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# From Henley to Harvard at Hyderabad? (Post and Neo-) Colonialism in Management Education in India

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ARUN KUMAR

Founded in 1956, the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) was established with the objective of professionalizing management in post-colonial India through training, research, and consultancy. It was modeled on the Administrative Staff College at Henley-on-Thames (Henley), in the United Kingdom. Like Henley, ASCI used syndicates for its management training programs. Between 1958 and 1973, ASCI received more than \$1.26 million from the Ford Foundation, part of which was used to finance the development and use of the case method in ASCI's training programs, and later more widely in its research and consultancy. This article traces the ways by which the Ford Foundation—as a *dominating institution*—stigmatized Henley and ASCI, their institutional practices, and the wider Indian society; and legitimized the case method pioneered at the Harvard Business School. Imbricated in the Cold War's geo-politics, Ford Foundation's interventions in Hyderabad should be understood as part of the emergence of the United States as the dominant neo-colonial power, which required the displacement of Britain, its institutions, and their practices as the template for India's post-colonial management institutions.

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A significant part of the archival research presented in this article was supported by a 2015 competitive grant-in-aid awarded by the Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC; in New York) for my wider research on management, modernity, and nation-building. I am thankful to the archivists at RAC for all their help and suggestions, particularly Lucas Buresch for pointing me to the then-uncatalogued Ford Foundation reports.

“India,” the president of the Ford Foundation (FF) Paul G. Hoffman, said on his overseas tour of Asia in 1951, “can still be saved from communism.”<sup>1</sup> Before launching the foundation’s international programs, Hoffman described the mission as building a “better understanding between the free peoples of the world.”<sup>2</sup> The foundation’s subsequent international programs were part of the United States’ wider efforts at countering communism in the so-called third world countries.<sup>3</sup> Following Harry Truman’s Four Point Program, as launched in his presidential inaugural address in 1949, FF’s international interventions were framed through and legitimized in the name of international development.<sup>4</sup> Such interventions were aimed at remaking a new global order, with the United States as the dominant neo-colonial power. Crucial to the U.S. global rise was its “soft power,” which in political scientist Joseph Nye’s widely cited formulation is understood as power over countries by which “one country gets other countries to *want* what it wants.”<sup>5</sup> In the making of American soft power, according to International Relations scholar Inderjeet Parmar, U.S. philanthropic foundations played an influential role.<sup>6</sup> Significant among these, were the “Big Three” foundations—Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Ford—which funded international development programs with the explicit aims of alleviating hunger and poverty, supporting economic development, and uplifting living standards in the third world. However, their unstated objectives were to combat communism, contain anti-American sentiment, and promote Americanism across the third world by sponsoring elite but purposive knowledge networks.<sup>7</sup>

In FF’s fight against communism during the Cold War, India was seen as an “essential democracy.”<sup>8</sup> The success of development in the country was deemed crucial to the future fortunes of democracy and development globally. Hoffman, for example, viewed India as

1. *Hoffman on Tour*, Reel AV 1951, Box 2, FA750, Audio-visual Materials, Ford Foundation (FF) Records, Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC).

2. *Ibid.*

3. For a discussion on the discursive and material creation of the third world, see Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 9.

4. Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, “Inaugural address,” [https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/50yr\\_archive/inagural20jan1949.htm](https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/50yr_archive/inagural20jan1949.htm). For a discussion on the role of the Four Point Program in combating communism in third world countries in the name of their development, see Esteva, “Development,” 1–3; Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 31–39.

5. Nye, “Soft Power,” 166.

6. For a more detailed discussion on foundations’ role in the rise of U.S. “soft power,” see Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*, 7–15.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Hess, “Foundations in India’s Globalization,” 52; Hess, “Waging the Cold War”; see Staples, *Forty Years* for an insider’s account.

the “next critical battleground of the Cold War” after China, which he believed had already been lost.<sup>9</sup> It is hardly surprising, then, that the foundation’s first overseas office was opened in New Delhi, India, in 1951. Although FF’s early programs in the country were targeted at community development, from 1958 onward it made a number of large program grants for the establishment and institutionalization of management education in the country, including most notably the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) in Ahmedabad and Calcutta.<sup>10</sup> They were modeled on the Harvard Business School (HBS) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Sloan School, respectively. The establishment of management education institutions in India has been characterized as “mimicry” of U.S. management education, including its concerns, theory, curricula, and pedagogy.<sup>11</sup> It was part of the wider Americanization of management knowledge and practice, on which there is a more established and extensive scholarship.<sup>12</sup> Postcolonial critics of management have characterized the Americanization of management in previously colonized third world countries as a colonial continuity; that is, driven by similar logic and built on earlier colonial infrastructures that reinforced the binary colonial representations of the West and Rest of the World and its peoples.<sup>13</sup> Frenkel and Shenhav, for example, have argued that the Americanization of Israel’s productivity models in the 1950s was built on the prior institutional infrastructures and logics from British colonialism.<sup>14</sup>

Although widely acknowledged, the influential role of U.S. philanthropic foundations in the Americanization of management education in third world countries remains underanalyzed.<sup>15</sup> More so, as organizations such as FF operate as a *dominating institution* that, according to Khurana, Kimura, and Fourcade, work purposively to

9. Sackley, “Foundation in the Field,” 237.

10. For an overview, see Staples, *Forty Years*, 48–50. For a detailed discussion and evaluation of Ford’s institution-building in management education in India, see Hill, Hayes, and Baumgartel, *Institution Building in India*.

11. D’Mello, “Management Education”; Srinivas, “Mimicry and Revival.”

12. The Americanization of management education and knowledge took on diverse institutional trajectories, but it was also actively resisted. For an overview of the trajectories and responses, see Sahlin-Andersson and Engwall, *Expansion of Management Knowledge*. For a more specific discussion on third world countries, see Kipping, Engwall and Üsdiken, “Preface.” For an overview in Europe, see Üsdiken, “Americanization of European Management Education,” 87–88.

13. Prasad, “Gaze of the Other,” 3–43; Prasad et al., “Debating Knowledge,” 3–42.

14. Frenkel and Shenhav, “Americanization to Colonization.”

15. Notable exceptions include Rakesh Khurana, *Higher Aims to Hired Hands*; Gemelli, *Ford Foundation and Europe*. On FF’s role in the São Paulo School of Business Administration, Brazil, see Cooke and Alcadipani, “Toward a Global History.”

change other institutions and exercise their dominance.<sup>16</sup> They have been doing so in three key ways: brokering across institutions (where previously there were structural holes among key actors, sectors, and disciplines); legitimizing particular organizations and their practices (by establishing new rational truths) or stigmatizing others (including well-entrenched routines); and creating resource dependence within the institutions they were trying to change.

This article interrogates and explains FF's influential but problematic role in institutionalizing the mimicry of American management education in India. Operating as a dominating institution, it first purposively engineered the severing of India's post-colonial institutions' connections with British institutions following imperialism; and then supplanted them with U.S. institutions and their practices. This was part of distinguishing U.S. interests and presence in India from British colonial institutions, against whom—FF believed—there had come to be considerable but expected resentment. This article argues that placed in its contemporary context of post-colonial development in India and the Cold War being fought on the battlegrounds of third world countries, FF's brokering of management education pedagogy was driven by the United States' need to establish its supremacy. It did so by displacing the dominance of British institutions and making U.S. institutions *the* dominant referent for India's institutions; indeed, for its development too. Although distinct, management education in India, I conclude, has been imbricated in related forms of colonialism.

