and Mines: The Economics of Child Labor during the British Industrial Revolution* (Westview Press, 1999), 130.

places to the bone, and many of the arteries and sinews were severed."[34] Emmanuel Taylor of the Azores got his arm similarly broken and skinned only 10 days into his first job in 1873.[35] Annie McNeal, a fifteen-year-old doffer, got her hair wound into a speeder machine in 1879, and found "her hair and portions of her scalp…[wound] around the machine… A piece of the skull two inches long…was also missing and the brain was laid bare though uninjured."[36] A tired, young French Canadian operative, Regis Verzina, fell 45 feet to his death early in the morning by walking into an empty elevator shaft in 1880.[37] Portuguese immigrant Joseph Pacheco, only four months into his American sojourn, was killed in 1903 after his clothing got caught in machine shafting in the drawing room and was stripped from his body and wrapped around his neck.[38] The list of such incidents goes on and on.

[34] Untitled Article, Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 15, 1867 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885,* 84-86.

[35] "Serious Accident…," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Apr. 25, 1873 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 219.

[36] "Probably Fatal Accident," Jan. 24, 1879 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 332.

[37] "Elevator Boy Killed," Oct. 20, 1980 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 380.

[38] "Entangled in Shafting," Jan. 1, 1903, in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 159.

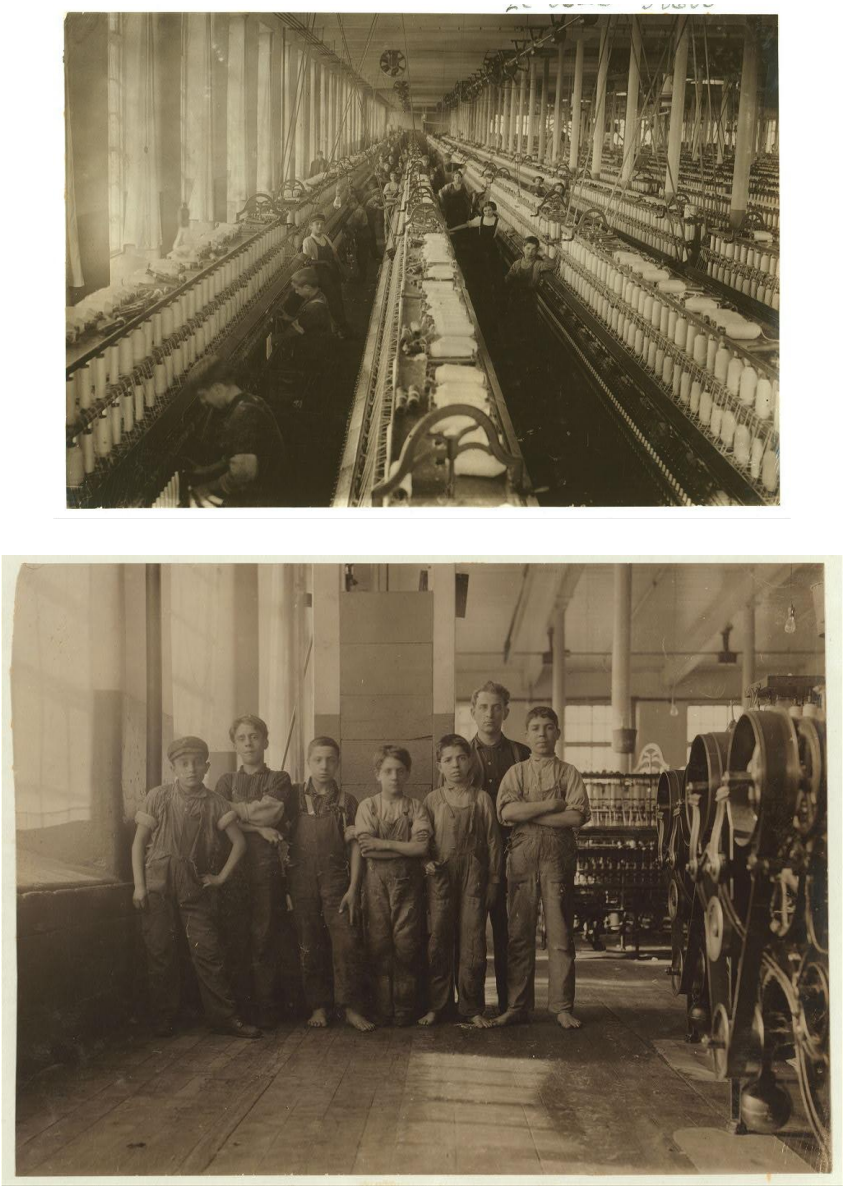

Figure 4.2: Spinning Room and Workers of the Cornell Mill, Fall River, MA, by Lewis Hine, 1912

Hine captioned the second photo as follows: "In this group are some of the youngest workers in Spinning Room of Cornell Mill. The smallest is Jo Benevidos…Other small ones are: John Sousa…Anthony Valentin, …Manuel Perry…John Travaresm [or Taveresm?].... The difficulty they had in writing their names was pathetic. When I asked the second hand in charge of the room to let the boys go outside a moment and let me get a snap-shot he objected, saying they would stay out and not be in shape to work. When they carry dinners, they breathe the close air of the spinning room from 7 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. with no let-up".[39]

[39] Lewis Hine, "General view of the spinning room, Cornell Mill, showing some of the young boys and girls employed there...," Jan. 1912, Reproduction no. LC-DIG-nclc-02494, Call No. LOT 7479, v. 5, no. 2763 [P&P], Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC **[hereafter *LOC*]**. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/nclc/item/ncl2004003362/PP/ ; Lewis Hine, "In this group are some of the youngest workers in Spinning Room of Cornell Mill…," Jan. 1912, Reproduction No. LC-DIG-nclc-02505, Call No. LOT 7479, v. 5, no. 2778 [P&P], *LOC,* http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/nclc/item/ncl2004003256/PP/.

Beyond freak accidents, layoffs, and catastrophic conflagrations, everyday life in the mills still left much to be desired. Working hours were long. Fall River's earliest mills often kept their workers at their machines from 4:00 AM to 7:30 PM each day.[40] After a fourteen-year-old girl died of what a local physician diagnosed as "overwork," Fall River millowners voluntarily agreed to reduce summer working hours to 5:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Although hours had been reduced by the 1840s, they still ranged around 12 hours daily.[41] By 1874, workers' strenuous political efforts resulted in a 60-hour law for women and minors, with 10 ½-hour weekdays and 7 ½-hour Saturdays becoming the standard schedule in area mills until the passage of 58-hour legislation in 1892.[42] Much to workers' chagrin, however, manufacturers often responded to legal cuts in hour maximums by simply speeding up machines or increasing the number of machines workers had to tend.[43] So whereas weavers had once been expected to run two looms for over twelve hours each day in the early-nineteenth century, by the 1880s, although they were

[40] Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 104.

[41] United States Department of Labor, Bulletin No. 604, *History of Wages in the United States from Colonial Times to 1928* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1934), 90; Benjamin Wood Pearce, *Recollections of a Long and Busy Life, 1819-1890* (Newport, RI, 1890), 43; Joseph Maltais, interviewed Aug. 9, 1964, Tape 17-B, *POHC-NBWMRL*; Mrs. Stanley Curylo, Oral History, July 4, 1964, Tape 15, *POHC-NBWMRL*.

[42] MBSL, Public Document No. 15, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882* (Boston: Rand, Avery, & Co, 1882), 228; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 128-140; *Public Documents of Massachusetts: Being the Annual Reports of the Various Public Officers and Institutions for the Year 1901*, Vol. 2 (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1902), 320; "Big Success," July 11, 1892 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 323-326.

[43] Despite the fact that the secretary of the New Bedford Spinners' Association took it as a point of pride that the city's looms ran "at higher speeds than anywhere in the country," most workers complained vociferously about the increasing speed of their machinery. See Thomas McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City: New Bedford, Massachusetts, 1865-1900," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1976), 227; U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee…Relations between Labor and Capital*, Vol. 1, 55, 631; U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee…Relations between Labor and Capital* Vol. 3, 493; "Three Strong Unions In New Bedford; They Have Reserves Of 75k To Fall Back On—Want To Strike Rather Than Take 10 Percent Cut," 1898, Scrapbook, 1898 Textile Strike in New Bedford, Massachusetts, Vol. 1, Henry Beetle Hough, Widener Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts **[hereafter *HBH-WLHU*]**; "Joint Convention of Labor Organizers To be Held Tomorrow—Call Issued," in *Victorian Vistas, 1865-1885*, 385; "Big Strike is Ordered," July 21, 1904, in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 212-214.

working two hours less, they were tending four times as many machines.[44] Paired with the hot and humid conditions in mills—around 86 degrees Fahrenheit, summer and winter—these long hours made for deplorable conditions.[45]

Back home, things were not necessarily much better. The working-class tenement districts of Fall River and New Bedford were often hastily constructed, tightly packed, and lacked basic amenities such as sufficient plumbing and drainage.[46] One outspoken Fall River journalist took readers on a very vivid tour of the city's filthy living conditions in 1867, inviting his audience to "take a short walk...through certain portions of our city": "We would suggest, however, that gentlemen whose stomachs are weak and nasal organs moderately acute, take the precaution to burden their pockets with a few bottles of volatile salts…Pig-pens, cesspools, privies, stagnant pools, puddles of slops, dish-water, and a thousand other things, all productive of the most sickening stenches, are scattered around in profusion."[47] In particular, the "filthy, green, stagnant puddles" and the "army of rats" of 6 ½ street were marked as some of the worst in the city, though this journalist was quick to admit that "seventh street is only an improvement as far as [the] puddles in the street and the size and tameness of the rats are concerned."[48]

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[44] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 359; "New Bedford's Warring Factions: Starvation Wages and Destitution Versus Enormous Salaries and Luxury," *Boston Sunday Post*, Jan. 16 1898, *HBH-WLHU*.

[45] U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee of the Senate…Relations between Labor and Capital,* Vol. 3, 488. Indeed, as one offended New York reporter put it during the New Bedford strike of 1898, "[t]he man who spends 58 hours a week in the hot, stifling air of the factory, barefooted, and lightly clothed, bending anxiously over the machine…this man is generally undersized, pale-faced, and narrow-chested." See H.W. Bird, "Strikers Hold Out," Jan. 20, 1898, Vol. 1, *HBH-WLHU*.

[46] U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee of the Senate…Relations between Labor and Capital,* Vol. 3, 411.

[47] "Odors of Fall River," Aug. 31, 1867 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 102-104.

[48] Ibid. One Fall River spinner used his own tenement as an example of the "very poor condition" of housing in the city during a visit by a Bureau of Labor investigator in 1882: "The [water] closets in the yard are very bad, as their odor is the reverse of pleasant. There is a hydrant in the yard to which we all have to go for drinking water." See MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 272.

Company-built housing was singled out as some of the worst in the city. One investigation of the tenements of the Borden Mills described "operatives [living] in bedrooms and kitchens," with as many as ten people packed into each apartment.[49] In the yards, where both water spigot and water closet stood side by side, "the air is pestilential and the place revolting to every sense."[50] Perhaps most egregious was the discovery of one company-owned bedroom with three cots for fifteen men and children, one of whom was a young boy dying of typhoid fever.[51] Crowding was endemic amidst Massachusetts' industrial tenements, especially amongst impoverished French Canadian and Portuguese tenants.[52]

[49] William Hale, "The Importance of Churches in a Manufacturing Town," *Forum* 18 (September 1884-Febraury 1895: 295, quoted in Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 117.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Kingston Wm Heath, *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 166.

Figure 4.3: Working Class Housing in New Bedford, MA. Photographs by Lewis Hine, 1912

In the first photo, we see Adrian Lornager, a 13-year-old sweeper at the Grinnell Mill, standing amidst rows of working-class housing. In the second photo, we see young Alfred Benoit, a Bennett Mill sweeper (third from the right), and his large family (he had a total of ten siblings) in his family's tenement. Hine captioned the second photograph with the following: "Slovenly kitchen living-room of family of Alfred Benoit… Mother works in the same mill; father is a canvasser (and shiftless)…The baby in the girl's arms is one they are keeping for another woman. The mother would not get in the photo. Alfred had bad eyes this morning (influenza apparently) and mop[p]ing them with a filthy rag. One of the little ones had the same trouble. Another had a boil on his face."[53]

[53] Lewis Hine, Photograph, "Adrian Lornager, 8 Bowditch St. (Apparently 13.) Has been sweeper in Grinnell Mill Nearly a year. Location: New Bedford, Massachusetts,"Jan. 1912, Reproduction No. LC-DIG-nclc-02471, Call No.

It is perhaps not surprising, then, that Fall River and New Bedford became viewed as almost uniquely impoverished industrial cities, both from within and without. Indeed, one of the most surprising findings of the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor's 1882 investigation was that Lowell's workers were not only in better circumstances, but manifestly aware of their superior status. Whereas "the agents in Fall River…found much misery, rarely meeting with happy, contented people," in Lowell, not only were workers more materially secure, but they also proudly defined themselves as, in the words of one Lowell laborer, "the best paid and the best treated class of help in Massachusetts...a better class of operatives than you will find in Fall River."[54] As one Fall River owner summed up his city to the Bureau's investigator, "Fall River is a large manufacturing city, and the central stopping-place for operatives from the other side…we manufacture cheap goods, and have cheap help to make them."[55] In 1898, one journalist even went so far as to bring ex-slave Joseph Copeland to New Bedford to compare his former enslaved condition to the city's textile operatives: "I never liked being a slave, and would not like to be one again" he apparently told reporters after touring the city, "but if I had to take my choice between being a slave again and living like those people I have just seen in New Bedford[,] I would prefer being a slave again for sure."[56]

LOT 7479, v. 4, no. 2737 [P&P], *LOC*, http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/nclc/item/ncl2004003339/PP/; Lewis Hine, Photograph, "Slovenly kitchen living-room of family of Alfred Benoit…," Jan. 1912, Reproduction No. LC-DIG-nclc-02475, Call No. LOT 7479, v. 4, no. 2741 [P&P], *LOC*, http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/nclc/item/ncl2004003343/PP/.

[54] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 220, 342

[55] Ibid., 412. Even when the local Merchants' Association ran a contest to determine a new motto for the city, entries like "The Bargain City" and "City of High Mills and Low Bills" evoked Fall River's self-awareness of its image as a cheap, mass-production center. See "Many After Fifty Dollars," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Mar. 8, 1910, in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 666-670.

[56] "The New Slavery of the North: By an Ex-Slave: By an Ex-Slave Owner," Jan. 1898, Vol. 2, *HBH-WLHU*.

Objectively, such comparisons must be taken with a grain of salt. But they nonetheless help explain the growing consensus amongst New Bedford and Fall River textile workers that they essentially had nothing to lose in labor activism.[57] As the leader of the New Bedford weavers put it amidst the 1898 strike, "the weavers in this city are the worst paid mill help in the United States…They are desperate, I can assure you," and, having decided it "a question of starvation anyway," their decision to strike was partly motivated by the conviction that they "might as well starve in idleness."[58] This sense of desperation was equally reflected in the reminiscences of one leader of the New Bedford strike of 1928, recorded some fifty years later: "I don't think you could get a group of workers to go through with what they did today, to go on strike for six months…they have something to lose now, no matter what their status is. In those days, they had nothing to lose."[59]

An understanding of working-class politics in this era must begin with this sense of desperation and collective suffering. Although it might be easy to imagine confident and assertive unions standing up for the virtues and prerogatives of "manliness" and "skill"—as is often claimed—this was the reality for only a fraction of the highest paid and best organized workers. For the vast majority, unionization, strikes, and labor activism itself were much more reactive responses, generally prompted by sudden wage cuts and stoked by the daily sense of desperation that came from the precariousness and the drudgeries of lives spent on the textile mill floor. It is in this sense that one can begin to understand two of the most surprising aspects

[57] Fall River, George Gunton argued, was "the hardest place for work and the meanest place for wages" in New England. See *Boston Herald*, Feb. 24, 1875, quoted in Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 131.

[58] "Three Strong Unions In New Bedford; They Have Reserves Of 75k To Fall Back On—Want To Strike Rather Than Take 10 Percent Cut," 1898, Vol. 1, *HBH-WLHU*.

[59] Jack Rubinstein, interview by Daniel Georgianna, Sept. 2, 1980, 19-20, Folder 8, Box 1, MC 9, *NB1928-UMASSD*.

of early-twentieth century labor activism on the Massachusetts South Coast: the fact that workers' half-hearted and often erratic organizational work was paired with sudden bursts of bold and radical direct activism, even in the face of the constant threat of de-industrialization.

Labor in a De-Industrial Era

The specter of textile deindustrialization cast its shadow over almost all aspects of early-twentieth-century South Coast labor activism. Indeed, across the board, these cities' laborers were acutely aware of the competition they faced from their southern brethren. As early as 1873, Robert Howard, the leader of the Fall River spinners, had begun correspondence with "all the new mills being built in Georgia and Alabama," discovering that spinners' wages in "those Southern states were only about $1.25 a day."[60] Moreover, operatives were certainly kept abreast of conditions in the south by fellow workers who traveled northward in search of higher wages. One group traveling to Fall River in 1900 told a local newspaper that although "work in the South was easier than it is here," the pay was lower and "the hours range all the way from 66 to 72 a week."[61] There was, simply put, no way of ignoring the growing southern textile industry.

More to the point, manufacturers used the southern threat as a bargaining chip in almost every early-twentieth-century labor conflict. Amidst hearings on whether or not to limit women's and children's hours to eight hours daily in 1901, for example, a member of the Arkwright Club—a political organization for New England's textile interests—suggested that it was just this sort of legislation that explained "the fact that during the last two years there were only three

[60] U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee of the Senate…Relations between Labor and Capital,* Vol. 1, 655-656.

[61] "They Like the Place: Southern Operatives Satisfied With Conditions Here," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, May 26, 1900 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 740-742.

mills built in Massachusetts, while in the state of South Carolina 43 mills were built."[62] Fred Waterman, treasurer of Fall River's Cornell Mills, was even more blunt in his assessment, predicting that, in light of growing southern competition, "Grass will be growing on the streets of Fall River in ten years."[63] "Northern spinners," a New Bedford newspaper reported in 1903, were already "convinced that southern competition is something more than a mere bugaboo."[64] In other words, northern textile workers were hardly surprised by the textile crisis that would come to undermine the Massachusetts industrial economy in the 1920s. The southern threat was difficult to ignore.

In fact, these workers were remarkably attuned to the fluctuations of the cotton and textile markets. "They have as good a knowledge of the markets as anyone," one Fall River reporter commented on the city's workers in 1875: "they know the sources of supply and the costs of the materials, transportation and working machinery, and of course...the average profits."[65] "Talk with a mill agent for five minutes and he will paralyze you with an array of figures he presents to show you that the mills are almost bankrupting themselves by paying 19 cents a cut for weaving," another reporter noted in 1889; but by the same token, one could "give a weaver a piece of paper and a pencil, and in a twinkle he will have it covered with figures, which he claims will convince any sane man that the mills are making nearly a cent a yard profit

[62] "Labor Hearing: Local Delegates Before the Legislative Committee," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 1, 1901 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 53- 57.

[63] "Strong Opposition Put Up Against The Proposed Overtime Bill," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 8, 1901 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 61-67.

[64] "New Bedford: Cotton Yarn Changes the Cause of a Stir," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Oct. 4, 1903, Vol. 20, Mayor Ashley Scrapbooks, New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *MAS-NBFPL*]**.

[65] *Fall River News,* Apr. 16, 1875 quoted in Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 207.

on cloth and one-third their capital stock in a year."[66] As the secretary of the slasher tenders' union justified his own position in 1901, "the secretaries watch the markets," keeping up on the dividends and quarterly statements of the mills, and are thus "always willing to argue their claims and if they make a claim they are always willing to submit to arbitration."[67] Just as this sort of market savvy defined their experience as labor migrants, it similarly structured their activism as workers and unionists.[68]

Moreover, rather than looking to extricate themselves from the hegemony of market forces—like so many other late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century workers—Massachusetts textile unionists often argued that just wages simply reflected the health of the overall market. As a result, workers could be remarkably quiescent if they believed a poor market truly warranted wage cuts. As one textile worker explained to the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor in 1882, "The market is very low now, and the profits are small, so, happily, the help are contented."[69] But, he also made sure to add in the crucial corollary that, "we [also] think, and I think rightly, that when the profits are large we ought to share in them."[70] Another Fall River operative agreed: "Whenever the market is dull, and the mill is not making money, the operatives have to be reduced, and, as a rule, they swallow the fact, and accept the situation."[71]

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[66] "Some Excitement: Flint Village the Scene of a Miniature Riot," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Mar. 23, 1889, in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900*, 159-160

[67] "Labor's Problems: Industrial Commissioners in this City Listen to Testimony of Union Secretaries at Mellen House," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 23, 1901 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 68-84.

[68] "Operatives Meeting at City Hall," Jan. 1, 1868, Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 119-123.

[69] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 239.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 329.

This was not mere rhetoric. In 1897, for instance, Fall River unionists, after a series of citywide negotiations, agreed to a ten-percent wage cut in order to maintain the mills' competitiveness.[72] When another ten-percent cut was announced in 1903, Fall River's unions—aware of the meager market, cotton's high price, and the mills' cloth stockpiles—simply accepted the cut under protest.[73] Strikes were sometimes formally "deferred," waiting for precise market benchmarks. In 1881, for instance, a planned strike was delayed until the price of print cloth returned to 4 ½ cents a yard.[74]

Indeed, unions increasingly began to fight to enforce mathematical wage determinations that depended directly upon the relative health of the textile market, as measured by the price of cotton subtracted from the selling price of cloth. It was this very formula that was codified as the ruling wage agreement between mule-spinners and the mills of New Bedford, Fall River, and Lawrence in 1886.[75] With regularly negotiated revisions, it would continue to structure spinners' wages until the First World War.[76] Fall River weavers established a similar, though shorter-lived "sliding scale" wage agreement in the wake of a 1904 strike.[77] Unions, then, essentially fought to pin their own economic futures on the very same market forces that both sustained and endangered local mills.

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[72] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 23.

[73] Philip T. Silivia, Jr., "Introduction," in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*.

[74] "Deferring the F.R. Strike," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Mar. 1, 1881, in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885,* 386.

[75] David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 163.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 29.

Motivated by this "just wage" ideology, unionists increasingly began to argue that the role of unions was to restrain strikes, and to simply defer to prevailing sliding scale agreements. As Robert Howard boasted in 1875, "I have been congratulated a good deal within the last three years for keeping the men quiet and getting little grievances rectified without trouble."[78] For James Tansey of the Fall River carders, "Unions are beneficial" precisely "because they prevent 'impulsive strikes'."[79] In other words, these union leaders little resembled their eventual caricaturing as aggressive and uncompromising stalwarts. In fact, they sought a relationship of relative harmony between worker and millowner, leaving wages to simply fluctuate alongside the health of the market, vitiating any need for either strikes or sudden cuts.[80]

It was not an entirely fantastical notion. For instance, this is what essentially played out in 1906 when Fall River's workers—responding to reports that, riding renewed market prosperity, the King Philips, Chace, and Tecumseh Mills had declared dividends of 50, 75 and 50 percent respectively—asked for wages to be restored to their 1903 levels.[81] The mills countered with a five percent advance, a deal which the workers rejected. The full wage increase was eventually granted, along with another ten percent increase in 1907.[82]

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[78] Howard added that "When we are thoroughly organized we won't allow the men to go on strike until the grievance, whatever it is, has been thoroughly investigated, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred we can settle and trouble that may arise without a strike." See U.S. Congress, Committee on Education and Labor, *Report of the Committee…Relations Between Labor and* Capital, Vol. 1, 632, 638.

[79] "Labor's Problems: Industrial Commissioners in this City Listen to Testimony of Union Secretaries at Mellen House," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 23, 1901 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 68-84.

[80] See "Meeting of the Weavers at City Hall," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 1, 1868 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 123-127; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 213, 268.

[81] "Mills have Made Grand Showing," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Oct. 26, 1906 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911,* 394-395; "Fiver Per Cent Advance in Wages," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Nov. 19, 1906, in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 406.

[82] "Full Advance of Wages Granted: Manufacturers Grant Operatives Demands After Unions Had Voted to Strike…," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Nov. 23, 1906, in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911,* 407-410; "New Wage Scale In Effect Today," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, May 27, 1907 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911,* 487.

Yet this "just wage" ideology was by no means inherently conservative. If workers felt that manufacturers were violating their end of the bargain, this desire for the "just wage" could also come to animate massive labor protest. One of the first textile strikes in New Bedford, for instance—an 1877 strike of 1,500 workers at the Wamsutta Mill—was prompted by workers' sense of "astonishment" at a seven to ten percent wage cut that seemed incongruous with "the improved state of the market."[83] The New Bedford strikes of 1898 and 1928 were similarly catalyzed by a sense that announced wage cuts did not reflect the actual status of the textile market.[84] In particular, motivated by their abiding faith in the market itself, workers were quick to launch strikes if convinced that manufacturers were trying to solve problems of overproduction by cutting wages rather than curtailing production in order to "properly" adjust to new market conditions.

Again, departing significantly from the anti-market orientation of so much of labor activism in this era, Massachusetts workers often launched work stoppages in the name of restoring market "equilibrium." In fact, this desire for "equilibrium" ultimately inspired one of the most unique labor actions in Massachusetts textile workers' protest repertoire: the so-called "vacation." In contrast to strikes, which workers viewed as class "warfare," "vacations" were walkouts that came with no explicit moral critique or oppositional claim: they were merely a means to forcibly halt production and "equalize" the market. For instance, Fall River's "Great Vacation" of 1875, involving 15,000 workers and nearly a mile-a-minute in production loss, was launched explicitly on the premise that a production curtailment would end the market glut and

[83] *The Standard- Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 22, 1877, quoted in Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 239.

[84] "Eternal Infamy Their Reward…A Talk with Rev. Mr. Acornley," *Boston Traveler*, Feb. 3, 1898, Vol. 2, *HBH-WLHU*; Daniel Georgianna and Roberta Hazen Aaronson, *The Strike of '28* (Spinner Publications, 2001).

raise wages.[85] Workers were not waiting on any particular act of compromise from manufacturers. They simply decided to withhold their labor (and thereby production) for four weeks time.[86] Another, similar vacation was launched in 1894.[87] Indeed, to the extent there was any critique of millowners, it was in their inability to band together for their own rational self protection. As one Fall River letter to the editor put it in 1877, "The cotton manufacturers are not an entirely reliable source of support, from the very evident fact business in that line is overdone already; and still the cry comes 'more mills'."[88] Workers thus used the so-called "vacation" to take production management into their own hands.

Clearly, contrary to later popular opinion, the southern migration of textile capacity was not a result of over-active labor unions and their never-ending cavalcade of demands. In fact, motivated by their "just wage" ideology, workers sought to pin their own economic futures on the very same forces that endangered and sustained local mills, using their unions, more often than not, as a bulwark against wildcat activism.

But there was certainly one way in which some workers' strategies, especially amongst union leaders, did indeed help catalyze southbound capital mobility: namely, in their refusal to extend organizing efforts across the lines of geography and craft. These failures became lessons future generations of workers would not soon forget.

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[85] Philip Thomas Silvia Jr., "The Spindle City: Labor, Politics, and Religion in Fall River, Massachusetts, 1870-1905" (PhD diss., Fordham University, 1973), 90-91.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 323.

[88] "More Variety in Industry Needed," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Jun. 25, 1877 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 307.

Like millowners, workers rarely provided a united front on any issue, thanks in large part to craft segregation: weavers, card room workers, spinners, and loomfixers all had their own exclusive unions throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In a telling augur of what was to come, New Bedford's first textile strike at the Wamsutta Mill—engaged on behalf of gaining the ten-hour-day—ground to a halt when skilled union leaders accepted a compromise deal granting their demands at the expense of a pay cut to the mill's unskilled workers (which of course had little effect on those privy to the negotiations).[89]

Such craft exclusivity was only compounded by the inter-ethnic animosity that often defined local labor politics. In 1884, for instance, when the Knights of Labor attempted to organize an amalgamation of all local textile operatives, it only took two years for the union to fragment into spinners, weavers, card room employees, and a French ethnic union.[90] Indeed, the refusal to incorporate both women and new immigrants was a recurrent feature of Massachusetts' most skilled and well-organized textile unions.[91] Even unions like the Fall River "Yarn Finishers," which organized a majority women workforce, were still firmly controlled by men, running the union—and even calling strikes—on behalf of the "girls."[92] Local textile unions similarly made almost no effort to organize unskilled Portuguese workers. Years later, when Mary Alves—a former doffer at New Bedford's Whitman Mills—was asked about whether or not she was a union member in the early-twentieth century, her answer was quite telling: "No,

[89] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 208-9.

[90] Ibid., 225

[91] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 38.

[92] Fall River Yarn Finishers Union, Yarn Finishers Union Minutebook, 1919-1922, Yarn Finishers Union (Fall River, Mass.) Records, 1919-1922, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *FRYFU-UMASSA*]**; Yarn Finishers Union contribution book, 1920-1922, *FRYFU-UMASSA*.

there was no such thing. Only a few of the English people…belonged to the union."[93] In fact, despite its outsized influence on local labor politics, the Fall River mule spinners union numbered a mere 380 in 1908—just a tiny fraction of the city's overall textile workforce.[94] On the whole, the vast majority of Massachusetts textile workers remained unorganized.

Efforts to expand organization and amalgamate the textile crafts never made it far. For instance, as early as 1875, Fall River's mule spinners refused to join a labor amalgamation proposed by the city's weavers because it would have meant co-organizing with female ring spinners.[95] Even successful amalgamations often remained ephemeral concoctions, prone to certain crafts breaking ranks, such as when the Fall River weavers seceded from an 1894 amalgamation of the city's five main textile unions after it refused to strike a ten-percent wage cut.[96] In turn, these wildcat weavers were incensed when Robert Howard, acting unilaterally on behalf of the spinners, accepted a "compromise" five-percent reduction for the spinners that left all other workers with the ten-percent cut: a vicious "sellout" that ultimately doomed the strike.[97] Even the delegates to the eventual creation of the United Textile Workers in 1901 reported "they never took part in a harder fight than this one" because, despite "a feeling on the part of all that the textile workers of this country should be united," nobody, especially the "national mule

[93] As the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor put it in 1912, Portuguese and Polish workers "begin at the bottom in some such department as the picking room…These occupations are not organized, and the coming of the foreigner there does not concern the textile unions." See Mary Alves, interview by Dora Bastarche, Aug. 31, 1981, Folder 12, Box 1, MC 9, *NB1928-UMASSD*; Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Forty-Third Annual Report...1912* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1913), 43.

[94] "Notable Day for Spinners' Union," Jan. 18, 1908 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911,* 557-558.

[95] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 209.

[96] Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 192.

[97] Ibid., 193.

spinners and loom fixers," was willing to give up their own union.[98] Over and over again, skilled unions—with the fullest coffers and the most political sway—were unwilling to sacrifice their prestige and power by allying with unions of unskilled, women, and immigrant workers.

Local craft exclusivity increasingly bled into regional insularity. Indeed, South Coast textile unions developed an unfortunate habit of suddenly trying to throw together regional and national union organizations when the economy soured, and then quickly abandoning them when conditions improved, worried their own earnings would get siphoned away to support weaker unions.[99] For instance, local workers took great interest in the so-called "National Union of Textile Workers" (NUTW) in 1890, only to abandon it for independent organization by the latter part of the decade, claiming they objected to its domination by socialists.[100] Instead, Fall River and New Bedford weavers decided to form a "Massachusetts State Federation of Weavers" in 1895, which morphed into a regional organization, then ultimately rejoined the NUTW to form the United Textile Workers of America (UTW) in 1901, with an explicit mandate to organize the south.[101]

History repeated itself again. Amidst the prosperity of the first decade of the twentieth century, local unionists began to chafe at the UTW's attempts to use their money to organize other locales. In 1908, following on the heels of major across-the-board wage increases in 1906 and 1907, the UTW raised its levies on union dues, and both the New Bedford and Fall River

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[98] "In One Union: Textile Workers Agree to Amalgamate," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, May 13, 1901, in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911,* 98-101.

[99] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 15.

[100] Clete Daniel, *Culture of Misfortune: An Interpretive History of Textile Unionism in the United States* (ILR Press, 2001), 16; McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 229.

[101] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 22–23; Daniel, *Culture of Misfortune*, 17–18. Even the UTW, however, maintained a commitment to only organizing the most skilled of workers. See English, *A Common Thread*, 74.

weavers exited the organization. After the UTW moved its headquarters from Fall River to New York City in 1915, all remaining South Coast unions followed suit.[102] In other words, at the very moment these unionists could have been using their flush treasuries to expand their organizations outward, they were leaning ever more inward, a move that would have baleful consequences just five years down the road, as a new wave of economic crisis overtook the area.

These union leaders were not without their critics. After the 1875 Great Vacation, for instance, local publisher Louis Lapham pointed out that had "the Fall River operatives…combined with the operatives in other mills to vote themselves a vacation, the other mills could not have run, and the stock [of cloth] would inevitably have gone down."[103] Fellow unionists back in England were even more damning in their critique: as English weaver William Birtles told one New Bedford newspaper in 1898, the city's operatives were "a quarter of a century behind the times…They used to get good wages which suited them, and I am afraid they did not pay that heed to the future which they ought to have done," advising New Bedford unionists to create "a wide and extensive combination" in order to "approximate conditions of capital and labor" across space, vitiating the need for endless labor struggles that devolved into "a mere cutting of each other's throats."[104]

Women, for obvious reasons, were perhaps most critical of the union establishment's exclusivity and insularity. For instance, following one 1875 wage cut months before the start of the Great Vacation, Fall River's weaving *men* assembled and voted—in light of the unfavorable

[102] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 40.

[103] *Providence Sun,* Aug. 7, 1875, quoted in Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 229.

[104] "Promise Aid: Lancashire Only Waiting for the Call: Labor's Cause the Same the World Over," *New Bedford Standard*, Jan. 21, 1898, Vol. 1, *HBH-WLHU*.

business conditions—not to strike.[105] In response, Fall River's weaving women organized their own meeting, and, "being more spunky than the men," as one local described it, decided to call their own strike (to which the men, hoping not to lose face, sheepishly followed).[106] Moreover, the women explicitly dedicated *their* strike to, as one laborer put it, "[sinking] all national differences in the one great question of [our] preservation."[107] The women similarly concluded their strike (in victory) by further offering a pledge to be "mindful of our brethren and sisters in other places who are struggling against the domination of capital," and to "put forth our united effort and purpose for the emancipation of downtrodden and oppressed labor."[108]

In fact, precisely because of their outward radicalism, it was often the outspoken women of these cities who became the "leaders" of strikes in the eyes of the public. As one Fall River operative confessed to the Bureau of Labor, "strikes are rarely caused by the men: they dare not strike; but the women may strike, and the only result will be that they gain their point."[109] Lancashire widow and weaver Harriet Pickering became the inflammatory celebrity of New Bedford's 1898 strike: New Bedford's "Joan of Arc," as the labor reformer and reporter Eva Valesh dubbed her.[110] A self-described "Christian Socialist," Pickering fought hard to make sure the strike committee did not ignore issues of particular import to women (such as the fining system, which disproportionately affected women) and to push for "the thorough amalgamation

[105] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 193.

[106] "Saxon," Letter to the Editor, Feb. 3, 1875 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 252-253.

[107] *Providence Sun,* Jan. 30, 1875, quoted in Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 194.

[108] *History of the Fall River Strike, Being a Full and Complete Report of the Labor Troubles from 1873, to April 5th, 1875,* revised by John Smith (Fall River: Clark & Co, 1875), 25-26.

[109] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 363.

[110] "New Bedford's Joan of Arc," Jan. 20, 1898, Vol. 1, *HBH-WLHU*.

of all trade unionism."[111] Similarly, the coming 1928 strike would see radical Portuguese women like Eula Mendes, Mary Valente, Maria Botelho, and Mary Costa joining Communist organizers in the ultimate effort to create one big industrial union spanning the genders, races, and crafts, from New England to the United States south.[112]

Unfortunately, such efforts at amalgamation often had the ironic effect of further dividing textile workers. Strikes often fractured into warring political camps: amalgamators (generally dominated by women and other unskilled workers) and craft unionists. For instance, after Daniel De Leon and the Socialist Labor Party attempted to use the New Bedford 1898 strike to shore up support from immigrant workers—using their vehement denunciations of "pure and simple unionism" as ideological lure—it simply further divided the New Bedford working class. Some stalwartly kept to their craft unions; others joined the new umbrella labor party.[113] The conflict in New Bedford got so heated that no less than Eugene Debs advised New Bedford's workers that "whatever of the differences, dismiss them until after the battle is over."[114] Local workers would often find themselves divided by the issue of unity.

Simply put, workers did not "get away with murder," pushing Massachusetts textile mills out with their outsized demands. In fact, labor activism sought, more often than not, to handcuff

[111] Ibid.; Eva Macdonald Valesch [Valesh], "Journal Woman With Strikers: Eva Macdonald Valesch, International Labor Commissioner, Tells of New England's fight for Living Wages." Jan. 18, 1898, Vol. 1, *HBH-WLHU*; Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 349–356.

[112] Eula Papandreu, interview by Penn Reeve and Jack Stauder, July 2, 1987, Folder 16, Box 1, *NB1928-UMASSD*; Evelyn A. Stone, "Patchwork of Protest: Social Diversity and Labor Militancy in the New Bedford Strike of 1928" (master's thesis, Duke University, 1994), 57-58; Aviva Chomsky, *Linked Labor Histories: New England, Colombia, and the Making of a Global Working Class* (Duke University Press, 2008), 76–77.

[113] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 244-246; Daniel DeLeon, *What Means This Strike?: Address Delivered by Daniel De Leon in the City Hall of New Bedford, Massachusetts, February 11th, 1898* (New York City: New York Labor News Company, 1928).

[114] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 246.

wages to the very same market forces that shaped the profitability of Massachusetts mills. But workers ultimately did not speak with one voice. While the state's most elite textile workers sought to protect the prerogatives of craft and ethnic hierarchy, others sought a far more capacious organizing ideology. The Strike of 1928 would come to demonstrate this divide all too well. As unionists sought mere "fair adjustment" under the sway of their "just wage" ideology, radicalizing Portuguese, Polish, and Cape Verdean workers, especially women, would join ranks with Communist organizers to create an entirely new sort of labor organization.

Business in a De-Industrial Era

Workers obviously had their own variegated strategies for confronting the increasing threat of southern competition, but it is worth remembering that the south was, first and foremost, a threat to Massachusetts textile operators. After all, it is somewhat surprising that—considering how much ink has been spilled either implicating or excusing workers from blame for textile de-industrialization—there has been comparatively little scholarship on the question of why northern *business* owners were unable to resist the southern threat. Partly, this is a result of the enduring strength of the "de-industrialization" narrative itself. As economist Seymour Harris, for instance, confidently put it in 1947, explicitly comparing New England's decline to the British precedent, "*Any region that depends heavily on manufacturing is almost certain to lose ground in the late stages of industrial development*."[115] In other words, by this reading, "de-industrialization" was hardly a result of this or that choice made by textile industrialists, but rather the consequence of the inevitable dynamics of economic growth. But importantly, like workers, there were also historical reasons northern textile interests found it so difficult to

[115] Seymour E. Harris, "New England's Decline in the American Economy," *Harvard Business Review* 25, no. 3 (Spring 1947): 348–71.

wrestle with emerging southern competition. Foremost, they too were internally divided and in a state of constant inter-competition. While some clamored for business readjustment, production cuts, and technological upgrades, most established textile producers became convinced that they were structurally incapable of overcoming southern competition. A growing sense of the inevitability of the relocation of textile production to the south became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The fact that Massachusetts textile interests were so heavily divided against one another may seem somewhat surprising given that one of the most outstanding facts of textile management in this era was its downright incestuousness. In what became denounced by reformers and workers alike as an "interlocking directorate," a mere seven Fall River families controlled the vast majority of the city's mills.[116] Similarly, the average late-nineteenth-century New Bedford mill executive had interests in five different corporations, and about 60 percent had either been involved in whaling or had fathers who had.[117] When Col. Richard Borden of Fall River, for instance, died in February of 1874, he was the president and director of the Fall River National Bank, and served in some executive capacity in a local furnace company, two railroad corporations, a water works, a tool maker, and seven textile mills.[118] His oldest son, Thomas, was equally ambitious, serving as manager and agent of the Bay State Print Works, treasurer of the Troy Mills, president and agent of the Mechanics Mills, chief organizer of the Richard Borden Mills (named for his father), president of the American Printing Company, president of

[116] "Frauds Not Failures," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Oct. 11, 1879 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 367-8; "The Seven Family Frauds," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Jan. 3, 1880, in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 375; Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 7.

[117] McMullin, "Industrialization and Social Change in a Nineteenth-Century Port City," 57.

[118] "Death of Col. Richard Borden," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 25, 1974 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885*, 229-234.

two local banks, as well as an executive for the same railroad, steamboat, and water corporations his father originally oversaw.[119] Most textile millowners sported similar pedigrees.[120]

Economic oligarchy was reproduced across the generations through rampant intermarriage between elite families. Deviation from the norm was swiftly punished. For instance, after M.C.D. Borden discovered that his son Matthew Sterling secretly married a struggling actress while attending Yale, he conspired to have a doctor convince the younger Matthew that his poor health necessitated removal to the gentler climates of Europe, pushing him on an extended European tour with a Yale professor.[121] M.C.D. Borden then topped off his scheme by paying off Matthew's young wife with $15,000 to obtain an out-of-state divorce while her husband was away.[122] Unfortunately, it was all for naught. Upon Matthew's return, the couple was remarried, and poor Matthew found himself written out of his father's will.[123] Few sons or daughters followed the impertinent path blazed by the young Matthew Borden.

Nonetheless, much to workers' dismay, the "interlocking" nature of textile management hardly diminished local competition. Foremost, despite Fall River's "interlocking" nature, textile management was essentially divided into two core groups, a "western" and an "eastern" alliance, roughly corresponding to the original landholdings that defined the city.[124] Moreover, Fall River

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[119] "Col. Borden Dead," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Nov. 22, 1902 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911,* 153-156.

[120] For instance, see Obituary, Nathan Durfee, Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, April 10, 1976 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885,* 282-284; "Death Claims Richard B. Borden," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Oct. 13, 1906 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885,* 390-391; Hugh R. Noel, "Jonathan Bourne: Whaling Merchant/Tycoon," 27, MSS 18, Jonathan Bourne Jr. Business Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, MA.

[121] "Old Love Renewed," Sept. 11, 1897 in *Victorian Vistas…1886-1900,* 623-625.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 389.

[124] Thomas Russell Smith, *The Cotton Textile Industry of Fall River, Massachusetts: A Study of Industrial Localization* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1944), 28, 33; Silvia, "Spindle City," 10.

and New Bedford millowners felt themselves constantly under threat by the power of Boston's remaining textile interests—concretized by the formation of the Arkwright Club—as well as emerging textile concerns in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Maine.[125] And, more to the point, as workers never tired of pointing out, executives' very interconnection also made it easier to share notes on production returns and relative labor costs, comparing how much each mill was able to extract from its workers.[126] In other words, incestuous management hardly foreclosed the possibility, and reality, of rampant local competition.

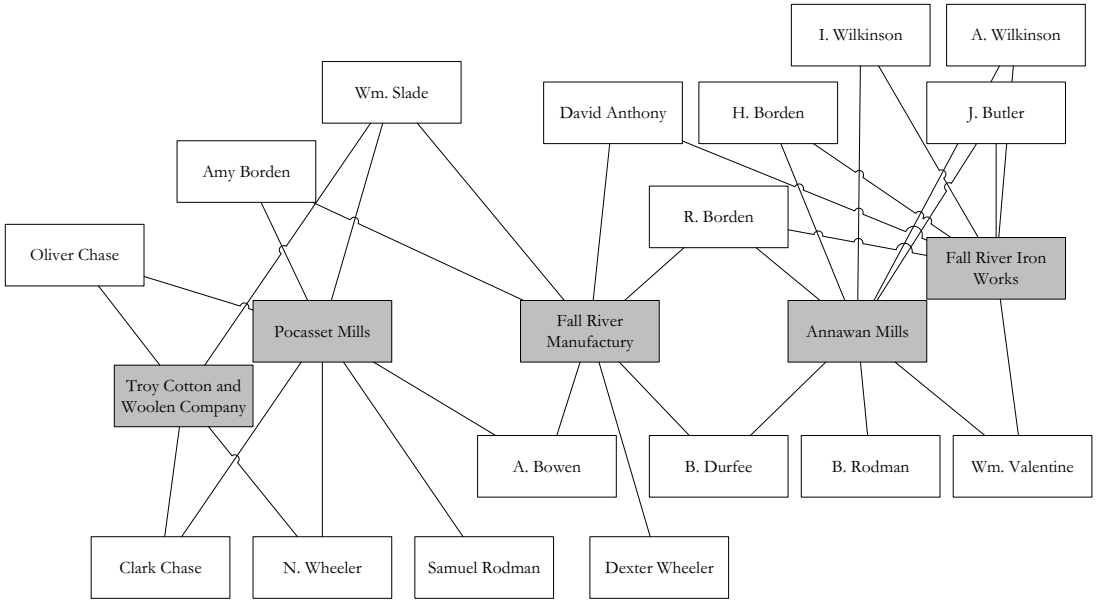

Figure 4.4: Ownership of Fall River's First Five Mills
This graphic shows the owners of the first five mills built in Fall River: the Fall River Manufactury (1813), the Troy Cotton and Woolen Company (1813), the Pocasset Mills (1821), the Fall River Iron Works (1825), and the Annawan Mills (1825). Even at this early date, one can see both the rampant interconnected ownership of mills, as well as the growing divide between the "western" alliance—the Anthonys, Wilkinsons, and Durfees—and the "eastern" alliance—the Chases, Wheelers, and Rodman.[127]

[125] Blewett, *Constant Turmoil*, 341; U.S. Congress, Committee on Education and Labor, *Report of the Committee…Relations Between Labor and* Capital, Vol. 1, 54.

[126] As Robert Howard complained in 1883, "These manufacturers see each other's returns on the board of trade, and if the percentage is one hundredth part more in one mill than in another, as they are of course competing with each other, it often results in the discharge of one small boy, or somebody else." U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee…Relations between Labor and Capital* Vol. 3, 495.

[127] Smith, *The Cotton Textile Industry of Fall River*, 28; Silvia, "Spindle City," 10.

Long before the threat of southern textile mills had materialized, in a system workers denounced as the "grind," local mills ruthlessly competed with one another to minimize costs—developing strategies that would later define their response to increasing southern competition. "This unhealthy spirit of competition that is the ruin of the working class," one worker told the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor in 1882, "They call it 'grinding'; but why do they grind? Is it not to beat the other mills?".[128] And the reason workers felt the pull of the "grind" most acutely was because, as New Bedford textile capitalist Andrew G. Pierce pointed out in 1901, labor was basically the only cost "mills have any control over."[129] Pierce was not being entirely hyperbolic: balance sheets from one of his own mills, the Pierce Manufacturing Company, show that wage payments typically made up around 40-50 percent of total costs.[130] Not surprisingly, then, mill owners first sought to reduce this part of their expenses when other reductions proved impossible. For instance, a comparison of Peirce's 1895 and 1908 balance sheets shows that, while labor costs actually declined as a percentage of total mill expenditures, spending on cotton increased by a factor of twelve, going from $77,122 in 1895 to $860,421 in just a little over a decade.[131] With no real recourse to manipulate the price of cotton, it was laborers who would have to make up the difference. In other words, long before the rise of mass southern cloth

[128] MBSL, *Thirteenth Annual Report…March, 1882*, 349. As spinner Robert Howard pointed out in 1875, "The keen grind of competition that is going on against each other by the manufacturers…it is not a competition against the foreigner at all; it is manufacturer against manufacturer, each trying to undersell the other, that is creating the trouble." See U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee…Relations between Labor and Capital* Vol. 3, 501.

[129] "New Bedford: Governmental Inquiry as to Cotton Mills," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Feb. 24, 1901, Vol. 15, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[130] Minutes of meetings, including balance sheets and accounts, 1892-1935, Vol. 1, Sub-Series 1, Series A, Sub-group 1: Pierce Manufacturing Corporation Records, 1892-1944, MSS 3, *PMCR- NBWMRL*.

[131] Ibid.

production, these cities' interrelated textile magnates were already locked in a vicious race to the bottom against one another.

Thus, even as early as the late-nineteenth century, millowners developed a common set of strategies to overcome local competition; almost all centered on their workers. Most infamous, of course, was the sudden wage "cut" itself.[132] Similarly, other common "efficiency" tactics included the "stretch-out"—making workers run increasingly more machines—and the "speedup," or the increase of the machinery's overall pace.[133] Similarly, beginning in the 1920s, Massachusetts' textile manufactures began a vigorous (and hotly contested) political campaign to overturn Massachusetts' labor legislation—especially the law banning the working of women and children (their cheapest source of labor) at night.[134] Labor became a key part of the textile industry's competitive strategy.

Unfortunately, strategies to squeeze more from their workers had a crucial unintended consequence: overproduction. And although there was a near universal consensus that Massachusetts mills indeed "overproduced" cloth and flooded markets, most textile industrialists—locked into the competitive logic of the market itself—felt powerless to do anything about it. For instance, when Fall River textile capitalist S.B. Chase defended one 1884 wage cut, his answer revealed the ways in which millowners accepted overproduction as a fact of

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[132] Wage cuts were generally posted in the factory with little warning. As one typical announcement read, "On and after Monday, July 25, 1904, the wages of the employees in these mills will be reduced 12 1/2 per cent. Fall River, Mass., July 15, 1904." When one Fall River millowner was pressed for an explanation for a recent cut in 1903, his explanation was equally telling: "There is nothing to say. The notices speak for themselves. There is no money in the business now…We do not anticipate any trouble from the operatives." See "Notices Up Announcing the Wage Reduction of 12 1/2 per cent," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, July 14, 1904 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911*, 211-212; "All Are in Line: Bourne the Last Mill to Post the Cutdown Notices," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Nov. 12, 1903 in *Victorian Vistas…1901-1911,* 181-182.

[133] English, *A Common Thread*, 130; David A. Zonderman, *Aspirations and Anxieties: New England Workers and the Mechanized Factory System, 1815-1850* (Oxford University Press, 1992), 32.

[134] David Koistinen, *Confronting Decline: The Political Economy of Deindustrialization in Twentieth-Century New England* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 12, 29, 31, 33.

life. "We [Fall River manufacturers] produce a little over one-half of the print cloths made in this country," Chase explained, and while the goal was "to produce no more goods than the people want and are willing to pay a fair price for," the reality was that overproduction existed and there was little manufacturers could do about it: "Suppose we assume that the overproduction as a whole is…the output of all New England for two weeks. Allowing Fall River to have one-sixth of the spindles in New England…it would take us twelve weeks of absolute idleness to correct the evil."[135] All the while Fall River's stoppage would "be hailed with delight" by the owners of the other "thousands of looms in New England."[136] In other words, Fall River simply could not curtail production, lest it lose its competitive edge and hegemonic sway over the global cloth market.

In fact, in a beautiful turn of logic, Chase argued that the *real* source of overproduction was Fall River's antagonistic labor unions. After all, the city's competitors, he argued, did not need to curtail production because they knew that if the price of cloth dropped too precipitously (taking wages with it), eventually, Fall River—"the weakest link when it comes to questions at issue between capital and labor"—would devolve into a labor standoff.[137] Consequently, competitors could simply wait for a Fall River strike to bring them an opening to eat into the city's productive hegemony.[138] So while Chase openly admitted that Fall River mills overproduced, he justified it as the only course of action in a business climate in which any curtailment would merely allow some other locale to seize the throne of textile hegemony.

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[135] "A Strike Decreed," Unidentified Fall River Newspaper, Feb. 1, 1884 in *Victorian Vistas…1865-1885,* 415-419.

[136] Ibid.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Ibid.

To Chace's credit, even at the level of the shopfloor itself, overproduction was in some sense an unavoidable aspect of textile production. An analysis of the production records of Fall River's Annawan Mills from February 1882 to February 1883, for instance, sheds light on the more anodyne reason millowners felt so powerless to control overproduction: namely, that sales themselves were incredibly unpredictable.

As the Annawan's weekly records of sales, production, and cloth stocks show (see Figure 4.5), huge production surpluses were in some sense a necessary consequence of the unpredictability of sales themselves. In 1882, for example, sales essentially dried up throughout the months of July, August, and September.[139] The Annawan responded by cutting production slightly, adjusting its average weekly output of 888 "pieces" of cloth (a piece generally measured about 80 to 100 yards in length) that it had yielded from February through June down to 599 pieces through the end of September.[140] Nonetheless, with no sales forthcoming (and perhaps no clear idea of when sales would again pick up), the Annawan's cloth surplus continued to climb, peaking in October at 11,662 pieces, or enough cloth to stretch from Fall River to Detroit (with 50 miles of slack).[141] But, it was perhaps all for the best. With a spate of sudden sales in October and November, the Annawan's cloth stocks plummeted to only 1,357 pieces in just a little over a month.[142] In other words, if the Annawan records are any guide, it is probable that millowners—

[139] Annawan Mill Weekly Statement, 1882-1884, Vol. N-1, Annawan Manufactory Series, Fall River Iron Works Collection, MSS 5, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts **[hereafter *AMS-FRIW-BLHC*]**.

[140] Ibid.; Phyllis G. Tortora and Ingrid Johnson, *The Fairchild Books Dictionary of Textiles* (Fairchild Books, 2013), 456.

[141] Annawan Mill Weekly Statement, 1882-1884, Vol. N-1, MSS 5, *AMS-FRIW-BLHC*.

[142] Ibid.

amidst a market of volatile demand—preferred to risk overpoduction in order not to miss a sudden surge of large orders. Overproduction was in some sense structured into the system itself.

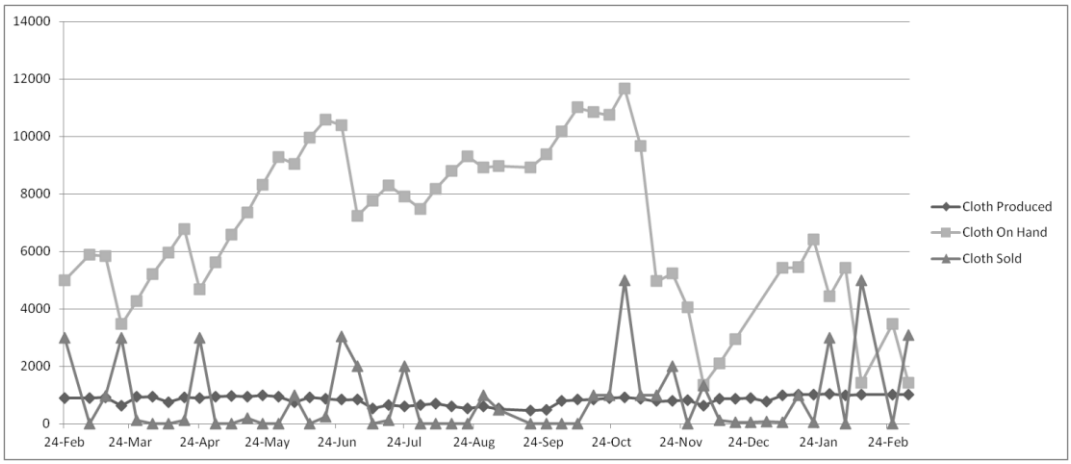

Figure 4.5: Cloth Produced, On Hand, and Sold at Fall River's Annawan Mills, February 1882 to February 1883
Note that cloth sales came in unpredictable bursts, leaving manufacturers to continually produce in the hopes that future sales would evaporate cloth stockpiles (as occurred in October and November of 1882). In many ways, this sales volatility made overproduction a structural facet of Massachusetts textile production.[143]

Ultimately, there was very little that separated how manufacturers handled *local* competition in the late-nineteenth century and southern competition in the twentieth. Wages were cut, machines were added and sped up, and production was relentlessly ramped up in an attempt to maintain solvency amidst shrinking profit margins. Unfortunately for millowners, however, such tactics only tended to exacerbate problems of overproduction. And, following the collapse in cloth prices following the First World War, the problem of overproduction became widely recognized as one of the most crucial issues in the textile industry.[144] And although occasional plans were made for collective curtailments, considering how crucial overproduction

[143] Ibid.

[144] E.N. Hurley, "Overcapacity: Problem or Opportunity," *Industry: A Weekly Journal of Industrial Information* 20, no. 3 (Sept. 17, 1927), 4.

had become to the normal functioning of the Massachusetts textile industry, such efforts rarely succeeded.

In other words, even before the specter of capital mobility reared its head, Massachusetts mills were already, in some sense, on a path of self destruction: engaged in a sort of textile arms race to displace the problem of overproduction through across-the-board wage cuts and even further productive increases. Emerging southern mills were simply able to take this logic to its most extreme terminus, exploiting the prevailing postwar agricultural crisis in the southern United States to offer wages that ranged anywhere from 70 percent to only half of the prevailing rates in Massachusetts.[145]

This is not to say that the emerging threat of capital mobility changed nothing about the management of Massachusetts textile mills. Importantly, it catalyzed two new techniques millowners could adopt in order to contain competition. Foremost, it simply raised the possibility of moving South. And as southern industrial boosters worked tirelessly to advertise the area's limited protective labor legislation, alluring tax incentives, and "docile" labor force ready to submit to the forces of northern capital, they effectively helped catalyze yet another wave of capital mobility fleeing Massachusetts.[146] The Massasoit Mills of Fall River, for instance, spent

[145] Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries, *Report of a Special Investigation*, 2, 11 quoted in English, *A Common Thread,* 116. As one 1898 writer put it glumly, "[i]n the Piedmont section…the low price of farm products is making life hard for the cultivators; and the farmers are everywhere eager to move to town. All the mills that could be built in that region in the next half-century would hardly shelter the stream of agriculturalists who would seek asylum in them." See Jerome Dowd, "Textile War Between the North and the South," *Forum* XXV (June, 1898), 442-443, quoted in Alice Carol Galenson, "The Migration of the Cotton Textile Industry from New England to the South, 1880 to 1930," (PhD diss., Cornell University, 1975), 158.

