

The background of the cover is a vibrant, multi-colored marbled paper. The colors include shades of orange, yellow, blue, green, and purple, swirling together in a fluid, organic pattern. A dark grey rectangular box is centered on the page, containing the title and volume information in white text.

Rice Historical Review

**Vol. 9
2024**



**Rice
Historical
Review**

**Vol. 9
2024**

About Us

The Rice Historical Review is a student-run, open access journal published online and in print. It features outstanding historically focused papers written by Rice undergraduates. All Rice undergraduates, regardless of major, are welcome to submit their work to the journal.

With this journal, we seek to emphasize the diversity of study within Rice's History Department. We hope to foster discussion of historical topics on campus and in the greater Rice community.



www.ricehistoricalreview.org
Instagram: @RiceHistoricalReview
historicalreview@rice.edu
Rice Historical Review - MS 42,
Rice University, PO Box 1892 Houston, TX 77251-1892

Editorial Board

Rijuta Vallishayee

Co-Editor-in-Chief

Benji Wilton

Co-Editor-in-Chief

Ansh Rai

Managing Editor

Sean Weeks

Managing Editor

Hoang Nguyen

Co-Director of Publishing

Yumeng Zhao

Co-Director of Publishing

Abby Antinossi

Co-Director of Copyediting

Muyao Huang

Co-Director of Copyediting

Bryson Jun

Co-Director of Copyediting

Jack Madary

Co-Director of Copyediting

Megan Foreman

Director of Art

Daniela Bonscher

Co-Director of Podcasting

Bora Göbekli

Co-Director of Podcasting

Kennedi Macklin

Co-Director of Podcasting

Annie McKenzie

Co-Director of Podcasting

Rahul Santhanam

Co-Director of Podcasting

Sophia Govea

Co-Director of Outreach & Social Media

Will Grayer

Co-Director of Outreach & Social Media

Chris Shi

Co-Director of Outreach & Social Media

Hong Lin Tsai

Co-Director of Outreach & Social Media

Advisor

Dr. Fay Yarbrough

William Gaines Twyman Professor of History
Associate Dean, Faculty and Graduate Programs

ASPIRATIONS

Trees dig their roots into the ground to reach water. Birds flap their wings to venture to warmer lands. Humans build, destroy, travel, settle, compete, cooperate—not just to survive, but to realize the lives to which we aspire.

The course of history is driven by such aspirations. We act because we want. In the human endeavor to sustain life, sometimes our aspirations align; other times, they violently clash. Understanding history requires investigation of the aspirations that have led to action as well as inaction, repression as well as resistance. Only then can we achieve our present aspirations with prudence and perspective.

Hoang Nguyen
Co-Director of Publishing

Table of Contents

Letter From the Editors	2
Statement on Racial Justice	4
The Floyd Seyward Lear Prize	5
“I Want to Be a Living Loving Force”: Frances E. W. Harpers’s Black Suffragist Feminism Georgia Jensen	7
Mexican Typhus in the Bacteriological Age: Constructed Science, Medicine, and Practice Rodolfo Gutierrez	33
Pilgrimage to Medieval Jerusalem (1099-1187): Religious Imagination and Physical Reality Ally Godsil	63
Law or Politics: A Re-Examination of the Judicial Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws Kelly Liao	79
Acknowledgements	102

Letter From the Editors

In the fall of 2023, the editorial board of the Rice Historical Review began the process of preparing our ninth edition with the goal of furthering the future by promoting the past. The dynamic nature of Rice's campus is a testament to Rice students' commitment to furthering the future, both inside and outside of academics. From the reconstruction of the Academic Quad to the dynamism of Palestine-related activism on campus, this academic year has proved that Rice students are not passive witnesses to change on both the global and local scale. Rather, we seek to shape our world for the better. While we work towards the future, we also look towards the past, to the history of those who worked to better their own future and in the process shaped the world we live in today. The papers in this year's edition of the Rice Historical review truly capture the ambitions of historical actors to change the world around them. They take the reader from medieval times to the twentieth century, exploring the ambitions of our predecessors within the fields of social justice, medicine, religion, and law.

The winner of this year's prestigious Lear Prize is "I Want to Be a Living Loving Force: Frances E. W. Harper's Black Suffragist Feminism," by Georgia Jensen. Jensen analyzes Harper's literary and political writings to make sense of the changes in Harper's feminism throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, tracking the role of faith and the franchise in the debate on how to improve the lives of Black women. Next, Rodolpho Gutierrez-Garcia's paper "Mexican Typhus in the Bacteriological Age: Constructed Science, Medicine, and Practice" deconstructs the role of Mexico in typhus research and control to demonstrate the role of political, cultural, and economic inequities in determining the meaning of science and medicine. Through archeological records and narratives, Ally Godsil examines the relationship between space and the imagination, discussing how physical changes in the geography of Jerusalem altered both pilgrimage spirituality and practice in "Pilgrimage to Medieval Jerusalem (1099-1187): Religious Imagination and Physical Reality." Finally, in "Law or Politics: A Re-Examination of the Judicial Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws," Kelly Liao considers lower court enforcement of Chinese exclusion laws during the late-nineteenth century to contextualize the United States' emerging immigration regime and highlight the agency of Chinese immigrants in combating their exclusion in court.

As students of history, we believe that these papers have much to teach us about how to understand our present. From the courthouse to the hospital, the sites that our published authors examine are spaces where hopes clash, where ambitions play out, and where our predecessors truly made history. Through examining these sites, we can make sense of our present and understand how to better realize our hopes for a better future. This idea served as the inspiration for

this year's theme of the Rice Historical Review: aspirations. The editorial board of the Rice Historical Review has aspired throughout the academic year to put together our best publication yet. This year, our board was twenty members strong, the largest board in the history of the Review. Due to their hard work, we were able to continue our podcast series, Cast From the Past, and publish our first peer-reviewed book review on the Rice Historical Review website. We are grateful for the aspirations of previous boards and the support of the History department, as they are the foundation for our continued journey *ad astra per aspera*. Thanks to the foundations, aspirations, and determination of the editorial board, we are proud to present readers with the ninth edition of the Rice Historical Review. We truly hope that it testifies to the importance of understanding our past to further our future while highlighting the breadth and depth of historical research at Rice.

Rijuta Vallishayee & Benji Wilton
Co-Editors-in-Chief

Statement on Racial Justice

After a brief hiatus, we are excited to re-introduce the Racial Justice Team to our writers, readers, and editorial board. The Racial Justice Team was established in 2021 as a response to increased racial, religious, and gender discrimination in the United States and abroad. Its original purpose was to bring awareness to racial issues and developing research around this topic at Rice. By highlighting the work of campus initiatives like the Task Force on Slavery, Segregation, and Racial Injustice, the Racial Justice Team hoped to bring Rice University's past relationships with racial injustice to the forefront of campus discussions.

While we continue to encourage those who are affiliated with Rice to be aware of Rice's complicated past, this year, we are also encouraging our campus historians to uncover diverse perspectives outside of the hedges. In previous years, many of the articles published in our journal have taken a Eurocentric perspective. While these perspectives are informative and important, they often leave out the voices of marginalized populations that are equally, if not more, important to understanding history. When studying history, it is imperative that we go beyond the dominant narratives when picking which sources, topics, populations, countries, and time periods we read and write about.

The importance of diversity applies not only to the presentation of historical topics, but then to our own understandings of them. We want to encourage our readers to challenge their perspectives on how they approach history with potential biases. While the misrepresentation of history is an issue stemming from discrepancies in our educational system, it is also up to us to recognize these patterns. We encourage an individual reorienting of ourselves to be open-minded to learning new things, especially when it comes to relearning histories that we previously thought we knew.

In line with this year's theme of "Aspirations," we aspire to be inclusive of marginalized voices and topics, recognizing that there is always more to educate ourselves on. Drawing inspiration from our Lear Prize winner – "I Want to Be a Living Loving Force" – as well, we celebrate legacies advocacy for equality and nuanced understandings of historical events. Especially in our present moment, our Racial Justice Team furthermore highlights the dire importance of understanding our histories as students, as faculty, and as engaged citizens – in relation to our 2023-24 RHR publication and beyond.

Daniela Bonscher & Kennedi Macklin
Co-Directors of Podcasting
Racial Justice Team

The Floyd Seyward Lear Prize

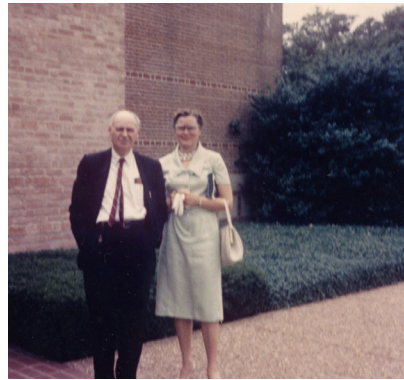
2024 Winner

“I Want to Be a Living Loving Force”:

Frances E. W. Harper’s Black Suffragist Feminism

Georgia Jensen

The Floyd Seyward Lear Prize for Best Essay is an annual prize awarded jointly by the *Rice Historical Review* (*RHR*) and the Rice University History Department for the best submitted article to the *RHR*. The award is in honor of Dr. Floyd Seyward Lear, who was a member of the faculty at the Rice Institute (later Rice University) in the Department of History from 1925 to 1975, the year of his death. He was Assistant Professor from 1927 to 1945, Professor in 1945, Harris Masterson Jr. Professor of History in 1953 (the first to hold this chair), and Trustee Distinguished Professor from 1965. He served as chairman of the Department of History from 1933 to 1960.



Dr. Floyd Seyward Lear (left) and Dr. Katherine Fischer Drew (right)

Source: Woodson Research Center

All papers submitted to the *Rice Historical Review* were automatically considered for this award. After submissions have been reviewed, nominated articles selected for consideration were reviewed by the *RHR* editorial board. Through consensus, the board narrowed down the pool to two nominees. The Department of History Undergraduate Studies Committee evaluated the final three candidates and decided the winning article. The author of the winning essay received a \$500 award.

This year, the History Department and *Rice Historical Review* Board have awarded the Lear Prize to Georgia Jensen, author of the “‘I Want to Be a Living Loving Force’: Frances E. W. Harper’s Black Suffragist Feminism.” This article argues that the human dignity of Black women in the United States was always at the core of Frances E. W. Harper’s literature and activism, insisting that Harper never regarded the vote alone as a sufficient mechanism to achieve black and female dignity or equality under the law, or to reduce racism in the nineteenth century.

The Rice Historical Review would like to thank Dr. Katherine Fischer Drew, Lynette S. Autry Professor Emeritus, for giving us the possibility to provide this scholarship.

Spring 2024

**Rice
Historical
Review**

**Vol. 9
2024**



“I Want to Be a Living Loving Force”:

Frances E. W. Harper’s Black Suffragist Feminism

Georgia Jensen

In the 1870s, Black female author and lecturer Frances Ellen Watkins Harper created a young Black character named Jenny to elucidate the overarching goal of her own work.¹ Jenny, freshly returned from college, excitedly tells her Aunt Jane, “I want to be a living loving force, not a mere intellectual force, eager about and excited only for my own welfare; but a moral and spiritual force. A woman who can and will do something for woman, especially for our own women because they will need me most.”² Like Jenny, Harper sought to improve the lives of Black women socially, politically, and spiritually; a fact evident in her lifelong suffragist work.

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper is known as a nineteenth-century abolitionist and prolific Black female writer and lecturer. Research has focused on her role as a Black literary and antislavery figure. However, her decades of involvement in the women’s suffrage movement and her writings on the Black vote are neglected by historians. Instead, historians of suffrage focus on her 1869 endorsement of the Fifteenth Amendment, which provided Black men the fran-

1. From around 1873 to 1874, Harper wrote a series of fictional dialogues, published through the *Christian Recorder*, entitled “Fancy Etchings” or “Fancy Sketches.” They featured conversations between a young Black girl named Jenny and her Aunt Jane, who advised Jenny on her hopes of improving social and political conditions for Black men and women. The character of Jenny was likely intended to explain the motives behind Harper’s own activism and as a role model for young Black women to aspire to.

2. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “Fancy Etchings,” *Christian Recorder*, February 20, 1873, in *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin, 2020.

chise before women. This paper explores Harper's understanding of the value that the vote carried and asks whether her understanding changed over time. I examine the trajectory of Harper's participation in the suffrage movements, both for African Americans and all women, by analyzing her writings and lectures throughout her career. I argue that Harper's advocacy changed over time with respect to the political climate and her personal experience. More specifically, I contend that Harper's early suffrage activism suggests a faith in the vote as the key mechanism to improving the lives of Black women and equalizing society, while later writings indicate a growing interpretation of the franchise as one of several mechanisms by which African Americans could create a moral society.

This paper divides Harper's life into three periods. The first section focuses on the early years of Reconstruction, from approximately 1866 to 1869, when the post-Civil War universal suffrage movement enticed Harper, new to the suffrage cause, to push for a broad human rights movement. The second section centers on Harper's Black feminist suffrage activism in the 1870s, a time when the women's suffrage movement had split into competing national organizations following Black male enfranchisement.³ The final section details Harper's post-Reconstruction shift from viewing the vote as the essential equalizer to pursuing the vote alongside other tools to better the condition of Black men and women.

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper was born free in 1825 in Baltimore, Maryland, where she was raised by her aunt and uncle, Henrietta and William Watkins. Her uncle, an outspoken abolitionist, likely influenced Harper's ideology. He established a school for Black children that Harper attended until age thirteen. She published her first major work around 1846, a book of poetry entitled *Forest Leaves*, by which time her strong sense of morality and antislavery sentiment was already present.⁴ As a young woman, Harper committed herself to abolitionism. She became involved with the Underground Railroad, wrote for antislavery newspapers, and traveled across the country as a lecturer for various antislavery societies. Harper was relatively politically inactive during the Civil War, residing on a farm in Ohio after marrying Fenton Harper in 1860. During this time, she had a daughter. After Fenton died in 1864, Harper resumed lecturing. During the early years of Reconstruction,

3. This is known as "the great schism" in suffrage literature. The women's suffrage movement split into two competing suffrage organizations, the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association, of which Harper was a founding member. The NWSA, led by Stanton and Anthony, continued to oppose the Fifteenth Amendment, while the AWSA, led by Lucy Stone, supported the amendment. This split remained until the organizations merged into the NAWSA in 1890.

4. This is evident in such poems of Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's as "Bible Defence of Slavery," in *Forest Leaves*, ed. by Alex W. Black, Brigitte Fielder, and Johanna Ortner, 2016, originally published c. 1846, 17, <https://jtoaa.americanantiquarian.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/ForestLeaves.pdf>.

from 1867 to 1871, Harper toured every southern state except Texas and Arkansas, giving lectures to Black and mixed audiences. Around this time, she published several more works, including *Minnie's Sacrifice* (1869) and *Sketches of Southern Life* (1872), both of which speak on Harper's support for suffrage for Black men as well as for women. After the tour, Harper settled again in Philadelphia. She later became involved with reform organizations like the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Harper continued to advocate for Black and white women's right to vote throughout her lifetime, imbuing her writings and speeches with Black feminism, such as in her 1892 novel *Iola Leroy*. She also continued to write on her hopes that African Americans would become fully integrated citizens in American society. By the twentieth century, Harper had become much less publicly active and passed away in 1911.

Previous Historical Scholarship on Harper

Despite her prominence as a greatly admired nineteenth century writer and lecturer, Harper's work as a suffrage activist is not well known today. While historians have examined Harper's literary legacy, her decades of work promoting suffrage rights for African Americans and women have been largely neglected. At the same time, her 1869 Fifteenth Amendment endorsement has received disproportionate attention.⁵ Several scholars have questioned why Harper would support Black male enfranchisement rather than stand with the women suffragists who wanted to be enfranchised simultaneously, or even first.⁶ I believe that focusing on the endorsement oversimplifies the issue of intersectionality that permeated Harper's suffragist views.

Jen McDaneld has worked to address this issue by situating Harper's support for the Fifteenth Amendment within the context of her Reconstruction lectures and writings. She reinterprets the endorsement in the context of the particular oppression and experiences of Black women that make separating race from sex impossible, especially when these identities come into conflict.⁷ I expand on this work by tracing the evolution of Harper's suffragist

5. Such historians include Melba Joyce Boyd, *Discarded Legacy: Politics and Poetics in the Life of Frances E.W. Harper, 1825-1911* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994); Hazel Z. Carby, *Reconstructing Womanhood: the Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); and Frances Smith Foster, *A Brighter Coming Day: A Frances Ellen Watkins Harper Reader*, by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, edited by Frances Smith Foster (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990). Jen McDaneld, on the other hand, has pointed out Harper's exclusion from suffrage literature in "Harper, Historiography, and the Race/Gender Opposition in Feminism," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 40, no. 2 (2015): 394-395.

6. For examples of such scholars, see Carla L. Peterson, "Doers of the Word": *African-American Women Speakers and Writers in the North (1830-1880)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 224; and C. C. O'Brien, "'The White Women All Go For Sex': Frances Harper on Suffrage, Citizenship, and the Reconstruction South," *African American Review* 43, no. 4 (Winter 2009).

7. McDaneld, "Harper, Historiography, and Race/Gender Opposition," 410.

opinions over her lifetime. Darlene Clark Hine, C. C. O'Brien, and Martha S. Jones are among other authors who identify Black women as Harper's chief consideration in her suffrage activism,⁸ a position that I also advance in this paper.

The First Period: Broad Human Rights Movement

The early postbellum period was marked by widespread support among African Americans and Black and white women for universal suffrage. Prior to the end of slavery, there had been considerable overlap between the ranks of abolitionists and women's rights activists; the antislavery movement had even helped to grow the women's suffrage movement.⁹ By the end of the Civil War, this had lent itself to the beginnings of an equal rights alliance that demanded the enfranchisement of both Black Americans and women.¹⁰ In fact, the Eleventh National Women's Rights Convention of 1866 resulted in the creation of the American Equal Rights Association (AERA), which called for suffrage rights for all citizens irrespective of race or sex. Harper was a speaker at the convention and a founding member of the AERA. Her sentiments from this period of time echo the hopes of the larger alliance of African Americans and women suffragists, while also hinting at a Black feminist understanding of the political situation's differences for African Americans as opposed to white women.

From the start of Harper's advocacy for suffrage for both African Americans and all women, she articulated different reasons for their enfranchisement. Specifically, Harper wanted to maintain the momentum for the improvement of life for Black Americans following emancipation, a societal goal for which the Black vote had become emblematic. In the early years of Reconstruction, Harper viewed the vote as a necessary measure for Black Americans, both as a means of self-defense and as a stepping stone to becoming equal citizens in American society. It is clear that Harper did not trust the nation's—and especially the South's—long history of oppression to end with the defeat of the Confederacy. She regarded the vote as security against continuing abuse. On August 1, 1865, Harper spoke at the Boston celebration of the 32nd anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies. She was recorded to have “believed it was generally conceded that men had the right of self-defence, and the ballot

8. Darlene Clark Hine, ed., *Black Women in America*, vol. 3, second edition (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), 36-37; O'Brien, “The White Women All Go For Sex” 609; Martha S. Jones, *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2020), 111-113.

9. Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*, Revised edition (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 142.

10. Jad Adams, *Women and the Vote: A World History* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2014), 144.

was the means of self-defence to the negro against the malice of his oppressors.”¹¹ Her wording humanizes Black Americans by establishing the right among all men to defend themselves, in this case with the vote. In doing so, Harper capitalized on the recency of slavery to frame Black male suffrage as a protective measure.

Harper feared that true equality for African Americans would not be possible without their enfranchisement. In the North, where slavery had already been abolished, she had witnessed severe prejudice against Black Americans in terms of access to education, legal discrimination, and over-policing. In an 1867 letter that Harper wrote to friend and fellow abolitionist William Still, she communicated her belief that the vote meant that the newly emancipated Black man “is not forced to go through the same condition of things here, that has inclined him so much to apathy, isolation, and indifference, in the North.”¹² Harper’s criticism of the treatment of Black Americans in the North dates back to her antebellum days of lecturing there with the intent of garnering support for the antislavery movement. A letter she wrote from Indiana in 1859 showcases her resentment at the fact that, despite the “nominal” freedom of Black Americans in the state, they were denied access to education and faced severe legal discrimination.¹³ Harper denounced this treatment as limiting to the good that African Americans could contribute to society as equals. Instead, the North was only willing to “build prisons, penitentiaries! and gallows to punish them for their crimes.”¹⁴ Despite the lack of formal slavery in the North, the choice to keep Black Americans in ignorance condemned them to the consequences of their inevitable mistakes. In Harper’s eyes, the vote would both safeguard Black Americans from oppression in the South and save African Americans nationwide from the prejudice that had long been present and damaging in the North. It is apparent that Harper considered the right to vote to be essential to the immediate future of African Americans following the abolition of slavery.

Regarding Harper’s stance on the female right to vote, the discrimination that women faced under the law for their sex became increasingly salient to Harper by the end of the Civil War. In 1866, she spoke at the Eleventh National Women’s Rights Convention, her first known appearance at such an event, deliv-

11. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “Speech of Mrs. Frances E. W. Harper [at the 1 August 1865 Celebration of the West India Emancipation in Boston],” *The Liberator* 35, no. 32. (1 August 1865): 128, in *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin, 2020.

12. Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 767.

13. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “Letter from Ellen Watkins,” *Anti-Slavery Bugle* 12, no. 47. (9 July 1859): 2, in *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin, 2020.

14. Harper, “Letter from Ellen Watkins,” 2.

ering a speech that has come to be known as “We Are All Bound Up Together.” With the speech, Harper threw her support behind a broad human rights movement that would serve the interests of white women as well as Black men and women.¹⁵ Harper cited the death of her husband in 1864 as an eye-opening experience, as the family property and personal possessions that her work had helped purchase were seized in order to pay her late husband’s debts. Harper exclaimed in her 1866 speech, “Had I died instead of my husband, how different would have been the result!” She contended that “justice is not fulfilled so long as woman is unequal before the law.”¹⁶ This explicit endorsement of women’s rights marks the beginning of her involvement in the women’s suffrage movement, which was significantly influenced by her personal experience as an independent Black woman.

Harper’s feminism was always tied to her identity as a Black woman, effectively inseparable from her racial advocacy. In the speech, Harper immediately followed her feminist declaration with the famous line, “We are all bound up together in one great bundle of humanity, and society cannot trample on the weakest and feeblest of its members without receiving the curse in its own soul,” hinting her desire to tie the women’s cause to that of all Black Americans.¹⁷ Harper confirmed as much when she proclaimed, “I, as a colored woman, have had in this country an education which has made me feel as if I were in the situation of Ishmael, my hand against every man, and every man’s hand against me,” a direct reference to the intersectional oppression on the basis of both race and gender that Black women experienced. She then substantiated her claim to intersectional oppression with anecdotes about the treatment that she and other African American women regularly received on public transport.¹⁸ These serve as clear and effective examples of her larger point about the constant and inescapable prejudice against independent Black women. It is evident that Harper’s stance on women’s suffrage was colored by her experiences as a Black woman.

Still, one of the most important and enduring aspects of Harper’s suffrage

15. Jones, *Vanguard*, 115; Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “We Are All Bound Up Together,” in *Proceedings of the Eleventh Women’s Rights Convention* (New York: Robert J. Johnston, 1866), 46-47.

16. Harper, “We Are All Bound Up Together,” 45-46.

17. Harper, “We Are All Bound Up Together,” 46.

18. Harper, “We Are All Bound Up Together,” 46. Martha S. Jones in *Vanguard*, 115 maintains that Harper’s repeated references to her experiences in travel as a Black woman constitute the cornerstone of her feminist activism, though I am more inclined to interpret these allusions as examples of her larger point of the intersectional challenges faced by independent Black women. In numerous pieces, Harper also argues that Black women are confronted by struggles specific to being both Black and female with examples of Black women struggling to gain employment among white women. See *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 2: 1861-1876, edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joselyn Gage (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1887), 392; Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, *Iola Leroy, or, Shadows Uplifted* (Philadelphia: Garrigues, 1892), 210.

activism was her refusal to see the vote as a panacea. Although Harper was an advocate for Black and female suffrage, she did not see the vote as the perfect solution to their chronic mistreatment. While she believed that the vote was necessary to improve their lives, she did not subscribe to the notion that the ballot alone would be sufficient to address their needs. Instead, she used the potential impact of the vote to underscore the need for what would become known as racial uplift, or the belief that the Black elite or educated middle class had a duty to “uplift” their fellow, less fortunate Black Americans by encouraging their education and serving as moral role models. Many historians identify Harper as among those African American leaders who subscribed to it, based on her work in urging her audiences to buy land, seek education, and pursue spiritual and moral betterment.¹⁹ In an 1867 letter, Harper wrote that she “[did] not in lecturing confine [herself] to the political side of the question” but rather “[knew] that the colored man [needed] something more than a vote in his hand.”²⁰ This need was to know how to use his vote wisely, a skill that required moral, material, and spiritual advancement. Harper’s desire to see Black Americans vote in accordance with their interests as a race was a pillar for her support for racial uplift. Without the “rise in the scale of character, wealth and influence” that Harper believed critical, a Black man “may use the vote against his interests.”²¹ In her eyes, Black Americans were still economically and socially vulnerable to exploitation and manipulation, and until they achieved, as a race, an adequate level of independence and sense of shared racial concern, it was all too likely that their vote would not carry the full extent of its potential power to improve their lives.²² This caveat to the benefit that Harper thought African American suffrage could bring about would underlie her work over the course of her career.

Meanwhile, Harper’s concern that white women suffragists were treating the vote as a panacea led to her reluctance to fully embrace White women

19. See Boyd, *Discarded Legacy*, 16; Petty, *Romancing the Vote: Feminist Activism in American Fiction, 1870-1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 14, 75-76; and Schuller, “Woman’s Rights Are White Rights?": Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Frances E. W. Harper,” in *The Trouble With White Women: A Counterhistory of Feminism* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2021), 36-37. criticisms. See, for example, Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 129. From our perspective, the concept seems awkward and even contradictory to Harper’s writings, which at times do address issues of financial hardship, obstacles to education, and class among Black Americans, as pointed out by Hine, *Black Women in America*, 89. The full discussion of why Harper might have taken this viewpoint is beyond the scope of this paper, but Harper’s privileged experience as a well-educated, middle-class Black woman may have played a role. It is probable that Harper’s support for the racial uplift movement stemmed from a belief that an “enlightened” race would be better able to overcome prejudice and help form a moral society.

20. Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 770.

21. Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 770.

22. It is this core belief of Harper’s that makes up what Boyd, *Discarded Legacy*, 120 has termed her “Literacy, Land and Liberation” theme. Though Harper never used this phrase herself, Boyd named the theme according to recurring values that Harper wove into her writings in the hopes that they would inspire African Americans to economically and socially improve their condition while also taking into account the lingering effects of slavery in impeding that progress.

as allies of Black men or women. This is one of the hallmarks of Harper's unique Black feminist suffragism. By the 1850s, the women's rights movement had begun to pursue suffrage as the primary goal.²³ Present at the very beginning of Harper's feminist suffrage activism was the worry that White women were not true allies for Black men or women. The "We Are All Bound Up Together" speech conveys a strong mistrust of white women and a fear that, once enfranchised, white women would use their newfound power to contribute to racialized oppression. Harper was careful to qualify her feminist activism, saying, "I do not believe that giving the woman the ballot is immediately going to cure all the ills of life. I do not believe that White women are dew-drops just exhaled from the skies. I think that like men they may be divided into three classes, the good, the bad, and the indifferent."²⁴ Here too, Harper expressed doubt that suffrage alone would solve the overarching problems faced by women and hinted that White women's relentless push for suffrage had come across to her as "airy nothings and selfishness."²⁵ Her decision to end the speech on that note highlights the centrality of this concern. Though Harper still chose to join the movement, she had major reservations that its White female leaders would put their own interests first instead. This fear that White women would undermine her push for a broad human rights movement pervaded her uneasy acceptance of them as allies in activism.

The Second Period: Harper's 1870s Black Feminist Suffrage Activism

Harper's suspicion was confirmed in the late 1860s when, amidst consideration of the Fifteenth Amendment, prominent leaders of the women's suffrage movement like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton began to espouse racist sentiments against Black men receiving the vote before women. By fall of 1867, Stanton had labeled Black men as "degraded" and liable, if given the vote, to serve as even more dangerous despots over women than had White men.²⁶ Over the next few years, Stanton and Anthony crafted an increasingly racist defense of women's suffrage that attacked the virtue and intelligence of Black Americans and decisively alienated their former allies. In reaction to this betrayal, Harper chose to endorse Black male suffrage over women's suffrage with the Fifteenth Amendment, but, more importantly, she continued to advocate for the franchise to be extended to Black women throughout the 1870s.

23. Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, 142.

24. Harper, "We Are All Bound Up Together," 46.

25. Harper, "We Are All Bound Up Together," 48.

26. Adams, *Women and the Vote*, 146-148.

At the final meeting of the AERA in 1869, which later disbanded due to the conflict over the Fifteenth Amendment, Harper famously responded to the racist attacks and endorsed the amendment. Harper's remarks were summarized briefly in a record of the meeting as follows:

When it was a question of race, she let the lesser question of sex go. But the white women all go for sex, letting race occupy a minor position. She liked the idea of working women, but she would like to know if it was broad enough to take colored women?

Miss Anthony and several others: Yes, yes.

Mrs. Harper said that when she was at Boston there were sixty women who left work because one colored woman went to gain a livelihood in their midst. [Applause.] If the nation could only handle one question, she would not have the black women put a single straw in the way, if only the men of the race could obtain what they wanted.²⁷

With this, Harper declared her support for the Black male vote first and condemned White women for their racism. Harper's strong wording at first may seem at odds with the argument of this paper. On the surface, with phrases like "the lesser question of sex," it does seem that Harper is making a choice among her identities, as several historians have claimed.²⁸ However, the following sentences of the passage help to refine her stance and hint at Harper's true purpose: to further the interests of Black women. Though some white women advertised the Women's Rights Movement as inclusive of Black women, Harper challenged that notion with a clear example of white women standing in the way of Black women's empowerment. When Harper announced that she "would not have the black women" stand in the way of Black male enfranchisement, she was speaking as a self-proclaimed leader of Black women who believed that she knew what was best for their political future.

We can find a more complete account of Harper's ideology in her novel, *Minnie's Sacrifice*, which was published in 1869, during the same year as the AERA meeting and, as the majority of her writings likely were, aimed toward an African American literary audience. This is evidenced by the fact that *Minnie's*

27. Stanton, Anthony, and Gage, ed. *History of Woman Suffrage*, 391-392.

28. It is unclear why Harper might have framed sex as "the lesser question" to make her point. Considering the hostility of the 1869 AERA meeting, it is possible that the nuances of Harper's position, which appears to have been paraphrased, were abandoned for the sake of directness. Alternatively, C. C. O'Brien has suggested that the recording of her remarks may have been inaccurate and speculates other reasons for her reference to sex as "the lesser question" in "The White Women All Go for Sex," 605.

Sacrifice, like several of her other novels and poems, was published periodically through the African Methodist Episcopal Church's *Christian Recorder*.²⁹ *Minnie's Sacrifice* advances a perspective on the suffrage debate that prioritized first and foremost the perspective of Black women. Minnie and Louis are the two protagonists, both of whom were born to slave mothers and planter fathers and are described as appearing "just as white as anybody."³⁰ Secretly freed and sent North by their fathers to be educated, both are raised with no knowledge of their African ancestry and only find out around the start of the Civil War, deciding then to embrace their identity as Black Americans. Minnie and Louis eventually marry and aid the Union during the war, and the novel follows the couple as they become Black leaders seeking to help uplift the newly freed Black Southerners morally, economically, and politically, another example of Harper's support for the Racial Uplift Movement. This process takes place through the early postbellum era. Harper emphasizes the dangerous atmosphere of the South at that time for African Americans, an ever-present threat that ends the novel with the death of Minnie. It is implied that she was the victim of a lynching by the Ku Klux Klan.³¹

A dialogue between Minnie and Louis serves to flesh out Harper's ideas on the right to vote in relation to the 1869 suffrage controversy. Initially, Minnie complains to Louis that "everything gets settled on a partial basis" and questions why the right to vote must always be somehow exclusionary and cannot rest instead on "the broader basis of our common humanity."³² This statement summarizes the human rights-based philosophy underlying Harper's early suffrage activism, which she at this point was forced to reject as overly idealistic and unattainable at that time. Still, Harper's endorsement of Black male suffrage was not meant to occur at the expense of Black women's right to vote. Through Minnie, Harper expressed frustration that Black women could not share in the same opportunities afforded to their male counterparts. When Louis reminds Minnie that "This hour belongs to the negro," she retorts, "But, Louis, is it not the negro woman's hour also? Has she not as many rights and claims as the negro man?"³³ Harper challenged the common rationale employed by African American men that the needs of Black men must come first due to the social and political op-

29. Frances Smith Foster, introduction to *Minnie's Sacrifice; Sowing and Reaping; Trial and Triumph: Three Rediscovered Novels* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), xxv.

30. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, "Minnie's Sacrifice," in *Minnie's Sacrifice; Sowing and Reaping; Trial and Triumph: Three Rediscovered Novels*, edited by Frances Smith Foster (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 4.

31. Several issues of *Minnie's Sacrifice* have been lost. Frances Smith Foster recovered most of the novel and republished it in 1994 in *Minnie's Sacrifice; Sowing and Reaping; Trial and Triumph: Three Rediscovered Novels*, but the chapter describing Minnie's death remains missing.

32. Harper, "Minnie's Sacrifice," 78.

33. Harper, "Minnie's Sacrifice," 78.

portunities created to protect African Americans in the wake of the Civil War. She pointed out that the same logic applied to Black women. In doing so, Harper established the Black feminist perspective from which she viewed the debate.³⁴

In the next part of the passage, Minnie and Louis recognize that women should be treated equally under the law and need “some power to defend herself from oppression.”³⁵ The Black woman’s oppression, Harper believed, was tripartite: they “were thrice oppressed—as poor, as black, and as women.”³⁶ As Frances Smith Foster and Margaret Hope Bacon have also stated, it is likely that Harper’s own experiences and travels heavily influenced this belief.³⁷ An 1870 letter to Still reveals that Harper had been meeting privately with Southern Black women in order to encourage their empowerment, while an 1871 letter lamented the abuse that many Black women suffered at the hands of their own husbands.³⁸ Harper wove this intersectional understanding into *Minnie’s Sacrifice* with the death of the titular character, who, in accordance with the expected behavior of a true member of the Black elite, sacrifices her privilege as a white-passing woman in order to cast her lot with Black Americans, dedicates her life to helping freedpeople in the South, and supports Black male suffrage before her own. Minnie ultimately loses her life due to the failure of society to consider the unique vulnerability of Black women, even those as prominent and upstanding as herself. *Minnie’s Sacrifice* echoes the issues of Black female vulnerability that had first prompted Harper to join the Women’s Rights Movement.

Nevertheless, for Harper, the idea that enfranchising Black men would benefit African Americans as a whole—and, as such, Black women—was the crux of the enfranchisement issue. In the end, Harper believed that “you cannot better the condition of the colored men without helping the colored women.”³⁹ While her famous endorsement of the Fifteenth Amendment seemed to imply that Harper saw race as a more important identity than sex, she instead evaluated the ability of each group—Black men or women—if enfranchised, to better the condition of Black women. In the years leading up to 1869, white women had advanced a vision of women’s suffrage that only considered white women, meaning that Black women were not likely to gain much advantage, if any, from the enfranchisement of women, and white women might instead use their new-

34. See Boyd, *Discarded Legacy* (128) and O’Brien, “The White Women All Go for Sex”, 609, respectively.

35. Harper, “Minnie’s Sacrifice,” 78

36. Bacon, “One Great Bundle of Humanity,” 36.

37. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, *A Brighter Coming Day*, 122; Margaret Hope Bacon, “‘One Great Bundle of Humanity’: Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911),” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113, no. 1 (1989): 35-36.

38. Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 772; Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 777.

39. Harper, “Minnie’s Sacrifice,” 78.

found political power to further oppress African Americans. Although Black male suffrage still excluded Black women, Harper felt that she could trust Black men to serve as better representatives than white women of Black female interests.⁴⁰

Harper believed Black women, though disenfranchised, retained political power through their roles as wives, mothers, and community members. This can be seen in her 1872 poetry anthology, *Sketches of Southern Life*, which follows an enslaved Black woman named Aunt Chloe through the Civil War and Reconstruction. It was inspired by Harper's postbellum travels to the South.⁴¹ In one of the poems narrating the years after the end of the war, "The Deliverance," Aunt Chloe expresses her disgust at any Black man who would sell his vote and lists several examples of men who had. Then she details the methods their wives used to exact revenge or otherwise censure their husbands for their foolishness. Aunt Chloe ends the poem by proudly describing their effectiveness in coercing their husbands to use their votes wisely, proclaiming, "I think that Curnel Johnson said / His side had won the day, / Had not we women radicals / Just got right in the way."⁴² In this passage, Aunt Chloe celebrates the success Black women had in affecting the results of a local election. Though Aunt Chloe is frustrated that she cannot vote herself, *Sketches of Southern Life* focuses on Aunt Chloe's instrumental role within her Black community. *Sketches of Southern Life* shows Harper's desire to highlight a path for Black women to contribute to the cause of African Americans by holding their husbands accountable, building strong and moral families, and striving for self-improvement. Again, Harper has woven in a racial uplift-inspired example for her readers, as Aunt Chloe develops an increasingly strong Christian faith, learns to read, and even acquires a home for herself, proudly reporting:

So I got a pair of glasses,
And straight to work I went,
And never stopped till I could read
The hymns and Testament.

Then I got a little cabin
A place to call my own—
And I felt as independent

40. See Hine, *Black Women in America*, 36-37.

41. Bacon, "One Great Bundle of Humanity," 38.

42. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, "The Deliverance," in *Sketches of Southern Life* (Philadelphia, PA: Ferguson Bros. & Co., 1891), 13-15.

As the queen upon her throne.⁴³

These achievements demonstrate the ways in which Black freedwomen, though disenfranchised, could still improve themselves and, with their influence as wives and mothers, their race. Not only did Harper endorse the doctrine of racial uplift, she carved out a specific role for African American women in the advancement of Black Americans as a racial community.⁴⁴ In the wake of the Fifteenth Amendment, Harper sought to show Black women that they still held significant influence, politically and domestically, and that Black communities seriously depended on them.

Even without the ability to vote, Harper believed that Black women like herself were central to the improvement of conditions for African Americans within the social and moral sphere. By 1870, she had reported in a letter to Still that her private meetings with Black women included advice about their daughters and their chance to better “the welfare of the race.”⁴⁵ She was confident that Black women carried an important role in the postbellum period, telling Still that “Now is the time for our women to begin to try to lift up their heads and plant the roots of progress under the hearthstone.”⁴⁶ Harper perceived an opportunity for women, as the moral center of the home, to instill in their families a sense of foundational integrity and devotion to their fellow Black Americans that would span generations. While this statement implies that Harper imagined women pursuing this advancement from inside the home, she also understood herself, as a Black woman who was privileged through her education, economic standing, and reputation, to occupy an important niche in helping Black Americans through her lectures. Writing to Still, Harper stated, “I am standing with my race on the threshold of a new era, and though some be far past me in the learning of the schools . . . I may help the race forward a little. Some of our people remind me of sheep without a shepherd.”⁴⁷ Harper saw herself as a leader among African Americans, encouraging them to collect land, cultivate their morality, and become as independent as possible. These measures, according to Harper, would reduce the possible influence of exploitative white Americans and substantially reduce the likelihood that Black Americans could be taken advantage of, both on a day-to-day basis and at the polls.

43. Harper, “Learning to Read,” in *Sketches of Southern Life*, 18-19.

44. See “Minnie’s Sacrifice: Frances Ellen Watkins Harper’s Narrative of Citizenship,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Nineteenth-Century American Women’s Writing*, edited by Dale M. Bauer and Philip Gould, Cambridge Companions to Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 310.

45. Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 772.

46. Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 772.

47. Still, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper,” 772.

Harper continued to support female suffrage from a Black feminist perspective after the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment. Despite her strong and enduring reservations about white women activists, Harper continued to be active in the broader women's suffrage movement during this period. She believed that Black women would never be adequately represented without possessing the power of the vote. In 1873, Harper gave the closing speech at a meeting of the American Women's Suffrage Union, which she had helped form. She is attributed with having "showed that much as white women need the ballot, colored women need it more. Although the women of her race are no longer sold on the auction block, they are subjected to the legal authority of ignorant and often degraded men. She rejoiced in the progress already made, but pleaded for equal rights and equal education for the colored women of the land."⁴⁸ Harper considered the vote necessary to the well-being of Black women, to an extent greater than that of white women. The speech also alludes to Harper's racial uplift ideology in which education was esteemed as key to the improvement of Black women's condition and criticized the discrimination that blocked these opportunities.

Further, the enfranchisement of Black men seems to have removed, in Harper's eyes, one of the last barriers to women's suffrage. Harper addressed this in an 1885 dialogue debating women's rights from the perspective of two fictional Black men, John and Jacob.⁴⁹ John, who is in favor of women's suffrage, reminds Jacob that, only a short time before the setting of the conversation, millions of Black Americans had been enslaved and the Black vote had been an impossibility. He asks Jacob, "Now if you don't believe 'twas right / To crowd us from the track, / How can you push your wife aside / And try to hold her back?"⁵⁰ Harper appealed directly to the newly enfranchised Black men to support their wives in seeking their own voting rights, on the basis that the pursuit of equal voting rights should not stop at race. One could argue that Harper's argument references the original alliance between abolitionists and female suffragists in seeking universal suffrage. Now that the Black man had enjoyed his hour and the enfranchisement that accompanied it, the Black women who had supported them deserved the same opportunity.

Without equal voting rights, she feared that the condition of the Black woman would not substantially improve. To demonstrate the benefit that Harper

48. Stanton, Anthony, and Gage, ed. *History of Woman Suffrage*. 391-392.

49. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. "John and Jacob—A Dialogue on Woman's Rights," in *A Brighter Coming Day: A Frances Ellen Watkins Harper Reader*, edited by Frances Smith Foster (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990), 241.

50. Harper, "John and Jacob," 241.

believed the franchise had for Black women, it is necessary to return the character of Jenny. In one of these stories, published on January 15, 1874, Jenny communicates to her aunt her desire for Black women to receive the vote, telling her, “It seems to me that the men who vote, find in that vote increased advantage, and I do wish that at the late National civil rights meeting, some wom[e]n had been sent as delegates” in order to “present unto that convention some views of vital importune to the future of our woman.”⁵¹ Jenny wished for Black women to represent her interests and to be able to do so. This desire suggests that Harper was dissatisfied with the idea of virtual representation by Black men and continued to see the franchise as necessary to the improvement of Black women’s condition. Harper continued speaking at women’s rights conventions and writing in support of the female vote throughout her life, showing that she was still involved in the women’s suffrage movement as a Black feminist.

The Third Period: Harper’s Post-Reconstruction Shift Away From a Voting Rights Focus

As Reconstruction ended, many of the accomplishments of that era were erased by conservative Southerners, including the practical right to vote for Black Americans. During what is known as a period of “Redemption” in the final years of Reconstruction and after its end in 1877, the South embarked on a mission to disenfranchise Black men or otherwise prevent their voting through terrorism or similar methods. Additionally, states instituted Black Codes, and lynching incidents increased in frequency.⁵² This attack on the political rights of Black men threatened the years of work that Harper had poured into fighting for their enfranchisement and mobilizing them to vote responsibly. Harper’s faith in the vote faltered. To compensate for the loss of the vote as an equalizing force, Harper turned away from the strictly political sphere and toward social and moral improvement as a way to better the lives of Black Americans and especially women. The racial uplift movement, for which Harper had demonstrated support throughout her life, now came to the forefront of her activism.

Harper was not ignorant of the damaging effect that the end of Reconstruction had on the lives of African Americans. Harper blamed this failure on the country’s long history of racialized oppression that made the coexistence of Black and white Americans extraordinarily difficult. With most Black Americans unable

51. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “Fancy Sketches,” *Christian Recorder*, January 15, 1874, in *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin, 2020.

52. See Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, 83-86.

to vote or unable to have their votes count, the ability of the franchise to significantly improve the lives of African Americans was severely diminished. This meant that Harper could no longer so confidently champion the female vote as an equalizer, as Black women might face the same challenges to their voting rights, or worse. In response, she began to express a more reserved view of Black involvement in politics. Harper's solution to the South's "Redemption" was for Black Americans to improve their economic, spiritual, and moral life rather than focus solely on political gains. She wanted African Americans to concentrate their attention on "[developing] self-reliance, self-control, and self-respect in the race."⁵³ This echoes some longstanding goals of Harper, namely that postbellum African Americans become independent and cultivate a sense of strong morality and shared racial identity. In the post-Reconstruction context, these ideals were more important to Harper than striving for political equality, as shown in 1844 when she wrote in 1884:

Man cannot live by politics alone, and if for the next ten years the national government shall be too weak or too vicious to place protection to human life at the basis of its civilization, let the colored man abate somewhat of his political zeal, and do all he can to shame the nation into a higher regard for human rights, and human life, than it now possesses.⁵⁴

This statement indicates another turning point for Harper. While she had always pushed for Black Americans to work to better their own situation and character as best as they could, until this point, Harper had also seemed to consider political rights central for this goal. But the end of Reconstruction and the efforts to disfranchise Black Americans seem to have convinced her that any political gains they made did not actually guarantee an improvement in the lives of African Americans.

If Black Americans could rise as the moral and spiritual better to white Americans, then maybe they could persuade the nation to more highly value human rights. In the same 1884 speech, Harper continued:

If for the next twenty years the colored people take no feverish interest in the success or failure of either party, but will do all they can to build up an intelligent and virtuous manhood, and a tender, strong and true womanhood, we can afford to wait for political strength while developing mor-

53. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, "The Democratic Return to Power—Its Effect?" *African Methodist Episcopal Church Review* 1 (1884): 222, in *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin, 2020.

54. Harper, "The Democratic Return to Power," 224.

al and spiritual power. We can better, if need be, postpone taking part in the next election, than we can neglect attending to the best interests of the next generation. Power will naturally gravitate into the strongest hands, be they white or black; and to strengthen our hands, and base our race-life on those divine certitudes, which are the only safe foundations for either individuals or nations, is of more vital importance to us than being the appendages of any political party.⁵⁵

This strategy of stepping back from politics to focus on cultivating an independent and morally upright race whose virtue would lend itself to future power became Harper's philosophy in the later years of her career. The strategy also refocused her commitment to the goals of racial uplift. In Harper's eyes, it was critical now more than ever for Black leaders to encourage their fellow Black Americans to improve themselves economically, morally, and spiritually. Whereas before, Harper's support for racial uplift was a means of ensuring the Black American vote was used responsibly, it was now the primary way by which they could improve their own lives. While she still held suffrage as a goal, Harper's post-Reconstruction era activity was characterized by this turn away from politics in favor of promoting moral betterment.

One of the major examples of this shift can be seen in Harper's temperance work. Harper incorporated her support for women's suffrage into her crusade of racial uplift. Throughout her life, Harper was a staunch temperance activist and often connected temperance to the issue of suffrage. During the 1880s, she served as Superintendent of the "Colored Section" of both the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Women's Christian Temperance Unions. From early in her writing career, temperance was a key value in her writings and, at times, even used as a justification for the enfranchisement of women. An excerpt from Harper's 1876 temperance novel, "Sowing and Reaping: A Temperance Story," illustrates the degree to which Harper perceived women's suffrage and temperance to be intertwined. A conversation between a mother and her daughter culminates in the commitment of the mother, Mrs. Gladstone, to the cause of women's suffrage. Mrs. Gladstone tries to convince her daughter of the necessity of enfranchising women, listing their inequality under the law, the inadequacy of virtual representation, and, most importantly, the failure of men to address the problem of intemperance. She asserts, "I hold my dear that a nation as well as an individual should have a conscience, and on this liquor question there is room for woman's conscience not

55. Harper, "The Democratic Return to Power," 224.

merely as a persuasive influence but as an enlightened and aggressive power.”⁵⁶ Harper used the common perception of women as the moral center of the household to argue that women can improve the moral character of the nation if enfranchised, particularly by promoting temperance, a distinctly women’s movement. She framed temperance as the goal and the enfranchisement of women as a tool in advocating for it. In promoting the temperance issue, Harper created a niche for women’s political activity that would lend credence to their claim to suffrage.

One of the most comprehensive examples of Harper’s post-Reconstruction goals for Black Americans can be found in her 1892 novel *Iola Leroy*, or, *Shadows Uplifted*, which was reprinted four times in as many years. *Iola Leroy* was one of Harper’s most popular works, and, despite being set in the Civil War and Reconstruction era, it is very cognizant of the political conditions of the 1890s for Black Americans.⁵⁷ Similar in plot to *Minnie’s Sacrifice*, the story covers the Civil War and the Reconstruction period, and the protagonist is a beautiful, young, white-passing woman named Iola. Her father was a planter who had secretly freed Iola’s white-passing mother and married her. Iola is raised oblivious to her Black ancestry and her mother’s former status as a slave, receiving a privileged education in the North. When her father dies, however, Iola, her mother, and brother are remanded into slavery and become separated from each other. Iola is rescued when a group of slaves decide to run away to join the Union Army. The slaves take her with them, and she becomes active in the war cause. The novel follows Iola through the Civil War and the postbellum period, detailing her decision to embrace her Black identity as well as her efforts to reunite her family, her work to gain independence for herself, and her determination to help newly emancipated Black Americans in the South.

Iola Leroy, in contrast to *Minnie’s Sacrifice* (1869), shows Harper’s transition from valuing the vote as central to the improvement Black Americans’ quality of life to emphasizing racial uplift as the more promising solution. Whereas, in *Minnie’s Sacrifice*, Harper makes a passionate case for the enfranchisement of Black women, in *Iola Leroy*, she makes only limited references to the vote, all of which carry a sense of frustration, in *Iola Leroy*. In one section, Harper cynically implies that the Black man was begrudgingly given the right to vote as the government’s half-hearted attempt at his protection, for which there was “no other alternative.”⁵⁸

56. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “Sowing and Reaping: A Temperance Story,” in *Minnie’s Sacrifice; Sowing and Reaping; Trial and Triumph: Three Rediscovered Novels*, edited by Frances Smith Foster (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 161.

57. Foster, introduction to *A Brighter Coming Day*, 26. See also Griffin, “Minnie’s Sacrifice,” 309-311.

58. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, *Iola Leroy, or, Shadows Uplifted* (Philadelphia: Garrigues Brothers, 1892), 223.

She even went as far as to challenge that this measure was at all effective, asking, “What protection does the colored man receive from the Government? I know of no civilized country outside of America where men are still burned for real or supposed crimes,” a clear reference to the lynching and violence Black Americans faced in the aftermath of Reconstruction.⁵⁹ Through the novel, Harper argued that the vote she had once believed crucial had failed to shield Black Americans from outright violence. Instead, they faced terrorism for attempting to vote and were punished inhumanely for falsely accused crimes. Despite the Reconstruction setting of the novel, Harper clearly allowed her post-Reconstruction perspective to color her depiction of the era. Conspicuously absent throughout *Iola Leroy* is any reference to the female vote, and the subject of the franchise itself is relegated to a minor role.

Rather than make suffrage a major theme of *Iola Leroy* as it was in *Minnie’s Sacrifice*, Harper focused on self-sufficiency, racial uplift, and moral work in delineating a way forward for Black men and women in the face of prejudice following the Civil War. One of the major plot points revolves around Iola’s desire to work. Iola justifies this goal by arguing, “I have a theory that every woman ought to know how to earn her own living. I believe that a great amount of sin and misery springs from the weakness and inefficiency of women.”⁶⁰ Harper’s Black feminist voice shines through here. Through Iola, Harper specifies that her long-held belief in economic independence does not only apply to Black men but is also crucial to Black women. By gaining employment, Black women also gain a measure of autonomy and an understanding of its value, knowledge that remains even if they later stop working. This is critical to their ability to assert control over the domestic and social sphere, as Harper had urged them to do. While encountering discrimination that hinders her ability to keep a job, Iola remains resolved to continue searching without hiding her race in order to succeed, representing Harper’s ideal of an independent Black woman.

