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Americans in Japan: A Look at Race, Land, and the Colonization of Hokkaidō in the Meiji Era

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Author's Note

Japanese names in this paper are written according to Japanese convention, where family names precede given names. As for place names, those in quotes will remain as they were in the original, while my own words will use the modern spellings.

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Introduction

> July 4th. To day all round the globe ring out salutes in honor of the day so sacred to the American people. The ships of every nation honor the occasion by running up to the mast head the stars and stripes, and giving the national salute. In this harbor so far away from all civilized nations the day has not been forgotten.
>
> —Horace Capron, *Memoirs of Horace Capron*

> It must be that things seen all the time soon become commonplace and boring, whereas things seen rarely always appear precious. One of the driving forces behind civilisation is to regard what is in ones' own house as ordinary and to envy the treasures in other peoples' houses. I wonder whether it is not the demand for rarities from abroad that causes trade to flourish and reputation to spread.
>
> —Kume Kunitake, *The Iwakura Embassy, 1871-1873: A True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary's Journey of Observation Through the United States of America and Europe*.

Japanese relations with the Ainu, the people indigenous to Japan's northern island Hokkaidō, spans hundreds of years.[1] Yet, it was not until the late-nineteenth century under Emperor Meiji (1868-1912) that the Japanese government started seriously considering what to do with the island and its people. At the same time, the Meiji government was pushing for modernization under the influence of the Western powers, who had compelled the Japanese to open their previously closed country for trade by threatening to open the country by force. With the West's superior armaments and mastery of steam technology, Japan had limited ability to

[1] For a much more detailed history of the Ainu pre-Meiji, I recommend Brett Walker's *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590-1800* as a place to start.

resist. The signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Japan and the United States on July 29, 1858 led to the opening of Japan to international relations on a much larger scale than previously experienced, allowing for the creation of connections to the Western world through commerce.

As part of a program of Meiji modernization, the Meiji government sent Japanese abroad to gain firsthand knowledge of how the West operated through the Iwakura Embassy, whose primary goal was the observation of Western institutions and "civilization" to aid in modernization through the emulation of Western models. The Embassy, headed by Ambassador Iwakura Tomomi, was centrally comprised of high-ranking officials in the Meiji government, who selected those under their influence to travel with them. The government also hired foreign advisors from the West who would help transform and modernize Japan from within, with the most notable in Hokkaidō being Horace Capron, former United States Commissioner of Agriculture, to whom the Japanese entrusted Hokkaidō's agricultural development along Western lines. What ideas did these Western advisors bring with them to Japan? What did the Japanese who were sent abroad experience? How did the ideas they came into contact with contrast or compliment how they viewed the world? How did these ideas compare to those brought to Japan by the foreign advisors? Finally, how did the implementation of these ideas impact Hokkaidō and the Ainu who lived there? In the paper that follows, I argue that while the development of Japanese settler colonialism in Hokkaidō had its origins before the creation of the United States, it was most profoundly impacted by American views on racial hierarchies and land development that the Japanese came into contact with following the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In order to support this claim, I will analyze three sources to explore characterizations of racial hierarchies and land development from both American and Japanese perspectives. In the first chapter I will analyze both volumes of the *Memoirs of Horace Capron,* the aforementioned foreign expert hired by the Meiji government to aid in the nation's development. Specifically, Capron would oversee the work of the *Kaitakushi* (Hokkaidō Development Commission) and provide insight into the agricultural development of Hokkaidō. I will use the first volume of Capron's memoir, which provides us with information of his life, as an entry point into the discussion of racial hierarchies and Anglo-American white supremacy through his views of indigenous Americans and their racial position in comparison to the white settlers in the western United States. The first volume will provide us with a point of comparison for how Capron—and much more broadly, Americans—viewed the Ainu and the Japanese. I will also analyze the second volume of Capron's memoirs, which details the time he spent in Japan working for the Kaitakushi. This volume will provide us with insight as to how he viewed the Japanese and the Ainu and how he attempted to place them in this pre-established Western racial hierarchy, which parallels with how Anglo-Americans were trying to decide where the two groups fit in the hierarchy. Perhaps even more important, analysis of these volumes will show how Capron had his own conflicts with ideas of race, development, and "civilization", providing an example of how these beliefs were not rigid, and could be warped however the Westerner saw fit. This analysis of Capron's views on race will be used to connect to the Western idea of what "civilization" was, and how they impacted ideas of land use that Capron brought with him to Japan.

In the second chapter, I will analyze the *Reports and Official Letters to the* Kaitakushi, a collection of documents written by Capron and some of the men who worked under him. This

collection will serve to provide insight into how the land was discussed by these American advisors, and how they determined what made a country developed, modern, and "civilized". In particular, I will highlight how they discussed the land and natural resources as having value based on how they could impact the economy, as well as the centrality of the establishment of transportation and communication in the development of the land, and how settlement, labor, and government input could play a role in Hokkaidō's development. From this, I will establish that for Capron and his colleagues, what made a place developed was related to its engagement in commerce and the global market. That development was connected to the racial hierarchies discussed in the previous chapter, as the Ainu's lack of developing the land for profit led them to be deemed as "uncivilized" by Westerners, placing them lower on the West's racial hierarchy.

In the last chapter, I will use the first volume of the account of the Iwakura Embassy compiled by Kume Kunitake, which details the Embassy's journey across the United States, to provide information about how the Japanese experienced coming into contact with the various aspects of Western modernity. I will highlight how Kume writes about how the Embassy viewed the importance of race and land development in the operation of the United States and the construction of Western "civilization". In particular, I will analyze themes of religion and morality, education and labor, and transportation and communication to connect the Iwakura text back to Capron to find where the two groups converge and diverge, and how these aspects all relate back to economic development. Using this text, I will pull all the threads together to demonstrate how the construction of racial hierarchies and land development contributed to a vision of economic development, leading to the accumulation and preservation of wealth in Western society, forming the backbone of "civilization". Through the influence of these Western beliefs, Japan too was set on a path of wealth accumulation and preservation that stemmed from

the development of land for profit, elevating the status of Japan to that of a “civilized” society. Meanwhile, the Ainu who were deemed unfit for “civilization” were pushed to the margins as their territories were settled and developed by the Japanese.

Chapter I:

The *Memoirs of Horace Capron* – The Influences of Racial Hierarchies

Horace Capron's memoirs, written in 1884,[2] contain a vast amount of information on the entirety of Capron's life, with the second volume focusing on the years 1871-1875, which he spent in Japan serving as a foreign advisor to the Kaitakushi. As someone who was directly involved in and directing the agricultural development of Hokkaidō, these memoirs serve a crucial role in this study as they provide a firsthand account of his experiences as an advisor to the Kaitakushi as well as what the planning and active development of Hokkaidō was like. Not only that, but Capron also makes many remarks on race in regards to the Japanese, the Ainu, and Indigenous Americans as well, and tends to compare both indigenous populations throughout the text. Of course, he also provides his views on land development, as that was a large part of his position as an advisor, as well as his background in business, farming, and the Commissioner of Agriculture under President Ulysses S. Grant. The interpretation of these texts is a point of entry for understanding how Capron—and more broadly, Americans—viewed racial hierarchies and land development, and how they related to the construction of "civilization". However, before delving into the specifics of Capron's views on race hierarchies and land development, a brief account of his life is in order.

Over the course of his life, Horace Capron was a businessman, agriculturalist, Indian Agent, Union Army colonel, Commissioner of Agriculture, and foreign advisor to the Kaitakushi. Born August 31, 1804,[3] Capron was born the son of Dr. Seth Capron, practitioner of medicine and founder of both the Oneida factory, the first cotton factory in New York, and the

[2] Horace Capron, *Memoirs of Horace Capron*, vol. 1, *Autobiography* (1884), 19.
[3] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:11.

Oriskany woolen factory, the first woolen mill in the United States that was fully mechanized.[4] After failing to enter West Point, Capron turned to the manufacturing business and started working in the mills his father had helped establish in the town of Walden, New York. He would further pursue knowledge in the operation and construction of mills in the factories of Peter and Abraham Schenks in Matteawan, New York. Having become familiar with the business, Capron would later become supervisor of the Savage factory located on the Patuxent River in Maryland.[5] Following the death of his father-in-law, Nicholas Snowden, Capron and his wife Louisa were assigned a 500-acre plot. On another 100-acre plot which had not been divided between any of the Snowden siblings, Capron would later establish the Patuxent Manufacturing Company and construct the Laurel factory, and would work to improve the surrounding agricultural areas, his work being highly praised by the press.[6]

Following the failure of his mill and bankruptcy in 1851, Capron requested and received a commission as an Agent over indigenous tribes in Texas and along the Rio Grande, a topic that will be covered further in the next section, following the annexation of that state and the Mexican-American War.[7] After being relieved from this duty, Capron moved to a body of land in Illinois that his mother had turned over to him, and turned to agriculture as his next endeavor, achieving first prizes at various fairs for his cattle. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Capron was appointed by an army commission to raise the 14th Illinois Cavalry Regiment, a duty that would require him to abandon his cattle as well as the farmland he would be unable to take care of while off at war.[8] With the conclusion of the war, Capron found that his land and cattle,

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[4] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:5.
[5] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:38-40.
[6] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:55-8.
[7] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:79.
[8] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:130-6.

having been entrusted to others while away, were greatly neglected, resulting in incalculable losses. In a visit to Washington, friends of Capron's pushed for his confirmation as the Commissioner of Agriculture, a position in which he was confirmed in 1867,[9] and would remain so until 1871 when he would be hired by the Japanese government to advise the agricultural development and settlement of the northern island of Hokkaidō.[10]

In the sections that follow, the matters of Capron's time spent in Texas as an Agent of indigenous tribes there and his time in Japan as advisor to the Kaitakushi will be analyzed in detail, with the focus being placed on his perspectives of racial hierarchies, land and agricultural development in Hokkaidō. While there is no explicit indication of how Capron acquired his perspectives of race, his writings reveal that he was influenced by ideas of "civilization" and racial hierarchies that developed in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Such ideas would further be molded by the United States steadily expanding Westward in its attempts at achieving Manifest Destiny, developing a backdrop for Capron's time defined by an American view of white, Anglo-Saxon supremacy that culminated in the dominance of white Americans displacing indigenous peoples and taking control of their territories. These ideas of race and land were critical influences on Capron's view of Hokkaidō and its development, and through this viewpoint the impact of his time in Japan on Hokkaidō's colonization and development will be discussed.

Time Spent with Indigenous Americans

The concept of race changed rapidly throughout Capron's life, largely based on social and cultural values used to describe biological differences before genetic data was widely

[9] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:140-2.
[10] Horace Capron, *Memoirs of Horace Capron*, vol. 2, *Expedition to Japan, 1871-1875* (1884), 1-4.

available, which resulted in biological determinism and the idea that race determined certain innate characteristics. Prior to the development of a racial hierarchy, biologist Carolus Linnaeus articulated a geographic basis of racial division, with characteristics based on these divisions.[11] Johann F. Blumenbach developed this into a hierarchy, with what he termed as "Caucasians," or Europeans, at the top and "represented the ideal standard of physical beauty from which other races had gradually deviated."[12] Another notable factor in the developing ideas of race was Anglo-Saxonism, where the descendants of Teutonic tribes were granted their ideas of individual rights and rule of law, resulting in the development of "civilization" in England. From this, "nineteenth-century Americans could trace the westward migration of freedom and civilization, beginning with the origins of the Caucasian race and continuing through the Teutons, the Anglo-Saxons, and the English, finally culminating in themselves."[13] Herbert Spencer's ideas of Social Darwinism were also developing in the mid-nineteenth century, with the idea that evolution was also a social change with the transformation from "savage" to "civilized". These factors all culminated in a broadly held American ideology about racial hierarchies, where while lower races were able to advance, higher races would always be a step ahead in development, and those remaining in a state of primitive barbarism were stuck in an eternal childlike state.[14]

The first volume of Capron's memoir, detailing his time spent as an Agent among the indigenous tribes of Texas, provides details that illustrate his views on race, which tie in with the Western view of "civilization". The following section of Capron's text will be used as a starting point in analyzing his views on race and "civilization":

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[11] Joseph M. Henning, *Outposts of Civilization: Race, Religion, and the Formative Years of American-Japanese Relations* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 11.
[12] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 11.
[13] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 13.
[14] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 14-15.