[146] Southern "boosters" launched massive efforts to attract New England textile capital throughout this period. The 1881 Atlanta, Georgia "International Cotton Exposition" was itself used primarily to market the manufacturing advantages of the South. Later, the "Southern Association of Science and Industry" printed a 64-page newspaper supplement on the advantages the South held for manufacturing, circulating it to every New England mill director. Twelve southern towns also convened a 500-person delegation to tour New England in an order to attract mobile textile firms. See English, *A Common Thread*, 14–15; Galenson, "The Migration of the Cotton Textile Industry,"

200,000 dollars to open a plant in the town of Lake Charles, LA in 1926; Beacon Manufacturing of New Bedford moved its machinery to its new mill in Swannanoa, NC; and Fall River's giant American Printing Company moved much of its machinery to its new mill in Kingsport, TN.[147]

Nevertheless, the overwhelming choice of textile capitalists and stockholders was to simply liquidate, eventually causing another massive economic crisis in the area.[148] From 1922 to 1933, 93 Massachusetts mills shut down; only 11 were owned by corporations with extant southern factories.[149] The transformation was impossible to miss. By 1927, 67 percent of American cloth originated from below the Mason-Dixon Line.[150] Massachusetts was plunged into economic turmoil.

This may seem a somewhat surprising end for this story. After all, how were major textile families to secure their economic futures with no Massachusetts industry to speak of? The answer, it turns out, is that for all intents and purposes, the children of Massachusetts' textile magnates were, by the early-twentieth century, simply so well-established they had little interest in the hurly burly life of mill management. M.C.D. Borden's sons, for instance, went on to become fixtures of the resort community Rumson, located on the Jersey Shore. Bertram Borden went on to become something of a professional philanthropist, and Howard Borden went on to be a land developer (building more than 150 houses in the community) as well as taking on,

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103-106.

[147] "The Year's Business in the Country Along the Kansas City Southern Railroad," *Port Arthur Route Agricultural and Industrial Bulletin* 7, no. 11 (Oct. 1926), 3; Manufacturer's Association of New Jersey, *Manufacturers Association Bulletin* 14 (1926): 30.

[148] David Koistinen, "The Causes of Deindustrialization: The Migration of the Cotton Textile Industry from New England to the South," *Enterprise and Society* 3, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 482–520.

[149] English, *A Common Thread*, 127.

[150] Irving Bernstein, *The Lean Years: A History of the American Worker, 1920-1933*, Reissue (Haymarket Books, 2010), 2.

essentially for fun rather than economic need, work in local law enforcement, becoming the town's "millionaire police officer," as the local press colorfully described him.[151] Only poor Matthew—written out of his father's will for his unorthodox marriage—had to assume a life of labor as a New York City doctor.[152]

Others moved laterally. Some moved west: Jonathan Bourne Jr.'s son moved to Portland, Oregon after graduating from Harvard, becoming a senator and a major industrialist.[153] Of Fall River's John S. Brayton's four children, only one went into textiles.[154] His two other sons went into investment banking, and his one daughter also became a philanthropist, managing, somewhat ironically, local food relief operations in crisis-torn 1930s Fall River.[155] Similarly, although Russell Grinnell—heir to Joseph Grinnell, one of New Bedford's earliest textile magnates—began his career as president of the Page Mill (incorporated 1906), after the mill was closed in 1935, he moved to Providence and became President of the "General Fire Extinguisher Company," building and designing fire safety systems for mills.[156] In other words, as the "interlocking directorate" that originally ruled these mills broke apart and children moved into

[151] Randall Gabrielan, *Rumson: Shaping a Superlative Suburb* (Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 41–42; Caroline Seebohm and Peter C. Cook, *Cottages and Mansions of the Jersey Shore* (Rutgers University Press, 2007), 19.

[152] *The Lancet-Clinic* 122, no. 5 (Aug. 1, 1914), 133.

[153] "Bourne, Jonathan, Jr. (1855-1940)" *Oregon Biographical Dictionary*, Jan Onofrio (Somerset Publishers, 1999), 21

[154] "Official and Personal," *Amherst Graduates' Quarterly* 12, no. 48 (Aug. 1923), 283.

[155] Ibid.; Clifford Ross Brayton, *Brayton Family History*, Vol. 2 (1982), 329-330; "Alice Brayton, Author is Dead," *Nashua Telegraph*, Dec. 13, 1972; Holly Collins, "Living Art: A Singular Expression of Portuguese-American Cultural Traditions and Values," The Preservation Society of Newport County, Jan. 28, 2004, http://www.newportmansions.org/documents/green_animals_living_art.pdf.

[156] Henry H. Crapo, "The Story of Cotton and Its Manufacture into Cloth in New Bedford," *Old Dartmouth Historical Sketch*, no. 67 (Nov. 1937); *Industrial Research Laboratories of the United States*, Bulletin of the National Research Council, no. 104, 7th ed. (Washington, DC: National Research Council, 1940), 115.

new industries, or out of industry altogether, it is not surprising that liquidation emerged as an increasingly attractive option for these local mills' most well established stockholders.

Those left behind to either resurrect or fight to preserve these local economies, then, were largely not the descendants of these original whaling and landholding families. After 1910, few of the mills incorporated in New Bedford had descendants of the city's whaling elite on their executive boards.[157] There were some exceptions. Seabury Stanton, for instance, dedicated his life to "[standing] fast" amidst "the general exodus from the area," refusing "to give up under competitive difficulties"—as president of the Hathaway Mills, a position he inherited from his father, a former whaling captain.[158] But the industry was increasingly dominated by newer entrants. Walter Langshaw, an English immigrant who worked his way up from the factory floor to head of the Dartmouth Mill, would join Stanton as another outspoken critic of these mills' self-destructive strategies.[159] As the textile industry collapsed over the ensuing decades, those who would fight to revive New Bedford would be local capitalists who had more or less only recently joined the ranks of textile mill ownership, as well as the sizable class of allied utility, real estate, retail, and banking interests who depended on the economic vitality of these cities for their livelihood.

Falling Apart in the Strike of 1928

New Bedford's massive Strike of 1928, sending more than 30,000 textile workers off their jobs, was in some sense a fitting denouement for this long period of protracted labor-capital struggle in the context of the constant threat of capital mobility. Fittingly, it too was justified by

[157] Crapo, "The Story of Cotton and Its Manufacture."

[158] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 93.

[159] Zephaniah W. Pease, *History of New Bedford,* Vol. 3 (New York: The Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1918), 512-514.

workers' "just wage" ideology; it too resulted from manufacturers' failure to uphold a voluntary production cut; and it too was in some sense doomed by the divisions that roiled local unions, torn between craft-based exclusivity and ethnic and geographic inclusivity.

Like so many strikes before it, the Strike of 1928 began with a cut: a ten-percent wage cut manufacturers announced on April 9, 1928, citing the "extremely critical" situation of high operating costs, "unfair conditions" of competition, and the "handicap" of hours and wage restrictions.[160] The next week, the day the cut was to take effect, 2,571 union members outvoted 188 in favor of the walkout, taking with them another 25,000 or so unorganized workers.[161]

The argument put forth by unionists remained the same as in previous contests: wages should reflect profits. And although the price of cloth may have plummeted in the early 1920s, textile firms had continued to reap massive profits by selling off surplus cotton left over from the war.[162] Rather than investing these earnings into updating outmoded production technology, however, New Bedford mills had instead pushed profits back into investor pocketbooks through a series of dividend payments.[163] Thus, although the 1920s is routinely identified as the "lean years" of the textile industry, through 1924, dividends from New England textile firms averaged some 12.2 percent.[164] Moreover, although local mills had suffered setbacks in 1926, 1927 was a year of recovery: New Bedford mills made profits in excess of 2.5 million dollars.[165] Indeed, in

[160] "Announcement," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr. 9, 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[161] "The Strike at a Glance," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr. 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*; Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 57.

[162] Ibid., 51.

[163] "No Excuse," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr. 12, 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[164] Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 52.

[165] Ibid., 51.

the months leading up to the strike, the local newspapers were chock full of good news about the mills' substantial profits.[166] Four months before the wage-cut announcement, for instance, the chairman of the "New Bedford Boosters Club" enthusiastically announced that the city's textile industry had "emerged from the world wide depression in the cotton industry," and that "the fine textile industry [is] here in New Bedford to stay" with "nothing to fear from the South."[167] It is not surprising that workers ultimately remained unmoved by manufacturers' claims of distress.

Further compounding workers' sense of righteous grievance was the fact that, despite the mills' recoveries, wages had been in a steady decline since 1920. Immediately following the First World War, for instance, New Bedford workers had to accept both a wave of layoffs and a twenty-percent wage cut. Wages continued to fall an additional fifteen percent over the next six years as manufacturers attempted to address the problem of overproduction by cutting labor costs.[168] In fact, the wage cut leading up to the 1928 strike was itself the result of the local Manufacturers' Association's failure to uphold a voluntary twenty-percent production cut instituted in January of that year.[169] Indeed, despite the agreement, most manufacturers quickly

[166] "Acushnet Mill Earnings Gain: Figure for this year given as $217,932.39 against $50,325 in 1926," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), Nov. 17, 1927; "Loss in 1926 turned to Gain: Hathaway's Mills' Earnings $108,595.12 for Year Ending Oct. 1" Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Nov. 1927, Vol. 117, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Grinnell Mill Earns $162,866: Manufacturing Account Year Ago showed $153,914," Vol. 117, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Kilburn Mill Earns $67,809: President of First Yarn Company to Report for 1927 Registers Optimism," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), Nov. 28, 1927; "Bristol Gain is $61,473," Unidentified Newspaper, Nov. 1927, Vol. 117, *MAS-NBFPL*; "More Mill Gains," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Feb. 19, 1928, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Butler Mill Profit for 1927 Reaches $111,000: Big Plant Reported Loss of $320,331 for Preceding Year," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Feb. 1928, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Taber Earns $9.63 on Share: Manufacturing Gain in Year amounts to $154, 180, Treasurer Reports," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Feb. 1928, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[167] "Boosters Hear State Budget Expert Speak," *Morning Mercury* (New Bedford), Dec. 1, 1927.

[168] Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 45–6.

[169] "Twenty Per Cent Curtailment by Fine Cotton Goods Mills," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Jan. 1927, Vol. 117, *MAS-NBFPL*.

broke ranks and boosted production, thus further lowering the price of cloth and exacerbating profit instability.[170] Manufacturers remained as divided as ever.

Armed with this data, unionists worked tirelessly to prove to the people of New Bedford that local mills could indeed pay fairly and compete effectively. For example, local unionists never lost their fondness for pointing out that one of the few mills in the city that refused to institute the wage cut, Walter Langshaw's Dartmouth Mill, was also the city's most profitable factory. It did not help that Langshaw himself seemed to take immense pleasure in publically denouncing local mill owners for their "greed and intolerance" as well as their unwillingness to address the real issue at stake: "overproduction."[171] "The cause of the depression in the textile industry had nothing to do with wages," one local newspaper confidently declared: "The reason for the situation was known and admitted by every manufacturer and student in the land. It was due to the overbuilding of mills...The remedy was obvious. It lay in curtailment of production."[172] New Bedford unionists even commissioned a twelve-part series of articles by famed labor economist Norman Ware in an effort to demonstrate empirically that the Manufacturers' Association wage cut was unnecessary.[173]

For workers, the manufacturers had failed to uphold their end of the "just wage" bargain. And it was this combination of rising profits, an unwillingness to curtail production, and declining wages that inspired the Strike of 1928. As a poem by weaver Thomas Spellmen,

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[170] Chomsky, *Linked Labor Histories*, 37.

[171] Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 73; Walter Langshaw, "Press Clippings," 375 quoted in Ibid., 74; "Declares Wage Cut is Not Remedy...Blames Overproduction and Giving High Salaried Positions to Friends of Persons With Pull," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Aug. 1928, Vol. 123, *MASNBFPL*; "Langshaw Urges Junking Old Mills, Liquidation, Curtailment, To Cure Ills," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Aug. 1928, Vol. 123, *MASNBFPL*;

[172] Untitled, *Morning Mercury* (New Bedford), Apr. 10, 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[173] Ibid., 68.

addressed to his fellow workers, put it, "In the industrial depression/ you did take a noble part/ And ungrumbling shared the leanness/of the floundering textile mart…By your courage and your patience/ Toiling in the uphill rut/ You've deserved a commendation/ Not the stinging lash – the cut."[174] As in the nineteenth century, unionists saw the just wage as a function of the same market pressures manufacturers faced. These understandings of the political economy of textile manufacturing would continue to frame their anger and guide their protests throughout the Strike of 1928.

Thus, partly as a result of the local union's efforts to prove the justice of their cause, the Strike of 1928 enjoyed tremendous community support. Local newspapers, clergy, merchants, and even national trade magazines criticized local mill owners for their short-sighted management tactics, voicing support for the strikers.[175] Even the *American Cotton and Wool Reporter* found managers to blame: "The whole world has changed. Everything is different now than it was 50 years ago—except the selling methods of these and other cotton mills."[176] A local minister recounted to a reporter all the headlines he wished he had seen in the local newspaper instead of the wage cut—such as "MILLS ADJUST [MANAGEMENT] ALONG PROGRESSIVE NEW LINES!" and "MILLS DROP EVERY USELESS OFFICIAL FROM THEIR STAFFS"—adding that it was millowners' "LACK OF FAITH in their own ability to grow" that undergirded the strike.[177] A local businessman similarly cited millowners' "lack of

[174] Ibid., 63.

[175] Paul Blanshard, "New Bedford Carries On," *Nation* 126, no. 3285 (June 20, 1928): 692-693; "'Consider Mill Wages First, Profits Later,' Plead Pastors: Three Churchmen Assert Present Industrial System is Obsolete, Inadequate, Contrary to Christianity—Call upon leaders and workers to accept revision," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, May, 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*; Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 69–72.

[176] "Textile Weekly Blames Mills for Own Plight," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr. 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[177] "Lack of Faith," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, circa Apr. 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL.*

courage" as the issue, adding that millowners needed "a 'Mussolini' to take them over and make them do the things they're afraid, or too inert, or too locked in their old ways of doing things, to attempt for themselves."[178] Across the board, millowners were shocked by the vicious public backlash against the wage cut.[179]

But for those long denied a place or a voice in New Bedford's unions, the strike also became a chance to create an entirely new kind of working-class organization. Indeed, Portuguese, Polish, and French Canadian workers began to flock to New Bedford's newly organized "Textile Mill Committee" (TMC), founded by two communist party operatives, Fred Beal and William Murdoch.[180] "On Pleasant street," at the craft union Textile Council headquarters, one journalist noted, "you will hear the cadence of Lancashire tongues predominating over every other accent," but at TMC headquarters, "the tongue is Portuguese and Polish for the most part."[181] In fact, TMC rallies regularly featured speeches in English, Portuguese, French, and Polish.[182] And although many local residents looked upon the TMC with deep discomfort—it was, after all, organized by out-of-town "red agitators" attracted to New Bedford by the massive strike—its promise to bring all textile mill operatives, regardless of skill, ethnicity, or region under one umbrella union was deeply compelling to unskilled immigrants long deprived a place on the local Textile Council.[183] At one of the earliest TMC rallies, Juliette

[178] "Lack Courage!," New Bedford Times, circa Apr. 10, 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL.*

[179] "More Millmen Not So Eager For Pay Slash," *New Bedford Times*, Apr. 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Expert Declares Wage Cut Cannot Stimulate Demand," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr. 21,1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL.*

[180] Fred Erwin Beal, *Proletarian Journey: New England, Gastonia, Moscow* (New York: Hillman-Curl, 1937).

[181] "Rival Strike Leaders Present Sharp Contrast of Attitudes," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, May 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[182] "Murdoch Thinks Police had no Right to Interfere," May 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[183] During the TMC's Labor Day parade, even respectable "middle-class" Portuguese groups like the "Progressive

Poyntz, for instance, declared "this strike in New Bedford" to be "the greatest ray of hope to workers that has come out of New England in years," urging "the non-unionists to organize," making "an especial appeal for the women to join in the movement."[184] At another rally, "Miss Irene" urged "workers to make one, great, big union" and to not "be afraid of the bosses."[185] Beal himself, a former textile operative of Lawrence, urged workers that no strike is won by "a group of little unions," but by "one big union."[186] Fittingly, after the close of the 1928 strike, Beal would move on to begin organizing in North Carolina, where his activism would eventually get him thrown in jail; he eventually skipped bail and fled to the Soviet Union.[187]

Figure 4.6: TMC Picketers, 1928

Although many community members were deeply suspicious of the TMC, it was warmly received by the thousands of unskilled, immigrant operatives who had long been ignored by the craft union establishment. In this 1928 photo, for instance, TMC members are seen holding signs advocating for the TMC's anti-discriminatory, egalitarian vision.

Club" and "Monte Pio Society" marched in solidarity. See Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 122; Clara Sharpe Hough, "Rival Strike Leaders Present Sharp Contrast of Attitudes," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, May 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[184] "Got out a Fair Crowd, but few took T.M.C. Cards," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr., 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[185] "The T.M.C. Group Held Open Air Meeting on Scott Street," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, May 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[186] "'You Can't Win Fight in Bed,' Murdoch Aid Tells Strikers," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, May 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[187] Beal, *Proletarian Journey*.

In particular, the TMC became a haven for women, who not only made up the majority of New Bedford's strikers, but took on crucial roles as leaders and organizers.[188] Portuguese immigrant Eula Mendes, for instance, became a prominent TMC organizer, struggling to create, as she put it, "a union that would take in all of the textile workers…not only for the…so-called cream of the textile workers, not highly skilled workers but for the unskilled and for all the workers."[189] Mendes too was later arrested and deported for her activities "as a member of an organization that advocates the overthrow of the U.S. Government" and was forced to seek asylum in Poland.[190] Picket lines were dominated by women—often with their children by their sides, much to the dismay of local authorities. No less than 65 women were arrested over the course of the strike for either intimidating strikebreakers or fighting back when police violently sought to disperse picket lines.[191] Arrestees included Greek immigrants Angilina Tsoupreas and Christina Simores**,** the first of which, witnesses claimed, kept strikebreakers from entering a mill by "Brandishing [a] brick above her head" and screaming "I kill. I kill."[192] Portuguese operative Mary Valente similarly landed herself in hot water when she threatened one police sergeant with the claim "We broke [Officer McCarty's] head and we're going to split yours open too."[193]

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[188] Stone, "Patchwork of Protest," 52; William Moran, *The Belles of New England: The Women of the Textile Mills and the Families Whose Wealth They Wove* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2002), 227.

[189] Eula Pompandreau [Papandreu], interview by Dan Georgianna, Aug. 1, 1985, Folder 16, Box 1, *NB1928-UMASSD*.

[190] Clipping, "Mrs. Figueiredo Seized by U.S. Immigration Unit," March 16, 1950, Folder 17, Box 1, *NB1928-UMASSD*.

[191] Stone, "Patchwork of Protest," 43; Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 84; "Children March in Picket Line as Batty, Murdoch Argue Issue," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr. 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[192] Stone, "Patchwork of Protest," 1.

[193] Ibid., 57

Issues like equal pay for women—and equal freedom for wives in the household—became recurrent themes in T.M.C. speeches.[194] Radical women immigrants—in particular Portuguese, Polish, and Greek workers—became crucial actors in the making of the Strike of 1928.

In short, the TMC represented the institutional consolidation of the alternative organizing ideologies that unskilled workers had been cultivating for decades. As non-union Portuguese operative Alfred Botelho wrote to a local paper in April of 1928, in the war of conflicting ideologies, "it is the manufacturers who are wrong and the unions partly so," blaming manufacturers for their stubbornness as well as the unions for their exclusivity.[195] For workers like Botelho and the thousands of unskilled workers long excluded from New Bedford's formal union establishment, the TMC's call to organize both north and south, skilled and unskilled, women and men, and all ethnicities made it immensely attractive.

The results of the strike were nonetheless anticlimactic. After six months of joblessness, a series of drab hearings conducted by the State Board of Arbitration brought the strike to a close. Mill owners sat on one side, Textile Council leaders on the other. No women, TMC members, Portuguese, French-Canadian, or Polish workers were allowed in.[196] For those who had the privilege, the agreement reached was pointedly non-radical: a five (rather than ten) percent wage cut. It was cold comfort after six months of joblessness. The mills reopened on October 28, 1928.[197] The Strike of 1928 came to a close.

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[194] "Murdoch Thinks Police had no Right to Interfere," May 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*; "The Seven AIMS of the T.M.C.," Clipping, July 31, 1928, Vol 123, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[195] Alfred L. Botelho, Letter to the Editor, Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Apr. 21, 1928, Vol. 119, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[196] Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 126.

[197] Ibid., 137.

Conclusion

It may seem puzzling that workers would call such a massive strike amidst a moment that, in retrospect, seems defined by far-reaching economic decline. Yet workers were indeed acutely aware of the threat of southern competition, the state of the cotton and textile markets, and the ways in which northern mills were manipulating the price of cloth. Indeed, New Bedford unionists had long maintained an ideology that stressed the just wage as a function of the health of the global economy. As a result, the militancy that brought them to the Strike of 1928 was undergirded by an articulate—and frequently articulated—belief that it was possible for New Bedford mills to compete effectively and pay fairly.

But neither workers nor millowners necessarily spoke with one voice. Whereas these cities' craft unions had little interest in expanding the benefits of unionization across the lines of craft and geography, others, like Eula Mendes and the TMC, fought for just this sort of expansive working-class organization. While some mill owners, such as S.B. Chase, hoped that wage cuts would buy them ever-soaring production levels from a stable, ever-competitive position, others, like Walter Langshaw, relentlessly criticized these mills' self-destructive path. The Strike of 1928 saw these economic visions clash in the streets of New Bedford. And as the textile crisis only deepened, the failure of these alternative visions of political economy to gain traction would ultimately have devastating consequences for these cities.

Chapter 5

Cut from the Same Cloth: Re-making Industrial Massachusetts

Figure 5.1: New Bedford as Textile City
Textile factories as seen from Downtown New Bedford, circa 1920[1]

The collapse of the New England textile industry in the 1920s wrought almost unimaginable suffering upon the people of Massachusetts. "I had not ever lived through such a rough time as I did in those days," one Portuguese immigrant worker remembered in the 1980s. "I gave birth to seven children in the thirties. Three of those children died. One boy was stillborn, and another died at two months due to health. Her lungs had been affected due to the air I breathed in the mill. Another little girl died at the age of three from malnutrition."[2] As unemployment and poverty overtook Massachusetts, children could be seen in the streets thieving wood from abandoned tenements for heat; others scrounged through local trash dumps looking for cloth rags to sell at one-and-a-half cents a pound at the cotton waste plant. By the early 1930s, the city of New Bedford was literally paying the travel expenses for unemployed

[1] Daniel Georgianna and Roberta Hazen Aaronson, *The Strike of '28* (Spinner Publications, 2001), 45.

[2] Oral History 14, interview by Cara Connelly, 1987-1988, MC24/PAA, Oral History Project, 1987-1990, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, Archives and Special Collections, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Library, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *OHP-FMPAA*]**.

Azoreans to return to Portugal, provided they promised never to return.[3] Oral histories of the era are harrowing tales of starvation, families in disarray, and the exhaustion of local sources of relief, leaving workers simply penniless.

It was economic crisis on an unthinkable scale. Whereas in 1920, Fall River, Massachusetts boasted some 111 mills and one-eighth of the nation's total spindles, by 1931, more than half these mills had been liquidated and a state-appointed board was managing the now bankrupt city. [4] In New Bedford, the story was little different. Having once employed some 35,000 workers in 1928, the next ten years saw the evaporation of some 27,000 jobs from local mills.[5] When the city attempted to institute a jobs program in 1930 in an effort to connect the local unemployed with potential employers, it simply ended up with lines of unemployed workers and few jobs to offer. In the first two days alone, it received nearly 1,000 applications for aid, with only one morning of work for forty to offer in return.[6] The collapse of an industry that had once provided over eighty percent of local employment was simply not an obstacle easily overcome.[7] As the president of the United Textile Workers of America lamented in the fall

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[3] Oral History 47, interview by Olivia Silva, May 1, 1987, *OHP-FMPAA*; "Sweatshops Fall River and New Bedford, Confidential Report, 1938," Folder 482, Box 28, Consumers' League of Massachusetts Records, 1891-1955, Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts **[hereafter *CLMR-AESL*]**; "City to Send 3 to Azores for Sum of $35: Another Family of Eight Persons is Preparing to Sail," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, July 1932, Mayor Ashley Scrapbooks, New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *MAS-NBFPL*]**.

[4] William F. Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?: Unions and Economic Change in the New England Textile Industry, 1870-1960* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 54.

[5] Seymour Louis Wolfbein, *The Decline of a Cotton Textile City: A Study of New Bedford* (Columbia University, 1944), 156.

[6] See "Unemployment Registration to Start Here, U.T.W. In Charge," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), Oct. 28, 1930; "500 More File Please for Jobs as Bodfish offers work for 40," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), Oct. 31, 1930; "Responses are still coming," *Sunday Standard* (New Bedford), Nov. 2, 1930; "Two Get Jobs in Registration," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), Nov. 3, 1930.

[7] Wolfbein, *The Decline of a Cotton Textile City*, 9–10, 156.

of 1931, these former centers of New England's industrial ascendance had become places of "destitution…misery and degradation": cities of hungry workers and empty factories—"sad, sad places."[8]

Figure 5.2: Children scrounging up wood and other rubbish from abandoned tenement houses in New Bedford, circa 1932.[9]

For those who weathered the ordeal, it is little wonder that the 1930s became regarded as the end of an era in Massachusetts: the twilight of the industrial moment. Indeed, such stories of acute suffering and the angry grievances of policymakers who saw their state as under assault by economic forces they could neither see nor control have only reinforced the popular and scholarly perception that the 1920s in Massachusetts represented the opening salvo in America's de-industrial future.[10] And just as most works on Massachusetts industrialization begin their

[8] Louis Adamic, "Tragic Towns of New England," *Harper's Magazine* (May 1931), 748.

[9] Jack Delano, "Bringing Home Some Salvaged Firewood in Slum Area in New Bedford, Massachusetts," Photograph (1941), Reproduction No. LC-USF34-042934-D, Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection, Prints & Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000024469/PP/.

[10] As the governor of Massachusetts, James Michael Curley apocalyptically declared in the mid-1930s that "[i]t is about time the authorities in Washington started thinking in terms of the United States and its citizens…and not about the citizens of foreign lands. Unless government aid is given [to] the textile industry…not a spindle will be turning in New England in six months." See "Textile Shutdown Visioned By Curley: New England Industry Will

narratives in the heady days of the 1870s or the early mill days of the 1830s, they inevitably end in the 1920s, precisely at this moment of far-flung capital mobility and economic depression.[11]

Yet by basing narratives upon the movements of capital rather than people, much of this work fails to answer what is perhaps the most important question the specter of de-industrialization raises: namely, what do workers do once all the jobs are gone? The operative assumption, it seems, is that once industry leaves, the writing is already on the wall: factories migrate, workers depart, and all that is left is rust, degradation and crisis. Labor history ends where unemployment begins.[12]

Yet industrial Massachusetts proved more phoenix-like than many observers expected, and many historians have since assumed. In fact, just as Massachusetts textile factories fled for the non-union south, they were replaced by a wave of equally mobile garment shops from the union strongholds of Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York. Arriving in order to capitalize on the area's seemingly endless pool of newly unemployed Portuguese women, open factory space, and monetary incentives from local elites, these garment factories turned de-industrialization for one

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Die in Six Months Unless Washington Helps, He Says," *New York Times*, April 15, 1935. On New England as opening salvo in northern de-industrialization see Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 127; David Koistinen, *Confronting Decline: The Political Economy of Deindustrialization in Twentieth-Century New England* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014). Many others see de-industrialization as an entirely postwar phenomenon, See Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (Basic Books, 1982); David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, "'Take Government out of Business by Putting Business into Government': Local Boosters, National CEOs, Experts, and the Politics of Midcentury Capital Mobility," in *What's Good for Business: Business and American Politics Since World War II*, ed. Kim Phillips-Fein and Julian E. Zelizer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[11] John T. Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America: Work, Leisure, and Struggle in Two Industrial Cities, 1880-1930* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979); Philip T. Silvia, "The Spindle City: Labor, Politics and Religion in Fall River, Massachusetts, 1870-1905" (PhD diss., Fordham University, 1974); Wolfbein, *The Decline of a Cotton Textile City*; Thomas Russell Smith, *The Cotton Textile Industry of Fall River, Massachusetts: A Study of Industrial Localization* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1944); R. Scott Fosler, ed., *The New Economic Role of American States: Strategies in a Competitive World Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 9.

[12] For a significant exception, see Alexander Keyssar, *Out of Work: The First Century of Unemployment in Massachusetts* (Cambridge University Press, 1986).

group—skilled, male textile operatives—into industrialization for another: immigrant women the former textile union establishment had long excluded. No ruinous switch was thrown launching the de-industrial era. In fact, the very desperation left in the wake of de-industrialization was itself employed by local capitalists in their struggle to lure mobile capital back to Massachusetts. From this complex interplay of community and capital—crisis and rebirth—a new industrial regime arose.

Yet how departing textile mills would be replaced was not foreordained. Indeed, the open chasm of empty factories and bankrupt cities yielded something of an imaginative space upon which local actors—workers, middle-class pressure groups, and elites alike—all sought to construct their own visions of "recovery" upon the ruins of Massachusetts' shattered economy. Crisis may have sparked industrialization, but it was the economic projects conjured by far-sighted capitalists—and the reception they received—that determined what shape the future of industrial Massachusetts would take. It is worth remembering that these economic regime shifts are, to draw upon a metaphor employed by David Harvey, a chain of events akin to an artist crafting a pot on a potter's wheel. The process itself may be cyclical, even familiar: but what emerges will vary infinitely, neither automatic nor predictable.[13] Both structural economic transformation and the designs and struggles of workers, capitalists, citizens, and the state helped foment a new industrial regime in the state of Massachusetts.

Desperation and Development

Unskilled Portuguese laborers, who now made up the majority of the area's mill workers, suffered terribly from the mill liquidations of the 1920s and 1930s. After all, the "Great

[13] Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*, 121.

Depression" in South Coast Massachusetts was merely the compounding of a longer-developing depression in wages and employment stretching back to the end of the First World War. Even a decade after the stock market crash of 1929, nearly half the Portuguese population remained unemployed.[14] Municipalities were in similar disarray, as cities like Fall River, which had traditionally encouraged industrialization through low taxes, found themselves in financial ruin.[15]

Already strained local relief agencies broke down quickly, and unemployed workers learned to survive by whatever means necessary.[16] Many lived off the small gardens most Portuguese immigrants kept behind their tenement houses.[17] Indeed, one of the few successful welfare programs instituted in New Bedford was managed by a local gardening club, and entailed giving out hundreds of 2,500-square-foot plots of unused land to the local unemployed for the purposes of small-scale farming. It was a perfect fit: most Azoreans after all, had spent their pre-migration years as farmers. Within months, more than 600 plowed plots had been distributed and successfully farmed.[18] For a brief moment, the industrial era did indeed look genuinely over in New Bedford: the city seemed to retreat some 100 years into the past as workers returned to the land for their subsistence. Yet no matter how creative, few saw New

[14] Wolfbein, *The Decline of a Cotton Textile City*, 45.

[15] Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 105; Irving Bernstein, *The Lean Years: A History of the American Worker, 1920-1933*, Reissue (Haymarket Books, 2010), 256.

[16] Oral History 23, interview by Angela King, Oct. 8, 1987, *OHP-FMPAA*; Keyssar, *Out of Work*, 288-290.

[17] Georgianna and Aaronson, *The Strike of '28*, 130–131.

[18] "Free Gardens Ask for Help: Finance Committee Communicates with 60 Organizations in City," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), April 16, 1932; "Garden Plots allotted to more than 150 applicants," *Morning Mercury* (New Bedford), April 19, 1932; "Garden Committee Receives Last Applications Today" *Morning Mercury* (New Bedford), April 23, 1932; "Free Gardens Now Assured 513 Jobless: Additional Funds Permit Handling of Hundred More Plots." *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), May 9, 1932; "600 Gardens Aid Jobless: Community Project Provides Food and Work for Unemployed Here," *Sunday Standard* (New Bedford), July 17, 1932.

Bedford's resourceful "garden program" as much more than a stopgap solution. Simply put, the city needed something to replace its eviscerated textile infrastructure.[19]

Not coincidentally, almost as soon as New England mills began shutting their doors, local capitalists began an ambitious program to attract new industry to the area. In New Bedford, the Board of Commerce—a group dominated by local utility, retail, and real estate interests—set up an "Industrial Development Fund" in May of 1927, into which local business owners poured tens of thousands of dollars.[20] The parallels with the similar transition undertaken by whaling capitalists some half century earlier were not lost on them. "Many of us can go back and remember the lull after the city's whaling industry died out," one of many Development Fund circulars read. "From the whaling industry we went into the manufacture of textile goods, using the capital that had been earned in whaling… [but] for the future, even if textiles come back within the next two years to what they were ten years ago, it certainly would be the height of folly not to persist in bringing other industries to our community."[21] Just as whaling captains were forced to become lords of the loom, they too would have to reinvent both themselves and their community.

Frank J. Leary, head of New Bedford's new "Industrial Development Commission" (IDC), made sure to strike an attractive bargain with potential industry. Constantly touring outside capitalists around abandoned mills, he offered low rents, low taxes, and free money for

[19] Indeed, the first meeting of New Bedford's "unemployment committee," convened by the Mayor, created a sub-committee to launch this very initiative. See "The Local Unemployment Committee Discuss Problem," *Morning Mercury* (New Bedford), Jan. 3, 1931.

[20] "Effort to bring New Industry here traces back to '27," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), May 11, 1954; "Reviews Work of Industrial Development: Ritchie Cites $20,000,000 Wage Fund, 8,082 Jobs in 21 New Plants," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 16, 1938; Greater New Bedford Industrial Foundation, Advertisement, "Partners in Progress," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 30, 1966.

[21] "Campaign to Raise Industrial Development Fund Announced," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, March 1931, Vol. 139, *MAS-NBFPL*.

moving and machine costs.[22] Fall River boosters promoted similar tax breaks and free use of abandoned mill space for new factories.[23] In fact, at least one corporation made the remarkably un-arduous 15-mile journey to move its factory from New Bedford to Fall River merely to take advantage of such temporary inducements.[24]

The state of Massachusetts, equally desperate to attract manufacturers to its shores, also jumped into the fray. Today's "State Office of Travel and Tourism" was once the Massachusetts "Department of Commerce and Industrial Development," formed in 1936 to transform workers' desperation into industrial development. In 1937, for instance, it produced a gold-bound, hardcover volume, addressed to all "manufacturers who desire to re-locate existing manufacturing plants or establish new industries," entitled *In Black and White: The Facts Concerning the Industrial Advantages in Massachusetts*.[25] In the introduction, the department commissioner proudly declared it "a curious, yet easily understandable fact that the ebb and flow of economic factors have again placed striking advantages in the old Bay State" and that "MASSACHUSETTS, pioneer industrial state…again spells OPPORTUNITY to the ambitious and far-sighted manufacturer."[26] A quick perusal of the seven virtues Massachusetts offered mobile capital made clear the state's "curious" yet "easily understandable" attractions: "unexcelled labor supply," "freedom from labor unrest," and a "state government, mindful of

[22] "City May Get Shirt Factory: Prominent New York Manufacturer Looks Over Local Sites," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Jan. 24, 1928, Vol. 118, *MAS-NBFPL*; "New Company May Come Here: Boston Overall Firm Talks with Board of Commerce," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Feb. 1928, Vol. 118, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Excellent Development," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, May 1928, Vol. 120, *MAS-NBFPL*; "New Industry Coming Here," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, Dec. 31, 1930, Vol. 138, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[23] Cumbler, *Working-Class Community in Industrial America*, 140–1.

[24] "Sweatshops Fall River and New Bedford, Confidential Report, 1938," Folder 482, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

[25] The Massachusetts Development and Industrial Commission, *In Black and White: The Facts Concerning Industrial Advantages in Massachusetts* (Boston, 1937).

[26] Ibid., 1.

industry's needs… [a] friend and helpful towards it manufacturers" topped the list.[27] Massachusetts had 275,738 residents seeking employment as of April 1937, *In Black and White* advertised to readers with a sort of artlessly ironic pride: an estimated 70 percent of the labor pool.[28] The Fall River and New Bedford metropolitan area remained the seventh largest manufacturing area in the country, but wages there were lower than every city in the top twenty. Cost-of-living charts similarly advertised Fall River and New Bedford's rock-bottom position.[29] Manufacturers were likewise assured that although Massachusetts was once "known throughout the country as the leader in the adoption of so-called liberal labor legislation," those days were long gone: workers now understood that "labor cannot enjoy good wages and steady employment without a prosperous industry," and manufacturers now took responsibility for their employee's contentment without state interference.[30] The state of Massachusetts continued to distribute these kinds of books and booster materials throughout the late 1930s and the 1940s, always emphasizing the desperate condition of labor and the friendly posture of the state.[31]

These efforts were, at least on paper, remarkably successful. The list of incorporated shops in the New Bedford City Directory from 1930 to 1945 offers a glimpse of the massive transformation these "industrial development" commissions initiated. Whereas in 1930, New Bedford had 26 officially incorporated cotton mills and no garment shops, by 1941, the city had

[27] Ibid., 3.

[28] Ibid., 8.

[29] Ibid., 13, 64.

[30] Ibid., 17.

[31] Massachusetts. Development and Industrial Commission, *The Facts Concerning Industrial Advantages in Massachusetts ...* (Boston, 1940); The Massachusetts Development and Industrial Commission, *The Facts Concerning Industrial Advantages in Massachusetts* (Boston, 1945).

only 14 cotton mills, but 16 garment shops. By 1945, the disparity was even more visible. The city now had only 12 mills, but 22 garment shops.[32]

Moreover, the number of officially incorporated factories only tells half the story: New Bedford and Fall River were also frequent homes to "runaway" shops that simply came for a period of months—sometimes weeks—in order to escape the hold of the clothing workers' unions on New York and to reap the profits of cheap, non-union labor.[33] The costs were low and the profits potentially huge. A contractor needed only to set up an agreement with a New York shop, receive cuts of cloth ready for sewing, put up a few machines in an empty factory loft, and bring the finished clothing back to New York for a handsome profit.[34] New York garment production had long been based on subcontracting out batches of work to various subsidiary producers in order to minimize costs and maintain flexibility amidst a constantly shifting industry; the only difference now was that shop operators could contract out across space in search of the lowest wages.[35]

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[32] *W.A. Greenough Co.'s 1930 New Bedford and Fairhaven Directory of the male and female inhabitants over eighteen years old, buyers' and sellers' directory, governmental directory, house and street directory, complete classified directory, containing associations, business firms, clubs, fraternal orders, societies, incorporated companies, institutions, manufacturing establishments, with map, etc.* (Boston, MA: W.A. Greenough & Co., 1930); *W.A. Greenough Co.'s 1941 New Bedford…Directory…* (Boston, MA: W.A. Greenough & Co., 1941); *W.A. Greenough Co.'s 1945 New Bedford…Directory…* (Boston, MA: W.A. Greenough & Co., 1945).

[33] As one local lamented in the pages of the *Boston American,* "The sweatshops are conducted largely by outsiders who came from others States [sic] into Massachusetts at the prospect of obtaining abandoned mill properties for a small fraction of their cost and at the prospect of acquiring for a pittance the labor of the women and girls who had been thrown out of work in the textile cities." See Editorial, *Boston American,* May 16, 1933; Corinna R. Marsh, "Shops That Pass in the Night," *The Rotarian* XLIII, no. 5 (Nov. 1933); "Sweatshops Fall River and New Bedford, Confidential Report, 1938," Folder 482, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

[34] Ibid., 19.

[35] Roy B. Helfgott, "Women and Children's Apparel," in *Made in New York: Case Studies in Metropolitan Manufacturing*, eds. Max Hall and Roy B. Helfgott (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959); Steven Fraser, "Combined and Uneven Development in the Men's Clothing Industry," *The Business History Review* 57, no. 4 (1983): 522–47.

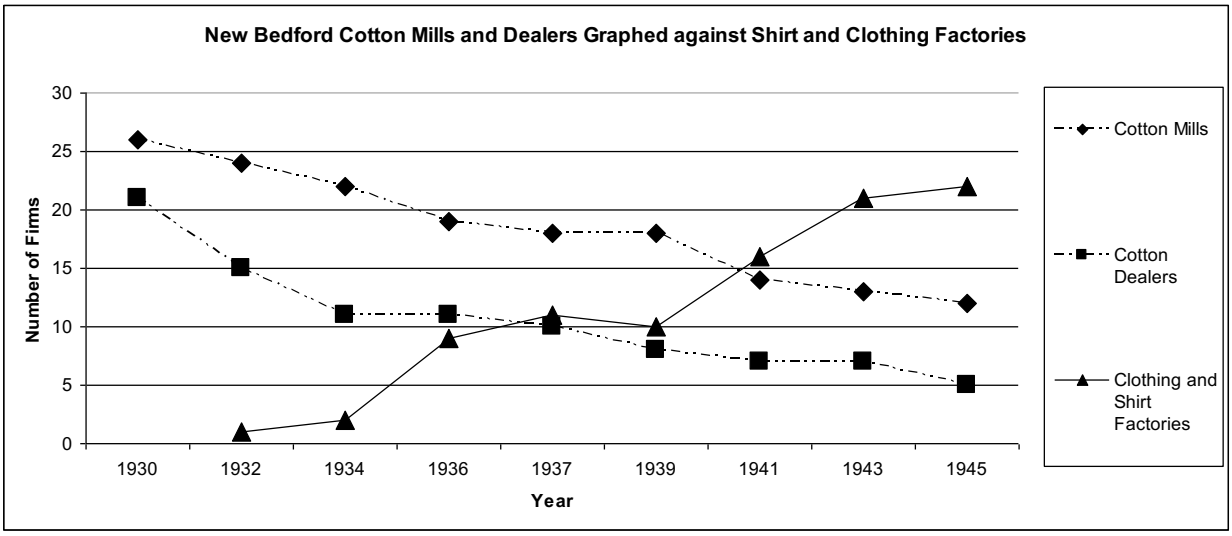

Figure 5.3: The decline of New Bedford's Textile Industry graphed against the Rise of the Garment Trade, 1930-1945.
By the early 1940s, the garment trade had decisively replaced textile manufacturing as the city's leading economic sector.

To remain profitable, however, the whole process depended upon plentiful labor and pitiful wages. Indeed, when Frank Leary gave a local congressional representative a personal tour of the former Fairhaven Mill complex, although no garment shops were officially incorporated in the city, it was noted that at least ten manufacturers were operating in the "vacant" mill. In one firm, young women were getting paid 75 cents a day to pack shirts.[36] Similarly, when Edwin Smith, Massachusetts' Commissioner of Labor and Industries, investigated wages in New Bedford and Fall River garment shops, he found that in New Bedford, 90 percent of workers in women's apparel and 74 percent of those in menswear earned less than $1.50 a day. In Fall River, he found "rates as low as ten cents and even in one case five cents an hour, and hundreds of girls with weekly earnings under $5.00."[37] For the time being, the

[36] "Legislators Visit Newer Industries in this City," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, May 1931, Vol. 140, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[37] Edwin Smith, "Statement of Wages in New Bedford," Folder 478, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*; Edwin Smith, "Statement of Wages in Fall River," Folder 478, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

desperation left in the wake of textile de-industrialization left workers in no position to exact much better.

Figure 5.4: A Typical New England Garment Factory
Although most likely taken during the 1960s or 1970s, this photo shows the crowded layout of an archetypal New England garment factory within a retrofitted textile mill.[38]

Even when factories did officially incorporate, it did not necessarily stop them from taking shrewd advantage of these cities' prostrate position. Indeed, one of the largest shops in the area, the Har-Lee factory of Fall River—a Chicago émigré—was well-known for hiring workers at a special "learner's wage" with promises that future raises would eventually buoy their wages to the state-mandated minimum, only to fire them after six months.[39] Like many other local

[38] Harry Crone and David Gingold, *35 Northeast : A Short History of the Northeast Department, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, AFL-CIO* (New York: Northeast Department, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, 1970).

[39] "Sweatshops Fall River and New Bedford, Confidential Report, 1938," Folder 482, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

garment shops, Har-Lee also took specific "deductions" out of workers' pay to fund various, (sometimes non-existent) programs. For example, one worker made only $3.51 after her first six-day week at Har-Lee, in large part because of forced deductions to fund a fictional "social club" and to buy a Christmas gift for the forelady.[40]

Working conditions in these sweatshops were similarly deplorable. Recalling their experiences in the early garment trade decades later, workers vividly remembered the brutal hot and cold of the factory floor, their tyrannical bosses, and the deafening noise and unrelenting rush of the machines. Maria Carvalho, for example, worked in an underwear factory in New Bedford for 66 cents a day throughout the 1930s. Fifty years later, she could still remember the name, "Sam," of her menacing foreman.[41] "It was a real sweatshop. I'm telling you, boy, it was," she reflected, adding "It was in turmoil all the time. It was this rush, rush, rush; Bring bundles there, put them over here, and hurry up we need this."[42] Carvalho would continue to work in various local garment firms for another forty years.[43] Another worker remembered the constant fear of machine breakage: "If the machine broke, we would almost be in tears. We were afraid to tell the boss…He would get mad. He called us 'God damned Portaguee's [sic]… Go back to your country,' he would say."[44] Yet these jobs were often the sole source of support for many women and their families.[45] Jobs were scarce, and even the worst work beat out starvation.

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[40] Ibid.; "Joan Lowell finds girls shamed and ridiculed in Fall River by unscrupulous New York sweatshop Operators," *Boston Daily Reporter,* Jan. 30, 1932.

[41] Oral History 23, interview by Angela King, Oct. 8, 1987, *OHP-FMPAA*. Unfortunately, the Portuguese Oral History Project transcripts at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth contain numerous transcripts in which there is no signed release. In these cases, I have assigned a pseudonym.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Oral History 44, interview by Susan Moniz, 1988, *OHP-FMPAA*.

[45] "Sweatshops Fall River and New Bedford, Confidential Report, 1938," Folder 482, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

Sweatshops ran on low wages, low wages ran on desperation, and desperation ran on economic crisis. Hard at work turning working-class desperation into renewed industrial ascendance, enterprising capitalists invested thousands of dollars into bringing these kinds of shops to New Bedford and Fall River. Much to their chagrin, however, not everyone celebrated the coming of the garment shop as a harbinger of the next era of New England industrialization. Many workers may have been forced to take jobs in the expanding garment trade, but it did not stop them from challenging the legitimacy of these elites' visions of Massachusetts' economic future.

Defining Recovery

Almost as soon as garment factories began rolling into Massachusetts, their presence set off a fierce debate over their legitimacy as heir to the state's dethroned textile industry. While local capitalists extolled the garment shop as promising a rebirth of industrial Massachusetts, others decried its low wages and abysmal conditions as recovery's very negation. Although in hindsight, it may seem that the garment trade was the natural successor to textiles, it by no means seemed that way to people on the ground. The next era of industrial Massachusetts was still very much a thing in the making.

The middle-class women of the Consumers' League of Massachusetts, motivated by their sense of being "public mothers" with a duty to safeguard those who demanded special protection—namely, working-class women—were perhaps the first to intervene.[46] Focused on lobbying consumers and sellers to boycott sweatshop products, the League created a series of

[46] Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in United States* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995), 352–3. As Robert J. Watt, Secretary of the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor, put it in 1932, he "[had] only found just one group, the Consumers' League of Massachusetts, really concerned and intelligently interested" in the sweatshop problem. See Robert J. Watt to Helen Morton, Dec. 9, 1932, Folder 478, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

anti-sweatshop groups almost as soon as garment factories began setting up shop in Massachusetts.[47] Indeed, the consensus of the first meeting of the "Anti-Sweatshop Committee" in January of 1933 was that "a large share of responsibility for sweatshop conditions rested on store buyers," and it was thus the consumer's responsibility to "[bring] pressure to bear upon buyers to make their purchases from legitimate industry."[48] Not until the latter half of the 1930s would the League ally itself with the garment workers' movement.[49] Their target, for the time being, was not the forces of capital, but the pocketbooks of consumers.

Nevertheless, the League helped make these invading sweatshops into a statewide concern. It generated plenty of interest in the "sweatshop problem," for instance, after it sent three Boston University seniors to engage in undercover work at a Fall River garment shop. One lurid *Boston Daily Record* article based on the Consumers' League investigation authored by Joan Lowell—a former silent film star as well as a member of one of Massachusetts' most prominent families—recorded how these girls were "regularly shamed and ridiculed in Fall River by unscrupulous New York sweatshop operators."[50] "I have walked and talked with the girls who are the victims of sweatshop wages," Lowell wrote, "Bent-shouldered youngsters, 40-years old before they are 16," any possibility of protest was "muted by threats of unemployment."[51]

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[47] "Three Years of Anti-Sweatshop Work," Folder 478, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*; "Urges Stores to Boycott Sweatshop," *Boston Journal*, Sept. 15, 1932, *CLMR-AESL*; Consumers' League of Massachusetts to "All store executives in Mass.," April 6, 1932, *CLMR-AESL*; Margaret Weisman to "Merchants of Massachusetts," July 22, 1933, Ibid; "What the Garment Label Means to Women," Pamphlet, Folder 406, Box 25, *CLMR-AESL*.

[48] "First Meeting of the Anti-Sweatshop Committee," Meeting Minutes, Folder 480, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

[49] "The Citizens' Committee for the Ladies Garment Industry: Statement of Purpose," Folder 423, Box 25, *CLMR-AESL*.

[50] "Joan's Expose Stirs Up Probers: Sweatshop Visited by College Girls," *Boston Daily Record*, Jan. 30, 1932, Folder 406, Box 25, *CLMR-AESL*.

[51] Ibid.

Another article printed two workers' weekly paystubs—one for $3.20 and the other for $3.60—as proof of the low pay in these shops.[52]

What is most surprising about League activism, however, is the degree to which it centered not on the shocking and the lurid, but rather, on the more prosaic argument that the "garment shop" impeded real economic recovery. "The consumer has a right to expect a responsible guarantee that his or her dollar will expedite and not undermine recovery," declared one of many League press releases and internal memos from the early 1930s addressing the sweatshop menace.[53] Convinced that high wages and well-spent consumer dollars would pave the way to economic reconstruction, the League saw the low wages of the sweatshop as a fundamental threat to renewed prosperity.[54] As the "Citizens' Committee for the Ladies Garment Industry" put it in 1936, although "the papers are full of talk of recovery, of return to prosperity…shall we have recovery at the human cost involved in wages of $8.00 a week[?]," concluding, pessimistically, "Indeed, *can* we have recovery under such conditions?"[55] The sweatshop was as much a menace to women's dignity as it was to the future prosperity of Massachusetts.

In New Bedford, local textile unionists also began to mount ideological battle against elites and their "industrial development" programs. Like the Consumers' League, their protests centered largely on what "recovery" should mean for these local communities. During a March 1931 legislative hearing in Boston, for example, local workers personally condemned Frank

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[52] "The Right Idea" *Boston Daily Record*, Jan. 30, 1932, Folder 406, Box 25, *CLMR-AESL*.

[53] Consumers' League of Massachusetts, "Sunday, October 1," Press Release, Folder 478, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL.*

[54] Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 54–6.

[55] Citizens' Committee for the Ladies' Garment Industry, "Statement of Purpose," Folder 423, Box 25, *CLMR-AESL*.

Leary for the effect his "industrial development commission" was having on New Bedford. As one worker put it, "It seems to me that our Board of Commerce and city officials are condoning a bad thing by throwing out bait in the way of low rents and other privileges to these concerns." Although the Board of Commerce might be pleased to see new shops in the area, "we'd be far better off without them," he argued, adding "You know $5 a week doesn't help much in making good citizens."[56] From union resolutions to editorials, city councilmen to the state commissioner of labor, few were reticent to express their deep disdain for Leary's so-called "development" plan.[57]

Frank Leary—now the director of a recently arrived rayon company in addition to his duties as the leader of New Bedford's industrial development commission—remained equally vocal and just as quick to rejoin.[58] He publicly upbraided local unionists and state representatives alike as self-interested opportunists, attacking their ideas as both impractical and retrograde. He lost no time in pointing out that the complaints of local labor leaders "[were] not helping out employment any," adding that such agitation actually made recovery all the more difficult by driving businesses out and making it increasingly hard to attract new industry to the area.[59] "Idleness, want, hunger, and labor agitation breed Communism," he declared during a 1931 state

[56] See "Starvation Wage Charge Here Vigorously Denied by Leary," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, March 1931, Vol. 139, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[57] In 1931, the New Bedford Card Pickers and Ring Spinners Union passed a resolution to much the same effect, condemning the Board of Commerce for using the bait of low-cost factory rentals and unemployed to bring in industries paying "indefensibly low wages." See "Labor Attacks Acts of Police," *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), Aug. 7, 1931; "Let's Have the Facts," Editorial, *Evening Standard* (New Bedford), March 6, 1931; "Leary Replies to Councilman on 48 hours," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, July 1932, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Smith Criticizes Needle Pay: Leary in Response for Board," Unidentified New Bedford Paper, June 1932, *MAS-NBFPL*.

[58] Stock Brochure, "New Bedford Rayon Co.: Class A Stock," Folder 1, Series A, Sub-group 1: New Bedford Rayon, Inc., Records, 1926-1974, MSS 25, New Bedford Rayon, Inc. Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *NBRR-NBWMRL*]**.

[59] "Starvation Wage Charge Here Vigorously Denied by Leary," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, March, 1931, Vol. 139, *MAS-NBFPL*.

legislative hearing, adding that "there are some people who do not want to work so long as New Bedford pays $70,000 a month to welfare and landlords can live without rents."[60] Moreover, after a city councilman suggested in July of 1932 that Massachusetts should encourage national 48-hour legislation instead of abolishing its own 48-hour requirements—as the Board of Commerce had suggested a month previous—Leary took it as a personal attack. He dismissively shot back that New Bedford workers were "more interested in jobs [than] political bologna."[61] For Leary, labor agitation and inflexible labor laws had not only caused New Bedford's economic crisis in the first place, they now threatened to prolong it indefinitely.

Leary was no one-dimensional capitalist autocrat, but neither was he quite as pragmatic and humanitarian as he claimed. Taking on the Massachusetts Commissioner of Labor's derisive report about the appalling state of wages in the New Bedford garment industry, for instance, Leary put forth a curious defense of the morality of low wages. "We wish we could put everyone in New Bedford to work at fair living wages," Leary told a local reporter, "but we are facing facts, not theories."[62] Thus, although he confessed that the commissioner was technically right in pointing out that some factories were indeed paying below the state minimum, Leary remained unmoved. While the commissioner had done nothing to address the "troubles of our older industries," Leary argued, he himself was actually spurring real economic development. Ultimately, Leary concluded, "We are concerned about low wages. We do not like them but our

[60] Ibid.

[61] "Says Industry Depends upon Liberalization: Board of Commerce Asserts Concessions Must be Made to Employers," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, June 1932, Vol. 145, *MAS-NBFPL*; "Leary Replies to Councilman on 48 Hours," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, July 1932, Vol. 145, *MAS-NBFPL*. On larger struggle over labor legislation amidst the textile crisis, see Koistinen, *Confronting Decline*, 26–66.

[62] "Industrial Head Says the City Cannot Support Jobless in Idleness," Unidentified New Bedford Newspaper, June 1932, Vol. 145, *MAS-NBFPL*.

civic problems are many and varied."[63] While others complained about the nature of the business he was bringing in, Leary felt he was the only one actually making business happen. He alone worked to solve New Bedford's "many and varied" civic problems. In Leary's own eyes, he alone was the true humanitarian.

Echoes of the Strike of 1928 thus continued to resonate in New Bedford: unionists were convinced that they did not need to make a choice between a living wage and economic prosperity, and local elites like Leary made it in fact explicitly clear that it could only be one or the other. For many New Bedford capitalists, the resurrection of local industry would have to be built off the same formula that had propelled industrial greatness in generations past: low wages, plentiful labor, and an unyielding refusal to grant either personal or municipal welfare provision.

Noticeably absent from these debates, however, were the women whose labor actually fueled Massachusetts' growing sweatshop economy. And although textile unionists may have claimed to be speaking on these women's behalf, their past activism against *any* involvement of women in industry likely made their sincerity hard to believe. [64] Like many craft unionists around the nation, they had shown themselves firmly dedicated to the ideal of a "living wage" high enough to keep women *out* of industry.[65] During an 1898 state hearing, for example, New Bedford union weaver James Green called for a law that would permanently ban married women from working in textile mills. When asked what kind of hardship he thought this might cause

[63] Ibid.

[64] See Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 20.

[65] Elizabeth Faue, *Community of Suffering & Struggle: Women, Men, and the Labor Movement in Minneapolis 1915-1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 13; Robert H. Zieger and Gilbert J. Gall, *American Workers, American Unions: The Twentieth Century* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 44.

multiple-income families, his reply was simple and curt: "My wife don't work in the mill and it don't work any hardship on her." [66]

Similarly, although the local New Bedford Textile Council supported garment unionization throughout the 1930s, their public demonstrations continued to highlight the superiority of (male) textile work over (female) garment work. During an anti-sweatshop rally held in 1937, for instance, a journalist noted one textile unionist who "went at some length" about "the contrast between the textile industry requiring large capital, in which there are many owners, and with a management that is responsible to both [employees] and to stockholders…while the garment shops he declared are under no such responsibility."[67] Thus, dedicated as they were to the prerogatives of skilled, male workers, the eradication of the sweatshop was likely just a means through which to gain political clout in rebuilding the city's broken textile industry.[68] Unionists too may have claimed the mantle of humanitarianism, but their own conceptions of a male-dominated household economy equally limited the reach of their activism.