Toward the end of the novel, Iola takes her place as a leader of her Black community in the South. Along with some of her relatives and acquaintances, Iola is invited to a *conversazione*, the purpose of which was to “gather some of the thinkers and leaders of the race to consult on subjects of vital interest” to the welfare of Black Americans.⁶¹ These leaders include teachers, reverends, and a few women community leaders. The nature of the *conversazione* demonstrates Harper’s support for the racial uplift movement by establishing Iola and several other characters as the intellectual and moral Black elite who take on the re-

59. Harper, *Iola Leroy*, 224.

60. Harper, *Iola Leroy*, 205.

61. Harper, *Iola Leroy*, 243.

sponsibility of deciding what is best for their race. At this event, the characters share their opinions on the needs of Black Americans and how best to achieve them. It is here that Iola identifies the key to a brighter future for Black Americans as “striving to be more generous, noble, and just.”⁶² Becoming a race of moral individuals was critical, Harper claimed, for helping Black Americans improve their own lives and eventually achieve equal standing with white Americans.

Iola shows that Black women have their own role to play in bringing about this moral development. At the *conversazione*, Iola presents a paper that she had written, calling for the “Education of Mothers.” The others strongly agree, adding that both parents should be involved in teaching their children to be moral individuals. One says, “We need a union of women with the warmest hearts and clearest brains to help in the moral education of the race.”⁶³ In claiming this specific need for women, Harper establishes that Black women occupy an important niche in the uplift of the race, as moral figures guiding their fellow Black Americans—particularly their children—in becoming more virtuous. In combination with Iola’s desire to work, this discussion demonstrates Harper’s new, politically detached conceptualization of Black feminism. Black women are to be “useful and self-reliant,”⁶⁴ or independent women devoted to helping improve the character of their race. They are integral to the project of racial uplift and can even serve as members of the Black elite. The vote, while desirable, is no longer central to the betterment of their lives or those of their fellow Black Americans.

In the later years of her activism, Harper continued to support the enfranchisement of women, but she had a much more qualified opinion on the vote’s ability to substantially improve the lives of Black women. In an 1893 speech entitled “Woman’s Political Future” at the World’s Congress of Representative Women, Harper presented her post-Reconstruction position on the impact of the female vote, stating that the power of the vote—constructive or destructive—rested on the character of the women who used it. She noted that at the same time that Black men were losing their right to vote, many African American women became increasingly active both in literary production and in the Woman’s Club Movement, which forwarded the idea that women were valuable members of their communities and had a moral responsibility to influence public policy.⁶⁵ Harper was aware

62. Harper, *Iola Leroy*, 249.

63. Harper, *Iola Leroy*, 253-254.

64. Harper, *Iola Leroy*, 253.

65. Foster, introduction to *A Brighter Coming Day*, 24; Bettye Collier-Thomas, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper: Abolitionist and Feminist Reformer, 1825-1911,” in *African American Women and the Vote, 1837-1965*, edited by Ann D. Gordon (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 51. Gordon (Amherst: University of Massachusetts

of this development, declaring that “to-day we stand on the threshold of woman’s era, and woman’s work is grandly constructive. In her hand are possibilities whose use or abuse must tell upon the political life of the nation, and send their influence for good or evil across the track of unborn ages.”⁶⁶ In this speech, she argued that the era of female—especially Black feminist—empowerment has the potential to transform the political sphere and the future of the nation. With this in mind, she claimed that “The ballot in the hands of woman means power added to influence. How well she will use that power I cannot foretell.”⁶⁷ It is likely that Harper saw this rising activity among women as a sign that the political power she and other Black women had been waiting for was impending. The enfranchisement of women would test whether she and the other Black elite had done enough to improve the independence and moral character of Black Americans. If they had, she believed that Black women would be wise enough voters to use their ballots to further the interests of their race, thus bettering their condition. Still, in this line of reasoning, she is careful not to assume that the vote itself will improve the lives of African Americans merely by awarding them power, as she had been more inclined to do previously.

Understanding Harper’s Suffragist Work in a Black Feminist Context

The nuance uncovered by an examination of Harper’s long history of suffrage activism in the context of her fiction as well as her speeches provides a better understanding of a Black feminist perspective during a tumultuous time in African American and feminist history. While historians focus only on Harper’s endorsement of the Fifteenth Amendment, her motivations are left unclear, and it also becomes easier to overlook her involvement in the suffrage movement altogether. This explains Harper’s obscurity in suffrage literature relative to her reputation as a Black literary figure.

My purpose in this paper has been to trace Harper’s opinions on the value that the franchise held for Black men, Black women, and White women over the course of her lifetime and determine if they changed. I have found that Harper had one continuous goal—improving the well-being of Black women—which she pursued over three different periods of her life in different ways. At the beginning of her suffrage activism, Harper, like most of those in abolitionist-women’s rights alliance, was optimistic enough to believe that a broad human rights movement could

Press, 1997), 51.

66. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, “Woman’s Political Future,” in *World’s Congress of Representative Women*, edited by May Wright Sewell (Chicago: World’s Columbian Exposition, 1893), 433-434.

67. Harper, “Woman’s Political Future,” 436.

successfully enfranchise and thus serve the interests of both Black Americans and women. When the alliance broke down, Harper's well-founded mistrust of white women led her to support Black male enfranchisement, in the hopes that Black men would be more sensitive to the influence and interests of their female counterparts. However, she still pursued women's suffrage, believing it to be necessary to Black women's defense and equal status. As social and political conditions worsened for Black Americans during the late nineteenth century, Harper was forced to reassess her faith in the ability of the vote to substantially improve the lives of Black women. She refocused her efforts on social and moral development, as championed by the racial uplift movement, rather than suffrage rights. While she continued to support the expansion of the franchise throughout her life, the vote became just one of several mechanisms that Harper hoped would help Black men and women.

Bibliography

- Adams, Jad. *Women and the Vote: A World History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Bacon, Margaret Hope. "'One Great Bundle of Humanity': Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911)." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113, no. 1 (1989): 21–43.
- Boyd, Melba Joyce. *Discarded Legacy: Politics and Poetics in the Life of Frances E. W. Harper, 1825-1911*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994.
- Carby, Hazel Z. *Reconstructing Womanhood: the Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Collier-Thomas, Bettye. "Frances Ellen Watkins Harper: Abolitionist and Feminist Reformer, 1825-1911." In *African American Women and the Vote, 1837-1965*, edited by Ann D. Gordon, 41-65. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Gaines, Kevin. *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics and Culture in the Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Griffin, Farah Jasmine. "Minnie's Sacrifice: Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's Narrative of Citizenship." In *The Cambridge Companion to Nineteenth-Century American Women's Writing*, edited by Dale M. Bauer and Philip Gould, 308–19. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Harper, Frances Ellen Watkins. *A Brighter Coming Day: A Frances Ellen Watkins Harper Reader*, edited by Frances Smith Foster. New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990.
- . "The Democratic Return to Power—Its Effect?" *African Methodist Episcopal Church Review* 1 (1884): 222-225. In *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin. 2020 edition.
- . "Fancy Etchings." *Christian Recorder*, February 20, 1873. In *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin. 2020 edition.
- . "Fancy Sketches." *Christian Recorder*, January 15, 1874. In *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin. 2020 edition.
- . *Forest Leaves*. Edited and with an introduction by Alex W. Black, Brigitte Fielder, and Johanna Ortner, 2016. Originally published c. 1846. <https://jtoa.americanantiquarian.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/ForestLeaves.pdf>.
- . *Iola Leroy, or, Shadows Uplifted*. Philadelphia, PA: Garrigues Brothers, 1892.
- . "John and Jacob—A Dialogue on Woman's Rights." In *A Brighter Coming Day: A Frances Ellen Watkins Harper Reader*, edited by Frances Smith Foster, 240-242.

- New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990. Originally published 1885.
- . “Letter from Miss Watkins.” *Anti-Slavery Bugle* 14, no. 36, (23 April 1859): 2. In *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin. 2020 edition.
- . “Minnie’s Sacrifice.” In *Minnie’s Sacrifice; Sowing and Reaping; Trial and Triumph: Three Rediscovered Novels*, edited by Frances Smith Foster, 1-92. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994. Originally published 1869.
- . “Mrs. Frances E. W. Harper on Reconstruction.” *The Liberator*, March 3, 1864. In *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin. 2020 edition.
- . “Mrs. Frances E. Watkins Harper on the War and the President’s Colonization Scheme.” *Christian Recorder*, September 27, 1862. In *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin. 2020 edition.
- . “The Present Age.” In *The Sparrow’s Fan and Other Poems*. Philadelphia, PA: George S. Ferguson Co., 1895.
- . *Sketches of Southern Life*. Philadelphia: Ferguson Bros. & Co., 1891. Originally published 1872.
- . “Speech of Mrs. Frances E. W. Harper [at the 1 August 1865 Celebration of the West India Emancipation in Boston].” *The Liberator* 35, no. 32, (1 August 1865): 128. In *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000*, edited by Rebecca Jo Plant, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Thomas Dublin. 2020 edition.
- . “We Are All Bound Up Together.” In *Proceedings of the Eleventh Women’s Rights Convention*, 45-48. New York: Robert J. Johnston, 1866.
- . “Woman’s Political Future.” In *World’s Congress of Representative Women*, edited by May Wright Sewell, 433-437. Chicago: World’s Columbian Exposition, 1893.
- Hine, Darlene Clark, ed. *Black Women in America*. Second edition, vol. 3. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Jones, Martha S. *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All*. New York: Basic Books, 2020.
- Keyssar, Alexander. *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*. Revised edition. New York: Basic Books, 2009.
- McDanel, Jen. “Harper, Historiography, and the Race/Gender Opposition in Feminism.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 40, no. 2 (2015):

393–415.

O'Brien, C. C. "'The White Women All Go for Sex': Frances Harper on Suffrage, Citizenship, and the Reconstruction South." *African American Review* 43, no. 4 (Winter 2009): 605-620.

Petty, Leslie. *Romancing the Vote: Feminist Activism in American Fiction, 1870-1920*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006.

Peterson, Carla L. *"Doers of the Word": African-American Women Speakers and Writers in the North (1830-1880)*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Schuller, Kyla. "Woman's Rights Are White Rights?: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Frances E. W. Harper." In *The Trouble with White Women: A Counterhistory of Feminism*, 15-44. First edition. New York: Bold Type Books, 2021.

Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, eds. *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 2: 1861-1876. Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1887.

Still, William. "Frances Ellen Watkins Harper." In *Underground Rail Road: A Record of Facts, Authentic Narratives, Letters, &c., Narrating the Hardships, Hair-Breadth Escapes, and Death Struggles of the Slaves in Their Efforts for Freedom, 755-780*. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1872.

Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.

About the Author

Georgia Jensen (Brown' 26) is a sophomore majoring in history and sociology. Her historical research so far has been in 19th and early 20th century Black American activists, with particular interest in their suffrage experiences. In her free time, she enjoys hanging out with friends and watching TV.



Rice Historical Review

**Vol. 9
2024**

Mexican Typhus in the Bacteriological Age:

Constructed Science, Medicine, and Practice

Rodolfo Gutierrez

Following the development of germ theory in the eighteenth century, a modern understanding of infectious diseases gradually took form. Current structures of epidemiology, microbiology, public health, research institutions, and health policy were constructed by the disciples of germ theory who disseminated, applied, and evolved this framework internationally. Typhus, specifically its pervasive danger in Mexico in the twentieth century, can serve as a case study to explore the development of institutions, nation-building, global health, and modern scientific models that reflect the social frameworks. Ludwik Fleck was a Polish-Jewish microbiologist who worked with Rudolf Weigl to study and create a vaccine for epidemic typhus in Poland in the 1920s and 1930s before being arrested and deported to Nazi concentration camps to develop a typhus vaccine. Along with his research, Fleck developed one of the first systems of historical philosophy and sociology of science, preceding and inspiring Thomas Kuhn's theories of scientific revolutions. As Fleck argues in his 1935 book *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, science is inherently community-driven. When ideas are exchanged, a "thought collective" arises, developing a unique "thought style" from a series of understandings and misunderstandings that reflect contemporary thinking, biases, and ideals that form a "collective mood" (i.e., a readiness for an identically directed perception). This thought style and what are called "facts" are social constructs and are often incom-

measurable to other possible thought styles.¹ As a result, the scientific method and the possible knowledge that can be produced are constrained and preconditioned by earlier discoveries, practices, and beliefs. The Mexican typhus story of the early twentieth century highlights how science, medicine, and truth—historical and contemporary—are social constructs reflecting existing political, economic, and cultural inequalities. The advent of the germ theory of infectious disease and the ideas maintained by the successors of Pasteur and Koch led to significant issues when tackling and understanding the complex bacterial source typhus. Furthermore, Mexican typhus epidemics' historical and geopolitical context lends itself to a parallel discussion of how American involvement in Mexican public health was shaped by capital, interest, and power. These two stories exemplify the social determinants of not only health, but also health policy and scientific thought.

The Science and Larger History of Typhus

Medical textbooks now describe typhus as a group of infectious bacteria in the *Rickettsia* genus that induce fever, headaches, and other flu-like symptoms a week or two after infection. A couple of days after the onset of symptoms, a rash begins, typically at the trunk of the body, then spreading to the extremities and covering most of the body save the face, palms, and soles. In severe cases, small red/purple spots from hemorrhaging capillaries called petechiae may develop. Without antibiotics (typically doxycycline, discovered in the 1940s), the disease can complicate with meningencephalitis—inflammation of the meninges and brain tissue—leading to headache, nausea, light sensitivity, altered mental status, personality shifts, coma, or death. Although vaccines have been developed for typhus, they range in effectiveness and are not widely produced in the twenty-first century. Before the 1930s, typhus had a 17-25% mortality rate.² Recrudescence infections of *Rickettsia prowazekii* (which causes epidemic typhus), called Brill-Zinsser disease, may lay dormant for months or years after an initial illness. When infection does reoccur, the symptoms are similar to the primary infections, but generally milder and rarely fatal. However, patients with Brill-Zinsser may reintroduce typhus in a community and create a new outbreak. The most significant risk factors for typhus

1. Incommensurable, in other words, means what is a fact to the members of a thought collective A sometimes does not exist to the members of a thought collective B, and a thought that is significant and true to the members of A may sometimes be false or meaningless for members of B. This is opposed to a commensurable conception in the philosophy of science where scientists could theoretically discuss concepts and objectively understand truth (i.e., scientific realism). Wojciech Sady, "Ludwik Fleck." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, Fall 2023, Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2023, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2023/entries/fleck/>.

2. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, "On Lice, Rats, and Mexicans" in *I Speak of the City: Mexico City at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 313.

are unsanitary conditions and overcrowding that allow lice and rats, vectors and reservoirs of typhus-causing *Rickettsia*, to live near humans for a zoonotic leap.³

This paper will focus on Mexico and its role in typhus research and control in the age of bacteriology—a new field around germ theory. Nevertheless, being aware of other international chapters and dimensions of the typhus story is essential. Typhus has been recorded among troops and civilian populations during war or famine. During the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), roughly 10% of the total German population and 90% of the casualties in Europe were caused by typhus. Often epidemic at the same time, typhus and typhoid fever (two distinct diseases, but only understood as such in the nineteenth century) were responsible for 400,000 deaths during the Great Irish Famine (1846-1849). Between 1917 and 1923, it is estimated that nearly three million people died of typhus during the Russian Civil War. In the lead-up to and during World War II (1939-1945), typhus outbreaks were common and deadly in POW camps, ghettos, and Nazi concentration camps—most notoriously at Bergen-Belsen and Buchenwald.⁴ In Mexico, typhus—known as *matlazahiatl* in Nahuatl or *tabardillo* or *tifo* in Spanish—chronically plagued streets, barrios (slums), hospitals, and prisons throughout the colonial and independent eras. It is theorized that epidemic typhus was introduced to Mexico by Europeans, killing over 2 million indigenous Americans in the sixteenth century.⁵ Between 1800 and 1921, Mexico City suffered 12 major typhus epidemics. Between these outbreaks, typhus continued to be endemic in the city and one of the leading causes of mortality.⁶ It was only after major public health initiatives sponsored by international philanthropic organizations and government institutions utilizing the scientific knowledge of the time that typhus was finally controlled in Mexico.

The Pitfall of Pasterian Consensus

The germ theory of disease—that microorganisms were the cause of disease—revolutionized medicine and science in the late nineteenth century, ushering in the golden era of bacteriology as scientists from around the world competed to

3. CDC, "Typhus Fevers for Healthcare Providers | CDC," *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, March 29, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/typhus/healthcare-providers/index.html>.

4. At Buchenwald, typhus vaccine experimentations were conducted and aided by the Robert Koch Institute, leading to the deaths of 127 of the 537 tested prisoners. At Bergen-Belsen, typhus was rampant and the leading cause of death (roughly 500 a day), including for Anne Frank and her sister Margot. Joseph P Byrne ed. "Typhus.," "Typhus and Poverty in the Modern World.," and "Typhus and War.," *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues*. (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2008), 723-735.

5. Recent genomic research suggests that the predominant pathogen responsible for the *Cocoliztli* epidemic was a *Salmonella enterica* subvariant closest to typhoid (although the results are not conclusive). Nevertheless, typhus-like *tabardillo* was recorded in sixteenth-century colonial Mexico.

6. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 314.

identify, isolate, and create vaccinations against pathologies. Highly controversial when first proposed because it challenged popular miasmatic theory (illness caused by “bad air” or a dirty environment) of disease, it quickly came into vogue during the 1860s and 1870s in Western medical circles. Louis Pasteur demonstrated that rabies, cholera, anthrax, and silkworm diseases have causal microscopic origins, disproved the doctrine of spontaneous generation, and developed vaccines for rabies and anthrax. Robert Koch developed techniques and rigorous standards to show the exact causality between specific microorganisms and diseases by demonstrating that a pure culture of *Bacillus anthracis*, *Vibrio cholerae*, and *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* caused anthrax, cholera, and tuberculosis, respectively, in healthy organisms. Soon after, proteges of Pasteur, Koch, and others, known collectively as the bacteriologists, would search the world over to find the microbial agent of diseases using the Pasteurian paradigm and achieve national and personal glory.

The scramble for bacteriological discovery had political and economic dimensions. Pasteur and Koch, both considered the fathers of bacteriology, developed a rivalry that was professional and nationalistic contributed by increased tensions between France and Germany after the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). Pasteur founded the Pasteur Institute in 1887 in Paris with government support, and would expand to satellite international institutions in French colonies to research tropical diseases, such as Saigon (1891), Tunis (1893), Algiers (1894), and Tananarive (1897).⁷ Similarly, Koch was allowed to form the government-funded Royal Prussian Institute for Infectious Diseases (posthumously named the Robert Koch Institute), although he failed to receive further funding for satellite schools. Nevertheless, both Pasteur and Koch attracted protégés from around the world who would develop bacteriology through their work internationally, with many Nobel Prizes awarded to their disciples.

Mexico City as a Laboratory of Epidemiology

This was the international context the bacteriologists needed when, in 1909, President Porfirio Díaz announced he would personally reward 50,000 and 20,000 pesos as a first and second prize for “the discovery of the typhus agent and its cure,” attracting several international groups of scientists to converge on Mexico.

7. Other biomedical institutes that worked closely with colonial offices were founded in other countries (e.g., Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (1898) in the United Kingdom, the Prince Leopold Institute of Tropical Medicine (1906) in Belgium, Vereeniging Koloniaal Instituut (1910) in the Netherlands, and the Institute of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (1902) in Portugal).

At that point, typhus control and prevention had long been the project of the Mexican government. In 1876, the first Medical Congress was convened in Mexico City to discuss typhus and other epidemic illnesses after a tremendous fecal stink settled over the city. Although many doctors at the congress followed the conclusion of Mexico's leading contemporary typhus researcher Dr. Miguel Jimenez, who stated that typhus was caused by unsanitary latrine and drainage pipes, early hygienists such as Eduardo Licéaga began exploring the possibility of a germ theory of disease.⁸ However, there continued to be division and debate within the Mexican medical community between miasma theory and an emerging germ theory for typhus. In the 1880s, Mexico's National Academy of Medicine created a permanent commission of 500 pesos for "observations that advance knowledge of [typhus] in terms of its nature, etiology, prophylaxis, or treatment" that was eventually rewarded for a miasma-based hypothesis that correlated changes in subterranean water levels and typhus cases.⁹

Regardless of what people theorized, typhus continued to kill. Hospitals like the Juarez Hospital and Hospital General de México were built during typhus outbreaks during the Porfiriato. The Porfirian government, desiring to modernize and industrialize the country for "order and progress," invested and implemented policies towards infrastructure and sanitation in Mexico City. Under the direction of physicians and hygienists—a sub-clique of the científicos, the leading intelligentsia and administrators of the Porfirian government—urban renewal projects such as a comprehensive sewage and drainage system for the city and the Valley of Mexico were constructed to control Mexico City's chronic flooding problem.¹⁰ In the 1880s, Eduardo Licéaga led a mass vaccination campaign and systemic massacres of street dogs in Mexico City, citing American and European sanitary codes and a Pasteurian understanding of rabies.¹¹ Health education was another cornerstone of the Porfirian government, attempting to create a hygienic "instinct" to the population through public lectures and informal talks by physicians and hygienists in markets, plazas, and schools using non-technical language.¹² All these projects were important for the international image of economic and political development that the Díaz government wanted to project, particularly in participating in world's fairs and expos with medicine and hygiene exhibitions.¹³

8. Paul Ross, "From Sanitary Police to Sanitary Dictatorship: Mexico's Nineteenth-Century Public Health Movement," (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2005), 236-251.

9. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 317.

10. Claudia Agostoni, *Monuments of Progress: Modernization and Public Health in Mexico City, 1876-1910*. (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2003), 37-43; 131-43.

11. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 289.

12. Claudia Agostoni, "Popular Health Education and Propaganda in Times of Peace and War in Mexico City, 1890s-1920s," *American Journal of Public Health* 96, no. 1 (January 2006), 55-56.

13. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 146.



Dr. Carlos D. Jimenes, Chief of the Typhus Ward in the Hospital General de Mexico, Mexico City, circa 1921. Courtesy of the Wellcome Collection. <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/dwpg4vzb>.

Despite all these efforts, typhus continued to kill far more people in Mexico City than in any other contemporary world class city (between 1900 and 1909, typhus caused 7,371 premature deaths in Mexico City), and the capital was still considered as one of the most unsanitary places in the world.¹⁴ With the failure to develop a domestic solution to the typhus problem, the Porfirian government turned to international bacteriologists and modern science for solutions.

During 1909 and 1910, bacteriologists picked apart Mexico City for knowledge and discoveries. Four international teams arose: the U.S. Public Health Services with Joseph Goldberger and John Anderson; Howard T. Ricketts and Russell

14. Agostoni, *Monuments of Progress*, 76, xii.

Wilder from the University of Chicago; E. McCampbell and James Conneffe from Ohio State University; and Charles Nicolle of the Pasteur Institute of Tunis (who never went to Mexico during this period, but still set a consideration for the prize money). Local bacteriologists also were active during this 1909 Mexican typhus search, such as Ángel Gaviño, founder of the Instituto Bacteriológico Nacional, and his associate Joseph Girard (hired from the Pasteur Institute of Paris years before), who established the infrastructure to study typhus in the city. The demonstration of lice as carriers for typhus by Charles Nicolle in Tunis drastically changed the direction of research in Mexico.¹⁵ Ricketts shifted his focus to the typhus germ that Nicolle failed to identify in both the lice and human patients as expected using germ theory established by Koch's postulates. However, he found it difficult since the microbe that causes typhus is not a normal, easily isolated germ that grew in 1910s laboratory conditions.¹⁶ Many memorializing biographies written decades later say Ricketts was on the verge of identifying the typhus bacteria from samples he collected during the many expeditions he made into the notoriously dangerous and contagious Belém prison before dying in 1910. In any case, Ricketts became a martyr, and when the Brazilian bacteriologist Henrique da Rocha Lima conclusively identified in 1916 the etiological agent of typhus, *Rickettsia prowazekii*, he named the genus after Ricketts. In February 1911, the National Academy of Medicine considered the applications for the typhus prize and decided to not give the prize to anyone. The academy argued that although, in the long run, the transmission agent of typhus was louse neither Nicolle nor anyone else identified the active germ nor conclusively proved the function of lice.¹⁷

15. Gaviño would argue that he was the first to do the experiment and identify the typhus microorganism using a guinea pig and monkeys. Many of these experiments were inconclusive and could not verify or negate Nicolle's louse hypothesis. Regardless, Nicolle would win the 1928 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine "for his work on typhus," specifically on how lice was the vector for epidemic typhus.

16. *Rickettsia* is an obligate intracellular pathogen and highly pleomorphic, meaning it needs to live inside cells to survive and can change its morphology depending on the environment. As a result, none of the researchers were able to grow the typhus-causing agent in pure culture: one of Koch's postulates necessary in identifying the pathogenic source. The methodology to grow *Rickettsia* (and other obligate intracellular pathogens like viruses) *in vitro* was developed in the 1930s by Ernest Goodpasture through growth in tissue and embryo cultures (e.g., chicken embryos).

17. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 316-326.



Howard T. Ricketts working in a laboratory in Mexico City, circa 1910. Courtesy of the University of Chicago Howard Taylor Ricketts Papers. www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/building-long-future/howard-taylor-ricketts/.