> Treachery prevailed then as now, and ever has done in all the intercourse between these natives and their foreign conquerors- [sic] My own sympathies were entirely with the Indians, and it was upon such basis my whole future intercourse with them was conducted, and I have yet to see any reason to change it. Simple justice to the Indian in all our transactions, would in my opinion, not only have saved all the suffering and bloodshed of the past, but reconciled them to gradual change, which our civilization required to fit them for the position of useful citizenship- [sic][15]

Here Capron displays his sympathy for the indigenous peoples, believing in a need for justice when dealing with them. However, what sticks out most about this passage is Capron's belief that this justice would have made them part of "civilization", and would have made their citizenship in said "civilization" useful. While American ideas of white supremacy would not allow them to reach the highest forms of "civilization", there was still room for progress along Western lines that would allow indigenous peoples to become somewhat "civilized". In their position as a "civilized" people, the settlers believed they must turn the indigenous peoples into good model citizens that fit their needs rather than those of the indigenous peoples. This passage provides a glimpse into the internal conflict that Capron struggled with and will become more prevalent later in his text, as to whether this Western model of "civilization" was what was best for the indigenous populations. Capron is not only as an example of how Americans viewed race in the late-nineteenth century, but also shows how these ideas of race and "civilization" were also changing at this time.

While Capron does not explicitly state it, the idea of what a "good native" looked like compared to one who was "wild" or "savage" is present throughout the text. In a letter to the

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[15] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:94.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs detailing his time spent in Texas as an Agent, Capron states in reference to the Tonkawa tribe that "These Indians are peaceable and quiet, and are a great protection to the frontier settlers against the wild tribes of the north," and that "as they are never engaged in warlike expeditions to Mexico, an example so frequently set by other wild tribes. They deserve better treatment from the United States Government."[16] He displays this split in the view of the various tribes, where those who were peaceful and protected the settlers were considered more deserving of better treatment by the government, compared to those tribes who were considered a danger to the settlers and actively resisted against them. I believe that such ideas may be based in Spencer's idea of primitive races being in a permanent childlike state intellectually, which would have led the tribes Capron views as "warlike" to become more "savage" and undeserving of better treatment by the government. Meanwhile, those indigenous peoples who welcomed and aided the settlers, bringing themselves closer to Western "civilization", would have led them to be considered as peaceful, making them deserving of being treated better by the government as Capron believes they should be. Later in the letter, Capron states about the settlement of the Delaware tribe that "Should it be urged that this band of Indians are left too near the frontier of Texas, it must be borne in mind that in this territory and on its borders are large bands of hostile Indians, and it is a well-known fact the Delawares are always found fighting in defense of the whites, and are the most formidable barrier to these predatory excursions."[17] Again we see the settler view of certain tribes having been of better standing due to their use as defenders of the settlers, protecting them from more hostile groups. For that reason, Capron determined that they should be allowed to remain where he had let them settle. In his "allowing" them to remain where they were, Capron displays the white supremacist

[16] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:116-7.
[17] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:123.

idea that because they were more "civilized", the white Americans were allowed to dictate how they believed the populations they were superior over should live.

In regards to those tribes seen as more hostile towards the settlers, Capron writes the following in the same letter:

> Were proper steps taken by the Government of the United States to settle these Indians upon a peaceful basis, which may be easily done, Texas would be relieved from nearly all her Indian troubles, and the General Government would be saved thousands.
>
> Injustice has been done these Indians by the Government of the United States, and I have no doubt for the want of a proper knowledge of their true position.[18]

Again, Capron shows this belief that a turn towards peaceful resettlement could change the current situation, and perhaps would make those more hostile tribes establish better relations with the settlers and bring them justice in the form of continuing to "civilize" them to make them useful. This passage also brings up the notion of a peaceful settlement and resettlement, however it was an inherently violent act and could not be done peacefully. Removal from the land would lead to the destruction of ways of living. For example, moving a group of people who subsisted off agriculture to an area that was less suitable for growing crops while their original lands were settled by other groups could lead to mass starvation within the group. Capron even acknowledges this when stating his reasons for allowing the Delawares to remain, as a large number of the animals with them probably would have been lost to further strain from travel or the climate and oncoming winter.[19] Once again Capron struggled against these institutionalized hierarchies, but still went along with the idea that the white settlers knew what was best.

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[18] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:125.
[19] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:121.

Continuing the thread of the actions Capron suggests be taken towards the more hostile tribe, he hones in on the Wichita tribe, stating:

> They are not noticed in the Indian Department of the United States, and have no appointed Agent amongst them to teach by language and by acts of kindness, or even justice, that the people of Texas are of one and the same great white nation; who are capable of meting out right and justice to the poor red man.
>
> I would most respectfully recommend to the Government of the United States that before a war of extermination is waged upon these poor misguided, but brave bands, that the truth of what I have written may be inquired into, and that agents be sent to teach them to be friends, and by suitable presents of food and blankets, relieve them from present wants that now drive them to deeds, which, in any other people would be considered heroic.[20]

Capron is seen here pushing for the imposition of the Western view of "civilization" as well as the superiority of the white man, modeling him in the form of the Agent who would bring the indigenous peoples language and kindness, and implying that they had none already. We are also given the contrasting depictions of the "great white nation" and the "poor red man," with the former being the one, again, who would bring justice to the natives and save them by bringing them "civilization", displaying the power that ideas of white supremacy gave Americans over indigenous peoples. It is also interesting to note how the white Americans were given the term nation by Capron, while the natives were labeled as individuals, which, at least partially, gives the impression of having strength in numbers, as well as that having "civilization" would bind people together in a nation, and without it they were completely on their own. However, the idea of "civilization" bringing people together also conflicted with the broad American view that

[20] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:126-127.

"civilized" societies created individual freedoms, and that the United States pursued the destruction of the collective tribes for their own gain, as seen in the case of the Dawes Act that would break up tribal lands into individual allotments, further imposing Western ideas of "civilization" through the spread of private property.[21] Capron's description of the natives being "poor" and "misguided" also played into the idea of them needing to be set on the correct path, which was the purpose of the Agents and the white race as a whole. This could once again be Capron struggling with conflicting ideas of whether or not the "uncivilized" can elevate themselves to the status of a "civilized" people on their own.

However, Capron is also very vocal about how not all settlers were superior to that of the indigenous peoples. When writing about those from Europe, America, and Mexico who travelled the frontier, having fled their homes to avoid criminal punishment, he remarks that they were "far more dangerous, and much more to be dreaded than the most savage of our Indian tribes."[22] Rather than setting an upstanding example of "civilization" for the natives, these men, as well as many of the settlers, were actually a detriment to the "civilization" mission. A prime example of how some settlers were a detriment comes in the form of whiskey. Capron mentions that the natives he was the Agent for would give anything to obtain whiskey, down to their last bit of clothing. The blame is placed on the settlers, as Capron states that "unprincipaled [sic] men of every nation are filling the country with shops for the sale of whiskey, and the amount of mischief thus produced is incalculable. It is not only materially retarding the growth of the State, but is daily rendering the condition of the Indians on these borders more brutal and savage."[23] "Principles", it seems, was another determining factor in considering the "civility" of a people,

[21] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 13.
[22] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:99.
[23] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:112.

as principles would bind people together in ensuring the law was upheld, and would impact both the state and the individual. Just as in Capron's eyes there are "good", "friendly" natives and "wild", "dangerous" natives, there were also unprincipled whites who wished to make the matter of "civilizing" the native harder for their own gain alongside those whites who wished to carry out the "civilizing" mission to make proper citizens of the indigenous peoples.

From these passages we can discern Capron's views on race. It is intertwined with the idea of "civilization" and being a "proper" and "useful" citizen within that "civilization". Those who aided and were friendly to the white settlers, also being the ones who would protect them from the more "wild" tribes, were the ones who deserved to be treated better, while there was still hope for those who were hostile to become useful citizens if the government would put more effort into developing friendly relations with them and taught them to be kind. He is also shown to push against and question these pre-established hierarchies. Still, he worked for the expansion of Western "civilization" overall and fell into this mindset of white supremacy. Capron took these views of race with him when he traveled to Hokkaidō. I further unpack these views of race and development when he comes into contact with the Ainu people, and analyze how he draws direct comparisons between both indigenous groups in his writing.

Views of the Japanese and the Ainu

On April 1, 1871 Capron was first interviewed in Washington D.C. for the position of foreign advisor by Kuroda Kiyotaka. Kuroda was in charge of the Kaitakushi in Hokkaidō and was given the responsibility of finding a suitable person who would take control of the development of Hokkaidō by the Meiji government as Japan was pushing towards modernization fueled by Western influence and beliefs. Within a few days, Capron was given a formal proposal

to aid in the effort, which he accepted and resigned from his position as United States Commissioner of Agriculture in a letter to President Grant on June 27 of that same year.[24] The second volume of his memoir, which consists of nearly daily journal entries of the time he spent in Japan, paints an even grander picture of Capron's views of race in his discussions of both the Japanese and the Ainu people, who resided largely on Hokkaidō. On July 19 Capron started out on his journey, stating in a short entry that "To day [sic] I start for my trip across this broad continent, and the still broader Ocean for a far off and semi-barbarous country."[25] Before he even stepped foot on Japanese soil, Capron already had an opinion of the Japanese, denoting them as "semi-barbarous" rather than simply "barbarous", although he had used the latter term in the prior volume when writing about indigenous Americans.[26] This implies that there was something about the Japanese that had resulted in them being racially superior to that of the native, which kept them from being fully "barbarous" in Capron's eyes.

Capron uses the term in a later passage when describing the Japanese in more detail, stating that "Everything in Japan is to me a mystery; how is it that a people so naturally intelligent, ingenious, appreciative, and so capable of imitating everything they see, should remain so long in a state of semibarbarism, is perfectly incomprehensible."[27] He goes on to state examples of how they were still in this state, such as the performance of actions "exactly the reverse of all European or American ideas," like mounting a horse on the right rather than the left and sawing upwards rather than downwards.[28] What was keeping the Japanese from achieving a high state of "civilization", as so many other nations have achieved, was their apparent

[24] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:1-3.
[25] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:9.
[26] Capron, *Memoirs*, 1:108.
[27] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:38.
[28] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:38-39.

backwardness in comparison to an American, as well as a way of using tools that Capron considered rude or primitive.

Such views, which were commonly held by Westerners, stemmed from the end of Japan's seclusion policy within the two decades prior to Capron's visit, partially due to the seclusion policy itself. According to common American views, seclusion was an act of childishness, connecting to the idea that "uncivilized" groups were in this childlike state. [29] Americans believed that, much like how they had to "civilize" indigenous Americans, it was America's duty to open up Japan and "civilize" the Japanese as well. Adding to the childlike view the Americans had of the Japanese, to American travelers the country seemed small, a view that was only emphasized by the apparent difference in stature between the Americans and Japanese.[30] There was also the cultural difference in attitude towards nudity, and while some Americans marked it as offensive, others viewed a primitive innocence in the act due to the purpose that it tended to serve, whether it be keeping cool or partaking in public bathing.[31] However, Americans did not view the Japanese as entirely "uncivilized" by American standards, with cleanliness and politeness being two key traits of the Japanese, as well as the eagerness of many to adopt Western "civilization" and "catch up" so to speak with the United States and Europe.[32] Thus, Capron's use of the term "semi-barbarous" when referring to the Japanese was characteristic of American racial views at this time, signaling that he was positioned within this general mindset of racial hierarchies and American dominance over the Japanese.