Nonetheless, the unskilled women largely left out of these debates were beginning to form their own visions of a new economic order. Rather than merely eliminating the garment factory or returning to some previous mythologized era of halcyon textile hegemony, they began organizing their own bold union campaign to remake New Bedford and Fall River's garment

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[66] See Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 20.

[67] "Allege Conditions Are Below [Standard]: Labor Leaders Speak at Meeting In Interest of Garment Workers," Clipping, Feb. 1937, Folder 2, Box 221, Coll. No. 5619, Amalgamated Clothing Workers Of America Records, 1914-1980, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York **[hereafter *ACWA-KCA*]**; Flyer, "Join the Crusade Against Sweatshops," Feb. 7, [1937], Folder 15, Box 59, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[68] Indeed, local unionists may have lost no time denouncing Leary when he was working on developing the sweatshop, but they were more than willing to work with the Board of Commerce in developing the textile industry. See "O Movimento a Favor da Industria Textil," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), April 1, 1935.

industry along entirely different lines. They organized not to abolish, but to fundamentally reinvent the sweatshop.

Recovery

In January of 1936, a photo of seven women clad in stereotypical Arthurian dress, bearing shields and chainmail armor, appeared in the *Boston Evening American*. "TO ALL COTTON GARMENT and UNDERWEAR WORKERS," their shields read, "THE CRUSADE IS ON!"[69] Although foremost a simple, attention-grabbing publicity stunt, the message was nonetheless clear: The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) was planning to invade Massachusetts' sweatshop economy.[70]

"Crusading" for Better Conditions in Garment Industry

SARAH BUCKMAN ELAINE GILMORE

ALICE KELLEY MARILYNE EVANS THELMA YOUNG TRUDIE DERRY BARBARA WEEKS

Costumed after the fashion of knights of old, these young women "crusaders" appeared on downtown streets today in an effort to call public attention to alleged "sweatshop" conditions in the garment industry. Their "shields" bore placards calling for better hours and wages for workers. In the group are Alice Kelley, Marilyne Evans, Thelma Young, Trudie Derry, Barbara Weeks and Elaine Gilmore. On the horse is Sarah Buckman.

Figure 5.5: The ILGWU, in Boston, preparing to "crusade" against the sweatshop.[71]

The ILGWU had begun organizing in Fall River as early as 1934, but had found progress exceedingly difficult. Although the ill-fated National Recovery Administration (NRA) was

[69] "Crusading' for Better Conditions in Garment Industry," *Boston Evening American*, Jan. 14, 1936, Folder 407, Box 25, *CLMR-AESL*; Crone and Gingold, *35 Northeast*, 17.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

originally charged with both protecting the right of workers to organize as well as setting minimum wages and maximum hours in the garment trade, small employers easily evaded these codes.[72] NRA provisions were especially difficult to enforce in Fall River, as most employers were minor contractors for major shops in other cities. Thus, if workers attempted any kind of organized protest, the corporate head could simply close shop and bulk up production at some other shop in another city.[73]

These tactics repeatedly frustrated ILGWU efforts. Even more embarrassing for early unionists was the fact that the ILGWU was simply not strong enough to exact fair wages from the shops it did manage to organize. Indeed, although by May of 1935 the ILGWU had unionized some of the smaller shops in Fall River and New Bedford, their efforts had not even earned them NRA wage minimums. As the ILGWU's main Fall River organizer, William Ross, lamented in a January 1935 letter, whereas most union members were making $11.70 a week, large, unorganized firms were shelling out the $13 minimum mandated by the NRA codes.[74] "In view of the fact that the employers [we are] dealing with are contractors," he wrote, "there is not much we can do about it at this time."[75] Similarly, when union organizers in New Bedford called on local sweatshop laborers to write them describing their workplace conditions for publication in 1937, although plenty of letters decried the low wages and long hours of sweatshop labor, other

[72] Melvyn Dubofsky, *The State and Labor in Modern America* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 111–112; Steve Fraser, *Labor Will Rule: Sidney Hillman and the Rise of American Labor* (Cornell University Press, 1993), 302–4.

[73] William Ross to David Dubinsky, Nov. 16, 1934, Folder 4, Box 95, Coll. No. 5780/002, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union: David Dubinsky, President's Records, 1932-1966, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York **[hereafter *ILGWU-DD-KCA*]**; William Ross to David Dubinsky, June 9, 1934, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[74] William Ross to David Dubinsky, Jan 8. 1935, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[75] Ibid.

workers denounced the local unions for their inability to do anything about it. "We have a union but they don't do us any good…All they want is our quarters…I really believe they were bought by the boss," one Harwood Underwear factory worker fumed.[76] The combined effect of poverty, limited bargaining power, and contract production made effective unionization a seemingly impossible task.

The NRA's termination in May of 1935 thus created new, unexpected openings for organization at firms like Har-Lee, which, because of their size and status, had more difficulty evading NRA codes.[77] Almost as soon as the NRA expired, Har-Lee instituted a 44-hour week and cut its wages far below what workers were making in unionized shops.[78] When Har-Lee workers began to organize in response, the factory made a dramatic about-face, restoring wages and cutting work schedules back to 40 hours a week. Nevertheless, as a letter collectively addressed from the workers of Fall River to the workers at Har-Lee's parent Chicago plant put it, it was a lesson in the power of organization: "*Today, we want union recognition and a living wage*." The fear the union inspired in Har Lee's bosses had shown these workers its potential power.[79]

Har-Lee, though, had a number of anti-union strategies at its disposal. Its slash-and-burn labor recruitment and expulsion policies maintained both high rates of turnover and low wages, leaving the ILGWU's Fall River organizer to conclude that it might never be possible "to have

[76] Assistant General President to A.J. Morrow, Harwood Underwear Co., Feb. 1, 1937, Folder 15, Box 59, Coll. No.5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[77] On the collapse of the NIRA/NRA, see Alan Brinkley, *The End Of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), esp. 18.

[78] William Ross to David Dubinsky, Aug. 27, 1935, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[79] "Workers of Sopkin Bros., Fall River, Mass." to "Sopkin Workers in Chicago," Nov. 7, 1936, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

anything like a majority…join the union in a reasonable length of time."[80] Har-Lee also remained affiliated with its powerful Chicago parent, B. Sopkin & Sons Company, leaving many organizers with the fear that if they attempted a strike, production would simply be shifted back to Chicago.[81] In addition, Har-Lee had also started its own, internal "company union" in June of 1934 in an effort to thwart organization.[82]

Other obstacles were less tangible. Although, in retrospect, it may seem only natural to assume that workers would be rallying behind the industrial union movement of the 1930s, ILGWU organizers were surprised to discover that local workers' experiences with the old, exclusionary textile unions had left them deeply disenchanted, if not openly hostile to unionization.[83] As the ILGWU's Fall River organizer put it in 1936, the local labor movement was in a "deplorable" condition as a result of the apathy and insularity of the local textile union establishment. The fact that Fall River's dying textile union continued to call strikes despite having organized only ten percent of its workforce only compounded local, anti-union attitudes.[84] "It is ever necessary for us," he wrote, "to state that we are 'another union'."[85]

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[80] William Ross to David Dubinsky, Aug 27, 1934, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.; William Ross to David Dubinsky, June 9, 1934, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[81] William Ross to David Dubinsky, Sep 5 1934, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.; William Ross to David Dubinsky, Jan 8, 1935, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*; William Ross to David Dubinsky Aug 27, 1935, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[82] William Ross to David Dubinsky, June 9 1934, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*; "Har-Lee Tricks Fail," *The Garment Worker* 1, no. 2, March, 1936, Folder 1, Box 25, Coll. No. 5780/005, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Frederick F. Umhey, Executive Secretary, Collection, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York **[hereafter *ILGWU-FU-KCA*]**.

[83] Oral History 56, interview by Judy Knox, March 23, 1988, *OHP-FMPAA*; Oral History 46, interview by Julie Landry, Nov. 17, 1987, *OHP-FMPAA*; William Miernyk, *Inter-Industry Labor Mobility: the Case of the Displaced Textile Worker,* (Boston: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Northeastern University, 1955), 104.

[84] Crone and Gingold, *35 Northeast*, 4, 22.

[85] William Ross to Elias Reisberg, Oct. 21, 1936, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

Other forces in the community helped compound local anti-union sentiment. For instance, in sharp contrast to the general support strikers had received from local clergy during the 1928 strike, the ILGWU found itself condemned at the pulpit. One French-Canadian priest, for instance, personally denounced the ILGWU organizer, declaring "It took the Almighty six days to make the world and this blasphemer has the devilish effrontery to promise you a week of only five working days."[86] Employers, too, made sure to assure workers that the ILGWU simply wanted to drive business out of the area.[87] Precisely because so many workers had come to blame the textile unions for the crisis of the 1920s, clothing unions like the ILGWU and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) would need to convince a new generation of workers of the merits of labor unionism.

But importantly, organizers quickly discovered that workers were not anti-union per se, but instead had developed a deep distrust of the union institutions that had traditionally dominated these communities. Indeed, although the ILGWU and ACWA both sent organizers to help mobilize Massachusetts garment laborers, the initial groundswell of union activism in the South Coast actually came from local workers themselves. One of the first garment walkouts in the area, for instance, occurred after two women were fired from Shelburne Shirt Company for organizing activity; the solidarity walkout that followed became the beginning of the Fall River chapter of the ACWA.[88] Similarly, in February of 1934, after two women were fired for union activity from the Harwood Underwear Company in New Bedford, some 100 workers marched off work and into the ACWA headquarters.[89] Former textile operative and 1928 strike leader Eula

[86] Crone and Gingold, *35 Northeast*, 4, 22.

[87] Ibid.

[88] "Strikes in Fall River And Vicinity, 25 Years Ago" Jan. 1960, Folder 8, Box 58, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[89] Ibid.

Mendes, now a dress maker at the M and M manufacturing shop in New Bedford, similarly led her shop's ILGWU organizing drive.[90]

In fact, even the New Bedford organizers' idea to publish garment workers' letters, describing their terrible working conditions and pay, in order to generate public support for unionization was itself inspired by a local activist. When President Roosevelt toured New Bedford in 1936, a lone, young garment worker ambushed his motorcade, insisting he take her letter.[91] The letter itself—"We are working in a garment factory[,] a few months ago our minimum wages were $11. Today they have been cut down to $4 and $5 and $6. Please send someone from Washington to restore our minimum wages so that we can live"—generated immense national attention (and was used by Roosevelt to illustrate wage cuts since the end of the NRA during a subsequent press conference).[92] Not surprisingly, it also inspired organizers to build off this same strategy. New Bedford unionists thus ended up using a series of real letters from local garment workers to publish a pamphlet entitled "Thirteen Letters Addressed to You—From Thirteen Unlucky Girls." Many of the letters were ultimately cited in the national press.[93]

In searching for concrete victories, however, the local Har-Lee factory, the area's largest garment plant, became a natural target for unionization. In order to organize the factory's 2,000 workers, clothing worker organizers found themselves having to reach out to groups of workers

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[90] Eula Papandreu, interview by Penn Reeve and Jack Stauder, July 2, 1987, Folder 16, Box 1, MCC 9, New Bedford Textile Worker's Strike of 1928 Oral History Interviews and Research Collection, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Archives and Special Collections, Dartmouth, Massachusetts. **[hereafter *NB1928-UMASSD*]**

[91] Clipping, "President Led into Wage Fight By Girl's Tears," New York World Telegram, Feb. 10, 1937, Folder 15, Box 59, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Memo, Herman Wolf to J.S. Potofsky, Feb. 10, 1937, Folder 2, Box 221, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*; Edith Christensen to Jacob Potofsky, Jan.9, 1937, Folder 15, Box 59, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*; Clipping, *The New Republic*, Feb. 17, 1937, Folder 15, Box 59, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*; Pamphlet (Proof), "13 Letter Addressed to You…From Three Unlucky Girls," Folder 2, Box 221, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

who had been routinely ignored by the craft union establishment: French-Canadian, Polish, and Portuguese women. To that end, union organizers used every cultural resource available, placing advertisements in the local Portuguese newspaper, putting on radio broadcasts, and ultimately writing and performing a pro-union play, "Sit Down Sister!," in 1937.[94] Regardless of method or media, the aim was the same: to convince workers that industrialists did not have their best interests at heart, and that only self-assertion would win them better working conditions and fair pay.

For example, "Sit Down Sister!," a play set on the factory floor of the not so subtly named "Far-Lee Dress Co.," was a veritable paean to the virtues of self-determination, self-dependence, and union solidarity. First and foremost, the play urged workers to see the ultimate hollowness of the humanitarianism of their bosses. Indeed, throughout the production, the forelady tries to lure the girls into company loyalty by offering a number of inane promises or gifts—candy, a baseball team, and gold medals for the fastest girl—in order to show them that the boss is "always thinkin' of youse girls [sic]." The workers, of course, see through the false humanitarianism of their employer: "You keep the candy. Give us a raise!," they shout, and "We'd rather have beer!"[95] Similarly, when the forelady, on behalf of the boss, offers the workers "protection" in order to keep "Bolshevik agitators" from bothering them, she is met with a sharp rebuke. "We're not babies. We can talk to anybody we feel like," one calls back.[96] The writers even noted that the actual enticements were less important than what they represented. In the production notes, they encouraged potential actors to change the specific promises offered by

[94] "O Vosso Interesse na Eleição Har-Lee," Advertisement, *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), Feb. 14, 1941.

[95] Fall River ILGWU, "Sit Down Sister!," Unpublished Play, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.

[96] Ibid.

"Far Lee" to match the "different kinds of 'sops' or paternalistic stunts" which their own local employer "may have used to prevent organization."[97]

Most importantly, the play extolled the power of solidarity. For example, when, in a last-ditch effort to secure the workers' loyalty, the forelady decides to give out a "gold medal" to the fastest worker ("Miss Florence Speed-Up"), she is met with quick admonishment: "Cool off, sister—you'll get heartfailure that way! [sic]." The forelady is finally left questioning the workers' loyalty and company spirit:

> Listen saps, you don't sound loyal to me….What's got into you? Maybe ya think ya wanna strike too?...Well, listen, dopes…the Big Shot [boss] he told me if there was any trouble to give you a dose of our sure-fire remedy – the old Far-Lee Spirit. Listen if ya got a complaint we can straighten 'em out later—that is, provided of course ya never lose that old Far-Lee spirit.[98]

The workers remain unimpressed. "Sit down, sister!," one says. "We work for pay—not sex appeal," calls back another. "Far-Lee spirit don't buy groceries!" calls out the third. And finally, the fourth declares, "And what's more, I'd rather have union spirit!"[99] The message was clear: workers no longer needed to depend on the humanitarianism of others. They could now depend on themselves and their union.

Additionally, the ILGWU brought in a young playwright by the name of Peter Frye—fresh home from fighting fascism in the Spanish Civil War—to help the local union put on what became a radio show by the name of "Rita Quill, Union Member."[100] Emphasizing the problems these laboring women experienced at work alongside the domestic problems they faced at home,

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[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid.

[100] "ILGWU Radio Serial Turns the Trick in Fall River Labor Strife," Unidentified Newspaper, Feb. 13, 1941, Folder 7, Box 317, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*; Thelma Ruby-Frye, *Double or Nothing: Two Lives in the Theatre, The Autobiography of Thelma Ruby and Peter Frye* (London, England: Janus Publishing Co., 1997), 128–130.

"Rita Quill" also showcased the democratic nature of the ILGWU as well as the ways in which a reluctant husband or boyfriend could be converted to the union cause.[101] After all, hostile husbands and ambivalent boyfriends had been—and would continue to be—a frequent problem for women unionists in the ILGWU.[102] In fact, after the Fall River radio show's main star—a 17-year old French-Canadian operative by the name of Dorothy Brière—complained about her boyfriend's uneasiness over her involvement in both the union and as "Rita" on the radio show, Frye simply wrote him into the next week's program.[103] Thus did "Rita" end up assuaging the doubts of her unhappy boyfriend, "Mickey," over her involvement in the union, explaining how the union gave her a sense of self-empowerment. Thankfully, Mickey understood.[104]

Just as important, the women of the ILGWU also used the power of their votes to erode the structural advantages that had made Har-Lee so difficult to organize for so many years. Like workers around the nation, they were vocal organizers for President Franklin D. Roosevelt.[105] When he visited Fall River shortly before the election of 1936, 50,000 people greeted him at a local rally; the garment workers waved signs reading "Garment Workers Want Roosevelt and More of the New Deal."[106] The importance of such changes cannot be overstated. The ILGWU could now face off against Har-Lee on a far more level playing field thanks to a host of new

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[101] Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Waves of Opposition: Labor and the Struggle for Democratic Radio* (University of Illinois Press, 2006), 51-52.

[102] Oral History 14, interview by Cara Connelly, 1987-1988, *OHP-FMPAA*; Oral History 23, interview by Angela King, Oct. 8, 1987, *OHP-FMPAA*.

[103] "ILGWU Radio Serial Turns the Trick in Fall River Labor Strife," Unidentified Newspaper, Feb. 13, 1941, Folder 7*,* Box 317, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[104] Fones-Wolf, *Waves of Opposition*, 52.

[105] Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 256, 287–88.

[106] William Ross to David Dubinsky, Oct. 21, 1936, Folder 4, Box 95, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

federal protections: the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932, curtailing the ability of employers to level debilitating court injunctions against unions; the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) of 1935, protecting workers' rights of self-organization; and, although less flashy but perhaps most important of all, the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which finally set national wage minimums, thus undercutting the appeal of the "low-wage" south.[107] Workers were now ready to use their New Deal to re-make industrial Massachusetts.[108]

No longer could Har-Lee's parent company move production back to Chicago in case of a strike. In the summer of 1933, a union of black and white garment workers, organized by the Needle Trades Workers' Industrial Union, had successfully struck for higher wages, non-segregated restrooms, and a shorter workweek at Har-Lee's parent firm in Chicago.[109] The Sopkins eventually liquidated their Chicago plant and moved all production to non-union Fall River.[110] With more than 2,000 employees, Har-Lee was now the nation's largest cotton dress factory.[111]

The cultural and political efforts of the ILGWU soon paid off. In February of 1941, the ILGWU won a National Labor Relations Board election at Har-Lee by a 5 to 1 margin.[112] Over

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[107] Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 302; Irving Bernstein, *The Turbulent Years: A History of the American Worker, 1933-1940*, Reissue (Haymarket Books, 2010), 775; Brinkley, *The End Of Reform*, 12. Not surprisingly, it was the leaders (especially the women leaders) of the National Consumers' League, the ACWA, and the ILGWU who would lobby to keep expanding the Fair Labor Standards Act. See Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton University Press, 2004), 110.

[108] Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 251–290.

[109] Sharon Harley, "When Your Work is Not Who You Are: The Development of a Working-Class Consciousness among Afro-American Women," in *Gender, Class, Race, and Reform in the Progressive Era*, eds., Noralee Frankel and Nancy Schrom Dye (University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 51.

[110] David Dubinsy to Unknown, Telegram, March 17, 1941, Folder 7, Box 317, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[111] Fones-Wolf, *Waves of Opposition*, 52.

[112] Election Results, United States of America National Labor Relations Board, Folder 7, Box 317, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

the coming months, a delegation of workers and ILGWU union leaders worked out a contract for the new union. In sharp contrast to the highly exclusive negotiations that had ended the 1928 strike, the ILGWU's delegation included nine women workers. Judging by last names, it also included a diverse mix of Americans, French-Canadians, and Portuguese operatives.[113] By March, the ILGWU had reached a contractual agreement with Har-Lee, promising a $15-a-week minimum wage, a closed union shop, and provisions for wages to go up automatically based on changes in the federal minimum wage.[114] Almost instantly, wages in other Fall River garment shops shot up to match the new Har-Lee standard.[115] By August, Har-Lee workers were already getting a raise; they now earned $16 a week.[116] It was an incredible victory considering that just five years previous, one Har-Lee employee had been fired after she had brought her "learners' wage" of $3.51 up to $10.06 a week.[117] The garment workers of Fall River had achieved a remarkable, industry-altering victory.

Over the next half-century, the ILGWU continued to score victories in the New Bedford and Fall River area, becoming a fixture of community life. Indeed, by the end of the Second World War, unions like the ILGWU and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America had achieved collective bargaining agreements with most of the area's major garment manufacturers.[118] Similarly, the newly-founded industrial textile workers' union—the Textile

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[113] "Station WSAR – Fall River, Mass.," Radio Script, Folder 7, Box 317, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[114] Max D. Danish, Press Release, March 17, 1941, Folder 7, Box 317, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[115] William Ross to David Dubinsky, Telegram, March 22, 1941, Folder 7, Box 317, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[116] "Aumento de Salarios na Fábrica Har-Lee," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), Aug. 9, 1941.

[117] "Sweatshops Fall River and New Bedford, Confidential Report, 1938," Folder 482, Box 28, *CLMR-AESL*.

[118] Union Contract, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and Massachusetts Shirt Manufacturing Corp., Nov. 13, 1945, Folder 19, Box 3, Series 2, MS 193, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, New England Joint Board, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*]**; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and C & D Sportswear, Jan. 12,

Workers of America—had also organized ten of New Bedford's eleven remaining mills.[119] Other benefits, beyond wage increases, also came with successful unionization. In 1944, the ILGWU opened a union health center in Fall River. In 1954, the Northeast Department of the ILGWU acquired a "Mobile Health Unit" truck to provide periodic medical services to workers living too far away from local ILGWU clinics.[120] And, on December 6, 1952, the ILGWU opened a new health center at a Fall River ceremony attended by government officials and industry representatives in the newly minted "Garment Workers' Square," right in front of the city hall. As a symbol of this new era of cooperation between community and labor, the old street signs were taken down and replaced with new ones emblazoned with the ILGWU logo. Now, garment workers had a fully functioning health center, prescription drug program, paid vacations, death benefits, seniority rights, and union representation.[121] Perhaps recovery had finally come to Massachusetts.

1946, Folder 25, Box 4, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and Youth-Craft Clothing Company, July 31, 1941, Folder 88, Box 7, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Dunmar Mfg. Co., July 24, 1941, Folder 34, Box 4, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Freedman + Soloff, April 10, 1946, Folder 111, Box 9, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*.

[119] Pamphlet, New Bedford Joint Board, *Silver Anniversary,* Feb. 8, 1964, Folder 3, Box 1, Series 1, MS 134, Textile Workers Union of America, New Bedford Joint Board Records, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts.

[120] Crone and Gingold, *35 Northeast*, 61, 98; "ILGWU local to mark 50th Year," *Fall River Herald News*, March 3, 1984.

[121] Oral History 14, interview by Cara Connelly, 1987-1988, *OHP-FMPAA*; On union benefits achieved by 1950s and 1960s, see Bernard C. Luckoff, Massachusetts Shirt Mfg. Co. to Joseph Salerno, Sept 18, 1967, Folder 19, Box 3, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and Elite Sportswear Inc., July 18, 1958, Folder 35, Box 4, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and Drane Mfg. Co., May 10, 1949, Folder 49, Box 5, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (New Bedford, MA) and Kay Bee Sportswear, May 1947, Folder 62, Box 6, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and La-Glo Mfg. Co., Jan 14, 1960, Folder 66, Box 6, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Martin Sportswear, Feb. 16, 1953, Folder 74, Box 7, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA), Press Release, Dec. 15, 1960, Folder 86, Box 7, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Judy Ann Mfg. Co., June 25, 1958, Folder 99, Box 8, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Troy Clothing Specialties, Oct. 26, 1950, Folder 100, Box 8, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract/Supplemental Agreement, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and Valor Mfg. Co., March 23, 1954, Folder 101, Box 8, Series 2,

Figure 5.6: The inauguration of "Garment Workers" Square, 1952[122]
The creation of the ILGWU "Garment Workers" Square in the Municipal Center of Fall River in 1952 was one of many symbols of the state-labor alliance that largely prevailed in the immediate postwar decades.

The Missing Industrial Revolution

Despite the gains of the garment industry in the 1930s and 1940s, the economy of Massachusetts would continue to be seen by commentators in largely declensionist terms.[123] Partly, this was a function of *who* these apparel factories hired: namely, unskilled, largely immigrant women. By the early 1950s, New Bedford's still expanding garment industry contained an impressive 75 shops and 7,500 workers; but 98 percent of these workers were women.[124] The rebirth of industrial Massachusetts was thus a rebirth primarily for its clusters of

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ACWA-NE-UMASSA; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Vanco Shirts, March 1958, Folder 102, Box 8, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Vogue Sportswear, Aug. 1962, Folder 103, Box 8, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and H. Werner Sons Company, Sept. 1960, Folder 106, Box 8, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Sova Outer Wear, Sept. 4, 1956, Folder 114, Box 9, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*.

[122] Crone and Gingold, *35 Northeast*.

[123] Seymour E. Harris, "New England's Decline In The American Economy.," *Harvard Business Review* 25, no. 3 (Spring 1947): 348–371; Seymour E. Harris, *The Economics of New England: A Case Study of an Older Area* (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 1952); Bennett Harrison and Jean Kluver, "Deindustrialization and Regional Restructuring in Massachusetts" in *Deindustrialization and Regional Economic Transformation: The Experience of the United States*, eds. Lloyd Rodwin and Hidehiko Sazanami (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 104.

[124] "Needle Trade Shops Observe Their 30 Year Here; Growth Continues," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 18, 1953.

new immigrant women and unskilled workers. For many skilled men, and even for many native women who abhorred the drudgery of the garment factory, the benefits of re-industrialization were far less tangible.

What had happened to the men? Likely, many of the most skilled male workers had simply moved. As in the strikes of 1898 and 1928, many probably either headed west or returned to England, French Canada, or Portugal. Others, mainly those who worked in the ancillary machine shops the original textile mills had spun off, faced less economic upheaval than the average textile worker. Many of these shops survived by simply shipping their products to the south.[125] As the twentieth century rolled on, many other men likely became commuter workers for the jewelry factories in the nearby town of Attleboro. Nationwide, the production of goods for affluent consumers was more resilient to the Great Depression, and the expansion of Attleboro jewelry firms in this era relied heavily on commuter labor from Fall River and New Bedford.[126] Others simply found themselves pushed back and forth from textile job to textile job amidst the swings of a dying industry. When New Bedford slasher tender Raymond Dupont was asked to recount his work history during a 1947 arbitration hearing, he explained that the last two decades had seen him change jobs ten times: twice because of mill closures, and twice because

[125] R.C. Estall, *New England: A Study in Industrial Adjustment* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 171, 176; "Alabama Concern to Use Massachusetts Spindles" *Industry: A Weekly Journal of Industrial Information* 25, no. 25 (Aug. 16, 1930), 5.

[126] The L.G. Balfour Company of Attleboro actually expanded during the 1930s: "Business," its owner reported, "[was] wonderful." Attleboro, however, remained a relatively small town: by the 1960s, for instance, it was estimated that about half of Attleboro manufacturing workers actually lived in Taunton, Fall River, New Bedford or Woonsocket. See Michael A. Bernstein, "Why the Great Depression Was Great: Toward a New Understanding of the Interwar Economic Crisis in the United States," in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*, eds. Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (Princeton University Press, 1990), 34–35; "The L.G. Balfour Company Grows from Eight to 539 employees" *Industry: A Weekly Journal of Industrial Information* 25, no. 9 (Apr. 26, 1930), 6; Doug Robarchek, "The Attleboros: New Expression on a Familiar Face," *Industry* 33, no. 7 (May 1968), 11.

of his own attempts to seek employment outside the mills.[127] Many other men simply remained unemployed.

Ultimately, it is impossible to understand the "diversification" of the Massachusetts industrial base—especially the rise of the electronic components industry—without understanding the unease the problem of "men's employment" created, as well as the ability of local capitalists to exploit that problem in the name of industrial gain. After all, for contemporaries, the lack of "manly" employment was a serious problem in these cities. Following the Second World War, for instance, the New Bedford Textile Institute and a Fall River partnership between the federal government and the ILGWU both independently attempted to train returning veterans for stitching work. Both projects, however, were widely unpopular and summarily failed.[128] As one Lawrence priest complained as late as 1954, Massachusetts needed more "hard-core industries" and less garment firms: "if we bring in many more we are going to have men walking the streets and women working."[129] Prevailing gender norms made both women breadwinners and male dress stitchers seemingly unthinkable, leaving these cities in the lurch.

[127] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 99.

[128] "Needle Trade Shops Observe Their 30 Year Here; Growth Continues," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 18, 1953; Marc Munroe Dion, "Male Stitchers, Orthodox Russians and a population of 111,963: Snapshots of Fall River," *The Herald News* (Fall River), Sep. 18, 2012, http://www.heraldnews.com/blogs/fall-river-history/x887148217/Male-stitchers-Orthodox-Russians-and-a-population-of-111-963-Snapshots-of-Fall-River

[129] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 169.

Figure 5.7: Man Sewing at the Wentworth Manufacturing Plant, Fall River, 1946[130]
Roland Allard, a navy veteran, works a sewing machine at the Wentworth Manufacturing Plant in Fall River as part of a short-lived 1946 government program to re-train returning veterans in garment work.

The repeated re-organization of the New Bedford Industrial Development Commission was itself in large part inspired by the desire to finally attract an industry for men. In 1938, for instance, the New Bedford City Council formed a municipal Industrial Development League (IDL), composed of local textile and machine-production capitalists, as well as one textile trade union representative, charged with bringing a new, "stable" industry to the area.[131] The League officially incorporated, and then, in a bizarre twist, began a vigorous fundraising drive to get donations from *workers* to help industrialize the city. "The Industrial Development Legion Needs Your Help—Give Your Contribution Today," was the headline of New Bedford's newspaper for weeks.[132] From February to March of 1938, IDL fundraisers took in 55,363 dollars.[133] Capitalism

[130] "Male Stitchers, Orthodox Russians and a Population of 111,963: Snapshots of Fall River," Sep. 18, 2012, accessed October 3, 2012, http://www.heraldnews.com/features/x887148217/Male-stitchers-Orthodox-Russians-and-a-population-of-111-963-Snapshots-of-Fall-River.

[131] "Record of the IDC," *Standard Times* (New Bedford), May 29, 1954.

[132] "$5,000 in Daily Gifts Required: Industrial Development Legion Sets Goal as Drive Nears End," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), March 3, 1938.

was seemingly turned on its head in mid-century New Bedford: workers were now paying *employers* for their jobs.

Like its progenitor, Frank Leary's Industrial Development Commission (IDC), the IDL was, at least on paper, remarkably successful. Playing off the controversy that surrounded the moribund IDC, the IDL always emphasized that it was searching for something better than a mere "fly-by-night" industry. T. A. Haish, the IDL's managing director, underscored that the businesses he sought would be "investigated thoroughly and approved by a committee from the Industrial Legion," and would employ "both men and women."[134] Ultimately, the IDL spent 42,000 dollars—about three-quarters of the money it raised—to lure one electronics company, Aerovox, from New York City to New Bedford.[135] Although many local citizens were furious that so much public money had been given to a single firm, Haish was unapologetic.[136] As he put it to a gala of local capitalists and Aerovox executives, "the acquisition of this outstanding industry...will be the beginning of bringing New Bedford back into the industrial limelight of this country." Paired with a vigorous national advertising campaign, Haish was sure New Bedford would soon have a "stream of industrialists looking for happier manufacturing environments" on its hands.[137]

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[133] Melvin F. LaBrode, "Old IDL Set Good Outline For Bringing Industry Here," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Sept. 23, 1954

[134] "New Industry is Installed in Nashawena," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Oct. 13, 1938

[135] "Effort to bring New Industry here traces back to '27," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), May 11, 1954; Melvin F. LaBrode, "Surge of Industrial payrolls In City Was Sparked by IDL," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Sept. 24, 1954; "Haish Reports on Work of the Industrial Legion," *Morning Mercury* (New Bedford), Oct. 25, 1938

[136] Ibid.

[137] Ibid.

Despite superficial differences, the movement of electronics firms into Massachusetts bore a striking resemblance to their garment-producing co-conspirators. Both industrial migrations were stoked by generous funding packages from local capitalists and promises of cheap, unemployed labor. Indeed, as the years went on, New Bedford's apparently disproportionate store of unemployed male workers became an ever-important selling point for the city.[138] When the IDC was again resurrected in 1949, for instance, William Zink, the manager of the local employment office, noted that there were still "considerably more men unemployed and available for work here than there are women," and as such, "New Bedford has a golden opportunity, through the Industrial Development Commission, to bring new industries here which will employ these men."[139] Like mobile garment firms, then, electronics factories were lured to New Bedford to employ those left unemployed by the southward movement of textile firms.[140] And like mobile garment firms, many of these Massachusetts electronics factories had their workforces eventually organized by inter-ethnic industrial unions.[141]

It is important to recognize that these local capitalists were not necessarily out to crassly take advantage of the desperation of workers. Many members of these development groups were simply retail or utility-owning capitalists who were frankly concerned about—and directly invested in—the economic development of Massachusetts.[142] Others, like the owner of the

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[138] Melvin R. Levin and David A. Grossman, *Employment and Economic Trends in Southeastern Massachusetts, 1950-1970* (Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Planning Program, 1959), 36.

[139] "IDC Surveys Jobs Potential," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Sept. 1, 1950

[140] Estall, *New England*, 91.

[141] Ann Bookman, "The Process of Political Socialization Among Women and Immigrant Workers: A Case Study of Unionization in the Electronics Industry" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1977).

[142] On membership of industrial development boards, see "Reviews Work of Industrial Development: Ritchie Cites $20,000,000 Wage Fund, 8,082 Jobs in 21 New Plants," *Standard Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 16, 1938; Greater New Bedford Industrial Foundation, Advertisement, "Partners in Progress," *Standard Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 30, 1966.

Hathaway Mill, Seabury Stanton, seem to have simply felt a strong, emotional connection to the local community: indeed, after his father (himself the son of a whaling captain) died and Stanton took control of the business in the 1930s, rather than caving to calls to liquidate the firm, he put his own money towards gaining majority control and proceeded forward with a ten-million-dollar modernization plan.[143] Neither "money-bags" caricatures nor self-abnegating "job creators," capitalists too found their agency constrained by the dictates of an unforgiving global market. Thus, whether or not local elites pursued the development of the electronics industry for civic-minded or totally self-interested reasons, the structures of the global economy channeled their desires into specific forms of industrial-regime building.

As such, although the nationwide expansion of the electronics industry ultimately owed a great deal to massive federal investment during the Second World War and the following Cold War, its initial appearance in Massachusetts sprung from a familiar combination of cheap labor and enterprising elites.[144] Yet, in an ironic twist, as electronics plants transformed from smaller, research-focused firms into mass military production behemoths, they too began to rely increasingly on cheaper, female labor. By the early 1950s, it was estimated that of New Bedford's 5,500 electronics operatives, some 72 percent were women.[145]

As a result, New Bedford often found itself in the paradoxical position of facing both elevated levels of unemployment and recurrent labor shortages. Backbreaking garment or

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[143] Seabury Stanton, *Berkshire Hathaway Inc.: A Saga of Courage*, (Newcomen Society of North America, 1962), 15-16.

[144] With the onset of the Second World War, for instance, the United States government went from spending 100 million dollars annually on military electronics to shelling out some 1.5 billion dollars annually for five years straight. See James M. Hund, "Electronics," in *Made in New York: Case Studies in Metropolitan Manufacturing*, eds. Max Hall and Roy B. Helfgott (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 256.

[145] William W. Zink, "Increased Job Openings Seen Reducing Unemployment Levels to New Low," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 18, 1953.

electronics production work was easy to find, but skilled, more "masculine" jobs remained few and far between. This strange paradox of mid-century Massachusetts can clearly be discerned in the unexpected results of an economic study of displaced textile workers launched by Northeastern University in 1953. On one hand, the survey conductors found serious rates of unemployment amongst displaced textile workers—nearly half, in fact—yet on the other hand, the third of displaced workers who had managed to secure new jobs reported that they had faced a "choice of jobs" when taking their current occupation.[146] How could unemployment be so high if so many workers faced a *choice* of jobs upon re-entering the workforce?

As in past eras, the answer revolved back to what *kind* of jobs workers would be getting. After all, the study noted that "many...women said they had been offered employment in garment factories...which they refused," and men "frequently turned down jobs which paid the legal minimum wage on which, they said, they were unable to support their families."[147] Unsurprisingly, for those displaced textile workers who had taken new jobs, job satisfaction was abysmally low: in a sample of 241 displaced and re-employed Fall River textile workers, 57.8 percent of males and an astounding 71.3 percent of females found their new job worse than their former employment in textiles.[148] A combination of workers' ideology and the kinds of employers attracted to economic crisis thus created a paradoxical situation of high unemployment and labor shortage, precisely because workers did not just want *any* job. They wanted a job worth having, and they were often willing to go jobless than put up with any less. Unlike those who had worked so hard to bring the "sweatshop" to Massachusetts, workers did

[146] Almost a quarter of Fall River and over half of New Bedford's displaced textile workers considered "active" in the labor force remained unemployed. Some 40 percent of New Bedford workers reported being unemployed for over 5 months. See Miernyk, *Inter-Industry Labor Mobility*, 96, 114.

[147] Ibid., 23.

[148] Ibid., 101.

not see "recovery" as simply a process of re-accumulating jobs, no matter how ill-paying or degrading. Crisis could attract capital, but it did not necessarily attract prosperity. And although the ILGWU was working to organize factories like Har-Lee, its benefits did not extend to all women, and they certainly did not extend to many men.

Conclusion

Southeastern Massachusetts workers and capitalists had helped to inaugurate a new industrial moment: for lack of a better term, "the mixed manufacturing era." In an act of mutual historical re-imagining, workers and elites had come to see the collapse of the Massachusetts economy in the 1920s as merely the product of an over-reliance on a single industry, and had embraced mixed manufacturing as the appropriate recipe for permanent stability.[149] In reality, textile firms had simply been traded out for apparel factories and electronics plants, lured by promises of massive returns on prevailing economic crisis. By 1953, whereas Massachusetts apparel factories employed almost 60,000 workers, cotton and synthetic textiles employed less than 30,000, and woolen and worsted mills employed less than 20,000.[150] Some 37 percent of Fall River and 27 percent of all New Bedford manufacturing jobs were now in the growing apparel sector.[151] Not surprisingly, then, when the young labor historian Susan Porter Benson was put in charge of leading a "reading group" of retired garment workers in Lawrence, Fall River, and New Bedford in the late 1970s, she recorded how "their work histories show in microcosm the transition that came with the decline of a New England textile town: many started

[149] Robert H. Cain, Editorial, *Industry* 40, no. 2 (Feb. 1975), 4.

[150] Miernyk, *Inter-Industry Labor Mobility,* 3.

[151] Ibid., 92; Ibid., 110.

out working in textile mills…then many moved into war industry…and then came the clothing shops."[152] Yet, importantly, these cities were not simply in "decline": in fact, by the 1960s, New Bedford's garment factories were growing so rapidly that they were encountering labor *shortages*.[153]

Industrialization and de-industrialization worked in tandem in mid-century Massachusetts, but it was no sterile process of capitalist transition. Indeed, the re-making of mid-century Massachusetts little resembled the classic definition of "creative destruction"—in which old productive forms are displaced to make way for new, more innovative regimes of production—as described by Schumpeter.[154] Instead, it amounted more to a simple shuffling of the geographic allocation of industrial production. Textile mills moved south; British and French-Canadian workers moved west, north, and east; garment shops moved north and east; and Azoreans continued their cross-Atlantic migrations to the ebb and flow of the Massachusetts economy. Mobile capital had escaped the house of labor, lured by crisis in another part of the country, only to find that its very movement ironically engendered a recovery that ignited the activist spirits of workers and middle-class citizens concerned for the future of their community. A process of industrialization that began in the throes of crisis thus resolved in a stasis remarkably similar to its predecessor. Prosperity and decline, recovery and crisis, and industrialization and de-industrialization were all cut from the same cloth.

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[152] Susan Porter Benson, "Lawrence—Community—Retirees—5/14/1979," Folder 35, Box 3, Series 1, ACTWU—New England Regional Joint Board, Records, 1974-87, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts.

[153] New Bedford Industrial Directory for New Bedford and the Metropolitan Area, 1968-1969, Folder 6, Series D, Sub-group 2: New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce Records, 1961-1969, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Jeannette J. Lambert, "Fall River's Apparel Industry, 1920-1986," (unpublished manuscript), Ambrose F. Keeley Library, Fall River, Massachusetts, 10-11.

[154] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (Martino Fine Books, 2010).

Chapter 6

Towards Free Migration: Immigrant Politics in an Age of Restriction

Most young professors eagerly await the publication of their first book; Donald Taft was probably no different. Unfortunately for Taft—a Columbia University-trained sociologist who had spent some eight years finishing his dissertation on the Portuguese populations of Fall River, Massachusetts and Portsmouth, New Hampshire—the publication of his 1923 book, *Two Portuguese Communities in New England*, was instead greeted by mass public protest.[1]

The reason was easy to spot: *Two Portuguese Communities in New England* revealed volumes about the suspect place immigrants like the Portuguese had in the American psyche. His primary interest, Taft explained, was determining the cause of the "notoriously excessive" rates of infant mortality that prevailed amongst Portuguese immigrants, and to inquire as to whether these infants "died because of racial or nationalistic traits" or simply "because the Portuguese chanced to be exposed to peculiarly adverse surroundings."[2] Although he forthrightly confessed that he had started "with a considerable prejudice in favor of the economic and non-personal causes of infant mortality," his eight years in the field apparently changed his outlook.[3]

Taft ultimately found these high rates of infant mortality simply inexplicable without recourse to these immigrants' extraordinarily ignorant character and manifestly inferior racial makeup. Not only were they "Southern-European," he pointed out, but the Portuguese were also

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[1] Library of Congress, Copyright Office and United States, Dept. of the Treasury, *Catalog of Copyright Entries. New Series: 1923* (Copyright Office, Library of Congress, 1924), 7244; Donald Taft, *Two Portuguese Communities in New England* (New York: Columbia University, 1923).

[2] Taft, *Two Portuguese Communities in New England*, 17.

[3] Ibid., 192.

of a "semi-negroid type."[4] For Taft, it was an unavoidable social fact that "this infusion of negro blood" adversely affected "their own social welfare and…the influence they exert in America." Moreover, high infant mortality was itself "a characteristic which the Portuguese have in common with the negro."[5] Yet racial characteristics were not the only culprits: Taft was also excruciatingly careful to detail the minute ways in which these immigrants were an astonishingly base people. His conclusions are rather striking. He argued that while higher incomes might help some in decreasing Portuguese infant mortality, he remained doubtful as to whether it would have any lasting impact. In fact, Taft contended that higher incomes would be, in the last analysis, ineffectual unless paired with a means of somehow altering "the personal causes of infant deaths," which was to say, "ignorance on the part of mothers, improper spacing of pregnancies which accompanies ignorance, and certain other," presumably racial, "characteristics of the nationality."[6] Taft's conclusions often bolted to sheer absurdity: for example, he claimed that the Portuguese inability to speak English *directly* contributed to higher infant death rates.[7]

Taft was no isolated quack, at least by the standards of his time. Indeed, the scholarly community appears to have received Taft's book quite well. His dissertation eventually landed him a position at Ohio State University and, upon publication, a satisfied review from famed University of Chicago sociologist Robert Park. According to Park, it was a "careful and cautious" study which showed the Portuguese to be, "by all the accepted standards, a low-grade people, and one that responds very slowly to supposedly better economic and living conditions

[4] Ibid., 17.

[5] Ibid., 18, 143.

[6] Ibid., 193.

[7] Ibid., 160.

of the American environment."[8] Portuguese immigrants, however, did not share in this scholarly consensus.

THE FIRST PORTUGUESE DAILY IN THE UNITED STATES

A Alvorada

JORNAL DIARIO IMPARCIAL E NOTICIOSO

A Manifestação de Protesto da Colonia Portugueza de New Bedford

Cerca de 6.000 Portuguezes acorrem a lavrar o seu protesto contra o livro insultuoso do Dr. Taft.

INVESTIGA-SE O MYSTERIOSO CRIME QUE CAUSOU A MORTE A' DOUTORA WITKINS

Por o Club Portuguez Recreativo não poder conter a multidão, foi necessario pedir licença a's autoridades competentes para falarem ao "ar livre"— Reunem-se no Grove Park.

UM CAVALO QUE LEVAVA MAIS BELOS DO QUE A ESPOSA DO CAVALEIRO

MARAVILHOSA RELIQUIA HISTORICA ENCONTRADA NA TUNISIA

Cambios em Escudos

LIBRAS, MARCAS E CABO VERDE 156$00

ACORES 195$00

Figure 6.1: The front page of New Bedford's *A Alvorada* from March 24, 1924.[9] The headline reads "A Manifestation of Protest from the Portuguese Colony in New Bedford: Around 6,000 Portuguese flock to protest against Dr. Taft's insulting book." Taft's book became a topic of tremendous interest and anxiety for local Portuguese precisely because it revealed the rampant xenophobia and nativism of the American intellectual establishment.

On the afternoon of March 23, 1924, some six thousand Portuguese immigrants descended upon Grove Park in New Bedford to protest Taft's "insulting" book.[10] Before the book was even in print, the Portuguese immigrant newspaper, *A Alvorada*, published two livid reviews, side by side, on the front page of their March 19, 1924 edition. Local Azorean Alipio C. Bartholo defended his countrymen against Taft's calumnies: "there is, of course, amongst [us] a

[8] Robert E. Park, "Review: [untitled]," *The American Journal of Sociology* 31, no. 2 (1925): 272.

[9] "A Manifestação de Protesto da Colónia Portugueza de New Bedford: Cerca de 6.000 Portuguezes acorrem a lavrar o seu protesto contra o livro insultuoso do Dr. Taft," *A Alvorada* (New Bedford), Mar. 24, 1924, from Portuguese-American Digital Newspaper Collections, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *PADNC-FMPAA*]**.

[10] Ibid. Grove Park no longer exists—it used to be located within the square of Rivet, Water, Blackmer, and Front Streets in New Bedford—today it is a section of Route 18.

great number of illiterates, but illiteracy does not mean stupidity, but rather a lack of intellectual culture, and poverty is not, nor has it ever been, synonymous with stupidity or ignorance."[11] Most poignantly, Bartholo ultimately faulted Taft for failing to visit the Azores.[12] The other editorial blasted Taft's book as "statistics without basis, assertions without official evidence, and absurd conclusions; nothing more."[13] Again, the editorial chastised Taft for failing to actually visit the Azorean islands.[14]

Portuguese protests, however, were aimed neither at Taft nor the American intellectual or political establishment more generally. Instead, their audience was their homeland. As one speaker at the New Bedford protest put it, their purpose in gathering was to show the "Portuguese Colony of New Bedford's desire that our government" take on the responsibility of "responding to the book in question…in whatever way the Portuguese government considers most convenient and dignified for restoring prestige and lifting the Portuguese name."[15] The protest itself was led by a dignitary of the Portuguese consulate in Fall River, Dr. Castro Madureira.[16] Moreover, at the protest's conclusion, all agreed to send copies of Taft's book to "each of the Portuguese Universities, namely, Lisbon, Coimbra, and Porto, so that all of the great

[11] "O livro do professor Taft," *A Alvorada* (New Bedford), March 19, 1924. Original Text: "Há, de facto, entre, todos eles grande numero de analfabetos; mas o analfabetismo não significa estupidez, mas sim a falta de cultura intelectual, e a indigência não é, nunca foi, sinónimo de estupidez ou ignorância."

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] See "A Manifestação de Protesto da Colónia Portugueza de New Bedford Cerca de 6.000 Portuguezes acorrem a lavrar o seu protesto contra o livro insultuoso do Dr. Taft," *A Alvorada* (New Bedford), March 24, 1924. Original Text: "Levar perante o Governo Português por in intermédio do seu zeloso e ilustre representante em Washington, o desejo da Colónia Portuguesa de New Bedford de que o nosso Governo se encarregue de responder ao livro em questao, quer seja pela forma proposta pela Colónia de Fall River que apoiam, quer pela forma que o Governo Português julgar mais conveniente e digna para prestigio e levantamento do nome português."

[16] Ibid.

professors and doctors in sociology can respond scientifically to this hypothetical work by Dr. Donald R. Taft."[17] It is not altogether improbable that future dictator Dr. António Salazar himself—as head of the Social Science department at the University of Coimbra—got wind of the explosion of fury which met Taft's book.

Although the seemingly "defective" political consciousness of Portuguese Americans—unable to manifest themselves as a political force akin to the Irish of Boston—has perpetually mystified (or frustrated) many interested scholars, it would seem that perhaps they have simply been focused on the wrong state.[18] As the fallout from Taft's incendiary work demonstrates, Portuguese Americans were indeed capable of mass collective action: but their politics cast their sights not towards Washington D.C. or Boston, but to Lisbon.

The Johnson-Reed Immigration Act, passed by the federal congress in 1924, was a fitting capstone for this era of proliferating xenophobia and racism. Allocating "quotas" to the various nations of the world, Johnson-Reed erected a system of immigration restriction based on a hierarchy of racial desirability: nations like Great Britain were given annual immigration quotas as high as 65,721, while "undesirable" migrants from nations in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa were either barred from entering the United States altogether, or held to miniscule quotas, generally not larger than 100.[19] Portugal was allocated a mere 440 immigrants each year.[20] Not

[17] Ibid.

[18] See Note 24.

[19] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton University Press, 2005), 28-29.

[20] Ibid.

surprisingly, Johnson-Reed inaugurated some forty years of migratory stagnation in Massachusetts.

Although quota restriction's eventual overthrow by the reformist 1965 Hart-Cellar Act did indeed help "open" the doors to American immigration, Hart-Cellar was intended to neither increase immigration nor eliminate the quotas altogether.[21] Instead, the 1965 reforms merely sought to transform a system of immigration restriction based on nationality and race into one based on economic needs and familial connections. Post-1965 Portuguese immigrants, lacking any real skills unavailable within the American working population, thus depended almost wholly on receptive families and a trans-Atlantic community of Portuguese migrants to make "free migration" a reality in the post-1965 era.

It is worth asking, then—in light of the tremendous burst of Portuguese immigration to Massachusetts in the 1960s and 1970s—how did the connections that linked Portugal and Massachusetts, originally forged in the early-twentieth century, remain so strong despite decades of migratory stagnation? Although it may seem only natural that the link between immigrants, or even the children of immigrants, who arrived in the 1910s and their brethren back home would remain strong after sixty years—sixty years is indeed a very long time on a human scale. Moreover, from the Americanization programs of the 1920s to the patriotic "culture of unity" that prevailed during the Second World War, the twentieth century was a time rife with assimilationist pressures for American immigrants.[22] Not surprisingly, then, many other ethnic

[21] Ibid., 230; David M. Reimers, "An Unintended Reform: The 1965 Immigration Act and Third World Immigration to the United States," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 3, no. 1 (Oct. 1983): 9–28.

[22] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People* (Little Brown Atlantic Monthly, 1952); James R. Barrett and David R. Roediger, "The Irish and the 'Americanization' of the 'New Immigrants' in the Streets and in the Churches of the Urban United States, 1900-1930," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 24, no. 4 (July 1, 2005): 3–33; Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2008); Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton University Press, 2002); Russell A. Kazal, "Review: Revisting

groups—Jewish migrants to New York City, for example—found it difficult to maintain ethnic harmony across the generations.[23] As such, there are many reasons to believe that the existing Portuguese communities of Massachusetts would have seen renewed migration as an economic or social threat rather than a political project to adopt as their own. As such, in order to understand how free migration became a reality for Portuguese emigrants in the 1960s and 1970s, this chapter looks to how the politics of Portuguese identity, the Portuguese fascist state, and the search for immigrant respectability bred a resurgent emigrant nationalism that maintained these crucial links between mid-century Massachusetts and the Lusophone world. Ultimately, the postwar decades did not see the rise of immigrant Americanization historians generally associate with the era.[24] As this chapter shows, a variety of interceding institutions—

Assimilation: The Rise, Fall, and Reappraisal of a Concept in American Ethnic History," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1, 1995): 437.

[23] Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York Jews, 1870-1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), 95; Laura Levitt, "Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism," *American Quarterly* 59, no. 3 (Sep. 2007), 813.

[24] There is a tremendous amount of literature addressing the fragmentation, lack of political power, and apparent "Americanization" of Portuguese Americans in the mid-twentieth century. In Francis M. Rogers' classic 1976 article, "The Portuguese Experience in the United States: Double Melt or Minority Group?," Rogers argued that whereas "members of the first wave of Portuguese immigration into the United States prided themselves on their ability to adapt, to learn English, to become Americans" (to "melt"), the newer immigrants—arriving at essentially the very moment Rogers was writing, faced "a wide range of choices which polarize around the two horns of a dilemma: double melt or minority group?". Rogers suggested it was this fracture which ultimately left the American Portuguese "split right down the middle," ultimately arguing that this might account for why local Portuguese populations had so much trouble mustering significant political strength.

Steven Samuel Ussach, writing around the same time, argued that the main tension in the Portuguese community was between alternative paths to Americanization. The earlier immigrants, he argues, "did not like being immigrants," and as such, "Americanized as quickly as possible." Consequently, with "the introduction of large numbers of new immigrants who…do not accommodate and who certainly do not assimilate, but who in fact demand a voice and a place in the community precisely as immigrants," the American Portuguese have only "splintered" further.

Estellie Smith, writing in 1973, blamed the Portuguese penchant to ensconce into their status as an "invisible minority" on their uniquely "long and intimate contact with Americans and America," giving them a certain "foreknowledge" of American "prejudicial attitudes" and teaching them the political efficacy of assuming "invisibility" as "protections against such discrimination." More recently, Irene Bloemraad has argued that the Portuguese immigrants of Massachusetts, unlike their Canadian brethren, are "invisible" not only as the result of larger structural conditions, such as "government [U.S.] policy, the local political system" and "understandings of

foremost among them the Portuguese State—helped to keep the social links between emigrants and their brethren back home alive and well. In so doing, Portugal itself unintentionally helped make "free migration" possible—and, by extension, helped impel the industrial revival of Massachusetts in the 1960s.

Being Portuguese in Mid-Century Massachusetts

The nearly 250,000 Portuguese who arrived in the United States from 1880-1929 left a nation in disarray, a fact of which they were all too aware.[25] Portuguese intellectuals had long ago conceded that their nation had become ensnared in some sort of inexorable decline ever since the close of the so-called "marvelous century" of 1415-1515.[26] Portugal's vigorous

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race-based multiculturalism in the United States," but also the values and characteristics the Portuguese took with them when they immigrated: "limited English-language ability, low levels of schooling, distrust of politics, and a lack of long-standing political ties."

Jerry R. Williams, in perhaps the only book-length treatment of Azorean Immigration to the United States, argues that during World War II—and presumably the Cold War as well—"under the guise of patriotism, many former immigrants abandoned their native tongue, anglicized their name, and de-emphasized 'un-American' cultural traditions." When newer immigrants came in the 1960s and 1970s, they brought a very different sense of identity: not only were the imbued with a far deeper sense of national pride, they also pursued "economic well-being" with such zeal that "it caused disdain on the part of many Portuguese-Americans and non-Portuguese."

See Francis M. Rogers, "The Portuguese Experience in the United States: Double Melt or Minority Group?" *The Journal of the American Portuguese* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1976), 3-4, 12-13; Steven Samuel Ussach, "The New England Portuguese: A Plural Society within a Plural Society," *Plural Societies* 6 (1975), 50, 55; Estellie Smith, "Portuguese Enclaves: The Invisible Minority" (paper presented at the Southern Anthropological Society Meeting, Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina, March 1973), 6, 10-11; Irene Bloemraad, "Citizenship, Naturalization and Electoral Success: Putting the Portuguese-American Experience in a Comparative Context" in *Community Culture and the Makings of Identity: Portuguese-Americans along the Eastern Seaboard* eds. Kimberly Holton and Andrea Klimt (North Dartmouth, MA: Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2009), 27; Jerry R. Williams, *In Pursuit of their Dreams: A History of Azorean Immigration to the United States* (North Dartmouth, MA: Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2005), 108, 112-113.

[25] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Washington, DC, August 2010), 6-9.

[26] Douglas L. Wheeler, *Republican Portugal: A Political History, 1910-1926* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 5; John Charles Chasteen, *Born in Blood & Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*, 2nd ed. (W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 104.

emigration restriction edicts were one crucial result of this consensus, as the state's emigrants so often took the blame for national and imperial decline. Migrant Azoreans were thus acutely aware that they were, more often than not, viewed by their compatriots as betrayers of Portuguese progress and perhaps even the root cause of Portugal's decline.[27]

Yet Portugal's antipathy towards its emigrants paled in comparison to many Americans' antagonism towards the nation's immigrants. As Taft's book shows all too well, early-twentieth-century America was riddled with resurgent xenophobia and anti-immigrant nativism.[28] One of the most vocal anti-immigrant groups of the era, "The Immigration Restriction League," was itself based in Massachusetts, founded by three Harvard College graduates in 1894 in order to keep those "elements undesirable for citizenship" and "injurious to our national character" away from America's shores.[29] "Swarthy" Portuguese—and especially their "black" Cape Verdean compatriots—were quickly branded as racially suspect.[30] The Restriction League would spend the next thirty years lobbying congress on various immigration control bills. The notion of using literacy tests to restrict immigration, for instance, began as a pet project of the Restriction League before being formally enacted into law in 1917.[31]

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[27] Bela Feldman-Bianco, "Multiple Layers of Time and Space: The Construction of Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism among Portuguese Immigrants," in *Community Culture and the Makings of Identity: Portuguese-Americans along the Eastern Seaboard*, 67.

[28] John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1963); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Harvard University Press, 1999); Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (University of California Press, 1975); Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*.

[29] Immigration Restriction League, "Constitution of the Immigration Restriction League," Collection Development Department, Widener Library, Harvard College Libraries, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

[30] Marilyn Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity: Cape Verdean American Immigrants, 1860-1965* (University of Illinois Press, 1993), 7; F.E. Emrich, "The Problem of New England," *The Home Missionary* 78, no. 6 (Nov. 1904), 228; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 76.

[31] Henry Pratt Fairchild, "The Literacy Test and Its Making," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 31, no. 3 (May 1, 1917): 447–60.