Looking retrospectively, it is tempting to scrutinize the early twentieth typhus experiments for their over-reliance and overconfidence of the contemporary post-Pasteurian paradigm. One of the key debates between the Mexican and European scientists was whether there were different, geographically unique strains of typhus. We know that typhus is caused by different *Rickettsia* species. The two main species in the typhus group are *R. prowazekii* that causes epidemic louse-borne typhus (also known as Brill-Zinsser, historic, or European typhus) and *R. typhi* that causes murine “Mexican” endemic typhus from fleas on rats (also called tabardillo or flea-borne typhus).¹⁸ When a second generation of bacteriologists reinvestigated typhus in Mexico City in the 1930s, their mindset was noticeably different from the 1910 moment. Scientists like Maximiliano Ruiz Castañeda and Gerardo Varela made their careers in a post-revolutionary Mexico of rapid industrialization and urbanization. They had more extensive training in North American and European institutions, they saw themselves as constituents of the global scientific community,

18. Both types of typhus were present in the Old- and New World, but are still statistically associated with a geographic region. Furthermore, there exist several sub-species strains that exhibit different symptoms.

and had learned the new scientific lingua franca: English. This background allowed Ruiz Castañeda and Varela to work with American Hans Zinsser to analyze the social and biological ecology of Mexico City and communicate their findings to those with a more laboratory-centered approach, like Swiss rickettsiologist Hermann Mooser and Polish bacteriologist H  l  ne Sparrow. Their collaboration eventually led to laboratory experiments—communicated in English—that demonstrated a difference between Mexican and European typhus fevers, which convinced leading scientists (namely Nicolle) who had previously discounted earlier descriptions from Mexican doctors.¹⁹ Ruiz Castañeda, however, was confused why neither Gavi  o, Girard, or Ricketts didn't recognize the difference between the two beyond a hunch. He reasoned that either at the time the murine strain was rare, and that it had not yet acquired the importance it would during the Mexican Revolution.²⁰

Attempting to reconstruct the thought collective of the 1910 moment is a valuable lens to view overlooked data. It is very possible that the 1910 bacteriologists did not think that two different types of bacteria could coexist and be specialized to one vector host or another. Darwinian evolution, although already published and known, was widely criticized by biologists as incomplete in 1910, and did not share enough meaningful discourse with bacteriology, preventing a parasite-host specificity hypothesis.²¹ Instead, they applied the Pastuerian paradigm and Koch's postulates along with their geographic, not evolutionary, preconception of the disease strains. It was only in the 1930s, when evidence contrary to the preexisting theories were conveyed in a common language with common definitions and standards that the vanguard modified and recontextualized their own thought style to the shifted thought collective.

One can see this paradigm shift overtime by looking at how the pathogen was described during different decades. In 1906, Dr. Miguel Otero in San Luis Potosi had suggested that the typhus germ was an amoeba (*Hemameba mexicana petequialis*) similar to other amoeba illnesses seen in Mexico. When the international bacteriologists entered Mexico, they assumed that typhus was a bacteria like other discovered infectious pathogens.²² However, when the typhus pathogen did

19. The experiment in question focused on the difference in the scrotal reaction of guinea pigs to either murine/ endemic or epidemic typhus.

20. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 316-344.

21. For more, see Stephen Jay Gould, "The Hardening of the Modern Synthesis," in *Dimensions of Darwinism: Themes and Counterthemes in Twentieth-Century Evolutionary Biology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 71-93 or Julian Huxley, *Evolution: The Modern Synthesis* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942).

22. Bacteriologists were wrong about their conclusions in other instances, such as the attribution of the bacteria *Haemophilus influenzae* as the causative microbe of influenza by Richard Pfeiffer (a mentee of Koch) instead of the virus. When the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic arrived, most scientists at the time still believed that it was the causal

not fit neatly into the Pasteurian paradigm, different theories emerged on why the bacteria was difficult to isolate or the true identity of the pathogen. By the 1930s and the second wave of typhus research in Mexico, researchers had to derive a term to describe typhus in light of the uncertainty. In correspondences and publications by Zinsser and Ruiz Castañeda, the pathogen is referred to as the “Typhus Fever Virus,” both borrowing a Pasteurian term to refer to any pathogenic agent and opening the possibility that it is similar to other recently discovered sub-microscopic agents.²³ In theorizing about the true nature of the typhus-causing pathogen, Zinsser in *Rats, Lice, and History* (1935) used the term “Rickettsiae” diseases to specifically talk about typhus to differentiate between other fevers, such as typhoid, that categorized separately within the bacteriological movement. However, Zinsser understood that it is likely an intracellular pathogen similar to a “true bacteria,” but that lack of taxonomic certainty beyond this “render[s] a separate tentative classification convenient.”²⁴ By the 1940s—and the adoption of the modern synthesis that incorporates Darwinian, Mendelian, and population genetics—a unifying taxonomic classification system was imposed onto the existing typhus research. At the 1945 Inter-American Conference on Typhus in Mexico City, the difficulty in converting meaningful discussion of Rickettsial diseases without a lack of consensus and utility resulted in four different proposals on how to reorganize Rickettsiaceae taxonomy based on morphology and disease presentation.²⁵ Making matters more complicated, Rickettsia is also highly pleomorphic, meaning that it can change its morphology depending on the environment. Even now, with taxonomy and identification increasingly relying on DNA—something unimaginable and inaccessible in the 1950s—there exists a continued lack of consensus and communicability between scientists. The continuity in disagreements persists not only between different countries, but even from different labs, hindering the development of a cohesive thought style and “objective facts,” however they are created.

agent. Another example is rabies. Although Pasteur was able to develop a vaccine against rabies, he was not able to isolate it, speculating that the virus was too small to be observed with light microscopy.

23. The first virus discovered was the tobacco mosaic virus in 1892 was not bacterial or fungal (*Contagium vivum fluidum*, or contagious living fluid), countering Pasteur’s 1890 claim that all infectious diseases are caused by living microbes. More acceptance and consensus definitions of a virus as an obligate parasite continued to be developed in the 1910s-30s. In the present day, a virus is defined as a submicroscopic infectious agent that is an obligate parasite and typically consists of a nucleic acid surrounded by a protein coat. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 339, 341-2, 345, footnotes 52, 54.

24. Hans Zinsser, *Rats, Lice and History*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 224.

25. Luis Patiño Camargo, “Anotaciones al Problema de Nomenclatura y Clasificación de las Enfermedades Tifo Exantemáticas Producidas por Rickettsias;” Henry Pinkerton, “Problems of Nomenclature in the Rickettsial Diseases;” Atilio Macchiavello, “Notes on the Taxonomy of the Rickettsias and the Classification of the Rickettsioses;” Ludwik Anigstein, “Problems of Nomenclature of Certain Pathogenic Rickettsiae and Rickettsial Diseases;” in *Primera Reunión Interamericana de Tifo, October 7-13, 1945*, ed. *Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, Instituto de Asuntos Interamericanos*, (Mexico City: Wellcome Collection), 387-432.



Primera Reunión Interamericana del Tifo. — México, D. F., octubre de 1945.

Group photo of the participants from Canada, United States, Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, (among others) at the First Inter-American Conference on Typhus. Some of the people depicted are: Manuel Martínez Báez (Committee President); Gerardo Varela (1st Committee Vice-President); Maximiliano Ruiz Castañeda (2nd Committee Vice-President); Atilio Macchiavello (Chilean Bacteriologist from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)); Juan Antonio Montoya (Secretary for the PAHO Comision against typhus); Stanhope Bayne-Jones (Brigadier General and Director of Typhus Control for the American Armed Forces during World War II); George C Payne (Representative of the Rockefeller Foundation in Mexico), 1945. Courtesy of the Wellcome Collection. <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/j8nf25je>.

Social Interpretations of Typhus

Despite the lack of scientific consensus on its nature, typhus was already being used by both scientists and lay-people as a fact to reinforce preconceived notions of sociology, history, and culture. Zinsser wrote *Rats, Lice and History* as a biography of “typhus fever” and its relationship to humanity, with disease being one of the greatest factors for human history and development more than war and great men.²⁶ Zinsser writes for a general audience, spending most of the book (the first twelve chapters of sixteen) establishing background “indispensable for the preparation of the lay reader” before going into the specifics of typhus.²⁷ Throughout the book, Zinsser draws on historical and contemporary examples of typhus to argue

26. Zinsser, *Rats, Lice and History*, 9.

27. Zinsser, *Rats, Lice and History*, Subtitle.

that it is the great shaper of the human history, but cautions against application of such logic to race by pseudoscientists in a tongue-in-cheek manner, saying:

Unlike the flea, [the louse] can neither hop nor live for any length of time separated from its human host, it possesses qualities of dogged persistence and patient diligence which arouse that admiration, thinly masked by a pretense of loathing, which men similarly feel for competing races whom they fear and, therefore, persecute. (We refer to the “Blond Aryan” complex).²⁸

Zinsser respected his Mexican colleagues, especially Ruiz Castañeda, whom he held in high regard; however, he could not separate himself from a racialized perception of Mexican science. In his memoirs, Zinsser blended his work with his perceived civilizational gap between himself and Mexico: “As a matter of fact, the Indian population is Mexico, and that is the main reason why we do not understand the Mexicans. Their developing civilization starts from a base line quite different from our Anglo-Saxon, fundamentally commercial one.”²⁹

Nicolle, the other great typhus researcher, had a similar impression of Mexico with a more overt imperial perception of the bacteriological movement. Nicolle, like Zinsser, believed that human civilization reflects nature, but extended this to believing that genius was also a product of certain civilizations, and that people of mixed races generated “cerebral sterility.” He perceived civilizations like Mexico as mere reservoirs of disease waiting to be tamed and civilized by France and himself.³⁰ When visiting Mexico City in 1931, Nicolle’s first thoughts of the city was that it was racially mixed, or Indian and dirty.³¹ When presented with the theory from Mexican scientists that typhus was caused by two distinct pathogens, Nicolle discounted their findings or studies, instead believing that if there were any differences in typhus presentation between Mexico and Europe, it was because of a racial expression of the disease.³² Nicolle centered his narrative of the history of typhus research—for which he won the Nobel Prize—on the louse, and how the eradication of lice in Europe represented man’s recent ascension to civilization that colonial

28. Zinsser, *Rats, Lice and History*, 227.

29. Hans Zinsser, *As I Remember Him. The Biography of R.S.* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1940), 340 and ff. as quoted in Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 347.

30. Charles Nicolle, *Naissance, vie et mort des maladies infectieuses* (Paris: Alcan, 1930), as quoted in Tenorio-Trillo, *Rats, Lice, and History*, 340.

31. “Mexico ... grande ville peuplée d’indiens et de métis, plutôt sale.” Charles Nicolle, *Entretiens d’humanistes. Correspondance de Charles Nicolle et Georges Duhamel, 1922-1936, présentée et annotée par le docteur J.-J. Hueber*. (Rouen: Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Rouen, 1996), as quoted in Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 349.

32. Mooser, Ruiz Castañeda, and Varela in personal correspondences believed that Nicolle’s European prejudices about Mexico led him to oppose their findings. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 346.

and developing countries need assistance in adopting.³³

The racial and geopolitical interpretations of the typhus movement in Mexico during the early twentieth century was part of the prevailing thought collective of bacteriologists in the global north as adopted by the rest of the world. Education in America or in Europe was seen as a prerequisite for any scientist from the global south, shaping the types of questions that the scientific community would ask: why was “Mexican” typhus different from “historical” typhus? Was typhus a disease brought by Europeans or did it exist before? If typhus presented differently, was it because of different rat populations, human populations, climates, geography, or strains—or a combination? Was typhus—and by extent other infectious diseases—a mark of barbarity or an immature civilization? Once answered, these interpretations from the natural world only make sense to the thinker’s culture.³⁴ When it comes to epidemiology, scientific knowledge has an inherent motivation: control and prevention. The typhus movement in Mexico started by Díaz’s “cañonazo de 50,000 pesos” was part of the larger global movement to end disease. However, the narrative of typhus control in Mexico was influenced by the United States’ vested interest in what they perceived to be a stable and non-contagious neighbor.

The United States’ Interest and Relationship with Mexican Public Health

Mexican history and policy, both domestic and foreign, has often been interpreted in relation to the United States. In the pre-revolutionary years, the Díaz government encouraged and played off American and European investments in Mexico to modernize the country and diminish the development gap. Mexican positivists in the government feared that the geographic proximity of the United States placed Mexico in the American sphere of influence unless Mexico developed into a modern power, exemplified by the purported Porfirian quip: “Pobre México, tan lejos de Dios y tan cerca de Estados Unidos.”³⁵ The United States investments in Mexico, developed during the Porfiriato (1876-1911), would later be threatened with the start of the Mexican Revolution in 1911; the Americans viewed the regime change and conflict as possessing potential spill over, both violently and biologically, across the border.

33. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 340.

34. “In science, as in art and in life, only that which is true to culture is true to nature,” Ludwik Fleck, *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979), II, 3.

35. “Poor Mexico, so far from God yet so close to the United States.” Although commonly attributed to Díaz, it is likely to have been said by journalist José Nemesio García Naranjo.

The Mexican Revolution was the catalyst for one of the deadliest outbreaks of typhus in Mexico. Typhus outbreaks, along with other diseases such as cholera and smallpox, were ubiquitous with war and famine. In *Rats, Lice and History*, Zinsser often paired the two to demonstrate a correlation between the increase of people congregated as a unit—such as sharing makeshift living quarters and unwashed clothes—and poor nutrition that prevented an effective immune response to the devastation of “camp,” “jail,” “war,” or “hunger” fever experienced by both troops and civilians.³⁶ For example, the Mexican hero of the Battle of Puebla, Ignacio Zaragoza, died of typhus shortly after his victory over the French when an outbreak occurred.³⁷ For the armies of the Mexican Revolution, uncleanness and outbreaks were common and deadly. In a 1915 interview with *New York American*, General Pancho Villa spoke to the uncleanness of his army, saying: “There are a great number of unburied corpses and the stench is nearly unbearable. After our “wrong brothers” the Carrancistas, our worst enemies are the flies, the lice, and the rats ... By day two or three after bathing and cleansing, we are already lice-ridden once again.”³⁸ Reports of influenza, smallpox, scarlet fever, and typhus were common causes of death among the rank-and-file; outbreaks were reported in cities that revolutionary armies captured.³⁹ This was especially true in Mexico City, where refugees not only brought disease but also strained the already tenuous economic situation from the civil war. Many rural dwellers fled to the capital for a safe haven, but instead found unemployment, hunger, chaos, violence, and death.⁴⁰ Housing shortages, for example, became an issue that led to increased population density in the poorest neighborhoods of the city. The immense political instability during the Victoriano Huerta government led to a suspension of several health and sanitation services in the capital.⁴¹ After the fall of Huerta in the July of 1914 and the entry of the Constitutionalist armies’ entry to Mexico City in August, the new government under Venustiano Carranza aimed to establish legitimacy with the United States

36. Interestingly, “trench fever,” which infected anywhere between a fifth to a third of troops during World War I was initially believed to be caused by a *Rickettsia* (named ‘*Rickettsia quintana*’ or ‘*Rickettsia weigli*’ [sic]) because of its similarity in symptoms and using body lice vectors. In *Rats, Lice and History* as well as other primary sources discussing *Rickettsia*, *R. quintana* is also discussed. It was only in the 1960s when it was discovered to not be an obligate pathogen like “true-Rickettsiae” when cultured from a patient in Mexico City and in the 1980s it was classified as *Bartonella quintana*. Gregory Anstead “The Centenary of the Discovery of Trench Fever, an Emerging Infectious Disease of World War I using genomic analysis,” *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* 16, no. 8 (2016), [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(16\)30003-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(16)30003-2). M Maurin and D Raoult “*Bartonella (Rochalimaea) quintana* Infections,” *Clinical Microbiology Reviews* 9, no. 3 (1996): 273-4.

37. Some sources suggest that it may have been a typhoid fever outbreak. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 313-14.

38. “*Hay una gran cantidad de cadáveres insepultos y es casi insoportable la hediondez. Después de nuestros ‘equívocos hermanos’ los carrancistas, nuestros peores enemigos son las moscas, piojos y ratas... A los dos o tres días de bañados y limpios, ya estamos empiojados de nuevo*”, Francisco “Pancho” Villa, *The New York American*, July 19, 1915, as quoted in América Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario en la Ciudad de México: 1911-1917*, (México: CIESAS, 2016), 65.

39. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 67-94, 473-87.

40. Agostoni, “Popular Health Education and Propaganda,” 57.

41. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 120, 122-29.

who occupied the port city of Veracruz after a bombarded and punitive invasion in April.⁴² This became more difficult with the split by Villa and the Conventionists, as Carranza's Constitutionalist faction was forced to move to Veracruz in November 1914 soon after the American withdrawal. In December 1914, Villa and Emiliano Zapata entered Mexico City with their armies. With renewed mobilization, the capital was cut off from supply routes. Famine set in and 1915 became known as the "year of hunger."⁴³ By July 1915, Mexico City was recaptured by the Constitutionalist; the Carranza government was recognized by the Woodrow Wilson administration as the de facto Mexican government by October 1915. The revolving door of revolutionary armies as well as the civil-war induced social and economic instability exposed the city to a massive typhus outbreak from 1915-16.⁴⁴

Epidemic typhus spikes were expected in the colder months as rats migrated and body lice from pauperized populations shared and wore unwashed, infested clothes and blankets. From 1911-1914, approximately 1,384 typhus cases were recorded in Mexico City out of roughly 720,753 people in the Federal District. A majority of cases occurred from December to May with monthly totals fluctuating between 60 - 140 cases and 30-90 deaths.⁴⁵ Starting in November of 1915 and continuing into March 1916, 9,879 cases of typhus resulting in 1,833 deaths were reported in Mexico city for a monthly average of 366.6 deaths from 1975.8 cases.⁴⁶ Other reports indicate that typhus claimed a thousand lives a week in the capital and countless more in other cities and the countryside.⁴⁷ In the Mexican press, reports of "many casualties" in Tehuacán, Puebla, Toluca, Aguascalientes, and Chihuahua initiated local and state governments to implement public health emergency measures, such as house cleaning campaigns and calls for quicker burials.⁴⁸

Medicalization of the borderlands

The typhus outbreaks increased already high American interest in the po-

42. Three days into the occupation of Veracruz, the New York Times noted the prevalence of yellow fever and typhus in Mexico as a greater danger to soldiers than bullets in the case of a Mexican campaign, saying that "DISEASE IS OUR WORST FOE IN INVASION." "Peril in the Germs that Infest Mexico" *The New York Times*. April 26, 1914, 4.

43. Ryan Alexander, "The Fever of War: Epidemic Typhus and Public Health in Revolutionary Mexico City, 1915-1917" *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 100, no. 1 (2020): 65.

44. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 95-117.

45. Molina del Villar, "Gráfica 2.3 Estacionalidad mensual de enfermos de tifo en la Ciudad de México y municipalidades, 1912-1915" in *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 115.

46. Molina del Villar, "Cuadro 4.2 Número de Enfermos y Muertos por Tifo en la Ciudad de México, 1911-1917" in *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 231.

47. It is important to note the difficulty of getting reliable population and health statistics during this time. Molina del Villar analyzed data from bulletins issued by the Superior Council of Public Health, hospital registries, and burial records. Although exact numbers are not certain, Molina del Villar has taken exhaustive care in analyzing these figures and the source material and presenting all data in historical contexts in *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*.

48. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 490-498.

litical turmoil south of the border. With the start of the Mexican Revolution and crescendoing in 1916-17, there had been an increase of reported number of typhus and smallpox in border towns such as El Paso, Laredo, and Eagle Pass. Concerned about disease entering the United States from “consequent migration of refugees, soldiers, and their families, with the attendant misery, poverty, and absolute lack of sanitary measures,” General Pershing—installed at Fort Bliss the year before to prevent a spillover of violence—on behalf of the army, municipal, and United States Public Health Service (USPHS) physicians and the El Paso County Medical Society, placed the medical corps to limit disease and contagion.⁴⁹ Immigration authorities also implemented stricter migration policies following several fatal cases of typhus in El Paso and Laredo. When paired with racial anxiety, violence occurred. For example, on January 23, 1916—days after a race riot in El Paso sparked by anti-Mexican sentiments following a massacre of American engineers in Chihuahua by Villa—“customs officers... opened fire on several Mexicans attempting to cross the international border with large bundles of rags” after a recent policy banned their importation because of possible typhus contamination.⁵⁰

Following more high profile typhus deaths, public outrage and concern over contagion and national security (especially after Villa’s raid into the border town of Columbus, New Mexico in March 1916 and the subsequent expedition into Mexico), the border was increasingly enforced along bacteriological and nationalistic lines.⁵¹ In Mexico, public bulletins from municipal offices, like the state government of Chihuahua, warned citizens trying to enter the United States of U.S. border authorities harassing or denying Mexican migrants with the current typhus paranoia.⁵² Across the border, the USPHS and the Bureau of Immigration renovated border cross checkpoints to install builders and streamlined disinfection equipment with a sign saying “every arrival from Mexico will be bathed with soft soap and warm water,” installing an “iron-clad quarantine” that emphasized delousing.

These new quarantine measures incited anti-Mexican sentiments by Americans and anti-American sentiments by Mexicans. On January 23, 1917, the day

49. C.C. Pierce, “Combating Typhus Fever on the Mexican Border,” *Public Health Reports (1896-1970)* 32, no. 12 (1917): 426.

50. “Fire on Mexican Ragmen,” *The New York Times*, January 23, 1916, 6.

51. Stern discusses an incident in an El Paso prison that held around twenty Mexicans for possible Villista sympathies. They had been recently deloused with kerosine and were all killed when someone (probably accidentally) lit a match. Stern argues that an overlooked reason for the Villista raid on Columbus and the subsequent rhetoric of burning the Americans alive was retribution for the incendiary zeal of typhus paranoia and delousing protocols at the border. Alexandra Stern, “Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood: Medicalization and Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1910-1930” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 79, no. 1 (1999): 41, 61-63.

52. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 494.

that the quarantine was put into effect, hundreds of Mexican women hurled stones at American civilians in El Paso and Juarez in what was known as the “1917 Bath Riots.” By the end of the week, the USPHS implemented strict and elaborate medical inspections that included stripping migrants as inspectors scrutinized their body for ticks, lice, or bites while their clothes were chemically sterilized. If lice were found, the men had their hair clipped and burned while the women had their hair doused with equal parts kerosene and vinegar for half an hour. Afterwards, they were set to sex-segregated showers and sprayed with a mixture of soap, water, and kerosene. At the end of the process, they were handed back their clothing, given a smallpox vaccine as needed, and given a signed certificate by the “United States Public Health Service, Mexican Quarantine” showing that they had been “deloused, bathed, vaccinated, [and had their] clothing and baggage disinfected” before being sent for a general medical examination, psychological profiling, and citizen interrogation.⁵³



Front page of the El Paso Morning Times, Monday, January 29, 1917. Courtesy of the University of Texas at El Paso. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531>

metaph198630/.

The typhus quarantine by the USPHS is an example of the medicalization of American imperialism and nation-building in the early twentieth century as the United States attempted to maneuver their relationships with Mexico and

53. Pierce, “Combating Typhus Fever on the Mexican Border” 426-429; Stern, “Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood,” 45-46.

Mexicans. These invasive and violent procedures continued into the late 1920s—long after the typhus panic had subsided—and at its height in 1917 processed 39,620 bodies per week in El Paso alone. Many of the rationales behind increased control along the border had racial and eugenical undercurrents that were supported by influential government officials, intellectuals, health officers, and doctors.⁵⁴ Similar to Nicolle's beliefs about Mexicans, many Anglo-Americans viewed Mexicans as a fundamentally mixed race and believed that immigration threatened to taint the American "seed stock" with their mestizo background and propensity for disease.⁵⁵ David Starr Jordan, the first president of Stanford and leading American eugenicist, wrote to Charles Davenport, director of the Eugenics Record Office, that "[t]he Mexicans have brought with them bubonic plague, small pox [sic], and typhus fever. While these diseases do not touch the clean living part of the south, they have still kept the health officers very busy and probably diminished by one-half the chief crop of Southern California, winter tourists."⁵⁶ The transition of the typhus checkpoint from temporary public health measure to instrument of enforcing and militarizing the Mexican-American border was justified through racialized and social distinctions by the global north to distinguish a modern and healthy white civilizations from a global south with mixed races, filth, and microbes.

Revolutionary Sanitary Dictatorship

In Mexico City, the typhus outbreak coupled with the food shortage the year prior and general insecurity and fatigue of violent revolution led to a deterioration of support for the Carranza government. The public and the press would question whether bullets or microbes were causing more casualties.⁵⁷ In charge of the federal response to the 1915-16 typhus outbreak was Doctor and General José María Rodríguez. Along with being a close friend and personal physician to Carranza, Rodríguez was a surgeon from a prominent Coahuila family who gained recognition for securing American arms and munitions during the Revolution and

54. The American eugenics movement was most popular in the late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The goal was to have human-directed evolution, to improve the "racial stock" of a nation by promoting the procreation of positive traits while limiting those with deleterious traits (such as poverty, "feeble-mindedness," and certain other racial traits) based on social applications of Darwinian natural selection and/or Mendelian genetics.

Many institutions, such as the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor, were supported and sponsored by corporate foundations such as the Carnegie Institution and the Rockefeller Foundation. Policies implemented at the time include immigration restrictions such as the Immigration Act of 1924, anti-miscegenation laws, and state sterilization policies upheld by the Supreme Court in *Buck v. Bell*. For more see Diane Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity, 1865 to the Present: The Control of Nature*. (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1995).

55. Stern, "Buildings, Borders, and Blood," 59, 64, 73-80.

56. David Starr Jordan to Charles Davenport, 7 May 1925, APS, Davenport Paper, ms, B:D27 as quoted in Stern, "Buildings, Borders, and Blood," 75.