The article is based on FF's interventions at the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) in Hyderabad, India, starting in 1958. Modeled on the Administrative Staff College at Henley-on-Thames (Henley), in the United Kingdom, ASCI used syndicates in its training programs, which targeted midcareer managers. In addition, ASCI replicated Henley's physical setting, institutional leadership, and roles of staff.<sup>17</sup> In particular, this article focuses on FF's financial and technical support to ASCI for moving its training programs from syndicates to the case method. This included the appointment in 1960 of Andrew R. Towl, the first director of Case Development at HBS, as a technical expert at ASCI. As a dominating institution, FF engaged in a persistent and purposive stigmatization of Henley and ASCI—and in particular its instructional method of syndicates—as well as deficits of modernity in Indian society and economy. Further, FF-appointed

16. Khurana, Kimura, and Fourcade, "How Foundations Think."

17. For an overview of its history, see ASCI, "Our History" webpage, <http://asci.org.in/index.php/about-us/our-history>. For a detailed discussion of ASCI's similarities and differences from Henley, see Taylor, *Administrative Staff Colleges*, 41–44; Sen, "Administrative Staff College of India," 185–187.

staff and consultants engaged in legitimizing U.S. management institutions, such as HBS and its instructional methods, as the template for India's post-colonial management institutions. This article makes a contribution by contextualizing and explaining FF's interest in ASCI, outlining the mechanics of its influence as a dominating institution, and challenging—following Cooke and Alcadipani—their limits as a dominating institution.<sup>18</sup>

I argue that the focus on ASCI and management pedagogy are significant as ASCI has received limited attention in the history of management education in India.<sup>19</sup> Departing from Hill, Hayes, and Baumgartel's three-phase classification of development of management education in India, I argue that ASCI—which they place in the rather short and unimpressive second stage—was significant despite its small size and since diminished prestige.<sup>20</sup> First, planned as a collaboration between the state and industry, it marked the recognition—by public and private industrial sectors as well as public administration—of the incipient nation-state's need for trained administrators for overall development. Second, less like the IIMs in Ahmedabad and Calcutta, ASCI was organized as part of the Nehruvian mixed economic model, where the post-colonial state was involved in industrial sectors deemed crucial to national interest. Established before and outside of FF's influence on management education in the country (most notably in the form of IIMs), this article's focus on ASCI provides a prehistory of Americanization of management education in India, howsoever short, and the mechanics of FF's purposive and influential role in the history of Americanization of management education in India. The article makes a contribution by bringing into relief the mimicry of British institutions of management education and training and their practices in post-colonial India, which preceded the mimicry of American management education.

The article's focus on pedagogy is also instructive as prior scholarship on the Americanization of management education has tended to focus on institutional models (B-schools), management knowledge and theory, and curricular resources, while teaching and training

18. Cooke and Alcadipani, "Toward a Global History," 494–495.

19. See D'Mello, "Management Education," M-172-5; Mir, Mir, and Srinivas, "Managerial Knowledge"; Pylee, "Management Education"; Srinivas, "Mimicry and Revival"; Srinivas, "Cultivating Indian Management," 155–160.

20. Hill, Hayes, and Baumgartel, *Institution Building in India*, 10–20. Their classification begins with the establishment of Sydenham College in 1913 as the first phase centered on commerce colleges in the country; the relatively short second phase is classified as the management studies phase, which involved the establishment of training institutions such as ASCI. The third stage started in the 1960s: the apogee of management education involved the establishment of the IIMs.

methods have received comparatively lesser attention. Relatedly, extant scholarship on pedagogy has focused on the effectiveness—or lack—of different methods in meeting the challenges of training tomorrow's managers. This article instead contextualizes management pedagogy.<sup>21</sup> In doing so, it makes a further contribution: although FF staff and consultants frequently presented it as a struggle over pedagogic and institutional effectiveness, it was in effect a struggle over influence.

I draw on archival research conducted at the Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC) in New York, and the University of Reading's (UR) Special Collections and the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) in Britain. FF's archival material at RAC included official documents such as financial reports, grant letters, extensions, requests, narrative and evaluation reports; and correspondence among FF-appointed consultants and staff and correspondence with ASCI leadership. A number of unpublished and previously uncatalogued evaluation and travel reports were also consulted. Sources in UR's Special Collections included archival material relating to Henley's Staff College, which were particularly useful in understanding not only the context and practice of syndicates at Henley itself but also across the globe. Finally, the Latham Papers at LMA contained the only available systematic study of syndicates as compared to other pedagogic methods, particularly the case method.

This article is structured as follows. The next section is a considered review of the scholarship on Americanization, its continuities with colonialism in the third world, and the significant but problematic role played by U.S. philanthropic foundations. That is followed by a section on the historical overview of syndicates (Henley) and the case method (Harvard) of training. The article's central narrative of making Henley and then Harvard at Hyderabad is presented next; followed by FF's attempts at displacing syndicates and supplanting them with the case method. In the final section, I place FF's programs at ASCI into their contemporary context and outline the article's contributions.

### Americanization, Colonialism, and U.S. Foundations

The United States has exercised disproportionate influence on management studies across the globe.<sup>22</sup> Commonly understood as

21. See Bridgman, "Manager's Moral Dilemma"; Grey, "Reinventing Business Schools."

22. Clegg and Ross-Smith, "Revising the Boundaries"; Engwall and Zamagni, *Management Education in Historical Perspective*; Kipping, Engwall, and Üsdiken, "Preface."



Americanization, its predominance in management (education, research, theory, and even practice) has led to a reduction of other societies and nations to mere “field experiments in the global laboratory of universalizing US management theory.”<sup>23</sup> Americanization gained impetus in the context of the Cold War, where management was deemed crucial for maintaining a strong and growing American economy, and by extension the United States’ place in global political and economic order in comparison to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.<sup>24</sup> H. Rowan Gaither Jr., FF’s president from 1953 to 1956, and later the chair of its board, recognized as much in July 23, 1958, in a speech at Stanford University, when he argued, “The Soviet challenge requires that we seek out and utilize the best intelligence of American management—and in turn puts on management a national responsibility of unparalleled dimensions.”<sup>25</sup> Management, therefore, was imbricated in the United States’ related pursuits of its war against communism and in installing itself as an economic and political exemplar for the Rest of the World to follow. In its importation, of which the third world is the focus here, management studies took different foci, form, and trajectories in different geographies and historical eras.<sup>26</sup> Notwithstanding such significant differences in the Americanization of management education, it has always been crucial to serving the country’s domestic and global interests and foreign policy objectives.<sup>27</sup>

The responses to the Americanization of management knowledge and education, Kipping Engwall, and Üsdiken suggest, tended to be more extreme in countries located on the global periphery,<sup>28</sup> which vacillated between enthusiastic adoption informed by development and modernization and rejection based on nationalism with limited attempts at adaption or translation into specific contexts. The former is commonly understood, as noted earlier, as mimicry, which involved transplanting American theory, choice of issues, curricular resources, and pedagogy, although not always successfully, into third

23. Clegg, Linstead, and Sewell, “Only Penguins,” 109.

24. Khurana, *Higher Aims to Hired Hands*, 239–340; Schlossman, Sedlak, and Wechsler, “Revolution in Business Education.”

25. Cited in Khurana, *Higher Aims to Hired Hands*, 239–240.

26. Engwall, “Americanization of Nordic Management”; Kipping, Engwall, and Üsdiken, “Preface”; Kipping, Üsdiken, and Puig, “Imitation, Tension, and Hybridization”; Üsdiken, “Americanization of European Management Education,” 87–88.

27. Cooke and Kumar, “Shaping of Management Education.” For a similar discussion on international relations, see Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*. For social sciences, see Fisher, “Reproduction and Production of Hegemony.”

28. Kipping, Engwall, and Üsdiken, “Preface,” 13.



world countries such as Brazil and India.<sup>29</sup> It was framed through, and legitimated in the name of, international development, where management and development were twinned in the mid-twentieth-century third world in two related ways.<sup>30</sup> As a field of practice, management was required for the organization, delivery, and control of international development programs to rapidly transform rural, agrarian, informal third world economies into urbanized industrial economies.<sup>31</sup> As a field of knowledge, management was conceived as enabling third world countries to “catch up with Western nations in its scientific temperament and its political and cultural modernization.”<sup>32</sup> With the West installed as the exemplar, management promised a singular trajectory toward a predetermined goal, and it did not matter “where you [were] in the world or at what time in history you [came] from.”<sup>33</sup>

Imposed from the outside-in, the transplanting of management from the United States to third world countries led to, as Ibarra-Colado terms it, “epistemic coloniality.” It was based on the “totalitarian pragmatism of the ‘one best way’ and the supposed scientific character of a set of logical and highly formalized mathematical knowledge.”<sup>34</sup> In management’s pursuit of *the* one best way, people, communities, ecologies, geographies, and industries from the third world were commonly designated as deviant, deficient, or backward. Like colonialism, therefore, management worked to reinforce or reconfigure preexisting colonial binaries (modern versus traditional, for example) and order (developed industrial nations of North America and western Europe as exemplars) in the third world.<sup>35</sup> The postcolonial critique of management has, therefore, characterized management in terms of its continuities of colonialism: in its colonizing intent, gaze, and representations of the Other. It is worth highlighting here that the internationalization of management in the third world shared its colonizing characteristics

29. Alcadipani, “From Latin America to the World”; Alcadipani and Caldas, “Americanizing Brazilian Management”; Alcadipani and Rosa, “Global Management to Global Management”; D’Mello, “Management Education”; Srinivas, “Mimicry and Revival.”