Throughout the volume Capron also praises what he considered to be the progress of the Japanese in attaining "civilization". For example, when writing about his meeting with Emperor

[29] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 18.
[30] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 22.
[31] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 23-24.
[32] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 28-29.

Meiji, Capron states that "...we are then, the first foreigners who have been so distinguished. It has excited much comment from the press, and all the foreign representatives and residents in Japan, but it is but the beginning of more liberal ideas for the future, and we can only claim the high honor of being the first."[33] From this we can discern that the introduction of liberal ideas was a key part of an advanced "civilization", which America had aided in bringing to the Japanese. The role of America in the progress of the Japanese can also be seen when Capron discusses the advancement of women, four of whom "it is understood, are to be educated in America, and eventually to become teachers in the family of the Tenno."[34] Not only were Americans aiding in the advancement of the Japanese towards a higher state of "civilization", but the Japanese were actively seeking American knowledge. The fact that these women would be teachers within the Emperor's family displays just how highly they thought of not just the West, but America in particular. The fact that Japan even hired foreign advisors such as Capron is also indicative of this Japanese push towards "civilization". So, while they were still seen as "backwards" in Capron's eyes, the active seeking of "civilization" by the Japanese placed them in this "semi-barbarous" category—not quite "civilized" like European-Americans, but not quite as "uncivilized" as the indigenous Americans.

However, as the Japanese continued to progress towards what American commentators considered a higher level of "civilization", the white Anglo-Saxon basis for "civilization" would start to deteriorate. To combat this, "American scholars also highlighted similarities rather than differences. While identifying racial differences between the Japanese and other Asians, scholars claimed simultaneously to have discovered racial similarities between the Japanese and

[33] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:22-23.
[34] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:47.

Westerners."[35] Rather than allowing the racial hierarchy to be destroyed by this development, Westerners started to work around it and find explanations as to why the Japanese were advancing so quickly. It was at this point that the Ainu took their place in the American racial hierarchy, which Capron proceeds to display in his writing.

The Ainu, unlike the Japanese, did fit in the category of being "uncivilized" in Capron's view. However, he also claims them to be "a very superior race of beings in every respect" in comparison to the indigenous Americans, "having none of their savage brutality."[36] His praises of them came in the beauty of their sailing vessels despite their lack of modern science, machines, metals, or any other tools, as well as his highlighting of their distinct lack of qualities that were discussed as being seen in the "savage" native previously—their lack of warlike dispositions and their "native politeness and civilities."[37] These "good" traits that Capron perceived also led him to determine that they would readily assimilate into "civilized" life, and their position of accepting what Capron intended to do on Hokkaidō, as they also saw him as being from a "superior race of mortals,"[38] all led to him considering the Ainu to be much superior to the indigenous Americans that resisted "civilization".

However, Capron also shows concern in regards to this "civilizing" mission. It makes him pause, and he gives the following passage:

> All incentive for bickering, and heart burning jealousies &c which follow in the wake of civilization, seem to be wanting in their mode of life, and in their natural dispositions. In a people so free from guile, and so little prone to do evil, it raises in the mind the question of how far the introduction of the wants, habits and ideas of civilized society, with all its

[35] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 149-150.
[36] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:93.
[37] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:93.
[38] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:93.

> concomitant of evils and vices, may add to their real happiness in this world. Were this present existence to be the end of all things, we might be inclined to let them alone, but for a people to live and die without religion, without a hope for immortality--'aye there is the question'.[39]

He questions whether bringing "civilization" to the Ainu was a good thing, because as someone who came from a "civilized" nation, he knew the negative side of it. Capron had experience with the men who were a scourge on the "civilized" world, such as those "unprincipled whites" who brought whiskey to the west to sell it to the natives, intending to make whatever money they could off of them. Is this really what Capron wanted them to experience? To risk that they too might be plagued by all the foul aspects of "civilization"? Yet, Capron pushed ahead because of one critical aspect: Christianity, or a lack thereof. While Capron hardly wrote about religion in his memoir, aside from one other aspect where he described the Ainu as "untutored and unchristianized,"[40] it appears to be this one singular aspect that pushed a people from being "barbaric" to "civilized". To American evangelicals, Christianity was what provided for the progress towards "civilization", and they considered the United States to be the highest point of Christian "civilization". Missionaries in Japan also played a large enough role that they were able to influence policy changes to make them more Christian.[41] While scholars argued whether Christianity was required for "civilization", the influence that missionaries had displays that there was a Christian aspect to American policy in Japan. Thus, to be Christianized was to be "civilized", and that is why, for Capron, the colonization of Hokkaidō must continue.

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[39] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:93-94.
[40] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:111.
[41] Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, 37-39.

One last point on the topic comes from Capron's few brief notes about his solitary status in Hokkaidō. In the first of two similar instances, Capron mentions that "On this wild coast, in this almost unpeopled Island thus remote, I stand solitary and alone, a pioneer, as it were, upon the outpost of civilization."[42] In the second, he similarly calls himself "a solitary white man in a strange unpeopled land, the few scattered inhabitants thereof mere savages."[43] Despite the fact that there were indeed people living on Hokkaidō, he still mostly denied their presence, which makes it appear as if the land was just open to be claimed by whoever came upon it. There was an affirmation that any sort of development that occurs on the island was alright because there was no one there, nearly erasing the existence of the indigenous people who actually lived there. Capron also viewing himself as alone, although he had Japanese traveling companions with him, further illustrates how his status as a "fully civilized" person set him apart from those with him due to the influence of the difference in position on this racial hierarchy that Capron perceived between all three groups, further alienating not just the Ainu, but the Japanese as well.

The Agricultural Development of Hokkaidō

In his role as foreign advisor, Capron's main purpose in Hokkaidō was to aid in the development of its land and natural resources to fit a settler population. In looking at Capron's discussions of the land in his memoirs, there are two noticeable categories that come up quite often. The first is the perceived worth of the land, which was based on what the land was able to produce and if what was produced was considered profitable. This does not just include the market value of agricultural or other resources, but also the land's ability to sustain a population and the productiveness of labor as well. The second category is that the development of land was

[42] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:89.
[43] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:111.

tied to progress, especially in the making of an American-style market and connecting Hokkaidō not just to the national market in Japan, but the global market as well.

Capron largely discusses land in terms of its value and what it was able to produce. In one instance when writing about the trees on the island, Capron states that "The timbers of this Island certainly add much to its value; we find here all of our native woods in great perfection."[44] In another instance, he writes "This is a splendid Island; the real value of it is not well understood or appreciated. Its mineral resources are great, its fisheries unlimited, its timber abundant and superior in quality, its agricultural capacity great."[45] In both of these instances, it is easily seen that what the island could produce, highlighted by descriptors such as "perfection" or "superior", had an impact on what it was worth in Capron's view. In another instance, Capron writes the following:

> Other crops such as buckwheat, barley &c are grown in small quantities on the higher grounds, and occasionally a few roots of little or no value; the turnip radish, the most conspicuous, grows to an enormous size and length, penetrating this rich soil to two and a half feet, but it is a poor apology for a food plant, in fact, in America it would be considered unprofitable for any purpose for food for either man or beast.[46]

While not about the land itself, this description of the turnip radish provides an example of something lacking value. The fact that this plant was considered unprofitable, a word which now places it in a market context, ultimately decreased its value and led Capron to disregard it. This also shows how his view was very American-centric, as he only stated that it would be unprofitable in America, rather than in Japan where it was grown.

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[44] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:103.
[45] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:135.
[46] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:35.

The American influence can further be seen when Capron discusses what he intended to introduce to Japan. In one instance in Hokkaidō, Capron remarks how "The soil is rich, and with proper drainage and cultivation, can be made to produce all the fruits, vegetables and grains grown in the United States."[47] Later in his experience in Tōkyō, Capron mentions how almost every American crop had flourished.[48] Although this was not in Hokkaidō, it shows that this development project was not just to be localized to Hokkaidō, but rather it would have influence all across Japan. Agriculture was not the only part of Japan being influenced by Americans, as Capron mentions when riding down the new highway in Hokkaidō that "it not only reminded me of home, but demonstrated the rapid marches we are making towards the introduction of our American ideas of progress into this heretofore neglected country."[49] Here a connection between Capron's views of land and race can be made. The apparent "barbarous" nature of all three groups previously discussed was evident in their apparent neglect of the land and the lack of developing it for proper use in a market. Hokkaidō was not entirely empty as his comments of an "unpeopled land" could lead one to assume. Rather, the land was seen as empty because it was not economically developed to the extent that the West was. In order to achieve the level of "civility" of the Americans, the Japanese would have to first learn how to conquer the landscape and exploit the value of its resources, pushing for the development of a more Western economy. The Americans, the ones who were called to aid the Japanese in the development of the land, were the bringers of progress towards "civility", and to reach "civility" they must first create a market through this land development by attracting Japanese immigrants to settle there and teach them to use the resources available to their greatest economic extent.

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[47] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:72.
[48] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:158.
[49] Capron, *Memoirs*, 2:172.

From what Capron has displayed throughout his memoirs, I believe that Western ideas of "civilization" and racial hierarchies were primarily connected to patterns of land use. Because the indigenous Americans and the Ainu were not developing the land and extracting its natural resources for use in a market, Capron viewed them as "uncivilized", and they were placed lower on the racial hierarchy constructed by Westerners. The Japanese, on the other hand, were only seen by Capron as being "semi-barbarous" because they did cultivate the land to some extent, but it was only to the extent that what was being produced only catered to the Japanese, rather than producing for a wider market which signified "civilization". However, the hiring of foreign advisors such as Capron by the Meiji government indicated that the Japanese were ready and willing to pursue "civilization" on Western terms, which would ultimately mean the development of Hokkaidō for the purposes of economic expansion.

Chapter II:

Reports from Hokkaidō – Development of the Land for Commerce

During his time as foreign advisor to the Kaitakushi, Capron and his team wrote various reports and letters documenting their experiences and suggestions for furthering the development and settlement of Hokkaidō. As in the parts of Capron's memoirs discussed at the end of the prior chapter, much of what these documents contain also revolves around the worth of the land and its resources, and the connection between land development and Western ideas of progress. From the documents contained in *Reports and Official Letters to the Kaitakushi*, the two ideas connect under the process of constructing a capitalist market economy. What follows is a dissection of how Capron and his team viewed the land and discussed developing it with the idea of creating a market economy in mind. Capron's team, it should be noted, consisted of a variety of individuals who were also hired by the Japanese government for the purposes of modernizing Japan. These men worked under Capron, conducting geological surveys—which were primarily about the extent of coal and oil that could be found on the island—botanical surveys, hydrographic surveys, and other such examinations of Hokkaidō.

This chapter will be divided into three thematic sections. The first focuses on the value of the land and its natural resources, determined by such factors as what the land and resources were able produce, the quality of both the resources and products, how they would aid in the development of manufacturing and agriculture, and overall, how they would contribute to the economic prospects of Hokkaidō. The second section centers on the need for developing means of communication and transportation on the island, and how they would enable the growth of Hokkaidō's population and further aid in the development of the land and the market economy. Finally, the third section consists of settlement, and how those who settled on the island,

attracted by the prospects of increasing their economic status, would contribute to the development of a market by providing labor and being educated by Westerners. This last section also focuses on the influence of the government in the construction of a market economy, involving factors such as property ownership, government aid to settlers, and the question of whether industries should be under government or private ownership.