57. "Bacilos o Balas," *El Demócrata*, September 15, 1915, p1, cited in Agostoni, "Popular Health Education and Propaganda," 57.

fighting yellow fever, smallpox, typhus, and influenza as head (and founder) of the revolutionary Medical Military Corps. When Huerta fled in 1914 and Carranza became the de facto head of state, he appointed Rodríguez as head of the Superior Council of Public Health (Consejo Superior de Salubridad).⁵⁸

The Superior Council was a vestige of the ancien régime. Founded in 1841 during the centralist republic as the institutional home for leading Mexican hygienists, it was strongly overhauled by the Porfirian government under Eduardo Licéaga in an attempt to develop Mexican autonomy of public health and establish Mexico as a trusted partner in defending the health of the western hemisphere.⁵⁹ The Superior Council would continue to be under the direction of Licéaga until his resignation in 1913 (13 days after Huerta's U.S. supported coup of President Francisco I. Madero).⁶⁰

When typhus cases began to climb to higher than expected numbers, health authorities at first required physicians to deliver talks and lectures in schools, plazas, and gardens on cleanliness, temperance, rest, fresh air, and exercise much like they did during the times of Don Porfirio. Physicians would traverse the city for suspected carriers before two accompanying hairdressers that shaved 90,000 people in 1916 and 1917.⁶¹ Soldiers with typhus were quarantined in local hospitals. Cinemas and theaters were closed. Churches had restricted hours. Despite all these efforts, the number of deaths increased. In the United States, the Rockefeller Foundation along with the American Red Cross offered the Carranza government aid in fighting the typhus epidemic in Mexico City, Puebla, and Pachuca in part because of typhus anxiety from the borderlands adding to American attention to the Revolution.⁶² Carranza and the Constitutionals, however, rejected the international aid consistent with their nationalist ideology. Carranza denied the existence of famine conditions, maintaining that the existing food shortages and epidemic were a result of the recent Conventionist occupation of Mexico City, and that Mexico was politically stable and adept to handle the typhus outbreak.⁶³ A special sanitary police was established with forced curfews, animals were removed from homes, and

58. Alexander, "The Fever of War," 65.

59. Paul Ross, "Mexico's Superior Health Council and the American Public Health Association: The Transnational Archive of Porfirian Public Health, 1887–1910," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (2009): 573.

60. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 122.

61. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 321–23, 368–389; Agostoni, "Popular Health Education and Propaganda," 57.

62. "To Fight Typhus in Mexico City," *The New York Times*, December 23, 1915, 1; "Typhus Leaps Line; Laredo is Stricken," *The New York Times*, December 24, 1915, 4; "Red Cross Anxious to Right Typhus," *The New York Times*, December 25, 1915, 3.

63. Alexander, "The Fever of War," 87.

public places were prohibited to people “of any social class who by their notorious dirtiness could carry on their body or clothes parasitic animals which are transmissible.”⁶⁴ By 1916, Rodríguez’s reorganization of the sanitary personnel launched a house-to-house disinfection campaign and free showering stations that targeted the poorest neighborhoods of Mexico City. Those suspected of having typhus were evicted from their homes and transferred to dedicated typhus wards in the city’s hospitals.⁶⁵ Although topically effective in the midst of a fatal outbreak, the government response was burdened by bureaucracy and lack of cohesion and highlighted the inability of Mexico’s political institutions to solve public health crises.

As a delegate to the constitutional convention, Rodríguez made a speech in January 1917 arguing for a “sanitary dictatorship” that reflected his experience with the typhus epidemic. Rodríguez called for the reorganization of public health administration under a General Council of Public Health (replacing the Superior Council) to unify the country and the federal health ministries under a central administration in Mexico City through executive powers to end the country’s chronic endemics and epidemics. Rodríguez pointed to the drastic differences in hygiene between Mexican and American cities on different sides of the Rio Grande as a failure in Mexican disease prevention and moral and hygienic failings of the poor and marginalized. Quoting Jules Courmont, head of the Lyon Superior Council of Hygiene in France: “hygiene is the ultimate expression of social progress realized through science. The quality of a nation’s civilization is measured through their perfection of hygiene.”⁶⁶ To achieve modernity, Rodríguez argued, public health should be authoritarian to impose a hygienic character to Mexicans who lack it. The subsequent 1917 Mexican Constitution established the General Council and the Department of Public Health (also originally under the direction of Rodríguez) as executive agencies with compulsory, national power.⁶⁷ Rodríguez’s sanitary dictatorship became an integral tenet of the institutionalized revolutionary ideology—not dissimilar to the Porfirian mind-set, but with revolutionary language—that attempted to modernize Mexico in the 1920s and beyond.

Between the 1920s and 40s, the General Council and the Department of Public Health (also originally under the direction of Rodríguez) launched several

64. Agostoni, “Popular Health Education and Propaganda,” 56-7; “Carranza Fights Typhus in Capital,” *The New York Times*, December 16, 1915, 9.

65. Molina del Villar, *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario*, 324-363.

66. “La higiene es la última expresión del progreso social realizado por medios científicos, El grado de civilización de una nación se mide actualmente por la perfección de la higiene”; from José Rodríguez, “Federalización de la salubridad,” in *50 Discursos Doctrinales en el Congreso Constituyente de la Revolución Mexicana, 1916-1917* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de las Revoluciones de México, 2014): 300.

67. Mexican Constitution of 1917, art. 73, sec. XVI.

health education and disease containment campaigns in both urban and rural Mexico. Starting in 1923, groups of teachers would embark on “Cultural Missions” targeting rural and indigenous communities and schools to transform the peasantry into patriotic, scientifically informed, and productive citizens. Hygiene and health were prominently featured, with material targeted at indigenous populations (who were portrayed as incompetent, ignorant, and superstitious) emphasizing the importance of personal hygiene, toothbrushing, handwashing, bathing, and avoiding unlicensed physicians.⁶⁸ In Mexico City, children’s health education was promoted by the Department of Public Health through pamphlets, calendars, and health maxims plastered in schools and public places.⁶⁹ Anti-typhus campaigns through state-run delousing and showering services, working in tandem with obligatory smallpox vaccination, sanitary engineering, and food and beverage controls initiated by the Department of Public Health shaped revolutionary Mexico as a sanitary Mexico.⁷⁰ American philanthropy, DDT, and the Rockefeller Foundation

Although public health education was under the direction of domestic national institutions, effective and forceful campaigns to tackle the disease and the many endemics in Mexico often required a reluctant, but self-serving, acceptance of foreign involvement, chiefly the Rockefeller Foundation.⁷¹ Working closely with the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (founded in 1901 as one of the first American biomedical institutes following the example of the Koch Institute), the Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1913 “to promote the wellbeing of mankind throughout the world.”⁷²

Following domestic success in eliminating hookworm, the “germ of laziness,” in the Southern United States, the Rockefeller Foundation exported their expertise internationally, including Mexico.⁷³ Although often working closely with

68. Agostoni, “Popular Health Education and Propaganda,” 58.

69. Agostoni, “Popular Health Education and Propaganda,” 59.

70. Bernardo J Gastelum, “La Labor del Departamento de Salubridad Pública: Agosto 1925–Julio 1926” in *Boletín del Departamento de Salubridad Pública*. (Mexico City, Mexico: HathiTrust), 52-53; Anne-Emanuelle Birn, *Marriage of Convenience: Rockefeller International Health and Revolutionary Mexico* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 46.

71. The Rockefeller Foundation was not the only international organization to enter post-revolutionary Mexico. Other American, pan-Latin American, and even Soviet approaches and organizations were involved in Mexican public health campaigns. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 11-12.

72. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 20.

73. Hookworm infections are caused by an obligatory parasitic nematode (either *Ancylostoma duodenale* in the Old World or *Necator americanus* in the New World) that live in human intestines. Eggs are deposited in the stools of infected people and when hatched, the larvae can infect others through contaminated food/water or penetration through skin (a major risk factor is walking barefoot in warm climates with poor sanitation). They cause itchiness, abdominal pain, and diarrhea, and when untreated can lead to anemia and protein deficiency, causing lethargy. As a result of this lethargy, hookworm was often called the “germ of laziness” in the late 1800s and blamed for the lack of productivity in the American South. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 18.

the U.S. State Department, American military consuls, and consular offices (especially before beginning projects in a new country), the Rockefeller Foundation was independent of the American government health agencies like the USPHS, which was largely occupied with active military or colonial activities, such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Panama Canal Zone, and the Philippines. The Rockefeller Foundation was also seen as organizationally different from other American business involvement in local public health (e.g., the United Fruit Company Medical Department with divisions on plantations in Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Colombia, Honduras, Cuba) even if several nationalist Mexican government officials expressed concerns of ulterior motives.⁷⁴ Although the chairs and officers of the Rockefeller Foundation shared many of the same interests and worldviews of American public and private industry, they distanced themselves from U.S. military efforts while portraying intervention as for the good of mankind, not just for trade or profit. As a result, the Rockefeller Foundation escaped international controversy and possible resistance for intervention in Mexico because of its perceived independence.⁷⁵

By the 1920s, the post-revolutionary consensus and institutions were still being formed as violence and political instability generally decreased or was subdued.⁷⁶ In April 1920, Álvaro Obregón, leader of the Carranza's Constitutionalist army, revolted against Carranza and by December was elected President of Mexico. During this transitional period, a yellow fever outbreak began in Veracruz. The Rockefeller Foundation was invited by the government of interim president Adolfo de la Huerta—which was never extended during the typhus, yellow fever, smallpox, or Spanish influenza outbreaks under the Carranza government despite insistence from the Rockefeller Foundation. Theodore C. Lyster, a retired brigadier general and surgeon for the United States Army Air Medical Service in Panama City, Manila, and Veracruz, was the Rockefeller Foundation's International Health Bureau (IHB) yellow fever point man in Central America. He was appointed by President Obregón to head the "Special Commission for the Yellow Fever Campaign," and was successful by targeting the larval form of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito vector with a highly organized, punitive, and coercive campaign through the Mexican Department of

74. In annual reports by the United Fruit Company Medical Division, articles focus on maximizing profits and labor retention while minimizing absenteeism, waste, and time lost recovering from industrial accident deformities. Some ethnological comparisons draw on eugenical explanations for the susceptibility of diseases to the ability to survive machete blows. United Fruit Company Medical Department, *1912 Annual Report*; United Fruit Company Medical Department, *Fifteenth Annual Report*, p205-212, 214-216.

75. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 32-33.

76. One major exception of decreased violence is the Cristero War (1926-1929) centered around rural north-central Mexico known as the Bajío. This was a militant backlash against the enforcement of secularist and clerical articles in the 1917 Constitution that limited the Catholic Church in Mexico. There were also several military rebellions during the 1920s, but the victorious revolutionary faction that controlled the state also suppressed these.

Public Health and its “supreme authority.” The quick elimination of yellow fever not only decreased its threat to international commerce, but boosted the popular perception of the Department of Public Health, the Rockefeller Foundation, and by extent American philanthropy.⁷⁷

The following decades of the Rockefeller Foundation saw public health campaigns target several endemic diseases within Mexico, including typhus. By the 1930s and 40s, the Mexican Revolution had been institutionalized, and rhetorical sanitary politics of public health research, institutionalized medical professionalism, industrial hygiene, and rights to healthcare needed to begin producing concrete results.⁷⁸ Under the Lázaro Cárdenas administration, governmental involvement in urban and rural healthcare increased, infant mortality decreased, and social activism and development were encouraged with the existing IHB infrastructure being gradually co-opted in the institutional machinery. Focusing on typhus, the Rockefeller Foundation had established a strong relationship with Mexico City for training, research, and control by the 1930s. Between 1917 and 1950, 2,500 public health and nursing fellows were sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation to study in the United States and return to Latin America, with several hundred thousand dollars being invested in Mexican students alone.⁷⁹ Both Maximiliano Ruiz Castañeda and Gerardo Varela, the leading Mexican typhus researchers in the 1930s, received Rockefeller Foundation Public Health Fellowships for 1926 to 1927.⁸⁰ Between 1928 and 1933, the government of Mexico City had received \$16,000 (\$359,323 in 2023) for local health administration for typhus. In 1933, Hans Zinsser and other Mexican typhologists lobbied the Rockefellers to increase their funding for typhus research.⁸¹

After the fieldwork in the hospitals, streets, and prisons of Mexico was concluded, the center for typhus research was moved to New York. The Rockefeller Foundation shifted their focus from public health campaigns to agricultural development in Mexico during the 1940s and 1950s as U.S. government agencies began to take a more direct role in international health. As for typhus, following the death of Zinsser in 1940, the existing New York Virus Laboratory was joined with the “Louse Laboratory” (created in 1942) under the direction of the IHB and became the center of typhus research in the 1940s.⁸² Mexico became merely a place for field test-

77. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 51-60.

78. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 175.

79. Roughly four million USD in 2023. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 31.

80. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 289.

81. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 329.

82. Tenorio-Trillo, *I Speak of the City*, 345; “‘Louse Laboratory’ Seeking Means to Prevent Typhus.” *The New York*

ing when the Rockefeller Foundation required civilian populations before usage by American soldiers in World War II.⁸³ In 1943, the world's first field trial of dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) as a lice insecticide was carried out in Morelos, where five villages—giving at best dubious consent and only one village actually harbored typhus prior to the experiment—were treated with DDT and subsequently deliberately infested with lice to test DDT potency.⁸⁴ By 1945, the Mexican Department of Public Health and the IHB utilized DDT to control typhus within rural communities in Central Mexico.⁸⁵ On the American-Mexican border, Mexican braceros entering the United States were sprayed with DDT at U.S. reception centers as part of their health inspection while in Texas, mass anti-rat DDT dusting and anti-typhus vaccines (which was developed by Ruiz Castañeda) campaigns were conducted.⁸⁶

International public health allowed the Rockefellers' to fulfill multiple goals for their philanthropy: advance developing economies by improving productivity and preparing the state and professionals for modern development to align with American interests while also promoting international goodwill or financial dependency.⁸⁷ The Rockefeller Foundation classified Mexico as a "backward" country (albeit one having greater similarity to the American South than Central and South America) needing guidance, with many field officers typecasting the Mexican character as conniving, underdeveloped, and difficult.⁸⁸ This opinion was shared by Mexican elites, politicians, and doctors in their attitudes towards the marginalized and poor populations of the city and the countryside. Whether it be urban renewal of Porfirian científicos, the United States Public Health Service on the border, Rodríguez's sanitary dictatorship, or Rockefeller Foundation philanthropy, political, social, and economic inequalities informed the decisions of those who shaped public health, sanitation, and typhus in a bacteriological age.

Times, November 15, 1942, 139.

83. Darwin Stapleton, "A Lost Chapter in the Early History of DDT: The Development of Anti-Typhus Technologies by the Rockefeller Foundation's Louse Laboratory, 1942-1944," *Technology and Culture* 46, no. 3 (2005): 528-30.

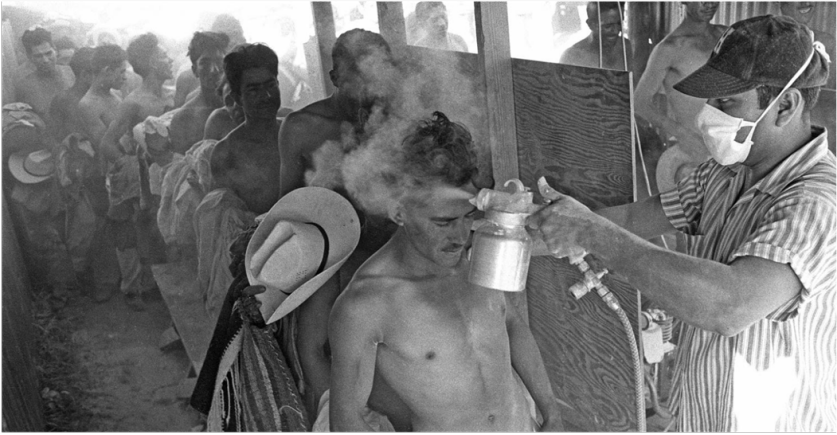
84. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 256.

85. Carlos Ortiz-Mariotte, Felipe Malo-Juvera, and George C Payne, "Control of Typhus Fever in Mexican Villages and Rural Populations Through the Use of DDT," *American Journal of Public Health and the Nation's Health* 35, no. 11 (1945): 1191-1195.

86. DDT would eventually be banned in the early 1970s by the Environmental Protection Agency due to its environmental damage (particularly in bird populations) and health concerns after research linked DDT to cancer, sterility, and developmental illnesses. Nevertheless, DDT is still widely used in some developing countries (notably India) as a cheap insecticide. Gregory Anstead, "History, Rats, Fleas, and Opossums. II. The Decline and Resurgence of Flea-Borne Typhus in the United States, 1945-2019," *Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease* 6, no. 1 (December 28, 2020), 26-27; Don Mitchell, *They Saved the Crops Labor, Landscape, and the Struggle over Industrial Farming in Bracero-Era California* (Athens, Ga: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 85.

87. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 25.

88. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience*, 259-260.



A masked worker fumigates a bracero with DDT at the Hidalgo Processing Center, Texas, 1956. Photo: Courtesy of the National Museum of American History. [https://edan.](https://edan.si.edu/slideshow/viewer/?eadrefid=NMAH.AC.1313_ref700)

[si.edu/slideshow/viewer/?eadrefid=NMAH.AC.1313_ref700](https://edan.si.edu/slideshow/viewer/?eadrefid=NMAH.AC.1313_ref700).

Conclusion

Through all these international efforts, Mexico became a destination for foreigners to collect and export raw biological data to the global north. Oftentimes, their exploits were framed as a beneficent mission to civilize the locals and as a source of adventure, fame, glory, and even state patronage/recognition for the educated and well-to-do much akin to other colonial exploits. For the bacteriologists, microbe hunting as expressed by Hans Zinsser captures the draw for exploring the tropics for new diseases:

[Bacteriology] remains one of the few sporting propositions left for individuals who feel the need of a certain amount of excitement. Infectious disease is one of the few genuine adventures left in the world. The dragons are all dead and the lance grows rusty in the chimney corner.... About the only sporting proposition that remains unimpaired by the relentless domestication of a once free-living human species is the war against those ferocious little fellow creatures, which lurk in dark corners and stalk us in the bodies of rats, mice and all kinds of domestic animals; which fly and crawl with the insects, and waylay us in our food and drink and even in

our love.⁸⁹

For those responding to public health, the control and prevention of typhus wasn't seen as merely an exercise of philanthropy and altruism, but also a benchmark for civilization and economic prosperity. Not dissimilar to Michel Foucault's understanding of biopower—a form a political power framed through biological metrics and control—Mexican sanitary officials before, during, and after the Revolution attempted to impose a hygienic nationalism and education on poor, rural, and indigenous populations as a means of securing order and development. When needed, they looked to the west, notably France and the United States, for examples and assistance. The Americans and French, in turn, viewed Mexico as a mixed-race and inherently unsanitary society that nevertheless was prime for urban and rural developments conducive to trade, commerce, productivity, and stability through the implementation of Western science and values.

Yes, many actors involved in the Mexican typhus story were concerned about the wellbeing of people and society. Nevertheless, the prevailing notions of race, class, education, and nationalism framed how scientists, public health officials, and field officers understood their work. They adopted Pasteurian bacteriology with its contemporary scientific and cultural frameworks. When confronted with a disease and country that did not neatly conform to the contemporary paradigm, they imposed the prevailing thought style.⁹⁰ Mexico, existing between the global north and south, chronically struggles with portraying itself as a world actor while wealthier nations look down on the country. Mexican sanitation was always understood in terms of nation-building, and typhus confirmed the pre-existing notions of how both Mexicans and foreigners viewed the nation. *Rickettsia* did not neatly fit bacteriology, and the Pasteurian ideology had to be rescued with amendments and modifications. Even in the present day, pathologists rhetorically resurrect and recontextualize Pasteur and Koch to fit our current cultural, molecular, and evolutionary paradigms. As with now, early twentieth century science is perceived within the cultural, political, and social frameworks of the time. This thought collective shaped how the typhologists, bureaucrats, and doctors interacted with typhus in Mexico, and their work continues to shape how science and medicine are thought of in the present day.

89. Zinsser, *Rice, Lice, and History*, 13-14.

90. "The individual within the collective is never, or hardly ever, conscious of the prevailing thought style, which almost always exerts an absolutely compulsive force upon his thinking and with which it is not possible to be at variance." Fleck, *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, II, 4.

Bibliography

- Agostoni, Claudia. *Monuments of Progress: Modernization and Public Health in Mexico City, 1876-1910*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2003.
- Agostoni, Claudia. "Popular Health Education and Propaganda in Times of Peace and War in Mexico City, 1890s-1920s." *American Journal of Public Health* 96, no. 1 (January 2006): 52-61. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2004.044388>.
- Alexander, Ryan M. "The Fever of War: Epidemic Typhus and Public Health in Revolutionary Mexico City, 1915-1917." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 100, no. 1 (2020): 63-92.
- Anstead, Gregory M. "History, Rats, Fleas, and Opossums. II. The Decline and Resurgence of Flea-Borne Typhus in the United States, 1945-2019." *Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease* 6, no. 1 (December 28, 2020): 2. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tropicalmed6010002>.
- Anstead, Gregory M. "The Centenary of the Discovery of Trench Fever, an Emerging Infectious Disease of World War I." *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* 16, no. 8 (August 2016): 164-72. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(16\)30003-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(16)30003-2).
- Birn, Anne-Emanuelle. *Marriage of Convenience: Rockefeller International Health and Revolutionary Mexico*. Rochester Studies in Medical History, v. 8. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006.
- Byrne, Joseph Patrick. *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008.
- "Carranza Fights Typhus in Capital." *The New York Times*, December 16, 1915, 9. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1915/12/16/106734015.html>.
- "Fire on Mexican Ragmen." *The New York Times*, January 23, 1916, 6. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1916/01/23/104020084.html>.
- Gastelum, Bernardo J. "La Labor del Departamento de Salubridad Pública: Agosto 1925-Julio 1926." *Boletín del Departamento de Salubridad Pública*, no. 3 (1926): 45-66. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015076329351>.
- "'Louse Laboratory' Seeking Means to Prevent Typhus." *The New York Times*, November 15, 1942, 139. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1942/11/15/96408013.html>.
- Maurin, M and Raoult D. "Bartonella (Rochalimaea) Quintana Infections." *Clinical Microbiology Reviews* 9, no. 3 (July 1996): 273-92. <https://doi.org/10.1128/CMR.9.3.273>.
- Mexican Constitution (1917). Article 73, section XVI.
- Mitchell, Don. *They Saved the Crops: Labor, Landscape, and the Struggle over Industrial Farming in Bracero-Era California* 1st ed. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2012.
- Molina del Villar, América. *Guerra, Tifo, y Cerco Sanitario en la Ciudad de México: 1911-1917*. México: CIESAS, 2016.

- Ortiz-Mariotte, C, F Malo-Juvera, and G C Payne. "Control of Typhus Fever in Mexican Villages and Rural Populations through the Use of DDT." *American Journal of Public Health and the Nation's Health* 35, no. 11 (1945): 1191–1195.
- "Peril in the Germs That Infest Mexico." *The New York Times*, April 26, 1914, 4. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1914/04/26/100308941.html>.
- Pierce, C. C. "Combating Typhus Fever on the Mexican Border." *Public Health Reports (1896-1970)* 32, no. 12 (1917): 426-429. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4574464>.
- "Red Cross Anxious to Right Typhus." *The New York Times*, December 25, 1915, 3. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1915/12/25/100183935.html>.
- Rodríguez, José M., "Federalización de la salubridad." in *50 Discursos Doctrinales en el Congreso Constituyente de la Revolución Mexicana, 1916-1917*, edited by Jesús Castañón and Alberto Morales Jiménez, 295-308. Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de las Revoluciones de México, 2014.
- Ross, Paul. "From Sanitary Police to Sanitary Dictatorship: Mexico's Nineteenth-Century Public Health Movement." ProQuest Dissertations, 2005.
- Ross, Paul. "Mexico's Superior Health Council and the American Public Health Association: The Transnational Archive of Porfirian Public Health, 1887–1910." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (November 1, 2009): 573–602. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00182168-2009-046>.
- Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia de los Estados Unidos Mexicano, Instituto de Asuntos Interamericanos, ed. 1947. *Primera Reunión Interamericana del Tifo*, October 7-13, 1945. Mexico City: Wellcome Collection, 1947. <https://wellcome-collection.org/works/j8nf25je>.
- Stapleton, Darwin H. "A Lost Chapter in the Early History of DDT: The Development of Anti-Typhus Technologies by the Rockefeller Foundation's Louse Laboratory, 1942-1944." *Technology and Culture* 46, no. 3 (2005): 513–40. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tech.2005.0148>.
- Stern, Alexandra Minna. "Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood: Medicalization and Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1910-1930." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 79, no. 1 (1999): 41–81. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2518217>.
- Tenorio-Trillo, Mauricio. *I Speak of the City: Mexico City at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Tenorio-Trillo, Mauricio. *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- "To Fight Typhus in Mexico City." *The New York Times*, December 23, 1915, 1. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1915/12/23/104659902.html>.
- "Typhus Leaps Line; Laredo is Stricken." *The New York Times*, December 24, 1915, 4. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesma>

[chine/1915/12/24/104660300.html](https://www.google.com/books/edition/chine/1915/12/24/104660300.html).

United Fruit Company Medical Department, 1912 Annual Report. I. United Fruit Company, 1913. https://www.google.com/books/edition/Annual_Report_United_Fruit_Company_Medic/3JA6AQAAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.

United Fruit Company Medical Department, Fifteenth Annual Report. 15. United Fruit Company, 1926. https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/LGd-NAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1.

Zinsser, Hans. Rats, Lice, and History. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2008.

About the Author

Rodolfo Gutierrez (Baker' 24) is a senior majoring in History and BioSciences: Cell Biology and Genetics. His interests in history include the history of science and medicine, political thought, and Latin America. In his free time, he enjoys collecting coins, doing the crossword, and taking power naps.



Pilgrimage to Medieval Jerusalem (1099-1187):

Religious Imagination and Physical Reality

Ally Godsil

A man dressed as Jesus at the entrance to the Old City in Jerusalem. A tourist convinced he is Samson attempting to move a stone from the Western Wall. A tourist proselytizing on the Temple Mount. All of these people are sufferers of “Jerusalem Syndrome,” a psychiatric phenomenon that appears in some tourists who visit Jerusalem and experience sudden and intense religious delusions.¹ Sufferers of Jerusalem Syndrome are incapable of seeing Jerusalem for its contemporary reality, but rather they view the city through the lens of biblical imagination. These delusions have striking parallels to the experience of medieval Christian pilgrims. After the Crusader conquest of Jerusalem in 1099, Christian pilgrims poured into the city. Then and now, Christian pilgrims bear a cross in imitation of Christ’s Passion and crucifixion. This form of mimetic pilgrimage—the imitation of Christ’s suffering—gained popularity during the period of the Frankish Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem between 1099 and 1187. This paper will examine the physical changes made to the architecture of the Holy City during this time frame and how the physical environment of Jerusalem interacted with Christian pilgrims’ spiritual imagination. Ultimately I argue that the crusaders’ reconstruction of Jerusalem between 1099 and 1187 and spiritual fixation on the city as the “City of Christ” worked together to foster a pilgrimage practice focused on the recreation of Christ’s Passion.