30. For a discussion on the modernizing and universalizing tendencies of both development and management and their mutual entanglements, see Dar, “Re-Connecting Histories”; Cooke and Faria, “Development, Administration and Imperialism.”

31. Cooke, “Managing the (Third) World.”

32. Srinivas, “Mimicry and Revival,” 48; Srinivas, “Authentic Management.”

33. Dar, “Re-Connecting Histories,” 104.

34. Ibarra-Colado, “Organization Studies and Epistemic Coloniality,” 468.

35. For an overview of the postcolonial criticism of management, see Prasad, “Gaze of the Other,” 3–43. For an updated review, see Prasad et al., “Debating Knowledge,” 3–42.

with its twin: international development.<sup>36</sup> Both were not only characteristically modernizing and universalizing but also indexical in their expressions and representations of colonialism.

In the name of and as part of international development in the third world, management research and training institutions were established. Both U.S. academic institutions (such as HBS, Sloan School of Management, and Michigan State University) and philanthropic organizations (most notably the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation) were involved.<sup>37</sup> They were part of the wider efforts of U.S. foundations to expand and consolidate American soft power.<sup>38</sup> In an early signal work, for example, Robert Arnove marked the motivations and programs of U.S. foundations in the production of public culture and policy as “cultural imperialism.”<sup>39</sup> Arnove and contributors in his anthology argued that foundations had a corrosive influence on democracy, contrary to the latter’s claims. From an international relations perspective, Parmar has argued that the United States’ Big Three foundations’ core investments were directed at creating and sustaining elite scholarly networks, which were crucial for serving U.S. foreign policy and global interests.<sup>40</sup> During the Cold War, for example, these networks were involved in promoting Americanism and combating anti-Americanism while sharing “close cooperation, shared convictions and worldviews” with the United States.<sup>41</sup> However, the foundations’ programs were hardly static; they frequently mirrored the shifts in U.S. foreign policy. Like Parmar, Gemelli has argued that the changes in FF’s policies and programs on management education in western Europe during the 1950s and 1960s reflected the changes in U.S. foreign policy as it moved from fighting communism to fighting the impending internationalization of the Soviet bloc countries and their economies in the 1970s.<sup>42</sup>

36. McEwan, *Postcolonialism and Development*; Cooke, “Managing the (Third) World.”

37. Alcadipani and Caldas, “Americanizing Brazilian Management,” 41; Cooke and Kumar, “Shaping of Management Education”; Mir, Mir, and Srinivas, “Managerial Knowledge,” 129–131; Srinivas, “Mimicry and Revival,” 43–5. For a discussion on the role of U.S. foundations and disciplinary knowledge and networks from fields other than international development, see Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*.

38. Cooke and Alcadipani, “Toward a Global History”; Cooke and Kumar, “Shaping of Management Education.”

39. Arnove, *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism*.

40. For a more detailed and critical discussion on U.S. foundations’ role in the rise of U.S. soft power, see Parmar’s, *Foundations of the American Century*, 7–15.

41. Parmar, “State–Private Network,” 24; Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy*, 159.

42. Gemelli, “Imitation to Competitive-Cooperation.”

Still later, the networks worked to promote neoliberal globalization strategies in third world countries. This complemented U.S. foreign policy even as it shifted over time and across geographies.<sup>43</sup>

As part of their efforts at expanding U.S. soft power, these foundations sponsored programs to support specific disciplines and fields across the globe through international institution- and network-building.<sup>44</sup> In India, for example, FF identified management and public administration as its chosen fields of intervention. This choice reflected not only the needs India's overloaded and small administrative capacity to lead its postcolonial development but also the mutual significance for industrial development and private enterprise.<sup>45</sup> In 1957 FF commissioned Charles A. Myers to investigate which Indian institutions could be supported for their teaching in "industrial relations and industrial management"; his report identified ASCI as a potential recipient.<sup>46</sup> In addition to ASCI and the IIMs in Ahmedabad and Calcutta, FF supported the founding of a third IIM in Bangalore in 1975 focusing on public-sector management, and of the Institute of Rural Management in Anand in 1979 on cooperative management. At each of these institutions, FF financed technical support of other U.S. B-schools in the adoption of an autonomous business school model in India. Characteristic features of such a model included autonomy from accredited universities, postgraduate teaching in a trimester format, and case-based teaching with the objective of insulating management institutions in the country from contrasting imperatives of Indian universities.<sup>47</sup>

## Pedagogic Approaches

Before proceeding further, it is worth outlining the historical development, key features, and pedagogic effectiveness of syndicates and the case method. The latter is now widely known and highly regarded; less is known about the former.

43. Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*. For an overview of how U.S. foundations' international operations worked—overtly or secretly—to consolidate U.S. domination and establishment of free markets in third world countries, see Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy*, 157–195.

44. See Fisher, "Reproduction and Production of Hegemony"; Tosiello, "Max Ascoli"; Gemelli, "From Imitation to Competitive-Cooperation"; Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*.

45. Staples, *Forty Years*, 44, 48.

46. Memo from Charles Myers to Douglas Ensminger, dated February 4, 1958, Reel 3228, ASCI (05900021), Grants A-B, FF Records, RAC. All archival sources related to the grant ASCI (05900021), Grants A-B, FF Records, RAC are hereafter shortened to ASCI, FF, RAC.

47. Srinivas, "Mimicry and Revival," 44–45.

*Henley's Syndicates*

The Administrative Staff College at Henley was organized along the available model of the Services' Staff Colleges. Recalling British Prime Minister Clement Attlee's visit to Henley in April 1948, Noel F. Hall (Henley's founding principal) shared that Attlee had regarded the school as the "civil equivalent of the Imperial Defence College."<sup>48</sup> There was, according to Hall, a self-evident case for their comparison. Like the Services' Staff Colleges, Henley provided a platform for personnel whose training might have been in a different branch or specialism to exchange ideas. The Staff Colleges provided useful training for personnel moving into positions of seniority, where decision making was consultative. Similarly, at Henley the central organizing idea was to make a "co-ordinated group out of individual specialists."<sup>49</sup>

At Henley, syndicates involved strictly residential training that lasted twelve weeks. The sixty selected participants were organized into six groups of ten "members," which is what participants of syndicates were called.<sup>50</sup> The members came from the civil service, private and nationalized industries, local governments, and overseas (where most came from former Britain colonies). The groups were purposively constituted to ensure a cross-section of the fields the members came from and their specialisms. Each group was led by a different chairperson, selected from among the group members for each time-bound task assigned to them. As a result of the rotating appointment of chairs, all the members of the syndicate held the responsibility of chairing their group at some point. The curricular material was handed out to each group at the beginning of their tasks, with experts invited to deliver talks in their areas of specialism. For some tasks, the groups made observational visits to selected organizations. At the end of each task, the group presented its report before the college assembly and then answered questions in an open discussion. A directing staff (as members of faculty were known) was assigned to each syndicate group. They were responsible for preparing task briefs, compiling working materials, and facilitating the discussion in syndicates if called on by the group's chair. Designed as a self-instructional method, members

48. Noel F. Hall, *The Staff College in Training for Management*, Winter Proceedings No. 1, 1948–49, British Institute of Management, LMA/4062/06/015, Latham Papers, London Metropolitan Archives (LMA).

49. Ibid.

50. *The Method of Work*, Administrative Staff College, MSS 5567/Box 6, Special Collections, University of Reading. For an in-depth discussion on content, pedagogy, and roles of staff in syndicates, see Hall, *Making of Higher Executives*; Hall, "Administrative Staff College"; Taylor, *Administrative Staff Colleges*, 11–19; Dimock, "Administrative Staff College," 171–173.

of the syndicates not only drew on their own professional experiences but also on those of other members within and across groups on various subjects. The subjects covered were categorized into three divisions: the first dealt with various subfields of management; the second focused on cross-sectoral issues, such as relations between government and industry; and the third dealt with complex problems of administration, such as major technological developments.

