THE UNDERGRADUATE HISTORICAL JOURNAL

At UC Merced

Volume 6 • Number 1 • 2019

The Undergraduate Historical Journal
At the University of California, Merced

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Cover Design by Sarah Lee

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Letter from the Chief Editor

It is my great pleasure to present the first issue of the sixth volume of the *Undergraduate Historical Journal at UC Merced*. A fully collaborative effort on the part of authors and editors, this issue marks the culmination of months of hard work on the part of first-generation undergraduates dedicated to becoming published authors.

Covering a wide array of historical topics, this edition of the journal is composed of five articles. These articles span the globe, from farming in the Central Valley to the use of space in Safavid Iran. The journal opens with an article from Omar González, who used extensive archival evidence to highlight the successes of the National Land for People's activism against large landowners in the Westlands Water District in the late twentieth century. Next, we turn to Colonial Africa, where Brandon Stilson interrogates the failure of white colonial governments to provide adequate healthcare for indigenous African populations. This is followed by two articles on late nineteenth-century Merced, California. Madelyn Lara uses newspaper archives and county government records to chart the anti-Chinese intention behind Merced's establishment of a health officer to regulate Chinatown and its inhabitants. Sarah Lee examines racialized policing in 1880s Merced during a District Attorney led campaign of police raids and targeted arrests in Merced's Mexican Quarter and Chinatown. We close this edition with an article by T.R. Salsman, who examines space, race, and gender in the pastoralist society of Iran under the Safavid dynasty.

While the authors of these articles worked tirelessly to find their evidence and make their arguments, this edition would not have been possible without the diligent effort and attention of my editorial board. I am truly thankful that I had the assistance of the best and brightest UC Merced has to offer. This semester's board was staffed by Omar González, Madelyn Lara, Adrian Enwright, Maria Nguyen-Cruz, Tommy Paniagua, Jeremy Paguibitan, and Kevin Ng. I thank each and every one of you for your contributions in making this edition a reality. I would also like to thank Assistant Professor Romina Robles Ruvalcaba for advising the journal. I also would like to announce that this will be the last and final issue of the *Undergraduate Historical Journal at UC Merced.* Following a unanimous vote by the editorial staff, this student led effort will be henceforth known as the *Undergraduate Historical and Critical Race & Ethnic Studies Journal at UC Merced.* As members of a joint department, we feel we cannot best represent the work of our student body without a clear and intentional statement of our commitment to scholarship centered around critical questions of race, class, and gender. I hope you will join us in this endeavor by reading our newly christened journal next spring. Leading the journal this semester has been not just an exciting academic opportunity, but both an honor and a privilege. Without further ado, I proudly present this edition of the journal for your enjoyment.

Sarah Lee
Chief Editor

Faculty Forward

I am very proud to present the Fall 2019 issue of the *UC Merced* based *Undergraduate Historical Journal*. For almost seven years, the *Journal* has steadfastly been a hub for students to submit, critique, edit, and publish each other's work. What makes the *Journal* special is the editorial team, comprised exclusively of students. While faculty and graduate students enjoy access to various venues for publication, it is rare for undergraduate students to have the same opportunity. Such tradition of exclusion misses the centrality of how formative the undergraduate years can be for a historian's training. Having the opportunity to transform a research paper into an article for publication puts our undergraduate students at a great advantage because it constitutes a personal accomplishment and prepares them for graduate school and beyond. Publishing allows students to also value and carry out a side of knowledge production and professionalization that often eludes the classroom experience.

The *Undergraduate Historical Journal* has blossomed into a mainstay and promises to continue to grow in ways that more concertedly express the research interests and interdisciplinary approaches that students value. In this sense, for the Spring 2020 issue we are working to incorporate Critical Race and Ethnic Studies into our *Journal*'s title to reflect in name what student's articles have been about from the beginning: works that are concerned with a critical understanding of systems of power and how they shape and affect people's lives. From its inception, the *Journal* has engaged with events and subjects that demonstrate the contradictions, oppressions, and contestations in the past to help move our understanding of the present forward. Such is a mission shared with the Department of History and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies at UC Merced.