1. Yair Bar-El, Rimona Durst, Gregory Katz, Josef Zislin, Ziva Strauss, and Haim Y. Knobler, “Jerusalem Syndrome,” *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 176, no. 1, (2000): 86–90.

Methods and Outline

This paper combines a narrative and archeological approach to the history of Crusader Jerusalem. The first section of this paper, titled “Religious Imagination,” analyzes how the religious psychology of pilgrims impacted their engagement with the spiritual topography of Jerusalem. In the second section, “Physical Reality” I look at how architectural changes to Jerusalem facilitated a fixation on the sites of Christ’s Passion and crucifixion. By Christ’s Passion, I am referring to the story of Christ’s arrest, trial, suffering, crucifixion, and ultimate resurrection and the corresponding locales of these events in Jerusalem and its vicinity.² I begin with an analysis of the religious imagination of the first Crusade-era pilgrimages. I use evidence from pilgrimage chronicles and medieval ampullae to demonstrate how fixation on Christ’s Passion was a cornerstone of Crusader-era religious imagination. Ampullae are glass and earthenware flasks with cylindrical bodies and two handles. They were used by the ancient Romans to hold ointment, perfume or wine.³ During the medieval period, ampullae were mass produced as pilgrimage souvenirs.⁴ Next, I look at how the practice of “bearing the cross” emerged during the First Crusade. Finally, I look at Katja Boertjes examination of three ampullae as evidence for the spiritual fixation on Christ’s Passion in medieval souvenirs.

While there is a large breadth of scholarship on the Crusades and medieval pilgrimage, none focus exclusively on the interaction between pilgrims’ imagination⁵ and the physical environment⁶ in Crusader-era Jerusalem. By elucidating how Christian pilgrims’ religious imagination of Jerusalem distorted their view of the city to focus almost entirely on Christ’s Passion, crucifixion, and resurrection, I hope my paper will provide illumination to curious modern psychological distortions such as “Jerusalem Syndrome” and provide a better understanding of the experiences of Christian pilgrims at this time.

2. “Christianity: The Passion of Christ,” *BBC - Religions*, accessed March 24, 2024, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/holydays/passionofchrist.shtml>.

3. “ampullae,” *Merriam-Webster*, accessed March 24, 2024, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ampullae>.

4. Katja Boertjes, “The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented: Tradition and Renewal on Pilgrimage Ampullae from the Crusader Period” in *The Imagined and Real Jerusalem in Art and Architecture*, (Brill, 2014): 169-171.

5. Discussions of Crusading Spirituality are covered in: William J. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c.1095-c.1187*; Sylvia Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099-1187)* and Beth C. Spacey, “A Land of Horror and Vast Wilderness”: Landscapes of Crusade and Jerusalem Pilgrimage in Arnold of Lübeck’s *Chronica Slavorum*.”

6. Changes of the architecture of Crusader Jerusalem and representations in art are discussed in: Adrian J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time of the Crusades: Society, Landscape and Art in the Holy City Under Frankish Rule*; Deny Pringle, “Jerusalem 1099” and Katja Boertjes, “The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented: Tradition and Renewal on Pilgrimage Ampullae from the Crusader Period.”



Figure 1. Map of the Crusader States of the 12th Century from “The Crusader states.” Britannica. Accessed [March 24, 2024]. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Crusades/The-Crusader-states>.

Historical Background

Except for the 87 year long period of the Kingdom of Frankish Crusader Jerusalem from 1099 to 1187 and the Second Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem between 1229 and 1244, medieval Jerusalem was under Muslim control. After the rise of Islam, Jerusalem was under the control of the Umayyad dynasty from 661 to 750.⁷ The Umayyads were overthrown by the Abbasids in 750, who were successively challenged by the Seljuk Turks for control over Jerusalem until the First Crusade.⁸ The start of the Crusades in 1096 threatened Muslim dominance in the Holy Land. After Pope Urban II called on Christians to “let go of their petty infighting and turn their arms instead against the ‘infidel Turks’” in 1095, campaigns of Franks led by Counts Godfrey, Tancred, and Raymond successfully established Frankish outposts in the Holy Land.⁹ The crusaders were successful in their goal to reconquer Jerusalem and liberate the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 1099.¹⁰ Conflict between the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt and the Seljuk Turks made it easier for Christian forces to take Jerusalem, as the Fatimids had only recently reconquered the city from the Seljuk Turks in 1098.¹¹ After a six week siege of the city, the crusaders carried out a massacre of the non-Christian population from the 15th to the 18th of July 1099. Under Frankish control, Jerusalem regained its status as a royal city and prominence as a site of Christian pilgrimage.¹²

I. Religious Imagination

Christian Pilgrims’ spiritual fixation on Christ’s suffering shaped how they interacted with the Holy City. Fostered by religious doctrine and the safety of the Holy City now under Christian control, the Middle Ages witnessed the rise of mimetic pilgrimage through the imitation of Christ’s Passion and crucifixion. In this section I examine pilgrimage chronicles from the perspectives and medieval ampullae to demonstrate how pilgrims’ religious imagination shaped their interaction with the topography of Jerusalem to be focused on the recreation of Christ’s Passion.

The call for the Crusades and the successful conquering of Jerusalem by Christian forces in 1099 had a large impact on the Western Christian psyche.

7. Michael Zank, *Jerusalem: A Brief History* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2018): 126.

8. Zank, *Jerusalem: A Brief History*, 132.

9. Zank, *Jerusalem: A Brief History*, 108.

10. Sylvia Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099-1187)* (London: Routledge, 2016): 11.

11. Zank, *Jerusalem: A Brief History*, 137.

12. Adrian J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time of the Crusades: Society, Landscape and Art in the Holy City under Frankish Rule* (London: Routledge, 2001): 1: 8-9.

From the outset, the Crusades were centered around the reclamation of holy places associated with Christ, and “one contemporary even compared its significance to Christ’s redemption of mankind on the cross.”¹³ Pope Urban’s call to crusade in 1095 focused on a reclamation of the spiritual topography of Jerusalem. He described the perceived and actual destruction which had been caused to Christian sites over the course of Muslim rule, saying: “it [Muslim Rulers of Jerusalem] has either entirely destroyed the churches of God or appropriated them for the rites of its own religion. They destroy the altars, after having defiled them with their uncleanness...”¹⁴ From the outset of the First Crusade, restoration of Christian religious sites was a main priority. Control over the physical space of Jerusalem centered on the places which Christ had interacted with, particularly during the Passion and crucifixion. Pope Urban II proclaimed: “This, the Redeemer of the human race has made illustrious by His advent, has beautified by residence, has consecrated by suffering, has redeemed by death, has glorified by burial. This royal city, therefore, is situated at the center of the world.”¹⁵ What Pope Urban II is describing in the passage would come to be known as “The Way of the Cross”, the path that Christ followed after his arrest, the bearing of the cross, crucifixion, and finally burial at the location of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. More generally, the entirety of Jerusalem was made a royal “Kingdom of Heaven” through emphasis of the presence of Jesus Christ. Thus the entirety of Jerusalem was holy by virtue of the physical engagement of Christ with its topography, and the events of Christ’s Passion and crucifixion were considered the most holy. Figure 3. William R. Shepherd, *Historical Atlas*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911): 68. The Medieval Way of the Cross started at the Gate of Jehoshaphat, in the top right corner, near the Temple Mount Complex and ended at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at the top left part of the map on the Street of the Holy Sepulchre.

The importance of Jerusalem as the place where “the Lord walked and suffered” is echoed in chronicles from Guilbert of Nogent and Baldric of Bourguieil.¹⁶ As Guilbert of Nogent described, “If this land is the inheritance of God... even before the Lord walked and suffered there, as can be gathered from the sacred and prophetic pages [of scripture], then what sanctity and reverence did it gain next when the God of majesty became flesh there, was fed, grew up, and moving in his

13. William J. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c.1095-c.1187* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2008): 59.

14. Pope Urban II’s Call to Crusade in 1095 in Murray, Alan V., ed., *The Crusades to the Holy Land: The Essential Reference Guide*, (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2015): 263.

15. Pope Urban II in *Reference Guide*, 264.

16. Purkis, 59-60.

lively way, walked here and there in that land.”¹⁷ Jerusalem was sacred because it was in God-given land, but it was made increasingly sacred by Christ’s suffering. Because of Pope Urban II’s direction that crusaders should “accordingly undertake this journey for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven” through participation in the First Crusade, crusaders believed they would achieve salvation.¹⁸ The crusades were seen as a violent pilgrimage to Jerusalem and were perceived as *imitatio* (imitation) of Christ’s life and death.¹⁹ Dying and suffering on the way to Jerusalem were seen as ways to imitate Christ and achieve redemption. This imitation of Christ through physical interaction with the sites of his Passion or replication of his suffering was continued inside the Holy City.

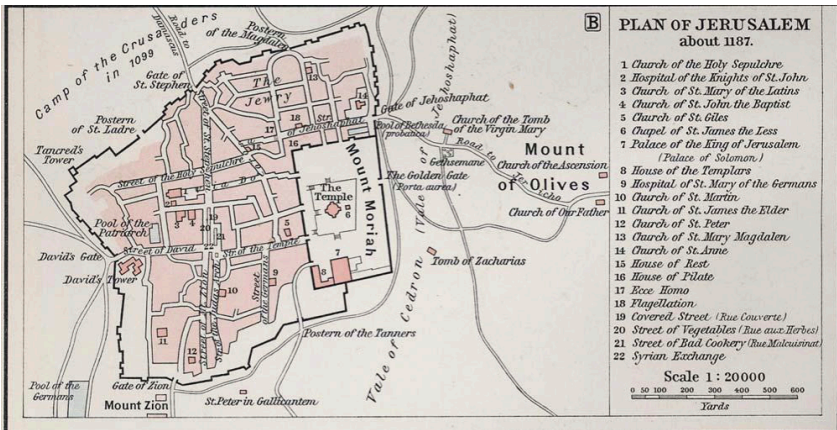


Figure 2. William R. Shepherd, *Historical Atlas* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911), 68. The Medieval Way of the Cross started at the Gate of Jehoshaphat, in the top right corner, near the Temple Mount Complex and ended at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at the top left part of the map on the Street of the Holy Sepulchre.

a. Suffering En Route

Even prior to entering the Holy City, pilgrims were exposed to the idea of imitating Christ. From the highest rungs of religious power, the Pope emphasized Jerusalem as the “Holy City of Christ, embellished by his Passion and Resurrection.”²⁰ Not only were pilgrims exposed to religious ideas concerning Christ’s suffering outside of Jerusalem, they were also encouraged to suffer on their way to the holy city.

17. Purkis, 60.

18. Pope Urban II in *Reference Guide*, 264.

19. Zank, *Jerusalem: A Brief History*, 141.

20. Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City*, 10.

Beth C. Spacey demonstrates how crusaders and pilgrims believed the experience of pilgrimage to Jerusalem was meant to be an imitation of Christ's Passion. She uses Arnold of Lübeck's *Chronica Slavorum* as a model, a narration of Henry the Lion's—the duke of Saxony and Bavaria—1172 Pilgrimage from Brunswick to Jerusalem.²¹ The Chronicle begins with a reference to replicating Christ's movement in Jerusalem, in which Henry the Lion chooses to go to Jerusalem because he wishes “to see the Holy Sepulchre for his sins, that he might worship the Lord in the place where his feet had trod.”²² Christian pilgrims believed they could win remission of sins by visiting the same places that Christ had or suffering in the same manner Christ had.

The physical hardships that pilgrims experienced on the way to Jerusalem were a form of penance akin to the 40 year wandering in the desert of the Israelites.²³ The party of Henry the Lion's first obstacle was the River Danube which they passed “with the help of God.”²⁴ At their next obstacle, the Bulgarian Forest, Henry's troop is forced to discard their luxuries; “[y]ou might have seen, therefore, great heaps of the finest flour thrown away, and many wine vessels, full to the brim with wine, left behind, a huge amount of meat and fish abandoned, along with all sorts of carefully prepared delicacies flavored with various spices.”²⁵ To Arnold, it is important to show the piety of Henry the Lion through his suffering and lack of comfort. It is by God's grace that the pilgrims are saved in the river Danube, likely—in the opinion of Arnold—because God did not want to see their journey of suffering end prematurely. The journey to Jerusalem was an act of penance for pilgrims in order to achieve salvation upon arrival.

Another way in which pilgrims, soldier or not, practiced imitation of Christ's Passion en route to the Holy City was through the bearing of the cross. Pilgrims regularly wore crosses to the Holy City, carrying wooden crosses from their home countries and placing them on Mount Calvary in Jerusalem.²⁶ As discussed by William J. Purkis, the idea of imitating Christ was “understood by contemporaries to be something revolutionary...the most striking manifestation was the act of taking the cross to follow Christ.” The German pilgrim Theodoric, who traveled in the Holy Land from 1116 to 1174, describes this practice as commonplace: “Two miles

21. Beth C. Spacey “‘A land of horror and vast wilderness’: Landscapes of Crusade and Jerusalem Pilgrimage in Arnold of Lübeck's *Chronica Slavorum*,” *Journal of Medieval History* 47, (2021): 350.

22. Spacey, “A Land of Horror”, 355.

23. Spacey, 358.

24. Arnold of Lübeck, *The Chronicle of Arnold of Lübeck*. Translated by Graham A. Loud (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2019): 43.

25. Arnold of Lübeck, 44.

26. John Wilkinson, Joyce Hill, and W. F. Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage, 1099-1185* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1988): 73-74.

from the Holy City on the north side stands a small church where the pilgrims have their first view of the city and, moved with great joy, put on their crosses."²⁷ This was a phenomenon which emerged during the First Crusade. There is no contemporary evidence that wearing the cross was associated with pilgrimage to Jerusalem before 1095.²⁸ It is likely that with the increased safety of Jerusalem for Christians post-1099, pilgrims felt more comfortable expressing their religious devotion physically. With the rebuilding of Jerusalem to accommodate the physical experience of pilgrims, Christians could safely and easily access sites of Christ's Passion.

b. Medieval Souvenirs

After 1099, Pilgrims could also engage safely with the relics of Christ's Passion. Upon Christian conquering of the Holy City, important relics, such as the True cross, were either moved to or made more accessible in Jerusalem. Crusaders' and pilgrims' relationship with relics and medieval souvenirs shaped their interaction with the physical environment of Jerusalem. The creation and sale of ampullae (small stone vessels adorned with carvings) saw a revival in the second half of the twelfth century.²⁹ These portable vessels emerged as a kind of medieval souvenir. With images depicting holy sites in Jerusalem, ampullae were a portable way for pilgrims to interact with the physical environment of Jerusalem. Katja Boertjes examines three ampullae in her essay "The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented: Tradition and Renewal on Pilgrimage Ampullae from the Crusader Period". The ampullae each depict the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in almost identical fashion. All three ampullae depict the rebuilt church of 1149, with its recognizable tall tower and domed roof, and are dated to between 1149 and 1187. The ampullae specifically depict Christ's Passion, featuring an image of Christ's body on a tomb.³⁰ Through purchasing the ampullae before, during, or after their visit to Jerusalem, pilgrims expressed a desire to physically touch the holy city, specifically the locations of Christ's Passion.

Relics such as the Holy Lance and the True Cross were rediscovered during the first crusade and shortly after the reconquering of Jerusalem, respectively; these relics had a large impact on the physicality of Jerusalem pilgrimage. Pilgrims wanted to see and touch the relics of Christ's Passion. Raymond of Aguiler, notably cele-

27. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 300.

28. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality*, 62.

29. Katja Boertjes, "The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented: Tradition and Renewal on Pilgrimage Ampullae from the Crusader Period" in *The Imagined and Real Jerusalem in Art and Architecture*, (Brill, 2014): 169-174.

30. Boertjes, "The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented", 175.

brated: "All our men rejoiced and we gave praise and thanks to Almighty God, who returned us not only the city in which he suffered, but also the symbols of his Passion and victory, so that we might embrace him more closely with the arms of faith, the more certain because we beheld the signs of our salvation."³¹ Raymond of Aguilers was the chaplain to Count Raymond IV of Toulouse and accompanied Count Raymond on the first crusade in 1095. He is thus representative of the masses of Christian men who made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem during the first crusade and witnessed first hand the retaking of the Holy City. While Raymond is likely speaking of metaphorical "arms of faith", it is interesting to note that he describes devotion to Christ as a physical act. The return of Jerusalem to Christian hands allowed pilgrims to physically see the "signs of our salvation", deepening their faith and ensuring their salvation to heaven. In crusading spirituality, the Holy Land itself was considered a relic. Thus the "restoration process was a visual expression of the faith of the crusaders...and a symbol of their deep devotion to the humanity of Christ."³²

II. Physical Reality

It is true that prior to 1099 Christians emphasized the importance of Christ's Passion in the practice of Jerusalem pilgrimage. St. Jerome and the Piacenza Pilgrim discuss the importance of visiting the locations of Christ's sufferings in chronicles from 385 and 570. The difference between these original visitations and the developments during the first crusade is a matter of access and shift to a focus on Christ's humanity.³³ The reconquering of Jerusalem in 1099 was significant to religious imagination because it brought the city under Christian control for the first time in centuries. What developed was a religious practice that was much more widespread in nature, as crusaders had rebuilt and reopened sites of Christ's Passion. These sites were no longer in the realm of spiritual untouchability, but brought to the level of human religious practice. After the Christian taking of Jerusalem, the Crusaders began christianizing the Holy City. To christianize is to make something Christian. In this instance, the Christianizing of Jerusalem was the process in which crusaders rebuilt, remodeled, and socially redefined the architectural landscape of Jerusalem to reflect the religious values of the time. The Christianizing of Jerusalem post-1099 focused on defining the city as the site of Christ's Passion and making the locations of Christ's suffering more accessible to Christian pilgrims to replicate Christ's Passion.

Due to an extended period of Muslim rule, Christians were faced with a

31. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality*, 65.

32. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality*, 65.

33. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality*, 60-61.

Jerusalem which had been changed to fit Muslim religious needs. The Dome of the Rock was built by Abd al-Malik in 692 and was accompanied by several other works of Muslim architecture.³⁴ The Temple Mount Complex (Haram al-Sharif) also included the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Umayyad palaces south of the Dome of the Rock.³⁵ Symbols of Christian worship were also destroyed under Muslim rule. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, St. Anne, St. Mary on Mount Zion, Tomb of the Virgin in Jehoshaphat, St. James in the Armenian Quarter, and the Church of the Ascension were destroyed during the reign of Caliph al-Hakim.³⁶ While the rebuilding of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre began earlier, it was not completed until 1149.³⁷ The construction of the rest of the Churches began under Frankish (crusader) rule.³⁸

a. The Temple Mount Complex

Renaming was a major tool that Crusader period rulers used to christianize the city. In order to fit into the Christian imagination of Jerusalem as the “City of Christ”, sites were renamed to reflect Christ’s interaction with them. Christians also built a large number of new buildings, re-identifying and, on occasion, inventing holy sites to go with them.³⁹

The Temple Mount Complex, the site where the Dome of the Rock was constructed under Muslim rule, was a major center of christianizing activities. Gates entering the Temple Mount were renamed or reimagined accordingly. It was thought that the Golden Gate (Porta Aurea) on the east side of the complex was the gate that Jesus entered the city prior to his crucifixion. Two domes on the drums of the eastern bays of the golden gate were added to convert the gate into a chapel.⁴⁰ With the addition of a chapel, Christians could engage physically with the site of Christ’s entrance into the city during his crucifixion through prayer. They could also imitate Christ’s movement by entering the city through this gate. Christians during the Crusader period demonstrated the importance of this gate by entering the city through it in processions on Palm Sunday and on the Feast of Exaltation of the Cross.⁴¹ This was an imitation of Christ not because he participated in the festivals, but because Christians were mimicking his entrance to Jerusalem by using the same door Christ used to enter the city during his crucifix-

34. Zank, *Jerusalem: A Brief History*, 126.

35. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 9.

36. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 2.

37. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 31.

38. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 3.

39. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 3.

40. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 64.

41. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 63.

ion. Through the repetition of the same movements of Christ's Passion in a ceremonial procession, Christians could express their gratitude for Christ's suffering.

Not only did Christians rename sites, they also made significant physical alterations. In order to make the city's holy sites accessible to Christian pilgrims, Jerusalem's authority redesigned Muslim holy spaces to fit Christian religious imagination. The Dome of the Rock underwent a significant transformation. This temple was restored in honor of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ. It became known as the Lord's Temple. Artistic representations of Mary and Jesus were added to the temple, as well as events associated with the Jewish temple in the Old and New Testaments. The most audacious addition was the golden cross added to the top of the Dome by 1170,⁴² which was removed when Jerusalem was reconquered by Muslim forces in 1187.⁴³

Various biblical stories centered around Jesus and Mary were subsequently attached to the Dome in either physical or spiritual form. A subsidiary place inside the old pinnacle of the temple was dedicated as the "Mosque of Mary" and purportedly contained the cradle of Jesus. The cave below the Dome of the Rock became a location of confession because of its association with Christ's forgiveness of the adulteress. A footprint of Jesus was apparently shown on the rock, although the rock was eventually covered and surrounded by walls in 1115, likely to stop pilgrims from chipping away souvenirs.⁴⁴ A lamp which was hung in the middle of the Dome was later believed to be filled with the blood of Christ.⁴⁵ Christ's life and death took center stage at the Dome of the Rock in crusader Jerusalem. Upon entering the Dome, pilgrims had the opportunity to witness and touch various locations associated with Christ's life and death. It is no wonder pilgrims regularly chipped away at the dome's rock; by touching the stone believed to contain Christ's footprints, they could finally fulfill the desire to "worship in the place where his feet have stood!"⁴⁶

b. Church of the Holy Sepulchre

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was dismantled in 1009⁴⁷ along with several other churches destroyed by Caliph al-Hakim in Jerusalem including the Church of St. Anne, St. Mary on Mount Zion, St. James in the Armenian Quar-

42. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 43.

43. Pringle, "Jerusalem 1099", 24.

44. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 43.

45. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 44.

46. Brett Edward Whalen, "Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages: A Reader," ed. Brett Edward Whalen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011): 201.

47. Zank, *Jerusalem: A Brief History*, 130.

ter, and the Church of the Ascension (see figure 6.⁴⁸ A project of rebuilding began in 1014. Between 1014 and 1023 the project was under the patronage of Caliph al-Hakim's Christian mother, while Jerusalem was still under Muslim rule. From 1020 onwards the rebuilding was funded by Nicephorus I, patriarch of Jerusalem.⁴⁹ While certain individuals made efforts to reconstruct the Church earlier, significant Imperial Funding from the Byzantines was not provided until the reign of Constantine Monomachos in 1048.⁵⁰ Constantine began the work of expanding and further associating the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with Christ's Passion. He created three new chapels during his reign: one to commemorate where Christ was crowned, dressed in the purple robe, then stripped of his garments; another where he was bound to the column; and the last where he was imprisoned.⁵¹ Finally, the Church was restored under Byzantine religious jurisdiction— the city was still controlled by Muslim rulers— by Emperor Constantine Monomachos and rededicated in 1048.⁵² Crusader architects further expanded upon these changes starting in 1099, when a charter by Godfrey of Bouillon was created to divide the Church into 20 canons, in this case canon refers to individual religious leaders, in order to organize the construction process.⁵³ The immediacy of this decree illustrates how important the rebuilding of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was to the crusader psyche.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre contains the most important sites of Christ's Passion and is thus arguably the most important site in the Christian faith. The Church is believed to encompass the locations where Christ was crucified, buried, and then resurrected; it is the tomb where Jesus is believed to have been buried and resurrected.⁵⁴ The rebuilding project of 1099 to 1149 greatly expanded the church complex in order to accommodate the influx of pilgrims and new base of religious authority. As described by William Archbishop of Tyre, the church was enlarged in order to bring all the holy sites under one roof. He writes "Accordingly, they enlarged the original church and added to it a new building of massive and lofty construction, which enclosed the old church and in marvellous wise included within its precincts the holy places described."⁵⁵ Bringing all the holy

48. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time*, 2.

49. Pringle, "Jerusalem 1099", 18.

50. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land: The Indispensable Archeological Guide for Travellers*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 51.

51. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 34.

52. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 33.

53. Gutgarts, Anna, "List of the Main Transactions in Jerusalem and Its Vicinity," Cambridge University Press, Revised Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani (RRR) 12, cambridge.org/gutgarts.

54. "The Church of the Holy Sepulchre," *The Church of the Holy Sepulchre*, accessed December 4, 2023, <https://thechurchoftheholyssepulchre.com/church-of-the-holy-sepulchre-significance/>.

55. Atwater Babcock, Emily, (ed. and trans.), *A History of Deeds Done beyond the Sea by William, Archbishop of Tyre*, ed. August C. Krey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943): 344.

sites into one space allowed for more streamlined pilgrimage access to the sites of Christ's Passion. Now pilgrims could see and touch the sites of Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection in a single path. The importance of the sites of Christ's Passion, crucifixion and burial are indicated in charter in 1172 in which Henricus, the Duke of Bavaria and Saxony, donated three perpetually burning lamps to be placed in the Holy Sepulchre, writing "one [lamp] in the Holy Sepulchre itself, one in the Calvary chapel, and the third before the relic of the True Cross."⁵⁶ The Calvary chapel was the location, according to William of Tyre, where "the body of the Saviour when taken down from the Cross was anointed with ointment and wrapped with fragrant spices in a linen winding cloth."⁵⁷ The Calvary was one of the locations brought into the Holy Sepulchre complex during the Christian rebuilding completed in 1149. Christian Crusader construction after 1099 turned the Church of the Holy Sepulchre into an efficient pilgrimage complex which connected the sites of Christ's Passion, crucifixion and resurrection into one path.