And although the Portuguese of Massachusetts were very much aware of the bigotry they faced in America, their diagnosis of its cause often had less to do with American racism or xenophobia than with their frustration with Portugal's inability to adequately advertise its apparently massive global power. In the pages of New Bedford's Portuguese newspaper, discussions of even the most banal problems in the local community frequently devolved into diatribes against the Portuguese state's ineptness in protecting its emigrants abroad. One article on the lack of Portuguese wine consumption in the United States, for instance, went on to lament that "the reality of the Luso-American colony is this: we have all been excellent people, we have all complied with caring, zeal, intelligence, and patriotism to our duty…but the colony of the United States" still remains "an 'unknown colony' to Portugal."[32] In fact, the author enviously compared the direction and guidance Portugal gave to its other—African—holdings with the cool indifference it bestowed upon its American colonies.[33] Facing hostile nativism in a foreign land, Portuguese Americans saw themselves as an embattled people who searched for support from *their* government: the Portuguese state.[34]

Thus, the rise of Salazar and his unique brand of Portuguese fascism in the 1930s—bent on "restoring" Portugal's global power and imperial ambitions—was nearly as compelling to the Portuguese of Massachusetts as it was to their compatriots back home.[35] Born April 28, 1889 to a

[32] "Os productos de Portugal nos Estados Unidos," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), July 6, 1933.

[33] Ibid.

[34] The irony, of course, is that these Portuguese immigrants did not necessarily object to America's racial ordering of the peoples of the world per se: the Azoreans of Massachusetts, after all, did everything they could to distance themselves from their "black" Cape Verdean co-nationals. But, as promoters of their own colonial dominions in Africa, the Portuguese of Massachusetts felt that Portugal needed to do more to reestablish its persona as on the "winning" side of civilization, so to speak. In other words, these immigrants did not object to racism, but rather to where American whites saw them on the racial hierarchy. See Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity*, 7.

[35] Filipe Ribeiro De Meneses, *Salazar: A Political Biography* (New York: Enigma Books, 2009), 4–6, 10, 17, 21; Hugo Gil Ferreira and Michael W. Marshall, *Portugal's Revolution: Ten Years On* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 6; Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, 39, 48.

modest family in the wine-growing center of Portugal, Salazar received his formal education through the Catholic seminary. Eventually trained in economics, Salazar's position as head of the University of Coimbra's Economic and Social Science Department gave him a bully pulpit from which to decry the secular First Republic in the name of Catholic rule. As the republic crumbled, Salazar became seen as something of an intellectual-prophet. Following the ascension of a right-wing military government in 1927, General Oscar Carmona made Salazar Portugal's head of finance. By 1932, now as the nation's prime minister, he began to consolidate his dominion over Portuguese politics through the formation of the fascist "Estado Novo" (New State) regime, formally inaugurated in March of 1933 with Salazar as dictator.[36] Envisioning himself as a true, modern-day philosopher king, he candidly accepted his title as "dictator," and even publicly acknowledged that his regime censored the press, citing it as a political virtue.[37] As Salazar liked to point out, even in liberal countries, the capitalist class practiced de facto censorship of the press. In Salazar's own eyes, he had simply turned censorship into a weapon for political unity rather than commercial gain.[38]

Yet there was always an imperial, globally expansive edge to Salazarist regeneration. The First Republic had created a whole array of unifying national symbols to shore up public support—drafting Portugal's first flag and national anthem in vain attempts to fire up nationalist

[36] António Costa Pinto, "Twentieth-Century Portugal: An Introduction" in *Modern Portugal*, ed. Antonio Costa Pinto (Sposs, 1998), 36.

[37] Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, 3, 75.

[38] Kay, 75. Indeed, Salazar intended for his corporatist Estado Novo apparatus to transcend all social conflict through enforcement of hierarchy, tradition, and discipline. It thus required that all groups within Portuguese society unquestionably acknowledge the state as *the* "coordinating agent," regulating political life in the name of the national good. See Ibid., 62; Pinto, "Twentieth-Century Portugal," 38.

sentiment—but Salazar took a very different tack.[39] Indeed, Salazarist rhetoric of national regeneration was unapologetically and unwaveringly framed in global terms: he aimed always to convince his people that although they may be small in Iberia, they were downright enormous when seen as a true, global empire.[40] For Salazar, and increasingly, to the Portuguese public at large, Portuguese nationalism and Portuguese imperialism became ever more deeply entwined.[41] By staking his legitimacy upon his mission to rebuild Portugal's power and character on the global stage, Salazar emerged as a compelling figure to Portuguese on both sides of the Atlantic.

Figure 6.2: Portuguese propaganda map from 1934: "Portugal is Not a Small Country."[42]

Created for the First Colonial Portuguese Exhibition in Porto, this map also came with an English equivalent.[43] As these maps nicely show, Salazar built his legitimacy as Portugal's dictator upon his claim to rebuild Portugal as a great global power.

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[39] Nino G. Monteiro and Antonio Costa Pinto, "Cultural Myths and Portuguese National Identity" in *Modern Portugal*, 212.

[40] Heriberto Cairo, "'Portugal Is Not a Small Country': Maps and Propaganda in the Salazar Regime," *Geopolitics* 11, no. 3 (September 1, 2006): 367–95.

[41] Nuno Severiano Teixeira, "Between Africa and Europe: Portuguese Foreign Policy, 1890-1986" in *Modern Portugal*, 63.

[42] Henrique Galvão, Map, "Portugal Não É Um País Pequeno : Superfície Do Império Colonial Português Comparada Com A Dos Principais Países Da Europa," Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Lisbon, Portugal **[*hereafter BNPL*]**, http://purl.pt/11440.

[43] Cairo, "'Portugal Is Not a Small Country'."

The 1939 New York World's Fair, and the press and propaganda it incited, thus serves as a useful source of material for probing the new relationship Salazar would attempt to forge with his American emigrants: "our colony in America," as he would call them.[44] After all, the Portuguese state would come to deploy all of its engines of propaganda—neatly consolidated in 1933 into the National Propaganda Secretariat (SPN) under the leadership of fascist ideologue António Ferro—in preparation for the World's Fair.[45] In addition, the state constructed a prominent pavilion upon the fairgrounds, adorned with oversize Portuguese flags, coats of arms, and an imposing statue of Prince Henry the Navigator. António Ferro himself would personally guide reporters from almost all the major New York newspapers, as well as New Bedford's *Diário de Notícias,* through the Portuguese complex, including the "Room of Industrial Arts," the "Room of Discoveries," the "Columbus Room," the "Room of Portuguese Expansion throughout the World," and the "Room of the Present."[46] The SPN would also produce and disseminate a whole series of pamphlets amongst the American public. One pamphlet in particular, *Portugal: The New State in Theory and in Practice*, was circulated to major colleges and universities throughout the United States (a surprising feat, considering its highly

[44] It should be noted that the Portuguese word, "colónia" is ambiguous as to whether it refers to a formal colony—"a territory in which colonists are subject to the government of the metropole"—or merely any "group of compatriots that settle outside of their country." Thus, although Salazar's choice of words here clearly reaffirmed that Portuguese Americans were foremost Portuguese settlers in a foreign land, it is not likely he saw them as colonists in any formal sense. See "colónia," *Dicionário Priberam da Língua Portuguesa*, http://www.priberam.pt/DLPO/colonia.

[45] Pinto, "Twentieth-Century Portugal," in *Modern Portugal*, 34.

[46] "O 'Preview' do Pavilão de Portugal," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford)*,* May 2, 1939. On Ferro's tireless involvement in advertising Portugal's place at the World's Fair, see, for example: "Discurso do Snr. António Ferro na recepção á Colónia Portuguesa no Hotel St. Morítz em Nova York no dia 24 de Março de 1938" *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), April 2, 1938; "O 'Preview' do Pavilão de Portugal," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), May 2, 1939; "Foi Oficialmente Inaugurado o Pavilhão de Portugal na Feira Mundial de New York," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), May 11, 1939; "A Recepção a António Ferro pelo Cônsul e Consuleza de New Bedford," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), June 5, 1939; "Propaganda de Portugal: Discurso de Antonio Ferro no dia de Portugal na Feira," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), July 18, 1939; "Portugal Celebra os Centenarios," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), September 30, 1939; "António Ferro discursando no 'Dia de Portugal' na Feira," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), November 29, 1939.

tendentious content, such as its opening "fundamental principle" that all "democratic constitutions of the French kind," founded on the "rights of man," have "no economic or social content" whatsoever).[47]

Moreover, Salazar would use the main event of the Portuguese Pavilion's tenure at the World's Fair—his June 12, 1939 "Portugal Day" address in the "Room of Honor"—to finally concede to Portuguese-Americans their longstanding demand for a place in Portugal's global empire.[48] "Grant me a few words for you on this festive day as an echo of the distant fatherland," Salazar began, formally addressing the "Portuguese of America," before confessing that, despite the cheerful occasion, he was nonetheless "ill-at-ease and afraid [these words] will arrive hollow and cold."[49] Strikingly, right from the start, Salazar underscored the fact that past instances of state indifference to Portuguese abroad did not guarantee him a warm reception.[50] Indeed, Salazar's extant papers contain numerous carefully preserved and catalogued clippings from the Portuguese and American press, including news articles and editorials from those in the Portuguese-American community who had repeatedly denounced Portugal's failure to

[47] Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional, *Portugal: The New State in Theory and in Practice* (Lisbon: Editroial Império Limitada, 1939), 11; "Opiniões que muito honram o Pavilhão de Portugal na Exposicão de Nova York," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), November 29, 1939.

[48] It should be noted that Salazar did not actually deliver his speech in person. Notorious for his steadfast disdain of travel (he ruled over an extensive empire but never went to a single colony, never visited Brazil, and flew only once and hated the experience) Salazar had the speech delivered for him. See Pinto, "Twentieth-Century Portugal," in *Modern Portugal*, 27.

[49] "Mensagem do Doutor Oliveira Salazar aos Portugueses na America [Message from Doctor Oliveira Salazar to the Portuguese of America]" *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), July 18, 1939. Original Text: "Pedem-me duas palavras que sejam para vós neste dia de festa eco da Pátria distante, e embora doente e receoso de vo-las fazer chegar apagadas e frias, hei-de dizer o que mais importa ao momento sem preterir a parte que possa caber á saudade."

[50] Notably, Salazar's initial rise to power was indeed greeted with a manifestly unfriendly news article in New Bedford, see "De cima para baixo e de baixo para cima," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), June 20, 1928.

adequately advertise its power and prestige abroad.[51] His purpose here, then, was not merely to pitch the virtues of the Estado Novo, but to convince the American Portuguese that they were, whether they knew it or not, members of this larger, global Portuguese community. Indeed, the point of Portugal's presence at the world's fair, he assured his audience, was "to pay homage to the American people and their work," to "reclaim for Portugal its fair share…in the formation of the United States of America," and to "give the Portuguese and the Americans an idea…of the force of the reconstruction realized in these last years in Portugal."[52] "Our whole policy can be reduced, after all," Salazar closed his speech, "to making it so that the Portuguese are proud of the traditions of their fatherland and to show them that the homeland is going through a resurgence operating in all fields worthy of the love and dedication of its children," including its American colony.[53]

If Salazar only hinted at the Estado Novo's emerging emigrant nationalist and community-building project, his chief propaganda agent made it a central theme in almost every

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[51] For instance, see L. De Teixeira Machado, "Politica Portugueza: A Falencia da Ditadura – Uma Vida Nova Vae Começar em Portugal; A sua Reflexão na Vida Consular," *O Colonial* (Fairhaven, MA), Sept. 19, 1930, Mç. 465, [pt. 27/1], File 54, Subseries 44, Series 4, Subfundo: Gabinete do Ministro 1917/1977, Fundo: Ministério do Interior 1910/1983, Reference Code: PT/TT/MI-GM/4-44/54, Ministério do Interior, Arquivo Nacional Torre Do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal **[hereafter *MI-ANTT*]**. On other ways Portugal tracked U.S. press, see Silva Dias, Secretariat da Propaganda Nacional to Secretario de Sua Excelencia o Presidente do Conselho, Feb. 28, 1941, cx. 662, pt.4, PC-12E, Document 4, UI 6, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Reference Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/6/4, Arquivo Salazar, Arquivo Nacional Torre Do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal **[hereafter *AOS-ANTT*]**.

Time magazine's critical article on Salazar in 1946 also generated much anger amongst Salazar and his cadre, leading to the banning of the magazine in Portugal. See *Time* (July 22, 1946), cx. 662, pt.16, PC-12E, Document 16, UI 6, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/6/16, *AOS-ANTT*; Secretariado Nacional da Informação to Chefe do Gabinete de Sua Excelência o Presidente do Conselho Lisboa, Jun. 28, 1949, cx. 662, pt.16, PC-12E, Document 16, UI 6, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/6/16, *AOS-ANTT*.

[52] "Mensagem do Doutor Oliveira Salazar aos Portugueses na America [Message from Doctor Oliveira Salazar to the Portuguese of America]" *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), July 18, 1939. Moreover, in praising Portuguese Americans' ability to "adapt to the most varied conditions of local life and work," Salazar declared that he was most proud they had not lost that "fundamental character of their race—their pure love of their family and their fatherland, the sweetness of their sentiments and the pride in its history."

[53] Ibid.

speech he delivered at the World's Fair. It was Salazar, after all, Ferro told a New York reception in 1938, who insisted Portugal make a strong showing at the World's Fair; it was Salazar who had "remembered the thousands of Portuguese who toil in America," and "with his vision always fair," saw their "moral desolation" and "deep discouragement…in the absence of our colors in this competition of nations."[54] Directly addressing the Portuguese of America, he declared, "if you, so despised and humiliated in other times, can now walk with your head up, without fear that they will confuse your nationality, it is Salazar who has done it!"[55] As we will see, American Portuguese, stung by decades of marginalization, took such rhetoric seriously. After all, they had finally succeeded in achieving their long-sought political objective: pushing the Portuguese state to publicize its power, prestige, and vanguard role in civilization's development.

The ways in which Portugal's Pavilion would directly aid emigrant struggles for respectability ultimately became one of the most prominent themes in Ferro's speeches. The Estado Novo, Ferro reminded audiences, represented not just a national resurgence, but an equal moment of regeneration for all who belonged to Portugal's "great moral imperial nation," including its "colonies" in the United States.[56] In another of Ferro's speeches, as if directly addressing incidents like the infamous Taft book, Ferro observed that "the Portuguese of the United States have organized their economic life within the possibilities that are offered in this great nation. That which they expected, therefore, of the government of their native land was

[54] "Discurso do Snr. António Ferro na Recepção á Colónia Portuguesa no Hotel St. Moritz em Nova York no dia 24 de Março de 1938," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), April 2, 1938. Original Text: "É que o Dr. Oliveira Salazar, com a sua visão sempre justa [unclear] avaliar, a distancia, o desconsolo moral, o desalento profundo dos Portugueses da América perante a ausência das nossas colores nesta próxima corrida das nações."

[55] Ibid. Original Text: "Se vós, tão despresados e humilhados noutros tempos, podeis hoje andar de cabeça levantada, sem receio de que vos confundam a nacionalidade, apenas a Salazar o devei."

[56] "Propaganda de Portugal: Discurso de Antonio Ferro no dia de Portugal na Feira," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), July 18, 1939.

only moral support and prestige…to be released from this inferiority complex that has thrived lately; and for us to bring to the United States—so ignorant of our past and our present—this image of Portugal reborn and of Portugal forever" so that American Portuguese could "hold their heads up proudly alongside the descendants of other major nations."[57] As always, Salazarist emigrant-community building thus went hand-in-hand with resurgent Portuguese nationalism and imperial power.

Salazar's project of emigrant nationalism obviously fit into a larger project of bolstering the legitimacy of his fascist regime; but this does not mean it was taken any less seriously by the Portuguese of Massachusetts. Indeed, although one might view pamphlets like *Portugal: The New State in Theory and in Practice* as simply maladroit propaganda, the editors of New Bedford's *Diário de Notícias* celebrated their dissemination. In fact, in November of 1939, they printed a full page of letters sent to Portugal by professors and librarians around the United States thanking the Portuguese state for its generous propagandist donations.[58] It was an especially curious choice, as most of the newspaper's readers would have been unable to read these English-language letters. The point, however, was likely less what the letters said than the prestige letters from grateful Yale and Macalester college professors and librarians conferred.

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[57] Ibid. Original Text: "Como se exterioriza esse olhar, como se está manifestando esse interesse no que diz respeito á nossa colónia dos Estados Unidos? Através de palavras vagai,de inflamados discursos, enfatuadas mensagens? Não! Através de factos e de factos indiscutíveis. Os portugueses dos Estados Unidos organizaram a sua vida económica dentro das possibilidades que lhes oferece esta grande nação. O que esperavam, portanto, dos governos da sua terra de origem era apenas assistência moral e prestigio. Dizendo melhor, o que precisavam, acima de tudo, era que os libertassem deste complexo de inferioridade em que têm vivido, que se trouxesse aos Estados Unidos, tão ignorante do nosso passado e do nosso presente, a imagem do Portugal renascido e do Portugal de sempre. O que precisavam, para socêgo da sua vida moral e para facilidade da sua vida material, era poderem erguer a cabeça, orgulhosamente, ao lado dos descendentes de outras grandes nações." He also finished a July speech by urging the Portuguese of America to unite behind a distinctive Portuguese Americanism: "Portuguese! Unite forever! Forget the political differences, clubs rivalries, and personal issues!...Lower the flags, all flags, so that you can get up, triumphant, alongside the Flag of the United States and the Flag of Portugal!" See "Propaganda de Portugal: Discurso de Antonio Ferro no dia de Portugal na Feira," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), July 18, 1939.

[58] "Opiniões que muito honram o Pavilhão de Portugal na Exposicão de Nova York," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), November 29, 1939.

Salazar's speeches were also twice printed in New Bedford's *Diário de Notícias,* America's largest Portuguese newspaper, the second time alongside portraits of General Carmona and Salazar under the headline "SHOWING OUR GRATITUDE."[59]

O TEMPO

Diario de Noticias

THE ONLY PORTUGUESE DAILY NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES

TESTEMUNHANDO A NOSSA GRATIDÃO

GENERAL CARMONA

DR. OLIVEIRA SALAZAR

MENSAGEM DO NOSSO MINISTRO

Portugal na Exposição

A COLONIA PORTUGUESA NA AMERICA

Figure 6.3: The front page of New Bedford's *Diário de Notícias*, November 29, 1939[60]

The headline reads "Showing our Gratitude," and the photos are of General Carmona, Dr. Oliveira Salazar, and the Portuguese Pavilion at the New York World's Fair. Local Portuguese took Salazar's campaign for international prestige very seriously, seeing it as a means of increasing Portuguese respectability in the United States.

Letters and editorials from local Portuguese equally attest to how immigrants re-appropriated Salazarist rhetoric and put it to their own struggles for prestige. Gil Stone, for instance, who appears to have immigrated to Cambridge from the Azores sometime in the first

[59] In fact, Salazar's speech was printed twice. See "Mensagem do Doutor Oliveira Salazar aos Portugueses na America [Message from Doctor Oliveira Salazar to the Portuguese of America]" *Diário de Notícias*, July 18, 1939; "Portugal Celebra os Centenarios," *Diário de Notícias*, September 30, 1939; "Testemunhando a nossa Gratidão," *Diário de Notícias*, November 29, 1939.

[60] Ibid., *PADNC-FMPAA*.

decade of the twentieth century, submitted his own "review" of the Portuguese pavilion.[61] For Stone, the pavilion represented nothing short of a new era for the Portuguese of America: "The colony cannot ignore that it was not long ago that Portugal was almost totally unknown in America…[often] mistakenly seen as a dependent of Spain or England! And then we all screamed for Portuguese propaganda in this country, as we felt a deeply hurt national pride, a deeply hurt Portuguese pride."[62] Thankfully, Portugal's presence at the World's Fair, Stone argued, "declares loudly that Portugal is an independent nation, sovereign, of noble scrolls and covered in glory through the courage and valor of its people... the Portuguese Pavilion is the payoff and the eloquent response to the humiliations we have suffered."[63] In another editorial printed two months later, Stone would argue that it was "the duty of the GOOD PORTUGUESE: the GOOD PATRIOT" to push "our government to take the lead in this Portuguese propaganda crusade" as to "increase our prestige in this country."[64] Stone's loyalty would not go unnoticed or unrewarded: after getting a job as the personal secretary of the Portuguese Ambassador, he would eventually be put in charge of one of Portugal's main propaganda hubs in New York City

[61] One reason there is so much detail available concerning Gil Stone's life is because he was the grandfather of popular romance novelist Danielle Steele. See Lorenzo Benet, *The Lives of Danielle Steel: The Unauthorized Biography of America's #1 Best-Selling Author* (Macmillan, 1995), 7.

[62] "Pela Feria: Criticas e Criticos…," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), September 30, 1939.

[63] Ibid. Original Text: "A Colónia não ignora que ainda não ha muito tempo Portugal era quasi totalmente desconhecido na America e que quando se falava da nossa Pátria, confundiam-na como uma dependência de Espanha ou Inglaterra! E todos nós gritavamos então por propaganda portuguesa nêste país, e sentiamos ferido profundamente o nosso brio nacional, o nosso brio nacional, o nosso brio de portugueses. As nossas queixas eram justificadas pelo abandono a que nos tinham votado no que diz respeito ao prestigio da nossa Patria e da nossa Raça na America. Foi então quando menos esperavamos, que veio ao seio da Colónia a quasí inacreditavel notícia de que Portugal tomaria parte na Feira Mundial de New York. E assim foi, pois aí está ao lado das outras nações o Pavilhão de Portugal, em cujo cimo flutua a Bandeira Portuguesa, afirmando bem alto que Portugal é uma nação independente, soberana, de nobres pergaminhos e coberta de gloria pela coragem e valor do seu povo."

[64] "Secção Editorial: Portuguesismo no Estrangeiro," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), November 29, 1939.

in May of 1945.[65] Others, like Luiz Gomes, president of New Bedford's Portuguese-American Club, expressed similar appreciation for the Portuguese government. "If 80%, today, of people, know us then they thus know," he wrote in November of 1939, "that Portugal is an independent nation; that the Portuguese people are an apostle of civilization; and that Portugal maintains vast overseas dominions in five parts of the globe, so vast and rich that we can call ourselves a COLONIAL EMPIRE—we owe it to HIM [Salazar]!"[66]

The Portuguese of Massachusetts thus eagerly embraced Portuguese propaganda as a means to immigrant prestige. Although somewhat perverse in retrospect, for these migrants, so embittered by the experiences of the previous three decades, the ability to claim the mantle of empire for the Portuguese people was a crucial ingredient to their claims to respectability: as equals in the American nation. Importantly, however, this also meant that rather than distancing themselves from their ethnic heritage in order to gain the hallmarks of American respectability, immigrant thinkers were largely arguing that respectability instead came from their affiliation with a powerful Portuguese empire. Consequently, Salazarist efforts at building emigrant nationalism came to push against the tides of Americanization, strengthening these immigrants' connection to both their homeland and their identities as Portuguese emigrants. Rather than playing out the oft-repeated story of wartime and postwar immigrant Americanization, the institutional forces the Portuguese state marshaled in the name of emigrant nationalism insured that Massachusetts' Portuguese never quite assimilated into the American mainstream.[67]

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[65] "Casa de Portugal," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), May 9, 1945.

[66] "A Grande Obra de Propaganda Portguesa no Estrangeiro," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), November 29, 1939. Original Text: "Se 80%, hoje, deste Povo, nos conhece e sabe: que Portugal é uma Nação independente; que o Povo Português é um apóstolo da Civilização; que Portugal mantém vastos domínios ultramarinos nas cinco partes do orbe, tam vastos e ricos que nos podemos classificar como IMPÉRIO COLONIAL, a ELE o devemos!"

[67] In contrast, on work that paints Portuguese immigrants as "Americanizing" in the mid-century era, see note 24; Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams*, 108-113.

Stacks of previously classified documents in the Salazar "Estado Novo" archive in Lisbon, finally opened to the public in the mid-1990s, make clear the vast institutional resources Portugal mustered in its campaign for emigrant nationalism. For instance, the Portuguese state seems to have funneled some 200,000 dollars into the "Portuguese Radio Club" in 1935 to build broadcast towers in Asia, Mozambique, Brazil, and North America to disseminate, as Portugal's head of propaganda put it, "political propaganda" through this "uncommon and patriotic initiative."[68] Through its "Casa de Portugal" in New York City, the Portuguese state worked to covertly inject state propaganda into the Portuguese newspaper *Diário de Notícias* of New Bedford.[69] By October 1947, the Portuguese government had also created an "Emigrant Board" that peppered migrants with both practical advice and political propaganda.[70] One 1954 pamphlet, for instance, began with the declaration that "WE, THE EMIGRANTS, have aspired, for quite a long time, for a BOOK that made us feel the HOMELAND with us... to comfort us with the imperishable certainty that – *in any part of the world* – [the fatherland] sees us and loves us as children."[71]

The Portuguese state also found a personal contact in the New Bedford community through journalist João Rocha. After Rocha was fired from the *Diário de Notícias* for, in his own

[68] Letter, Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional to Presidente do Concelho, May 21, 1935, cx. 662, pt.1, PC-12E, Document 1, UI 6, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/6/1, *AOS-ANTT.*

[69] Silva Dias, Secretariat da Propaganda Nacional to Secretario de Sua Excelencia o Presidente do Conselho, Feb. 28, 1941, cx. 662, PC-12E, File/ pt. 4, UI 6, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/6/4, *AOS-ANTT.* Original Text: "Trate-se, em resumo, de um jornal cujas possibilidades de propaganda convem aproveita – e têm sido aproveitadas – em virtude da sua grande expansão, mas com o qual se não pode contar em absolute."

[70] Victor Pereira Da Rosa and Salvato Trigo, *Azorean Emigration: A Preliminary Overview*, trans. Margaret Butler (Porto, Portugal: Fernando Pessoa University Press, 1994), 33.

[71] See *Nós, Os Emigrantes* (Lisboa: Junta da Emigração, 1954), 5, S.C. 16897, *BNPL; Canadá: Intruções Para Uso dos Emigrantes,* (Junta da Emigração, 1955), S.C. 16858, *BNPL*; *Guia Prático para uso dos Trabalhadores Portugueses que se Destinam à República Federal da Alemanha,* (Junta da Emigração, 1969), S.C. 23641, *BNPL*; *Instruções para uso dos Portugueses que se destinam a França,* (Junta da Emigração, 1961), S.C. 20768, *BNPL*.

words, "the links I maintained with the consulate…tackling the onerous task of defending the [Portuguese] political station against a well-organized minority," he bought out the newsweekly *O Independente*, "The Independent," in 1932 in an attempt to (somewhat ironically) turn it into a mouthpiece for pro-Portuguese propaganda.[72] Although it is not clear what "links" exactly bound Rocha to the Portuguese state apparatus, he was clearly a personal contact of the propaganda secretariat, and he certainly felt comfortable appealing to the state (and Salazar personally) in hopes of receiving 7,500 dollars to distribute a pro-Portuguese English-language pamphlet in 1939.[73] After a member of the Portuguese embassy, Laurinda Andrade, successfully lobbied the City of New Bedford to begin teaching Portuguese in the local high school, Rocha would also help her co-found "The Portuguese Educational Society of New Bedford, Massachusetts" in 1944 to "promote the learning and teaching of the Portuguese language" by giving out college scholarships to students who chose to learn Portuguese in high school.[74] Through everything from ordinary subsidies to elaborate fetes, the Portuguese state apparatus continued to work in the background to keep Portuguese identity and national pride alive amongst its emigrants in Massachusetts.

António Ferro even came up with a broader so-called "Campaign of 'Lusitanidade' in all of America" that entailed "guiding through a distance…the Portuguese press in Brazil and all of

[72] João Rocha to António Ferro [Confidencial], Feb. 18, 1939, cx. 661, PC-12D, File/pt. 12, UI 5, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/5/12, *AOS-ANTT*.

[73] On request for financial assistance, see João Rocha to António Ferro, Feb. 18, 1939, cx. 661, PC-12D, File/pt. 12, UI 5, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/5/12, *AOS-ANTT* . Rocha also corresponded personally with Salazar, see João Rocha to Senhor Presidente do Conselho, Feb. 18, 1939, cx. 661, PC-12D, File/pt. 12, UI 5, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/5/12, *AOS-ANTT*; João Rocha to Oliveira Salazar, Feb. 17, 1959, PC-1D, cx. 572, pt. 35, UI 5, Series 21, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/21/5/35, *AOS-ANTT*.

[74] Norwood Andrews Jr., ed. *Proceedings of the Vanderbilt Invitational Conference on High School Portuguese,,* Final Report, Project No. 7-0966, Contract No. OEC-1-7-070966-3722, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Jan. 1970, 130, http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED035868.pdf; Laurinda C. Andrade, *The Open Door* (New Bedford: Reynolds-Dewalt, 1968), 215.

Portuguese media throughout the New World," subsidizing local libraries to include more Portuguese books, setting up Portuguese primary schools across the United States, and putting on Portuguese music concerts to help "[keep] alive within these emigrants the pride of their origins and elucidating them on the progress of Portugal these past years."[75] Ferro also sought a larger media offensive, including the creation of "a Portuguese weekly covertly linked to the SPN [Portugal's National Propaganda Secretariat]" as well as the creation of a Los Angeles consulate with the sole purpose of infiltrating Hollywood to foment the production of more pro-Portuguese cinema.[76] Although the Portuguese state's plan to secretly inject itself into the American movie industry likely fizzled out, Portugal's more immediate goals in New Bedford certainly bore fruit. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the Portuguese-American Club and the "Casa de Portugal"—the state's propaganda arm operating out of New York City—would throw lavish "Portugal Day" celebrations. Both also continued to print propaganda advertisements in local newspapers. Some expounded the great progress made in Portugal under Salazar's leadership; others urged Portuguese residents of America to continue to keep their Portuguese identity alive.[77] After the Portuguese state declared "Portugal Day" an official international holiday in 1956, the *Diário de Notícias* (now back under the control of the pro-Salazarist Rocha) took the initiative of launching an annual celebration in New Bedford—"in conformity with the desires expressed by the Portuguese government."[78]

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[75] António Ferro, "Plano duma Campnha De Lusitanidade em Toda a América, em Especial no Brasil," cx. 662, PC-12E, File/ pt. 17, UI 6, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/6/17, *AOS-ANTT*

[76] Ibid.

[77] See Advertisement, "Casa De Portugal," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), Dec. 22, 1948; "A Marinha de Guerra Portuguesa em New York: A Casa de Portugal," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), June 16, 1958.

[78] "Vai Ser um Facto O Dia da Raça Portuguesa nos E.U.: Só por este meio demonstraremos o valor que possuimos na América," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), April 3, 1957.

Indeed, although targeting emigrant communities in the name of establishing Portuguese "prestige" remained a major goal of Portuguese state efforts, American dollars spent on Portuguese products was also increasingly sought. After all, Americans were, as Ferro assured Salazar, basically "kids that always want new toys" and, with their ideology of "joy, artless joy, not immoral but amoral, joy for joy's sake," they could easily be sold on Portuguese culture: "If they [Americans] were intelligently understood in their infantile psychology, their love of flashy news, they could solve our economic problems, becoming the best market for our products." The United States was, he concluded, "a continent of big kids, and to understand it is to dominate it."[79] Portuguese emigrants, it seemed, by projecting Portuguese nationalism within their new national settings, could thus also be used as means to achieve Portugal's economic objectives.

Although these state efforts might seem somewhat comical in their lofty aims and clandestine means, it is worth reiterating that local Portuguese were nevertheless proud of the institutions Portugal helped to create. The organization of Portuguese language programs in the City of New Bedford, Harvard University's long-time professor of Portuguese studies, Francis Rogers, recalled in 1967, had a positive impact of perceptions of Portuguese in the community, especially in the context of the Second World War: "There has been a Portuguese Pan-American Day, a Portuguese Pan-American Festival on the part of the students, and there is a Portuguese Educational Society in New Bedford… Ridiculous as it sounds, this was a strategy for giving

[79] António Ferro, "Plano duma Campnha De Lusitanidade em Toda a América, em Especial no Brasil," cx. 662, PC-12E, File/ pt. 17, UI 6, Series 31, Subsection M, Section D, Code: PT/TT/AOS/D-M/31/6/17, *AOS-ANTT* . Original Text: "…Americanismo pela sua indiscutível alegria, alegria inconsciente, não imoral mas amoral, alegria pela alegria. …Os americanos adoram o pitoresco, o diferente, o que lhes parece original. São crianças que estão sempre a desejar brinquedos novos…."Os Estados Unidos, por exemplo, se fôssem inteligentemente compreendidos na sua psicologia infantil, no seu amor das novidades vistosas, pederiam resolver o nosso problema económico, constituir o melhor débouché para alguns dos nossos produtos... A América é um continente de crianças grandes, e compreendê-lo é dominá-lo."

respectability to Portuguese because Portuguese was the language of Brazil and Brazil was our biggest ally [in the Western Hemisphere, presumably]."[80]

Indeed, even as Portuguese immigrants joined the patriotic fervor surrounding the United States' involvement in the Second World War, they did not bolt into some sort of homogenized Americanism. Wartime pamphlets from the Associação Benificente Aliança (Portuguese Mutual Aid Society) of Fall River, for instance, show how easily Portuguese immigrants could fold Portugal and the United States together as intimate allies in the struggle against Nazism.[81] This was no easy task, considering that Portugal was both fascist and neutral during the conflict; Salazar, terrified of a German invasion of Iberia (which he knew Portugal would be powerless to halt), remained officially uncommitted throughout the war. He even called upon an official "half-day" of mourning following Hitler's suicide to demonstrate Portugal's only "half" commitment to either side.[82] Nevertheless, the establishment of American air bases in the Azores, as well as the fact that Portugal was apparently the victim of the "first act" of Japanese "treason"—a reference to the killing of 48 Portuguese missionaries in Japan in 1639—became points of pride amongst local Azoreans amidst world war.[83] The 1639 "massacre" became something of an "original" Pearl Harbor: "one of the first 'stabbing treasons' of Japan…it horrified all the civilized people of the world some three hundred years ago, just like the brutal killing of the

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[80] Andrews Jr., *Proceedings of the Vanderbilt Invitational Conference on High School Portuguese*, 130.

[81] See, for example, Portuguese Alliance Benevolent Association of Massachusetts, *The Alliance Bulletin, April 1939*, Folder 18, Box 2, MC 50/PAA, Portuguese Alliance Benevolent Association (Associação Benificente Aliança Portuguesa) Records, 1924-2004, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ABAP-FMPAA*]**; Portuguese Alliance Benevolent Association of Massachusetts, *Annual Book of Portuguese American Activities, Year of 1943*, Folder 10, Box 1, MC 50/PAA, *ABAP-FMPAA*.

[82] Ferreira and Marshall, *Portugal's Revolution: Ten Years On*, 7; De Meneses, Salazar, 223.

[83] Portuguese Alliance Benevolent Association of Massachusetts, Annual Book of Portuguese American Activities, Year of 1943, Folder 10, Box 1, MC 50/PAA, *ABAP-FMPAA*.

Doolittle fliers" horrified the world in 1941, one Portuguese-American pamphlet declared.[84] Even with a neutral homeland, Portuguese-American wartime patriotism had a distinctly *Portuguese*-American hue.

Making Migration Free

The importance of the connections between the Portuguese state apparatus and its emigrants abroad became all the more crucial as the doorway to free migration began to slowly re-open in the 1950s and 1960s. For instance, after a series of eruptions in 1957 and 1958 from the Capelinhos Volcano on the western coast of the Azorean island of Faial left nearly 25,000 Azoreans homeless, the relocation of displaced Azoreans to the United States became a major goal for both the Azorean government and the Portuguese of Massachusetts.[85] What they succeeded in achieving—a series of congressional "Azorean Refugee Acts" that ultimately allowed some 5,000 Portuguese to immigrate to America beyond Portugal's quota allocation—owed its existence to the political activism of Portuguese Americans, the Portuguese and Azorean government, and the connections between the two.[86]

Foremost, local Portuguese immigrants and their descendants were crucial actors in lobbying for the Refugee Acts. They took letters received from kin in Faial and submitted them to local newspapers (with sentiments such as "it looks like the end of the world" and "we are

[84] Ibid.; Original Text: "Foi uma das primeiras 'punhaladas tradições' do Japao, e horrizou tanto os povos civilizados do mundo de ha trezentos anos, como o assassinio brutal dos aviadores de Doolittle que cairam nas maos dos japoneses, depois do raide aereo levado a efeito com grande exito o ano passado."

[85] Da Rosa and Trigo, *Azorean Emigration*, 95; Daniel da Silva Costa Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption: Window of Opportunity for Azorean Emigration* (Providence: Gávea-Brown Publications, 2008), 35; Carlos M. Gomes Lobão, "Capelinhons, Fifty Years Later…The Chronology of the Volcano," in *Capelinhos: A Volcano of Synergies: Azorean Emigration to America*, ed. Tony P. Goulart (San Jose, CA: Portuguese Heritage Publications of California, 2008), 48.

[86] Da Rosa and Trigo, *Azorean Emigration: A Preliminary Overview*, 95.

here trusting in God, crying and hungry") in order to drum up awareness of the crisis.[87] Portuguese groups in both California and Massachusetts also ran fundraising drives to help those affected.[88] And, perhaps most importantly, groups like the Portuguese-American Civic League, the União Portuguesa Benificente, the Portuguese-American Democrats of Rhode Island, and the Clube Social Português sent droves of letters into local congressional offices, pushing for a temporary suspension of American immigration law in order to ameliorate the crisis.[89] Particularly targeted were representatives such as Joseph Martin—re-elected to Congress on a wave of Portuguese support based on his past struggles to raise the Portuguese immigration quota—and the recently elected Senator John F. Kennedy, who had also received tremendous support from the Portuguese community.[90] Indeed, as Martin Camacho of the "Portuguese-American Committee for the Election of John F. Kennedy" put it during Kennedy's first senatorial run, unlike his opponent, "Kennedy has ardently and vigorously fought…the iniquitous law of McCarran Immigration" and the "ridiculous" Portuguese immigration quota of

[87] *Providence Journal,* May 28, 1958, quoted in Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption*, 49–50.

[88] Indeed, West Coast groups raised some 56,700 dollars. See Ibid., 67; "Fayal Aid Drive Raises $1,500," *The Standard-Times* (New Bedford), 1958, clipping, reproduced in Álamo de Oliveira, "Emotional Ties and Humanitarian Support by the Azorean Communities," in *Capelinhos,* ed. Goulart, 103.

[89] Ibid., 47–50.

[90] Advertisement, "Nós Luso-Americanos Precisamos de Joe Martin," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), Nov. 1, 1956; "Um grupo de Portugueses de Fall River apoia O Congressista Martin," *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), Nov. 1, 1956; Robert Dallek, *An Unfinished Life: John F. Kennedy, 1917-1963* (Little, Brown, 2003), chap. 5. Although election results divided by ethnicity do not exist, anecdotal evidence certainly suggests that Martin and Kennedy enjoyed wide Portuguese support. Indeed, whereas Kennedy barely won the state of Massachusetts—gaining only a 51.35 percent plurality—he received nearly double the votes of his opponent in the city of Fall River, and about 2.4 votes per every vote his opponent received in New Bedford. See Edward Cronin, *Election Statistics: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1952* (1952), 353.

438.[91] Local Portuguese thus leaned heavily on their political representatives in their struggles to alter the political apparatus of American immigration.

Officials in the Portuguese government also worked in the background to alleviate the Azorean crisis, depending heavily on the organized might and unity of Portuguese-American communities. Officially, of course, Salazar's stance was in favor of relocating displaced Azoreans to Africa, not to the United States, whose government, Salazar had always (somewhat accurately) feared, had annexationist intentions with the Azores.[92] Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the eruption, Freitas Pimental, the Governor of Horta (the island to which Faialense refugees were removed) began encouraging Portuguese groups in America to work for immigration reform in addition to his own direct lobbying of American lawmakers.[93]

In fact, Pimental was able to use Portugal's own logic of emigrant community building to legitimize American relocation. When confronted by a critic who claimed that Faialense relocated to America would be "irremediably lost to Portugal," the Governor fired back that this "fresh crop of Azoreans" would instead insure the Portuguese community of America did not "[disappear] within one or two generations…[bringing] it new blood, which will guarantee its

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[91] "Carta Aberta aos Eleitores Luso-Americanos de Mass. Para Que Eleijam John F. Kennedy Senador," Advertisement, *Diário de Notícias* (New Bedford), Oct. 29, 1952.

[92] During the First World War—as the United States first set up air bases on the islands—many Azoreans and New Englanders had begun to call for official annexation. As a result, during the Second World War, Salazar originally allowed only British airmen access to the islands. After Florida Senator Claude Pepper called for the occupation of Cape Verde and the Azores during a May 6, 1941 speech on the senate floor, Salazar quickly demanded that Franklin Roosevelt forswear the tactic. Having received Roosevelt's personal word, Salazar went on to publish an official note in the newspapers reassuring his citizens that there was no need for alarm. American news outlets nevertheless continued to call for the United States to simply take the islands with or without Portugal's permission. Roosevelt himself even hinted, during one of his celebrated "fireside chats," that the United States may have to seize the Azores if there was any threat of German takeover. Even when Salazar finally did allow the United States access to the Azores, servicemen were required to wear both U.S. and British insignias. See De Meneses, *Salazar*, 265; Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, 162, 168-170; Leo Pap, *The Portuguese-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), 49.

[93] Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption*, 47.

survival for a century."[94] Similarly, to reward those American Portuguese who had raised money for Capelinhos victims and lobbied for the Refugee Acts, the Portuguese state invited them for an official trip to Faial and Lisbon in August of 1958 in order to meet with top-ranking officials and even Salazar himself.[95] As always, the goal was to unite the Portuguese-American community and infuse their activities with a healthy dose of Portuguese nationalism. As one consular official put it, the trip would be "another step in the direction of what can be our only policy toward the colony: to create among its leaders the unity, whose lack has been the major obstacle to the fair social improvement of our community."[96] For Pimental, the trip "would show the world how strong and lasting were the bonds that unite the hearts of all Portuguese…[bringing] together the Portuguese on both sides of the Atlantic."[97] The Portuguese Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs even considered giving Kennedy a formal Portuguese decoration until he was reminded by another official that Kennedy had revealed himself too "uncomprehending and hostile" towards Portugal's imperial policies.[98] The Portuguese state continued to encourage, manipulate, and selectively diminish the connection between Azorean and Azorean-Americans to suit its own purposes.

Nevertheless, these connections ultimately helped make Portuguese free migration a reality. In supporting the Azorean Refugee legislation, for instance, Congressman John Fogarty

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[94] *O Telégrafo*, Oct. 25, 1958, cited in Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption*, 90.

[95] Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption*, 69-70.

[96] Official Letter no. 67 from the Consulate of Portugal, San Francisco to the Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Maço 232, Armário 59, Arquivo Histórico do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Repartição dos Negócios Políticos, Arquivo Nacional Torre Do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal, quoted in Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption*, 69.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Telegram no. 159 from the Embassy of Portugal in Washington, Maço 232, Armário 59, Arquivo Histórico do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Repartição dos Negócios Políticos, Arquivo Nacional Torre Do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal, quoted in Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption*, 71-72.

of Rhode Island assured congress that he was "certain that the good Americans of Portuguese descent…will provide refuge for their relatives and friends and greet them with open arms"; Congressman Aime Forand also assured congress that his constituents "are ready and anxious to provide all necessary assurance that none of those who benefit from this legislation would ever become public charges"; Senator Kennedy too was confident "that the people of Portuguese descent now in the United States will welcome them."[99] Importantly, after so many years of migratory stagnation, many of the Portuguese-American families who sponsored these immigrants were not even related; some were not even born in Portugal.[100] Rather than a story of direct family connections, the Azorean Refugee Acts thus actually emerged from the organized strength—and trans-Atlantic social connections—of the American Portuguese community. And, following the passage of the Hart-Cellar Act in 1965, these social connections, as well as this enduring sense of Portuguese identity and heritage in these communities, were integral to making free migration a political reality in the 1960s and 1970s.[101]

In a well-timed publicity event coinciding with renewed debate over America's immigration quotas, a delegation of New England Portuguese visited the White House in May of 1963 to present President John F. Kennedy with a commemorative plaque in gratitude for his efforts in the passage of the Azorean Refugee Acts.[102] By that July, Kennedy was publically

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[99] Report No. 2558, "For the Relief of Certain Distressed Aliens," 85th cong., 2nd sess., House of Representatives, reproduced in Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption*, 147-157

[100] Manuel Fernando Neto, for instance, whose family came to America in 1960 when he was 15, was sponsored by American-born Ana Morais. See Maria da Gloria Mulcahy, "The Immigrants Assistance Center," *Portuguese Spinner: An American Story: Stories of History, Culture, and Life from Portuguese Americans in Southeastern New England*, eds. Marsha McCabe et al. (New Bedford: Spinner Publications, 1998), 104.

[101] Louise Lamphere, Filomena M. Silva, and John P. Sousa, "Kin Networks and Family Strategies: Working Class Portuguese Families in New England," in *The Versatility of Kinship: Essays Presented to Harry W. Basehart*, eds. Linda S. Cordell and Stephen Beckerman (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 226–227, 242–243..

[102] Goulart, ed., *Capelinhos*, 112-113; Edward M. Kennedy, "The Immigration Act of 1965," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 367 (September 1, 1966): 137–49.

calling upon Congress to abolish the national quotas in favor of an immigration regime that would privilege economic skills and "the family relationship between immigrants and persons already here" in allocating immigration quotas, and thus end the severe restrictions placed upon "immigration from southern and eastern Europe and from other parts of the world."[103] Salazar confidante João Rocha also worked in the background, lobbying for the immigration overhaul: as a reward, he was invited to the eventual signing of the 1965 immigration reform bill, co-sponsored by Kennedy's brother, Massachusetts senator Edward Kennedy.[104] Rocha even received one of the signing pens as a gift from the President.[105] Following the 1965 reform, Portuguese migrants would again get the chance to immigrate to Massachusetts in large numbers.

Figure 6.4: The Azorean Governor of Horta meets with Faialense migrants and Portuguese supporters of the Azorean Refugee Acts in Providence, Rhode Island, 1960.[106]

[103] John F. Kennedy, "Letter to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House on Revision of the Immigration Laws," July 23, 1963, digitized by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=9355.

[104] Lawrence F. O'Brien [Special Assistant to the President] to João Rocha, Oct. 2, 1965, Folder 5, Box 1, MC 100/PAA, João Rocha Papers, Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese-American Archives, Archives and Special Collections, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *JRP-FMPAA*]**; Ted Kennedy to João Rocha, Jan 24, 1969, Folder 5, Box 1, MC 100/PAA, *JRP-FMPAA*.

[105] Framed pen that signed H.R. 2580 An Act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, 1965, Box 2, MC 100/PAA, *JRP-FMPAA.*

[106] Goulart, *Capelinhos*, 107.

Figure 6.5: A delegation of New England Portuguese groups present President John F. Kennedy with a commemorative plaque in recognition of his work on behalf of Azorean immigrants, 1963.[107]

This was not the end to which the Portuguese state had originally aspired when it began its project of emigrant community-building. Nonetheless, the ways in which Portugal worked to strengthen emigrant pride and cohesion in the mid-century era gave Portuguese Americans the sense they had a powerful ally in Lisbon. Rather than "Americanizing" in an era of migratory stagnation, these Portuguese-Americans instead cited their equal status as "apostles of civilization" as part of a grand Portuguese global empire in their struggles for respectability. Thus, like Italian-Americans—whose mother country also embarked on a vast, fascist-inspired program of emigrant community-building—America's Portuguese remained committed to their Portuguese identity and their brethren back home.[108] Continued traditions of feasting, religious parades, Portuguese language classes, and ethnic media and newspapers—some of which were directly supported by the Portuguese state—functioned as a sort of life support for Portuguese

[107] Ibid., 113.

[108] Mark I. Choate, *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

nationalism in an era of immigration restriction.[109] As a result, again mirroring their Italian-American peers, the Portuguese were one of the few European immigrants with significant bursts of immigration to the United States both before and after the reign of America's quota regime, as some 175,000 Portuguese came to make their way to America's shores in the 1960s and 1970s.[110] Although a new legal framework may have made this migration possible, Portuguese social connections helped make it a reality.

Conclusion

For those schooled in the inherited tales of the de-industrialization of Massachusetts, the burst of Portuguese immigration to cities like New Bedford and Fall River in the 1960s appeared a perplexing turn of events. After all, why were so many immigrants suddenly flooding an area amidst wrenching industrial decline? As early Portuguese-American scholar Estellie Smith put it in 1975, having endured some "50 years of decline" with an end "not yet in sight," the Portuguese "had worn out their welcome and not only didn't know enough to leave but were inviting others to come and stay."[111] For many, such as Smith herself, the answer became a sort of clinging ideological incapacity for self-improvement paired with the stubborn inertia of chain migration: "Other immigrant groups came to New England, worked at jobs of drudgery for a time, and then…remove[d] themselves from the ranks of the disadvantaged immigrant. The Portuguese remained in menial positions, paying little attention to labor agitators and social

[109] Stephen L. Cabral, *Tradition and Transformation: Portuguese Feasting in New Bedford* (New York: AMS Press, 1989).

[110] Compiled with information from: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Washington, DC, August 2010), 6-9.

[111] M. Estellie Smith, "A Tale of Two Cities: The Reality of Historical Differences," *Urban Anthropology* 4, no. 1 (April 1, 1975): 70.

reformers alike…willing to work extremely long hours at dangerous work for starvation wages, often with a good-natured smile…They were, sociologically, the niggers of New England."[112] Smith was just one of many scholars who, even into the 1980s, relying upon often gross generalizations concerning the immutable "character" of the Portuguese people, offered sometimes bizarre justifications for their apparently apolitical status in a place and time of economic collapse.[113] Yet Portuguese immigrants were neither uniformly politically acquiescent, rapidly Americanizing, nor settling in de-industrial ghost towns. In fact, they were putting down stakes in fast reconstructing mixed manufacturing economies.

Much had to change, however, to make these late-century Portuguese migrations possible. Whereas Massachusetts in the 1920s was a highly protected economy—walled in by significant barriers to both migration and trade—fifty years later, things could not have been any more different. Free migration, at least from the perspective of Portugal, reigned essentially supreme.[114] But, if the story of the legal passage of America's restrictive immigration apparatus in the 1920s was driven in part by American manufacturers' declining interest in continuing the fight for free migration; the story of its collapse could not be any different.[115] The Portuguese of Massachusetts were key constituents in making "free migration" a reality in the 1960s. Their

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[112] M. Estellie Smith, "Portuguese Enclaves: The Invisible Minority," *Social and Cultural Identity: Problems of Persistence and Change*, ed. Thomas Fitzgerald (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1974), 86.

[113] Anthropologist Sandra Wolforth, for instance, also argued that the Portuguese "quietly assimilated into the American mainstream, rarely if ever demonstrating or forcing themselves into conspicuous stances either as individuals or as a group," though she conceded that "Estellie Smith probably overstates her point when she claims that the Portuguese were 'the niggers of New England" (Wolforth nonetheless confessed that Cape Verdean Portuguese "were among them the *most* 'nigger'"). See Sandra Wolforth, *The Portuguese in America* (San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, 1978), 2, 46.

[114] Vernon M. Briggs Jr., "Mass Immigration, Free Trade and the Forgotten American Worker," *In Defense of the Alien* 17 (January 1, 1994): 20–32.

[115] Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues : The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 218-219.

abiding sense of Portuguese identity—carefully nurtured and sometimes manipulated by the Portuguese state—insured the continuation of an intimate trans-Atlantic community of Portuguese migrants ready to capitalize on the new migratory regime that arose following the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act. Moreover, as we will see, through their involvement in their local unions, the Portuguese of Massachusetts also helped fight to make free trade a reality in the postwar era—with equally unexpected results. Just as free migration helped make the reconstruction of the Massachusetts economy in the postwar era possible, so did free trade help undermine it once more.

Chapter 7

Towards Free Trade: Globalization from the Ground Up

It might seem only natural that, by the mid-1960s, expanding Massachusetts garment firms—flush with migrant labor from the Azorean islands—would be peddling their goods abroad in a frantically expanding global economy. It may even seem only natural that they would soon be relocating their factories abroad in search of even cheaper labor and friendlier governments. But much had to change to make this possible. Whereas Massachusetts in the 1920s was a highly protected economy, walled in by significant barriers to both migration and trade, fifty years later, things could not have been any more different.[1]

Indeed, the ascendance of free trade would come to fundamentally upend the Massachusetts economy. After all, garment and electronics producers could only transfer production to Southeast Asia or Latin America if the pathway for commodity transfer into the world's most powerful consumer economy was sufficiently unobstructed. This chapter thus seeks to understand that critical transition: to excavate the roots of the political economy of free trade. To do so, however, it looks to the changing politics of Massachusetts workers and their unions.

A focus on workers as central catalysts in free trade ascendance may seem an odd choice. After all, as the well-known story goes, it was American unions' stalwart commitments to economic nationalism, union insularity, and Cold War paranoia that rendered them increasingly archaic and unpopular over the course of the twentieth century.[2] All the while, it was American

[1] Vernon M. Briggs Jr., "Mass Immigration, Free Trade and the Forgotten American Worker," *In Defense of the Alien* 17 (January 1, 1994): 20–32.

[2] Economic nationalism is, for instance, central to Andrew Wender Cohen's narrative of the ideological development of the American working class. Although other historians, such as Nelson Lichtenstein and Aviva Chomsky have recognized the support free trade enjoyed amongst workers in the postwar era, they nevertheless argue workers pursued such policies merely in the name of expanding the United States' global hegemony, seeking

business owners, the story goes, alongside their well-funded right-wing intellectual lackeys, who spent much of the postwar era working in the background to revive a "laissez-faire" free-trade ideology many thought moribund in the wake of the economic crises of the 1930s.[3] In the hothouse environment of late-century capitalism, the isolationist American trade union establishment was ill-equipped to face the sudden globalization of the world economy.

From the perspective of mid-century Massachusetts, however, this narrative must be flipped on its head. Indeed, while manufacturers scrambled to secure higher tariffs and stronger trade barriers, free migration and free trade, at least until the 1960s, emerged as a distinctly *working-class* project. The story of mid-century working-class politics is thus not one of union insularity and provincialism, but rather a story of how organized labor abandoned its erstwhile isolationism and embraced free trade and global development as the linchpins of a new world order of peace and prosperity. Workers were not "shocked" by the global; they were critical

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cheaper prices and market penetration abroad. Chomsky has even gone as far to argue that American unions simply sought the opportunity to "[join] management's drive for 'high productivity and imperial expansion' as a way to sustain profits." Timothy Minchin similarly sees trade union support for free trade in the postwar era as a product of the fact that "most American industries were booming, and labor leaders were not worried about imports." See Andrew Wender Cohen, "Unions Modernity, and the Decline of American Economic Nationalism," in *The Right and Labor in America: Politics, Ideology, and Imagination*, ed. Nelson Lichtenstein and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 16; Aviva Chomsky, *Linked Labor Histories: New England, Colombia, and the Making of a Global Working Class* (Duke University Press Books, 2008), 133; Nelson Lichtenstein, *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* (Princeton University Press, 2013), 236–237; Timothy J. Minchin, *Empty Mills: The Fight Against Imports and the Decline of the U.S. Textile Industry* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013), 48.

[3] David Harvey, "Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 610 (March 1, 2007): 22–44; David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2009); Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion : Reinventing Free Markets Since the Depression* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Malcolm Fairbrother, "Economists, Capitalists, and the Making of Globalization: North American Free Trade in Comparative-Historical Perspective," *American Journal of Sociology* 119, no. 5 (March 1, 2014): 1324–79.

agents in the very processes of making free trade a central, humanitarian concern of the American people.[4]

Making a Global New Deal

Although the sudden burst of activism in the name of labor internationalism that followed the Second World War was not entirely novel, its focus on creating a more equitable and prosperous global capitalist system arguably was.[5] Nineteenth-century antecedents, such as the 1864 International Workingmen's Association (more commonly known as simply the "First International") were not only oriented more towards abstract notions of international proletarianism, they were also of an explicitly anti-capitalist hue.[6] Often Marxist-inspired, organizations such as the "First International" or the anarcho-syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World would have found the idea of humanizing the global capitalist order incoherent at best, and simply counter-revolutionary at worst.[7]

In contrast, postwar labor internationalism sought to gain a voice for labor from within the global capitalist system. For instance, when the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) first called upon the American Federation of Labor (AFL) to convene a body of international trade unions in 1947, its explicit aim was to create a trade union body to coordinate

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[4] See, for instance, Niall Ferguson et al., eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

[5] As historian Lizabeth Cohen has shown, one of the innovative ideological features of the mid-century American union movement was the transition from socialist or anti-capitalist politics towards a more social-democratic ethos of "moral capitalism": a faith that a strong union movement and welfare state could temper the inequities of industrial capitalism. See Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 252-253.

[6] Marcel Van Der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labor History* (Brill Academic Pub., 2008), 269.

[7] Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (University of Illinois Press, 2000).

labor's role in the reconstruction of the postwar global economy.[8] Similarly, when Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA), was put in charge of drafting a report on how the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) could create a "single, powerful and effective world trade union federation," the organization that resulted, the World Federation of Trade Unions, was intended to essentially humanize the dynamics of global capitalism.[9] Its objective was, as Hillman explained to a French reporter in 1945, to "[assist] in the organization of the workers in economically backward countries" in order to "increase their purchasing power and living standards…hoping in this way to increase world trade, create more employment and generally to promote world prosperity."[10] Although Hillman would not live to see how his dreams of labor internationalism would play out—cut down by a series of heart attacks in July of 1946—he was one of labor internationalism's most well-regarded early advocates precisely because he dreamed not of a global anti-capitalist proletarian front, but of the creation of a truly "global version of the New Deal."[11]

Cold War political objectives also helped legitimize labor internationalism in the postwar era. Communist containment, for instance, was central to the founding goals of perhaps the most

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[8] David Dubinsky, "Rift and Realignment in World Labor," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1, 1949, 243, Folder 6, Box 24, Coll. No. 5780 PUBS, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Publications, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York **[hereafter *ILGWU-PUB-KCA*]**.