This Fall 2019 issue is no exception. We present five analyses that critically examine questions of space, territoriality, agrarian and agricultural development, and public health and medicine: Omar González's "The Fight for Family Farms: Farm Worker Success in the Westlands, 1960-1986," Brandon Stilson's "A Failure to Care: Colonial Power and Healthcare in Africa, 1850-1939," Madelyn Lara's "Chinatown Declared a Nuisance: Creating a Public Health Crisis in Merced, California, 1883-1908, Sarah Lee's "Clean Sweeps and Chain Gangs: Extending the Carceral Net in Merced, California, 1880-1890," and T.R. Salsman's "Constructing Safavid Iran: Space, Pastoralism, Power, and Identity in Safavid Iran 930-1077/1524-1666." These articles help us understand Merced's history of racial segregation, California's agrarian struggles in the face of agribusiness, colonial projects to eradicate indigenous forms of healing and political agency in Africa, and the pastoralist roots of cities in Safavid Iran. Please welcome me in thanking the editors and contributors of the *Journal* for this praiseworthy model of historical rigor and intellectual curiosity.

Romina Robles Ruvalcaba
Assistant Professor of History

The Fight for Family Farms: Farm Worker Success in the Westlands, 1960-1986

By Omar González[1]

Introduction: A Bright Future Foiled

Prior to the gold rush in 1848, California had been scarcely populated. Without proper irrigation technologies, California's land is only useful for dry farming, which is not the most lucrative type of agriculture. In an effort to populate the Spanish frontier, the Spanish government issued land grants for California lands to its citizens, a policy the Mexican Republic later followed. These land grants were often for huge amounts of land, well over the ideal family farm size, with some of them reaching 100,000 acres. Shortly after the Mexican-American War, Mexican landowners had their lands stripped away by the American government, who favored Anglo settlers. However, without proper irrigation technologies, neither of these groups of landowners were able to maximize their wealth.

Large landowners'[2] fortunes changed in 1902 when the US Congress passed the Reclamation Act. The act's primary purpose was to "settle people on the [Western] land and protect them [settlers] from speculators."[3] While controversial with large landowners who chafed against the act's acreage limit and residency requirements, the Reclamation Act stands as the first step the US took to transform its Western lands into fertile farmland. The acre limit barred farms greater than 160-acres from receiving irrigation water, while the residency requirement aimed to

[1] The author, being also an editor, recused himself from the editing process regarding this article. It received no special treatment and was required to conform to all standard requirements.

[2] A note on terminology, I use agribusiness, excess landowners, and excess landholders interchangeably. While the technical term for farming operations over 160 acres is either excess landowners or excess landholders, for the most part they tend to be massive farming corporations. As a result, I utilize the term agribusiness accordingly. However, not all operations over 160 acres were owned by farming corporations. At times, these huge chunks of land were owned by speculators. For those instances, I specify speculators and avoid using agribusiness to describe them.

[3] James J. O'Brien to George Ballis, April 1, 1976, 3.

eliminate absentee landowners and speculators by requiring all farm owners to live on their land. At the same time, excess lands had to be sold at prices that reflected pre-irrigation values. These requirements were upheld by the Supreme Court in 1958 because "the limitation insures that the enormous expenditures will not go in disproportionate share to a few individuals."[4] These requirements made the Reclamation Act a nightmare for landholders in the West because it essentially forced landholders to redistribute their massive ranches for the public's benefit.