From Henley, the syndicate-based model of training was exported to third world countries such as India, Iran, Pakistan, the Philippines, East Africa, and the West Indies as part of their post-colonial development. It was also exported to Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, and Norway as part of their postwar economic development.<sup>51</sup> For scholars of public administration, syndicates were effective as a prerequisite for “restor[ing] the flexibility and initiative that must always accompany free enterprise” in any industrialized nation.<sup>52</sup> They encouraged initiative, originality, dissent, mutual respect, and understanding.<sup>53</sup> As a small group-based teaching method, syndicates generated motivation and involvement among participants, leading to “deep-level processing” and development of higher-order skills.<sup>54</sup> They were, however, not without limitations. Adams, for example, has argued that although syndicates were not particularly effective in terms of knowledge acquisition, they worked well as a forum for exchange of experience, experimenting with one’s behavior in a team, and in creating opportunities for self-development.<sup>55</sup>

#### *Harvard’s Case Method*

First initiated at Harvard Law School in 1870, the case method soon migrated into HBS as a result of then Dean Edwin Gay’s enthusiasm. Although not immediately successful, moves toward adopting the case method were consolidated under Wallace B. Donham, who took over as dean of HBS in 1919 and helped develop the necessary institutional infrastructure.<sup>56</sup> Primarily geared toward training students to practice ways by which they dealt with business problems, the case method has since come to occupy the foremost position as an instructional method. Confronted with real-life cases or their simulations,

51. Taylor, *Administrative Staff Colleges*.

52. Dimock, “Administrative Staff College,” 166.

53. *Ibid.*, 172.

54. Collier, “Syndicate Methods,” 436; Collier, “Peer-Group Learning,” 57.

55. Adams, “Use of Syndicates,” 198–199.

56. For a history of the case method, see Bridgman, Cummings, and McLaughlin, “Re-Stating the Case.” In particular, Donham proposed the expansion of HBS’s Bureau of Business Research for producing cases.

students arrive at conclusions based on systematic analysis of facts, problem formulation, and discussion.<sup>57</sup> By focusing on managerial decision making, the case method of instruction has grown evermore popular and influential.

Despite its global popularity, the case method is not without its criticisms. Scholars have argued that the use of cases underplays social, political, and ethical factors related to managerial decision making.<sup>58</sup> Collinson and Tourish, for example, have argued that cases fail to reflect diversity of organizational perspectives and perpetuate the myth of a charismatic manager/leader.<sup>59</sup> Notwithstanding these criticisms, the use of the case method migrated geographies and fields, including medicine and public policy. The case method is popularly associated with Harvard University, with its Law, Medicine, and Business schools identified as exemplars of its use.<sup>60</sup>

Contardo and Wensley identified three core mutually reinforcing ideologies that underpinned the rise in global power and prestige of the case method: managerialism, institutionalism, and American capitalism.<sup>61</sup> In promoting Americanism across the globe—as an ideological endeavor—the case method was presented as an appropriate vehicle. As part of the Americanization of management education, the case method was propagated and adopted by management institutes in India. Foremost among these institutions were the IIMs in Ahmedabad and Calcutta, particularly the former as it had been modeled on HBS.<sup>62</sup> There were still other forces at work behind the adoption of the case method. Srinivas, for example, has argued that as compared to other teaching methods, the case method was seen as enabling “better description of actual working conditions.”<sup>63</sup> It, therefore, helped mediate the tensions between American management’s purported universalism and the Indians’ need to address the specificities of their context (i.e., mixed economics, with extensive state control of private enterprises). The IIMs’ adoption of the case

57. See Garvin, “Making the Case,” 60–61; Anteby, *Manufacturing Morals*, 51–69.

58. Bridgman, “Manager’s Moral Dilemma”; Grey, “Reinventing Business Schools,” 182.

59. Collinson and Tourish, “Teaching Leadership Critically,” 590.

60. For a discussion on its use at Harvard, see Garvin, “Making the Case,” 65.

61. Contardo and Wensley, “Harvard Business School Story,” 216–224.

62. For a historical discussion on IIMs’ adoption of the case method and the wider context, see Srinivas, “Mimicry and Revival,” 45; Srinivas, “Cultivating Indian Management,” 161–163; Dixit et al., “Future of Case Method,” 87–131. The last citation is to a colloquium in *Vikalpa*, published by the IIM in Ahmedabad; worth mentioning is this IIM’s central building’s steps are popularly known as the Harvard Steps.

63. Srinivas, “Cultivating Indian Management,” 161.

method was relatively straightforward, but it was much less so at ASCI, despite FF's support in the form of capital and technical expertise. This is discussed in the following three sections.

### Making Henley at Hyderabad

As part of the post-World War II development in India, the imperial government's Central Advisory Board of Education suggested that technical education in the country should be organized on a national, not provincial, level.<sup>64</sup> As part of this, an All India Council for Technical Education was established in 1945 to support higher technical education for industrial development in the country. After attaining independence in 1947, the post-colonial government of India began exploring the possibility of training its incoming cadre of civil servants at Henley starting in 1948. This was soon found to be unfeasible. In 1949 the council appointed a joint committee to plan for the organization and development of management training institutions in the country. The committee recommended that an Administrative Staff College of India should be established as a collaboration between India's government and private business community. A separate planning committee was setup under T. T. Krishnamachari, the minister of Commerce and Industry, who invited prominent members from the industry sector.<sup>65</sup> The committee's joint secretaries visited Henley in 1953. The following year, Hall (as noted above, Henley's founding principal) visited India to offer further advice. ASCI was formally registered on May 18, 1956, with Gen. S. M. Shrinagesh as its first principal and with syndicates as its choice for delivering management training. Before taking charge at ASCI, Shrinagesh spent six weeks at Henley studying, among other things, their use of syndicates. Impressed with what he witnessed, Shrinagesh found syndicates "so relevant in the Indian environment" that he was convinced that ASCI ought to adopt it as far as possible. For its first session, he arranged for the secondment of J. W. L. Adams, a member of Henley's directing staff, as ASCI's director of Studies.<sup>66</sup>

Launched in December 1957, ASCI's syndicates were modeled closely on those used at Henley, with adaptation of some features to accommodate the specificities of the Indian context.<sup>67</sup> Like Henley,

64. Biswas and Agrawal, *Development of Education in India*, 315.

65. Ibid, 321; Taylor, *Administrative Staff Colleges*, 38–39.

66. Taylor, *Administrative Staff Colleges*, 39.

67. Hill, Hayes, and Baumgartel, *Institution Building in India*, 10–20; Pylee, "Management Education," 212.



ASCI's program catered to midlevel managers who had recently moved into—or were likely to do so in the near future—senior administrative positions and/or had accepted an expansion of their administrative duties. Mimicking Henley's syndicates, the midlevel managers were selected based on interviews; the fifty successful candidates were then divided into five syndicates, each with ten members. To ensure diversity within each syndicate group, the division was also based on their functional specialisms and the types of organizations they came from. As at Henley, the members were expected to learn from their prior experiences and contrast it with those of others through dialogue. There were minor differences, though. Unlike at Henley, and reflective of the post-colonial Indian economic structure, where the public sector played a significant role, the majority of ASCI trainees were from governmental agencies and public-sector industries.<sup>68</sup>

At Hyderabad and elsewhere, Henley and its syndicates served as a template in a number of third world countries on which the latter's development and administrative institutions and practices were modeled. Acknowledging this, Taylor concluded that the syndicates had come to be universally recognized for their efficiency in delivering management training, irrespective of the differences within these third world countries.<sup>69</sup> However, I would argue that the rise of syndicates to universal prominence—if that—was not simply an outcome of its effectiveness as a pedagogic method. Instead, it involved concentrated efforts from Henley's staff. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Henley actively solicited nominations of members from third world countries on its own programs as well as the secondment of its staff to colleges in other countries. Hall and staff members from Henley toured Administrative Staff Colleges across the globe to provide advisory support as appointed consultants or on secondment from Henley. In 1963, for example, Henley's J. P. Martin-Bates approached the Ford Foundation with a request for financial support so that Henley could continue to provide additional technical assistance to ASCI.<sup>70</sup> His request was declined because FF was actively engaged in making Harvard at Hyderabad via the case method, as detailed in the following section.