[9] *Report of the CIO Delegates to the World Trade Union Conference* (London: Feb. 1945), 14, Folder 3, Box 213, Coll. No. 5619, Amalgamated Clothing Workers Of America Records, 1914-1980, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York [**hereafter *ACWA-KCA*]**; Steve Fraser, *Labor Will Rule: Sidney Hillman and the Rise of American Labor* (Cornell University Press, 1993), 545–547.

[10] Report: Answers by Mr. Sidney Hillman of CIO to Questions of Mr. Jean Robert of La Tribune Economique, Paris 1945, Folder 3, Box 213, *ACWA-KCA*.

[11] Iron and Steel Trades Confederation to David Dubinsky, Jan 19, 1949, Folder 2A, Box 173, Coll. No. 5780/002, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union: David Dubinsky, President's Records, 1932-1966, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York **[hereafter *ILGWU-DD-KCA*]**; Anthony Carew, "A False Dawn: The World Federation of Trade Unions (1945-1949)," in *The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions*, ed. Marcel Van Der Linden (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 169.

important international union of the era: The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which, at its 1949 founding, brought together some 48 million workers representing 51 different countries from around the world, including all the major American unions.[12] Indeed, when the AFL's Committee on International Relations justified joining the international union, it reminded unionists that "these are days of tension and travail. A powerful dictatorial government with a world-wide network of [fifth] columnists and dupes, is working tirelessly to pit people against people, race against race…to plunge mankind into another devastating conflagration."[13] For David Dubinsky, head of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, such concerns were clearly paramount.[14] In his exultant article for *Foreign Affairs* celebrating the formation of the ICFTU—"World Labor's New Weapon," he called it—Dubinsky trumpeted that "50,000,000 workers in more than 50 countries have now branded Bolshevism the arch-enemy of labor," and, in offering a new pathway to global prosperity, the international free trade union movement "may well turn out to be the blow that destroys the pretense under which Bolshevism has for several decades made most of its gains."[15] By offering the workers of the world an alternative to the "red menace," the international union movement was central to labor's struggle for the hearts and minds of the workers of the world.

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[12] Free World Labour Conference and International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *Official Report of the Free World Labour Conference and the First Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, London, November-December, 1949* (London: British Trade Union Congress, 1950).

[13] "Report of International Labor Relations Committee on our Program of Action," Sept. 24, 1951, Folder 5104, International Confederation of Free Trade Union Archives, 1949-1993, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Netherlands **[hereafter *ICFTU-IISH*]**.

[14] Robert D. Parmet, *The Master of Seventh Avenue: David Dubinsky and the American Labor Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 234.

[15] David Dubinsky, "World Labor's New Weapon," *Foreign Affairs* 28, (Apr. 1950), 462, Folder 25, Box 27, Coll. No. 5780 PUBS, *ILGWU-PUB-KCA*.

Yet Cold War imperatives did not necessarily deaden the political aspirations of these labor leaders.[16] Indeed, in the labor movement, as in other arenas, Cold War flavored arguments could make for very radical politics, pushing union leaders to embrace a broad range of internationalist projects.[17] After all, as Jacob Potofsky, president of the ACWA—the most powerful men's garment workers' union operating in Southeastern Massachusetts at the time—told the 1951 ICFTU Milan Convention, "improving the standard of living" of workers abroad would be "the only sure weapon for fighting off communist and fascist aggression."[18] Following this same line of thought, the AFL Executive Council decided in early 1952 that, precisely because the Soviet Union would seek out "underdeveloped" nations for Communist fodder, workers in Africa and Asia must become "equal partners in the struggle for freedom, peace, and social economic improvement," dedicating the AFL to anti-colonial causes and "economic aid to underdeveloped areas."[19] Sol Stetin, vice president of the industrial Textile Workers Union of

[16] The ways in which Cold War politics could inspire radical politics is a major theme in recent Civil Rights literature. For instance, see Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 2002).

[17] See Casey Bohlen, "'To Arouse the Dozing Conscience of the Nation,': Postwar Religious Thought and the Origins of Mass Civil Disobedience", presented at the Annual Society for U.S. Intellectual History Conference, Washington, DC, October, 2015; Jennifer A. Delton, *Rethinking the 1950s: How Anticommunism and the Cold War Made America Liberal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013). On Cold War context and international development, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 110–111.

[18] Memo, Richard Rohmen to Jacob Potofsky, June 14, 1951, "Notes for Milan Speech," Folder 2, Box 174, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*; "ICFTU is Best Hope for Peace, Democracy, Security, Says Potofsky," *CIO News*, July 16, 1951, Folder 3, Box 238, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*. On ACWA organization of New Bedford, see Union Contract, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and Massachusetts Shirt Manufacturing Corp., Nov. 13, 1945, Folder 19, Box 3, Series 2, MS 193, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, New England Joint Board, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ACWA-NE-UMASS*]**; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and C & D Sportswear, Jan. 12, 1946, Folder 25, Box 4, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASS*; Union Contract, ACWA 377 (New Bedford, MA) and Youth-Craft Clothing Company, July 31, 1941, Folder 88, Box 7, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASS*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Dunmar Mfg. Co., July 24, 1941, Folder 34, Box 4, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASS*; Union Contract, ACWA 177 (Fall River, MA) and Freedman + Soloff, April 10, 1946, Folder 111, Box 9, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASS*.

[19] "The Crisis in Asia and Africa…Resolution by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, Adopted Feb. 2, 1952, Miami Beach, Fla.," Folder 5104, *ICFTU-IISH*. On AFL, CIO, and AFL-CIO support for

America (TWUA), which now represented ten of New Bedford's eleven remaining textile mills, recalled his experience at an ICFTU convention in Milan in 1951 as nothing less than a political awakening.[20] It was, he told the 1951 CIO convention, "one of the most stirring experiences of my life…What the CIO has done for America, the ICFTU is preparing itself to do for the entire world," adding that "I say that if we truly believe in a democratic destiny, we might well consider the idea of taking some of the billions of dollars now being spent for armaments and set up a team of 300 organizers, putting them at the disposal of the ICFTU to work in the depressed and disheartened and confused areas of the world."[21] The Cold War itself thus incubated an entirely new set of labor internationalist objectives that became central to the ICFTU mission.

Seeking a sort of utopia of mutually-reinforcing international development, global unionism, and world peace, the ICFTU made trade liberalization one of its most immediate goals. Its first "Manifesto" in 1949 offered both an affirmation of "the duty" of "industrially advanced nations" to "[help] forward those great areas of the world…which have not been materially affected by the industrial revolution," while also condemning "the narrow nationalism which leads to the protection of national markets by high tariff walls and other trade restrictions."[22] American unions not only followed this free trade line, they also worked in partnership with President Truman's "Point Four" program for international development and

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international development, also see American Federation of Labor, Press Release, May 3, 1955, Folder 5104, *ICFTU-IISH*; Proceedings, Second Constitutional Convention of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, Dec. 11, 1957, 38, Folder 5016, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Labor Reshapes Foreign Policies," *New York Times*, Dec. 9, 1957, clipping, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; "AFL-CIO Votes Foreign Aid Fund," *New York Times,* Dec. 10, 1957, clipping, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[20] Pamphlet, New Bedford Joint Board, Silver Anniversary, Feb. 8, 1964, Folder 3, Box 1, Series 1, MS 134, Textile Workers Union of America, New Bedford Joint Board Records, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts [**hereafter *TWUA-NB-UMASSA*]**.

[21] Address by Sol Stetin, CIO Convention, Nov. 8, 1951, included in Sol Stetin to Francis K Eady, Nov. 20, 1951, Folder 5105, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[22] *Official Report of the Free World Labour Conference...November-December, 1949*, 243.

supported the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), began in 1947.[23] Free trade, after all, had long been a key goal amongst the most progressive leaders of the New Deal coalition. The famed "Atlantic Charter" of August 1941, for instance, drawn up by Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt to spell out their joint vision for the postwar world, called for free trade and state welfare provision as constitutive parts of their plan to secure "freedom from fear and want" for "all the men in all the lands."[24] Global investment and trade liberalization were similarly key features of Vice President Henry Wallace's vision of the "Century of the Common Man."[25]

Even when faced with mounting import competition in the 1950s, American unionists continued to hold the free trade line. When the AFL-CIO's director of research submitted a report on foreign trade to the federal congress in 1957, for example, he continued to argue for freer trade in the strongest possible terms. Even the restriction of trade from nations with low labor standards would be self-defeating, he argued, as it would only further retard their development and exacerbate the gap between industrial and industrializing nations.[26] Moreover, putting forth arguments that would have been downright blasphemous for an American labor

[23] Jacob Potofsky of the ACWA was, in fact, a member of Nelson Rockefeller's "International Development Advisory Board," making recommendations on how to put President Truman's Point Four directive into action. See "Partners in Progress: The Report of the International Development Advisory Board… A Sampling of Press and Radio Reaction," March 1951, Folder 1, Box 53, Coll. No. 5619/003, *ACWA-KCA*; Elissa Alben, "GATT and the Fair Wage: A Historical Perspective on the Labor-Trade Link," *Columbia Law Review* 101, no. 6 (October 1, 2001): 1410–47.

[24] Historian Elizabeth Borgwardt has, for instance, argued that the immediate postwar era was unique for the "cosmopolitan sensibilities" it engendered amongst Americans, "growing out of widespread wartime service and vastly increased mobility on the homefront," as well as the shared, worldwide experiences of the Great Depression. See Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 4, 7.

[25] Fraser, *Labor Will Rule*, 542.

[26] Statement by Stanley H. Ruttenberg, AFL-CIO Director of Research, Submitted to the Subcommittee on Foreign Trade Policy of the House Ways and Means Committee, Sept. 4, 1957, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*.

leader to express fifteen years later, he declared it better to continue to liberalize trade with a better social safety net for affected American workers than erect trade barriers: "We should not be forced to keep out foreign goods simply to permit American industries, long past the peak of their efficiency, to stay in business."[27] Although never quite so extreme, leading textile unionist and future professor of labor economics at the University of Massachusetts Solomon Barkin pushed for a similar policy of free trade paired with re-training programs for displaced workers.[28]

Yet harmonious free trade expansion, these workers argued, also required strong international unionism as ballast. This was certainly the rallying cry of one of labor internationalism's most stubborn defenders: Walter Reuther of the United Automobile Workers (UAW). While acknowledging that "a very large segment of the American [labor] movement" had historically maintained "a narrow, protectionist point of view," during a 1961 speech to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Reuther triumphantly acclaimed the fact that the modern union establishment had "succeeded in overcoming that backward concept," winning "over almost the entire American [labor] movement to the concept of free trade and reciprocal trade agreements."[29] But Reuther also made clear that prosperous free-trade economic expansion would require labor internationalism to succeed. Indeed, the challenge, Reuther reminded the IMF, was to not "be [victimized] by an economic rat-race, in which international capital makes one group of workers compete with the other…on the basis of who can live on the lowest

[27] Ibid.

[28] International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Committee on Fair Labour Standards in International Trade, Report, 1961, Folder 1387, *ICFTU-IISH*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, "Report of the First Meeting of the Committee on Fair Labour Standards in International Trade," 1961, Folder 1387, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[29] Walter Reuther, "Free trade, or an economic rat-race?," *Free Labour World* (Aug. 1961), Folder 1391, *ICFTU-IISH*.

standard of living."[30] Reuther would thus spend much of the 1950s and 1960s fighting to build a powerful international union, capable of "[reversing] the process…so that the strong can help the weak, so that the high-wage areas can help raise the wages of the low-wage areas."[31] Reuther, like many other labor leaders, ultimately dreamed that free trade—if backed by an aggressive international union movement—could promise real global prosperity and a check on the excesses of capital mobility.

As a result, there remained an edge of calculated self-interest to American unionists' attitudes on foreign development. It is no surprise that many of the unions most active in the international arena were garment and textile unions: those industries that had historically suffered the most from capital mobility, and also had long intellectual traditions of support for more geographically expansive visions of labor activism. Even in Reuther's case, most commentators instinctively understood that his own unwaveringly internationalist position stemmed from his own long-term plan for the auto workers' union to, as one journalist put it, "follow the big motorcar firms abroad, on the ground that international labour solidarity is needed to deal with great international corporations."[32] Similarly, when Jacob Potofsky of the clothing workers' union attempted to shore up support for labor internationalism in the mid-1950s, he appealed to this same sort of enlightened self-interest. The CIO, he wrote, "is developing close ties with the international free trade union movement [the ICFTU]… There are any number of industries where what happens in one country has an effect on workers in that industry in other countries. There are even several industries where that effect is made more

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid; Nelson Lichtenstein, *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 327–345.

[32] "Labour's Cold War," *The Economist*, June 18, 1966, clipping, Folder 5108, *ICFTU-IISH*.

direct by the fact that the same company or an affiliate operates both in the U.S. and abroad."[33] Even as early as the 1940s, the AFL's original committee on "Participation in a World Trade Federation" reported that "our common experience in trade unionism has taught us that where there are unorganized shops alongside of union shops in any area the union standards are under constant threat. This holds true on a world-wide scale."[34] These trade unionists understood, with surprising prescience, the threat international capital mobility might pose to America's economic future. Labor internationalism emerged as their preferred weapon of choice.

Yet capital mobility was, by itself, not necessarily viewed with contempt by union leaders. In fact, their commitments to international development often entailed outright support for increased foreign investment. Indeed, in yet another moment that would have likely seemed trade-union blasphemy only fifteen years later, hard-nosed AFL-CIO President George Meany called in 1957 for increased foreign investment by American business, as well as "a sort of international investment code which would protect the foreign investor," so that the "risks and difficulties surrounding private investments abroad could thus be reduced, if not entirely eliminated."[35] Continually pushed by the vocal demands of its Asian constituents, the ICFTU also tirelessly prodded member unions towards further trade liberalization and increased foreign investment.[36] As ICFTU president Arne Geijer reminded delegates in 1959, "Only a very great

[33] Jacob Potofsky, form letter, "to be sent to all International Presidents," circa 1954, Folder 4, Box 214, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[34] As the report also noted, "Our own American standards will always be threatened with a break-down unless the workers in other lands enjoy union wages and conditions." See Courtney Ward and Thomas Wilson, "Committee For A.F. of L. Participation in a World Trade Union Federation," Sept. 6, 1945, Folder 2B, Box 173, Coll. No. 5780/002, *ILGWU-DD-KCA*.

[35] *News From the AFL-CIO*, Oct. 17, 1957, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[36] On ICFTU pushing member unions on behalf of trade liberalization, see International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Committee on Fair Labour Standards in International Trade, 1961, Folder 1387, *ICFTU-IISH*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, "Draft ICFTU Memorandum to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development," 1964, Folder 1389, *ICFTU-IISH*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Committee on

plan to channel billions of dollars to the developing countries can be regarded as a solution" to global economic instability.[37] In the postwar era, most American unions followed suit: pushing for increased foreign aid, capital mobility, and protections for American capitalists investing abroad.[38] Their enemy, after all, was crisis capital, not capital mobility: these unionists in fact dreamed of an orderly expansion of foreign capital and industry tempered by a strong international union movement enforcing fair labor standards.

These trade unionists' pleas for increased capital mobility to the "underdeveloped" world can thus only be understood within the context of the massive organizational offensive American unions and the ICFTU launched in the 1950s and early 1960s. The ICFTU, for instance, worked to set up trade union colleges and seminars all over Asia and Africa.[39] A series of seminar

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International Trade Questions, "Guiding Lines for the Free Trade Union Position in the United Nations Trade and Development Machinery," 1964, Folder 1390, *ICFTU-IISH*; Speech by Harm G. Buiter to AFL-CIO Convention, Dec. 7-13, 1967, Folder 5108C, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[37] International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *The Need for a Dynamic World Economy: Report of the World Economic Conference of Free Trade Unions (Geneva 18-19 March 1959)* (Brussels, 1959), 11; On the push of Asian trade unionists for increased capital mobility, see Agenda Item 7, "Problems of Economic Development in Asia and the Far East," ICFTU, Asian Regional Conference, May 28-31, 1951, Karachi, Folder 1236, *ICFTU-IISH*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Asian Regional Organisation, Fourth Asian Regional Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, 30 August-6 September 1958, Agenda Item No. 7B: "The Free Trade Union Movement of Asia in the Face of Advancing Industrialisation," Folder 1240, *ICFTU-IISH*; Proceedings, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Asian Regional Organisation, Fourth Asian Regional Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, 30 August-6 September 1958, Folder 1241, *ICFTU-IISH*. On ICFTU support for increased international aid and foreign investment, see ICFTU, "Statement on the Necessity of International Aid to Under-Developed Countries," 1953, Folder 1228, *ICFTU-IISH*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Asian Regional Organisation, "International Trade and Development," 1956, Folder 1246, *ICFTU-IISH*; Resolutions adopted by the ICFTU Third Asian Regional Conference, March 30-April 4, 1957, Folder 1238, *ICFTU-IISH*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Committee on International Trade Questions, Draft Resolution on the Foreign Trade Problems of Developing Countries, circa 1962, Folder 1388, *ICFTU-IISH*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Draft ICFTU Memorandum to the United Nations Conference on Trade And Development, 1964, Folder 1389, *ICTFU-IISH*.

[38] American Federation of Labor, Press Release, May 3, 1955, Folder 5104, *ICFTU-IISH*; Partners in Progress: The Report of the International Development Advisory Board…A Sampling of Press and Radio Reaction," March 1951, Folder 1, Box 53, Coll. No. 5619/003, *ACWA-KCA*.

[39] International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *Training the World's Trade Unionists: A Survey of Five Years of ICFTU Educational Work* (Brussels: International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, 1956), 9. On AFL-CIO support of the trade union college, see R. Deverall to Harry Goldberg, Dept. International Affairs AFL-CIO, March 23, 1961, Folder 5107, *ICFTU-IISH*.

courses for training women trade unionists was set up in Brévièrem, France in 1953, Calcutta in 1954, and Accra in the future Republic of Ghana in 1955. A permanent Asian Regional Organisation College was also founded in Calcutta in 1952.[40] In 1954, the first international trade union course took place with participants from 21 countries. African American garment worker Maida Springer was invited to speak on conditions in the United States; she later went on to establish her own garment trade school in Kenya and serve as an advisor to trade unions in Tanzania and Ghana.[41] In its first eight years of existence, the ICFTU college program would come to hold some fifteen courses all over the world, including courses in Finland, West Bengal, Khandala, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Alipurduar, Manila, Kandy (Ceylon), Dacca (East Pakistan), Seoul, and Hitachi (Japan). In addition, early graduating students came to set up their own colleges in Jamshedpur, Badampahar, and Domohani, India.[42] Others founded trade union credit cooperatives in Pakistan, as well as a workers' library and savings and loan institute in the Philippines.[43]

[40] Carew, "A False Dawn," 215; ICFTU *Training the World's Trade* Unionists, 9.

[41] Ibid., 32, 58; Ervin Dyer, Obituary, "Maida Springer Kemp," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* , March 31, 2005.

[42] ICFTU *Training the World's Trade* Unionists, 91-92; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *Asian Trade Union College,* (1960), Pamphlet, IISG Int 2333/6, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Netherlands **[hereafter *IISH*]**

[43] Ibid., 90.

Figure 7.1: The ICFTU "Asian Trade Union College" [44]
Established in Calcutta, India in 1952, the ICFTU college was just part of a broad offensive in the name of international unionism in the 1950s.

In addition, organizations like the ICFTU lent various forms of support to unionization efforts abroad. The voluntary "International Solidarity Fund," created by the ICFTU in 1957 with an annual income ranging from about two to three million dollars until the mid-1960s (more than double the organization's general operating fund), allowed the ICFTU considerable latitude in embarking on a variety of international organizing projects.[45] The AFL-CIO was a major early contributor, donating some one million dollars in its first year alone.[46] Throughout 1956 and 1957, ICFTU activities in Asia thus came to include sending the international union's plantation representative to assist and provide funds for a Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka) plantation union that eventually encompassed ninety percent of the dominion's plantation workers, sending

[44] International Confederation of Free Trade Unions Asian Regional Organisation, *ICFTU-ARO* (1960), 18, IISG Int 2331/5, *IISH*.

[45] John P. Windmuller, "Cohesion and Disunity in the ICFTU: The 1965 Amsterdam Congress," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 19, no. 3 (April 1966): 357.

[46] Memo, ICFTU Developments Highlight AFL-CIO Convention In Atlantic City, Dec. 16, 1957, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; Address by President Arne Geijer of the ICFTU to AFL-CIO Convention, San Francisco, Sept. 22, 1959, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; "AFL-CIO Votes Foreign Aid Fund," *New York Times*, Dec. 10, 1957, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*.

Michael Ross of the AFL-CIO to provide financial and organization assistance to the Malayan rubber farmers, and sending ICFTU representatives to successfully pressure the Thai government to release jailed railway strikers (and enact a new legal code giving workers the right to strike). The ICFTU also financially supported striking dock workers in Pakistan, led organization drives in the Philippines and Indonesia, and orchestrated a successful mission to pressure the U.S. government to improve labor conditions in U.S.-occupied Okinawa.[47] In addition, the international union worked with the International Labor Organisation to a get a series of minimum wage laws passed in Asia, including minimum wages for 16 trades in Ceylon as well as Burma's cigar, cheroot, and rice workers.[48] By June of 1958, the ICFTU had come to incorporate 30 Asian constituent organizations representing 12 countries and nearly six million workers.[49]

Similarly, the formation of the International Textile and Garment Workers' Federation in 1960 was driven by the perceived need for a special international organizing effort for clothing and textile workers. In its first two years it pushed 4,250 British pounds—approximately 12,000 U.S. dollars circa 1962—into its own Asian Regional Organization.[50] A special fund was also created to focus on organizing "weaker affiliates" in "developing countries," particularly in

[47] Proceedings, Third Regional Conference, International Confederation of Labor Asian Regional Organisation, New Delhi, 30 March- 4 April, 1957, 29, 31, 33-39, Folder 1238, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[48] Agenda Item No. 7B: "The Free Trade Union Movement of Asia in the Face of Advancing Industrialisation," International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Asian Regional Organisation, Fourth Asian Regional Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, 30 August-6 September 1958, 3, Folder 1230, *ICFTU-IISH.*

[49] Agenda, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Asian Regional Organisation, Fourth Asian Regional Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, 30 August-6 September 1958, Folder 1240, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[50] International Textile and Garment Workers' Federation, "Statement of Policy Concerning International Trade in Textiles and Apparel," Oct. 18, 1960, Folder 52, Coll. ID ARCH00650, International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation Collection, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Netherlands [**hereafter *ITGLWF-IISH***]; International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation, "Financial Assistance Given by the International to Affiliates" Jan. 11, 1972, Folder 63, *ITGLWF-IISH*.

Hong Kong. In its first year alone the ILGWU donated 5,000 dollars, and the TWUA and the ACWA donated 2,000 dollars each.[51]

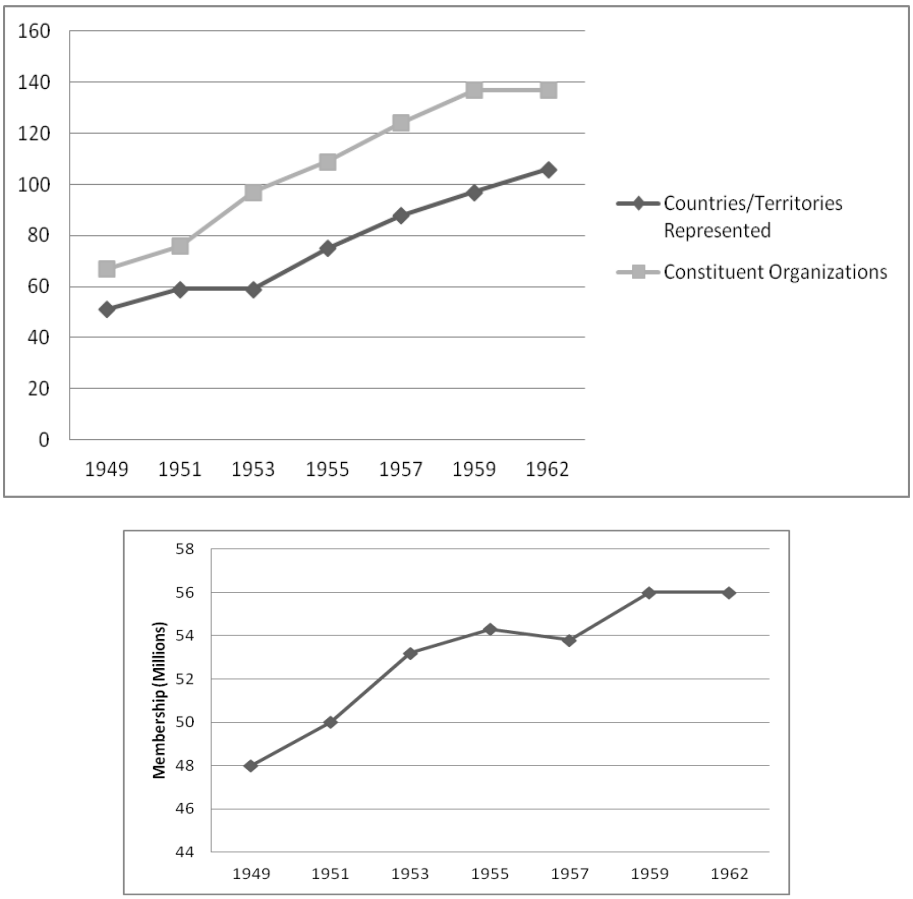

Figure 7.2: Postwar growth of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions[52]
Measured here in represented countries, organizations, and membership (millions).

Although such efforts may seem far and away from the concerns of the average New Bedford or Fall River trade unionist, this was entirely congruent with the whole theory of labor

[51] General Secretary [J. Greenhalgh] to Jacob Potofsky, Nov. 30, 1964, Folder 21, Box 130, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*; General Secretary [J. Greenhalgh] to Colleague [Jacob Potofsky], July 12, 1966, Folder 21, Box 130, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*; J. Greenlhalgh to David Dubinsky, Feb. 21, 1964, Folder 2B, Box 262, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[52] Windmuller, "Cohesion and Disunity in the ICFTU," 355.

internationalism. After all, the reason unions like the ILGWU and ACWA teamed up with powerful international bodies like the ICFTU or the International Garment and Textile Workers' movement was that these trade union amalgamations could wield power and financial resources unimaginable for a city, state, or even national union. Thus, when members Mary Roderick and Alice Buraczynski of the Fall River ACWA Local 377 motioned in January of 1962 to "pay our Local's share of the pledge made by the National Office to the following institutions: The Eleanor Roosevelt Cancer Foundations, Afro-Asian Institute, and the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center," totaling 173.30 dollars, their actions fit perfectly with the larger constellation of forces and sources of support that were to undergird their parent union's larger, internationalist projects.[53]

Moreover, evidence suggests that local unions were more than happy to see their union dollars go to international reconstruction efforts. In the postwar era, for instance, New Bedford's TWUA local union was pushing a sizable percentage of its incoming funds into donations, other locals, and the national TWUA body.[54] The three-month period ending September 30, 1948, for instance, saw 50,230 dollars of New Bedford money disbursed as donations, 44,810 dollars go to the national TWUA, and 7,154 dollars go to other labor bodies, more than maxing out the 83,564 taken in through union dues.[55] Just as Portuguese operative Manuel C. Simas of the Wamsutta Mill pushed for donations to the International Solidarity Committee in 1947, others pushed for New Bedford union money to go to the YWCA World Reconstruction Fund, the Greek War

[53] Fall River Amalgamated Clothing Workers Local 377, Minutebook, Jan. 17, 1962, Vol. 2, Coll. No. 5665 mf, ACTWU Fall River Local Minute Books on Microfilm, 1949-1977, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.

[54] Minute Book, [New Bedford TWUA] Board of Directors, 1949-50, Folder 6, Box 1, Series 1, MSS 134, *TWUA-NB-UMASSA*.

[55] Ibid.

Relief Association, the Red Cross, Catholic Charities, the United Nation's "Crusade for Children," textile strikers in Rome, Georgia, as well as 42,000 dollars to aid the CIO's southern organizing drive.[56] Those workers who had pushed for more expansive union organizing strategies as early as the nineteenth century may have lost the battle, but, ideologically, they eventually won the war. Even local unions seemed to have shared in the postwar consensus backing labor internationalism.

A Fraying Consensus

By the 1960s, however, the acids of personal and ideological discord had begun to corrode the basis of ICFTU power and cohesion. Most salient was the issue of anti-communism. While some, like Potofsky of the clothing workers, Reuther of the UAW, and most European union leaders began to adopt a far less hostile stance towards Soviet communism, others, primarily the so-called "Meany-[Jay] Lovestone-Dubinsky group" of the AFL-CIO, continued to pursue a doggedly anti-communist line.[57] George Meany, in particular, repeatedly and publicly denounced the ICFTU for its apparent "failure…to carry on an effective fight against Communist domination of workers." It was not coincidental, however, that such angry excoriations generally came alongside demands for more American power within the labor international.[58]

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[56] Minute Book, [New Bedford TWUA] Board of Directors, 1947, Folder 4, Box 1, Series 1, *TWUA-NB-UMASSA*; Minute Book, [New Bedford TWUA] Board of Directors, 1948, Folder 5, Box 1, Series 1, *TWUA-NB-UMASSA*; Minute Book, [New Bedford TWUA] Board of Directors, 1949-1950, Folder 6, Box 1, Series 1, *TWUA-NB-UMASSA*.

[57] John Dyer, "The Real Reasons for a Break," *WFTU Monthly*, clipping, Folder 5109, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[58] George Meany to Mr. Omer Becu and JH Oldenbrook, June 25, 1956, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; Executive Council, AFL-CIO, "Guiding Lines for American Overseas Economic Policy," June 7, 1956, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; George Meany, Editorial, *London Times,* April 12, 1957, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Meany's Attitude Toward the ICFTU," *John Herling's Labor Letter*, June 15, 1967, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*;

Animosities came to a boiling point in the mid-1960s. In 1965, for instance, inter-union acrimony gained considerable attention after Meany denounced the ICFTU as an "ineffective bureaucracy, right down to the fairies," which was widely reported by world newspapers as a not-so-veiled accusation of some sort of organizational homosexuality.[59] Simultaneously, Meany began directing the AFL-CIO to drastically cut its funding of ICFTU international organizing efforts.[60] Still dedicated to international union organizing but lacking the power or financial resources of the union international, America's largest union body instead began to team up (surreptitiously) with the Central Intelligence Agency to push anti-communist union organizing abroad, especially in Latin America—often with devastating results.[61]

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[59] Dan Kurzman, "Lovestone Now at Odds with Free Trade Unions," *Washington Post*, Dec. 31, 1965, Folder 5108, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Meany Explains 'Fairy' Rap to World Labor Group," *Washington Post*, March 17, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Meany attacks I.C.F.T.U. Again," *New York Times*, March 17, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Amerikanska LO lämnar FFI? Tjänstemän homosexanklagas," *Östergötlands Folkblad*, March 17, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Lo-basen har dementerat yttrande om homosexuella," *Folket*, March 16, 1965; "AFL-CIO och FFI," *Norrländska Socialdemokraten*, March 15, 1965; "Croisade des Syndicats Americains… Contre L'Homosexualite (Europeenne)," reproduced from *Liasons Sociales*, no. 805, March 15, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*; Bill Hancock, "[USA's National Centre Threatens to leave ICFTU. Result: Straighter Course]" *Stockholms-Tidningen*, March 13, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*; Damon Stetson, "A.F.L-C.I.O May Cancel Aid to World Labor Body," New York Times, March 4, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*; Jack Turcott, "Meany Raps Homos in World Labor Unit," Unidentified Newspaper, March 3, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Retirarán la Ayuda al CIOSL, Pues no Combate Eficazmente Al Comunismo," *Excelsior* (Mexico City), Mar. 3, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*. The archive of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions contains an additional three folders of international press about the Meany "fairy" incident. See Folders 5112A, 5112B, and F112C, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[60] Windmuller, "Cohesion and Disunity in the ICFTU," 357-358; John P. Windmuller, "Internationalism in Eclipse: The ICFTU after Two Decades," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 23, no. 4 (July 1970): 525.

[61] Windmuller, "Cohesion and Disunity in the ICFTU," 358; "Labour's Cold War," *The Economist*, June 18, 1966, Folder 5108, *ICFTU-IISH*; Dan Kurzman, "Lovestone's Cold War: The AFL-CIO Has its Own CIA," *The New Republic*, June 25, 1966, Folder 5108D, *ICFTU-IISH*; Dan Kurzman, "Lovestone's Aid Program Bolsters U.S. Foreign Policy," *Washington Post,* Jan. 2, 1966, Folder 5108, *ICFTU-IISH*; John P. Windmuller, "Internationalism in Eclipse," 525. There is a sizable amount of literature on the often baleful consequences of AFL-CIO (and United States) involvement in Latin America in this era. See, for instance, Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (University Of Chicago Press, 2004); Deborah Levenson-Estrada, *Trade Unionists Against Terror: Guatemala City, 1954-1985* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Chomsky, *Linked Labor Histories*; Charles Bergquist, *Labor and the Course of American Democracy: US History in Latin American Perspective* (Verso, 1996), 81-117; Kim Scipes, *AFL-CIO's Secret War Against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity Or Sabotage?* (Lexington Books, 2011); Quenby Olmsted Hughes, *In the Interest of Democracy the Rise and Fall of the Early Cold War Alliance Between the American Federation of Labor and the Central Intelligence Agency* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011).

Substantive issues were also at play. As one commentator put it in 1957, while Meany wanted the ICFTU to emphasize anti-Communism pure and simple, most other ICFTU unionists "thought Communism could best be countered by constructive work in helping to build up the trade union movements all over the world."[62] Meany faced plenty of detractors, of course, even within the American labor movement. As Sol Stetin of the textile workers put it as early as 1951 in describing why "America's message heretofore [has] not succeeded in penetrating into the hearts of men," he pointed to the "utter nonsense" of regaling the world with "the glories of free enterprise, and the indispensable advantages of television sets, radios, washing machines, and freezers. First they need something to put into the freezer. They need food and also freedom."[63] Reuther, in particular, had little hesitance in publically lambasting Meany's "drag-foot relation" to the ICFTU, his de-funding of international organization efforts, and his often asinine anti-communism as causing "U.S. labor to become alienated from its 'natural' labor allies in the free world."[64] Reuther received significant press for his cause when he (joined by Jacob Potofsky of the clothing workers) publicly condemned the AFL-CIO's boycott of a 1966 International Labour Organisation meeting simply because Meany's preferred candidate to preside over the meeting had failed to garner enough votes.[65] The publicity and recriminations that followed

[62] George Meany, Editorial, *London Times*, April 12, 1957, clipping, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[63] Address by Sol Stetin, CIO Convention, Nov. 8, 1951, included in Sol Stetin to Francis K. Eady, Nov. 20, 1951, Folder 5105, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[64] On Reuther's criticism of Meany operation, see "Meany, Reuther End Policy Rift," *New York Times*, June 8, 1956, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; "Meany's Attitude Toward the ICFTU," *John Herling's Labor Letter* , June 15 1957, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; John Herling, "Meany-Reuther Rift?," *Washington Daily News*, Feb. 12, 1957, clipping, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; Bernard D. Nossiter, "Meany Holdup of $200,000 Check Perils Anti-Red Confederation," *Washington Post*, Jan 10, 1961, clipping, Folder 5107, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[65] "U.S. Labor's Iron Curtain," *New York Times*, Feb. 6, 1966, clipping, Folder 5108B, *ICFTU-IISH*; Walter P. Reuther to George Meany, June 9, 1966, Folder 5108B, *ICFTU-IISH*; George Meany to Walter P. Reuther, June 10, 1966, Folder 5108B, *ICFTU-IISH* ; "AFL-CIO Body Backs Meany Over Reuther in Vote on Walkout of Geneva Delegation," June 17, 1966, Folder 5108B, *ICFTU-IISH*, "Labour's Cold War," *The Economist*, June 18, 1966, clipping, Folder 5108B, *ICFTU-IISH*; "The Adamant Mr. Meany," *The Nation*, June 27, 1966, clipping, Folder 17,

again made all too clear the growing divides within the American labor movement over foreign policy.[66]

By the 1960s, mutual animosity had irreparably damaged American workers' relationship with the international union movement. Already, the intransigence and blind anti-communism of the Meany contingent of the AFL-CIO had evaporated whatever good-will once existed for the American labor movement in international labor circles. By the mid-1960s, many labor internationalists were already seeing a silver lining to the seemingly ineluctable fate of AFL-CIO withdrawal from the ICFTU. At least, the argument went, the ICFTU would no longer need to pay lip service to Meany's increasingly paranoid style of anti-communist labor organizing.[67] Dashing all hopes of succeeding Meany as head of the AFL-CIO, Reuther's public attacks on the AFL-CIO's increasingly obstructionist international policies—especially following revelations of CIA financing of its operations in Latin America—pushed him to finally cease payment of UAW dues to the AFL-CIO on May 16, 1968.[68] A week later, Reuther sent a check for 18,750 dollars to ICFTU headquarters to formally affiliate on an independent basis.[69] President Meany, incensed that Reuther was even in contention for ICFTU membership, withdrew the AFL-CIO

Box 113, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*; On Jacob Potofsky's support, see "The Walkout in ILO," Folder 17, Box 113, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[66] The Meany-Reuther rift received much international attention. For instance, see Eiichi Ochiai to A Braunthal, Feb 10, 1967, Folder 5108C, *ICFTU-IISH*; Ohta, "[UAW to Withdraw its Members from AFL-CIO Executive Board]," *The Nihon Keizai* [日本経済新聞], Feb 4, 1967, trans. and reproduced by Eiichi Ochiai, Folder 5108C, *ICFTU-IISH*; Sekiguchi, "[Crack in AFL-CIO: Reuther Resigns as Vice president]," *The Tokyo* [Shimbun] [東京新聞], Feb. 5, 1967, trans. and reproduced by Eiichi Ochiai, Folder 5108C, *ICFTU-IISH*; Ogawa, "AFL-CIO in Danger of Split-Up," *The Yomiuri* [読売新聞], Feb. 5, 1967, trans. and reproduced by Eiichi Ochiai, Folder 5108C, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[67] For instance, see Bill Hancock, "[USA's National Centre Threatens to leave ICFTU. Result: Straighter Course]," *Stockholms-Tidningen*, March 13, 1965, Folder 5111, *ICFTU-IISH*.

[68] Lichtenstein, *Walter Reuther*, 407; Kevin Boyle, *The UAW and the Heyday of American Liberalism 1945-1968* (Cornell University Press, 1998).

[69] Walter P. Reuther to Bruno Storti, May 23, 1968, Folder 5113, *ICFTU-IISH*; Walter Reuther to Harm Buiter, April 12, 1969, Folder 5113, *ICFTU-IISH*.

soon thereafter.[70] The move merely formalized a long-standing de facto reality: by 1966, national infighting and the subsequent withdrawal of money from the International Solidarity Fund had already spelled the end of any meaningful international organizing work on the part of the ICFTU.[71] By 1977, the AFL-CIO had even withdrawn from the International Labour Organisation, citing the ILO's similarly too irresolute opposition to Communism.[72] The postwar consensus on labor internationalism unraveled.

Yet just as anti-communism drove both the formation and dissolution of American labor internationalism, so too did the specter of international capital mobility. Indeed, as the new political economy of free trade, as concretized by the labor-supported Reciprocal Tariff Act and the GATT, began to foment increased industrialization abroad, many American unions shifted course.[73] By 1960, Jacob Potofsky of the clothing workers, facing increasing import competition, was blazing a very different ideological path for his union. During a 1960 convention speech, while nominally re-affirming that "we in the Amalgamated have long supported the reciprocal trade policy," Potofsky began calling on new forms of import control, adding that "reciprocal trade was never intended to become an instrument for destroying American industries by unfair competition from sweated labor abroad."[74] As one 1961 editorial in the union's newspaper put it,

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[70] George Meany to Harm G. Buiter, Nov 8, 1968, Folder 5113, *ICFTU-IISH*; General Secretary to George Meany, March 14, 1969, Folder 5113, *ICFTU-IISH*; Windmuller, "Internationalism in Eclipse," 512–525.

[71] Anthony Carew, "Towards a Free Trade Union Centre: The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (1949-1972)," in *The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions*, ed. Van Der Linden, 238-241, 305.

[72] The AFL-CIO would finally re-affiliate in 1981. See Harvie Ramsay, "In Search of International Union Theory," in *Globalization and Patterns of Labour Resistance*, ed. Jeremy Waddington (Psychology Press, 1999), 200.

[73] Alben, "GATT and the Fair Wage"; Chomsky, *Linked Labor Histories*, 132–134; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Committee on Fair Labour Standards in International Trade, 1961, Folder 1387, *ICFTU-IISH*; Statement by Stanley H. Ruttenberg, AFL-CIO Director of Research, Submitted to the Subcommittee on Foreign Trade Policy of the House Ways and Means Committee, Sept. 4, 1957, Folder 5106, *ICFTU-IISH*; Jacob Potofsky, Statement On Imports, August 26, 1959, Folder 5, Box 238, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[74] Ibid.

"in the face of a potentially murderous threat from low-wage clothing imports, we have recently been forced to take measures to safeguard our industry from destruction." [75] Nevertheless, the editorialist assured readers that the union remained committed to free trade.[76] "Does [this] mean we've turned protectionist?," the editorialist rhetorically asked, concluding "Nothing could be further from the truth," even going so far as to say that "it doesn't make much sense to…wave the 'Buy American' flag."[77] Nevertheless, the international commitments of these unionists were undergoing rapid transformation.

When former Fall River ILGWU organizer Sol "Chick" Chaikin entered ILGWU leadership beginning in 1965, he made "import restriction," not free trade, the major issue of his tenure.[78] Cutting at cross angles to nearly two decades of American labor activism, Chaikin put increased tariff protections, cuts to third-world development programs, and the restriction of "illegal" immigration at the center of the ILGWU political program in an endless cavalcade of pamphlets, television appearances, newsmagazine articles, books, protests, and congressional appearances.[79] "Import restriction" quickly emerged as organized labor's new preferred method

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[75] Editorial, "Has the Amalgamated Turned Protectionist?," *The Advance*, April 15, 1961, Clipping, Folder 3, Box 283, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Glenn Fowler, "Sol C. Chaikin, 73, Ex-Organizer Who Led Garment Workers, Dies," *The New York Times*, April 3, 1991, http://www.nytimes.com/1991/04/03/obituaries/sol-c-chaikin-73-ex-organizer-who-led-garment-workers-dies.html; See Minchin, *Empty Mills*, 45–65.

[79] See Sol C. Chaikin, "The Impact of Exports on the American Economy," *USA Today,* Jan. 1979, Folder 9, Box 48, Coll. No. 5780/083, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union: Sol Chaikin Papers, 1940-1986, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York **[hereafter *ILGWU-SC-KCA*]**; "Questions And Answers, The War College, February 4, 1977," Folder 37, Box 47, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol Chaikin, "Free Trade or Fair Trade for America," Speech at Vassar College, Feb. 5, 1979, Folder 10, Box 48, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Address of Sol C. Chaikin, Symposium on International Trade and the American Economy, Seattle, Washington, Nov. 30, 1981, Folder 9, Box 49, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol Chaikin, "Summary of Principal Points: Statement of Sol C. Chaikin...Before the Subcomittee of Savings, Pensions,a nd Investment Policy of the Senate Committee on Finance…," April 21, 1982, Folder 16, Box 49, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol C. Chaikin, Speech,

of ameliorating the social and economic ravages of garment de-industrialization. Yet such tactics only further divided American workers from the international labor movement. Jacob Potofsky's decision for the ACWA to refuse to cut Japanese cloth in 1961, for instance, generated ire from both internationalist allies within and outside the American labor movement, especially amongst ACWA allies in Japan.[80]

These unionists, of course, did not necessarily see themselves as departing from their former ideological commitments. After all, their erstwhile dedication to trade liberalization had emerged alongside, and was always justified by, an internationalist union project that had largely failed to materialize. As Potofsky put it in 1959, though he "favored improved trade relations among countries of the world," his fear was not capital mobility per se, but the sweatshop: "I have lived through those sweatshop days—in fact, in some of our industries, those days were not

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Northeastern University, June 18, 1982, Folder 23, Box 49, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol C. Chaikin, "Trade, Investment, and Deindustrialization: Myth and Reality," *Foreing Affairs* (Spring 1982), Folder 31, Box 49, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol C. Chaikin, "Toward a Rational Development Policy," Delivered to the International Development Conference, May 17, 1983, Folder 37, Box 49, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol Chaikin, "Testimony of Sol C. Chaikin…Before the Subcommittee on Economic Stabilization of the House Committee on banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs," Jan. 31, 1984, Folder 52, Box 49, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol C. Chaikin to President Jimmy Carter, April 9, 1980, Folder 25, Box 41, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; ACTWU and ILGWU, Advertisement Clipping, "An Open Letter to the American Public," Folder 26, Box 41, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol Chaikin and Lazare Teper, Report to U.S. Department of Labor, "The Negative Impact of Duty Reductions on The Women's and Children's Apparel Industry and Its Workers," Folder 26, Box 41, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol C. Chaikin, "Statement Submitted to the United States International Trade Commission In Opposition of Duty Reductions on Articles of Women's and Children's Apparel," April 17, 1975, Folder 27, Box 41, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Sol Chaikin to Cyrus R. Vance, Secretary of State, Jan. 12, 1978, Folder 1, Box 42, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; On television appearances, See Annabelle W. Model to Sol Chaikin, Dec. 1, 1977, Folder 25, Box 41, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*; Betty G. Lall to Sol Chaikin, Feb. 2, 1983, Folder 1, Box 23, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*, Memo, Miriam Peretsman to Meyer Miller, Jan 21 1983, Folder 1, Box 23, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*

[80] Walter Reuther, "Free trade, or an economic rat-race?," *Free Labour World* (Aug. 1961), Folder 1391, *ICFTU-IISH*; Victor Riesel, "Inside Labor: Japanese Textiles Posing Problem of U.S. Labor," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, Aug. 16, 1961; Clipping, "Amalgamated bows to Kennedy Request, Lifts Stop Order on Japanese Fabric Cutting," *The Advance* 47, no. 9 (May 1961), Folder 3, Box 283, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

very long ago."[81] Free trade was palatable in the postwar era only because it was to unfold alongside expanding free trade unions. Failing that, most unions retreated back to protectionism.

Ironically, then, it was arguably the success of these workers' projects of international development and free trade that drove their later withdrawal into import restriction. The irony is only further exacerbated by the fact that, at the very moment that international trade unionism could have potentially pushed back against the power of mobile industry seeking easy returns on crisis capital abroad, American unionists took on a far more insular, nationalist stance. While mobile capitalists were ramping up their efforts to expand abroad—capitalizing on the new political economy of free trade inaugurated during the postwar decades—workers were doing the exact opposite, disengaging from their international allies.

Nevertheless, what followed was not simply a matter of workers' inability to cope with the ever-mounting, unavoidable fury of rapidly globalizing capital. Not only were these trade unionists themselves active agents in the creation of the political economy that made so-called "globalization" possible, they fought for it precisely because they imagined an alternative political project in which globalization could undergird their visions of worldwide prosperity through an expansive international labor movement. Although they succeeded only partially, they were thus key movers in heralding the wrenching economic changes of the late-twentieth century.

Conclusion

The rise of the political economy that made the economic transformation of industrial Massachusetts possible in the 1960s and 1970s—a world of relative free trade and free

[81] Jacob Potofsky, "Statement on Imports," August 26, 1959, Folder 4, Box 238, Coll. No. 5619, *ACWA-KCA*.

migration—was thus not simply a capitalist ploy to de-industrialize America. Instead, free trade, free migration, and international development were constitutive pieces of the working-class vision of international prosperity in the postwar era.[82] Together, these workers and their political projects laid the groundwork for the transformation of the Massachusetts economy in the late-twentieth century. Unfortunately for workers, however, they had also imagined such developments would come alongside a concomitant expansion of a global labor movement that never quite lived up to expectations. Free trade globalization became something of a Pandora's Box. Once opened, workers could never quite contain the forces it unleashed. The dream of labor internationalism as a viable solution to the excesses of global capital flow had all but died.

Yet not all workers had lost the faith. As one retired garment unionist, Max Klonsky, who had cut his teeth as a New York operative before traveling to Spain to fight fascism in the 1930s, wrote to union president Sol Chaikin after finding himself disappointed by an ILGWU "Roll Back the Imports" rally in 1983,

> Our Union International is an affiliate of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Why doesn't our Union secure from the I.C.F.T.U the cooperation to organize a campaign for the organization of garment workers in the countries mentioned…I have been working in the garment industry for over 50 years and a member of the union since 1934, so I remember what the conditions and wages were then and now…The gains that are won through this [international] effort, small at first, will ultimately stop the super-exploitation of those workers and make it [less] and less profitable for the exploiters in this country and those abroad to continue to pit workers against workers for super profits.[83]

[82] For contrasting narratives that focus on business owners and policymakers as the prime movers in the globalization of the American economy and the ascent of free trade political economy, see Harvey, "Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction"; Geoffrey Jones, *Entrepreneurship and Multinationals* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013), 7–8; Jones, "Globalization," 147-152; Jeffry A Frieden, *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 378–382, 400–405.

[83] Max Klonsky to Sol C. Chaikin, [1983], Folder 4, Box 31, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*. On Klonsky biographical note, See "Guide to the Robert Klonsky Papers ALBA.219," http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/tamwag/alba_219/

The reality, however, was that the AFL-CIO had only recently re-affiliated with the ICFTU after its 1969 break. As Sol Chaikin's lame response back to Klonsky might attest—voicing support for international unionism but dismissing it as a viable option, since "efforts to organize" abroad "are constrained by restrictive governments"—the sun had already long ago set on this moment of labor internationalism.[84] Massachusetts workers would face the global expansion of American capital with few allies outside of the United States.

[84] Sol Chaikin to Max Klonsky, May 10, 1983, Folder 4, Box 31, Coll. No. 5780/083, *ILGWU-SC-KCA*.

Chapter 8

Reconstructing Global Hegemony

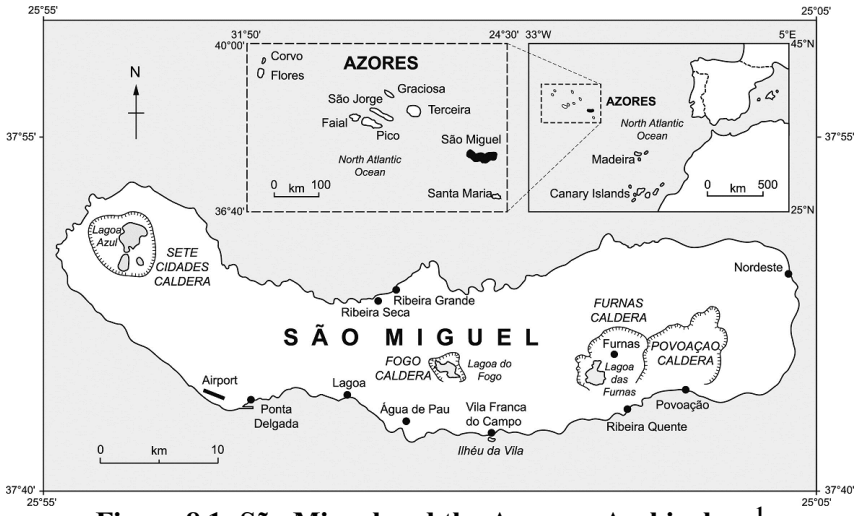

Figure 8.1: São Miguel and the Azorean Archipelago[1]

The people of Calhetas, a village on the north shore of the Azorean island of São Miguel, gathered for a summertime celebration. "The anticipation was enormous," an island journalist reported, as a procession of townsfolk, led by the district governor, marched through the village upon a traditional "carpet of flowers." Fireworks and rockets lit up the sky, and a local marching band paraded the streets bellowing a rousing chorus of "Maria da Fonte."[2] Calhetas' citizenry had assembled to celebrate the long-awaited introduction of electricity to their humble community. "And, when the Governor flipped the switch," the newspaper added, "the whole parish was lit…there was ebullient joy and many faces glowed with tears of satisfaction and

[1] Nicolau Wallenstein et al., "Fogo Volcano (São Miguel, Azores): A Hazardous Edifice," *Géomorphologie : Relief, Processus, Environnement*, no. 3/2007 (October 1, 2007): 259–70.

[2] "A Inauguração da Energia Eléctrica na Freguesia das Calhetas," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), July 28, 1973. Original Text: "A expectativa era enorme e, quando a banda de música fez ouvir o hino da 'Maria da Fonte', sinal da presence do Chefe do Distrito, foi estrondosa a salva de palmas, acompanhada de morteiros e girândolas de foguetes… Organizado o cortejo em que se incorporaram, além da presidente e vogais da Junta de Freguesia, as principais autoridades oficiais e as entidades mais em estreita ligação com o acontecimento, seguiu este sobre um longo tapete de flores e ao som dos acordes da Banda de música, até à cabine de transformação."

contentment."[3] Services like electricity and television were finally beginning to arrive in the Azores. The year was 1973.

The celebratory parade and festival ultimately gave both the community and the representatives of the Portuguese state a chance to vent their demands and frustrations. A young student speaker, for instance, praised the "benefits of lighting" but also "alluded" to the other "pressing needs of the parish, especially water distribution, street paving, etc.," ("which was much applauded"). Later, the civil (military) governor, Colonel Basílio Pina de Oliveira Seguro, put in place by Portugal's fascist state apparatus, reassured the villagers of Portugal's abiding interest in the "progress of all the regions of the country," while also gesturing to fascist Portugal's overarching interest—legitimacy—as he thanked the people for the "spontaneous" demonstration they had put on a few weeks back in solidarity with their dictator, Marcello Caetano, following his disastrous diplomatic trip to London. Indeed, Caetano's trip to England—intended to celebrate the six-hundredth anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance—did not provoke the wave of renewed international legitimacy and good feeling for which its planners had hoped. Instead, it devolved into a media nightmare, inspiring headline-stealing protests all over Britain, garnering only more attention to the ongoing genocide in Portugal's African colonies.

The Portuguese fascist state was ultimately not long for the world. Battered by African liberation movements, the increasingly vocal demands of the angry and impoverished at home,

[3] Ibid. Original Text: "E, quando o sr. governador fez a ligação do comutador geral e toda a freguesia ficou iluminada, a alegria foi esfusiante e em muitos rostos luziram lágrimas de satisfaçao e contentamento."

and its long declining international legitimacy, Europe's longest bout of state fascism failed to even make it another year before folding in on itself: a bloodless coup on April 25, 1974.[4]

Figure 8.2 (Left): Azorean José Ferreira Albino returns home after a day on the farm in 1972
Figure 8.3 (Right): "Rustic Peasant Woman: Simple and Beautiful, 'Margarida, go to the fountain'," São Miguel, 1964
"Margarida, go to the fountain" refers to a popular Portuguese folk song. Importantly, the Azores remained economically undeveloped throughout the late-twentieth-century; workers like José and Margarida would become an important part of the reconstruction of the Massachusetts economy in the 1960s.[5]

[4] "A Inauguração da Energia Eléctrica na Freguesia das Calhetas," *Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), July 28, 1973; Norrie MacQueen and Pedro Aires Oliveira, "'Grocer Meets Butcher': Marcello Caetano's London Visit of 1973 and the Last Days of Portugal's Estado Novo," *Cold War History* 10, no. 1 (February 2010): 29–50; Antonio Costa Pinto, "The Transition to Democracy and Portugal's Decolonization," in *The Last Empire: Thirty Years of Portuguese Decolonization,* Stewart Lloyd-Jones and António Costa Pinto, eds. (Intellect, 2003). Original Text: "Seguiu se lhe o jovem estudante Horácio de Medeiros Costa…enalteceu os benefícios da iluminação…Aludiu ainda a prementes necessidades da freguesia, em especial a distribuição de água, pavimentação das ruas, etc .. foi muito aplaudido… E a terminar, falou o sr. Coronel Basílio Seguro, que disse do crecen te agrado e da sincera alegria que sentia, sempre que era chamado a assistir a inaugurações e progressivos melhoramentos, em qualquer local do seu Distrito, salientando o grande interesse do Governo pelo progresso de todas as regiões do País…Recordou a recente e grandiosa manifestação, com que a ilha de S. Miguel tinha evidenciado a sua solidariedade para com o sr. Presidente do Conselho, a propósito da sua recente viagem a Londres e terminou por renovar a sua satisfação pelo melhoramento aiora realizado."

[5] "Homenagem ao Trabalho," *O Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Feb. 19, 1972; "Imagens da Terra Açoriana," *O Açoriano Oriental* (Ponta Delgada), Feb. 29, 1964.

Although a seemingly remote event of fascist pomp and local color, the 1973 Calhetas celebration nonetheless encapsulated so much of what was driving thousands of Azoreans to migrate to the open arms of Massachusetts employers in the 1960s and 1970s. Underdevelopment, poverty, political repression, and an unavoidable military draft for what was widely regarded as a doomed-from-the-start effort to save a dying empire were core catalysts of mass human migration. Jorge Manuel Pereira, for instance, whose family immigrated to New Bedford in 1980, vividly recalled growing up with two uncles fighting in Angola and Mozambique, a cousin fighting in Guinea-Bissau, and the constant knowledge that, "unless you were smart enough or had some godfather help you get out of it," all young Portuguese men were bound for Africa's shores in the fight *against* independence. "I thought I would probably be killed by a land mine or something," he confessed during a 1990 interview.[6] Such discontent, however, was not tolerated in public discourse. Pereira also recalled a pointed moment in which he was chastised by his mother for criticizing the government: "My mother looked at me and said, 'Well, there are certain things you cannot talk about and blaming the government is one'," adding, "You see, there were secret police who would arrest, torture and kill people." It was not poverty alone that pushed these emigrants onto Massachusetts' shores.