Value of Land and Natural Resources

Resources formed the basis of any economy, being what was or what could be made into goods that are bought, sold, or traded. In the book *Imperial Eyes*, Mary Louise Pratt writes of the capitalist vanguard that travelled to South America in the early nineteenth century, stating that "they did not present themselves as discoverers of a primal world; the bits of nature they collected were samples of raw materials… In their writings, the contemplative, estheticizing rhetoric of discovery is often replaced by a goal-oriented rhetoric of conquest and achievement."[50] The documents written by Capron and his team are similar in structure, with the goal being to develop the land and economy of Hokkaidō. They viewed the landscape with this goal in mind, which in turn dictated how they wrote about it.

In a report A. G. Warfield discusses the landscape surrounding the location chosen for Hokkaidō's new capital, Sapporo. He starts by stating that "There is not to be found on the island an unoccupied field, for the establishment and permanent support of a large city, such as should form the capital of Yesso, equal to that of the beautiful Ishcari valley."[51] Immediately the

[50] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 149.
[51] Horace Capron, *Reports and Official Letters to the Kaitakushi* (Tokei: The Kaitakushi, 1875), 25-26.

*It is important to note that while this collection designates Capron as the author, many of the documents within were actually written by others who worked under him, such as Warfield in the quotation cited

capitalist view is seen in how the only purpose of the field described is for establishing and supporting a large city, which could be aided by the large portion of arable land that he later claimed was in the vicinity. A resource that Warfield points out is the Toyohira River upon which the city is located, noting how "The day is not far distant when the manufactories which will grow up along the banks of the Toyohira river, and around the new capital, will engender a commerce far exceeding that arising from the fisheries."[52] The primary purpose of the river was generating commerce by its use as a provider of water power, which would allow manufacturers to spring up alongside it. The value of the river was also increased by the ability to fish in it, and since fish was a food staple that is consistently bought and sold, it provided a consistent means of generating income within the city. Warfield later states more generally that "The salmon, cod, herring, and other kinds of small fish, together with seaweed, are abundant, and the island will probably derive a considerable importance and revenue from this source alone."[53] This statement further emphasizes the economic importance of both the sources of water present all throughout Hokkaidō and the fish that filled them, and how these two natural resources alone would provide for a large portion of the commerce generated by the island's development.

Capron himself also discusses the importance of water within his documents. When writing about Sapporo and the Ishikari River in the first of his yearly reports, he states that "With suitable improvements at its mouth, large vessels could at all times enter and find a safe and commodious harbor, or pass far up the stream. Numerous small tributaries furnish inexhaustible water power for manufacturing and other purposes."[54] While agreeing with Warfield's points

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above. To keep a standard layout, the notes that refer to this text following this one will only refer to Capron as being the author and the title of the text itself, but the actual author of each document and the type of document it is will be stated within the main body of this paper.

[52] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 26.

[53] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 30.

[54] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 42-43.

about the importance of water power for development, Capron also notes how the river had the capacity to become a harbor. Such an attribute to the city would allow connections to be made with other parts of Japan as well as the world, connecting Hokkaidō to a larger market via means of water transport.

Another example of a resource that Capron mentions throughout multiple documents is rice, which played a large role in the diet and economy of the Japanese during this period. In the first of his yearly reports, Capron claims that a change in Japan's food productions was the "ultimate necessity," going on to write that:

> The cost of production in the case of wheat for the same amount of nutritive elements is twenty-five per cent less than with rice. It is the cheap production of bread food, together with the great variety of fruits and vegetables that enables the American people to enjoy many of the luxuries of life, and leaves many of them free to swell by other pursuits than the production of food the aggregate wealth and commerce of the nation.[55]

While not as poor in value as the previously discussed turnip radish, the low value of rice stemmed from its apparent lack of a high nutritive value, requiring more to be produced in comparison to bread food, and ultimately increasing how much must be produced. Here Capron pushes for an economic shift towards a more American model, highlighting how spending less on food would allow people to put their money towards other means and to enjoy life a bit more. This also connects to the idea of Hokkaidō's development being for the national good, as the money that would be saved from switching production to other grains from rice would put more money in the pockets of people that could be spent on goods and services from other parts of Japan, further aiding economic development all over the nation. Pratt states that "the failures of

[55] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 47.

Spanish American economic life are diagnosed in this literature not simply as the refusal to work, but also more specifically the failure to rationalize, specialize, and maximize production."[56] One such aspect that astonished those Europeans was the lack of interest in diversification of crops, and this can be applied to Capron as well. He advocates not only for the change from rice to other grains as the primary diet, but also the introduction of a variety of fruits and vegetables, which would expand the pool of resources on the market, maximizing production, and ultimately would bring more money into Japan.

Lumber is another resource mentioned many times throughout the documents. For example, in a letter to Kuroda from July 22, 1872, Capron writes that "There is great wealth in the timber of Yesso: much of it is of the finest quality and will command a market in any country in the world. I am pleased that my suggestion for the getting of a large quantity of timber at the mills has been carried out; it can now be prepared for immediate use here, or for shipment as may be desired."[57] The value of this resource stemmed from its versatility, primarily being used to construct buildings. With the vast amount of lumber that Hokkaidō contained, it would allow for houses to be easily built, which would aid in the expansion of the island's population and development. Capron is also sure to note how this lumber could be sold anywhere in the world, signaling the idea that Hokkaidō would eventually partake in the global economy. However, in his second annual report, Capron mentions how this had yet to happen. He states:

> No arrangements looking to a market beyond the immediate wants of the place have been considered by this Department, although often urged by me. The source from which could be derived more real net revenue to this government than from all the minerals in the island—leaving out of the question its coal—is suffered to decay, while at the same

[56] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 151.
[57] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 58-59.

> time lumber in considerable quantities is actually imported from America, five thousand miles away, to this country and to China and other markets.[58]

Rather than sell the excess lumber that was sitting at sawmills rotting and losing its value, which would allow the island to generate a large profit, the Kaitakushi was instead losing its money by importing lumber from America. They continued to bleed money and spend what they did not have rather than use what they did have, which was a perfectly fine amount of wood that could be used instead of importing more. Without the proper funds, it was questionable whether the development of the island could continue.

The aforementioned text by Pratt conjures the idea of "industrial revery," seen in the replacement of the natural landscape by a capitalist view of modernizing extraction, where beauty was found in the domestic landscapes carved out by man and put to use in a market.[59] Warfield also mentions lumber in part of his report, but rather than being about the value and abundance of it, he writes about the clearing of it. He states:

> …as the mighty forest recedes under the insatiable demands of an increasing population, agricultural products will fill the apparent void, for it is certain that the soil where these vast forests now grow is remarkably prolific. And if at some period in the future when numerous flourishing towns and villages shall have sprung up with the growth of Sapporo, the timber should be exhausted, in this now densely wooded section of the valley, a bountiful providence has stored up in other parts of the island, for the use of coming generations, an abundant supply of coal, an article which is the basis of most of

[58] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 102.
[59] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 150.

> the wealth of Great Britain, and which, more than any single product of the mines, has enabled the United States to take her present stand among the nations of the earth.[60]

The forest would disappear under the pressure of market demand, and the landscape would be domesticated via the production of agricultural products, which have a seemingly endless supply to meet the demand for food as crops are grown and animals are raised and slaughtered again and again. The loss of timber would not mean the loss of commerce, however, as resources could simply be extracted from other parts of the island. Under the guidance of the Americans and the development of the island, coal would step in and take the place of lumber as an export, one which may have the potential to make Hokkaidō—and thus Japan—a place of great wealth much like the Western nations of the United States and Great Britain. This shows the evolutionary progression of a political economy. The immediately available resources were used to make way for agriculture, which would take the place of natural resources in generating Hokkaidō's economy, and was added to by the mining and selling of coal. The extraction of these valuable resources was key to the development of capitalism in Japan.

Communication and Transportation

In order for a market to function, would require some means of transportation, which would make the movement of goods from place to place faster and more efficient, and communication, which would allow for the exchange of information about goods and transport. In regards to roads, Warfield claims that roads, being the pathways of industry and national intercourse, are the most important and influential parts of a settlement, as they would enable

[60] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 26.

commerce to commence between settlements, which in turn would create "civilization".[61] He goes on to state that:

> They enable the natural resources of a country to be developed, facilitate travelling and intercourse, break down local jealousies, and in all ways tend to bind together society and bring out fully that healthy spirit of industry which is the life and soul of every great nation. The road is so necessary an instrument of development and progress, that in every new colony it is one of the first things thought of. First roads, then manufactures and schools.[62]

Roads were vital for economic development as they created common pathways along which goods could be transported, and since Capron and his team were focused on the development of Hokkaidō's economy, it would make sense that roads were at the forefront of their plans for development. When a farm or factory was connected by some sort of path to a road or market, it made transportation more efficient, reducing both the time and the cost required to transport a good from one place to another. This in turn would both decrease the cost of an item and allow for the production of more, making it more accessible to consumers, and would increase the amount of money that producers would make in the process. Similar to how Capron viewed the switch from rice production to other grains, the more money that people had from saving on everyday expenses, the more they could spend on other luxuries that would increase economic development and commerce not just in Hokkaidō, but Japan as a whole.

[61] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 30-31.
[62] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 31.

Figure 1. *Map of Hokkaidō*, "Wikimedia Commons," March 12, 2007, accessed April 28, 2024, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hokkaidomap-en.png.

In a letter to Kuroda dated July 15, 1873, Capron expresses the need to change the main port that Sapporo connected to from Hakodate to Muroran. Muroran was selected as an alternative port to Hakodate due to being much closer to the planned capital, as well as having enough room for large vessels and being clear of ice in the winter. He states that:

> The transportation of all light articles and passengers from Tokio would enable them to reach Sapporo in less time than it now takes from Hakodate. That is; passengers leaving

> Tokio may reach Sapporo by this route in from four to five days, whereas it now takes nine days by way of Hakodate, and often by detentions at the crossing of Volcano Bay ten or twelve days.[63]

As Muroran was close to the capital, this would decrease the amount of time it would take to get from Tōkyō to Sapporo. This meant that commerce could occur at a much faster pace than it did at that point, and would result in a much faster generation of wealth. He also notes how this new road would remove the risk of losing time due to the unpredictable character of Volcano Bay, ensuring the continuous movement of commerce and development.

Capron also highlights the need to have access to various means of transportation and the importance of them in relation to each other. In one passage of his first annual report, Capron discusses the importance of having a road that connected Sapporo to the Ishikari River until a road that connected Sapporo and Muroran could be built that may also serve as a railroad. Capron especially urges for the construction of this road as the Ishikari River was closed five months of the year due to being frozen. Further, Capron recommends building a canal that connected Sapporo to the Ishikari that would allow for vessels to continue to the town rather than unloading along the Sapporo-Muroran road.[64] Here, Capron displays the importance of having alternative routes for transportation, because if one pathway were obstructed and there were no other means of travel, commerce would come to a halt or increase in price when finding other means of transportation that may not be fully developed. In the case of the Ishikari River, Capron recommends a road that directly connected Sapporo to Muroran as an alternative to the road that connected Sapporo to the Ishikari, because when the river froze in the winter, transportation, and

[63] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 60.
[64] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 43.

therefore commerce, would be unable to continue. As for the recommendation of also having a canal that connected the Ishikari to Sapporo, this would decrease the cost of transport as there would be less handling of products when moving from one place to another, allowing them to stay on one ship all the way to the city.