The typical route of a Medieval Christian pilgrim, an early Way of the Cross, can be reconstructed from pilgrimage chronicles. For example, in *The Travels of Saewulf* written by [author] in [date], the centrality of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is emphasized:

The entrance to the city of Jerusalem is from the west, under the citadel of King David, by the gate which is called the gate of David. The first place to be visited is the church of the Holy Sepulchre ... not only because the streets lead most directly to it, but because it is more celebrated than all other churches; and that rightly and justly, for all things which were foretold and fore-written by the holy prophets of our savior Jesus Christ were there actually fulfilled.⁵⁸

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the most important site of Christian pilgrimage because it is where Christ's Passion was performed. The architecture of Jerusalem was changed to demonstrate this importance and make an accessible route for pilgrims to access the Church. The rebuilding of Jerusalem after 1099 created a city structured around Christian pilgrimage to the sites of Christ's Passion with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at the center of pilgrimage activities.

56. Gutgarts, "Main Transactions," RRR 882.

57. Atwater Babcock, Emily, *A History of Deeds*, 343.

58. Whalen, *Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages*, 205.

Conclusion

Jerusalem was retaken by Saladin of the Ayyubid Sultanate on October 2, 1187.⁵⁹ The Holy City would not be conquered by Christians again until the Second Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem which ruled Jerusalem from 1229 to 1244. When describing the activities of Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem post-1099, William of Tyre mentions the “Bearing in their hands crosses and relics of the saints, they led the way into the church to the accompaniment of hymns and sacred songs.”⁶⁰ Today, the narrow streets of the old city of Jerusalem echo with the songs and prayers of pilgrims bearing a cross in imitation of Christ’s suffering. Jerusalem continues to be a place where Christian pilgrims imitate Christ.

In this paper I have looked to create an image of pilgrimage in Jerusalem during the period of the Frankish Crusader Kingdom from 1099 to 1187. With the use of pilgrimage chronicles and analysis of ampullae and relics, I have demonstrated how the religious imagination of the first crusade centered around the replication of Christ’s Passion. I have presented the unique phenomena of “bearing the cross” as the epitome of Christ mimesis.

In the second half of this paper I examined how religious imagination interacted with the physical environment of Jerusalem. Relying on Adrian J. Boas’ and Denys Pringle’s descriptions of the crusader reconstruction of Jerusalem beginning in 1099, I analyzed how the architecture of Jerusalem changed to match the religious imagination of the time. I looked at how christianization changed the temple mount complex to be a tribute to Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was expanded to encompass the entire complex under one roof, allowing easy access for pilgrims to sites of Christ’s suffering and crucifixion. A spiritual topography emerged of holy sites connected to Christ’s Passion centered around the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with auxiliary sites such as the Temple Mount complex.

The Way of the Cross remains in place as the central route of Christian pilgrimage. The spiritual fixation of the first crusade on Christ’s Passion has left a lasting impact on Christian religious worship. The architectural changes made by the crusader Kingdom of 1099 still serve their purpose. The success of the crusaders in creating a spiritual topography focused on recreation of Christ’s Passion has led some pilgrims to lose connection with reality, believing themselves to be Christ or other religious figures.

59. Boas, 36.

60. Atwater Babcock, Emily, *A History of Deeds*, 373.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Atwater Babcock, Emily (ed. and trans.). *A History of Deeds Done beyond the Sea by William, Archbishop of Tyre*, ed. August C. Krey. New York: Columbia University Press, 1943)
- Chareyron, Nicole, and Donald Wilson. *Pilgrims to Jerusalem in the Middle Ages*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Gutgarts, Anna. "List of the Main Transactions in Jerusalem and Its Vicinity," Cambridge University Press, Revised Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani (RRR), [cambridge.org/gutgarts](https://www.cambridge.org/gutgarts).
- Loud, G.A., *The Chronicle of Arnold of Lübeck*. Translated by Graham A. Loud. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2019.
- Murray, Alan V., ed. *The Crusades to the Holy Land: The Essential Reference Guide*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2015.
- Whalen, Brett Edward. *Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages: A Reader*. Edited by Brett Edward Whalen. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011.

Secondary Sources

- Bar-El, Yair, Rimona Durst, Gregory Katz, Josef Zislin, Ziva Strauss, and Haim Y. Knobler. "Jerusalem Syndrome." *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 176, no. 1 (2000): 86–90.
- Boas, Adrian J. *Jerusalem in the Time of the Crusades: Society, Landscape and Art in the Holy City Under Frankish Rule*. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Boertjes, Katja. "The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented: Tradition and Renewal on Pilgrimage Ampullae from the Crusader Period." In *The Imagined and Real Jerusalem in Art 169-*: BRILL, 2014.
- Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. *The Holy Land: The Indispensable Archeological Guide for Travellers*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Pringle, Denys. "Jerusalem 1099." *Medievalista online* 32 (2022). https://onesearch.library.rice.edu/permalink/01RICE_INST/1hplnr6/cdi_doaj_primary_oai_doaj_org_article_102e82d140314d279f14ec04ba492971
- Purkis, William J. *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia, c.1095-c.1187*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2008.
- Schein, Sylvia. *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099-1187)*. London: Routledge, 2016.
- Spacey, Beth C. "'A Land of Horror and Vast Wilderness': Landscapes of Crusade and Jerusalem Pilgrimage in Arnold of Lübeck's *Chronica Slavorum*." *Journal of Medieval History* 47, no. 3 (2021): 350–365.
- "The Church of the Holy Sepulchre." *The Church of the Holy Sepulchre*. Accessed December 4, 2023.

<https://thechurchoftheholysepulchre.com/church-of-the-holy-sepulchre-significance/>.

Wilkinson, John, Joyce Hill, and W. F. (William Francis) Ryan. *Jerusalem Pilgrimage, 1099-1185*. London: Hakluyt Society, 1988.

Zank, Michael. *Jerusalem: A Brief History*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2018.

About the Author

Ally Godsil (Will Rice' 26) is a history major from Will Rice College.



Law or Politics:

A Re-Examination of the Judicial Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws

Kelly Liao

In mainstream U.S. legal history scholarship, the Chinese exclusion era is often analyzed in the context of the emergence of an administrative state, with an overwhelming focus on the “plenary power” doctrine established by the Supreme Court’s landmark decision in *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* (1889).^{1, 2} This view frames the ruling as a crucial step in the Supreme Court’s broader agenda to consolidate federal power, a response to the social and economic challenges of a fast-growing nation after the Civil War.³ While the *Chae Chan Ping* decision was instrumental in transforming the immigration restriction to a site of the building of the administrative state, attributing the decision solely to the Court’s desire to reinforce the federal authority oversimplifies its implications. Such a focus overlooks the continuous congressional efforts to curb Chinese immigration, driven by prevalent anti-Chinese sentiment in American society. Moreover, it fails to acknowledge the successful resistance from the federal courts that attempted to check the power of the executive and legislative branches. Given that Chinese immigrants continued to seek judicial assistance for admission to the U.S. after the decision, *Chae Chan Ping*, though pivotal, might not have had a substantial impact on limiting Chinese

1. Kunal Parker, “Citizenship and Immigration Law, 1800-1924: Resolutions of Membership and Territory,” in *The Cambridge History of Law in America: Volume II the Long Nineteenth Century (1789-1920)*, ed. Michael Grossberg and Christopher L. Tomlins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 186-7.

2. William Forbath, “Politics, State-Building, and the Courts, 1870–1920,” in *The Cambridge History of Law in America: Volume II the Long Nineteenth Century (1789-1920)*, ed. Michael Grossberg and Christopher L. Tomlins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 682-3.

3. Parker, “Citizenship and Immigration Law,” 186-7.

immigration as suggested in existing legal scholarship.

To address these gaps, this paper examines the nuanced legal developments before and after the *Chae Chan Ping* decision by focusing on the first half of the Chinese exclusion era, specifically the late 19th century and the early 20th century, during when various laws and policies were enacted to restrict or entirely prohibit the immigration of Chinese individuals to the United States. It begins by tracing the post-Civil War rise of anti-Chinese racism and how it led Congress to enact a series of laws restricting Chinese immigration from the 1870s to the 1890s. Then, instead of concentrating on the Supreme Court's reactions to the Chinese exclusion laws, this paper looks at the records of the district and circuit courts' records and analyzes how lower federal court judges approached the Chinese immigrants' cases. The paper argues that there was no uniform judicial deference to Congress' illiberal policies, showing how the judges based their decisions on legal procedure instead of external political factors in their rulings favorable to Chinese immigrants. Even after *Chae Chan Ping* established congressional authority over immigration, lower federal courts maintained their commitment to constitutional mandates, consistently admitting thousands of Chinese immigrants into the country.

The last section tries to explain what led to the eventual sharp decline of Chinese immigration in 1905 by zooming out of the Chinese exclusion era. It contends that this decline was mainly due to the Supreme Court's consistent efforts to consolidate federal power against state governments after seeing how the judicial victories of the Chinese immigrants could weaken the newly expanded federal power. The section situates the development of an immigration regime within the historical trend of an increasing need for a stronger federal government to handle national sovereignty issues. Through *Sing Tuck v. United States* (1904) and *Ju Toy v. United States* (1905), the Court affirmed the finality of the executive branch over immigration matters by explicitly rejecting the petitioners' use of judicial review as a legal remedy.

Anti-Chinese Racism and Chinese Exclusion Laws

To understand the *Chae Chan Ping* decision, it is important to view it not only as one of the Supreme Court's key attempts to strengthen federal power in building an administrative state but also in the socio-political backdrop of decades of anti-Chinese racism and legislative efforts to codify this racism in law before the ruling. Following the end of the Civil War in 1865, the U.S. accelerated its industrialization and Westward expansion, considerably boosting its demand for manual

labor. The second half of the 1800s witnessed significant waves of immigrants arriving in the United States, leading to heightened competition for jobs and resources, especially during economic downturns.⁴ This influx contributed to mounting social tensions, with white working-class Americans often perceiving immigrants whose cultural practices distinct from Anglo-American traditions as a threat to their economic well-being and cultural values.⁵ Chinese labor, which made up the largest population of immigrant labor for being cheaper, less unionized, and more willing to perform onerous tasks, became the main target of the Nativist attacks.⁶ The anti-Chinese sentiment was particularly pronounced, marked by stereotypes and prejudices that portrayed Chinese immigrants as unassimilable, immoral, and economically detrimental.⁷ Nativist groups and political leaders capitalized on these sentiments, advocating for restrictive immigration policies as a means of protecting American workers and preserving social cohesion.⁸

As early as the 1850s, anti-Chinese movements in California had resulted in local laws designed to prevent the Chinese from working in certain industries and restricting Chinese immigration to California.⁹ The Page Act of 1875, which aimed to exclude Chinese deemed undesirable, such as “coolie” labor and prostitutes, marked one of the earliest instances of anti-Chinese racism codified into federal law. This escalating climate of exclusion culminated in the enactment of the more extensive Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first federal law to bar immigration explicitly based on nationality and race. In justifying the exclusion law, Senator Farley derogatively described the Chinese as “degraded people” whose culture had no “elevating tendency.”¹⁰ Unsatisfied with the 1882 act’s focus on new immigrants, Congress, in 1884, passed additional laws that applied to ethnic Chinese regardless of their country of origin. These amendments significantly affected Chinese already residing in the U.S., especially those who had left and were seeking re-entry.

This legislative momentum continued with the Scott Act in 1888, which prohibited the Chinese laborers’ re-entry after they left the U.S. Eventually, the Scott Act merged with earlier laws into the Geary Act of 1892. This act not only

4. Kitty Calavita, “Chinese Exclusion and the Open Door with China: Structural Contradictions and the ‘Chaos’ of Law, 1882-1910.” *Social & Legal Studies* 10, no. 2 (June 1, 2001): 207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/a017401>.

5. Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 3.

6. Edna Bonacich, “United States Capitalist Development: A Background to Asian Immigration,” in *Labor Immigration Under Capitalism*, ed. Lucie Cheng and Edna Bonacich (Oakland: University of California Press, 1984), 95-100.

7. Forbath, “Politics, State-Building, and the Courts,” 685.

8. Calavita, “Chinese Exclusion and Open Door with China,” 207-209.

9. Sucheng Chan, *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 123-5.

10. U.S. Congress. “Congressional Record,” 47th Cong. 1st sess., 1882, 1582.

prolonged the exclusion of Chinese laborers for another ten years but also imposed stricter entry requirements, including a mandatory certificate of U.S. residence. With the newly established Bureau of Immigration through the 1891 Immigration Act, these more stringent immigration laws had found more effective means of enforcement at the federal level. When the Geary Act was extended in 1902, it broadened its focus to Chinese residents in the country, mandating that each must register and secure a residence certificate or face deportation.

Chae Chan Ping was decided amidst such a political climate of heightened anti-Chinese racism, where Congress was actively pursuing legislation and creating immigration bureaucracies to curtail Chinese immigration. In 1888, Chae Chan Ping, a Chinese laborer who had legally resided and worked in the United States, left the country temporarily and attempted to re-enter with a certificate proving his prior legal residency. However, he was denied re-entry under the Scott Act of 1888 because he was a laborer and had left the United States, regardless of his previous legal status. Chae Chan Ping challenged the exclusion law, arguing that it violated his rights in two ways: (1) it deprived him of due process under the Fourteenth Amendment by denying his right to return to his home in the United States, and (2) it contradicted his implicit right to free emigration between the U.S. and China, as established by the 1868 Burlingame Treaty. The Supreme Court rejected both arguments. Justice Stephan Field contended that the Due Process clause did not apply to aliens seeking entry into the United States, and more importantly, Congress has absolute authority over immigration matters, even if it means overruling existing treaties.¹¹ Through the 1889 ruling, the Supreme Court affirmed Congress's "plenary power," aiming to limit judicial involvement in immigration matters.

Judicial Enforcement of Chinese Exclusion Laws

While the Chae Chan Ping decision seemed to grant Congress and immigration bureaucracies sweeping authority to enact nativist-driven immigration policies, it would be a mistake to assume there was uniform judicial deference to illiberal immigration legislation following the ruling. Ironically, the constitutional legacy of the Civil War constrained the federal government in ways that inadvertently benefited immigrants.¹² By redefining citizenship and extending equal protection rights and due process from citizens to "any person," the Fourteenth Amendment blurred the legal distinctions between citizens and aliens.¹³ This broad-

11. *Chae Chan Ping v. United States*, 130 U.S. 581 (1889).

12. Parker, "Citizenship and Immigration Law," 185.

13. Parker, "Citizenship and Immigration Law," 187.

ening of protections served as the constitutional basis for many important federal rulings, allowing thousands of Chinese immigrants to secure entry into the U.S. or to avoid deportation.

While historians generally acknowledge the significance of the constitutional legacy of the Civil War in contributing to the judicial success of Chinese immigrants, they diverge in their perspectives regarding the specific factors that motivated federal judges to challenge Chinese exclusion legislation and rule in favor of the Chinese petitioners. Some historians like Lucy Salyer and Christian Fritz believe that the judges' commitment to the Anglo-American judicial tradition restricted them from imposing their personal views and compelled them to apply the laws equally to both Chinese and American petitioners. On the other hand, legal scholars like John McLaren and Ralph Mooney attribute the pro-Chinese rulings to judges' elitist paternalism, which exercised caution against the prevalent anti-Chinese agitation to prevent it from influencing the neutrality of laws. Drawing from Charles McClain's "most-favored-nation" and Thomas Joo's economic rights arguments, I propose another possible explanation that contextualizes the Chinese exclusion cases in the broader trend of judicial activism in economic liberties in the Progressive Era. I suggest that following their shift from a race-based to an economic-based approach in the Chinese civil rights cases, federal judges might also be motivated to uphold the interests of the economic elite by admitting more Chinese immigrants in their Chinese exclusion cases.

The Anglo-American Judicial Tradition Explanation

According to Lucy Salyer, two practices of the court, respect for the doctrine of habeas corpus and the adherence to judicial evidentiary standards, were especially crucial to favorable rulings for Chinese immigrants.¹⁴ These practices, rooted in the institutional norm of deciding cases independently, prevented the judges from imposing their personal views and compelled them to apply these standards equally to both Chinese and American petitioners.¹⁵

Since the writ of habeas corpus has an honored place in Anglo-American judicial tradition, federal courts often found it difficult to deny such petitions from Chinese immigrants seeking to avoid deportation. As a fundamental constitutional right, habeas corpus embodies the key American legal principles of due process and

14. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 69.

15. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 69.

safeguards against arbitrary government interference.¹⁶ With the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, federal court judges felt obligated to issue the writ regardless of the petitioner's race or nationality.¹⁷ Judge Ogden Hoffman of the U.S. District Court for the District of California once described the writ as the "most sacred muniment of personal freedom," stating that Chinese immigrants, like American citizens, were equally entitled to protections against detention without just cause.¹⁸ His commitment to legal procedure remained unchanged despite the tightening of Chinese exclusion laws in 1888 and the judicial affirmation of congressional authority over immigration in 1889. Between 1888 and 1890, Hoffman consistently offered hearings and issued writs of habeas corpus to Chinese immigrants, enabling them to use judicial review to contest the deportation orders issued by immigration officials.¹⁹ By the end of this period, in Hoffman's court, 533 or 86 percent of Chinese habeas corpus petitions resulted in the discharge of the petitioner, while only 14 percent were remanded.²⁰ This significant rate of Chinese admitted to the U.S. reflects the federal courts' adherence to legal principles and institutional norms, rather than simply deferring to the immigration bureaucrats' decisions in the late nineteenth century.

In addition to writs of habeas corpus, evidentiary standards were vital in maintaining judicial independence by ensuring that courts made decisions based on the evidence presented instead of external political factors. A prime example of this practice was Commissioner E. H. Heacock of the California District Court. Under the enhanced due process established by the Fourteenth Amendment, Heacock carefully evaluated the credibility of witnesses and offered his recommendations to the judges on whether to adopt the testimonies. His judgments were grounded in the belief that Chinese immigrants deserved equal treatment regarding evidentiary standards as American citizens in courts.²¹ As long as there were no apparent discrepancies in the testimonies, he complied with the general principle to validate the evidence and recommended that the petitioner be granted admission to the U.S. Sometimes, despite being aware that the petitioners were lying, the Commissioner felt bound to make decisions in favor of them because of the consistency of their testimony.²² In most cases, the judges would adopt Heacock's recommendations

16. U.S. Constitution, art. I, sec. 9.

17. *In re Jung Ah Lung*, 25 F. 141 (1885).

18. *In re Jung Ah Lung*, 25 F. 141 (1885).

19. Christian G. Fritz, "A Nineteenth Century 'Habeas Corpus Mill': The Chinese Before the Federal Courts in California," *The American Journal of Legal History* 32, no. 4 (1988): 371.

20. U.S. Congress, House, Joint Select Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, H.R. Rep. 4048, 51st Cong., 2nd sess. (1890-1891): 412.

21. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 79.

22. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 79.

because of the shared compulsion to adhere to the nondiscriminatory evidentiary standards.²³ This adherence resulted in a high rate of Chinese petitioners being discharged or granted entry into the U.S. during Heacock's time in office. Until the late 1890s, the Commissioner reversed the immigration officials' decisions to deny entry in more than 80 percent of the cases, considerably counteracting the legislative attempts to bar Chinese immigrants.²⁴

However, it is important to note that courts' respect for habeas corpus and consistent application of evidentiary standards did not mean the judges were immune from anti-Chinese racism. Many of them still held highly racist views against Chinese immigrants and were enthusiastic advocates of the exclusion policies.²⁵ Although Hoffman's court gave thousands of Chinese a chance to convince him that they should enter the country, he was a strong proponent of Chinese exclusion policies and believed that the Chinese were racial inferiors.²⁶ Similarly, William Morrow, a district court judge from 1891 to 1897, and Joseph McKenna, a circuit court judge from 1892 to 1897, regularly issued habeas corpus writs to Chinese immigrants during their tenure, despite displaying racial prejudice against the immigrants and expressing vocal support for anti-Chinese forces in Congress on multiple occasions.²⁷

It might seem almost impossible for these judges to rule in favor of the Chinese petitioners given their racist perceptions that the Chinese were inferior and should be excluded. However, as Fritz points out, the nature of the American judicial system required the judges to deal with Chinese immigrants on a personal, day-to-day basis since the large number of separate hearings forced the judges "to see and hear them as human beings with distinct explanations and histories."²⁸ In spite of their generalized bias towards the Chinese, in the courts, the judges encountered not "the Chinese" as a race, but Chinese petitioners with unique cases. This case-by-case appraisal allowed each Chinese petitioner to present specific evidence, testimony, or arguments in favor of their liberty.²⁹ With the expansion of constitutional protections to include non-citizens, judges felt bound to set aside their personal views and apply general legal principles to each case based on its individual merits and facts. Consequently, their commitment to judicial due process

23. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 79.

24. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 80.

25. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 72.

26. Fritz, "A Nineteenth Century 'Habeas Corpus Mill'," 350.

27. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 72.

28. Fritz, "A Nineteenth Century 'Habeas Corpus Mill,'" 371-372.

29. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 80.

and the weight of evidence led to significant favorable rulings for Chinese immigrants, even after the enactment of harsher exclusion laws and the Supreme Court's grant of complete power to Congress over immigration.

Elitist Paternalism Explanation

Another group of scholars, including Ralph Mooney and John McLaren, argue that the pro-Chinese rulings by federal judges were influenced by their political and social conservatism, grounded in beliefs of elitist paternalism that emphasized safeguarding the law from public sentiments.³⁰ Judge Matthew P. Deady, Oregon's first federal district judge, who was known for his consistently favorable rulings for the Chinese petitioners, had constantly expressed his distaste of the anti-Chinese agitation and legislation during his office. Referring to the anti-Chinese legislators as "demagogues" and a "mob" in his various personal writings, Judge Deady showed his wariness of the popular opinion's detrimental impact on law.³¹ For instance, in response to the escalating white hostility towards Chinese in Portland, Deady described the anti-Chinese legislators as a "mob" in his 1886 diary:

Much excitement in town this week over the anti-Chinese Congress (mob) that meets here today, and I understand the citizens are well prepared to put down any act of lawlessness, like driving out Chinese and to punish the actors.³²

In March that year, he even went as far as assembling a grand jury to urge for indictment against the white agitators responsible for the anti-Chinese violence that occurred that month.³³

Deady did not attempt to conceal his aversion even in his judicial opinions. He expressly criticized the Chinese exclusion acts as mere echoes of the "sandlot" working-class whites who resented losing their jobs to the Chinese, rather than deliberate laws crafted by the country's "most intelligent and influential people."³⁴ When granting the habeas corpus to a petitioner born in the United States of Chinese parents on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment, he denounced how "harsh

30. Ralph James Mooney, "Matthew Deady and the Federal Judicial Response to Racism in the Early West Symposium," *Oregon Law Review* 63, no. 4 (1984): 586, 633-636; John McLaren, "The British Columbia Judges, the Rule of Law, and the Chinese Question: The California and Oregon Connection," in *Law for the Elephant, Law for the Beaver: Essays in the Legal History of the North American West*, edited by John McLaren, Hamar Foster and Chet Orloff. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center and Pasadena: Ninth Judicial District Historical Society 1992, 255.

31. Letter from Deady to E.W. McGraw (Jan. 27, 1878); Matthew Deady, *Pharisee among Philistines: The diary of Judge Matthew P. Deady, 1871-1892*, ed. Malcolm Clark Jr., 490 (Feb 13, 1886).

32. Deady, *Pharisee among Philistines*, 490.

33. Mooney, "Matthew Deady," 586.

34. *In re Moncan*, 14 F. 44 (D.Or. 1882); *In re Yung Sing Hee*, 36 F. 437 (9th Cir. 1888).

and unjust” the Chinese exclusion laws were and the “demagoguery” under such laws:

So harsh and unjust a measure as this concerning the intercourse between friendly nations maintaining diplomatic relations is something unprecedented in this age of the world, and can only be accounted for by the fact that a presidential election is pending, in which each political party is trying to outbid the other for the “sandlot” vote of the Pacific coast, and particularly for that of San Francisco.³⁵

Again, calling the advocates of the laws “sandlot[s],” Deady voiced his disdain for the fact that the laws were created solely to pander to anti-Chinese sentiments within the aggrieved white working-class community during the upcoming presidential election.³⁶

The Chae Chan Ping decision seemed not to impede Judge Deady’s from continuing to rule in favor of the Chinese petitioners in his court. In fact, he wrote his “most revealing” of his Exclusion Act rulings one year after the Chae Chan Ping decision in 1890.³⁷ Unlike his prior petitioners, the ones in *In re Chung Toy Ho* were not American citizens, which required him to extend beyond the established precedent of *Yung Sing Hee* and his other Chinese exclusion cases to grant them permission to enter the US.³⁸ Moreover, *Chung Toy Ho* was concerned with a Chinese merchant’s wife and child, whose statuses were never specified in Chinese exclusion acts. They were denied entry by immigration collectors because they did not possess the certificates required for “every Chinese person” who was a non-laborer by the newly enacted 1888 amendment. Creatively, Deady adopted a nonliteral interpretation of the 1888 act, contending that the petitioners did not fall in the groups the acts intended to have effects on.³⁹ Citing the original 1882 act which had a “manifest purpose” to only exclude Chinese laborers, Deady drew from the legislative intent of the acts to demonstrate that admitting the wife and the child of a merchant without the required non-laborer certificates did not violate the legislation.⁴⁰

Two years later, Judge Deady made his last Chinese exclusion case ruling at the new Circuit Court of Appeals before his death in 1893. The significance of the

35. *In re Yung Sing Hee*, 36 F. 437 (9th Cir. 1888).

36. *In re Yung Sing Hee*, 36 F. 437 (9th Cir. 1888).

37. Mooney, “Matthew Deady,” 623. -

38. *In re Chung Toy Ho*, 42 F. 398 (C.C.D. Or. 1890); Mooney, “Matthew Deady,” 623.

39. *In re Chung Toy Ho*, 42 F. 398 (C.C.D. Or. 1890).