Mid-century São Miguel may seem a strange place to begin to understand the contours of the economic transformation that would upend the Massachusetts economy in the 1960s and 1970s, but it was a crucial ingredient in that revolution. Indeed, it was in villages like Calhetas that Massachusetts manufacturers found the seemingly impossible: a source of migrant peasant labor with deep connections to existing Massachusetts communities, increasingly eager to

[6] Philip J. Rackley, "The New Immigrant Interview with Jorge Manuel Pereira," in *Portuguese Spinner: An American Story: Stories of History, Culture, and Life from Portuguese Americans in Southeastern New England* eds. Marsha McCabe et al. (New Bedford: Spinner Pub., 1998), 81-82.

emigrate almost *anywhere* in search of a better life. And, following a series of new immigration reforms—reforms for which the Massachusetts Azorean community pushed vociferously—this is exactly what they did. Capitalizing on their transatlantic familial connections, Azorean farmers left for Massachusetts in droves. From 1960 to 1979, some 175,000 Portuguese, mostly Azorean migrants, found their way to America's shores.[7] The Azores, for its part, virtually emptied out. The two decades after 1957 saw one half of the island's population, as measured in 1950, simply leave.[8]

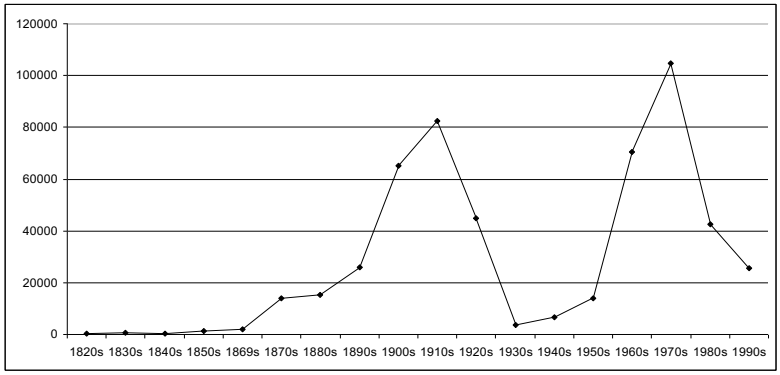

Figure 8.4: Number of Portuguese Obtaining Permanent American Resident Status by Decade: 1820-1999[9]

Spurred by the labors of these new migrants, the 1960s became a moment of surprising economic growth in Massachusetts. Manufacturing expanded, profits rose, and unemployment plummeted. In fact, despite soaring rates of immigration, local firms expanded so rapidly that many local manufacturing plants were actually encountering labor *shortages* by the end of the decade.

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[7] Compiled with information from: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Washington, DC, August 2010), 6-9.

[8] Octávio H. Ribeiro de Medeiros and Artur Boavida Madeira, *Emigração e Regresso No Concelho de Nordeste*, Cadernos de Emigração (Ponta Delgada, Azores, 2003), 28; Jerry R Williams, *And Yet They Come : Portuguese Immigration from the Azores to the United States* (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 1982), 100.

[9] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*, 6-9.

But this prosperity came with ironic consequences. As manufacturing thrived on new sources of cheap, immigrant labor, industry re-emerged as a profitable capital investment. Local manufacturing firms were thus hungrily brought into the fold of emerging corporate conglomerates. Proprietary garment and electronics factories transformed into mere subsidiaries of massive conglomerates, many of which were, at the same moment, also picking up firms in Latin America and East Asia. Ultimately, the prosperity of the 1960s came to fuel an unprecedented multi-nationalization of American capital, a process that had devastating consequences for the future of the Massachusetts manufacturing economy in the 1970s.

Labor Migration

By the 1960s, of course, centuries of transatlantic labor migrations had established firm connections between the state of Massachusetts and the Azorean archipelago. Not surprisingly, then, despite the fact that restrictive quotas kept the possibility of American immigration closed to most Azoreans from 1924 to 1965, letters and stories from family and friends in Massachusetts insured that the dream of American immigration was never quite dislodged from the Azorean mindset.[10] In villages across the archipelago, Azorean Cristóvão Aguiar observed, mid-century peasants found themselves beset with "letters stuffed with pretty things and dollars, speaking of a life of abundance, without problems…Bags with clothing sent from relatives, with that special smell that makes people say: 'Smell the clothing of America!' America, America! A word that is pronounced with a mix of religiosity and aspiration."[11] Conversely, Azorean-

[10] Leo Pap, *The Portuguese-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), 80.

[11] Cristóvão de Aguiar, *Alguns Dados Sobre a Emigração Açoriana* (Coimbra, 1976), 20. Original Text: "São as cartas recheadas de lindezas e de dólares, falndo de uma vida farta, sem problemas de futuro...São as sacas com roupas enviadas pelos parentes, com aquele cheiro especial, que faz com que as pessoas digam: 'cheira a roupa da América.' América, América! Uma palavra que se pronuncia com um misto de religiosidade e sonho!"

American poet Álamo Oliveira recorded what it was like to live on the other side of that divide. His poem, "Letter from João Valente," chronicled the melancholy yearnings of his brother back home in the Azores: "I was happy to hear that you have/ A freezer and a new car/ Sofas, closets, frying pans/ And dungaree overalls… And with a fistful of dollars / You outfitted yourself in a store/ Not even a gentleman from Lisbon/ Can spend money that way!... It all sounds like a dream!/ I weep with happiness!/ What kind of land, brother/ Gives so much so fast?"[12] Oliveira's poem also attested to the way the English language itself was infiltrating Azorean Portuguese: English borrowings like "friza" for "freezer" and "talaveija" for "television" now pervaded the Azorean dialect, even if only as aspirations rather than realities.[13] Indeed, when Dr. Henrique Martins de Carvalho reflected on "The Problem of the Azores" for a 1973 state report on emigration, he found that the difficulty was that Azoreans were, on the whole, just too *American*. They speak "in American terms," he emphasized. "Few families lack in the United States or Canada one or more relatives," and most troubling to Carvalho, they "fix their aspirations" in America.[14]

And as the story of Calhetas might suggest, no factor was more crucial in pushing Azoreans to "fix their aspirations" in America than the everyday reality of unrelenting poverty. The twentieth-century Azorean economy was ruled by meat production, dairy export, and a small group of rural elites who monopolized most of the islands' available land.[15] The system of

[12] Victor Pereira Da Rosa and Salvato Trigo, *Azorean Emigration: A Preliminary Overview*, trans. Margaret Butler (Porto, Portugal: Fernando Pessoa University Press, 1994), 92.

[13] Ibid., 94.

[14] Henrique Martins de Carvalho, *Possibilidade de deslocação de mão-de-obra portuguesa para o continente e medidas a tomar para a sua adequada integração social* (Lisboa: Centro de Estudos de Serviço e Desenvolvimento Comunitário, 1973).

[15] Da Rosa and Trigo, *Azorean Emigration: A Preliminary Overview*, 40.

"arrendamento"—the vicious system of rural land tenancy in which poor farmers had to rent out land, cattle, and equipment from local elites—had remained virtually unchanged since the nineteenth century.[16] In fact, it was not unknown for some impoverished Azorean farmers to find themselves forced into contracts in which they rented out single cows for the year in return for a certain payment in milk.[17] As Azorean intellectual Luís Ribeiro described it in 1940, "the prosperity of the territory is in the hands of a very small number of individuals, and the bulk of the population lives [on] starvation wages…overburdened by sometimes excessive rents and subject to all the risks and vicissitudes of farming."[18] Little changed in the ensuing thirty years.[19] The economic power of these rural elites to control access to land—as well as their political power in obstructing state efforts to industrialize either Portugal or the Azores—kept much of the archipelago locked in stagnant poverty.[20]

Of course, few records remain to illuminate the life of the average mid-century Azorean farmer. Nevertheless, one can catch glimpses of their lives and labors through a series of reports generated by the Portuguese state in the late 1950s as it sought to target families appropriate for an ambitious, short-lived project of colonial resettlement. Indeed, in seeking to exploit Azorean

[16] Carlos Enes, "Uma Economia em Tranformação mas uma Pobreza que Persiste," in *Historia dos Açores: Do Descobrimento ao século XX*, Vol. 2, Artur Teodoro de Matos, Avelino de Feitas de Meneses, José Guilherme Reis Leite, eds. (Angra do Heroísmo: Instituto Açoriano de Cultura, 2008), 190-191.

[17] Ibid., 191.

[18] Luís da Silva Ribeiro, *O Emigrante Açoreano* (Ponta Delgada, 1940).

[19] Indeed, when Azorean scholar Caetano Valadão Serpa summed up the state of his home island, São Miguel in the 1970s, his description differed little from Ribeiro's: "The existing [system of arrendamento] gives rise to a predominance of tenant farmers and the consequent excessive rents that aggravate the shortage of capital. Hence the poor living conditions of those who work the land…[exploited] by large landowners." Caetano Valadão Serpa, *A Gente Dos Açores* (Lisboa, Portugal: Prelo Editora, 1978), 132-133.

[20] Fernando Oliveira Baptista, "A Agricultura e a Questão Da Terra — Do Estado Novo À Comunidade Europeia," *Análise Social* 29, no. 128 (January 1, 1994): 908.

impoverishment to catalyze African colonization, the state was forced to intimately catalogue (and preserve) the extent of poverty amongst its island peoples.

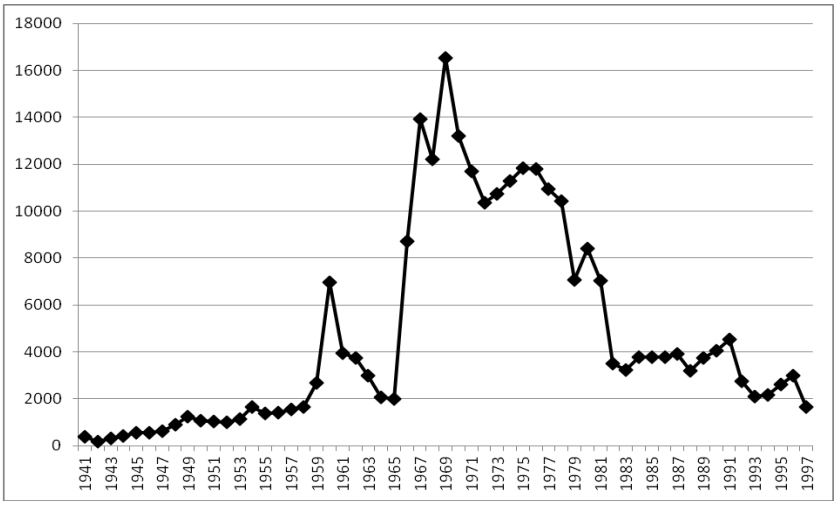

Figure 8.5: Portuguese Immigration to the United States, 1941-1997[21]

African resettlement, of course, responded to a very real demand: Azoreans continued to clamor for emigration throughout the twentieth century. It was, however, until the mid-1960s, politically impossible. The United States restricted immigration, and Portugal restricted emigration, wary of letting population flight sap its economic or imperial power.[22] African resettlement thus served a dual purpose for the Portuguese state, fulfilling its imperial ambitions while ostensibly easing domestic poverty.[23] Portugal thus explicitly sought out poor, landless

[21] Robert Barde, Susan B. Carter and Richard Sutch , "Immigrants, by country of birth – Europe: 1941–1997," Table Ad121-135 in *Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition*, eds. Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), http://dx.doi.org.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/10.1017/ISBN-9780511132971.Ad90-221.

[22] Maria Ioannis Baganha, "From Closed to Open Doors: Portuguese Emigration under the Corporative Regime," *E-Journal of Portuguese History* 1, no. 1 (Summer 2003); Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton University Press, 2005), 19, 24.

[23] Indeed, when Orlando Ribeiro of the University of Lisbon released an official report on how the Portuguese state could alleviate the suffering caused in the Azores by the Capelinhos Volcanic eruptions of that late 1950s, he suggested emigration as the most obvious cure. Azoreans, Ribeiro noted, demonstrate a "fatalistic acceptance of their emigratory destiny" and should thus be re-settled in the "Angolan uplands." See Relatório de Missão, Arquivo Marcello Caetano, Box 47, no. 32, Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal, quoted in Daniel da Silva

families for resettlement, offering potential migrants free transportation, agricultural implements, a three-bedroom house, five acres of irrigated land, twelve acres of "dryland," and forty acres of common grazing land in Angola. In exchange, migrants would be expected to slowly pay the state back, and were unambiguously informed they would lose their land if they "displayed maladjustment to the life centered on colonization to which they belong, disinterest, or bad moral, family, or social behavior."[24] Nonetheless, for farmers locked in a brutal system of rural tenancy, the offer of free land, a free house, and a free farm was often hard to pass up.

The reports the Azorean government produced in categorizing and characterizing those eligible for resettlement painted a dismal picture of Azorean rural life.[25] Farmers targeted for re-settlement included Jose Vieira Jr., a father of nine children, who, as one state report described him, "neither possessed nor possesses anything"; Manuel Moniz, with eight children, living off rented land; Manuel Jacinto De Medeiros Jr. and his family of thirteen, also living off rented land; Antonio da Camara, with eight children, living off of two-and-a-half alquieres, roughly .6 to .86 acres, of mostly rented land, and intermittent agricultural wages from himself and two of his daughters ("The environment of the house is one of extreme poverty," the report noted); and Jose Salvador Correia, with ten children, "living in extreme poverty, always living on the product of his and his children's daily labor...the home enviroment is the poorest I have ever

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Costa Marcos, *The Capelinhos Eruption: Window of Opportunity for Azorean Emigration* (Providence: Gávea-Brown Publications, 2008), 45.

[24] Circular, Ministério do Interio, Junta da Emigração, Informações Que Interessam Aos Colonos Que Pretendam Fixar-se Em Qualquer Dos Seguintes Colonatos," Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, Arquivo do Governo Civil do Distrio de Ponta Delgada, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal **[*hereafter AGCDPD-BPARPD*]**. Original Text: "Será retirado aos colonos o direito à exploração do casal agrícola que lhe foi atribuído, quando: Mostre inadaptação à vida do núcleo de colonização a que pertençam, desinteteresse, mau comportamento moral, familiar ou social"

[25] Circular, João Nunes da Silva, Junta da Emigração, Lisbon, Portugal, September 26, 1956, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD.*

encountered, but it has always been so."[26] Indeed, "living on the product of their labor, on land that must be rented" became a constant refrain in official reports.[27]

Others wrote directly to the state, appealing for emigration on the grounds of their crushing impoverishment. Saul Tavares de Chaves handwrote a letter to the civil governor, describing the "general contentment witnessed upon the news of emigration for colonists that wanted to move to the overseas Portuguese provinces—Angola and Mozambique…I, and others, are very anxious to emigrate."[28] Antonio da Costa, too, wrote the governor pleading to be considered: "The life of a farmer, gaining 15 escudos [a day] is not sufficient to live."[29] Manuel Medeiros Cabral, originally turned down for colonization, also wrote to the governor pleading "his great desire to emigrate to our colonies… I am poor and a worker and as such I cannot afford tickets."[30] Such sentiments are hardly surprising: emigration and African resettlement were both time-tested Azorean means for escaping poverty.

[26] Report, Secretaria do Governo Civil do Distrito Autónomo de Ponta Delgada to October 24, 1958, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Saul Tavares de Chaves to Governador Civil, Ponta Delgada, October 22, 1956, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD.*

[29] Antonio da Costa to Governador Civil do Distrito de Ponta Delgada, Oct. 26, 1956, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*.

[30] Manuel Medeiros Cabral to Governador Civil do Distrito de Ponta Delgada, November 13, 1956, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*.

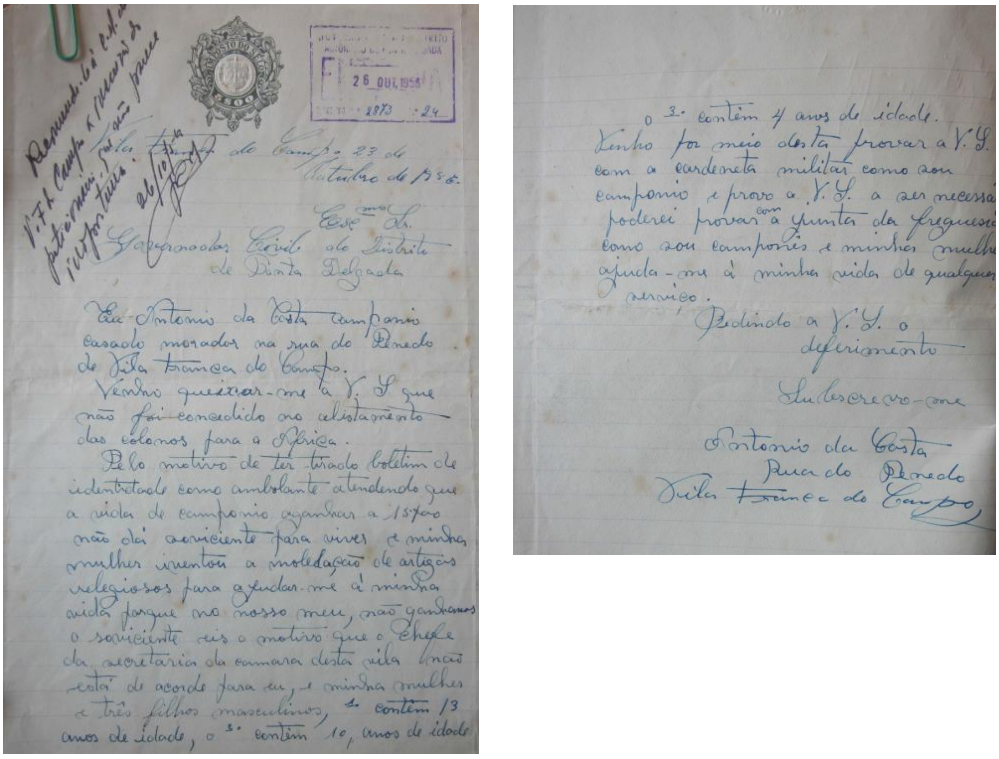

Figure 8.6: Letter to the Civil Governor from Azorean farmer, requesting relocation to Africa.
Many Azoreans, desperate to escape rural tenancy wrote directly to the civil governor, hoping to be considered for African resettlement.[31]

African resettlement, however, was not the panacea the state hoped it would be. Within a year, government officials were receiving letters from re-settled Azorean-African colonists, complaining of the awful conditions of agricultural life, especially around Mozambique.[32] "8 have already asked for repatriation," the president of the emigration board complained to the governor of Ponta Delgada in November of 1958, "incapable of continuing to put up with the climate."[33] Those scheduled for colonization at the program's cancellation appear to have been

[31] Antonio da Costa to Governador Civil do Distrito de Ponta Delgada, Oct. 26, 1956, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD.*

[32] Antonio Manuel Baptista to Governador Do Distrito…de Ponta Delgada, Nov. 27, 1958, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD.*

[33] Ibid.

forced to take a sort of "loyalty oath" to allow their passage to Africa. Acknowledging that they "were informed that some families [of the Azorean island] Horta[,] that were installed in the colony of Limpopo, have asked to return to the Azores" as they "could not put up with the heat there" and "did not like the nourishment/subsistence [alimentaçao], which cannot be the same as our Azores," potential migrants were forced to declare that, nonetheless, they remained committed to fulfilling their contract and moving to Africa, "despite the difficulties that have been pointed out," without the notion of returning.[34] Nevertheless, the whole program would be unceremoniously cancelled—and these colonists apparently returned—by 1959.[35]

What happened to these transplanted farmers in Africa again testifies to the unseen importance of something not mentioned in the letters of these impoverished Azoreans: namely, *ecology*. Although poverty was a daily reality for most Azorean farmers, poverty as a result of an unforgiving ecological regime was decidedly not. Instead, Azorean poverty was borne of distinctly social origins: an unequal distribution of land, political power, and access to agricultural resources. After all, of the 40,710 farm plots in the Azores in 1965, about 82 percent were less than 7.5 acres in size; yet such small plots made up only one-third of available land. Conversely, about two percent of large farms controlled nearly one third of the Azores.[36] The Portuguese state, too terrified to take on the power of its rural oligarchs, instead attempted to uproot poor farmers and move them 3,500 to 5,500 miles away to less fertile, though socially un-

[34] Secretaria, Câmara Municipal de Vila Franca do Campo, "Declaração," Dec, 30, 1958 [João Furtado Soares], Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Secretaria, Câmara Municipal de Vila Franca do Campo, "Declaração," Dec, 30, 1958 [José Vieira Junior], Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Câmara Municipal do Concelho da Ribeira Grande, "Declaração," Dec, 31, 1958 [António da Câmara], Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Câmara Municipal do Concelho da Ribeira Grande, "Declaração," Dec, 31, 1958 [Elias de Sá Cardoso], Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*.

[35] Presidente, Junta Da Emigração to Governador do Distrito Autónomo de Ponta Delgada, Lisbon, Portugal, June 11, 1959, Colonos 1956, Cota 1771, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*.

[36] Jerry R. Williams, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams: A History of Azorean Immigration to the United States* (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture, 2005), 140.

monopolized (at least from the perspective of colonial authorities) land in Africa. The Portuguese African resettlement plan thus not only again revealed the severe poverty of the islands, but also Portugal's unwillingness to contravene the power of the rural elite.

These distinctly *social* roots to Azorean poverty would come to shape their eventual collective voyage to Massachusetts in important ways. Foremost, like their early-twentieth-century antecedents, the Azoreans who responded to the repeal of the National Quota Act in 1965 by immigrating to America again came with a faith that they would one day return to their homeland with enough money to buy their own land and escape rural tenancy. "Some people get upset when [Portuguese] come to this country," Fall River immigrant Raymond Canto e Castro recalled in 1989, precisely because their aspirations *were not* fixed in America. Instead, the plan, time and time again, was to "save money, then go back to Portugal."[37] As Miguel de Figueiredo Côrte-Real put it in the 1990s, "In the old days, a man would come to America but not with his wife. He would make some money and go back to his country and buy a piece of land, so he could organize his life, work for himself, have his own house, have his own piece of land."[38] In contrast—driven by dreams of gaining the wages necessary to overturn a particular social regime of land monopolization—these migrant Azoreans sought less an American than a *Portuguese* dream: to return, buy their own land, escape arrendamento, and achieve subsistence living.[39]

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[37] Beth Negus, "The Smell of Ink Interview with Raymond Canto e Castro," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 119

[38] Joseph D. Thomas, "The Man from Santa Maria Interview with Miguel de Figueiredo Côrte-Real," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 52. Return migration did indeed increase drastically in Portugal throughout the latter half of the 1970s and 1980s—but the vast majority of migrants ultimately settled permanently in America, despite their original wishes. Jim Lewis and Allan Williams, "Portugal: The Decade of Return," *Geography* 70, no. 2 (April 1, 1985): 178–82; Medeiros and Madeira, *Emigração e Regresso No Concelho de Nordeste*; Octávio H. Ribeiro de Medeiros, and Artur Boavida Madeira, *Emigração e Regresso No Concelho Da Povoação* (Ponta Delgada: Câmara Municipal da Povoação, 2003).

[39] It is worth remembering that the outcomes and goals of migrants, are, across time and space, never shaped by any single determinant. Just as increased immigration restriction and a declining economy have tended to hold down Mexican migrant return rates in recent decades, the "potato famine" of the mid-nineteenth century kept Irish immigrant return rates to a similar minimum. In this way, late-century Azorean migrations looked much like early-

Not surprisingly, then, neither industrial work nor urban living was much of a dream for any of these Azorean migrants.[40] Indeed, the wave of Azorean immigrants to the South Coast in the second half of the twentieth century seems to have reacted to industrial Massachusetts with a mix of revulsion and bitterness. When Isabell Silva, for example, left the Azorean Islands in the late 1950s for Massachusetts, she found New Bedford to be an ugly disappointment. The city, she recalled, was "so dark," and the houses were "all grey."[41] For Dineia Sylvia, "everything in America seemed very dark and gray, cold and stony."[42] Elizabeth Figueirdo, remembering her first impressions of New Bedford in 1974, recalled that she "didn't like it too much": "I found it too dark and the houses were too dark and I was expecting skyscrapers."[43] For Maria Tomasia,

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twentieth century Italian, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian immigration. See Douglas S. Massey and Kristin E. Espinosa, "What's Driving Mexico-U.S. Migration? A Theoretical, Empirical, and Policy Analysis," *American Journal of Sociology* 102, no. 4 (January 1, 1997): 983; Michael S. Rendall, Peter Brownell, and Sarah Kups, "Declining Return Migration From the United States to Mexico in the Late-2000s Recession: A Research Note," *Demography* 48, no. 3 (August 1, 2011): 1049–58; Cormac Ó Gráda and Keven H. O'Rourke, "Migration as Disaster Relief: Lessons from the Great Irish Famine," *European Review of Economic History* 1, no. 1 (April 1, 1997): 5; Oriana Bandiera, Imran Rasul, and Martina Viarengo, "The Making of Modern America: Migratory Flows in the Age of Mass Migration," *Journal of Development Economics*, Migration and Development, 102 (May 2013): 23–47; Samuel Baily, *Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[40] Again, this particular consequence of the social context of late-century Azorean immigration distinguishes these migrants from the millions of internal urban-rural migrants across the world—in nations like China, Thailand, and the Philippines—who migrate to the city precisely to escape the "boredom" of rural life. See Christiane Harzig, "Domestics of the World (Unite?): Labor Migration Systems and Personal Trajectories of Household Workers in Historical and Global Perspective," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 25, no. 2/3 (January 1, 2006): 58; Mary Beth Mills, "Contesting the Margins of Modernity: Women, Migration, and Consumption in Thailand," *American Ethnologist* 24, no. 1 (February 1, 1997): 37; Ricardo G. Abad, "Internal Migration in the Philippines: A Review of Research Findings," *Philippine Studies* 29, no. 2 (June 1, 1981): 129–43; Max Henninger, "Poverty, Labour, Development: Towards a Critique of Marx's Conceptualisations," in *Beyond Marx: Theorising the Global Labour Relations of the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Karl Heinz Roth (Brill, 2014), 295.

[41] Oral History 44, interview by Susan Moniz, MC 24/PAA, Oral History Project, 1987-1990, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Library, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[*hereafter OHP-FMPAA*]**. Unfortunately, the Portuguese Oral History Project transcripts at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth contain numerous transcripts in which there is no signed release. In these cases, I have assigned a pseudonym.

[42] Kathy Hackett, "Two Worlds Interview with Dineia Sylvia," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 88.

[43] Elizabeth Figueirdo, Oral History 28, Interviewed by Michael Balenger, March 9, 1988, MC 24/PAA, *OHP-FMPAA*.

arriving in 1960, coming to America was nothing short of a "nightmare": "We left this very lush green place, blue skies, green ocean…And then I get off the plane in Boston and all I see is gray! Gray smog, gray buildings, everything was gray! And I'm like, What is this? Limbo? Then I'd think, well, maybe this is just the airport—things are going to get better. Little did I know. Things got worse!".[44] These rural migrants were anything but wowed by the wonders of urban life.

Figure 8.7: 1960s and 1970s New Bedford
Late-twentieth-century New Bedford was, for many migrating Azoreans, something of an ugly disappointment.[45]

Moreover, although most Azoreans did not make a name for themselves as labor radicals, their working lives were anything but contented.[46] Fernanda DeSousa, whose family immigrated

[44] Paula T. Beech, "Coming to America Interview with Maria Tomasia" in *Portuguese Spinner,* 76

[45] Photograph, ST 00250 (South End Aerial), Spinner Publications, https://www.flickr.com/photos/spinnerpub/3971823081/in/photolist-73YCCi; Photograph, URC-D 00074 - Unknown House : New Bedford, Spinner Publications, https://www.flickr.com/photos/spinnerpub/4770925405/in/photolist-8gAeUz

[46] Indeed, when the great labor historian Susan Porter Benson ran a discussion group amongst Portuguese garment-working women in the late 1970s, she was repeatedly frustrated by how little interest they had in radicalism or the history of the working class. They did, however, rapidly assent to the claim that pre-factory was "better," one woman citing "memories of her Azorean childhood." See "Union Gets $150,000 grant for Humanities Program," *Fall River Herald News*, Jan 16, 1979, Folder 35, Box 3, Series 1, MS 241, ACTWU: New England Regional Joint Board, University of Massachusetts Amherst Special Collections, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ACTWU-UMASSA*]**; Susan Porter Benson, "Week of May 21, Fall River/New Bedford and Lawrence," Folder 35, Box 3,

to Fall River in 1974, recalled that her mother's work at the Shelburne Shirt Company left much to be desired. "My mother wasn't used to working in a factory. In Portugal, she stayed at home and took care of us. Soon after, my sister went to work with my mother. Mom cried almost every night because she didn't like working all day in the factory, then coming home and having to put dinner on the table."[47] Dineia Sylvia similarly remembered that her mother "always said she should have gone to school when she came here." She too "used to cry at night because she found things to be quite difficult."[48] Azorean Americans often drew on the Portuguese cultural construct of "saudade"—a centuries-old concept denoting a powerful and inescapable longing for what has passed, often flaunted as a sort of unique emotional marker of the Portuguese people—to describe these immense feelings of grief.[49] Although migrant Azoreans generally celebrated the material splendor they found in America, as their letters back home amply attest, they often nonetheless missed the closely-knit social life of the villages they left behind.[50] Not surprisingly, most Azorean-American art and cultural output, in everything from songs and

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Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA* ; Susan Porter Benson, "Community—Retireees—FR/NB—5/15/79," Folder 35, Box 3, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA*; Susan Porter Benson, "Work Discussion—1/22—Fall River/New Bedford," Folder 35, Box 3, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA*.

[47] Fatima Martin, "The Letter Interview with Fernanda DeSousa," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 96.

[48] Kathy Hackett, "Two Worlds Interview with Dineia Sylvia," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 88.

[49] Bela Feldman-Bianco and Donna Huse, "Saudade: Memory and Identity," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 60.

[50] When a series of interviewers asked Azorean migrants to describe their former lives in the Azores in the 1980s and 1990s, most recollected lives defined by bucolic beauty and the tight bonds of friendship. Tomasia remembered the Azores as "a dream or a paradise…. To this day, I can close my eyes and picture myself in my house, looking at this blue ocean, blue sky, green mountains and the scenery." For Maria de Jesus, "Village life was so full of happiness, everybody knew each other…when people passed, we'd talk and laugh. [But] here in the city…I'm always inside the house. When I go out, most of the time I don't see anybody I know." Liduina Linhares recalled the island of Pico as "peaceful and full of joy, a quiet, delightful place where nature, plants and animals seem to live in harmony." See Ibid., 75; Paul Pinto, "The Long Journey Interview with Maria de Jesus," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 32; Maria Candida Pereira, "Two Women Conversation with Mrs. Linhares & Mrs. Pereira," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 35; Ibid., 67-68.

books to poems and plays, has been defined by this "saudade de terra": this profound longing for the land and life left behind in the Azores.[51]

Consequently, in contrast to the wave of Portuguese migration in the early-twentieth century, precisely because these Azoreans did not come dreaming of industrial work, most hoped their children would one day escape the factory floor. Education emerged as a newfound priority for these Azorean immigrants, a desire only further exacerbated by memories of the systematic denial of education under Portuguese fascism. For Maria de Jesus, "we came to America in search of a better way of life. Not so much for me and my husband but to be able to give my kids an education that we were never able to have." For another Azorean migrant, "coming to America was very good….I wanted to be a teacher, but I didn't have the opportunities. Now I would like my daughter to be the teacher I couldn't be." "We came for economic and educational reasons," another migrant remembered: "At this time, high school in Portugal was not free. It was an expensive proposition for a large family."[52] Although such sentiments may seem rather unsurprising for those familiar with immigration today, this orientation towards education and away from the factory was rather novel in the Portuguese-American community, sometimes causing considerable consternation amongst entrenched Portuguese populations who saw these new aspirations as anything but common sense.

Nowhere was this disjuncture between "old" and "new" Azorean immigrants more apparent than in a series of labor history "reading" group meetings run for garment workers by historian Susan Porter Benson in 1979, years before the publication of her path-breaking work on

[51] Robert Henry Moser and Antonio Luciano de Andrade Tosta, *Luso-American Literature: Writings by Portuguese-Speaking Authors in North America* (Rutgers University Press, 2011), ix–x.

[52] Paul Pinto, "The Long Journey Interview with Maria de Jesus," in *Portuguese Spinner,* 33; Maria Candida Pereira, "Two Women Conversation with Mrs. Linhares & Mrs. Pereira," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 39; Beth Negus, "The Smell of Ink Interview with Raymond Canto e Castro," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 118. See also Philip J. Rackley, "The New Immigrant Interview with Jorge Manuel Pereira," in *Portuguese Spinner,* 86.

department store workers.[53] During one session, she noted, "The divisions within the locals soon became clear: the older members (those present) scorn the younger ('they don't have any values'; 'they don't know what real work is'; 'things are too easy for them'." [54] One member, in particular, stood up and declared, "I'm Portuguese myself, but those greenhorns are different."[55] One of the younger people in the group, "a Portuguese immigrant woman about 25 years old," spoke up to defend her compatriots, pointing out that "not all immigrants were just interested in earning money and nothing else, that she and other immigrants were interested in getting out of the shops and in the meantime taking advantage of educational programs."[56] As Azorean immigrant Jorge Pereira similarly reflected in a 1990 interview, "the earlier immigrants" had "become very selfish and do not treat the new people well," musing over whether they resented the newcomers precisely because they were "people with more education…people who wanted to do different things"—people who ultimately wished to abandon the hardscrabble life of the factory floor.[57] Ultimately, such anti-industrial attitudes would come to have profound consequences for the economic future of Massachusetts.

Poverty, then, was certainly important in bringing Azoreans to Massachusetts' shores in the 1960s and 1970s; but poverty alone is never an adequate explanation for labor migration.[58]

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[53] Susan Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940* (University of Illinois Press, 1986).

[54] Susan Porter Benson, Notes, "Week of December 4 [1979]," Folder 35, Box 3, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA*.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Philip J. Rackley, "The New Immigrant Interview with Jorge Manuel Pereira," in *Portuguese Spinner,* 87, 85.

[58] Labor migration, after all, never happens in a vacuum: migrants build on their kin connections and social networks to get information and assistance in securing jobs, housing, and, of course, legal entrance. As a result, although many people all over the world are poor, labor migration is always historically defined and regionally

Indeed, Azoreans arrived through the ethnic and kin networks immigrants and future emigrants had sustained over the course of some fifty years. And it was these transatlantic social connections that made this migration—and the subsequent build-up of Massachusetts industry—possible. Nevertheless, although their labor was crucial to the growth of industrial Massachusetts in this era, Azorean immigrants also came freighted with ideologies less congenial to mass industrial production. Their desire for education—and their dreams of returning to the seemingly bucolic life they left behind—would become crucial factors in the political and ideological struggle that ensued as the mid-century incarnation of industrial Massachusetts crumbled in the 1970s and 1980s.

Prosperity: 1965-1973

The re-opening of Massachusetts' borders to new migrants in 1965 became a turning point in the state's economic history. The early 1960s, after all, had been a time of relative stagnation in Massachusetts: yearly capital expenditures in manufacturing had remained essentially unchanged from 1958 to 1964.[59] Yet by mid-1965, it was clear the tides were turning.[60] Capital expenditures in manufacturing suddenly shot up.[61] Expenditures in 1966, at 479.5 million dollars, surpassed Massachusetts' 1957 record year by almost 50 percent.[62] The year 1966 alone saw 248 firms added to the state, durable goods spending shoot up 244.1

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specific. See Charles Tilly, "Transplanted Networks" in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, ed. Virgina Yans-McLaughlin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[59] See Figure 8.8.

[60] Edwin Campbell, "Lesson of the '60's: A Competitive Tax Rate for Manufacturing," *Industry* 33, no. 4 (Feb. 1968), 4.

[61] Barbara Sullivan, "Manufacturers Maintain Capital Spending Pace," *Industry* 33, no. 5 (March 1968), 10.

[62] C. Philip Gilmore, "Capital Expenditures Raise the Roof," *Industry* 32, no. 4 (Feb. 1967), 12.

percent, electrical machinery investment rise a staggering 443.6 percent, and even the capitalization of textiles and apparel increase 164.8 and 71.4 percent respectively.[63] By 1967, Massachusetts manufacturing was growing at nearly three times the national pace. [64] In fact, Massachusetts manufacturing growth outpaced the national average from 1966 to 1973 in all but two years, sometimes by tremendous margins.[65]

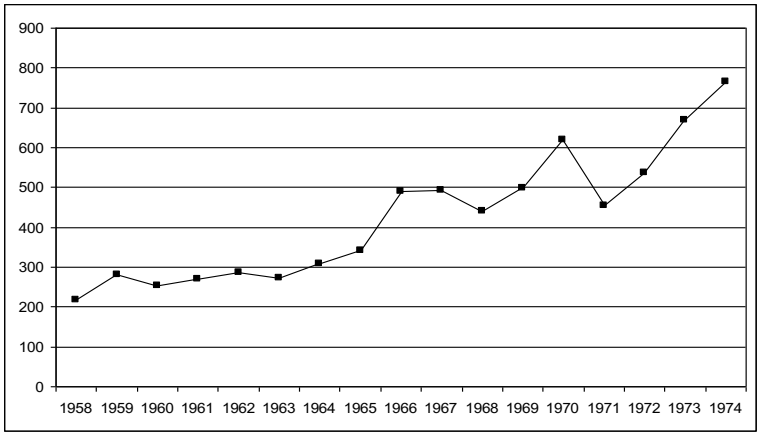

Figure 8.8: New Plant and Equipment Expenditures by Manufacturers, Massachusetts (Millions of Dollars)[66]

In part, the expansion of Massachusetts industry in the late 1960s was a product of increased wartime expenditures. Indeed, as one artless New Bedford journalist put it in 1966, "The Viet-Nam war has had many effects on the world. One, in New Bedford, has been to boost business."[67] Yet it is no coincidence that this marked buildup of industry ran concomitantly with a spectacular burst of immigration to the area. Manufacturers, after all, now had a seemingly

[63] Ibid., 13.

[64] Sullivan, "Manufacturers Maintain Capital Spending Pace," 11.

[65] James H. Howell, "Fewer Capital Dollars for '78" *Industry* (Feb. 1978), 13.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Paul Gauvin, "Defense Products Stands Ready As Viet-Nam Orders Increase," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 30, 1966.

endless stream of cheap labor at their disposal. As emigration rates from São Miguel, the Azores' largest island, surged to anywhere from 500 to 1,000 a month in the late 1960s, Portuguese immigrants began to enter New Bedford at the steady pace of about 600 each month.[68] In fact, more Portuguese immigrants arrived in New Bedford during the first three months of 1966 than had in the entire period from 1961 to 1965.[69] And although municipal leaders struggled to manage the city's ballooning public school rolls—after all, conservative Catholic Azorean families were often startlingly "bottom heavy"—finding jobs for these workers became a surprising non-issue.[70]

Importantly, Azoreans found securing employment easy due to the immense strength of the social connections that bound them to Massachusetts in the first place. In 1972, for instance, more than three-quarters of Portuguese immigrated to the United States under the aegis of a familial connection to a resident alien or a brother or sister who was an American citizen.[71] Most Azorean immigrants stayed with, or were at least welcomed by, family members upon arrival.

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[68] Lawrence G. Novick, "City Opens Its Doors to 600 a Month," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), May 25, 1966; Although records are spotty in places, the City of Ponta Delgada processed 1,002 emigrants in December of 1967, 1,002 emigrants in December of 1968, 732 in February of 1969, 631 emigrants in March of 1969, and about 600 emigrants monthly from April to June of 1970. See Governador do Distrito José Jacinto Vasconcelos Raposo to Presidente da Junta da Emigração, Jan. 10, 1968, 1968 Outgoing Mail to Junta de Emigração, 1968, Cota 1114, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Governador do Distrito, Luciano Machado Soares to Presidente da Junta de Emigração, Jan. 1, 1969, 1969 Outgoing Mail to Junta de Emigração 1969, Cota 1132, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Governador do Distrito, Luciano Machado Soares to Presidente da Junta de Emigração, March 5, 1969, 1969 Outgoing Mail to Junta de Emigração 1969, Cota 1132, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Governador do Distrito, Luciano Machado Soares to Presidente da Junta de Emigração, May 8, 1969, 1969 Outgoing Mail to Junta de Emigração, Cota 1132, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Augusto Branco Camacho, Secretário do Governo Civil to Presidente da Junta de Emigração, May 13, 1970, 1970 Outgoing Mail to Junta de Emigração, Cota 1143, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Augusto Branco Camacho, Secretário do Governo Civil to Presidente da Junta de Emigração, June 11, 1970, 1970 Outgoing Mail to Junta de Emigração, Cota 1143, *AGCDPD-BPARPD*; Augusto Branco Camacho, Secretário do Governo Civil to Presidente da Junta de Emigração, July 7, 1970, 1970 Outgoing Mail to Junta de Emigração, Cota 1143, *AGCDPD-BPARPD.*

[69] Lawrence G. Novick, "City Opens Its Doors to 600 a Month," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), May 25, 1966.

[70] "Schools Here Adapt to Flood of Immigrants," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), May 14, 1966.

[71] Dorothy Ann Gilbert, *Recent Portuguese Immigrants to Fall River, Massachusetts: An Analysis of Relative Economic Success* (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 65.

And as the head of the New Bedford Division of Employment Security put it in 1966, Azoreans got "pretty readily into employment" precisely because "they have relatives working, mostly in the garment shops, who get jobs for them."[72]

In fact, New Bedford's municipal authorities flaunted the ease with which Azoreans found a place in the city's reconstructed "mixed" economy. As Francis J. Murphy, New Bedford's director of Employment Security put it in May of 1966, Azoreans were "quickly absorbed into the labor force" through their familial and ethnic connections.[73] Similarly, when Leo S. Harrington of New Bedford's welfare department was asked about what problems his office was experiencing in helping new immigrants apply for aid, his answer was equally telling: "No problem at all…There just aren't any [immigrants applying]."[74] Optimism continued untrammeled into the close of the decade. As New Bedford's mayor put it in 1969, "We find these people to be industrious, capable, and they fit in rather quickly to the pattern of industrial life as it exists here in New Bedford…we have a continuing pool of workers who are assets to the industrial economy of our city."[75] The Portuguese, after all, were *not* migrating to an area in decline; they were migrating to a reconstructed garment and small-electronics economy that accepted them with open arms.

Local manufacturers, for their part, were anything but quiet about their adoration for these new migrants. "They're willing to learn and they're willing to work…they're very well mannered and well-disciplined—unlike some of our own boys and girls," one local garment

[72] Virginia E. Rodgers, "Immigration Tide is Rising Rapidly," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Oct. 9, 1966.

[73] Lawrence G. Novick, "City Opens Its Doors to 600 a Month," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), May 25, 1966.

[74] Rodgers, "Immigration Tide is Rising Rapidly."

[75] "Total Industrial Employment at Hand, Mayor Says," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Feb. 9, 1969.

employer noted in 1966.[76] By then, local companies were fielding calls directly to the local Portuguese consul, Vasco a Villela, in order to recruit workers directly from the Azores.[77] Three years later, facing persistent labor shortages, local Republican Congresswoman Margaret Heckler was publicly encouraging Azoreans to immigrate to the area.[78] Indeed, Al Markson, a local garment manufacturer, complained that although "we'd like to expand our operations in New Bedford…we can't because of the labor shortage. Several manufacturers in the city have found that they must expand elsewhere facing labor shortages."[79] Samuel Ades, owner of States Niteware in New Bedford made much the same observation: "I employ 300 people now, but I could easily employ 350 to 400 if I could get them." When asked about these shortages, his son cited prevailing "affluence" as the problem: "As society becomes more affluent, women prefer to stay at home rather than go to work," he lamented.[80] Samson Segall, who founded Eastern Sportswear in 1946, offered a similar diagnosis. New Bedford's problem was "overemployment," he contended, as it created "complacency in the worker, who if not satisfied with his present job, can move across the street to another employer." Rising prosperity, it seems, was not necessarily good news for these garment industrialists.

It was these desperate businessmen who hungrily brought Azorean migrants onto the factory floor. In fact, many mill owners would later confess that they likely could not have stayed open in the area if not for the sudden influx of Portuguese migrants. After all, as one New

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Jeannette J. Lambert, "Fall River's Apparel Industry, 1920-1986," 10-11, unpublished manuscript, Ambrose F. Keeley Library, Fall River, Massachusetts.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Paul Mindus, "Garment Industry Employment Nears 8,000" *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Feb. 9, 1969.

England mill owner put it in the late 1970s, "nobody wants to do weaving except the Portuguese."[81] Curiously, then, for local business operators in the late 1960s, neither "long-term" decline nor mass migration were the problem. *Affluence* was the problem; labor migration was the solution.

Fracturing Capital and Community

In hindsight, of course, the growth of the Massachusetts economy clearly stood on unstable foundations. Most obviously—at least in the southeastern industrial core—it was founded on an influx of cheap labor, leaving the area vulnerable to the possibility of future Portuguese prosperity. But other, less apparent factors would prove just as destructive: namely, the rampant bout of incorporation and multi-nationalization that ran concomitantly with Massachusetts' growth, the explosion of competing state development programs in the United States and the world, and the dependence of the state on the federal expenditures necessary to sustain "cold" war. These economic fault lines in 1960s prosperity would become the first points of fracture amidst 1970s disintegration.

Perhaps most obviously to contemporary commentators, the new profitability of Massachusetts manufacturing spurred a wave of mergers, incorporations, and acquisitions that quickly displaced proprietary firms and routed out family companies. [82] The "Massachusetts Merger Merry-Go-Round, " as it came to be known by the state's largest organization of manufacturing capitalists, the Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM), became a frequent

[81] Louise Lamphere, *From Working Daughters to Working Mothers: Immigrant Women in a New England Industrial Community* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 233.

[82] Walter P. Klein, "The Changing Fabric of the Textile Industry," *AIM Industrial News* 10, no. 10 (July 1968).

topic of interest amongst local businesspeople.[83] In 1967, for example, 57 Massachusetts firms were acquired by out-of-state corporations; 59 were acquired by in-state companies. In 1968, 106 were acquired by out-of-state and 76 by in-state corporations, giving Massachusetts the highest merger rate in the nation. In that year alone, some 34,000 Massachusetts workers came under new corporate ownership, leaving about 21,500 newly employed by out-of-state corporations. Overall, from 1967 to 1974, 770 Massachusetts firms were brought into the fold of larger national and multi-national corporations, most from outside the state.[84] By then, not only was the scale of this wave of "conglomeration" noteworthy, but so was its scope: as one industrialist noted, there were now companies making "macaroni," "chocolate." and all sorts of products in multiple plants spread over many cities.[85]

Importantly, the "multi-nationalization" of industrial Massachusetts came to perceptibly narrow the political aspirations—and weaken the local commitments—of Massachusetts manufacturers. Racial equality, for example, formed one core issue that incorporation tended to displace from business owners' concern. After all, in the mid-1960s, Massachusetts' business leaders had taken a surprising level of interest, and a surprisingly progressive orientation, towards racial matters. In the 1960s, for instance, Walter H. Palmer, an executive of Raytheon, headquartered in Lexington, made a name for himself in assisting local Civil Rights and public transit activists in the struggle to increase job prospects for Boston-area African Americans.[86]

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[83] Jim Sledd, "The Massachusetts Merger Merry-Go-Round," *Industry* 34, no. 5, (March 1969), 19; "Merger Merry-go-Round Slows" *Industrial News Reporter* 12, no 5 (Feb. 1970); "Merger Carrousel Starts to Wind Down," *Industry* 36, no. 3 (March 1971), 79.

[84] "Merger Merry-go-round Winds Down," *Industry*, 39, no. 2, (Feb. 1974), 15.

[85] Sledd, "The Massachusetts Merger Merry-Go-Round."

[86] Massachusetts Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, *The Six-District Plan: Integration of the Springfield, Mass., Elementary Schools* (1976), ii; Oral History, Armedio 'Al' Armenit, Oral History, interview by Renee Garrelick, Sept. 10, 2001, Concord Free Public Library, Concord, Massachusetts,

Palmer even used a series of articles published by the Associated Industries of Massachusetts to encourage his fellow businesspeople to embrace a more racially-inclusive agenda. More specifically, Palmer asked business representatives to join him in pushing for increased "government spending," the "massive rehabilitation of our slums," and the redemption of "American individualism" from "selfishness" and "material prosperity" in the fight to bring equality to black workers.[87] By 1968, even the President of AIM was prevailing upon Massachusetts industrialists to back the "black power" movement, declaring that "*Organized black power is the best hope we have that the deprived black man will acquire enough strength and capability to pull himself up by his own proverbial bootstraps.*"[88]

In fact, by the late 1960s, many Massachusetts capitalists saw their struggle to lower corporate taxes as making them *allies* with contemporary urban reformers. Both, after all, were part of a shared struggle to spur industry in Massachusetts' urban core.[89] Moreover, rather than endorsing the pell-mell rush to the suburbs, AIM backed the passage of Massachusetts bill 1175, creating an "urban job incentive bureau" to establish a means to equalize urban taxes with the state average to spur inner-city investment.[90] AIM never missed a chance to flaunt its alliances with pro-labor, democratic factions with whom it worked in the struggle to lower taxes for urban manufacturers. "I never thought I'd see the day…when Democrats would be fighting Republican

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http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/ Fin_Aids/OH_Texts/Armenti.html; Patricia Morse, *Route 128: Boston's Road to Segregation* (Boston, MA: Massachusetts State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1975).

[87] Walter H. Palmer, "The Job Ahead I: Urban Unrest forces a new, hard look at National Priorities" *Industry* 32, no. 10 (Aug. 1967), 29; Walter H. Palmer, "The Job Ahead—II: It's time to Get Serious," *Industry* 33, no. 3 (Jan. 1968), 14.

[88] Edwin Campbell, "Black Power: Destructive or Constructive?," *Industry* 33, no. 6 (April 1968), 4.

[89] Edwin Campbell, "S. 1175—Promise for Our Cities," *Industry* 34, no. 5 (March 1969), 6.

[90] Ibid.

governors to give industry in Massachusetts a break that it sorely needs," Michael Paul Feeney, a former factory worker turned pro-labor Massachusetts representative, put it in 1970.[91] In the struggle for issues like urban rejuvenation and racial equality, AIM was happy to extol its support for (and support of) folks like Feeney.

As the scope of Massachusetts manufacturing nationalized and, in many cases, multi-nationalized, however, not only did the power of the Association itself weaken, but it also became less of a mouthpiece for the interests of Massachusetts industry. Instead, it slowly began to pursue a more radical, geographically unhinged laissez-faire agenda. In 1971, for instance, its monthly publication featured a long-form editorial on the virtues of free trade: a tremendous departure for an organization long-defined by its staunch protectionism.[92] The Association also began to embrace a more conspiratorial mindset when it came to the seeming "war" on the free enterprise system. It began to urge members to check on how "the basics of our economic system" were taught in local schools. One member even started a ten-week program at Walpole High School that provided both vocational training and an education in the virtues of free enterprise ("freedom" after all, "can only be preserved if more people are aware of the tremendous advantages of the Free Enterprise System and become convinced of the need for their support").[93] Local business owners were also increasingly urged to fight for the interest of "free enterprise" as a sort of disembodied ideal. As the President of the Association put it in 1978, "There are plenty of spokesmen for the poor, the unemployed, the socially or physically

[91] Joe McCarthy, "Michael Paul Feeney: The Complete State Legislator," *Industry*, 25, no. 6 (June 1970), 10.

[92] Milton C. Lauenstein, Jr., "Contagious Effects of Trade Barriers," *Industry* 36, no. 4 (April 1971), 25. That same year, the president of the Association came out in support of "Fair Trade," what he saw as a middle ground between free trade and protectionism. See Elden L. Auker, "World Trade: A New Policy of Fairness," *Industry* 36, no. 11 (Nov. 1971), 6.

[93] Richard Nenneman, "Economic Illiteracy in U.S.—Political Opportunism," *Industry* 39, no. 3 (March 1974), 8; "An Introduction to Free Enterprise," *Industry* 42, no. 7 (July 1977), 34.

disadvantaged, and for every variety of narrow special interest or identifiable ethnic or racial group…But how about the people picking up the tab: who speaks for them?"[94] Although "free enterprise" sentiments had survived amongst a select few business radicals throughout the twentieth century, in a curious twist, it did not become the mainstream ideology of the Associated Industries of Massachusetts until its membership began to shift from owners and capitalists to executives and middle managers.[95]

This was no mere coincidence. Indeed, the increasing disassociation between Massachusetts industrialists and local politics was itself a product of the structural transformation of firm owners into middle managers. After all, as newly minted middle managers struggled to gain control over their fates, facing seemingly ceaseless corporate restructuring and conglomeration, it often only exacerbated their eventual political radicalization, as can be seen in the personal letters and corporate papers left by Leo F. St. Aubin and the New Bedford Rayon manufacturing company. Set up in 1928 by a Delaware company, New Bedford Rayon, no doubt due to the low wage rates in the city, provided profitable returns throughout most of its early life.[96] As a result, in 1951, it was bought out by Mohawk Carpet Manufacturers, which, by the

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[94] A.L. Bolton, Editorial, *Industry* 43, no. 4 (April 1978), 6.

[95] As Kim Phillips-Fein argues, although radical laissez-faire sentiments have existed amongst businessmen since the New Deal, these businessmen were, until this era, distinct minority. Most businessmen largely embraced the social safety net provisions of the New Deal order. See Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2009); Alan Brinkley, *The End Of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 173; Jason Scott Smith, "The Liberal Invention of the Mulitnational Corporation: David Lilienthal and Postwar Capitalism," in *What's Good for Business: Business and American Politics Since World War II*, ed. Kim Phillips-Fein and Julian E. Zelizer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 109.

[96] Eleventh Quarterly Report to the Stockholders, April 1931, Folder 2, Series A, Sub-group 1: New Bedford Rayon, Inc., Records, 1926-1974, MSS 25, New Bedford Rayon, Inc. Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts **[hereafter *NBRR-NBWMRL*]**; Twelfth Quarterly Report to the Stockholders, July 31, 1931, Folder 2, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Thirteenth Quarterly Report to the Stockholders, Sept. 30, 1931, Folder 2, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Stockholder Report, Feb. 15, 1932, Folder 2, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Sixth Annual Report, Covering the Year 1934, Folder 2, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*.

mid-1950s, had acquired a manufacturing base spread over Amsterdam (New York), Brockton, Dillon (South Carolina), Mexico City, New Castle (Delaware), and Phoenixville (Pennsylvania).[97] In 1956, Mohawk merged with Alexander Smith, creating the multi-divisional "Mohasco" corporation, the world's largest carpet manufacturer.[98] By 1959, Mohasco had shut down every northern plant except their New Bedford factory, moving plant machinery southward: Amsterdam equipment went to Mexico; Pheonixville equipment to Greenville, Mississippi.[99] Rather than shutting down the New Bedford plant, however, Mohasco decided to sell it off in 1969, receiving offers from four corporations.[100] Eventually sold to Empire Synthetics, it stayed open until an unfortunate combination of price increases, as well as an ill-timed factory fire, forced its liquidation in September of 1970.[101]

The President of New Bedford Rayon Company, Leo F. St. Aubin, was arguably more a victim than engineer of these machinations. Indeed, when Mohasco considered a merger with the

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[97] Annual Report to Stockholders, Dec. 31, 1951, Mohawk Carpet Mills, Inc., Folder 5, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Lewis R. Jones, "Through the Mill," *Tomohawk* [sic], Sept. 1951, Folder 2, Series G, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Olga Louise Garth, "A Historical Account of New Bedford Rayon Division," Sept. 19, 1966, 29, Folder 1, Series G, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; *Mohasco Industries: Annual Report, 1956*, Folder 4, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*.

[98] *Mohasco Industries: Annual Report: 1957*, Folder 4, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; "Notice of Special Meeting of Stockholders, Dec. 31, 1955," Folder 14, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; April Dougal Gasbarre, Candice Mancini, and Eric W. Novinson, "Mohawk Industries, Inc," in *International Directory of Company Histories*, ed. Drew D. Johnson, vol. 135 (Detroit: St. James Press, 2012), 258–63.

[99] *Mohasco Industries, Inc., Annual Report, 1958*, Folder 4, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; *Mohasco Industries, Inc., Annual Report, 1959*, Folder 5, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; *Mohasco Industries, Inc., Annual Report, 1961*, Folder 5, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; *Annual Report to Stockholders, Dec. 31, 1951, Mohawk Caret Mills, Inc.,* Folder 5, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMR*.

[100] Leo F. St. Aubin to Dr. Robert Steiger, July 9, 1969, Folder 6, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*.

[101] Memo to Leo F. St. Aubin from Harold Unterberg, July 11, 1969, Folder 17, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Leo F. St. Aubin to Robert Chadbourne, Aug. 11, 1969, Folder 7, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Letter to Edward Roberts, Aug. 11, 1970, Folder 12, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Form Letter, Aug. 12, 1970, Folder 12, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Olga Louise Garth, "A Historical Account of New Bedford Rayon Division," Sept. 19, 1966 [last page addendum, 1970], Folder 1, Series G, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*.

"American Standard" toilet and plumbing manufacturers (a "fast moving conglomerate" with a "young president who is really on the make," St. Aubin put it, somewhat tersely, in a personal letter), the veteran rayon manufacturer had "many reservations." St. Aubin knew, after all, that ownership by a plumbing company would not bode well for New Bedford's long-term rayon production future—but he had little choice in the matter.[102] The sale of the plant to Empire did not make his life any easier. "For the first time since the first of July [when New Bedford Rayon was sold], I have had a few minutes to sit down and catch my breath," he wrote a friend in late October.[103] "Nada [wife] and I had a very rough summer… For no good reasons at all the retina of my left eye split and this had to be corrected…We got through the selling of New Bedford Rayon Division to Empire Synthetics…this has been a complete change of pace and [they are practically] changing the complete operation…Business has been completely chaotic."[104] St. Aubin's papers certainly do not jibe with the all-too-frequent caricature of the assertive and increasingly savvy late-twentieth century executive: he often comes off as a manager harried by the tempestuous corporate restructuring of his rayon plant, with relatively little control over his future.