Capron further discusses the importance of a road connecting Sapporo and Muroran in a letter dated September 3, 1873. With the discovery of an extremely large deposit of coal by geologist Benjamin S. Lyman about fourteen miles from the Ishikari River, Capron describes two potential routes for transporting this coal. The first option was to transport the coal from the mines to the Ishikari by railroad, transferring it to a ship that would sail down the Ishikari to the harbor of Otarunai, a total of seventy miles. In response to this option, Capron states that "By the first of these routes it requires the coal to be handled over several times in the various transshipments, each time adding to the cost and causing a great loss and deterioration in the market value, and it must be borne in mind also that the harbour is only open for navigation about one half of the year."[65] The second option was to build a railway directly to Muroran from the mines, a distance of roughly eighty-five to ninety miles, about which Capron states that "By the way of New Mororan in the harbour of Endermo--which is one of the best on this Island and accessible the year round--the coal can be taken directly from the mines by rail, without any intermediate handling and deposited into the hold of the largest ship, at a cost of about two dollars per ton."[66] Despite the increased distance between the mines and Muroran compared to Otarunai, the second option was cheaper because it would allow for materials to be transported with less handling, which would increase the cost of transportation. Otarunai was also closed for

[65] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 78.
[66] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 78.

half the year, and depending on when shipments arrived to the port, there could be a long wait before they could be moved elsewhere, halting commerce for the time being. It should also be noted that Otarunai was on the northern side of Hokkaidō while Muroran was on the southern side, and if the coal were to be transported to the main island, especially Tōkyō, shipping from Otarunai would take longer than from Muroran.

Capron justifies this plan by stating that mines in the United States, most of which were much further from the coast than those in Hokkaidō, were also connected to the coast by railroads without handling between locations.[67] Here he provides an example of something that the United States, a country with a developed economy, had done that is similar to what he encouraged to be done in Hokkaidō, showing the influence of institutions in the United States on how Capron thought about these subjects. He continues, stating that:

> This great body of coal, situated as it is in the centre of a rich valley, covered with the most valuable timber only awaiting cheap transportation to a market to be turned to profitable account, together with the importance to Sapporo of railway connection with that harbour, would seem to justify us in looking forward with confidence to the completion of this road--not perhaps immediately but at no distant future. I do not doubt but that, with proper protection and reasonable privileges guaranteed, capitalists can readily be found who will construct this road.[68]

Capron highlights the value of the island's natural resources much like what was found in the previous section, adding to it the need for cheap transportation. These roads and railways that Capron had planned were important because they would make transportation cheap and fast, and

[67] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 78.
[68] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 78-79.

if transportation was cheap and fast, it would allow commerce to develop and move quickly and would put more money in the pockets of people at a faster rate, rapidly increasing the wealth of both the people and the nation as a whole.

Transportation was not just for moving goods, but people as well. Warfield poses a hypothetical, asking what would occur if the roads, canals, and rivers of Japan were closed. He posits that "The country would be brought to a dead-lock, employment would be restricted in all directions, and a large proportion of the inhabitants concentrated in the large cities and towns would perish of hunger."[69] I believe what Warfield means is that if efficient means of transportation were accessible to people, it would allow them greater access to goods as mentioned above, and would give them the ability to transport themselves from one place to another. This would expand a person's economic range, giving them access to goods that may not be readily available nearby. Not only that, but without the need to live on or near a farm to acquire food, it would allow for people to access a greater variety of jobs in place of agricultural labor, as well as access to work that may be further from home through commuting to work or moving closer to it. As a city grew from people moving there from the countryside, it would only further increase the need for good means of transportation to move food and other goods to those cities. Thus, communication and transportation would allow for greater means of developing settlements, labor, and industry.

[69] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 31-32.

Settlement, Labor, and Government Input

For commerce to occur there would need to be not just goods to buy and sell and ways to move those goods, but people to partake in commercial activities as well. In settling the land, these settlers would come into connection with one another and create a market for goods as well as labor that they could provide to different stages of production and distribution of what they consumed. Attracted by the prospects of increasing their economic status with the exploitation of Hokkaidō's natural resources, the Japanese settlers would start settling along the pathways of commerce for a chance at increasing their own wealth, while also having the ability to expand their economic range due to the presence of these roads and other pathways. In his second annual report, Capron notes how multiple farm settlements have appeared, "mostly upon the fine water courses and the newly opened roads, where the soil is universally fertile and fish convenient and abundant."[70] It is along these pathways of commerce that people were settling, but the roads were not only providing a means of access to a market in which they can sell goods. Nearby were also the resources that the settlers could exploit, with Capron noting how fertile the soil was, which would increase its value since it could produce high quality food for a good price, as well as how the fish were bountiful and easy to catch, providing yet another source of income for settlers.

In his first annual report, Capron advises against forcefully making people immigrate to Hokkaidō, as allowing it to be voluntary would keep the population loyal and friendly to the government. Further, he states that "Drawn by their individual interests, having a title to the soil they occupy, and liable at any time to be called upon to defend that soil, such a people, come

[70] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 105.

whence they may, will be an enduring strength to the nation, and will serve as a bulwark against the encroachments of any foreign power."[71] Capron believes that this liberal policy towards immigration would provide benefits to both the people and the government. The settlers would have land that they could call their own, and use to elevate their status by participating in commerce that connected the nation. Wanting to defend the land that generated this wealth, these settlers would also want to protect the nation as an extension of what they owned, and would ensure that Japan could continue to develop its collective economic strength without fear of being subjected to other nations. The settlements Capron mentions in his second report are proof that "under a liberal and enlightened policy the intrinsic value of its own resources is sufficient attraction to insure the full development of the island."[72] The land's resources were enough to attract settlers alone, and liberal policies for settlement were all that was required to start generating a market on the island, which would impact the nation as a whole.

An example Capron gives in regards to land distribution in his first annual report is the Homestead Act. Capron summarizes the law by stating that a settler could become the owner of 160 acres of land by paying ten dollars to the district's land officer and meeting certain conditions. The conditions for ownership were that the settler must move onto the property within six months of purchase, reside upon that tract of land for five years, build a comfortable home and make other improvements to the land, and after two years would be granted a patent or deed for the land if he has complied with these conditions.[73] Such an act is an example of the type of liberal land policy Capron believed the Japanese should enact on Hokkaidō. It would prevent any excessive expenditures of the farmer in acquiring the land, which could prevent the

[71] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 48.
[72] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 105.
[73] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 46.

prospective settler from becoming destitute and unable to maintain the land, and the money which would be saved in this act could be put toward such improvements that the Homestead Act described. With the land being improved upon faster than it would have been otherwise, production of agricultural products would be able to occur sooner rather than later, which would allow the settler to start generating income and expand his economic position, as well as the wealth of the island—and by extension, the nation.

In addition to encouraging this policy, Capron also discouraged taxing the settlers. In a letter dated March 10, 1874, Capron makes the following statement to Kuroda:

> Direct taxation is always unpopular and most difficult for the people to become reconciled to, and in this effort to colonize Yesso everything tending to discourage immigration should be studiously avoided, and where so much wealth exists in the natural resources of the Island, in its minerals, timber, fish &e. which only awaits to be properly utilized a sound policy would seem to direct attention particularly to these sources for raising a revenue for the current expenses of this Department.[74]

Much like the Homestead Act, Capron advocated a liberal land policy as it would allow for the settler to generate more wealth and increase his economic standing, which is especially important in the first few years of settlement as it would provide economic padding that could protect the settler in any extreme circumstances. The cheapness of the land would also encourage immigration, increasing the island's market which would lead to an expansion of wealth on the island. Rather than the Kaitakushi generating revenue through taxation of the settlers, Capron suggests using the island's resources as an alternative form of generating revenue due to how

[74] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 236.

rich the island was in them, and the income could then be used to further develop the island through methods such as expansion of transportation, which ultimately would encourage the growth of Hokkaidō's commerce.

In a letter dated July 25, 1873, Capron further writes of the increase in Japanese settlers and how their farms gave the appearance of producing an abundant harvest. He continues by claiming that "It is this class of settlers that are the most needed here, industrious frugal farmers, who feel that they have an interest in the soil they occupy, and in whatever tends to the general benefit of the island, and the enlargement of its permanent population."[75] Because these farmers had an interest in this land and had a claim on it, they were able to use the land to its fullest extent. This would further impact the island around them, as the development of the land would produce a market that could attract others and give the impression that they too could make a living in Hokkaidō, which would encourage the expansion of the population which would also participate in this ever-growing market.

A question that appears in a few of Capron's documents is just how much the government should play a role in the developing economy of Hokkaidō. When Capron writes about the island's mines in his first annual report, he believes that whether they were left to public or private control, the mines would provide immense wealth as long as they were managed economically. However, Capron states that:

> It has been the experience in England and America, however, that such enterprises are never productive of so satisfactory results under government auspices as when left to individual effort. A system of royalties paid to the government by individuals or corporations for the

[75] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 66.

> privilege of working the mines would seem to be the best means for securing the highest productiveness. Such a system presumes, of course, the enactment and enforcement of the necessary laws for the regulation of mining interests and rights of property, and would, perhaps, be best enforced under the supervision of competent officers in a bureau of mines.[76]

While admitting that the mines could be run either way, he suggests that private ownership was the direction to go in, as interest in the mines and what they produced would increase how productive they were. This can be compared to the liberal ideology Capron held towards settlement, and how, if left to their own devices, the farms would grow and produce as much as possible. The payment of royalties by private owners to the government would also ensure that rather than spending money to ensure the production of the mines, the government would instead earn a portion of what is produced that could be put towards other government plans. This could increase the desired production of private owners, as they would want to make up this guaranteed loss to the government. Capron also makes sure to note the importance of having laws in place to regulate how these private owners run industries since the government would not be directly tied to the operation of them, but would feel the impact of their productions as they were still part of the nation. Thus, Capron encouraged some government oversight in how private industry was to be handled, in this case suggesting a bureau of mines, but did not advise the government to operate the mines themselves.

Capron was far from the only one questioning how much of a role the government should play in this growing economy not just in Hokkaidō, but in Japan as a whole, as the new Meiji government was concerned about the same subject. To provide some background, industrial

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[76] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 42.

development in Japan had started before Perry's expedition, introduced by the Dutch who still had limited access to trade in Japan at the port of Nagasaki. The Tokugawa government, interested in these "Dutch studies" due to the perceived threat of foreign encroachment and the need for armaments to defend itself, pushed for the construction of ore refineries and other such industrial feats. This, combined with the lack of an experienced capitalist sector in Japanese society, resulted in this industrial development being solely under government control.[77] With the fall of the Tokugawa shogunate and the rise of the Meiji state in its place, the new government inherited these government enterprises, hiring foreigners in these industries with the intent that they would train Japanese personnel who would eventually take the place of foreigners in the operation of these industries.[78]

While the Japanese economy remained in a good position in the first few years after establishing trade relations with the West, it took a downturn after the Meiji Restoration as silk exports declined due to the restoration of sericulture in Europe, and imports rapidly increased as the Japanese became more familiar with the cheaper Western goods. Forced to issue paper currency due to the drop in specie caused by these exports, state revenue continued to drop due to land tax being a constant figure, which increased the purchasing power of the people and only encouraged even more imports.[79] This change in consumption habits destroyed the domestic handicraft industry, which served as a supplement to agricultural income, especially after the division and private ownership of common lands made farmers more reliant on cash income due to a loss in self-sufficiency. The government intended to use industry to create competition that

[77] Thomas C. Smith, *Political Change and Industrial Development in Japan: Government Enterprise, 1868-1880* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 1-4.
[78] Smith, *Political Change*, 12.
[79] Smith, *Political Change*, 23-25.

would drive out foreign imports and bring relief to the peasantry through the creation of markets and employment.[80] When the Meiji government commuted samurai stipends into bonds, there was hope that it would put enough capital in their hands to invest profitably in industry. However, due to the samurais' lack of experience in business and the weakening Japanese economy, their dire economic situation continued to increase, and the only solution seemed to be government expansion of the economy through industrial expansion.[81]

The Meiji government opted for government control of industrial fields, but that is not to say they were not open to private investment or did not attempt to encourage it. Merchant families, who owned large amounts of wealth, were initially reluctant to invest in industry due to the scale required for investments in industries such as railroads and shipbuilding, and high interest rates channeled capital into speculative fields where profit was quickly made, rather than long-term investments that did not promise initially high yields due to foreign competition. Transport was also an issue, as without railways it tended to be slow, uncertain, and expensive. With factories cut off from raw materials due to this lack of cheap and efficient transport, building factories was discouraged. Technological problems stemming from ignorance of how to properly operate machinery and enter this expanded line of business were also an issue, making investors hesitant to step into industrial fields without government guidance.[82]

To connect back to Capron, an example to show the merits of both government and private ownership of industry comes from the ore mining industry, one of the few industries where private ownership was the majority. Private mines, while numbering over 2,000 total, only produced around 1,600 yen worth of ore each in 1881, totaling almost 3.5 million yen. In

[80] Smith, *Political Change*, 26-31.
[81] Smith, *Political Change*, 32-35.
[82] Smith, *Political Change*, 36-41.

comparison, the nine government mines in operation, focusing on specie mining rather than the coal that the private sector focused on, brought in about half the value the private mines did, a considerable increase considering the difference in the number of mines. The difference in the two stemmed from the lack of mechanization in the majority of the private mines, while government mines had the aid of more advanced machinery and employed foreign experts for aid, which would be a very expensive investment for the capital-poor private investors.[83] While the Meiji government may have planned to turn industry in a more private direction as Capron suggested, the alternate route of government ownership was much easier to achieve due to the above combination of political, social, and economic factors that severely stunted private industrial growth in this period.