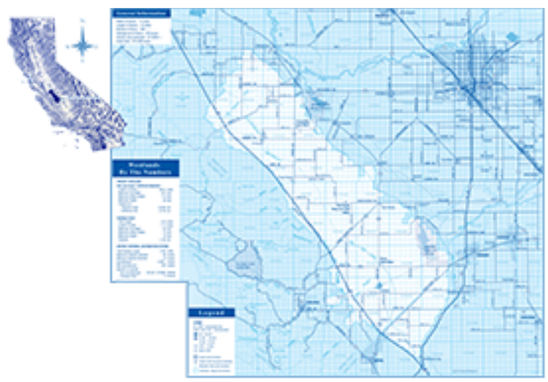

Image 1: Map of the Westlands Water District. Located in the western portion of Fresno County and roughly the size of Rhode Island.[5]

Despite the Reclamation Act's adoption in 1902, the Federal government did not begin irrigating California until Congress passed the Central Valley Project in 1933. Even under the Central Valley Project, the west Fresno area, known as the Westlands Water District (WWD), received a sparse amount of irrigation water from the Federal government. The 160-acre limitation only applied to lands that received irrigation water from the Federal government, so as late as 1964, the Westlands had 70% of its land owned by excess landholders.[6] To address the problem of excess landholders in the Westlands, the San Luis unit's distribution system, authorized as an extension of the Central Valley Project in 1960, was meant to irrigate the

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[4] George L. Baker, "Pact Could Aid Big Land Sales," in *Fresno Bee*, March 18, 1974.
[5] "Westlands Land Phasing Map," 1977.
[6] Kenneth Holum to James L. Vizzard, October 8, 1964, 3.

Westlands so family farms could prosper.[7] Under the San Luis unit, the Reclamation Act finally applied to the long-neglected Westlands. However, large landowners organized against the Reclamation Act, to prevent the act's enforcement in the Westlands and protect their control over the region's farms. Often financially well-off individuals or corporations, like the Southern Pacific Railroad, readily marshalled their wealth to amplify their grievances against the Reclamation Act. As a result, excess landowners changed interpretations of the Reclamation Act through strategic navigation of water bureaucracy for their benefit, making the Westlands during the 1970s the least compliant water district in land redistribution.[8] Boasting an incredible amount of wealth and influence, excess landowners acted as strong and vocal opponents to the Reclamation Act's enforcement.

Image 2: Walter Goldschmidt pioneered the claim of family farms producing a higher quality of life than corporate farms. His research was instrumental in shattering notions of agribusiness being the most effective producers of food and wealth.[9]

[7] Stewart L. Udall to Lyndon Johnson, April 24, 1964.
[8] Neil W. Schild to James L. Draper, February 25, 1975, 3-4.
[9] Thomas S. Wesiner, James Loucky, Hilarie Kelly, and Martin Cohen, "In Memoriam," https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/inmemoriam/html/walterrochsgoldschmidt.html.

On the other hand, settlers of the West viewed the Reclamation Act as their ticket to modernity. According to Walter Goldschmidt's thesis of 1944, the Westlands was destined to become among the wealthiest regions in the world. Goldschmidt, comparing the quality of life conditions in the California cities of Arvin and Dinuba, argued that corporate farms produced a lower quality of life than family farms.[10] Thus, the Reclamation Act was understood as a harbinger of rapid economic growth and the good life in rural regions through its development of family farms. In regards to the Westlands, the University of California (UC) system acknowledged it as among the most underdeveloped regions in California and determined irrigation to be the fastest way to develop the district.[11] The UC supported Goldschmidt's thesis, and felt irrigation in accordance with the Reclamation Act was a fail-safe method for making the Westlands prosper.

In 1968, the California government announced irrigation projects for the Westlands and followed this announcement four years later with plans for the I-5 freeway to pass through the Westlands.[12] The announcements of increased spending on the Westlands highlights California's attempt to expeditiously revitalize the Westlands, with both plans designed to strengthen the region's economy. As a result, corporations began investing in the Westlands. The promise of irrigation transforming the Westlands into the new Orange County of California even fooled the Walt Disney Company, who planned to build an amusement park in the region.[13] The increased federal spending, coupled with an increase in private spending, demonstrates that California intended to develop the Westlands into the most prosperous region in the US.

[10] Walter R. Goldschmidt, *As You Sow* (The Free Press, 1947), 423.
[11] Henry Fagin to Robert Harkness, October 25, 1968.
[12] "The Blossoming West of San Joaquin Valley," in *S.F. Examiner*, May 5, 1974.
[13] Ibid.