[102] Leo F. St. Aubin to Arthur Brown, Oct. 15, 1968, Folder 3, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL.*

[103] Leo F. St. Aubin to Arthur Brown, Oct. 29, 1969, Folder 8, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL.*

[104] Ibid.

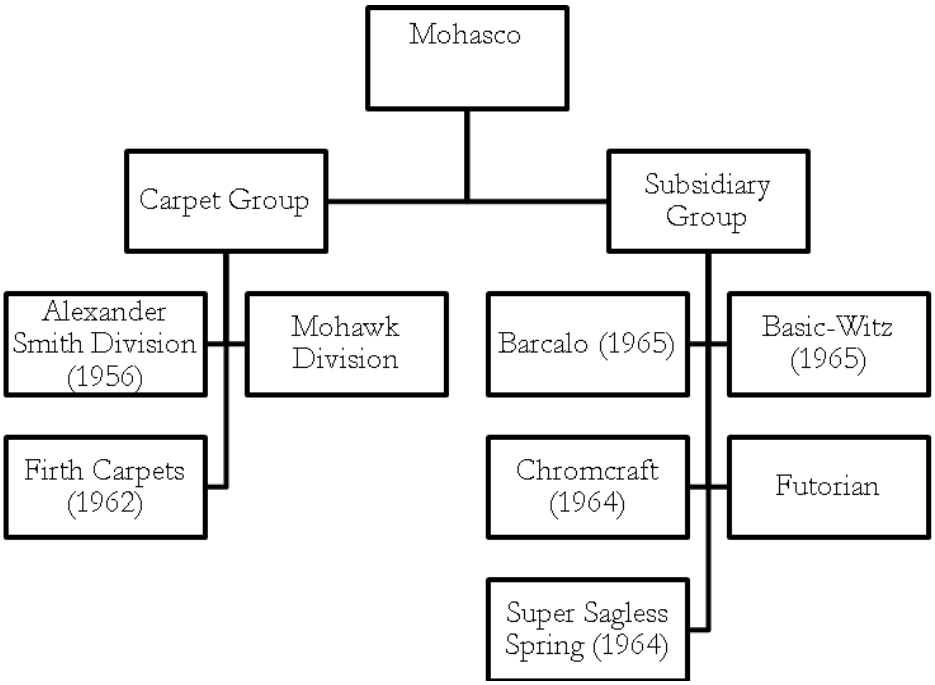

Figure 8.9: Corporate Structure of Mohasco, 1967
In the 1960s, Mohasco was rapidly diversifying into furniture production (all companies in the "Subsidiary Group" were furniture manufacturers). Factories were now found all over the United States (though especially the south), Puerto Rico and Mexico City. Although Mohawk unloaded its New Bedford plant in 1969, it remains the world's largest flooring company, with plants in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Europe, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia and the United States.[105]

Not only did the process take a personal toll on St. Aubin, but it also forced him to cut back on his local commitments. St. Aubin now found himself spending most of his time in New York City and Montréal rather than New Bedford. He withdrew from many of the community programs with which he had been involved, such as his role in the "Onboard" Concentrated Employment Program, simply because he was constantly getting pulled out of the area.[106] Similarly, he cut his payments to the New Bedford Chamber of Commerce—the board long

[105] *Mohasco Industries, Inc. 1967 Annual Report,* Folder 6, Series A, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Mohawk Industries, *Floor It: Taking Mohawk to the Next Level, Mohawk Industries, Inc. 2013 Annual Report*. http://mohawkind.com/CorporateIRFinancialReports.aspx

[106] Ibid.; Leo F. St. Aubin to Adalberth S. Rozario, Onboard Inc., Dec. 29, 1969, Folder 9, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL.*

known for sponsoring industrial development in the region—under pressure from the plant's new ownership.[107] And, most strikingly, for the first time in his personal papers, St. Aubin began firing off numerous angry letters to politicians and policymakers, pushing for a more business-friendly posture.[108] To cap it off, Aubin was convinced that the planted fire bombs that finally destroyed New Bedford Rayon in August of 1970—only a month after the New Bedford race "rebellion" in July—were a reaction to the company's past support for creating more jobs for African Americans. Although St. Aubin had put forth considerable sums of time, money, and energy for this cause, the experience left him bitter and dejected. As he summed up his state of mind in a personal letter,

> We at New Bedford Rayon have served on all kinds of committees—CEP, Onboard, etc., Give-away programs and feeding professional parasites. New Bedford Rayon itself has spent over $70,000 in the past few years trying to train the so-called 'underprivileged' groups to be rayon spinners (males), cone winders (females) which have minimal training periods of ten to twelve weeks that eventually pay $2.63 ½ per hour in base wages... And after 60 or 70 trainees, we end up with possibly two that are still working; and we have been bombed out probably as a result of our training programs in disagreements with some of the minority groups… [Go into] any of the bargain marts where the masses trade and see how much of the day to day wearing apparel is made in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, etc…Stop taxing the public and industry to death—City, State, and Federal…Stop all of these so-called 'do good' programs. We will soon have the whites setting up Vigilante groups – the law is uneffective.[sic] Why did not Governor Sargent send the National Guard to New Bedford?"… [Labor and minority groups] have become part of little groups that disregard the rights of common decency in the ordinary citizen.[109]

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[107] Leo F. St. Aubin to Frank Dixon, Vice President New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce, Oct. 7, 1969, Folder 8, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*

[108] For a sampling of Leo F. St. Aubin's 1969 and 1970 lobbying letters, See Leo F. St. Aubin to Edward Coury, Aug. 11, 1969, Folder 7, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Telegram, Leo F. St. Aubin to Hastings Ketih, Aug. 1969, Folder 7, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Leo F. St. Aubin to George C. Mendonca, Jan. 26, 1970, Folder 9, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Leo F. St. Aubin to Hastings Keith, Aug. 19, 1970, Folder 12, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL.*

[109] Ibid.

St. Aubin was perhaps more tragic figure than capitalist puppet master. Although we can never know the exact trajectory of his politics, it is clear that the Empire Synthetics buyout and the subsequent fate of New Bedford Rayon left St. Aubin's local commitments slashed and his politics strongly pro-business and anti-minority—a noticeable turnaround for a man who had, just a couple years earlier, pledged two thousand dollars to the local United Fund.[110]

In a very real sense, then, the morphing of local industrialists into middle managers of vast multinational conglomerates weakened the connection between capital and community that, although never powerful enough to thwart capital mobility entirely, had at least insured that *some* local elites identified their political interests and aspirations with the state of Massachusetts.[111] When Massachusetts voters turned down a string of what was decried as "anti-business" legislation in the late 1970s, for instance, the Association's chairman credited the victory not to an organized phalanx of manufacturing capitalists, but to the "strong grass-roots effort of 'middle management' people in industry itself…They wrote letters, distributed pamphlets, and even manned the polls," showing that industry could "beat the 'activists' at their own game."[112] Although historians have long asserted that the wave of major "race riots" that swept the country in the closing years of the 1960s—including the bloody New Bedford "rebellion" of 1970—evaporated support for business investment in the urban core, equally important was the fact that

[110] Letter, Leo F. St. Aubin to Mr. Armand Boudreau, "United Fund of Greater new Bedford" New Bedford, MA, Feb 4, 1969, Folder 4, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*; Letter to Armand Boudreau, July 28, 1969, Folder 6, Sub-Series 2, Series F, Sub-group 1, *NBRR-NBWMRL*

[111] As discussed in chapters four and five, many retail and utility-owning capitalists continued to see their future in Massachusetts throughout the twentieth century. Many manufacturing capitalists, both because of social and fixed-capital investments, also had a long history of functioning as what historian William Hartford calls "Regional Persisters." See William F. Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?: Unions and Economic Change in the New England Textile Industry, 1870-1960* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996).

[112] Edward T. Rigney, "PAACM: A Link with Political Reality," *Industry* 42, no. 2 (Feb. 1977), 4.

the erosion of proprietary capitalism weakened the business community's investment in Massachusetts itself.[113]

Global Capitalism Unbound

Boding equally poorly for the future of industrial Massachusetts was the fact that its massive economic growth in the 1960s was also inextricably bound to the special incentives local governments and the state offered mobile industry. After all, such incentives were fast becoming less unique as states all over the nation and world began to copy the strategies Massachusetts had been honing since the nineteenth century. Increasingly, "global capitalism" became a cacophony of seemingly endless local economies seeking to outflank one another in a mad dash for mobile capital. Massachusetts was unique enough in this endeavor that it easily reaped the benefits of industrial seduction in the 1930s; by the 1960s, however, its enticements were increasingly drowned out by a worldwide chorus of advertised incentives and inducements for mobile capital.

In fact, by the mid-1950s, "industrial relocation" had itself become something of an industry within industry, as companies like Fantus Factory Locating Service and Conway Data assisted businesses in moving into other states and nations in search of the cheapest labor and best incentives.[114] In October of 1956, Conway even began to publish a nationally syndicated

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[113] Ray Richardson, Say Brother, "New Bedford," Episode 63, Television Documentary, WGBH, July 23, 1970. Indeed, by the end of the 1970s, AIM was increasingly prioritizing the struggle for the "free enterprise system"—free trade, lower taxes, and industry deregulation—over the struggle for the particular interests of Massachusetts industry. See, for example, Elden Auker, "Free Enterprise—Wellspring of Efficiency," *Industry* 37, no. 11 (Nov. 1972), 7.

[114] Fantus Company and Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, *An Evaluation of Massachusetts' Changing Attitude toward Industry* (South Orange, NJ: Fantus, 1978); U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Industrial Policy, Economic Growth, and the Competitiveness of U.S. Industry,* 98th Cong., 1st sess., 1983, pt. 2 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1983), 129; Norton L. Berman, "Future Trends in Economic Development," *Vital Speeches of the Day* 51, no. 22 (9/1/85 1985): 691–94; Thomas R. Plaut and

magazine, *Industrial Development*, that allowed mobile capitalists a one-stop source on all the myriad incentives different areas of the United States offered them.[115] Now everyone from the Erie Railroad ("Ideal plant site in the heart of industrial America") to the Baltimore Industrial Area ("You'll find a site that's right!") to the Rhode Island Development Council ("world's most skillful people…competitive tax structure + excellent deep water ports") had a central venue in which to advertise their special appeal to mobile capital.[116] The very first issue of *Industrial Development* in 1956 also contained an index of the more than 5,000 state, local, and regional "development" organizations in the United States, all "seeking in various ways to lure you to specific localities…On the average, two new groups come into existence every week."[117] Thus, even when the New Bedford Industrial Development Commission did advertise in *Industrial Development* ("LABOR—large resident pool, all skills…HOUSING—Suburban living for key personnel") it now faced staggering competition from all over Massachusetts and the nation.[118]

Joseph E. Pluta, "Business Climate, Taxes and Expenditures, and State Industrial Growth in the United States," *Southern Economic Journal* 50, no. 1 (1983): 99; Michael B. Berkman, *The State Roots of National Politics: Congress and the Tax Agenda, 1978–1986* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994), 90–91.

[115] *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection*, October 1956.

[116] Rhode Island Development Council, Advertisement, "Rhode Island: Industry's Ideal State," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection,* Oct. 1956; Erie Railroad, Advertisement, "Your New Plant Will Grow in the Erie Area," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection,* October 1956; Baltimore Industrial Area, Advertisement, "Put Your Plant Where Others are Thriving," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection,* October 1956; Tami J. Friedman, "'A Trail of Ghost Towns Across Our Land': The Decline of Manufacturing in Yonkers, New York," in *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization*, eds. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2003), 33.

[117] "More Than 5000 Groups at Your Service," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection*, 45.

[118] New Bedford Industrial Development Commission, Advertisement, "Plant Location Facts of New Bedford, Massachusetts," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection*, October 1958.

Figure 8.10: Advertisements from the magazine, *Industrial Development*, trying to induce mobile manufacturers to various locales, 1956.

Reaching out to mobile capital was a relatively novel tactic for New Bedford to adopt when its program began in the 1920s; by the 1950s, states all over the United States and the world were doing much the same. Competition for mobile capital was stiff.[119]

[119] Rhode Island Development Council, Advertisement, "Rhode Island: Industry's Ideal State"; Erie Railroad, Advertisement, "Your New Plant Will Grow in the Erie Area"; Baltimore Industrial Area, Advertisement, "Put Your Plant Where Others are Thriving"; Louisville & Nashville Railroad, Advertisement, "No Water Worries Here!," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection,* October 1956; Northern States Power Company, Advertisement, "An Army of Highly Skilled Clerical Help," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection,* October 1956; Fall River Industrial Commission, Advertisement, "This is Fall River Massachusetts," *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection,* October 1962; Lackawanna Railroad, Advertisement, *Industrial Development: The National Magazine of Area Analysis and Business Site Selection,* October 1956.

Moreover, this trickle of local and state-funded "industrial development" programs in the early 1950s had become a veritable flood of public spending and manpower by the 1970s. In 1976, *Business Week* declared it a "Second War Between the States."[120] By then, there were well over 50,000 industrial development organizations all over the country, and Massachusetts' sizable 2.356 million dollar investment in luring mobile industry to its shores in 1974 still was not far over Washington State's 2.3 million investment or Alabama's 1.9 million dollar contribution.[121] Its industrial development staff of 96 public workers simply paled in comparison to the 358 in Ohio, 200 in Pennsylvania, and 183 in Tennessee.[122] And its advertising budget of 270,000 dollars was also a far cry from Michigan's 1.5 million or New Jersey's 600,000 dollar expenditure.[123] Direct industrial financing was also on the rise nationwide. The various American states had issued about 20 million dollars in industrial development bonds in 1957; ten years later, it was 1.8 billion dollars. By the late 1960s, that number was over 3.5 billion.[124] Tax-free financing for industry went from less than a half billion dollars in 1969 to 3.5 billion dollars in 1977.[125] Indeed, a 1977 research study by the Associated Industries of Massachusetts discovered that nearly half of all of New Hampshire's current employment could be traced to factories that

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[120] Bennet Harrison and Barry Bluestone, "The Incidence and Regulation of Plant Closings" in *Sunbelt/Snowbelt: Urban Development and Regional Restructuring*, Larry Sawers and William K. Tabb, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 381; R. Scott Fosler, ed., *The New Economic Role of American States: Strategies in a Competitive World Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 3–4.

[121] William Ronald Thomas, *Historical and Functional Aspects of State Industrial Development Organizations*, Occasional Studies 9 (South Carolina: Division of Research, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, College of Business Administration, University of South Carolina, 1975), 41–42.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Thomas, *Historical and Functional Aspects of State Industrial Development Organizations*, 65–66.

[124] Jerry Jacobs, *Bidding For Business: Corporate Auctions and the 50 Disunited States* (Washington, DC: Public Interest Research Group, 1979), 12–13.

[125] Ibid., 4.

had moved from Massachusetts to take advantage of any of the number of inducements New Hampshire industrial boosters could offer.[126]

Moreover, as the "cold war" simmered away, federal dollars for industrial production disappeared as well. Although the so-called "sun-belt" states are generally most associated with heavy military expenditures, Massachusetts was not left entirely in the cold.[127] Its manufacturers took in 1.2 billion dollars in federal defense money in 1965, 1.3 billion dollars in 1966, and 1.4 billion dollars in 1967, making it eighth amongst the states in defense spending.[128] Even the 1969 moon voyage departed with Aerovox of New Bedford electronic systems and rheostats, as well as electronic and metal components from New Bedford's Epec Industries, Reynolds-DeWalt Printing, and Rodney Metals Teledyne.[129] Fearing the worst for what might come at the Cold War's close, the state even commissioned a multi-volume report from the Arthur D. Little consulting firm on the potential of the Massachusetts economy to weather defense spending cutbacks.[130] Ultimately, it was the dire picture these reports painted that convinced the Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development to change its economic development tactics. From then on out, the department largely stopped advertising the wage and tax

[126] Associated Industries of Massachusetts, *The Move to New Hampshire, 1950 to 1970* (1977), 3.

[127] Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism: Phoenix and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[128] "How Defense Contracts Affect Employment, Spending," *Industrial News Reporter* 10, no. 2 (Nov. 1967).

[129] "Challenge to Private Industry," *Industry* 34, no. 14, (Dec. 1969).

[130] Arthur D. Little, Inc., *Fostering Industrial Growth In Massachusetts, Volume 1: Cutbacks in Defense Spending and the Economy of Massachusetts, 1968-1972* (Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, 1970); Arthur D. Little, Inc., *Fostering Industrial Growth In Massachusetts, Volume 2: Strategies for Development of Selected Industries in the 1970's* (Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, 1970).

advantages of Massachusetts and instead began to emphasize the educational attainment of its workforce and the state's technical and educational infrastructure.[131]

When the state of Massachusetts and cities like New Bedford and Fall River had begun engaging in the use of public money to lure industry in the 1930s and 1940s, they were pioneers of sorts. By the 1960s and 1970s, they were slowly losing ground in a frenzied race to the bottom. Industries could now play states and cities against one another to get the most state financing, tax abatements, and free land possible. After all, New Bedford's 1971 industrial park was not quite as effective when there was now enough available industrial park space in the state of Massachusetts to collectively form a city larger than Cambridge.[132]

And by the 1960s, not only was Massachusetts facing industrial development competition from other states, but other nations as well—all copying the very same tactics pioneered by the various United States. South Korea, for instance, took a large portion of the 2.6 billion dollars in aid it received from the United States between 1945 and 1958 and pushed it into the pocketbooks of foreign industrial developers.[133] By 1975, U.S. aid to South Korea totaled 11.6 billion dollars.[134] Under the rule of Park Chung-hee, South Korea continued to induce export industry development through inexpensive credit, tax abatements, tariff protection, and a devalued

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[131] Michael S. Dukakis and Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Creating the Future: The Massachusetts Comeback and Its Promise for America* (New York: Summit Books, 1988), 44–53; Carroll P Sheehan [Commissioner State Department of Commerce and Development], "Wage, Money Policies Incompatible," *Industry* 36, no. 2 (Feb. 1971), 17.

[132] By 1971, there was 5,769.32 acres of available industrial park sites available in Massachusetts. See Ibid., 54-55.

[133] Ellen Israel Rosen, *Making Sweatshops: The Globalization of the U.S. Apparel Industry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 44.

[134] Campaign for a Democratic Foreign Policy, "Background Report: U.S. Foreign Aid and U.S. Job Loss: Textiles in South Korea," Folder 3, Box 1, Series 1, MS 241, *ACTWU-UMASSA.*

currency over the course of the 1960s, all of which paid huge dividends when, over the course of the 1970s, the value of South Korea's exports ballooned a princely 4,000 percent.[135] Taiwan too began offering textile and apparel exporters tax rebates and "duty-free-processing zones" to catalyze industrial development.[136] The 1949 creation of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry in Japan began decades of strict import control, the injection of public funds into industrial research and development, and cheap and easy credit through the Development Bank of Japan and the Industrial Bank of Japan.[137] Indeed, although the rise of the "developmental state" and state-led industrial development is often heralded as a novel phenomenon that took over the nations of East Asia and Latin America in the late-twentieth century, the various United States were crucial forerunners.[138] Although federal officials may continue to wring their hands over "unfair" inducements to industrial development abroad, the progenitor of state-led industrial development was more Alabama or Massachusetts than South Korea.

And, not surprisingly, East Asian industrial development was about as successful as its American antecedents. From 1950 to 1980, United States foreign direct investment increased by a factor of sixteen; American domestic investment grew about half as quickly.[139] Such huge investment abroad often devastated local industries. The 1.2 million dollars pushed into foreign

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[135] Jeffry A Frieden, *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 421; Sudip Chaudhuri, "Government and Economic Development in South Korea, 1961-79," *Social Scientist* 24, no. 11/12 (November 1, 1996): 18–35.

[136] Ibid., 47.

[137] Hironori Sasada, *The Evolution of the Japanese Developmental State: Institutions Locked in by Ideas* (Routledge, 2012), 127; Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982); Mikio Sumiya, ed., *History of Japanese Trade and Industry Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Esteban Pérez Caldentey, "The Concept and Evolution of the Developmental State," *International Journal of Political Economy* 37, no. 3 (October 1, 2008): 28–29.

[138] Ibid.; Frieden, *Global Capitalism*, 421.

[139] Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (Basic Books, 1982), 42.

textile firms in Indonesia from 1969 to 1974, for instance, slashed handloom employment in that country by 80 percent while only creating new employment opportunities for about one quarter of the 250,000 left jobless.[140] Not only did East Asia fashion itself into something of a magnet for mobile capital, but as factories opened in nations like Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan, East Asia's "lure" became a self-fulfilling prophecy. As the devastation of local industries left workers desperate, poor, and willing to work for abysmal wages, non-migrating garment and electronics firms in cities like New Bedford and Fall River were forced to compete with their new, low-overhead East Asian counterparts.[141] Import competition exploded.

And although not headline-stealing until the 1980s, the first glimmerings of the so-called "import menace" emerged with these industrial development schemes in the 1950s and 1960s. In Japan, for instance, the four years from 1953 to 1956 saw cotton apparel exports to the United States grow 3,250 percent.[142] American cotton imports from all nations just about tripled from 1966 to 1972.[143] By 1971, foreign imports of dress and sportshirts totaled about half of domestic production figures.[144] And because the trade agreements codified by the Multi-Fibre Agreement in 1974 regulated import *quantity* rather than value, high-priced apparel like suits and trousers became especially susceptible to import competition.[145] The decade after 1966 saw American

[140] Brian Bolton and the International Textile, Garment, and Leather Workers' Federation, *The MNCs in the Textile, Garment, and Leather Industries,* Second World Congress, Dublin, March 22-26 1976 (ITGLWF, 1976), xi-xii.

[141] ACWA, ILGWU, Campaign for a Democratic Foreign Policy to Senator Brooke, May 4, 1976, Folder 3, Box 1, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA*.

[142] Rosen, *Making Sweatshops*, 41.

[143] Carl H Priestland and American Apparel Manufacturers Association, *Focus: Economic Profile of the Apparel Industry, with Extensive Comparative Data on the American Textile Industry* (Arlington, VA: American Apparel Manufacturers Association, 1976), 9;

[144] Ibid., 13.

suit imports increase by a factor of nearly fourteen, and sportcoat imports increase by a factor of twelve.[146] By the 1970s, then, state-led industrial development was amplifying competition both *for* capital mobility and *against* existing manufacturers. Pressure emanated from all sides, from New Hampshire to Taiwan.

Conclusion

All told, the last half of the 1960s was a somewhat surprising moment in the economic history of Massachusetts. Industry expanded, unemployment declined, and new immigrant workers flooded into manufacturing plants. In light of what was to come, it is perhaps not entirely shocking that this moment of industrial renaissance is now so often overlooked—both by locals and subsequent historians. Yet the crisis that followed is simply impossible to understand without first looking to its recurrent co-conspirator, prosperity. Indeed, by spurring a mass merger wave that turned proprietary garment and electronics firms into mere subsidiaries of national and multi-national conglomerates, the prosperous 1960s would insure that the crisis of the 1970s would affect local manufacturers in a very different fashion than its precursors. Business owners' political concerns were now more insular, more unmoored from the community; Massachusetts now faced increasing competition from other states in its endless push for industrial development; and, fearing what effect defense cuts would have on local electronics and textile plants, the state was beginning to shift its development initiatives, moving away from advertising the traditional "cheap-labor" appeal of Massachusetts and instead

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[145] The Apparel Political Education Committee of the American Apparel Manufacturers Association, *The MFA and the American Apparel Industry* (Arlington, VA: 1978); Elisabeth Allison, *The Impact of Imports on the Men's Clothing Industry* (Boston: Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1977), 18.

[146] Ibid., 11.

showcasing the state's growing "high tech" infrastructure. All told, such developments did not bode well for the South Coast.

Chapter 9

Industrial Twilight?: The 1973 Crisis and the Reordering of Global Capitalism

The *Wall Street Journal* recently featured an article on an unlikely subject: an abandoned textile mill in New Bedford, facing a potential future as a giant grow house for medical marijuana. Originally built in the 1880s with the whaling money of Horatio Hathaway, the "Hathaway Mill" had, by 1917, amassed some 17 buildings and 108,000 spindles. Due in large part to the determination and local commitments of its owner, Seabury Stanton, the mill managed to navigate the Great Depression intact, and was able to reap the profits of a massive upsurge in cloth demand during the Second World and Korean Wars. Following this wave of profitability, the mill merged with the Berkshire Fine Spinning Associates of Adams, Massachusetts in 1955. The "Berkshire-Hathaway" corporation now sported some million spindles, 12,000 looms, and a yearly production of 225 million yards of fabric. By the late-1950s, however, profits began to wane. The New Bedford mill thus welcomed the attention of a young, upstart investor from Nebraska, Warren Buffett, who saw potential in the undervalued firm. In 1962, Buffett began buying into Berkshire Hathaway at seven dollars a share. By 1965, he had achieved a majority stake in the company. He summarily booted Stanton—who had long made clear his personal commitment to keeping the mill open in New Bedford—and began using company earnings to diversify his own business ventures, quickly buying up the National Indemnity Co., the Illinois National Bank, Sun Newspapers, and Blacker Printer Incorporated.[1] In effect, Buffett ran the

[1] As described in chapters four and five, when Stanton took control of Hathaway in 1934—a time when "many New England mills were closing their doors and liquidating," as he put it in 1961—he instead decided that there was still "a place in New England for a textile company that had the latest machinery and capable management" and embarked on a ten-million-dollar modernization plan. See Seabury Stanton, *Berkshire Hathaway Inc.: A Saga of Courage*, (Newcomen Society of North America, 1962), 15.

Berkshire Hathaway mill into the ground to make the Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate a rousing success.

After two decades, Buffett abruptly ended Berkshire Hathaway textile production, simply telling stockholders that "in the end nothing worked and I should be faulted for not quitting sooner." Facing a future as a potential marijuana grow house, the mayor of New Bedford personally appealed to Buffett in December of 2013 to "rescue" the building that served as the basis of his now multibillion-dollar conglomerate. Buffett was unswayed: "I don't know what you'd do with that place."[2] The mill was instead demolished in January of 2014.[3]

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The global economic crisis of the 1970s has been largely understood by historians and social scientists as one of three storylines: a story of sudden "shock," inevitable "creative destruction, or long-term "disinvestment." Adherents of the "shock" narrative focus on the unique, macro-economic conjunctures of the moment: the rise of third-world nationalism and OPEC, the erosion of the Keynesian social coalition, technological revolution, and the industrialization of the third world and the concomitant collapse of American and European industry amidst a new, "globalized" economic order.[4] For practitioners of "creative destruction," however, history and agency are mere window-dressings on the long-term ineluctable historical

[2] Kris Hudson and Das Anupreeta, "Mayor Tries to Save Warren Buffett's Old Berkshire Hathaway Headquarters," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 1, 2013; Franklin W. Hobbs, "The Capitalization of Cotton Mills in New England," *The Market World and Chronicle* 88, no. 16 (October 14, 1911): 509.; Andrew Kilpatrick, *Of Permanent Value: The Story of Warren Buffett* (Birmingham, AL: 1994), 105–114; Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*.

[3] Steve DeCosta, "Historic Berkshire Hathaway Mill is Torn Down," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Jan. 14, 2014.

[4] Niall Ferguson et al., eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010); Jefferson R. Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (The New Press, 2012); Jefferson Cowie and Nick Salvatore, "The Long Exception: Rethinking the Place of the New Deal in American History," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 74, no. 01 (2008): 3–32; Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, eds., *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2003); Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Vintage, 1996).

processes at work: the inevitable stages of economic development all nations traverse on the march towards "post-industrial" status.[5] On the other hand, many American scholars tend to see the crisis of the 1970s as a story of "disinvestment." Sporting a more internalist approach, these scholars portray late-century "de-industrialization" as simply an outgrowth of the long-term failures in American social and economic policy. Postwar suburbanization, racial segregation, and mounting urban crisis ascend as prime movers in these narratives. For these scholars, it is no exaggeration to say that the crisis of the 1970s was rooted in a longer crisis of American industrial development going back to the end of the Second World War.[6] It is in this sense that Bennett Harrison and Jean Kluver, some of the first to popularize the very term "de-industrialization," would come to describe the entire era from the 1930s to the 1970s as, at least in New England, "a sustained period of economic decline" containing "two generations of 'deindustrialization' and 'hollowing'."[7]

A social history of business amidst the 1973 crisis in the southeastern industrial core of Massachusetts suggests, however, an alternative to traditional narratives of late-century de-industrialization. The long crisis of 1973, I will argue, did not represent industrial twilight in

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[5] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (Martino Fine Books, 2010); Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); David Brady, Jason Beckfield, and Wei Zhao, "The Consequences of Economic Globalization for Affluent Democracies," *Annual Review of Sociology* 33 (January 1, 2007): 313–34; Christopher Kollmeyer, "Explaining Deindustrialization: How Affluence, Productivity Growth, and Globalization Diminish Manufacturing Employment," *American Journal of Sociology* 114, no. 6 (May 1, 2009): 1644–74.

[6] Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Revised (Princeton University Press, 2005); Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton University Press, 2005); Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (Basic Books, 1982); Judith Stein, *Running Steel, Running America : Race, Economic Policy, and the Decline of Liberalism* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

[7] Bennett Harrison and Jean Kluver, "Deindustrialization and Regional Restructuring in Massachusetts," in *Deindustrialization and Regional Economic Transformation: The Experience of the United States*, eds. Lloyd Rodwin and Hidehiko Sazanami (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 104.

Massachusetts, either as the beginning of an irreversible decline in Massachusetts industry nor, as it is so often argued, the climax of a longer economic crisis that began in the early-twentieth century. The crisis of the 1970s was instead rooted in the hothouse prosperity of 1960s capitalism—itself a product of the mass migrations of Portuguese workers to the Massachusetts South Coast.

It was, however, a prosperity with ironic consequences. As manufacturing thrived on new sources of cheap, immigrant labor, industry re-emerged as a profitable capital investment. Local manufacturing firms like the Hathaway Mills were thus hungrily brought into the fold of emerging corporate conglomerates, and their profits were summarily drawn off and pushed into foreign expansion. In effect, in a sort of "remora" capitalism, these local plants' profits were funneled into conglomerate expansion, only to be run into the ground once either their infrastructure or profits had been exhausted.[8] And, in a final ironic twist, local "high-technology" capitalists were soon leveraging the 1973 crisis into renewed commitments of state investment towards the creation of an entirely new economic regime in Massachusetts.

Ultimately, then, it was not economic crisis that catalyzed the globalization of American capital. In fact, it was the very profitability of Massachusetts' manufacturing firms that helped launch the multi-national conglomerates that would unceremoniously shut them down in the 1970s and 1980s. Neither a story of "creative destruction," "shock," or long-term "disinvestment," the global restructuring of the Massachusetts economy in the 1970s was once more a story of how prosperity fueled crisis and crisis fueled subsequent accumulation: yet another undulation in the interminable drama of succeeding economic regimes in the state of Massachusetts.

[8] I am indebted to Natalie Marine-Street for suggesting the term "remora capitalism" as an apt description of this process.

Remora Capitalism

Berkshire-Hathaway's story is not unique. Although not every piece came together at the same time for each and every New Bedford firm, the stories behind many of these old mill buildings make for a common narrative. Textile mills built with whaling money amidst catastrophe in that industry were transformed into garment or electronics firms amidst crisis in the textile industry, bought out by some corporate conglomerate in the 1960s (though sometimes the 1940s, more rarely in the late 1980s or 1990s), and then, over and over again, run into the ground to buy up new firms and new enterprises in other states and abroad. In so doing, these old mill buildings became, in a very real sense, the foundation for the coming explosion of apparel and electronics imports to America: opening salvos in the slow deterioration of the Massachusetts "mixed economy."

Indeed, many other local buildings would come to share Berkshire-Hathaway's fate: take the "Aerovox" complex on New Bedford's Belleville Avenue. Originally started in New York in 1922, the Aerovox capacitor company was lured to the empty Nonquitt Mill on the banks of the Acushnet River with a massive funding package from city leaders. [9] By the 1960s, it had expanded to California, Canada, New York, and South Carolina. By 1972, it had even spun off its own multinational subsidiary, AVX, only to have its own subsidiary buy up and subsequently sell off what remained of the parent company following the 1973 crash. What was left of the original Aerovox firm was bought up by local capitalists, and employment was slashed. It was then bought by the RTE Corporation in 1978, which was in turn bought out by Cooper Industries, which in turn consolidated the plant into the now Delaware-based "Aerovox Holding

[9] "Effort to bring New Industry here traces back to '27," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), May 11, 1954; Melvin F. LaBrode, "Surge of Industrial payrolls In City Was Sparked by IDL," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Sept. 24, 1954. "Haish Reports on Work of the Industrial Legion," *Morning Mercury* (New Bedford), Oct. 25, 1938

Corporation." Thankfully, following the more prosperous 1990s, the company bought out Capacitores Unidos, creating "Aerovox of Mexico." Today, all manufacturing in New Bedford is automated: Aerovox manufacturing jobs are only found in Ningbo and Shanghai, China, India, and Juarez, Mexico. AVX, for its part, went on to get acquired by the Japanese multinational Kyocera. Still headquartered in Aerovox's old South Carolina plant, AVX now operates 20 plants in 11 countries.[10]

The original Aerovox building was demolished by the EPA as an environmental hazard in 2010. The AVX multinational, in what was likely a calculated public-relations move, agreed to pay the EPA about three million dollars for the massive environmental damage Aerovox had caused in New Bedford over the years, despite the fact that AVX itself had never technically operated in Massachusetts. When AVX spokesperson Donna Lees was asked why her company was paying to fix environmental degradation in New Bedford, her response—"I really don't know"—spoke volumes about the circuitous genealogies of modern conglomerate capital.[11]

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[10] AVX, Press Release, "AVX Earns Three 2015 TTI Supplier Excellence Awards," Accessed Apr. 27, 2016, http://www.avx.com/press-releases/avx-earns-three-2015-tti-supplier-excellence-awards/

[11] M. Jones and Cincinnati National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, *Walk-through Survey of Aerovox Industries, Inc., New Bedford, Massachusetts, January 5, 1976* (United States, 1976); "Aerovox History," *South Coast Today*, March 31, 2011, http://www.southcoasttoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20110331/NEWS/103310344; "Company Information: Aerovox," accessed June 6, 2013, http://www.aerovox.com/AboutAerovox.aspx; United States Securities and Exchange Commission, "Aerovox Incorporated: Annual Report Pursuant To Section 13 Or 15(D) of The Securities Exchange Act Of 1934," Form 10-K405, http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/856164/000102140800001377/0001021408-00-001377.txt; Norman Butterworth, Aerovox Industries Inc. to Jeffrey Miller, Director, Enforcement Division Environmental Protection Agency, Sept. 29, 1975, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New Bedford Site (New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site), http://www.epa.gov/region1/superfund/sites/newbedford/59586.pdf; "L.I. Concern in PCB's Settlement," *The New York Times,* March 5, 1987; Beth Daley and Katheleen Conti, "$366m Accord Reached to Clean Up New Bedford Harbor," *The Boston Globe*, Oct. 11, 2012; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Aerovox Mill Site, New Bedford, MA: Site Update," Feb. 2011, http://www.epa.gov/region1/superfund/sites/aerovox/480701.pdf; James M. Hund, "Electronics," in *Made in New York: Case Studies in Metropolitan Manufacturing*, eds. Max Hall and Roy B. Helfgott (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 282.

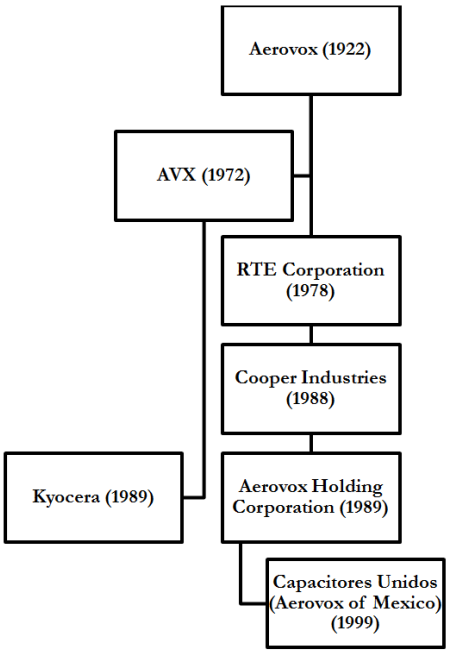

Figure 9.1: Changing corporate ownership at Aerovox (Left)
Figure 9.2: Location of Current AVX manufacturing plants, circa 2010 (Right)
AVX, the multinational corporation Aerovox spun off in 1972, is now the globe's second largest producer of capacitors, with manufacturing plants all over the world.

Many other local plants experienced the crisis of the 1970s not as a sudden "shutdown," but as a slow withering away of production as manufacturing firms were tossed back and forth between corporate heads. J.C. Rhodes, for instance, a manufacturer of shoe eyelets that moved to New Bedford in 1891, maintained its proprietary independence for about a century before it was bought out in 1969 by the PCI Group of the Plymouth Division of the Emhart Corporation: a massive multinational with seven divisions and nine subsidiaries from the Far East to Europe, producing guns, refrigeration equipment, fertilizers, pesticides, architectural machinery, and now, shoe eyelets.[12] A wave of layoffs followed in 1974, and the PCI group was spun off in 1975 before getting re-acquired into the Emhart fold in 1982. Seven years later, Emhart sold itself to

[12] "J.C. Rhodes: Last Link in a Broken Chain," *South Coast Today*, April 24, 1996; "Rhodes Now Part of Massive Emhart Corp.," *Sunday Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Feb. 9, 1969.

Black & Decker to avoid a takeover by a group of New York investors, and by 1997, the J.C. Rhodes plant was bought out by a Georgia competitor and shut down.[13] As one anonymous employee of 23 years put it in 1996, "I have been intimately involved with this business for much of my life…the company has gone through many ownerships… [and] I have seen PCI's sales cut in half over the past 23 years." Indeed, PCI did not simply go bankrupt, he argued, but had faced a steady "deterioration…caused by imports, in terms of closed divisions, less sales volume, and lower profitability," kicked back and forth between various corporate heads over the course of decades.[14]

Workers, of course, did not necessarily stand idly by while local firms were driven into the ground. Morse Drill Company, for instance—one of the handful of ancillary machine shops started in the late-nineteenth century able to whether New Bedford's rocky economic history intact—experienced a similar slow deterioration amidst constant corporate restructuring, but with a crucial twist. The nearly century-old firm was bought out by the Gulf and Western corporation in 1968 in an effort to make quick profits off the Vietnam War buildup. Workers, however, alarmed by the company's cuts to the sales division and refusal to repair broken machinery, began to suspect that Gulf and Western was not working with the long-term viability of its subsidiary in mind. In fact, in 1982, they went on strike with a somewhat novel demand: increased corporate investment. Posters with "STOP MILKING MORSE!" (alongside a cartoon of a man with a "G+W" hat milking dollars out of a cow) littered New Bedford. Striking workers made it a point to insure that Gulf and Western, the fifty-fifth largest corporation in the nation (also owning Paramount Pictures, cigar and mattress makers, Madison Square Garden, and sugar

[13] Ibid.; Patricia O'Connor, "J.C. Rhodes' Fate Still Uncertain," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), April 19, 1996.

[14] Ibid.

cane fields in the Dominican Republic) continued to invest in Morse Drill. Such strategies left Morse's management nonplussed. Union organizer Ron Carver later remembered that he knew the union was winning when an exasperated company executive asked him "What's the matter with you guys? Can't you run a normal strike?".[15]

Figure 9.3: Morse Drill Workers, 1953
Work at Morse was highly coveted, especially as "masculine" labor was considered difficult to find in the city of New Bedford. As Morse's president joked in 1969, "The typical Morse Cutting Tools employee tends to characterize New Bedford's blue-collar society in two types: those who work at Morse and those who wish they did."[16]

Although the strike was settled with new commitments to corporate investment, about a year later, Gulf and Western did in fact announce plans to shutter the plant. Betrayed workers responded by convincing city leaders to threaten the right of eminent domain over the plant if shut down ("One could almost see a smiling portrait of Lenin hanging on the wall of the City Council chamber," one angry editorialist fumed). Nevertheless, New Bedford's threat to essentially municipalize local drill production worked. Gulf and Western instead sold the plant

[15] William Serrin, "In New Bedford, Union Efforts Keep a Plant Alive," *New York Times*, June 15, 1986.

[16] Photograph, STC-D 00070 - Morse Twist Drill 1953: New Bedford, Spinner Publications, https://www.flickr.com/photos/spinnerpub/3277006098/in/photolist-5ZzvK9. Morse quote is from "Hayes Epitomizes New Bedford's Industrial Leadership," *Industry* 34, no. 7 (May 1969), 32.

off to a Michigan capitalist, James Lambert, with workers agreeing to cuts in wages and benefits. The victory was widely celebrated by city and state government leaders as a major win for the Massachusetts economy; Governor Michael Dukakis proclaimed it "a Massachusetts success story."[17] The union, too, thanked the community for its assistance in securing its victory in an open letter in the local newspaper. "To Our Community: Thank You…Across the country giant multinational corporations that gobbled up local plants in the 1960s have begun to liquidate many of those plants after milking them for profits. Our community cried 'foul' and demanded better treatment. We got it."[18] Not surprisingly, Morse workers intuitively understood the connection between multi-nationalization and plant closings. Their success in actually forestalling that process was, however, short-lived.

Importantly, by the 1960s and 1970s, such slash-and-burn corporate conglomeration practices had become management orthodoxy. Bruce Henderson, for instance, who founded the Boston Consulting Group in 1962, became the outspoken scion of the emerging "portfolio" view of the corporation, in which each management head was to act "as an investor, not as an operator."[19] As historian Louis Hyman explains, Henderson imagined a "2 by 2 matrix, with growth on the vertical axis from low to high, and cash generation on the horizontal axis, from high to low," and ultimately argued that corporate strategy should revolve around taking from "cash cows"—those subsidiaries "where the growth is low and the cash flow is high"—to fund "high-growth, high-cash creating companies" and the "problem children": those with low cash

[17] Ibid.

[18] Barbara Doherty, *The Struggle to Save Morse Cutting Tool: A Successful Community Campaign* (North Dartmouth, MA: Arnold M. Dubin Labor Education Center, Southeastern Massachusetts University, 1986).

[19] Louis Hyman, "Rethinking the Postwar Corporation: Management, Monopolies, and Markets," in *What's Good for Business: Business and American Politics Since World War II*, ed. Kim Phillips-Fein and Julian E. Zelizer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 203.

but high growth potential.[20] These emerging management strategies viewed "mature" industries as but a means to an end: the capitalization of new economic opportunities in emerging sectors.

The long crisis of 1973 would thus eventually take Morse Drill, too. Already, the Gulf and Western fiasco had seen a workforce that once amounted to 1,700 slowly pared down to 375. The plant lived on for a few years under its new owner—Lambert Consolidated Industries Inc.—but, following the diversion of some 1.5 million dollars in Morse capital into two new (failed) divisions, Lambert filed for bankruptcy. Workers again rejoiced when a federal judge decided in 1987 that the plant could not be sold to a competitor planning to simply shut it down. Instead, the plant was sold to a Scottish manufacturer who operated Morse for another three years before shutting it down for good. By then, Morse employed a mere 67 workers.

The Morse plant has since been demolished, leaving a somewhat eerie, empty field in the middle of downtown New Bedford; city leaders hope to turn it into a dog park. After years of pollution from the so-called Morse "weeping wall"—the east wall of the factory that famously leached a continual flow of mysterious oil into the adjacent street—there is little else that can be done with what is left of Morse Drill.[21]

Of course, when it came to milking smaller acquisitions to finance further and further conglomerate expansion, no one was more skilled than the infamous Royal Little of Textron. Widely credited as the founder of conglomeration, Royal Little took it as nothing short of inviolable business dogma. As he put it in 1968, "it has now been shown that through the

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[20] Ibid.

[21] William Serrin, "In New Bedford, Union Efforts Keep a Plant Alive," *The New York Times*, June 15, 1986; Lucien Rhodes, "Update: Morse Tool We Really Could've Made It'," *Inc*, June 1, 1987; "New Bedford Tool Plant in New Battle Over Jobs," *New York Times*, May 31, 1987; "Ruling Saves Jobs at New Bedford Tool Plant," *New York Times*, June 14, 1987; John Doherty and Monica Allen, "Final Act of Morse Tools in City Runs like Tragedy," *Standard-Times*, April 19, 1999; "Dog Park Discussion Continues in New Bedford," *WBSM*, accessed June 13, 2013, http://wbsm.com/dog-park-discussion-continues-in-new-bedford/.

combination of normal internal growth, plus growth through unrelated business acquisitions, you can get a better cumulative growth rate on capital than can be obtained in any normal, single industry operation…you just can't beat it unless you're the one in a hundred thousand that comes up with a Xerox or Polaroid."[22] As president of a small Rayon manufacturer in Rhode Island, he orchestrated a wave of buyouts in the 1940s to take advantage of wartime profitability, buying up 17 textile mills and 12 garment factories all over New England.[23] Importantly, Royal Little made it clear that he was never really invested in anything he bought—only the continued expansion of his Textron conglomerate. When he purchased the nearly bankrupt American Woolen Corporation in 1954, for instance, he openly confessed that his intention was to exploit its cash reserves and tax-loss credits before shutting it down: "If [American Woolen] hadn't been such a God-awful mess I couldn't have picked it up," he later wrote in his autobiography. "Textron was able to continue its unrelated diversification program…As a result of this merger and the use of their surplus cash, loss carry-forward and losses of millions of dollars on the sale of fixed assets that were later liquidated."[24] So flagrant was Royal Little in his slash-and-burn conglomeration strategies that he was eventually hauled in front of a full congressional probe in 1948. Solomon Barkin of the Textile Workers' Union of America prepared a series of exhibits to prove Textron's strategy of acquiring mills, running them into the ground, and using the profits to buy up more mills, including "The Milking and Closing of Manville Jenckes Corp." and the "The Mining and Stripping of the Nashua Manufacturing Co.," the last of which Textron had shut down only three years after acquiring it.[25]

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[22] Milton Leontiades, "Another Look at Conglomerates," *Financial Analysts Journal* 25, no. 3 (May 1, 1969): 81.

[23] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 92.

[24] Ibid., 157.

[25] Ibid., 176.

Garment production, too—historically built on a business model of small, flexible contract production that forestalled mass, multi-divisional throughput—was not immune to the forces of conglomeration.[26] New Bedford's Calvin Clothing, with roots to the 1920s, was acquired by Palm Beach Co. in 1968, which was later acquired via leveraged buyout by Merrill Lynch Capital Partners in 1985, then sold off to Crystal Brands in 1988, which was later acquired by Plaid Clothing Group in 1992, the last of which shut the plant down two years later.[27] Just as "Bedford Shirtmakers" of New York acquired New Bedford's "Massachusetts Shirt Mfg. Co." in 1968, Fall River's Shepard Clothing was acquired by U.S. Industries in 1969, and Jonathan Logan Inc. acquired Davis Sportswear Company in 1966, whose Fall River Clothing Mfg. facility would bring Pine Inc. into the Davis-Jonathan Logan fold in 1967 in order to fill government contracts for military coats.[28]

Although garment factories often held out longer after acquisition than their textile or electronics producing counterparts, their eventual fate remained the same. Anderson-Little, the national pioneer of "factory direct" suit production, originally opened in Fall River in 1936, became embroiled in a similar predicament. Huge consumer demand for men's suits in the

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[26] On traditional structure of garment production firms, see Philip Scranton, *Endless Novelty: Specialty Production and American Industrialization, 1865-1925* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 21, 94–95.

[27] Grant B. Southward, "The Bay State Boys Grow Up," *Daily News Record*, June 20, 1977, Folder 4, Box 1, Series 1, MS 241, ACTWU: New England Regional Joint Board, University of Massachusetts Amherst Special Collections, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ACTWU-UMASSA*]**; "Company News: Sale of Palm Beach," *The New York Times,* Dec. 16, 1988; Merwin Sigale, "Cincinnati-Based Palm Beach Inc.: Only Name Same," *The Palm Beach Post*, Nov. 21, 1988, Ross Hetrick, "J. Schoeneman's Owner Buys Men's Clothing Business, *Baltimore Sun,* Oct. 21, 1992; "New Bedford Apparel Plant May Close," *The Day* (New London, CT), July 20, 1994.

[28] Grant B. Southward, "The Bay State Boys Grow Up," *Daily News Record*, June 20, 1977, Folder 4, Box 1, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA*; Asher B. Lans to Joseph Salerno, Feb. 15, 1968, Folder 19, Box 3, Series 2, MS 193, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, New England Joint Board Records, 1939-1976, University of Massachusetts Amherst Special Collections, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*];** NLRB-859 Form, Order to Reschedule Hearing, Nov. 14, 1967, Folder 85, Box 7, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Harold B. Rotiman to Jacob Sheinkman, July 31, 1967, Folder 85, Box 7, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*; Form NLRB-4479, NLRB Decision, Fall River Clothing Mfg. Co… and ACWA, Case No. 1-Rc-9488, July 7, 1967, Folder 85, Box 7, Series 2, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*.

postwar period pushed the family firm to 11 outlets in 1960—all fed by Anderson-Little's main manufacturing plant in Fall River. The next six years saw Anderson-Little amass 29 new stores, leading to its subsequent buyout by the Richman Brothers national chain in 1966. Three years later, in 1969, Richman Brothers was bought out by the even more massive Woolworth Corporation. Although Woolworth continued to operate Anderson-Little for about two decades—declining profits forced it to shut down all three South Coast manufacturing plants and all but seven stores in 1992. The remaining stores were picked up by the Gentlemen's Wearhouse subsidiary of the Cliftex Corporation—a garment manufacturer started in New Bedford in 1941 that, facing declining demand for suits, was attempting to make a new start in retail. Six years later, Cliftex closed all remaining Anderson-Little outlets; three years later, Cliftex was bankrupt. About seven million dollars in state subsidies and federal tax credits later, the Cliftex Mill has now been renovated as a senior living facility. Barbara Baliko, long-time Cliftex stitcher, had the honor of cutting the ribbon at the opening of "Cliftex Lofts" and becoming the converted mill's first resident in May of 2013. Cliftex now joins a variety of other mills in having its main asset to the city be housing those it formerly employed—namely, the elderly.[29]

Specialty suit producers like Anderson-Little weathered the long crisis of 1973 for decades without being offloaded by their new corporate heads. Others were not quite so lucky. A

[29] Grant Welker, "Anderson-Little is Back in Fashion," *Herald News* (Fall River), Jul 16, 2008; Beth Perdue, "Reuse: Housing Developments Planned for New Bedford's Cliftex Mills," *Southcoast Business Bulletin*, November 18, 2011, http://www.southcoasttoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20111118/SCBULLETIN/112010311; Auditi Guha, "Cliftex Mill That Was Almost Demolished Is Reborn as Manomet Place," http://www.southcoasttoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130529/NEWS/305290333; Aaron Nicodemus, "Manager's Financial Problems Drive Cliftex Demolition," http://www.southcoasttoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070806/NEWS/708060326; "Cliftex Closing Stores"; "Cliftex Lofts Launch," October 28, 2011, http://www.mass.gov/governor/pressoffice/pressreleases/2011/111028-cliftex-landing-launch.html; Jay P. Pederson, ed., "Woolworth Corporation," in *International Directory of Company Histories*, vol. 20 (Detroit: St. James Press, 1998), 528–32

Fall River PVC plant, founded in the 1950s to supply local manufacturers with plastic, was bought out by a multinational oil conglomerate in the 1960s. Ordered to divest its monopoly in PVC by the Federal Trade Commission, the Fall River plant was quickly offloaded onto another corporation. Although the plant was run quite profitably throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, struck by rising energy costs and competing imported PVC from Japan, all employees were terminated in December of 1974. A later mail survey conducted by Thomas Barocci of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that these laid off workers averaged 60 weeks of continuous unemployment, and when they did find new jobs, averaged an 11 percent cut in real wages across the board. Despite the health hazards of PVC production, half of newly-employed respondents wished they could return to their former jobs.[30]

Yet multi-nationalization alone did not inevitably yield factory closures. The profits these garment shops yielded may have helped their multi-national parents expand into the areas of East Asia and Latin America, but it was the inability of workers in the global south to exact wages equal to their northern peers—itself partly rooted in the failures of mid-century global union activism—that ultimately sealed these factories' fate.[31]

Indeed, it is important to remember that local factory managers felt just as hemmed in by foreign growth as their workers. As the owner of Auerbach Bathrobe Co. of Fall River noted with trepidation to a local leader of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in 1970, "I

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[30] Thomas A. Barocci, *Disinvestment in Massachusetts: A Case Study of Personal and Economic Impacts of a Chemical Plant Closing* (Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, 1979).

[31] As the International Labour Organization discovered in the mid-1990s, "In 1992 the average hourly labour costs (wages and social charges) in the textile, apparel and leather industries were: Germany - $18.40; Italy - $15.70; France - $13.40; Japan - $10.30; Canada - $10.50; US - $10; Spain - $9.70….This compares with: Mexico - $1.70; Hong Kong - $3.70; Korea - $3.80; Taiwan, China - $4.20." See International Labour Organization, "Globalization Changes the Face of Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industries," Press Release, Oct. 28, 1996, http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/press-releases/WCMS_008075/lang--en/index.htm

have just returned from a selling trip, it was a very difficult one. I was bombarded with imports, robes from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, Brazil, Belgum [sic], Roumania [sic], Germany, Portugal, Austria and England. All at considerably lower prices"—pointing out that while his competitors were paying twenty dollars a month, he was paying two dollars an hour.[32] In one particularly revealing incident, Auerbach was ordered by Sears Roebuck in 1969 to cut costs to "[meet] competition" or face the consequences. "Time has run out," the Sears buyer declared flatly: "Either you set up a new robe operation…or admit your incapability so that we can look elsewhere."[33]

By the mid-1970s, although Philadelphia and New York manufacturers continued to complain that New Bedford was undercutting them with low wages, the global south was beginning to undercut New Bedford too. Wages in South Korea, in 1976, ranged from 10 to 30 cents an hour in garment shops, with workers laboring over 10 to 14 hours a day.[34] Faced with such unforgiving global market conditions, it is not surprising most local unions, in an historic reversal of union policy, took to the streets in the name of import restriction and fired off droves of letters in hopes of receiving redress from the federal government under the Trade Adjustment Act for factories closed due to foreign competition.[35]

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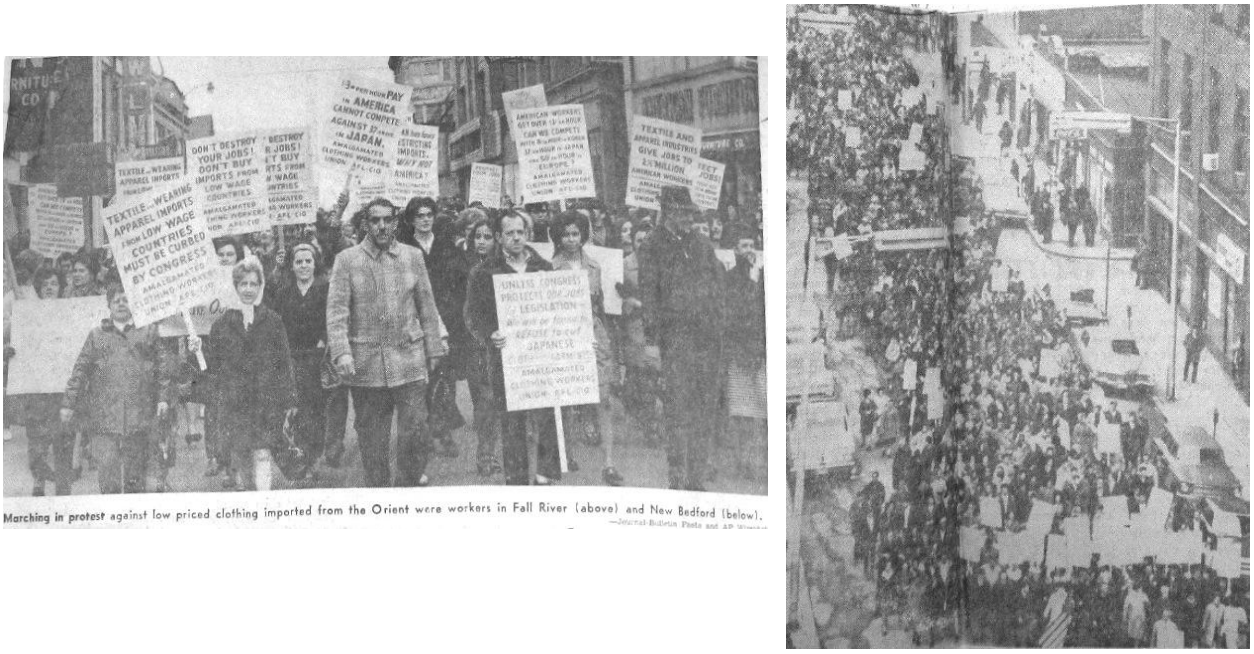
[32] Paul Auerbach to Joe Salerno, June 30, 1970, Folder 17, Box 3, Series 3, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA.*

[33] Arbitration Record, Auerbach Bathrobe Co. Inc. and ACWA, Local 177, Sept. 1971, Folder 17, Box 3, Series 3, *ACWA-NE-UMASSA*.

[34] Grant B. Southward, "The Bay State Boys Grow Up," *Daily News Record*, June 20, 1977, Folder 4, Box 1, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA* ; ACWA, ILGWU, Campaign for a Democratic Foreign Policy to Senator Brooke, May 4, 1976, Folder 3, Box 1, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA*; Campaign for a Democratic Foreign Policy, "Background Report: U.S. Foreign Aid and U.S. Job Loss: Textiles in South Korea," Folder 3, Box 1, Series 1, *ACTWU-UMASSA*.