Rather than entirely rejecting the government's role in the creation of Hokkaidō's economy, Capron actually encouraged the government to play a role in the form of giving aid to the settlers. In a letter to Kuroda dated June 28, 1874, Capron states that he believed that liberally distributing seeds, fruit trees, and livestock, all of which the Kaitakushi had at the farms in Tōkyō, would encourage and enable these new farm settlements to start producing. He continues by stating how at this point there was no market for the farmers to produce a surplus for, which meant there would be no incentive to produce anything more than what sustained them due to the perishable nature of produce.[84] With the introduction of the aforementioned aid that Capron suggested, however, he claims that:

> …you will soon see a different state of things, both in the appearance and character of the country and the people. These things may not be fully appreciated at the present moment, but

[83] Smith, *Political Change*, 45-47.
[84] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 246.

> the time is fast approaching when they will be, and then those who may now profit by this advice and follow it up, will begin to find themselves in possession of unexpected wealth and surrounded with comforts.[85]

Liberal government aid would give settlers the resources necessary to generate a market through the reproduction of these valuable resources that were provided to them, which in turn would generate wealth and comforts that added to the overall wealth of the nation. Once again this could be connected back to Capron's idea of replacing rice production with other grains, as he pushed for a shift in production to what he believed would generate the most wealth, which might not happen if the government did not provide enough aid to get commerce moving.

To further aid in the settlement of Japanese immigrants to the island, Capron also suggests the immigration of certain foreigners. In the first yearly report, Capron states that:

> The changes necessary in the habits and food of the emigrant from the milder climate of Nippon to Yesso must necessarily be slow. In no way, it seems to me, could it be better facilitated than by the introduction of a certain foreign population accustomed to the more rigorous climates of Europe and America, who can teach the native immigrant by example, the methods of best meeting and overcoming the difficulties of his new situation.[86]

This foreign population, rather than settling the island in a similar fashion to the Japanese, would be there to aid in the education of the immigrants. Capron suggests that certain American or European populations who lived in and were used to similar climates would have knowledge of

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[85] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 246.
[86] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 48.

how to best develop the land, as the climate on the Japanese main island Honshu differed quite drastically from that in Hokkaidō. With the knowledge of how to properly tend to the land in a new climate, the settlers would have an easier time adjusting to the production needed for this developing market.

Capron also recommends education in the usage of tools and machines, which would aid in the agricultural pursuits of the settlers. In the letter from July 25, 1873, Capron states that "The introduction of labor saving machinery, tools &c., can only be very gradually brought about. It is useless to put them into the hands of the Japanese without instructing them as to their uses and the way to use them, and this should be done by men skilled in the working of these various tools."[87] He connects this to his own experiences in Tōkyō, teaching the Japanese who lived there how to use various agricultural implements. The result of his efforts is that:

> Once seeing them operate, and understanding the natural advantages of such machines, the ingenious Japanese mechanic at once sets himself to work to manufacture them, as was the case at the farms at Tokio, and I have been amazed at their success in producing machines and tools as good in every respect as the imported sample, and this done without the aid of machinery, in their rude way of working. This is a double benefit to the country; it not only augments the farmers' muscles, but opens a new field of labor for the mechanic.[88]

[87] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 67.
[88] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 67.

Understanding how the machines worked would open up the field for the domestic manufacture of similar tools, creating new jobs, such as the mechanic, and aiding in the development of an industrial economy as well as an agricultural economy.

The education and manufacture of machines in Japan would also pave the way for a revolution in the labor system and the political economy of the country, which Capron viewed as inevitable. In the first annual report, he discusses how the introduction of machinery enhanced the value of human labor. If human labor remained the cheapest form of labor, he believed there could not be any advancement as he viewed the wealth of a country to be proportionate to its aggregate labor. He concludes by stating how in the progression of commerce, "higher civilizations" would require that manual labor be supplemented by such machines, and that the Department's work was thus both of local and national significance.[89] According to Capron, with the introduction of machines, goods would become easier to produce, making them more affordable and more accessible. If goods were cheap, especially those that were necessary like food, it would increase the wealth of the people and they could then put their money towards more expensive luxury goods. Workers could also become more specialized, focusing on certain parts of production while machines aided in other parts, increasing the value of certain kinds of labor. This mechanization was inevitable in Hokkaidō as it is in the rest of Japan, because there was this push from the more "civilized" countries for development. It would aid in a nation becoming "civilized" because it would aid in the production of capital and the development of a market, which formed the basis of what "civilization" was in the eyes of the West.

[89] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 49-50.

In Capron's letter to Kuroda dated September 29, 1874, he makes a passing comment about the Ainu that really highlights the connection between "civilization" and production for a market. He states:

> The Aino, however, possesses more amiable and attractive traits of character than the Indian, and greater capacity to appreciate the advantages of a higher civilization. But in the one case, as in the other, fondness for the chase and for an exciting and almost irresponsible life, with a corresponding distaste for steady and industrious application, vis a vis inertia which years of earnest endeavor may not overcome.[90]

While Capron believed that the Ainu could appreciate "civilization", he remained unsure due to this apparent distaste for industrious application. As in Pratt's description of South American colonization, "The maximizing, extractive paradigm of capitalism is presupposed, making a mystery of subsistence and non-accumulative lifeways."[91] Capron did not believe the Ainu could live up to this extractive capitalist vision, so he viewed them as incomplete and unable to achieve full "civilization" through industry and commerce. This connects back to the conclusion drawn in the prior chapter. Since Capron did not believe they could live up to this capitalist vision of land development for extraction and profit, they were considered to be "uncivilized" and were placed lower on the racial hierarchy of the West.

However, Capron notes that the Ainu did have certain traits that could bring them closer to "civilization", although he does not explicitly state what these traits are. These traits led Capron to suggest that there might yet be a chance for the Ainu to become "civilized" with the insertion of Americans and the currently "civilizing" and Westernizing Japan into their futures.

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[90] Capron, *Reports and Letters*, 267.
[91] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 151.

With Capron's emphasis throughout the documents on how settlement is essential for land development, he does not seem to indicate the need for Ainu labor would be necessary for land development, instead achieving it through the introduction of an outside population such as the Japanese. The Ainu could be "civilized", it seems, through encouraging the development of the land for profit under Western guidance, just as the Japanese were experiencing at this point. However, if the Ainu could not live up to this extractive vision of economic development and market engagement that Japan was then pushing for, who could say what would happen.

Chapter III:

The Iwakura Embassy

As the Japanese government was hiring foreigners to travel to Japan, it was also sending its own people abroad to get a close-up view of how other established nations operated. The same year that Capron arrived in Japan, the Iwakura Embassy departed from Yokohama in December 1871 on a nearly two-year trip that would take them across the United States and throughout Europe. The aims of the Embassy consisted of the ritual act of presenting gifts to the sovereigns of the nations visited, negotiating revisions to the treaties that opened trading ports to the West in Japan, and studying what modern "civilization" looked like in Western countries, with the intent of selecting models on which Japan could base its own modern development.[92] The details of the Embassy's travels were written and compiled by Kume Kunitake in a series of five volumes, the first of which centered on their time in the United States. Ambassador Iwakura Tomomi, understanding the significance of what the Embassy would encounter in the West for Japanese modernization, assigned Kume the task of recording and synthesizing everything the Embassy saw and did, and would always be in attendance of Iwakura. The Embassy arrived in San Francisco Bay on January 15, 1872, and would spend the next seven months traveling across the continent and visiting the major commercial and industrial cities of the East Coast of the United States.

Throughout their travels, the Embassy came into contact with many aspects of modern American life, but what Kume wrote of most was the aspects that made up commerce and economic development in the United States. The intent of this chapter is to analyze how closely

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[92] Akira Tanaka, introduction to *The Iwakura Embassy, 1871-1873: A True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary's Journey of Observation Through the United States of America and Europe.* Vol. 1, *The United States of America*, compiled by Kumi Kunitake, eds. Graham Healy and Chushichi Tsuzuki, trans. Martin Collcutt (Richmond: Curzon, 2002), xvi.

the Embassy's perspective on these aspects—divided into sections consisting of religion and morality, education and labor, and transportation—relate to Capron's perspective as seen in the prior chapters, as well as how it is perceived that these aspects connect to each other to promote economic development and the creation of "civilization".

Religion and Morality

One of the first aspects of economic development, although one of the last that Kume wrote about in the first volume, is religion and how it formed the basis of morality in the United States. During the Embassy's stay in New York City, they visited the Bible Society, which led to Kume writing about how such societies made the Bible widely available, both in terms of them being cheap and being available in Braille, and how everyone owned a copy and that even businesses, prisons, and hospitals distributed them. On the mass promotion and publication of the Bible, Kume states that "*It is the people's veneration of God which lies behind their impulse to work hard. Moral behaviour is the basic element in maintaining order in society.* The enriching and strengthening of a country also arises from this."[93] Kume suggests that the importance of the Bible and Christianity was the moral structure that it provided, as it maintained order and promoted the strengthening of society. When a group of people were connected by similar morals, it could increase their trust in one another and encourage cooperation. On the reaction to the lack of acceptance towards Christianity in the East, Kume states:

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[93] Kunitake Kume*, The Iwakura Embassy, 1871-1873: A True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary's Journey of Observation Through the United States of America and Europe*, vol. 1, *The United States of America*, eds. Graham Healy and Chushichi Tsuzuki, trans. Martin Collcutt (Richmond: Curzon, 2002), 364.

*In the original Japanese text, Kume used small circles to draw attention to key sentences. The translation I use indicates this emphasis by use of italics, so the italics present in this quote and any that follow from this text are in the original text.

> Yet Westerners think it is strange that people in the East have not accepted Christianity, and even rational people well-versed in world affairs urged us to display these images. What is their intention? *Western people are sincere in worshipping God and practising morality. They work hard and strive to co-operate with one another. The root of this co-operation is to be found here [in worshipping God].*[94]

The spread and encouragement of Christianity was a symbol of cooperation. With the idea that, for example, the Japanese could have the same moral beliefs as them, it would create a sense of comfort and trust between the two groups. With this trust in place, it would create a moral basis for commerce to occur, as you would be more likely to trade with someone whom you trusted to give you your money's worth than someone who you had less trust in.