Drawing on the postcolonial critique of management, Henley's attempts represented a colonial continuity in post-colonial India; their intent was to maintain British influence despite the formal

68. Taylor, *Administrative Staff Colleges*, 40.

69. Ibid.

70. Letter from HL Case, associate director, FF, to Ensminger, dated September 23, 1963; Reel 3228, ASCI, FF, RAC. The following reel citations are all located in ASCI, FF, RAC.

demise of colonialism and its universalizing assumption that third world context did not matter very much. In the name of development, Henley's import of syndicates represented attempts, as the postcolonial scholars Seth, Gandhi, and Dutton argue, at reinscribing the history of the third world into one that was not necessarily of its own making but based on received frameworks.<sup>71</sup>

### Making Harvard at Hyderabad

Between 1958 and 1973, FF made four grants to ASCI that totaled US\$1,266,143 toward institutional development, staff research and training, and development of a consultancy division. It is instructive to note that two-thirds of this funding was dedicated to technical experts; that is, costs associated with salaries, travel, and accommodation of various U.S. scholars who arrived for short- or long-term consulting and advisory assignments to Hyderabad.<sup>72</sup> There is no known archival evidence to suggest that Shrinagesh approached FF for help with the case method per se; however, according to FF internal documentation from 1960, he approached FF for support to introduce case method-based teaching "following the Harvard pattern" at Hyderabad.<sup>73</sup> Cases were expected to help develop a focus on decision making among members of ASCI's syndicates and support its faculty members to develop "their own ideas on management."<sup>74</sup> Given that cases were already being used alongside lectures, site visits, and simulations in syndicates at Henley as well as Hyderabad, FF's support was earmarked for guidance and technical expertise in combining the two in its training.<sup>75</sup> However, before case method-based teaching could be adopted at ASCI, there was a need for researching and writing cases relevant to the Indian context. As part of its Grant 59-21A, FF approached Andrew R. Towl at HBS. Initially interested in only a short-term position of six months, Towl was persuaded by Douglas Ensminger to accept an eighteen-month assignment to help ASCI develop the case method at Hyderabad. Ensminger, FF's representative in India from 1951 to 1970, was widely influential among senior members of Nehru's cabinet.<sup>76</sup>

71. Seth, Gandhi, and Dutton, "Postcolonial Studies," 8.

72. Calculated from a report by Dennis Gallagher, dated May 23, 1970, Reel 1133.

73. Request for grant action, dated January 28, 1960, Reel 1133.

74. Report by Gallagher, dated May 23, 1970, Reel 1133.

75. Request for grant action, dated May 13, 1964, Reel 1133.

76. Ensminger's influence in India has been widely noted by other scholars. For example, see Krige and Rausch, "Tracing the Knowledge," 20; Rosen, *Western Economists and Eastern Societies*, 53–56.

Towl began his ASCI assignment on September 15, 1960, not in Hyderabad but in Henley, where he met with Hall and R. L. Gupta, ASCI's principal. They discussed Hall's understanding of administration (as it was known in the U.S. context) and experience of syndicates. Arriving at ASCI in Hyderabad shortly afterward, Towl began looking for ways in which syndicates and the case method might complement each other, especially as he believed there existed a number of institutional and programmatic similarities between the Advanced Management Program at HBS and the management training at both Henley and ASCI. In a letter to Ensminger, for example, Towl discussed that the programs at all three institutes lasted for the same duration, typically attracted 40-year-old men with extensive practical experience, emphasized self-directed learning, and envisaged faculty members as instructors and not teachers.<sup>77</sup> Elsewhere, he outlined still other similarities, including their shared recognition of autonomous enterprise and belief that learning ought to challenge individuals.<sup>78</sup> Both methods, Towl believed, were committed to "administration as an internal process" and to "exposing members to the emotional requirements of management as well as to the intellectual."<sup>79</sup> He initiated a biweekly program at Hyderabad to discuss possible ways of using the case method in syndicates. The active participation of ASCI's faculty members in the program led Towl to believe that the problems of merging the two pedagogic methods "seem[ed] manageable."<sup>80</sup>

Despite Towl's optimism, senior leadership and faculty members at ASCI, particularly Gupta, remained skeptical about merging the two methods.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, FF's advisors coerced Gupta into the writing of cases. In April 1961, Towl wrote—self-admittedly—a rather tactless and blunt letter to Gupta. Written on FF's letterhead stationery, Towl reminded Gupta that FF's grant to ASCI Hyderabad was conditional on its acceptance of case method-based instruction.<sup>82</sup> Responding to Gupta's concerns, Towl argued that cases could always be discussed as "the eleventh experience at the syndicate table" because its design

77. Letter from Andrew R. Towl to Ensminger, dated November 16, 1960, Reel 3228. While both modes of teaching were organized around self-directed learning, some scholars believe that in comparison to Harvard's case method-based executive education programs, syndicates encouraged initiative, originality, dissent, and most importantly, respect and understanding built on "knowledge of common concerns." For example, see Dimock, "Administrative Staff College," 172.

78. Supplementary report by Towl, 1963, Reports 000600, Catalogued Reports, Box 31, Reports 1-3254 (FA7391), FF Records, RAC.

79. Letter from Towl to Ensminger, dated November 16, 1960, Reel 3228.

80. Letter from Towl to Ensminger, dated January 20, 1961, Reel 3228.

81. Report by Gallagher, dated May 23, 1970, Reel 1133.

82. Letter from Towl to R. L. Gupta, dated April 21, 1961, Reel 3228.

permitted “the feed back [*sic*] of faculty research without violating the fundamentals” of syndicates. Towl’s somewhat terse response was copied to Ensminger and C. D. Deshmukh, who until 1956 had served as the Indian finance minister and was known for proximity to Nehru and FF. Attached to Towl’s letter to Gupta was the draft of a separate letter—to be sent later on Gupta’s behalf—to various Indian universities and companies encouraging faculty members and senior managers, respectively, to join Towl’s training program on casewriting.<sup>83</sup> Particularly revealing here is the extent to which FF exercised its power as a dominating institution in drafting a communique on Gupta’s behalf and coercing him into sending it out, despite his strong reservations about merging the case method with syndicates.

Following this, a special task force comprising senior leaders from industries, banks, industrial associations, and academia was assembled by June 1961. It toured India’s major industrial centers to gather data for casewriting. As a result of this work, more than seventy-five cases were written over the following six months. Sixty cases were completed, of which fifty-five were compiled in a book titled *ASCI Case Collection: Series I*, with a note from Towl on writing and using cases.

Notwithstanding the seeming progress on the development of cases, uncertainty about its use in ASCI’s training programs continued. In 1962 Gupta voiced his reservations again. Possibly afraid of losing FF’s support, he continued to indicate his interest in finding ways to merge the case method within syndicates. Thus, Gupta requested FF to fund a separate travel grant for him. He proposed spending six to eight weeks with Towl and Ernest C. Arbuckle, dean of Stanford’s Graduate School of Business, to gain a “good deal of knowledge and insight” and to “co-ordinate the Case Studies with the Syndicate method and to get the best out of the new type of the Staff envisaged.”<sup>84</sup> It is worth mentioning that Gupta’s reservations about such a merger were also shared within FF. Robert Greenleaf, an FF-appointed consultant and a leading proponent of “servant leadership,” expressed reservations about the use of cases within syndicates.<sup>85</sup> He said that the case method was an excellent procedure under a “gifted teacher,” but under a mediocre teacher it would be “a pretty muddled kind of thing and not much good comes out of it.”<sup>86</sup>

83. Attached to Towl’s letter to Gupta (see note 82) is a note from Towl to Ensminger. Towl believed that while Gupta could get employees from companies, it was important that faculty members from Indian universities be included. Reel 3228.

84. Letter from Gupta to Ensminger, dated January 9, 1962, Reel 3228.

85. Letter from Robert Greenleaf to Gupta, dated November 23, 1964, Reel 1133.

86. *Ibid.*

Nevertheless, FF went from making a limited argument for the use of the case method in training to its adoption institution-wide at Hyderabad. FF personnel did so by posing ASCI's problems—perceived or real—with training as a wider institutional problem. Looking back, Dennis Gallagher (FF staff in its India Office) suggested in his evaluation report from 1970 that there had been an absence of integration of research and teaching.<sup>87</sup> The absence of an institutional integration at ASCI had failed to create any scope for faculty growth. He argued such an integration was not possible, in any case, through syndicates. In a letter to N. P. (Potla) Sen (ASCI's principal), Harold Howe (program advisor in Education at FF's New Delhi Office) repeated that the quality and utility of its syndicate-based teaching had grown to become “the major institutional problem” confronting ASCI.<sup>88</sup> Even though ASCI had made progress in consulting and research, teaching continued to lag in quality and effectiveness. To sort the institutional difficulties confronting ASCI, Greenleaf recommended a consultancy and applied research division (CARD), which was finally established in 1964 through FF's Grant 59-21C. Promoted as a source of additional income for ASCI, CARD was expected to resolve the reservations at Hyderabad over the use of the case method. The division proposed to integrate all of ASCI's institutional functions: consulting, research, and training in their use of the case method. CARD was expected to identify and provide data on which cases could be researched and developed, which could later be used in the training programs. CARD developed rapidly, and by 1966 leading FF staff believed that both Gupta and ASCI's governors had ultimately, although belatedly, come to an “understanding and appreciation of the philosophy of the integration of the training and research programs”; that is, the case method.<sup>89</sup> Such assessments, however, proved to be premature as ASCI's training programs continued to use syndicates.