40. *In re Chung Toy Ho*, 42 F. 398 (C.C.D. Or. 1890).

ruling lay not only in the decision itself but in its rationale, as it affirmed the crucial role of judicial review in the enforcement of Chinese exclusion laws, a role that both the Scott Act of 1888 and the Chae Chan Ping decision sought to curtail. The case involved a deportation order of Gee Lee, a Chinese merchant residing in the United States, charged with unlawfully entering the country following a visit to his relatives in Victoria, British Columbia. The district court found that Gee Lee, having been readmitted by the Customs Collector, should not be deported due to a mere error in the Collector's judgment. Deady upheld the district court's decision but not on the basis that the immigration officials' decisions are final as outlined in Section 12 of the Scott Act.⁴¹ Rather, he emphasized that Section 12 had never become effective because of the non-ratification of a pending treaty with China.⁴² Deady contended that the immigration officials' admission or refusal of Chinese individuals is not final but subject to judicial inquiry.⁴³ This argument was noteworthy, especially given the context of the Supreme Court's Chae Chan Ping decision three years earlier, which had granted Congress ultimate authority over immigration issues. Deady relied instead on another Supreme Court decision, *Lau Ow Bew v. United States*, to reach his ruling in favor of the Chinese immigrant. He pointed out that requiring the merchant, who had long resided in the U.S. to acquire the certificate from the Chinese government just because he left the country for a temporary visit of his relatives in Victoria would be "unreasonable and absurd."⁴⁴ Once again, Deady went beyond the literal interpretation of the law and took the unique circumstances of the immigrants into consideration in his judicial decision-making process.

Although Deady did not continue labeling Chinese legislators as "mobs" in his post-1889 rulings on Chinese exclusion cases, his willingness to reaffirm the judicial role in immigration matters and venture beyond the literal interpretation of harsher Chinese exclusion laws were consistent with his prior distaste for the recklessness of anti-Chinese legislation. Historian Mooney theorizes that, while genuine humanitarian concerns about the immigrants might have played a role, Deady's identification with the postwar industrial elite had a more significant impact in his judicial work on the Chinese exclusion cases.⁴⁵ In an era marked by rapid economic transformation and the expansion of free-market capitalism, the primary concern of the economic elite was maintaining the political status quo in order to prevent legislative redistribution of wealth.⁴⁶ Chinese immigrants, a cheap source

41. *United States v. Gee Lee*, 50 F. 271 (9th Cir. 1892).

42. *United States v. Gee Lee*, 50 F. 271 (9th Cir. 1892).

43. *United States v. Gee Lee*, 50 F. 271 (9th Cir. 1892).

44. *United States v. Gee Lee*, 50 F. 271 (9th Cir. 1892).

45. Mooney, "Matthew Deady," 635-637.

46. Mooney, "Matthew Deady," 635.

of labor that filled in the vacuum caused by the emancipation of black slaves, were considered crucial by the economic elite to maintain control over the working-class whites. That was why the economic elite tended to defend Chinese immigration, while Populists and labor leaders opposed it. As Mooney notes, Deady's alignment with the elite class, favorable rulings for the Chinese immigrants, and contempt for the anti-Chinese agitators should thus be anticipated, since they reflected a typical paternalistic view that laws should be safeguarded against the opinions of ordinary people.

However, a critical flaw of Mooney's arguments is that Judge Deady's admission of Chinese immigrants was primarily restricted to merchants, in accordance with the exclusion laws, which contradicts Mooney's assertion that Deady would have shown special sympathy to Chinese laborers because of his identification with the economic elite. The cases that Mooney references to support Deady's favorable rulings for Chinese immigrants involved petitioners who were predominantly merchants or their immediate family members, exemplified by cases like *In re Chung Toy Ho* and *United States v. Gee Lee*. In addition, as Mooney himself points out, Deady did make rulings against Chinese immigrants between 1891 and 1892 as a judge at the Ninth Circuit court, all on the basis that the petitioners were laborers and failed to establish their citizenship.⁴⁷ In this way, it does not appear that Deady had particular sympathy for Chinese laborers, who were supposed to be the groups that the economic elite like Deady sought to defend in order to maintain the elite's political control and keep the white working-class in line.

International Treaties and Economic Rights Explanation

According to Charles McClain, the "most-favored-nation" provision articulated in the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 and its 1880 amendment, the Angell Treaty, played an important role in federal courts' decisions to grant habeas corpus to Chinese immigrants in the Chinese exclusion era.⁴⁸ The Burlingame Treaty, which acknowledged the inherent right of individuals to change their residence and allegiance and promoted free migration and emigration between the U.S. and its most favored trading partner, China, had been frequently cited by federal judges to rule in favor of Chinese immigrants seeking to enter the U.S. or avoid deportation prior to 1889. Although promoting free emigration, the treaty did not explicitly prohibit the U.S. from regulating or restricting Chinese immigration. In 1880, two

47. *Gee Fook Sing v. United States*, 49 F. 146 (9th Cir. 1892); *Lem Hing Dun v. United States*, 49 F. 148 (9th Cir. 1892).

48. Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America*. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1994), 31.

years before the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Hayes Administration negotiated the Angell Treaty as an amendment treaty, which permitted the United States to restrict, but not completely prohibit, Chinese immigration. Nine years later, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of Chinese exclusion laws through the *Chae Chan Ping* decision on the basis that the legislative power to regulate immigration is “an incident of sovereignty which cannot be surrendered by the treaty-making power.”⁴⁹ This ruling affirmed the Congress’ ultimate authority in regulating immigration and passing laws restricting the entry of certain groups, even if it conflicted with prior international treaties.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, *Chae Chan Ping* did not completely negate the legal standing of the international treaties in lower federal courts. Some federal judges, especially Deady, continued referring to the U.S.-China treaties as the legal basis to grant Chinese immigrants admission to the U.S. For instance, to justify the admission of the wife and the child of the merchant in *Chung Toy Ho*, Judge Deady cited the 1880 treaty amendment to show that it only restricted the entry of Chinese laborers while maintaining most-favored-nation rights for all other Chinese residents in or desiring to migrate to the United States.⁵¹ Similarly, in disputing the conclusiveness of immigration officials’ decisions in *United States v. Gee Lee*, Deady again invoked a treaty with China to demonstrate that Section 12 of the Scott Act did not come into force due to the non-ratification of the treaty. This seems to stand in contrast to the ruling of *Chae Chan Ping*, which asserted that the exclusion laws should be enforced even if they were in conflict with the international treaties. Deady, on the other hand, believed that the legality of the Chinese exclusion laws derived from the ratification of the treaty with China. If the treaty was pending to be ratified, the enforcement of the exclusion laws should not be proceeded.

Some may argue that it was reasonable for judges to reference the treaties on provisions that did not have apparent conflicts with the exclusion laws. For instance, both the Angell Treaty and the exclusion laws focused on restricting Chinese laborers while permitting the immigration of other groups, such as merchants and scholars. Thus, the treaty could be cited as an additional legal source in justifying the intended group for exclusion was laborers, as opposed to the merchants or merchant’s immediate families involved in the case of *Chung Toy Ho*. However, as discussed in the previous section, the intricacies of these cases had given law enforcers certain discretion in their decisions, and they could choose to grant or not grant

49. *Chae Chan Ping v. United States*, 130 U.S. 581 (1889).

50. *Chae Chan Ping v. United States*, 130 U.S. 581 (1889).

51. *In re Chung Toy Ho*, 42 F. 398 (C.C.D. Or. 1890).

the immigrants' habeas corpus based on a variety of factors. Likewise, judges also had such discretion and often had to go beyond the literal interpretation of laws to make a decision.⁵² Hence, the question arises: what factors motivated judges to rule in favor of Chinese immigrants rather than against them?

One potential explanation lies in the political climate of the time, during which protests and boycotts escalated both within and beyond the United States in reaction to the tightening of Chinese exclusion laws in 1892. The Chinese American community, led by the Chinese Six Companies, organized campaigns of collective non-compliance, refusing to provide the officials with the required documents to demonstrate their legal status.⁵³ The American Asiatic Association established a fund to amplify public awareness regarding the dangers of alienating Chinese and the importance of bolstering trade relations with China.⁵⁴ Outside the U.S., Chinese merchant associations successfully organized a nationwide boycott of American goods. This effort garnered criticism of the harshness of the Immigration Bureau's practices within the American business community.⁵⁵ Fearing a substantial decline in business, a delegation of American businessmen representing various industries, including textiles, iron and steel, oil, and banking, personally petitioned President Roosevelt to intervene with the Immigration Bureau, seeking a resolution to bring an end to the boycott.⁵⁶

Domestic and international pressures significantly tempered the executive enforcement of exclusion laws. Faced with widespread protests and boycotts, the Commissioner General cautioned Chinese inspectors and emphasized the need to prevent justifiable complaints and enforce the law without unnecessary harshness. Following President Roosevelt's orders, the Secretary of Commerce and Labor issued Circular No. 81 in 1905, relaxing enforcement measures for exempt classes, such as merchants and scholars, due to pressure from commercial interests affected by the boycott.⁵⁷

The political pressures were likely to also have influenced the judiciary for two reasons. Firstly, as discussed previously, some judges, like Deady, might have identified with or sympathized with the economic elite. To appease the businesses

52. *In re Chung Toy Ho*, 42 F. 398 (C.C.D. Or. 1890); *United States v. Gee Lee*, 50 F. 271 (9th Cir. 1892).

53. Salver, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 47.

54. Delber L. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy, 1900-1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 50.

55. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy*, 103.

56. Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 477.

57. Calavita, "Chinese Exclusion and Open Door with China," 216.

affected by boycotts and protests and restore social order, they might have the incentive to rule in favor of Chinese immigrants, such as by loosening the requirements for merchants attempting to enter the United States. Secondly, the broader trend of increasing judicial activism in economic liberty cases during the Progressive Era might also have played a role. This era, characterized by rapid industrial growth and expanding laissez-faire ideology, saw a heightened focus on safeguarding economic rights against government intervention, best exemplified in the landmark case of *Lochner v. New York*, where the Supreme Court struck down a New York law regulating the working hours of bakers under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.⁵⁸ Such a trend of minimizing government interference in economic activities was already mirrored in Chinese civil rights cases around the same time, particularly in *Yick Wo v. Hopkins*.⁵⁹ Legal scholar Thomas Joo highlighted that by addressing economic rights within the context of racial discrimination, these civil rights cases marked a shift from a race-focused judicial approach under the Fourteenth Amendment to one centered on economic rights in the early 20th century.⁶⁰ The federal judges who upheld economic rights in Chinese civil rights cases may have approached the Chinese exclusion cases in a similar way since they were motivated to protect the interests of the economic elite by admitting more Chinese immigrants, particularly Chinese merchants. Therefore, it could be hypothesized that while ruling in favor of Chinese immigrants in Chinese exclusion cases, federal judges inadvertently upheld racial justice, although their primary intent may have been safeguarding economic rights.

In essence, though the *Chae Chan Ping* decision minimized treaties' legal force regarding exclusion, some federal judges persisted in citing U.S.-China treaties to admit Chinese immigrants, likely influenced by pressures to appease economic interests threatened by boycotts and the judicial philosophy prioritizing economic liberty over racial equality during that era.

The Eclipse of Judicial Justice

Regardless of which explanation better captures the lower-level judicial enforcement of the Chinese exclusion laws, it is evident that despite Congress' persistent efforts to implement stricter Chinese exclusion laws throughout the 1880s

58. *Lochner v. New York*, 198 U.S. 45 (1905).

59. *Yick Wo v. Hopkins*, 118 U.S. 356 (1886).

60. Thomas Wuil Joo, "New Conspiracy Theory of the Fourteenth Amendment: Nineteenth Century Chinese Civil Rights Cases and the Development of Substantive Due Process Jurisprudence," *University of San Francisco Law Review* 29, no. 2 (Winter 1995): 353-388.

and 1890s and the validation of these laws in the Chae Chan Ping Supreme Court decision that a substantial number of Chinese immigrants continued to be admitted to the U.S. in the late nineteenth century. Taking advantage of the blurring citizen-alien distinctions created by the constitutional amendments, Chinese immigrants had frequently pursued habeas corpus routes to enter the U.S. or avoid deportation. Claiming to be native-born citizens, they sometimes brought admission applications directly to the courts by bypassing administrators on the grounds that the exclusion laws and administrative remedies applied only to aliens instead of citizens.⁶¹ Some others, aware that the exclusion laws mainly targeted laborers, strategically rebranded themselves as merchants and crafted compelling and consistent narratives to apply for admission in court.⁶² Often, lacking concrete evidence of deception, these individuals were granted habeas corpus relief by federal courts.⁶³

Then, what effectively restricted the federal courts' involvement in Chinese exclusion cases and significantly reduced the number of Chinese immigrants in the U.S.? After the fractured nation was preserved through the Union's victory, there was a recognized need for the federal government to assert its sovereign authority more forcefully to prevent any future threats to national unity and security. The Civil War itself had been an existential crisis, with southern secession nearly dissolving the United States permanently. Allowing states to follow their own divisive policies on immigration risked reigniting such separatist movements.

The process of Reconstruction also gave the federal government an unprecedented level of control in intervening in the affairs of Southern states to abolish slavery and reintegrate the region. Moreover, as the nation's boundaries expanded westward through acquisition of new territories from the Mexican-American War, coherent federal immigration policies were needed to ensure effective sovereignty and incorporation of these far-flung regions. Leaving regulation of immigrant flows across the new frontiers up to individual territories or states risked undermining federal control.

At the same time, the post-war years ushered in a new era of industrialization, corporate growth and interstate economic activity that necessitated a nationalized system of infrastructure and regulations beyond what individual states could provide. This rapid industrialization also led to surging immigration from Asia and Southern/Eastern Europe, creating a need for uniform federal screening processes

61. Parker, "Citizenship and Immigration Law," 189.

62. Calavita, "Chinese Exclusion and Open Door with China," 220.

63. Calavita, "Chinese Exclusion and Open Door with China," 221.

to assimilate this influx of immigrant labor.

The Supreme Court enabled this consolidation of federal power over national concerns like security, territorial integrity and immigration control way before Chae Chan Ping. Before the Civil War, individual states designed their own immigration policies and apparatuses.⁶⁴ However, the influx of immigrants seeking to fill the increasing labor demand after the Civil War prompted the federal government to reconsider immigration matters from the perspective of national sovereignty. Recognizing the need for a cohesive and efficient national immigration policy, the government shifted its regulatory focus from the state to the federal level. As early as 1876, the Supreme Court attempted to dismantle state-level immigration regimes and establish immigration regulation as a matter of federal authority in *Henderson v. Mayor of New York* (1876) and *Chy Lung v. Freeman* (1876). These two decisions laid the legal groundwork for the ruling of Chae Chan Ping in 1889, where the Supreme Court granted Congress exclusive power to regulate immigration through the “plenary power” doctrine. By declaring it “an incident of sovereignty,” the Court expressly stated that the federal government had the power to make immigration policy largely free from judicial review.⁶⁵

However, as demonstrated in the previous sections, the “plenary power” doctrine did not stop the judicial system from challenging executive and legislative powers. To resolve this tension, the Supreme Court upheld the ultimate authority of the executive branch by denying petitioners the use of the habeas corpus route. In *United States v. Sing Tuck* (1904), Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes refused to grant Chinese immigrants the writ of habeas corpus, ruling that admission applicants must exhaust their administrative remedies under the exclusion laws before seeking judicial intervention. This ruling was based on the Act of August 18, 1894, which made the decisions of immigration and customs officers final unless the Secretary of Treasury reversed them.⁶⁶ In other words, Chinese immigrants could no longer employ the writ of habeas corpus as a remedy even if the detention was wrongful. Putting the final nail in the coffin, the Court in *United States v. Ju Toy* (1905) held that the administrative decision was “final and conclusive” regardless of the petitioner’s claim to citizenship. This ruling prevented Chinese immigrants from using their citizenship claims to seek judicial assistance for admission into the country. In addition, it further restricted federal courts from ruling in their favor by reinterpreting the meaning of “due process.” Emphasizing that “due process of law

64. Parker, “Citizenship and Immigration Law,” 184.

65. *Chae Chan Ping v. United States*, 130 U.S. 581 (1889).

66. *United States v. Sing Tuck*, 194 U.S. 161, 178 (1904).

does not require a judicial trial,” Justice Holmes removed the impetus for judges to offer hearings or issue habeas corpus to Chinese petitioners based on due process considerations.⁶⁷

As expected, following the *Ju Toy* opinion, the federal courts generally accepted the Bureau of Immigration’s decisions as final and refused to consider new evidence. Consequently, there was a notable decline in habeas corpus applications filed by Chinese immigrants, decreasing from 153 cases in 1904 to 32 in 1905 and further down to nine in 1906.⁶⁸ Likewise, the admission rates of Chinese immigrants via habeas corpus in the Northern District of California’s federal courts significantly decreased. Between 1904 and 1905, they dropped from 60 percent to 29 percent in the District Court and 77 percent to 0 percent in the Circuit Court.⁶⁹ In this way, the Supreme Court managed to block the “habeas corpus route,” which for two decades had allowed Chinese immigrants to mitigate the effects of exclusion.

Conclusion

While the *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* decision is widely regarded as a pivotal moment in consolidating federal power over immigration policy, this narrow framing overlooks the complex legal developments surrounding Chinese exclusion in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Despite congressional efforts and Supreme Court validation of exclusionary laws in *Chae Chan Ping*, the paper has shown how lower federal courts resisted implementing these illiberal policies through strict adherence to legal principles like habeas corpus rights and evidentiary standards. Even after 1889, district and circuit court judges continued granting admission to thousands of Chinese immigrants each year.

Drawing on legal scholar perspectives, the paper explored three potential explanations for these judges’ favorable rulings towards Chinese petitioners - upholding the Anglo-American judicial tradition, expressing elite paternalistic sympathies, and prioritizing economic interests over race-based exclusion. Regardless of their underlying motivations, the ability of lower courts to facilitate Chinese immigration exposed tensions between the judiciary and the political branches over enforcement of exclusion.

However, the Supreme Court ultimately reasserted its commitment to

67. *United States v. Ju Toy*, 198 U.S. 253 (1905).

68. Parker, “Citizenship and Immigration Law,” 189.

69. Salyer, *Law Harsh as Tigers*, 80, 82.

expanding federal authority across all spheres in the aftermath of the Civil War and the country's rapid industrialization. Immigration control became a matter of national security, territorial sovereignty, and orderly labor supply from new immigrant flows. Through decisions like *United States v. Sing Tuck* and *United States v. Ju Toy*, the Court eliminated judicial remedies like habeas corpus that Chinese immigrants had long leveraged, decisively consolidating the legislative's and executive's plenary power over admissions and deportations.

While *Chae Chan Ping* marked a significant philosophical milestone, it did not promptly or solely restrict Chinese immigration to the extent initially thought. It was only around 1905, when the Supreme Court closed all judicial avenues, that a unified immigration policy, resistant to judicial challenges, was eventually established, aligning fully with the exclusionary goals of other political branches. The Chinese exclusion laws, and the Supreme Court's affirmation of them, set concerning precedents for racial discrimination and exclusion in U.S. immigration policy. These decisions entrenched the notion of plenary power in immigration, allowing Congress and the executive branch broad, often unchecked authority. The era's legal developments also contributed to the marginalization of judicial review in immigration matters. This trend has had lasting implications for the balance of power among the branches of government and the protection of individual rights.

Understanding the Chinese exclusion era is thus crucial for its immediate impact on Chinese immigrants and its broader implications on American legal and political history. The era serves as a stark reminder of how law and politics can intertwine to produce policies prioritizing national interests and security at the expense of individual rights and equality. As current debates on immigration continue, the lessons from this period remain highly relevant, cautioning against the dangers of allowing racial prejudice and political motives to overshadow legal principles and judicial independence.

Bibliography

- Chae Chan Ping v. United States*, 130 U.S. 581 (1889).
- Gee Fook Sing v. United States*, 49 F. 146 (9th Cir. 1892).
- In re Chung Toy Ho*, 42 F. 398 (C.C.D. Or. 1890).
- In re Jung Ah Lung*, 25 F. 141 (1885).
- In re Moncan*, 14 F. 44 (D.Or. 1882).
- In re Yung Sing Hee*, 36 F. 437 (9th Cir. 1888).
- Lem Hing Dun v. United States*, 49 F. 148 (9th Cir. 1892).
- Letter from Deady to E.W. McGraw (Jan. 27, 1878).
- Lochner v. New York*, 198 U.S. 45 (1905).
- U.S. Congress. "Congressional Record," 47th Cong. 1st sess., 1882, 1582.
- U.S. Congress, House, Joint Select Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, H.R. Rep. 4048, 51st Cong., 2nd sess. (1890-1891): 412.
- United States v. Gee Lee*, 50 F. 271 (9th Cir. 1892).
- United States v. Ju Toy*, 198 U.S. 253 (1905).
- United States v. Sing Tuck*, 194 U.S. 161, 178 (1904).
- Yick Wo v. Hopkins*, 118 U.S. 356 (1886).
- Bonacich, Edna. "United States Capitalist Development: A Background to Asian Immigration," In *Labor Immigration Under Capitalism*, edited by Lucie Cheng and Edna Bonacich, 75-100. Oakland: University of California Press, 1984.
- Calavita, Kitty. "Chinese Exclusion and the Open Door with China: Structural Contradictions and the 'Chaos' of Law, 1882-1910." *Social & Legal Studies* 10, no. 2 (June 1, 2001): 203–226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/a017401>.
- Chan, Sucheng. *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882–1943*. Temple University Press, 1991.
- Coolidge, Mary Roberts. *Chinese Immigration*. (New York: Arno Press, 1969).
- Forbath, William. "Politics, State-Building, and the Courts, 1870–1920," in *The Cambridge History of Law in America: Volume II the Long Nineteenth Century (1789–1920)*, edited by Michael Grossberg and Christopher L. Tomlins, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 643-695.
- Fritz, Christian G. "A Nineteenth Century 'Habeas Corpus Mill': The Chinese before the Federal Courts in California." *The American Journal of Legal History* 32, no. 4 (1988): 347–372. <https://doi.org/10.2307/845742>.
- Joo, Thomas Wuli. "New Conspiracy Theory of the Fourteenth Amendment: Nineteenth Century Chinese Civil Rights Cases and the Development of Substantive Due Process Jurisprudence." *University of San Francisco Law Review* 29, no. 2 (Winter 1995): 353-388.
- McKee, Delber L. *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy, 1900-1906 : Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977).
- McLaren, John. "The British Columbia Judges, the Rule of Law, and the Chinese

- Question: The California and Oregon Connection,” in *Law for the Elephant, Law for the Beaver: Essays in the Legal History of the North American West*, edited by John McLaren, Hamar Foster and Chet Orloff. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center and Pasadena: Ninth Judicial District Historical Society 1992.
- MacClain, Charles J. *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1994.
- Deady, Matthew. *Pharisee among Philistines: The diary of Judge Matthew P. Deady, 1871-1892*, edited by Malcolm Clark Jr. Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1975.
- Mooney, Ralph James. “Matthew Deady and the Federal Judicial Response to Racism in the Early West Symposium.” *Oregon Law Review* 63, no. 4 (1984): 586, 561–638.
- Parker, Kunal. “Citizenship and immigration law, 1800-1924: Resolutions of membership and territory.” In *The Cambridge History of Law in America: Volume II the Long Nineteenth Century (1789-1920)*, edited by Michael Grossberg and Christopher L. Tomlins, 168-203. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Salyer, Lucy E. *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law*. University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

About the Author

Kelly Liao, from the Class of 2023, majored in Political Science and Asian Studies, with minors in History and Politics, Law, and Social Thought (PLST). She is interested in the intersections of race, gender, and capitalism within the Chinese diasporic experience in North America. During her time at Rice, she loved reading architecture magazines at Brown Fine Arts Library and photographing the light changes of the Skyspace during sunset.



Rice Historical Review

**Vol. 9
2024**

Spring 2024

Editorial Board



Benji Wilton
Co-Director in Chief
Wiess College, '24



Rijuta Vallishayee
Co-Director in Chief
Martel College, '24



Sean Weeks
Managing Editor
McMurtry College, '25



Ansh Rai
Managing Editor
Baker College, '26



Bryson Jun
Director of Copyediting
Brown College, '25



Muyao Huang
Director of Copyediting
McMurtry College, '25



Jack Madary
Co-Director of Copyediting
Duncan College, '26



Abby Antinossi
Co-Director of Copyediting
Sid College, '25



Will Grayer
Co-Director of Outreach
Lovett College, '25



Chris Shi
Co-Director of Outreach
Brown College, '24



Sophia Govea
Co-Director of Outreach
Hansner College, '25



Bora Göbekli
Editor
Baker College, '24



Rahul Santhanam
Director of Podcasting
Wiess College, '27



Annie McKenzie
Co-Director of Podcasting
Wiess College, '25

Daniela Bonscher
Co-Director of Podcasting
Lovett College, '25



Hoang Nguyen
Co-Director of Publishing
Lovett College, '24



Yumeng Zhao
Co-Director of Publishing
Wiess College, '25



Megan Foreman
Director of Art
Will Rice College, '25

Kennedi Macklin
Co-Director of Podcasting
Will Rice College, '25

Acknowledgements

Dr. David Cook
Professor
Department of Religion

Dr. Kerry Ward
Associate Professor
Department of History

Dr. Paula A. Sanders
Joseph and Joanna Nazro Mullen
Professor in Humanities

Dr. Sidney Lu
Annette and Hugh Gragg
Associate Professor of
Transnational Asian Studies

Dr. Fay Yarbrough
William Gaines Twyman
Professor of History
Associate Dean,
Faculty and Graduate Programs

Dr. Lisa Balabanlilar
Joseph and Joanna Nazro Mullen
Professor in the Humanities
Chair, Department of
Transnational Asian Studies
Director, Chao Center for Asian Studies

Dr. William Suárez-Potts
Associate Professor
Department of History

Dr. Aysha Pollnitz
Associate Professor of History
Director of Undergraduate Studies,
History

Dr. Nathan Citino
Barbara Kirkland Chiles
Professor of History
Chair, Department of History

Dr. Caroline Quenemoen
Associate Dean of Undergraduates
Director of Inquiry Based Learning

Jessica McWhorter
History Department Administrator

Marcie Newton
History Department Coordinator

Organizational Support

Rice University Department of History

Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry

Rice University School of Humanities

Fondren Library

Cover art by Pawel Czerwinski on Unsplash
<https://unsplash.com/photos/abstract-painting-aMPfitH2tT0>