This trust that a person's moral behaviors would maintain order would also indicate that they would respect the law, which was another means of maintaining order. In regards to the Western view of a person's character, Kume writes:

> …when people talk about a nation and the character of its people, they always discuss religion. When a foreigner comes to their country, they always ask what religion he observes and what god he worships. When they meet someone who professes no faith, they think of him as a lost soul or a heathen from the wilderness… They tend to think that a person who does not follow a religion will not respect the law.[95]

A lack of religious belief could indicate a lack of a moral structure to Westerners, and since morals created order, there would be concern that a person who had no faith would not respect the order or laws of society. Connecting to the prior passage, this lack of moral structure would also indicate a lack of willingness to cooperate, and therefore a lack of trust between parties,

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[94] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:365.
[95] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:364.

which could have consequences on any attempted commerce, or discourage it altogether. What also stands out in this passage is the comparison of someone without faith to a "heathen from the wilderness." This indicates that there was some connection between lack of faith and the natural world, the very thing that was supposed to be dominated in the development of "civilization". Now, if this is connected back to Capron's description of the Ainu as "untutored and unchristianized," we can further understand why Capron would make note of this. Both the Ainu and the indigenous Americans were seen as part of the natural world both because of their lack of religion—or at least, the Christian faith—and their inability to exploit nature for profit as described by Pratt. Spreading Christianity was a means of indoctrinating people into the capitalist mindset, allowing people to trust each other and follow laws due to its moral structure, which in turn would lead to the exploitation of natural resources in the name of developing commerce. The Embassy, however, was not equating Christianity to "civilization". Rather, it was a matter of moral structure that created "civilization", as indicated by the prior quote noting the sincerity in the worship of the Westerners. The root of their cooperation was in the worship of God, but that worship was encouraged through the practice of good morals.

In order for religion and morals to spread, it was important for people to be educated. When writing about American education, Kume claims that "American gentlemen are all devoutly religious and build elementary schools in large numbers. They place a low priority on higher education and put their effort into universal [elementary] education."[96] As for the reason such an emphasis was placed on universal education, Kume states:

> Vagrants and hired labourers are stubborn and ignorant, and as a result it is necessary to make them respect God to encourage good character. In imparting to them the benefits of

[96] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:160-161.

> learning, they start with the essentials of language, arithmetic and physics. They then have the basic skills they need to make a living. They give them rules, set them tasks, supervise them strictly, reward honesty and punish untrustworthiness, and lead them in the production [of goods]. These are the means by which they ensure that the people are of one mind, nurture the sources of wealth, and thereby build up the nation.[97]

First and foremost, it would be important to instill a belief in and respect for God, as it was faith in religion that created good morals, and thus good character in people. Morals were enforced by the establishment of rules and tasks, as well as rewarding honesty, which was a sign of good morals, and punishing untrustworthiness, which was the opposite. This religious and practical education was, as Kume states, designed to help people make a living. A dedication to God would encourage hard work, and combined with being moral and trustworthy, this education would be a means of preparing people to dedicate themselves to their labor. Also, in learning how to read, it would encourage the consumption of the Bible as a means of developing one's moral structure.

In comparison, Kume remarks how in the East, only some of the well-educated were able to understand Confucian texts, which served as the basis for morals in the East, with others only learning bits and pieces that had been emphasized by the government and the law. Kume goes on to state that "It is fair to say that nobody, past or present, has actually put them fully into practise. This is because, owing to political privileges and economic advantages, the sense of propriety has been lost while moral standards changed along with current politics."[98] Rather than morals dictating laws and politics, laws and politics dictated morals. Connecting to the influence of religious dedication on education, Kume writes how the upper classes of society dedicated

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[97] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:161.
[98] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:365-366.

themselves to trivial pursuits rather than making a living, and the middle class lacked a steadfastness of purpose that would have enabled them to engage in business. Due to these two factors, the lower classes were just barely existing, but were not respected as people.[99] With education only being accessible to the elite upper classes of Japanese society, they were the only ones who could access these morals-defining texts, and what could be consumed by the lower classes was based on what the economically and politically privileged would explain to them. The effect of a lack of stable morals that were easily accessible denied the people the development of cooperation found in the West, and without extensive commerce the boundaries of class were impenetrable, preventing the lower classes from increasing their quality of life and earning respect as humans. Rather than education being a moral basis for Christianity, it appears that the Embassy was rather viewing it as a moral basis for "civilization", which I noted previously did not require Christianity in the Embassy's point of view.

Education and Labor

The creation of a labor force and the education of that labor force were crucial aspects of economic development as seen in Kume's writings. In his overview of the United States, Kume claims that one could not see a country's level of "civilization" based only on arable farming and animal husbandry, as "the southern barbarians cultivated land and ate [the produce], and the northern barbarians, too, bred animals and killed them [for food]. To be born and to eat, to eat and to die, if that is all [there is to life], then it is done by beasts in the depths of the forest."[100] He continues, stating that "As people acquired knowledge and became civilized, they sought convenience and comfort; this gave rise to industry, and manufacturing flourished. In ancient

[99] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:161.
[100] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:49.

times, the barbarians of Scandinavia (what is now Sweden and Norway) used stones for blades. This is also the case with the Indians of America now."[101] Education, it appears, could cause a shift from "barbarian" to "civilized". With education, people were given the opportunity to make their lives more comfortable and convenient through industrial developments. The "barbarians" to the north and south of Japan, as well as the indigenous peoples of America, were lacking in industrial development because they were uneducated, as Europeans were in ancient times. This relates to Capron's emphasis on the importance of technological development, indicating that it would also increase the levels of comfort and convenience in the lives of the population. To pursue technological development would first require the Japanese to pursue education, which would carry with it a variety of effects.

The means and purposes of education come up when Kume discusses the differences in customs between the East and West. In the culture of the West, social activities were very important, which led to the establishment of places such as public parks. Botanical and zoological gardens in particular are highlighted by Kume, as "In the West, they are intended to attract people's eyes and ears so they can actually see things for themselves and discriminate, in order to promote industry and to promulgate knowledge and learning. Such projects are expensive, but the cost is not a worry because eventually there is great profit [to society]."[102] Experience, it seems, was the best form of education. Not only could such experiences allow the viewer to observe and think about what they were seeing, it was also an accessible form of education as it would only require the viewer to see what was being shown, without the blockade of needing to be literate, and could serve as a means of encouraging people to become more educated about something that interests them, expanding their field of knowledge. To explain the

[101] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:49.
[102] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:69.

last sentence in the quote about the cost of such projects, Kume further states that "The citizens of those cities generously support the costs. Their profit lies in the fact that they promote the material sciences and encourage the discovery of advances in agriculture, industry and commerce. They serve, therefore, as a means to promote national wealth."[103] The benefits would outweigh the costs, as encouraging education in this manner had the chance to lead someone down the path of discovering the next invention that could revolutionize agriculture, industry, and commerce. If such an invention were to increase the rate of production, the Embassy believed it would ultimately serve to increase the economic returns of production, and with more money in the economy, the wealth of the entire nation would be affected. In comparison, the people of the East focused on the abstract rather than the material, which hindered the development of machines that could be used to aid in production and develop the Japanese economy, and could increase the quality of life of the Japanese lower classes.

The potential to increase profits would make the encouragement of education a competition among the wealthy. On the subject of printing, Kume states that:

> In the United States, since Washington was established, books have been far cheaper than in other countries, both because people understood the enormous benefits of printing to civilisation and because they competed to make printed materials inexpensive and readily available. Those benefits are evident throughout the country, enhancing general learning and scholarship.[104]

As indicated in the previous paragraph, a lack of literacy would be a hinderance to becoming educated. However, the ability to mass produce books that could be purchased for cheap would expand the economic access that people had to books, increasing literacy rates. With the

[103] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:70.
[104] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:229.

competition to make books even cheaper, it would further increase their availability to the general public. As in the case of the gardens, even if there might had been a significant cost to such an undertaking, it would ultimately be repaid by increasing scholarship in the country. This would increase the ability for both the printing company and the country to gain wealth and expand economically, and then "civilization" could advance.

However, what could further drive this development was human physical energy that would be funneled into labor. This physical energy, Kume believes, was the great treasure of the world, and even if there was enough cash to fund economic development, what mattered was if there was a population to provide this physical energy. An example Kume points to is the land between California and Nevada, as while there was enough cash to develop the land, it remained vacant due to the lack of sufficient population willing to develop it. Even at the time of him writing there was still a shortage that left much of the land in the western United States undeveloped. Even with the construction of railroads to facilitate domestic immigration westwards, foreign immigration was necessary to increase the energy output needed, as well as the use of child labor taken from the cities and slave labor brought to America from Africa.[105] Without the labor required to put land and economic development into effect, a country and its people could not experience an increase in wealth.

Kume compares the lack of labor power in the United States to Japan, which had a similar population number but was much smaller in size and amount of land to develop. Despite the small size of Japan, Kume states that:

> …there are profits in its paddy-fields and treasures in its mountains. Why is it then that Japan is not free from distinctions between the upper and lower classes, between the rich

[105] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:160.

> and the poor? This is because uneducated people are hard to employ, untrained people are useless and enterprise without organisation is ineffective. Even though manpower is abundant in Japan, if we want to show how productive our population can be, it is not enough to sit back and indulge in wishful thinking [about our future].[106]

Japan, to Kume, clearly had the ability to utilize its natural resources and develop agriculture, which could generate a large profit and expand the wealth of all the Japanese, but the extreme class distinctions remained. Education, in his eyes, was the key to making the population productive, rather than engaging primarily in abstract trains of thought as noted previously. Education would lead to the ability to provide labor, which would allow the lower class to improve their position in society through the generation of income, and then Japan would be able to prosper as the United States and European countries do. Capron in comparison was of the mindset that infrastructure, which would lead to settlement, would encourage development that would enable the country to prosper. Rather than focus on general education for labor as the Embassy did, Capron was more focused on encouraging higher education that would expand the ability of settlers to develop the land in a way that would most efficiently generate profit.

Education could also serve the purpose of instilling patriotism in a nation's population. Kume explains that when a nation established its independence, it created a spirit of patriotism among the people who lived there, and people naturally loved the land they were born on. He continues:

> Therefore, the patriotic mind naturally gives rise to humane feelings and becomes a source of loyalty. When the people of Europe and America talk about civilisation, it is based on patriotism. Any person who forgets himself, abandons his house, turns his back

[106] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:160.

> on his home village and despises his own country is not only ignorant of Confucian principles but has also failed to grasp Western civilisation. European and American citizens are taught their national history first in order to encourage patriotism.[107]

The teaching of natural history first would serve as an introduction to the land on which they lived, and in loving that land, the people would become patriotic and loyal to the nation. This was key because, if a person were devoted to their nation, they would want to do what was best for it. What was best for the nation, as has been discussed in this section, was working to increase the economic wealth of the nation. Rather than solely using the land to produce what was needed for subsistence, this patriotism would urge the citizens of the nation to educate and better themselves in the name of making the country, as well as its people, all the richer by producing instead for the market, which would further enhance the position of the individual.

Just as there could be competition to make education accessible, there could also be competition to make labor cheap. In pursuit of cheap labor, for centuries European nations participated in the capture of slaves in Africa. Early in the establishing of the United States, the idea of abolishing slavery was brought up, but due to how deep it ran in America, the initial plan was to only impose an import tax as a means of limiting the amount of slaves brought into the country. However, Kume notes that:

> Around 1790… an American named [Eli] Whitney invented the cotton-gin, a machine to separate the cotton fibres from the seeds, and this encouraged cotton-planting [and production] in the southern states. Southerners developed their plantations by making ever greater use of slaves for planting and picking cotton. English industrialists, using steam-driven looms, expanded cloth manufacture with greater profit.[108]

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[107] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:311-312.
[108] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:217-218.

With part of the cotton-growing process becoming automated by machinery, there was a new economic pressure to producing cotton, which was now easier than ever. It facilitated a need for cheap labor that would make the most of this newfound profit, so the importation of slave labor was unphased by import taxes. Further, this instance displays the global effect of this development, as English industrialists, who bought raw cotton to manufacture cotton goods, were able to increase their own production and profits due to an increase in accessible materials.