As uncertainty over FF's support to ASCI grew, the latter's principal Sen wrote a detailed letter to Howe in September 1970.<sup>90</sup> Before commenting on FF's priorities for ASCI, Sen wrote about teaching methodology and the role of research. Arguing that ASCI was not “indissolubly wedded” to Henley's syndicate method, he downplayed its use at ASCI and cited the variety of teaching methods used at Hyderabad; and he included that FF's support was important in the development of cases at ASCI. In 1972 ASCI submitted a request to the foundation

87. Report by Gallagher, dated May 23, 1970, Reel 1133.

88. Letter from Harold Howe to N. P. (Potla) Sen, dated July 16, 1970, Reel 3227.

89. Memo from Ensminger to George F. Gant, director, South and Southeast Asia Program, FF, dated September 1, 1966, Reel 1133.

90. Letter from Sen to Howe, dated September 3, 1970, Reel 3227.

for a four-year grant for INR10,087,000 (approximately US\$328,200 at the time).<sup>91</sup> In it, Sen reiterated the use and relevance of syndicates in training senior executives. He argued that Towl's understanding of the subdivision of management in syndicates as its key weakness was incorrect; instead, such a subdivision was practical, necessary, and even beneficial. The participation of members from governmental, public, and private organizations in the syndicates, he noted, had been useful in comparing experiences and examining and forming their actions, and was more absorbing than academic theory. Additionally, the use of syndicates had aided in the "development of the member's personality and on making him more adept in handling tools and procedures" by improving skills in group thinking, decision making, self-expression, and so on.<sup>92</sup>

Despite making a strong case for conserving its Henley-style teaching in syndicates and their values, ASCI's leadership continued to signal its openness to other teaching methods, including the case method, possibly in order to secure FF's financial support in the near future. In its Prospective Plan for the following decade, which was appended to the above grant request in 1972, they restated ASCI's openness to "innovations that will be suggested as greater depth of knowledge about Indian administrative problems emerge" from CARD.<sup>93</sup> ASCI's case for conserving the past while expressing a willingness to change in the future was recast in terms of its autonomy as a distinct and Indian institution. The plan stated that ASCI wished to "evolve into a truly Indian institution that will not be regarded as an adaptation of a foreign model although it will obviously use any superior techniques that others have developed." Any change, such as the imposition of the case method should not involve a "sudden abandonment of the old and substitution of the new" but should be a gradual development toward more rigorous, specific, systems-oriented, and demanding individual work.<sup>94</sup>

The case for making Harvard at Hyderabad began with FF's proposal to merge the case method into syndicates. Even as ASCI's leadership and faculty resisted, arguments for the use of the case method were widened and presented as the mechanism for future institutional integration. Nonetheless, at ASCI the use of Henley's syndicates persisted.

91. ASCI grant request to FF, 1972, Reel 3228. The majority of the requested grant focused on teaching and research staff salaries (88 percent of the total grant was to pay for forty-eight faculty staff, twenty-seven research assistants, and twenty-seven stenographers). The grant request also included a prospective ten-year institutional plan.

92. *Ibid.*

93. From a document titled "Elements of the Ten Year Plan," Reel 3228.

94. *Ibid.*

Throughout this situation, FF staff and consultants continued to engage in the stigmatization of syndicates and the legitimization of the case method and their contexts. This is discussed in the next section.

### Not This Modernization; That Modernization

After India won its independence in 1947, its higher education institutional complex—largely modeled on the British system—turned back to Britain, expectedly so, for the training of administrative cadres in the public and private sectors. As with other third world countries, Henley served as a template for ASCI in India. The concluding chapter of Taylor's book, which reflects of the belief in the universal applicability of Henley's syndicates, outlined Henley's objectives, curricula, and pedagogy (i.e., syndicates, constitution, staffing, and conditions of work) as exemplars for other Staff Colleges to follow, with some flexibility to accommodate local conditions.<sup>95</sup> Accompanying this were outlines of specific institutional practices from other Staff Colleges in India, Iran, Pakistan, and the Philippines. These, however, were framed as exceptions or deviations, only relevant to their own specific contexts. Therefore, while Henley was framed as a universally relevant template for others to emulate, institutional practices from other Staff Colleges from the third world were mobilized to demonstrate the flexibility that Henley and its syndicates offered.

The expected affinity toward British institutional imaginary and practices at Hyderabad was acknowledged by FF-appointed staff and consultants. Looking back at the long and extensive historical connections between Hyderabad and Henley, Greenleaf noted that when ASCI was founded in 1957, it did "as much as could have been done in India at that time."<sup>96</sup> Further, he argued that although he would have urged the Indians against mimicking Henley's syndicates, he was certain his advice would have been ignored as the Indians were "still basking in the glow of their new-found freedom, and their development strategy was one of quickly adopting the ways of the Western world." The mimicry of Henley at Hyderabad was aided, Greenleaf said, by the limited prerequisites involved in running syndicates: a charismatic leader, an idyllic setting, and non-specialist staff as discussion leaders. He was amazed at the "minutiae of procedure that had been taken over from Henley."<sup>97</sup>

95. Taylor, *Administrative Staff Colleges*, 84–98.

96. Comment by Greenleaf on Gallagher's report (second rough draft), c. 1971, Reel 1133.

97. *Ibid.*



Emphasizing the mimicry of Henley's syndicates, Gallagher argued that ASCI's choice of syndicates was influenced by the contemporaneous "general attitude" toward management in India.<sup>98</sup> This attitude, according to Gallagher, was the result of:

(1) the "underdeveloped" state of management training as a discipline in the world; (2) the degree to which India was clinging to the early 20th century British faith in the generalist administrator; and (3) the extent to which India was subject to the rather common belief of socialist countries that management of industry requires no special technical skills.<sup>99</sup>

Along with the stigmatization of Henley's connections with Hyderabad, as discussed above, FF staff and consultants also engaged in the stigmatization of Henley itself. In a letter to Ensminger, for example, Towl argued that Hall's pattern of syndicates at Henley, and subsequently at Hyderabad, was based on "staff as his 'eyes and ears.'" <sup>100</sup> It was, therefore, hardly an exemplar unlike Harvard's "self-governing community of scholars."

Apart from Greenleaf's problematic characterization of Indian freedom as "found," which runs counter to the history of the Indian political independence, there are two further points to note here. First, even though the characterization of Indian management education as mimicry is commonplace and extensive in scholarship, it has been used mainly in the context of Americanization.<sup>101</sup> Agreeing with Srinivas, I would argue that it is important to remember British influence on India's management community, which has received comparatively less attention in the history of Indian management education.<sup>102</sup> This British influence was notably channeled through the civil services, expatriate managers, and managing agencies. Second, and significant for the discussion here, was that the stigmatization of syndicates—as not demanding very much, which was considered to be a reflection of the "underdeveloped" state of management outside of the United States—was based on a wholly mistaken premise.

FF staff and consultants stigmatized the organizational practices at Henley and ASCI as the received template for post-colonial India's development, and they also engaged in stigmatizing Indian society.

98. Report by Gallagher, dated May 23, 1970, Reel 1133.

99. Ibid.

100. Letter from Towl to Ensminger, dated January 20, 1961, Reel 3228.

101. Srinivas, "Mimicry and Revival"; Mir, Mir, and Srinivas, "Managerial Knowledge." This is somewhat expected; as noted earlier, the history of management education in India has tended to focus on IIMs while ASCI has received relatively minor attention.