[35] Much of clothing worker activism in the late 1960s and 1970s was done in the name of import restriction. See. for instance, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, Boston Joint Board, Scrapbook, 1965-1971, Box 12, Series 4, MSS 2, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, Boston Joint Board, University of Massachusetts Special Collections, Amherst, Massachusetts **[hereafter *ACWA-BOS-UMASSA*]**; US Department of Labor, Marvin M. Fooks to Manuel William, ACTWU 177, April 20, 1982, Folder 20, Box 7, Series 3, *ACTWU-UMASSA*;



Marching in protest against low priced clothing imported from the Orient were workers in Fall River (above) and New Bedford (below).

Figure 9.4: Fall River (left) and New Bedford (right) garment workers march in protest of import competition, 1970[36]

By the late 1970s, the vice president of the New Bedford Chamber of Commerce was happy to flaunt the string of "nationally-recognized names" one could now find in the city (Goodyear, American Brands, Continental Screw, Johnson & Johnson, Berkshire Hathaway, Teledyne, Polaroid, Borg-Warner, Augat, Clipper Craft, and PCI, to name a few). But the "incorporation" of New Bedford's local factories came with a hefty price tag.[37] The prosperity of the 1960s, by transforming these proprietary firms into subsidiaries of giant conglomerates, left these local factories and the multinationals they represented well poised—financially,

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Department of Labor, Delton Shirtmakers, Inc. New Bedford, Certification Regarding Eligibility to Apply for Worker Adjustment Assistance, Folder 4, Box 6, Series 3, *ACTWU-UMASSA*.

[36] Photograph, Mar. 20, 1970, Box 12, Series 4, MSS 4, *ACWA-BOS-UMASSA.*

[37] Frederick A. Rubin, "A One-Industry City No Longer" *Industry* 43, no. 12 (Dec. 1978), 26.

organizationally, and technologically—to expand operations all over the nation and world.[38] By the end of the 1970s, the foreign output of American multinationals exceeded the combined gross domestic product of every country in the world besides the United States and the USSR.[39] Strikingly, South Coast firms were often bought up on the explicit premise of siphoning their profits to out-of-state or foreign manufacturing ventures. As multinationals continued to invest in the global periphery—attracted by lower wages and greater offers of state assistance—machinery and fixed capital remained un-updated in Massachusetts. As machines degraded in America, profits waned. The long crisis of the 1970s became the drawn-out, torturous offloading of these firms once their profits had been exhausted.

The New Economy

By the mid-1970s, it was clear the economic tides were turning. Worldwide, industrial production fell 10 percent following the 1973 crisis.[40] In Massachusetts, as in much of America, cutbacks in defense spending, skyrocketing inflation and energy costs, and new competition from abroad made this worldwide slump seem like a never-ending economic nightmare.[41] Economic turmoil came to fuel social malaise—"a crisis of confidence," as President Jimmy Carter

[38] Importantly, these cities were hardly unique in this process. On similar dynamics in Central Falls, Rhode Island, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and Springfield, Massachusetts see Louise Lamphere, *From Working Daughters to Working Mothers: Immigrant Women in a New England Industrial Community*, Anthropology of Contemporary Issues (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 39, 224, 292; June C. Nash, *From Tank Town to High Tech: The Clash of Community and Industrial Cycles* (State University of New York Press, 1989); Max H. Kirsch, *In the Wake of the Giant: Multinational Restructuring and Uneven Development in a New England Community* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); Robert Forrant, *Metal Fatigue: American Bosch and the Demise of Metalworking in the Connecticut River Valley* (Amityville, NY: Baywood Pub. Co., 2009), 3–4.

[39] Bluestone and Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America*, 42.

[40] Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, 405.

[41] Timothy J. Minchin, *Empty Mills: The Fight Against Imports and the Decline of the U.S. Textile Industry* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013), 69–70.

famously put it in 1979—a sense that something was deeply flawed at the "very heart and soul and spirit of our national will."[42] This collective, intangible sense of social discontent ultimately helped give Massachusetts industrialists the political capital necessary to fundamentally transform the political economy of Massachusetts manufacturing: heralding the creation of a new, "high tech" economy in Massachusetts.

Capitalists who weathered the 1973 crisis in Massachusetts had a century of history to inspire them. Like their forerunners, they were quick in finding ways to transform crisis into renewed industrial ascendance. As the chairman of the Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM) put it in 1974, there was a "plus' side" to "crisis": a "reaffirmation of some of the qualities that made us a great nation…qualities which many said were forever lost to apathy, indolence and self-indulgence."[43] A year later, confidence reigned only more supreme: "Politically, industry's hour has come. It is an opportunity born of adversity, of course—of 'crisis,' in fact," but it was nevertheless industry's moment to fight "the heavy taxes, high fixed costs, entrenched bureaucracy, the outflow of talent, the in-migration of the dependent and unskilled, the extravagant promises, the chaos of social programs."[44] Massachusetts capitalists would use the 1970s to turn economic disarray and social discontent into an unprecedented expansion of direct state aid to business—what largely amounted to massive cuts in social spending in order to fund massive increases in business financing.

And nobody benefitted more from state aid for business than the state's technology entrepreneurs. Business leaders had already successfully pushed for a series of "pro-growth"

[42] Jimmy Carter, "Crisis of Confidence," July 15, 1979.

[43] Robert H. Cain, "The 'plus' side of a Crisis," *Industry* 39, no. 2 (Feb. 1974), 6.

[44] Eileen Lardner, "New Bedford's Back in Business under Banner of Variety," *Industry* 34, no. 7 (May 1969), 14; "Fall River Foresees: Growth Through Diversification," *Industry* 34, no. 8 (Aug. 1970), 16; Edward T. Rigney, Editorial, *Industry* 40, no. 11 (Oct. 1975), 4.

bills (dubbed "Mass Incentives") in 1973, intended to attract manufacturing and research and development firms to the state. The investment tax credit was tripled, tax credits were added for new hires, and the state instituted a loss carry-forward tax provision.[45] By 1977, a group of high-tech companies—the "Massachusetts High Technology Council"—began to aggressively lobby the state on behalf of high-tech business. In 1979, for instance, it successfully pushed Massachusetts' governor into signing a so-called "New Social Contract for Massachusetts," in which these high-tech firms essentially exchanged an offer of 150,000 new jobs for a series of massive tax cuts.[46] By then, the state was offering new businesses free vocational training, tax exempt revenue bonds of up to 4-million dollars, sales tax exemptions for machinery, and had become one of three states to offer specific incentives to multi-state corporations if they at least concentrated most of their employment in Massachusetts.[47] Additionally, a sort of "alphabet soup" of state-supported development institutions were created over the course of the 1970s: the MIFA, MTDC, MCRC, and the BSSC, to name a few.[48] By 1980, the state even passed a new

[45] David Lampe, ed., *The Massachusetts Miracle: High Technology and Economic Revitalization* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 9–10. In 1976, the state convened a "Task Force on Capital Formation" to generate further capital attraction ideas. See Ronald F. Ferguson and Helen F. Ladd, "Massachusetts," in *The New Economic Role of American States: Strategies in a Competitive World Economy*, ed. R. Scott Fosler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 40–41.

[46] Massachusetts High Technology Council, "A New Social Contract for Massachusetts," Feb. 1977 in *The Massachusetts Miracle*, 155.

[47] Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, *Massachusetts Business Incentives: Creating a Better Economic Climate* (Boston: Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, 1977).

[48] In 1989, Bennett Harrison and Jean Kluver collected this "partial list of new public, quasi-public, and public-private economic development institutions created in Massachusetts since 1975": "The Mass. Industrial Finance Authority (MIFA), the Mass. Technology Development Corporation (MTDC), the Mass. Capital Resource Company (MCRC), the Community Development Finance Corporation (CDFC), the Community Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC), the Community Enterprise Economic Development Agency (CEED), the Government Land Bank, The Bay State Skills Corporation (BSSC), the Commission on the Future of Mature Industries, the Industrial Services Program (ISP) which administers the Economic Stabilization Trust and a new Product Development Corporation, the Cooperative Regional Industrial Laboratories (recently renamed Industrial Action Projects), and the Centers of Excellence." See Harrison and Kluver, "Deindustrialization and Regional Restructuring in Massachusetts," 284.

"Investment Act" that allowed public funds to be injected into venture capital firms.[49] And yet, despite all the fury these lobbyists raised about Massachusetts business taxes, most of their lobbying efforts focused on issues like Proposition 2 ½—taxes that largely affected individuals, not corporations.[50]

As in eras past, these development efforts were, on paper, remarkably successful. The decade after 1979 saw the advent of the so-called "Massachusetts Miracle." The high-tech sector boomed, 440,000 new jobs were created—mostly in microcomputer production—and high-tech soon provided one out of every three Massachusetts jobs.[51] Under pressure from high-tech firms, the state also vastly expanded its vocational and educational infrastructure in order to train the next generation of Massachusetts workers to meet the demands of the new economy.[52] High-technology leaders succeeded both in lobbying policymakers to support them financially and in convincing them that "high technology" represented Massachusetts' only viable future.

The ideological victory of "high technology" was no more apparent than in the state government's massive tactical shift in how it sought to attract mobile capital. No longer did the state-run Department of Commerce and Industrial Development extol the low wages of cities like New Bedford in its overtures to mobile capital, but rather, the state's educational infrastructure and the technical abilities of its Boston-area workforce.[53] Industrial development

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[49] Sarah Kuhn, *Computer Manufacturing in New England: Structure, Location, and Labor in a Growing Industry* (Cambridge, MA: Joint Center for Urban Studies of MIT and Harvard University, 1982), 55.

[50] Ibid., 151; Ferguson and Ladd, "Massachusetts," 53.

[51] Lampe, *The Massachusetts Miracle*; Harrison and Kluver, "Deindustrialization and Regional Restructuring in Massachusetts," 104; Kuhn, *Computer Manufacturing in New England*, 2.

[52] The "Bay State Project" was intended to do just this. See Nick King, "Kariotis Likes Challenge," *Boston Globe* Jan. 30, 1980.

[53] 1973 wages in New Bedford were indeed still 20 dollars less than the state average. See Hamilton B. William, "Hard Times Not New to New Bedford," *Boston Globe,* Mar. 2, 1975.

propaganda now exalted the unique "environment" of Massachusetts: "conducive to the creation and growth of great ideas and great people."[54] Development publications increasingly took the high cost of manufacturing in Massachusetts as a given, instead trying to re-direct attention to the other "intangibles" the state offered industry. As Evelyn Murphy, the state's secretary of economic affairs put it in a 1983 preface to an industrial development pamphlet entitled *Massachusetts…Creating the Future*, "Massachusetts is an economic paradox. Its handicaps—minimal natural resources, distance from America's industrial heartland, heavy dependence on imported oil—could make it a place of the past," but "much of what will make the future is made here. The ideas for a new age stream from our universities, laboratories and institutions."[55] Increasingly, the state government—so key to industrial development in an age in which mobile capital could play governments against one another in the search for the ideal location—began to explicitly privilege the creation of a high-tech economy, and thus certain regional sectors of the state: namely, the Boston metropolitan area.

The rise of the high-tech economy ultimately shifted the center of industrial Massachusetts out of areas like New Bedford and Fall River. Most high-tech research, after all, occurred in the suburbs of Boston.[56] Some mill towns did benefit from the "high-tech" boom, but only those near enough to the Boston area to serve as low-priced alternative locations for mass manufacturing.[57] As such, about 90 percent of high-tech manufacturing jobs in the four years

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[54] Harbridge House, Inc., Provandie & Chirurg, Inc., and Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, *Massachusetts in Perspective* (Boston: 1977), 3; Harbridge House, Inc., Provandie & Chirurg, Inc., and Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, *Make it in Massachusetts* (Boston: 1979), 3.

[55] Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, *Massachusetts…Creating the Future* (Boston: 1983).

[56] Ferguson and Ladd, "Massachusetts," 32.

[57] Maura Doherty, "Spindle City Blues: The Impact of the Maturing Industrial Economy on the City of Lowell, Massachusetts, 1947-1978" (PhD diss., New York University, 1998).

following 1979 were in the four cities of Boston, Lawrence, Haverhill and Lowell.[58] In the decade following 1975, about three-quarters of new job creation in Massachusetts occurred solely in the Boston area.[59]

In response, New Bedford and Fall River workers and city leaders desperately pushed money into new vocational and educational programs and schools, hoping to attract higher-paying high-technology firms to the area.[60] State and local leaders, after all, did not necessarily intend to leave the South Coast entirely out in the cold. Many, like Governor Dukakis, hoped a mix of educational reform and local cheerleading would help make the South Coast into a high-technology magnet to rival Boston.[61] George Kariotis, founder of the Woburn technology firm "Alpha Industries" and head of a state project to transform Massachusetts' educational infrastructure to fit the needs of the blossoming high-tech sector, had all the confidence in the world that a statewide educational overhaul would have to entail a mass movement of high-tech firms to cities like Fall River and New Bedford: "They'll have to do it," he told one reporter, "Not only because the untapped labor pool is in [these] cities, but because of the energy

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[58] Chester G. Atkins, *There Is More Than One Massachusetts Economy: A Study of Massachusetts Private Sector Employment: The Major Growth Sectors of the Massachusetts Economy and Their Impact on the State's Nine Major Labor Market Areas* (Massachusetts Senate Committee on Ways and Means, 1984), vii.

[59] Harrison and Kluver, "Deindustrialization and Regional Restructuring in Massachusetts," 106. Mark Brenner, "The Economy: A Growing Divide with Uneven Prospects," in *The Future of Work in Massachusetts*, ed. Tom Juravich (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 14–18.

[60] Peter Greenough, "Education Key to Unemployment," *Boston Globe* Jul. 13, 1964; Wilfrid C. Rodgers, "The Old Statistics Are Changing: Influx of Modern Industry Gives New Bedford a Boost," *Boston Globe,* Jun. 9, 1980. Neville S. Lee, "The Economic Outlook for the Tri-City Area in Southeastern Massachusetts: New Bedford, Fall River, and Taunton," Oct. 14, 1983 in Fall River Office of Economic Development, Binder, Box 1, MC 86/PAA, The Carlton M. Viveiros Papers, Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese-American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts **[hereafter *CVP-FMPAA*]**.

[61] Tellingly, attempts to lure higher-paying or high-technology firms from Boston to the South Coast began as early as the mid-1960s and continue to the present. See Rachelle Patterson, "Dukakis Shifts Focus From Suburbia, "New Industry To Revitalize Older Cities," *Boston Globe,* Mar. 18, 1975; Anthony J. Yudis, "Massachusetts: Optimistic Outlook," *Boston Globe*, Mar. 11, 1980; Ben Bradlee, "New Bedford Tour Guide: Dukakis," *Boston Globe,* Jun. 16, 1982; James Risen, "Dukakis' State Miracle: Long on Jawboning," *Los Angeles Times*, August 7, 1988; Thaddeus Herrick, "Steering Mill Towns Closer to Tech-Boom Riches," *The Wall Street Journal,* Feb. 26, 2007.

crisis."[62] And indeed, the state government came to radically re-shape higher education in the area with the unification and consolidation of the old New Bedford and Fall River Textile Institutes into a full university in Dartmouth, finished in 1971.[63]

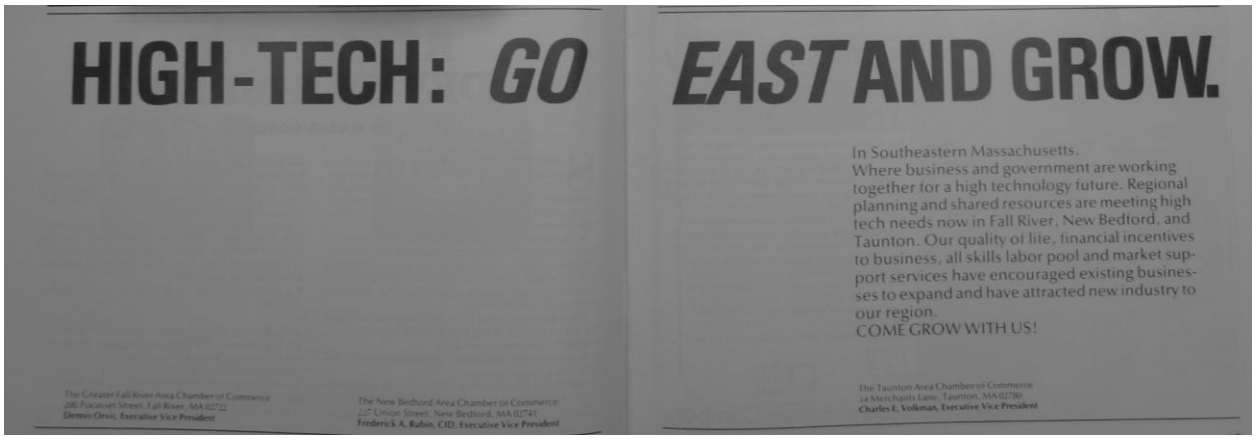

Figure 9.5: Southeastern Massachusetts Economic Development Committee, Advertisement, 1982

As local economic development policymakers became increasingly disillusioned with Boston high-tech firms' disinterest in relocating to the South Coast, they began to explicitly target mobile high-tech capitalists in California, urging them to "*Go east* and grow."[64]

But Boston area technology firms simply never took the bait. Exasperated regional and state leaders, in a last-ditch effort to bring "high-tech" to the area, instead pushed 150,000 dollars into the creation of a "Southeastern Massachusetts Economic Development Committee" in order to pay for travel expenses, mass mailings, and a two-day conference in Palo Alto in the effort to lure California technology firms to the South Coast.[65] Fall River's Office of Economic Development (FROED) similarly made attracting high-tech industry and encouraging "high tech

[62] Ian Menzies, "High-Tech Offers High Reward for State's Jobless," *Boston Globe,* Mar. 24, 1980.

[63] Frederick V. Gifun, *UMass Dartmouth, 1960-2000: Trials and Triumph* (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2007).

[64] Southeastern Massachusetts Economic Development Committee, Advertisement, *Industry* 47, no. 4 (Apr. 1982), 18-19, Folder 7, Box 2, *CVP-FMPAA*.

[65] Ronald Rosenberg, "Techno-Bytes: Come East, High Tech," *Boston Globe*, April 6, 1982.

education" central to its economic development strategies, with discouraging results.[66] "We have a feeling of frustration," Robert Karam, head of FROED, told reporters, "because we have not been discovered by the Rte. 128 [Boston-area] companies."[67]

Importantly, although it was somewhat novel for South Coast economic development leaders to advertise the area's emerging educational infrastructure, the booster materials they produced nevertheless continued to highlight many of the same appeals that had undergirded exhortations to mobile capital since the 1920s. A 1982 pamphlet for circulation to California high-tech firms, for instance, reaffirmed a familiar set of advantages that came with South Coast industrial production: the friendly posture of the city and state governments, tax and financial incentives, "significantly lower" housing and rent costs, and the availability of cheap mill space ("In the recent past, purchase and renovation of existing mill space has run as low as $6 a square foot").[68] As one local leader recalled of his trip in 1982 to California to bring "the next Apple, Microsoft or Dysan Corp. to our shores," the "pitch" was as it always was: "come to our region because we have empty mills, loyal labor, lower costs and great beaches."[69] Nonetheless, these efforts largely failed.

As factories closed and workers (or their children) sought education in order to adapt to the "Massachusetts Miracle," they found little opportunity in the South Coast. As second-generation immigrants made good on their parents' dreams of finding education in the United

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[66] Fall River Office of Economic Development, *Decade for Progress: The First 2000 Days* (circa 1983), 6, Fall River Office of Economic Development, Binder, Box 1, MC 86/PAA, *CVP-FMPAA*.

[67] Rosenberg, "Techno-Bytes: Come East, High Tech."

[68] Southeastern Massachusetts Economic Development Committee, *Southeastern Massachusetts: The Golden Connection* (circa 1982), Folder 6, Box 2, MC 86/PAA, *CVP-FMPAA*.

[69] Stephen C. Smith, "South Coast—On the verge of the breakthrough," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Aug. 15, 2013.

States, an increasing dissonance grew between the skills and jobs available in South Coast Massachusetts. By the early 1970s, Southeastern Massachusetts University—an institution for which local Azorean politicians like Mary Fonseca had fought so hard to expand—found that three-quarters of graduates had to look outside of Southeastern Massachusetts for employment.[70] Even those who did not leave the area were certainly not plying their new college skills in the (nonexistent) local high-technology economy. Although immigrants like Emidio Raposo, a 36-year veteran of Morse Drill, could declare with pride in 1987 that "all my children are college-educated," the reality was that those who chose to stay in the area used their education in a very peculiar sort of service economy: tellingly, one of Raposo's children was a priest, another graduate-educated daughter was a nun, and his other daughter was a counselor.[71]

Ultimately, high-technology firms emerged around Boston, and only around Boston, precisely because they were something of dignified leeches on the often publicly-funded research output of local universities.[72] Indeed, one 1986 Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) study determined that some 400 local firms—employing 175,000 and making 29 billion dollars annually—owed their existence to MIT's industrial outreach, much of which was itself originally funded by the federal government.[73] For instance, in 1983 alone, the United States government poured 24 million dollars into MIT research and development.[74] As long as federal dollars

[70] Yvonne Levesque, "The Senator Interview with Mary Fonseca," in *Portuguese Spinner*, 122; Everett S. Allen, "Employment: New Bedford's No. 1 problem -- XIX: SMU grads forced to leave area," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Nov. 30, 1971

[71] Gavin Hymes, "A Man of Steel: Interview with Emidio Raposo," in *Portuguese Spinner,* 250.

[72] AnnaLee Saxenian, *Regional Advantage: Culture and Competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128* (Harvard University Press, 1996); Al Larkin, "Whither High Tech," *Boston Globe*, January 11, 1981.

[73] Linda Moussouris, "The Higher Education – Economic Development 'Connection' in Massachusetts: Forging a Critical Linkage?," *Higher Education* 35, no. 1 (January 1, 1998): 91.

[74] Ferguson and Ladd, "Massachusetts," 30.

continued to course through the Boston educational infrastructure, the "build it and they will come" mentality of South Coast city and state leaders was almost destined not to pan out.[75]

Training workers for jobs that never arrived in the area only bred further despondence. Local CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) and WIN (Work Incentive Program) operators faced just this issue: workers could be re-trained with new skills, but these new skills did not generate or attract appropriate job openings. CETA placement rates in New Bedford were accordingly dismal; most dropped out and simply took up work in the garment trade.[76]

Ultimately, in yet another strange historical repetition, post-crisis New Bedford mirrored previous iterations of itself in its paradoxically high unemployment and frequent labor shortages. By and large, open positions remained in low-paying garment work. But as prosperity returned to post-fascist Portugal, Azorean immigration dried up, and manufacturers found cheap labor much harder to come by. It is in this sense that we can understand the self-righteous indignation of so many Massachusetts business operators in the 1970s, fuming over the discovery that, in 1973 for instance, 94,000 in the state were drawing on unemployment while somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000 jobs in the state remained unfilled.[77] For the executive vice president of the New Bedford Chamber of Commerce, government welfare was the obvious culprit: "We have a time of relatively high unemployment, and, at the same time, we have jobs going begging… the garment industry has the 'sweat shop' stigma which no longer applies, but the old wives' tale

[75] Brenner, "The Economy: A Growing Divide with Uneven Prospects," 23.

[76] Herbert Kessel, "The Impact of the Work Incentive Program In Two Local Labor Markets" (PhD diss., Boston University Graduate School, 1981), 174.

[77] Elden Auker, "Prescribing for the 'Job Paradox'," *Industry* 38, no. 1 (Jan. 1973), 6.

continues."[78] Another anonymous business owner was even more blunt: it was welfare and unemployment compensation that had conspired to make garment work unattractive. "Here is the crux of the problem. The answer does not lie in increasing wage rates so that they are higher than welfare and unemployment compensation, and other government subsidies, for such action could make many companies noncompetitive and possibly force some out of business."[79] In this sense, "welfare" opposition became a rational political end for these business leaders. After all, their factories were founded on trying to get desperate women to stitch pants for $1.80 to $2.00 an hour—which accordingly entailed a desire to foreclose other, more attractive options these women might find.[80]

But workers' increasing disdain for industrial work was not simply a matter of money. After all, industrial work had never been the dream to which these labor migrants aspired. Not surprisingly, educated, second-generation Azorean immigrants had absolutely no interest in a life making clothes or wiring capacitors. As early as the 1950s, New Bedford textile mills were already beginning to panic about the disinterest local youth displayed toward mill work. The Hathaway Mill began to cut its weave room capacity because of *labor,* rather than demand shortage, leading one union leader to muse that the mills would soon be unable to "get people to man the jobs because of low wages."[81] Similarly, when anthropologist Louise Lamphere studied the (largely Portuguese) apparel and textile workers of nearby Central Falls in the late 1970s, she

[78] Everett S. Allen, "Employment: New Bedford's No. 1 problem -- XII: City's old ways conflict with new technology" *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Nov. 24, 1971

[79] Everett S. Allen, "Employment: New Bedford's No. 1 problem -- XXVIII: Many Businessmen feel Jobs not greatest question," *Standard-Times* (New Bedford), Dec. 9, 1971; On "Jobs Paradox," See Ken O. Botwright, "Massachusetts Needs Jobs—and More Jobs: State Lags as Nation Recovers," *Boston Globe,* Oct. 26, 1975.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Hartford, *Where Is Our Responsibility?*, 164.

recorded workers' deep sense of disdain for industrial work. "There is nothing good about working," María Pino told her.[82] "Do you know what it is to have to work eight hours there? There is nothing that I like about my job," Amelia Escóbar reported.[83] "In the factory…they make us feel inferior…It's always a Portuguese who goes to work there (by the hot furnaces). They are the ones that always have to sacrifice," was how Maria Lídia Mendes put it.[84] As such, despite the economic crisis, labor turnover was surprisingly high. One forelady summed up the situation for Lamphere in the following way: "About three fourths of them quit, you know. They get in here and see what it's like and then leave…the good ones quit and I end up with all the rest."[85] Yet high turnover in times of high unemployment was not a new phenomenon in industrial Massachusetts. After all, the sorts of jobs crisis capital tended to attract were never the ones to which most workers aspired.

These trends continued unabated into the 1980s. By 1989, the business agent of the ILGWU Local 178 saw the biggest problem the union faced as simply "getting people…We cannot get the people." As one business journalist summed up the situation, "recruiting drives in local high schools and vocational schools turn up few candidates for jobs that start at 6 [dollars] an hour for unskilled work. Students, turned off by images of dirty sweatshops and convinced that the factories have no future, prefer to put on a tie, even if it means a lower-paying job in a bank, insurance company, or real estate firm."[86]

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[82] Lamphere, *From Working Daughters to Working Mothers*, 274.,

[83] Ibid., 277.

[84] Ibid., 278.

[85] Ibid., 298.

[86] Bennie DiNardo, "Apparel Manufacturers Fighting Back," *The Boston Business Journal*, August 14, 1989.

Figure 9.6: Women assemble lamp holders at the John Paulding electronics component factory in New Bedford, Massachusetts, 1969
As seen in this photo, these manufacturing jobs attracted older, immigrant, women workers. Younger, more educated workers had increasingly little interest in the factory jobs offered in the city of New Bedford.[87]

Ultimately, such sentiments suggest that the South Coast garment trade was partly a victim of worker *disinterest*. As Azorean migrants saw to it that their children were educated—without an expansion of local demand for highly-skilled manufacturing workers—this increasingly educated workforce was forced to migrate northward or out of Massachusetts entirely in search of better lives in an increasingly two-tiered, high-tech and unskilled, service economy. Although these Azoreans' children did not make good on their dreams of returning to the Azores to achieve subsistence living, they did ultimately seek a life outside the factory. To the degree they were successful, they too became accomplices in the un-making of the mixed manufacturing economy.

[87] Spinner Photos, "STC-D 00836 - John I Paulding Company : Kings Highway : New Bedford 2," https://www.flickr.com/photos/spinnerpub/4584072128/in/photolist-7Z5yWm.

Conclusion

Simply put, the story of industrial Massachusetts poorly fits our existing narratives of late-century industrial decline. After all, the 1973 crisis was hardly a story of long-term "disinvestment." Instead, in Massachusetts, it was in fact the prosperity of the 1960s—itself driven by the mass migrations of the era—which, by generating the profits that made multinational manufacturing possible, undergirded the long economic crisis that followed. Neither was Massachusetts' trajectory entirely a story of "shock." Indeed, unlike 1920s textile de-industrialization, in which capital and machinery fled southward amidst economic turmoil, 1970s crisis did not feed the globalization of capital. Conglomerates were not buying up firms abroad because they were in the throes of turmoil at home: they were buying up firms abroad because they were making so much money *in Massachusetts*. In the complicated milieu of late-century Massachusetts, migration drove prosperity, prosperity drove multi-nationalization, and multi-nationalization ultimately catalyzed the collapse of the "mixed manufacturing" economy.

More to the point, it is not entirely clear that the story of late-century Massachusetts is a story of de-industrialization at all. Although it is undeniable that numerous South Coast plants closed down in the 1970s and 1980s, complaints of labor shortages persisted, as second-generation immigrants largely sought lives outside the factory. Moreover, mirroring the closing moments of so many other eras of productive regime collapse in Massachusetts, the "de-industrialization" of the 1970s—the global restructuring of the conglomerates forged in the 1960s—was itself made into political fodder in the drive to create a new productive regime: "High-Tech" Massachusetts. Importantly, the 1973 crisis gave "high-tech" entrepreneurs crucial political legitimacy in their campaign to re-shape capital-state relations, successfully pushing the

state to cut back government spending on social welfare while ramping up state investment in "high-tech" industry.[88]

Taken at the level of the state, it would seem the 1970s was less an era of de-industrialization than one of linked inter-regional and global restructuring. It is fitting that just as the South Coast industrial core was borne out of a capital crisis in the Boston area in the 1870s, the 1970s saw a critical burst in Boston-area capital accumulation fed by the South Coast's collapse.

Even this seemingly most classic case of "de-industrialization," then, was no all-encompassing spectral menace emerging from first-world affluence.[89] Not only was the long crisis of 1973 rooted in the movements, desires, and struggles of mobile capital, migrant labor, and the state, but it too bred another generation of industrial buildup of a completely different variety.

[88] Ferguson and Ladd, "Massachusetts," 50.

[89] On the inevitable tendency for affluent, "pioneering" industrial nations to de-industrialize, see Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: From 1750 to the Present Day* (Penguin Books, 1999), 166; Kollmeyer, "Explaining Deindustrialization"; Brady, Beckfield, and Zhao, "The Consequences of Economic Globalization for Affluent Democracies."

Conclusion

In 2014, Guatemalan migrant Samuel Aj described to local anthropologist Lisa Knauer how he had made it to New Bedford. "His landless family was virtually enslaved by a wealthy landowner, or finquero," and their lives were under constant threat of collateral violence as a result of the raging Guatemalan Civil War. Aj vividly recalled his village getting stormed by the Guatemalan army, leaving him, "his mother and some of his siblings huddled in a ditch…while the armed forces carried out a bloody massacre above them."[1] In Aj's eyes, Knauer realized, his decision to migrate to New Bedford "did not begin in the early 2000s when he started to plan his journey, but over two decades earlier," amidst a life of rural poverty, bloodshed, and economic turmoil.[2] Like countless immigrants before them, thousands of Guatemalans like Aj decided to escape lives of crisis and poverty and seek new lives in New Bedford, taking up work in the city's remaining garment, fish-processing, and electronics factories.

The ways in which these cities have continued to draw in immigrants remains an important testament to the fact that these industrial economies are not quite as moribund as generally believed. Since the late-1980s, numerous Guatemalans—mostly ethnic Mayans—have come to join migrant Brazilians, Puerto Ricans, and various other South American and Caribbean nationals to set up a thriving Latin American district in New Bedford's North End.[3] For these migrants, the presence of cheap housing in these mass industrial towns is itself a

[1] Lisa Maya Knauer, "From post-conflict Guatemala to post-immigration raid New Bedford: Temporality, Violence and Alternative Citizenships," July 16, 2014, http://blogs.southcoasttoday.com/massmigration/2014/07/16/from-post-conflict-guatemala-to-post-immigration-raid-new-bedford-temporality-violence-and-alternative-citizenships/

[2] Ibid.

[3] Lisa Maya Knauer, "The Maya of New Bedford: Genesis and Evolution of a Community, 1980-2010," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 39, nos. 1 and 2 (Summer 2011), 176; Majid Al-Khazraji and Emilie Al-Khazraji, *The Puerto Rican Journey to New Bedford, MA* (Action Research Project, 1971).

significant draw: they "can rent a reasonably good-sized apartment...sometimes for as low as $300 or $400 a month," Earl Chase, president of a local Maya assistance organization, pointed out in a recent interview, allowing migrants "to send back at least $200 to $300 per month to their families."[4] Latinos now make up 15 percent of the city's population, and nearly a third of its public school students.[5] The stretch of North Front Street that bridges New Bedford's docks and the North End is colloquially known as "Maya alley."[6]

For capitalists too, New Bedford still has its lures. Francesco Insolia, born in southeast Sicily in 1956, originally began his career as a sea captain for the Carnival Cruise Lines in the 1970s before marrying a Quincy, Massachusetts native.[7] Insolia eventually founded an export business in Italy before he and his wife relocated to Pembroke, Massachusetts, where they set up an Italian goods retailer.[8] In 1985, he also founded "Michael Bianco Inc.," with 85 employees, manufacturing handbags and purses for major labels such as Coach, Fossil, G.H. Bass, and Mark Cross.[9] Not surprisingly, Insolia chose not to open the plant in suburban Pembroke, but began operations in Lawrence before moving to New Bedford in 1990.[10] In 2004, with the assistance of job training funds and tax breaks provided through the Massachusetts Department of Workforce

[4] Tom Juravich, *At the Altar of the Bottom Line: The Degradation of Work in the 21st Century* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), 61.

[5] Knauer, "The Maya of New Bedford," 172.

[6] Ibid., 176.

[7] Brian Fraga, "Colleagues, Friends Say Raided Plant Owner Was Hard-Working Immigrant," *SouthCoast Today*, Mar. 26, 2007, http://www.southcoasttoday.com/article/20070326/news/703260350

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

Development, Insolia won an $82-million contract from the United States Department of Defense, sewing vests and backpacks for the Army.[11]

In some sense, the workforce development program worked exactly as intended: Michael Bianco Inc. quickly grew to 500 employees.[12] Conditions, however, rapidly deteriorated. Workers were docked 15 minutes of pay for every minute late; employees could be either fined or fired for spending too long in the bathroom; and $20 fines were issued to workers for infractions ranging from leaving work early to simply talking to one another.[13] Relying on recent migrants, including Samuel Aj, Insolia's factory became, for all intents and purposes, a modern-day sweatshop.

Insolia's and Aj's fates became forever entwined when, on March 6, 2007, both were arrested after more than 300 agents, led by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE), burst into the Michael Bianco factory in New Bedford's South End. Some 362 undocumented workers, including Aj, were rounded up, mostly from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.[14] While Insolia would be released on bail the next day, his workers were spread out and detained all over the United States: everywhere from Fort Deven in Massachusetts and Albuquerque, New Mexico to Harlingen and El Paso, Texas and Miami, Florida.[15] Those affected recalled an incredibly traumatic experience. "They were trying to grab everybody and

[11] U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement [ICE], News Release, "New Bedford Manufacturer and Managers Arrested on Charges of Conspiring," Mar. 6, 2007; John Tirman, "'They Treated Us as if We were Murderers'": The Trauma of an ICE Raid," *Salon*, Apr. 5, 2015, http://www.salon.com/2015/04/05/they_treated_us_as_if_we_were_murderers_the_trauma_of_an_ice_raid/

[12] ICE, "New Bedford Manufacturer..."

[13] Ibid.

[14] Tirman, "'They Treated Us as if We were Murderers'."

[15] Ibid.; Yvonne Abraham and Brian R. Ballou, "350 are held in immigration raid," *Boston Globe*, Mar. 7, 2007; "Timeline of the New Bedford Raid," *Boston Globe*, Mar. 15, 2007; Juravich, *At the Altar of the Bottom Line*, 91.

people just started running like crazy. They panicked, they fell down. You found that they were pursuing people just like you were an animal," one victim recalled.[16] Attempting to deflect potential criticism, U.S. Attorney for the state of Massachusetts Michael Sullivan stated that although "[i]t is understandable that many from around the globe would want to come to live, work and raise families here in the greatest democracy in the world…this must be done in compliance with U.S. immigration laws—not in violation of them."[17]

Many in New Bedford reacted with surprise to the raid—not only because of its sudden nature, but because few had any clue that the city even *had* a backpack factory. After all, as political scientist John Tirman points out, the Michael Bianco plant was simply in "an unremarkable four-story red brick factory building that has housed enterprises long forgotten...unremarkable because so many buildings of that kind still stand in this legendary whaling town."[18] Indeed, the 2007 ICE raid and its fallout illustrate much of what has changed (and not changed) in the city of New Bedford over the past few decades. As corporate heads increasingly shut down the city's local garment and textile factories, a variety of smaller firms have moved in. Some are just local entrepreneurs looking for affordable office or factory space; others, like Insolia, come explicitly on the premise of taking advantage of the reserves of cheap labor still available in the city. Although much of the Wamsutta Mill has been converted into apartments, the 190,514 sq. ft. mill building no. 4, for instance, built in 1868, now houses everything from a custom welding shop, a small technology enterprise, a social club for West

[16] Tirman, "'They Treated Us as if We were Murderers'."

[17] ICE, "New Bedford Manufacturer..."

[18] Tirman, "'They Treated Us as if We were Murderers'."

Africans, a machine shop, and the base of New Bedford operations for "The Maids."[19] Even "tabloid" television personality Maury Povich is having his new clothing line, "Mother Freedom," made in New Bedford, keeping with Povich's mission to "demonstrate that our products—like our country—are number one."[20] In other words, it is simply not the case that manufacturing has disappeared from the South Coast. Instead, the conglomerate revolution of the 1960s transformed the large, billboard-clad factories like "Berkshire Hathaway" into nameless mills housing countless smaller firms and subsidiaries.

Nonetheless, since the closure of many—though by no means all—of the area's last remaining corporate garment and textile factories in the 1990s, there has indeed been increasing struggle to determine what will be the next economic regime that will define these cities. The lure of crisis still looms large. New Bedford's city planners, for instance, have sought to remold the city as a so-called "creative economy," following the relocation of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth's College of Fine and Performing Arts to New Bedford's downtown. The city has sought to attract young artists and "eclectic shops and restaurants"—based on New Bedford's low rents, huge space availabilities, and the marketability of the city's famed whaling past—hoping to create a thriving arts and tourism industry.[21] "The mayor does not want to see any resident or artist priced out of the New Bedford market," Matt Morrisey, executive director

[19] The City of New Bedford Economic Development Council, "City of New Bedford Historic Mill Inventory" (2008), 57, https://www3.epa.gov/region1/superfund/sites/newbedford/507968.pdf ; Office of Historic Preservation, New Bedford, Mass., "Wamsutta Mills," Form nos. 216, 218, 219, 220, 224, 225, 125, Area no. 78, Folder 37, Box 4, MC 9, New Bedford Textile Worker's Strike of 1928 Oral History Interviews and Research Collection, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Archives and Special Collections, Dartmouth, Massachusetts; "1 Wamsutta St., New Bedford, MA 02744," Rehold Real Estate Navigator, https://rehold.com/New+Bedford+MA/WAMSUTTA+ST/1, accessed Mar. 29, 2016.

[20] Jill Radsken, "Maury Povich Launches Clothing Company in New Bedford," *The Boston* Globe, Aug. 6, 2014.

[21] New Bedford Economic Development Council, "Creative Economy Task Force Report," Feb. 2008. http://www.nbedc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/NBEDC-Creative-Economy-Task-Force-Final-Report.pdf; Ken Hartnett, "'Whither is fled the visionary gleam?': Look to the arts," *SouthCoast Today*, Oct. 5, 2008, http://www.southcoasttoday.com/article/20081005/NEWS/810050363

of the New Bedford Economic Development Council told a reporter in 2007: "We are carefully planning to ensure there is a very clear balance."[22] While these efforts are admirable, and are beginning to bear fruit, in the immediate interim, the city's store of aging workers has become one of its most important assets. About 65 percent of New Bedford's laborers work in the service sector: "health and education" is both the most vibrant and fastest growing sector of the local economy.

Fall River's "Office of Economic Development" (FROED) is similarly still engaged in many of the same tactics that have long defined the city's struggle for economic hegemony. For these city leaders, the past is a constant reminder of the future: "Nearly 100 years ago, the City of Fall River secured its place as the textile capital of the world," the FROED's website proudly declares; "Today, the City of Fall River is embarking on a second renaissance."[23] "You're seeing a city reinvent itself," Robert A. Mellion, president and chief executive of the Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce, recently told journalists.[24]

Again, the inducements available in a struggling city loom large in the Economic Development Office's current pitch to investors: "FROED helps businesses evaluate the many advantages of locating in Fall River, offering aggressive incentive programs including low-interest financing, tax exemptions, employee recruitment and training services, and site selection assistance."[25] For instance, the city threw out nothing short of "a red carpet," as one reporter put

[22] Natalie Myers, "Betting on the Arts to Revitalize the City," July 25, 2007, http://www.nbedc.org/news/betting-on-the-arts-to-revitalize-the-city/

[23] Fall River Office of Economic Development, "City Overview," http://froed.org/city-overview/

[24] James Murdock, "A Red Carpet for Amazon in Fall River, Mass., and Hopes for More," *The New York Times*, Mar. 29, 2016.

[25] Fall River Office of Economic Development, "Welcome to the Official FROED Website," accessed April 1, 2016, http://froed.org/#

it, to bring an Amazon.com, Inc. distribution center (and 500 jobs) to the city.[26] City agencies prepared a "shovel-ready" site in a municipal industrial zone, expedited permit approvals, and procured federal money to build a nearby highway interchange to the facility.[27] The city has also added a variety of new luxury apartments and condominiums, fitting with the mayor's plan to attract young, urban professionals priced out of nearby Providence, Rhode Island. Nearly 2-million dollars in tax credits, for instance, helped turn Fall River's old Quaker Fabric Corp. into "Commonwealth Landing" apartments, with "Water views, hardwood floors, high ceilings, [and] granite kitchen counters." Simply put, Fall River's strategy continues to be defined by marketing the virtues of crisis: cheap rents and plenty of local, state, and national incentives.[28]

Unfortunately, although many economic planners have explicitly attempted to craft long-range plans that, it is hoped, will one day bring high-wage jobs to these cities, short-term efforts still too often go towards garnering more relatively low-wage jobs. No better example of this can be found than the city of New Bedford's recent, almost relentless push to attract a $650-million Foxwoods Casino to the city.[29] As local pastor David Lima pointed out, "The casino companies look for cities with high unemployment to come into because those are the only places where people will vote for them."[30] But while casino opponents focused on its moral and social outrages, proponents championed the revenue and jobs it would bring to the city. As Anthony R.

[26] Murdock, "A Red Carpet for Amazon in Fall River, Mass."

[27] Ibid.

[28] Kevin P. O'Connor, "Financing Falls into Place for Commonwealth Landing Apartments," *The Herald News* (Fall River, Massachusetts), Nov. 2015, http://www.heraldnews.com/article/20151110/NEWS/151119181

[29] Sean P. Murphy, "Commission Extends Time for Southeastern Mass. Casinos," *Boston Globe*, Mar. 19, 2015; Mike Lawrence, "Promise of Jobs Central to New Bedford Casino Debate," *SouthCoast Today*, Jun. 6, 2015, http://www.southcoasttoday.com/article/20150606/NEWS/150609492; Sean P. Murphy, "New Bedford Voters Overwhelmingly Back Casino Proposal," *Boston Globe,* June 23, 2015.

[30] Ibid.

Sapienza, chairman of the business and development committee for the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, put it, pointing to the estimated 2,164 construction jobs and 3,831 permanent jobs the casino was poised to create, "I think rising tides lift all ships…Economic growth gets economic growth…People are just going to come out of the woodwork for those jobs—kind of like what will happen in Fall River, when Amazon opens their facility there."[31] But almost completely ignored in the casino debate was a question that has long plagued local workers faced with the various "redevelopment" ploys that have rocked these cities over the past 150 years: are these jobs worth having?

Indeed, from the perspective of a longue durée history of South Coast Massachusetts, it would seem the problem is not that New Bedford or Fall River simply lack "jobs." After all, so many immigrants would not be continuing to venture to these cities if there were no jobs to be had. Even in the economically depressed 1990s, one Salvadoran immigrant recalled that local bosses were so desperate for low-wage workers that they "would come to your house and knock on your door and offer you work."[32] Crucially, this state of paradoxically high unemployment and labor shortage has become a bizarre but defining aspect of industrial Massachusetts. It is an enduring demonstration of both the practical advantages and recurrent vulnerability of development schemes premised on the lure of crisis capital, and it would seem to suggest that the issue that still most plagues these cities is not a lack of "jobs" as a quantifiable abstract, but a lack of high-paying, stable jobs.

This is in no way to denigrate the remarkable efforts of New Bedford and Fall River economic and city planners. After all, theirs is a decidedly uphill battle. New Bedford has

[31] Lawrence, "Promise of Jobs Central to New Bedford Casino Debate."

[32] Lisa Maya Knauer, "The Maya of New Bedford," 182; Juravich, *At the Altar of the Bottom Line*, 59.

garnered a reputation as a violent, poor, and crime-riddled city.[33] Fall River has fared no better. "Everywhere you go, there's shooting," local bartender Jen Machado told journalists investigating why so few young people are attracted to the city.[34] Local residents were understandably horrified in 2015, for instance, after a national travel blog rated New Bedford and Fall River the two "worst places to live in Massachusetts" (adding colorful observations such as "the residents here are chronically underemployed" and "Between New Bedford and Fall River, there were 173 reported rapes last year. Just wow.").[35]

Moreover, these city planners are hardly unique in their desperate search for "jobs." Today, it seems that rarely a state-of-the-union address or political campaign goes by that does not mention some kind of plan to bring manufacturing jobs back to America's shores. In 2012, Barack Obama declared that his economic "blueprint" was "built on American manufacturing."[36] In 2013, he reiterated that "our first priority is making America a magnet for new jobs and manufacturing."[37] By 2014, he was celebrating "[a] manufacturing sector that's adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s."[38] Yet, just like in the 1970s or the 1930s, there is rarely discussion

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[33] Ibid., 190.

[34] Elizabeth Teitz, "Fall River's Reputation a Challenge in Effort to Attract Younger Crowds At Night," *Herald News* (Fall River, Massachusetts), Aug. 21, 2015, http://www.heraldnews.com/article/20150821/NEWS/150828676

[35] Steve Urbon, "Worst? Buddy, you don't know the meaning of worst," *SouthCoast Today,* Jul. 16, 2015, http://www.southcoasttoday.com/article/20150716/NEWS/150719566; Kyle Scott Clauss, "This '10 Worst Places to Live in Mass.' Ranking Is Just Silly: Is New Bedford really that bad?," *Boston Magazine*, Aug. 7, 2015, http://www.bostonmagazine.com/news/blog/2015/08/07/worst-places-to-live-in-massachusetts/; Nick James, "These Are the 10 Worst Places to Live in Massachusetts," July 9, 2015, http://www.roadsnacks.net/places-in-massachusetts-that-need-a-hug/.

[36] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President in State of the Union Address," Jan. 24, 2012, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/01/24/remarks-president-state-union-address.

[37] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President in the State of the Union Address," Feb. 12, 2013, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/12/remarks-president-state-union-address.

[38] Barack Obama, "President Barack Obama's State of the Union Address," Jan. 28, 2014, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/28/president-barack-obamas-state-union-address.

of whether people actually *want* manufacturing jobs. After all, it is worth remembering that what made manufacturing jobs attractive in the mid-twentieth century was not industrial work itself, but the prospect of union representation, high wages, and fair working conditions. But these did not spring magically from the factory floor: they were the products of the intense political, cultural, and ideological struggle workers and their middle-class allies achieved (briefly) mid-way through the twentieth century. In other words, the contemporary nostalgia for industry is really a nostalgia for a much simpler concept: *good* jobs.[39]

In sum, although I hope this dissertation will shed light on the ways in which the short-term logics of economic development have often had less-than-stellar results in these cities, I hope it equally sheds light on why this vicious cycle of crisis capital accumulation is so intractable. After all, these cities are desperate, and local leaders are simply trying to do the best they can with what little resources they have. Their agency remains constrained in crucial and unavoidable ways.

An analysis of the long history of industrial development in Massachusetts indeed reveals surprising insights about the trajectory of capitalist expansion in the modern west. Foremost, despite the fact that Massachusetts is often portrayed as one of *the* paradigmatic global industrial economies, its development poorly fits much about our reigning models of industrialization and de-industrialization. Hardly rooted in the maturation of handicraft or agricultural industries, its beginnings were imposed by distressed capitalists looking to take advantage of a prevailing labor crisis. Hardly an endogenous productive boom powered by new technology or liberal ideologies,

[39] Jefferson Cowie and Nick Salvatore, "The Long Exception: Rethinking the Place of the New Deal in American History," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 74, no. 01 (2008): 3–32; Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, eds., *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2003), 14–15.

so much of what marked the industrial transition in Massachusetts came from the very mobility of industrial production and its factors: the ways in which capital and labor could easily course through the nation and globe, shifting factories and people in order to take advantage of transitory productive openings. And, more to the point, hardly a long-wave process of nineteenth-century industrialization and twentieth-century de-industrialization, it was a wrenching process of constant economic creation and re-creation at the price of interminable economic destruction and revolution.

Massachusetts' story also reaffirms the ways in which social history and business history must be told in tandem. After all, at first blush, it may seem somewhat contradictory to assert that industrialization and de-industrialization must be understood as mutually constitutive processes. But this contradiction only holds if one takes gross domestic product (GDP) to be the sole organizing mechanism for understanding economic growth.[40] As a global history of industrial Massachusetts reveals, however, the growth of the Massachusetts economy looks very different from the bottom up: its rises and falls in GDP were not the mere fluctuations of the business cycle, but represented fundamental economic transformations, cutting across regions, industries, and social sectors. The collapse of the textile industry and the rise of the garment economy, for instance, was a major economic catastrophe for skilled British workers, but a tremendous opportunity for new Portuguese women immigrants. Economic growth, as *Crisis Capital* shows, must be understood partly as a subjective experience.

In that same vein, it is hoped that by providing a *global* history of industrial development in Massachusetts, it becomes clear how even the long, sloping lines of aggregate global growth that continue to define economic history—from David Landes to Thomas Piketty—also mask far

[40] On the fetishization of GDP, see Eli Cook, "The Pricing of Progress: Economic Indicators and the Capitalization of American Life" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2013).

messier realities: namely, the ups and downs of myriad local economies, like Massachusetts, each seeking to use crisis itself to outflank one another in the race for mobile capital.[41] From the perspective of Massachusetts, global capitalism has been a sort of dissonant ensemble of numerous local economies, each seeking to advertise their own special appeal to mobile capital—in everything from tax abatements and free land to industrial financing and cheap labor.

In other words, the world of *global* capitalism was in some sense created at the *local* level. The rise of garment production in Bangladesh (at the expense of Massachusetts) in the 1970s was hardly that different from the rise of Massachusetts textile production (at the expense of Britain) in the 1870s. Massachusetts workers and capitalists were not simply "shocked" by the globalization of capitalism, they were part and parcel of that very process, even if they did not always possess total control over how exactly these phenomena unwound. The so-called "race to the bottom," then, is no contemporary bugaboo, but a structural facet of how industrial capitalism has expanded over the last two centuries.

[41] See Introduction. Also see David S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2003); Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2014).

Glossary of Archival Abbreviations

ABAP-FMPAA	Portuguese Alliance Benevolent Association (Associação Benificente Aliança Portuguesa) Records, 1924-2004, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts
ABNB-BLHC	Account Books and Other Material Relating to the Whaling Industry Chiefly From New Bedford and Nantucket, Mass., 1774-1922, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
ACTWU-UMASSA	ACTWU: New England Regional Joint Board, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts
ACWA-BOS-UMASSA	Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, Boston Joint Board, University of Massachusetts Special Collections, Amherst, Massachusetts
ACWA-KCA	Amalgamated Clothing Workers Of America Records, 1914-1980, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York
ACWA-NE-UMASSA	Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, New England Joint Board, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts
ACWC-MCGILL	Arkin Collection of Western Canadiana, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montreal, Canada
AGCDPD-BPARPD	Arquivo Governo Civil do Distrio de Ponta Delgada, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal
AMS-FRIW-BLHC	Annawan Manufactory Series, Fall River Iron Works Collection, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
AOS-ANTT	Arquivo Salazar, Arquivo Nacional Torre Do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal
ASPAM-BPARPD	Arquivo da Sociedade Promotora da Agricultura Micaelense, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, Portugal
BFP-NBWMRL	Thomas Bennett Jr. Papers, Bennett Family Papers, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts
BMC-BLHC	Boston Manufacturing Company Records, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
BNPL	Biblioteca Nacional De Portugal, Lisbon, Portugal

CC-MCGILL	Canadien Collection, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montreal, Canada
CFBR-BLHC	Coolidge Family Business Records, 1857-1938, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
CLMR-AESL	Consumers' League of Massachusetts Records, 1891-1955, Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
CMBR-BLHC	Charles W. Morgan Business Records, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
CVP-FMPAA	The Carlton M. Viveiros Papers, Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese-American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts
DFLC-HLHU	Daniel B. Fearing Logbook Collection, 1816-1882, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
FPEC-BPARPD	Fundo Particular de Eugenio Da Canto, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, Portugal
FPER-BPARPD	Fundo Particular de Ernesto Rodolfo Hintze Ribeiro, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, Portugal
FRLFA-UMASSA	[Fall River] Loom Fixers Association Records, 1895-1917, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts
FRYFU-UMASSA	Yarn Finishers Union (Fall River, Mass.) Records, 1919-1922, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts
HBH-WLHU	Henry Beetle Hough Scrapbooks, Widener Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
ICFTU-IISH	International Confederation of Free Trade Union Archives, 1949-1993, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Netherlands
ILGWU-DD-KCA	International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union: David Dubinsky, President's Records, 1932-1966, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York
ILGWU-FU-KCA	International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Frederick F. Umhey, Executive Secretary, Collection, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York

ILGWU-PUB-KCA	ILGWU Publications, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York
ILGWU-SC-KCA	International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union: Sol Chaikin Papers, 1940-1986, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York
ITGLWF-IISH	International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation Collection, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Netherlands
JBBR-NBWMRL	Jonathan Bourne Jr. Business Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts
JRP-FMPAA	João Rocha Papers, Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese-American Archives, Archives and Special Collections, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts
KPC-BLHC	Kidder, Peabody & Co. Papers, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
LLCC-MCGILL	Lawrence Lande Collection of Canadiana, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montreal, Canada.
LMC-BLHC	Lawrence Manufacturing Company Records, 1831-1955, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
LOC	Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC
MAS-NBFPL	Mayor Ashley Scrapbooks, New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts
MC-MCGILL	Manitoba Collection, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montreal, Canada
MI-ANTT	Ministério do Interior, Arquivo Nacional Torre Do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal
MMC-BLHC	Merrimack Mfg. Co. Papers, Baker Library Historical Collection, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
MS-FRIW-BLHC	Metacomet Series, Fall River Iron Works Collection, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts
NB1928-UMASSD	New Bedford Textile Worker's Strike of 1928 Oral History Interviews and Research Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts
NBRR-NBWMRL	New Bedford Rayon, Inc., Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts
NBWMRL	Logbooks and Journals, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts

OHJP-FIAC	Oral History Project Coordinated by Josephine Perrault, 1981-1984, French Institute, Emmanuel d'Alzon Library, Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts
OHP-FMPAA	Oral History Project, 1987-1990, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts
PADNC-FMPAA	Portuguese-American Digital Newspaper Collections, Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts
PEM	Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts
PMCR- NBWMRL	Pierce Manufacturing Corporation Records, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts
POHC-NBWMRL	Purrington Oral History Collection, New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts
TSMR-BLHC	Tremont and Suffolk Mill Records, 1831-1936, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts.
TWUA-NB-UMASSA	Textile Workers Union of America, New Bedford Joint Board Records, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, Massachusetts
VP-AACL-BPARPD	Arquivo da Administração do Concelho de Lagôa, Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel, Azores, Portugal
WPS-NBFPL	William J. Potter Sermons, New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts

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Arquivo Salazar

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Baker Library Historical Collection, Harvard Business School, Boston, Massachusetts

Account Books and Other Material Relating to the Whaling Industry Chiefly From New Bedford and Nantucket, Mass., 1774-1922

Boston Manufacturing Company Records, 1813-1933

Charles W. Morgan Business Records

Coolidge Family Business Records, 1857-1938

Fall River Iron Works Collection

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Biblioteca Nacional De Portugal, Lisbon, Portugal

Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Regional de Ponta Delgada, Ponta Delgada, Portugal

Arquivo da Administração do Concelho de Lagôa

Arquivo da Sociedade Promotora da Agricultura Micaelense

Arquivo do Administração de Concelho de Povoação

Fundo do Governo Civil do Distrito de Ponta Delgada

Fundo Particular de Ernesto Rodolfo Hintze Ribeiro

Fundo Particular de Eugenio Da Canto

Fundo Particular de Teófilo Braga

Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales Québec, Viex-Montréal, Montréal, Québec

Fonds Cour Supérieure, District Judiciaire de Montréal, Greffes d'Arpenteurs

Ferreira Mendes Portuguese American Archives, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Dartmouth, Massachusetts

Carlton M. Viveiros Papers

João Rocha Papers

Portuguese Alliance Benevolent Association (Associação Benificente Aliança Portuguesa) Records, 1924-2004

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New Bedford Rayon, Inc., Records, 1926-1974

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Pierce Manufacturing Corporation Records, 1892-1944

Purrington Oral History Collection

Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

Arkin Collection of Western Canadiana

Canadien Collection

Lawrence Lande Collection of Canadiana

Manitoba Collection

Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts

Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union—New England Regional Joint Board, Records, 1974-1987

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