To protect these newfound profits, "they [plantation owners and industrialists] tightened the bonds of slavery and argued that black slaves were provided for labour and were 'base people', hereditarily inferior as human beings, and that the treatment hitherto meted out to them was justifiable."[109] Kume perceives the construction of racial hierarchies in action. He suggests there was no scientific backing to the creation of these hierarchies. Rather, he sees that they were being constructed as a means of creating cheap labor that could increase the wealth of those that had been self-assigned a position at the very top of the hierarchy—the white Anglo-Saxons in America and Britain who were profiting from the cheap labor.

Transportation

Transport, once again, would allow for commerce to flow efficiently and cheaply between locations. The primary forms of transport that Kume hones in on were overland transport—using railroads and roads—and sea transport—using ships and ports—with both having different primary uses. This parallels Capron, who also focused on the development of both forms of transport to encourage development of the land and the growth of commerce. On the importance of overland transport, Kume states about roads that "We realised that developing

[109] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:218.

a city is like opening up the wilderness. If the local government provides the convenience of roads, then people will naturally come and settle. On the contrary, if roads are neglected, people soon lose their livelihoods and want to leave."[110] Roads were an important part of economic development because they would give people an easy means of moving to and settling a tract of land without the need for the government to forcibly move them there. Capron shared much of the same sentiment, that if roads were constructed and maintained, people would naturally be attracted to the land. Kume also makes a similar statement on railroads, remarking that "Not so much as the shadow of a flying bird darkens the landscape, yet in this empty, desolate place railway tracks were laid early on, as a preliminary stage for opening up the land, and in time the railway encouraged further economic development."[111] Once again, implementing efficient means of transport could attract people who would want to develop the land, which would add to economic development both at the local level and the national level.

The cost of land was also influenced by the addition of means of transportation to an area. When asking a Californian representative of the state government about land claim procedures, the Embassy was informed that "land conveniently located near a railroad or transportation centre is generally sold for $1.50 per acre. Land farther away from the railroad and less conveniently situated is $1.00 per acre. Remote land is given away for nothing to those who are willing to settle on it and develop it."[112] As land closer to transportation routes would have an easier time accessing markets, the higher price would give higher incentive to produce more in order to pay it off. Remote land being free, on the other hand, would increase accessibility to those who may not have been as wealthy as someone who would purchase land closer to

[110] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:91.
[111] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:155.
[112] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:186.

transportation, and if that remote land were to be sufficiently developed it would create a reason for transportation routes to be expanded upon, and would increase the economic range of the remote farmer.

While overland transport, at least in the case of the United States, tended to cater only to domestic commerce, water transport had a more global economic impact. In his observations of San Francisco, Kume makes note of the facilities required for commerce to occur and develop. An example is the emergence of maritime insurance companies, which allowed for shipment of goods across the ocean to occur without the risk of loss.[113] Without this risk, people would be more likely to ship goods overseas, which could increase the amount of global commerce that occurred and contribute to economic development on a global scale. The economic state of Japan at this point contrasted with the West, as without the various trading facilities of the West, transportation costs were higher for a few hundred miles in Japan than a few thousand miles in the West, and the produce rotted before it could even reach a market. The key issue Kume identifies is that "We do not recognise the main benefit of commerce *as a medium for buying and selling among people, moving goods to places where they have value*."[114] Without this view of commerce and why it was extremely important for development of transportation and economic facilities to occur, Japan could not compete on a national, let alone global scale, and would remain stagnant and unable to progress towards "higher civilization".

However, if Japan were able to break out of this situation and push for economic development, the prosperity of Japan would be greatly influenced. When one trading center existed, Kume explains, it would always have a counterpart city that responded to it and stimulated it, which would provide both an outlet for exports and a means of acquiring imports.

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[113] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:89.
[114] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:90.

San Francisco, despite the level of trade that it experienced in its position as an important port city between the East and West, was still reliant on imports since production was expensive due to the high price of labor caused by a lack of population. Japan was in the opposite situation, having many natural resources and a large population to extract them, resulting in low labor costs. Kume states that "The purpose of trade lies exactly here. If commodities are imported from the East and sold in San Francisco, prices will level out and both exporters and buyers will profit."[115] San Francisco would provide a means for Japan to put its foot in the door and start developing economically through the influence of the global market and its needs. With the development of transport in Japan, both on the land and on the water, economic development would be able to occur on a local, national, and global scale.

Economic Development, Wealth Accumulation, and "Civilization"

It was through economic development that wealth would accumulate in the West, with wealth being put towards any aspect of development with the idea that it would be further developed and further increase the wealth of the nation and the individual. While the importance of labor in this structure was already covered in this chapter, there is an example that Kume uses that really cements this idea, and that is the hiring of cheap labor in the form of Chinese coolies. Providing cheap labor in comparison to white labor in San Francisco, the hiring of the Chinese laborers provided economic relief in the city, which would allow the wealth of capitalists to be put toward economic development. When demands were made by white laborers to expel the Chinese, the potential for business problems for the capitalists in the city took priority, and nothing was done about the issue. With this background, Kume makes a very striking statement,

[115] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:95.

remarking that "*In the West every edict and law is principally directed towards watching and protecting the life and property of the people. Therefore [the adoption of] a measure, though clearly justified by circumstances, cannot be caried out lightly.* This is how wealth and strength have been preserved in the West."[116] The laws protecting the right to property went unchallenged, in large part possibly due to the moral structure imposed by Christianity, which was considered very important in the West as discussed previously. Racial hierarchies also contributed to this wealth preservation, as they were used to justify the idea of cheap labor, which kept wealth from being distributed to those deemed "uncivilized."

This wealth accumulation presented itself in the ownership and development of land. While the land itself was cheap, establishing the ownership of that land by building fences—designating private property that was protected by the law—was what ran up the costs of developing land. Not only that, but the hiring of labor to work the land would further increase expenses. Kume explains how, because of these high costs, "farmers must have some personal savings or a family fortune; and they must know what they are doing. The only way to make a profit is to reduce costs by cutting the number of employees and using farm machinery."[117] This was wealth preservation at work, as acquiring and maintaining land required wealth to already exist in the farmers life, which could accumulate further by mechanizing the agricultural process. The dominance and ownership of the natural world, which "uncivilized" peoples were seen as being a part of, allowed for the extraction of the land's natural resources, which contributed to a growing economy and the accumulation and preservation of wealth. These ideas of dominance and extraction made up the divide between what was considered "civilized" and "uncivilized."

[116] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:104.
[117] Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, 1:187.

In Capron's texts, he observes the progression of Hokkaidō and Japan's political economies primarily through the introduction of technology and infrastructure that would enable the development of transportation to occur. Through these technological developments, as well as the introduction of liberal policies for settlement, the settlement of Hokkaidō would occur naturally. The result of this settlement would be the development of a market through the efforts of individuals in extracting the natural resources of the island to make a profit. While the Embassy also believed in the importance of transportation for development, they emphasized the importance of education and morals in the construction of a political economy. They saw that morals, which in the West were reinforced by Christian beliefs, allowed for the cooperation and trust between parties that enabled commerce to occur. The Embassy also viewed general education as a means of encouraging development on a broader scale through the general public, who could then use the knowledge they gained to increase their economic status through a variety of occupations, specializing where they liked. While Capron did briefly cover the topics of religion and education, he was more focused on higher education specifically designed for agricultural development. In regards to religion, he only briefly indicates the importance of Christianity in the making of "civilization", but is not as impactful as the technological aspect of development. Both the Capron and the Embassy were after the same goal of modernizing and developing Japan to make it more "civilized", but they placed emphasis on different aspects of how they determined "civilization" and the path Japan's modernization would take.

Conclusion:

Economic Development and the Colonization of Hokkaidō

Following the establishment of relations between the United States and Japan, foreign advisors from the United States and Japanese ambassadors sent to the United States were influenced by American views of racial hierarchies and land development, ultimately aiding in further development of settler colonialism in Hokkaidō. The foundations of Western racial hierarchies were established by analyzing parts of Horace Capron's memoirs, where he associates levels of "civilization" with how much a people have developed the land for commerce. Then, looking at documents written by Capron and his team, we perceive their views on the important aspects of land development, and how they believed these aspects could contribute to economic development on a local, national, and global scale. Finally, through looking at the reports of the Iwakura Embassy from its time in the United States, I discuss how Japanese ideas of racial hierarchies and land development compare and contrast those of the Americans. In the end, both sides believed racial hierarchies and land development were connected to economic development and the accumulation and preservation of wealth, which they associated with "civilization".

However, a key piece of the equation still needs to be discussed. In the modernization and development of Japan, where did the Ainu stand in this development project? How were they impacted by this push for modernization? Throughout the lifespan of the Kaitakushi and in the years that follow its abandonment in 1882, the Ainu were further "othered" as Hokkaidō's economic strength grew. Multiple land regulations were put into place which converted Ainu territory into privately owned land that the Ainu actually aided in surveying since it was something they were accustomed to. There were attempts at developing self-sufficiency in the

Ainu lands through agriculture, but as agricultural labor was still largely seen as women's labor to the Ainu, very few actually engaged with it.[118] Many communities were combined in order to make room for Japanese immigrants to develop agriculture. The identity of the Ainu was further eroded as they were registered as official citizens of Japan, despite the fact they were still seen as separate from the Japanese population due to their long history of exploitation stemming from linguistic differences between the Japanese and the Ainu. This separation was signified in both the creation of the aforementioned collective Ainu villages, as well as the separation of Japanese and Ainu population records in the government.[119] While Ainu labor for years had been central to exploitation of Hokkaidō's resources, this source of labor became irrelevant when immigration from the mainland increased in the early twentieth century and the island became an established place of commerce, and labor for resource extraction was replaced by that of convicts.[120]

The research of this paper points to how the vision for economic development in Hokkaidō was achieved through the transfer of ideas relating to development of the land and resources for market access. This resulted in the marginalization of the Ainu through the destruction of their agency and categorization as "uncivilized" by those who were deemed "civilized" from their ability to exploit the land in pursuit of wealth accumulation, prioritizing the act of economic development over the welfare of Hokkaidō's indigenous population. However, Capron remained ambivalent about where the Ainu stood as a "civilized" people, acknowledging the dominance of settler-colonialism over indigenous populations, but still

[118] Richard Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan* (London: Routledge, 1996), 56-57.
[119] Siddle, 62-65.
[120] Siddle, 68.

displaying tensions within the bigger picture of spreading “civilization” due to the many bad traits that accompanied it.

On a much broader scale, this research shows how Western ideas have been transferred around the world and how they have impacted the places they reach, and how, in the end, the concepts of race and development were used as a means of expanding the West’s economic power and ensuring continued American dominance across the globe. The beliefs of the Japanese and Americans converged and diverged on many topics. An example of this is the idea of state intervention in the development of the economy, with both Americans and Japanese having similar ideas about the subject, but ultimately ending at different points. Both sides believed that development should have been primarily left to private individuals, as advocated for by Capron through a liberal approach to economic development. Yet, the Meiji government took a state-backed approach to economic development due to pre-existing economic and social factors that made a private approach to development nearly impossible to implement immediately. The Western private approach was still attempted on multiple occasions, showing the dominance of this idea over a state-back approach, but it was not standardized during this period in Japanese history.

If I were to expand upon this research, one direction I would go in would be looking at travelogues to see what in them is consistent with Capron’s thoughts. I had initially planned to use such sources in this paper, but I decided to focus on the roles of government agents who had direct lines to government leadership, which made them the most important figures in this modernization process as they had the greatest potential for impacting how development happened. I also think it would be interesting to compare Ainu-Japanese relations before and after the settlement of Hokkaidō by the Japanese, further looking at how Ainu lifeways changed

with the introduction of Western settler-colonialism. Finally, I am also curious about the similarities between how indigenous Americans experienced settler-colonialism and how the Ainu experienced it.

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