102. Srinivas, "Cultivating Indian Management," 156, 158–159.

Channeling the developmentalist trope of modernization, they argued that the role of management education in India was to support the rapid development of India's backward economy and society, which was frequently labeled traditional. Indian culture, Towl argued, was characterized by "deeply embedded" stratification and autocratic relations that had resulted in a time lag in understanding and using managerial concepts and knowledge.<sup>103</sup> While ideas were often promptly accepted at the policy level in India, their adoption and practice required long-term support for "assimilation." The purpose of management, therefore, was to help "young men who have been growing up in a rural bazar family business society prepare for an early responsibility in organized industry."<sup>104</sup> Greenleaf also characterized Indian society, economy, and management as backward, deficient, and "grade B," and which needed to be thoroughly dismantled and replaced with modern (i.e., American) management techniques and practices.<sup>105</sup> Given the developmental challenges confronting India, it could not rely on the development of its managers by trial and error, he argued, as it had in the past.

To legitimize FF's interventions, Towl argued that a quick and deliberate intervention from outside was necessary as leaving the task to India's elites would result in perpetuation of their own values and character.<sup>106</sup> Modern management in India, I argue, therefore ought to be understood as the "modern moment"; "by its appearance creates a dramatic and unprecedented break between past and present."<sup>107</sup> Much like international development, in whose name FF's programs in management education in India were organized, management required a breaking-away from the past, both for ASCI and India. In engineering this break, FF—as a dominating institution—was involved in the stigmatization of British management, Henley, and its practices; and Indian society and its management were recast variously as traditional, hierarchical, clinging to its colonial connections with Britain, and lagging. It was thus in urgent need of reform, particularly its bazaar-based economic structures and family businesses that relied on administrators from Britain and their management practices. The legitimacy of FF's interventions were, therefore, based on the double need to modernize ASCI and Indian society and its economy.

103. Supplementary report by Towl, 1963, Reports 000600, Catalogued Reports, Box 31, Reports 1-3254 (FA7391), FF, RAC.

104. Letter from Towl to Ensminger, dated January, 1962, Reel 3228.

105. Comment by Greenleaf on Gallagher's report (second rough draft), c. 1971, Reel 1133.

106. Supplementary report by Towl, 1963, Reports 000600, Catalogued Reports, Box 31, Reports 1-3254 (FA7391), FF Records, RAC.

107. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 3.

To overcome the persistent resistance to the case method at Hyderabad, FF staff and consultants engaged in efforts to denaturalize syndicates by posing them as alien to the Indian context and calling for the development of indigenous pedagogic approaches. In a letter to Ensminger, Towl argued that given the economic challenges confronting India, ASCI needed to develop an “innovation appropriate to Hyderabad.”<sup>108</sup> He suggested that ASCI combine faculty-led research with teaching and training, much like at HBS. The case method, Towl noted elsewhere, was capable of dealing with the specifics of the Indian condition; this resonated with his conception of administration that could not be “satisfied with ‘truth in general.’”<sup>109</sup> Similarly, Arthur N. Turner from HBS also argued against mimicry (British or American) and called for an organic approach to emerge while suggesting FF’s support for the development of an appropriate (research and teaching) methodology (i.e., the case method).<sup>110</sup> Downplaying the “outsider” status of the case method, Towl argued that cases did not require external experts and could be organized “*within and among*” management institutes in India.<sup>111</sup> Greenleaf, who remained unconvinced about merging the case method with syndicates, also argued for developing an indigenous approach. However, he only went as far as to suggest the use of systems analysis or an industrial dynamics approach, both of which were widely used in the United States.<sup>112</sup> Even as FF’s consultants pushed for an indigenous or Indian approach to management, the case method was presented as an organic approach that was potentially responsive to the specifics of Indian conditions and could be developed internally relatively easily.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, FF consultants argued that if the case method could not be used at ASCI as it lacked “gifted” teachers, U.S. management had other approaches to offer.

Revealing in all of the above is that FF staff and consultants’ criticisms of syndicates and their endorsement of the case method were not drawn from any scientific evaluation, research, or systematic review of the literature. Neither did they engage with questions

108. Letter from Towl to Ensminger, dated January 20, 1961, Reel 3228.

109. Supplementary report by Towl, 1963, Reports 000600, Catalogued Reports, Box 31, Reports 1-3254 (FA7391), FF, RAC.

110. Report by Arthur N. Turner, dated November 8, 1972, Reel 3226.

111. Supplementary report by Towl, 1963, Reports 000600, Catalogued Reports, Box 31, Reports 1-3254 (FA7391), FF Records, RAC. The italicized words were underlined in the original report.

112. The industrial dynamics was developed by Jay Forrester at MIT’s Sloan School with financial support from FF; for a brief overview, see Forrester, “Industrial Dynamics.”

113. This resonates with Srinivas’s contention that the case method relatively successfully mediated the tensions between the universal and particular. Srinivas, “Mimicry and Revival”; Srinivas, “Cultivating Indian Management.”

of cultural alienation, participation, and voice—all of which can be found extensively in contemporary scholarship on the use of syndicates.<sup>114</sup> More so, they stigmatized syndicates without ever having attended one and despite having commended them for their impact on ASCI's graduates. Although Greenleaf admitted that he had never attended a syndicate, it did not prevent him from calling them “a grade B idea even for England where it started and certainly not a prudent step for India.”<sup>115</sup> Towl complimented the syndicates' success elsewhere by noting, “The remarkable growth many of these men revealed from the time I first met them on arrival until they left twelve weeks later.”<sup>116</sup> He acknowledged that while the program's impact on the graduates may not be immediate, this was only because the new practices and attitudes “did not flower until the man got back on the job.” Curiously, even as FF continued to denounce syndicates and Henley, Henley's H. J. B. Taylor had, as far back as 1952, published a research report comparing the teaching methods used at HBS and at Henley.<sup>117</sup> In it, Taylor found that Henley's syndicates were “much more suitable” than methods used at Harvard or any other U.S.-based institution Taylor had studied. The case method, he concluded, was not essential, although it could be used for specific, limited and specialized purposes; thus, the comparison was not only illogical but also meaningless.<sup>118</sup> There is, however, nothing in the archival material to suggest FF staff or consultants took note of Taylor's study or commissioned one of their own.

## Discussion and Conclusion

FF's involvement in India, least of all in management education, was carried out in the name of international development. It was part of

114. For a systematic investigation on the use of syndicates from the 1960s, see Collier, “Experiment in University Teaching”; Collier, “Syndicate Methods.” For a review of prior research, see Collier, “Peer-Group Learning.” For a balanced evaluation of Henley's model, see Adams, “Use of Syndicates.” For studies on the use of syndicates in international MBA programs, see Currie, “Voice of International Students”; Griffiths, Winstanley, and Gabriel, “Learning Shock”; Gabriel and Griffiths, “International Learning Groups.”

115. Comment by Greenleaf on Gallagher's report (second rough draft), c. 1971, Reel 1133.

116. Supplementary report by Towl, 1963, Reports 000600, Catalogued Reports, Box 31, Reports 1-3254 (FA7391), FF Records, RAC.

117. “Report on the Methods Used for Advanced Management Training by the Harvard Business School (USA) and the Administrative Staff College Henley-on-Thames (England),” by H. J. B. Taylor, Project TA57-118, 1952, LMA/4062/06/015, Latham Papers, LMA.

118. Ibid.

the wider global expansionism of the United States during the Cold War in its fight against communism; combating anti-Americanism; and promoting Americanization, in which it sought to consolidate its soft power in the battlegrounds of the third world.<sup>119</sup> As with other third world countries, management studies was deemed crucial to the United States' presenting itself as an economic exemplar for India's post-colonial development and modernization.<sup>120</sup> FF played a significant role in the establishment and institutionalization of management education in India by establishing autonomous business schools outside the governing imperatives of Indian universities, such as the IIMs at Ahmedabad and Calcutta. Unlike ASCI, FF had a more formative and lasting influence on the institutional design, approach, and direction of these new institutions. The propagation of the case method at IIMs, and to a lesser extent at ASCI, was particularly significant here. Organized around the mutually reinforcing ideologies of managerialism, institutionalism, and U.S. capitalism,<sup>121</sup> the global diffusion of the case method provided the means for fulfilling the global expansionist ambitions of the United States' soft power.

Compared to the IIMs, FF's efforts at propagating these ideologies at ASCI via the case method were less successful. FF staff and consultants recognized that ASCI had already "derived much of its direction and inspiration from British rather than American models of management training."<sup>122</sup> Although its initial efforts at ASCI were directed at merging the case method within syndicates, the ongoing use of the latter at Hyderabad led FF staff and consultants to stigmatize Henley, ASCI, and even Indian society and economy. Simultaneously, it attempted to legitimize the use of the case method and HBS. FF's efforts at ASCI were driven, I argue, by the pragmatic need to distinguish U.S. neo-colonial developmentalism from British colonialism. FF's President Hoffman acknowledged as much when he noted the distrust and suspicion with which the Americans were seen in India. Their distrust, Hoffman believed, grew out of "a century old bitterness directed at us because we are mistakenly identified with the Western imperialism of a bygone generation."<sup>123</sup> Such suspicion, he argued, was likely to be exploited by the communist Russians, from whom India—from FF's standpoint—needed to be saved. Thus, FF's financial support to ASCI was driven by the need to distinguish the United States

119. Hess, "Foundations in India's Globalization," 52.

120. Khurana, *Higher Aims to Hired Hands*, 239–240.

121. Contardo and Wensley, "Harvard Business School Story," 216–224.

122. Note from R. M. Alt (FF industrial economic advisor) on ASCI, dated March 25, 1970, Reel 3227.

123. *Hoffman on Tour*, Reel AV 1951, Box 2, FA750, Audio-visual Materials, FF Records, RAC.

from the earlier British institutions on which India's postcolonial institutions were modeled; and by establishing the United States as the model, and its institutions and practices as templates for India's development and modernization. Although FF never commissioned any scientific or systematic evaluations of either teaching method, the adoption of the case method at Hyderabad was backed by experts (e.g., Towl, Greenleaf, Gallagher, etc.) and capital; and following Hoffman's formulaic resistance against communism.<sup>124</sup>

My argument on the role of FF staff and consultants in distinguishing themselves from British colonialism in establishing the United States as *the* neo-colonial power is not alone, and is not restricted to India, or for that matter FF alone. Discussing his experience in Pakistan, for example, A. T. Cornwall-Jones, a staff member at Henley from 1950 to 1970, revealed similar tensions between consultants from Henley and from Syracuse's Maxwell School (of Citizenship and Public Affairs).<sup>125</sup> Brought together through FF's financial support, studies' courses that had been agreed to by both staff were not adhered to; they were replaced entirely by the Syracuse staff later without any input from those from Henley. Attributing it to misunderstandings and mistakes, Cornwall-Jones downplayed the differences between Henley staff and Syracuse staff. The latter, he noted, "regarded themselves as being in charge of everybody and everything, including me."<sup>126</sup> Unlike Cornwall-Jones, I argue that FF's role as a dominating institution and its consultants' ongoing efforts at distinguishing themselves from the British were significant and part of the United States' ascendancy as a neo-colonial power. This claim is corroborated by the actions of other large U.S. foundations' programs in third world countries. In Latin America, for example, the Rockefeller Foundation played a crucial role in breaking up earlier academic links between Latin America and Europe, and to establish instead the United States at the center.<sup>127</sup>

Greenleaf's letter to Gupta shortly after his departure from Hyderabad in 1964 provides a final telling anecdote of FF's attempts at severing third world countries' colonial connections with Britain and offering the United States as the template for their post-colonial development, in which management education had a crucial role to play. In it, he wrote: "We have completed an interesting five days in Pakistan and we are now immersed in a totally new situation here in Kenya. (...) I have reviewed their agenda and it is quite a blend of several things.

124. Sackley, "Foundation in the Field," 237.

125. For his accounts of the event, see Cornwall-Jones, *Education for Leadership*, 61–67.

126. Ibid, 84.

127. Tosiello, "Max Ascoli."

(...) It is interesting that they do not feel that they had the talent to do this with an African staff, so it is mostly foreigners. The Director is from the U.K.”<sup>128</sup> Problematising the presence of British leadership and seemingly calling for the involvement of Africans themselves in management education, Greenleaf singularly failed to reflect on his own and the wider American presence in Kenya. Despite making frequent arguments for indigenous leadership of management education in third world countries, both Towl and Greenleaf continued to tour the globe promoting the case method and U.S. management education. Towl, for example, visited thirty-seven countries, some as many as fifteen times during his lifetime, in his role promoting the writing of and use of the case method.<sup>129</sup> In a way, then, it did not matter if they were in India, Pakistan, or Kenya. FF was complicit in securing the United States’ place in the neo-colonial global order among the “free” nations by making U.S. institutions and practices as exemplars. It required displacing—and distinguishing themselves from—the earlier colonial connections with Britain’s institutions and their practices.

This article makes three key contributions. The history of management education in India, limited no doubt, has focused on the IIMs, most significantly the first two in Calcutta and Ahmedabad. Hill, Hayes, and Baumgartel posited that ASCI was part of the second of three phases of development of management education in the country, suitable for low-level training. This was followed by its apogee in the form of the IIMs.<sup>130</sup> Elsewhere, ASCI is often presented as a minor stage in the development of management education in the country.<sup>131</sup> The lack of attention to ASCI has resulted in the somewhat straightforward characterization of management education in India as mimicry of American management institutions.<sup>132</sup> The article’s first contribution is the discussion of the earlier mimicry of Britain’s institutions and their practices in post-colonial Indian management institutions. Not unexpectedly, British institutions, following imperialism, served as the template for post-colonial development and its institutions across the third world. Departing from the characterization of Americanization of management in third world countries as a colonial continuity,

128. Greenleaf letter to Gupta, dated November 23, 1964, Reel 1133.

129. Bryan Marquard, “Andrew R. Towl, 101, Harvard Business School Innovator,” *Boston Globe*, July 15, 2012, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/obituaries/2012/07/14/andrew-towl-was-director-case-development-harvard-business-school/WmE7ya3cg2q2U8F1jQ5leJ/story.html>.

130. Hill, Hayes, and Baumgartel, *Institution Building in India*, 10–20.

131. Pylee, “Management Education,” 212.

132. Mir, Mir, and Srinivas, “Managerial Knowledge.” For a discussion on mimicry, see Srinivas, “Mimicry and Revival.”



I argue that FF-led Americanization at ASCI was not straightforward. It involved, first, a displacement of syndicates and, second, the establishment of the case method from HBS. This brings me to my second contribution.

From an Indian perspective, management education was imbricated in related but distinct forms of colonialism. Placed in its contemporary context of the Cold War and the ensuing deployment of programs to combat communism, the use of Hoffman's twin solutions of capital and technical expertise at ASCI were aimed at establishing the United States' neo-colonial power. I depart from Khurana et al.'s straightforward narration of dominance, and agree with Cooke and Alcadipani's challenge about FF's role as a dominating institution in the Americanization of management education in Latin America. In this article, I have also outlined the limits of its dominance.<sup>133</sup> Just as FF's interventions were subverted by their Brazilian counterparts, syndicates continued to be used at ASCI despite all efforts to remake Hyderabad into Harvard via the case method.

My third contribution is on contextualizing the instructional methods. Much of the prior scholarship on case methods and syndicates has focused on their value and limitations, their potential for future managers to learn, and what they make invisible or silent. Such debates are commonly framed around questions of effectiveness, relevance, merit, and scientific evidence.<sup>134</sup> Without detracting from their significance, I argue that such debates often ignore the historical and global geo-politics that can and have affected the choice of instructional method in management institutions. At Hyderabad and elsewhere, FF engaged in a struggle over, among other things, pedagogy and curricula. These struggles were to secure the United States' place as the dominant neo-colonial power at the helm of global political and economic orders. This argument is supported by the point discussed earlier that FF stigmatized one method and legitimized the other without conducting a single systematic or scientific study of pedagogic methods; the only contemporaneous study was conducted by Henley staff. Thus, the rise in use and prestige of the case method, which has become one of the defining feature of management education in India—particularly at IIM, Ahmedabad—and elsewhere can be explained by global geo-politics. The contrary fortunes of syndicates and the case method mirrored the United States' rise as a neocolonial power that, according to the renowned postcolonial scholar

133. Khurana, Kimura, and Fourcade, "How Foundations Think"; Cooke and Alcadipani, "Toward a Global History."

134. Smith has noted the lack of empirical evidence to substantiate the beneficial claims of the case method. See Smith, "Use and Effectiveness," 51.

Edward Said, “*replaced* the greater earlier empires as *the* dominant outside force.”<sup>135</sup>

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135. Said, “Representing the Colonized,” 215 (italics added). For a similar discussion on the United States’ emergence as the dominant reference for disciplinary knowledge, see Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, 55.

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