Unfortunately for the Westlands, full enforcement of the Reclamation Act never materialized. Landowners who far exceed the 160-acre limitation came to, and continue to, dominate the Westlands. Excess landholders banded together to successfully undermine the San Luis unit's goal of enforcing the Reclamation Act, but their efforts met resistance. Labor organizations increased their involvement in the San Luis unit through alternative methods. Labor organizations, like the AFL-CIO, mobilized more than ever to wage a tough battle against excess landholders. The mobilization of laborers materialized in lobbying Congress members, publicizing exploitable loopholes in irrigation contracts, and meeting with the US water bureaucracy. Utilized on two separate occasions, first in the 1960s as the San Luis unit was being negotiated and again in the 1970s as the San Luis unit was being built, these methods ultimately enjoyed limited success in preventing excess landowners from circumventing the Reclamation Act. Both times labor organizations triumphed over agribusiness, forcing excess landholders into compliance with the Reclamation Act by the late 1970s/early 1980s. The efforts undertaken by these labor organizations in the Westlands demonstrate the importance and effectiveness of organized labor in combating the interests of a small elite class.

Efforts against agribusiness in the Westlands did not have an experienced organization or leader. With César Chávez and his United Farm Workers (UFW) disinterested in fighting against agribusiness in the Westlands, the UFW's photographer, George Ballis, formed his own farm worker group, National Land for People (NLP).[14] The NLP aimed to capitalize on the promise made by the Reclamation Act to create family farms, in order to make farm workers the owners

[14] Although National Land for People was the most active and effective organization to seek enforcement of the Reclamation Act, they were not the only group to do so. To a lesser extent, organizations like the AFL-CIO, National Farmers' Union, the Catholic Church, and others participated in efforts to redistribute land in the Westlands. All of these groups shared the same goal of helping family farmers, and in my research, appeared to have mostly worked alongside the NLP. Thus, I use NLP and family farmer organizations interchangeably.

of the land they worked, summarized in their motto “Land belongs to those who work it.”[15] Their task was difficult and ultimately resulted in failure, with President Ronald Reagan’s administration passing the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (RRA), which repealed the family farm requirement for irrigation water recipients. As a result, the Westlands remains among the poorest regions in California. Additionally, many unincorporated communities in California suffer from the lack of clean affordable water, due to the RRA favoring the agricultural industry over farm workers in the distribution of water. However, the NLP did enjoy some success in enforcing the Reclamation Act prior to the RRA becoming law. Through active mobilization and exercising their legal rights, the NLP temporarily prevented agribusiness from avoiding compliance with the Reclamation Act.

Image 3: Cesar Chavez (left) and George Ballis (right) posing for a picture in front of an almond farm.[16]

[15] Ildi Carlisle-Cummins, “Podcast 2: Can Land Belong to Those Who Work It?” (Cal Ag Roots, 2015), https://www.agroots.org/nlp.

[16] J. Kile, “George Ballis” (MoralHeroes, 2013), http://moralheroes.org/george-ballis/.

Agribusiness today is a highly influential force that appears to be irreplaceable. The influence of agribusiness has been exercised repeatedly in history through the manipulation of laws, like extending the emergency Bracero Program long after the end of World War II, or more recently in their ability to maintain the subsidy on corn.[17] This paper seeks to unravel the idea of agribusiness' invincibility by highlighting the successes of the NLP; thus demonstrating the effectiveness of social movements in dismantling the overwhelming influence of farm corporations.

Theoretical Framework

Wiebe E. Bijker's 2007 article, "Dikes and Dams, Thick with Politics" argues technology is able to further society by solving problems, but technology is unable to drastically change a society's values.[18] Thus, technology will produce more advanced societies but will amplify the values that society holds and in turn, the social structures that manifest from those values. This is true of the Westlands, where the social structure remained consistent, leaving farm worker income static even after irrigation transformed agriculture into a more lucrative industry than ever before. Thomas G. Andrews intervenes by claiming environmental technologies do not only reproduce oppressive social structures, but amplify the oppressive nature of these social structures. In strengthening the inequalities of social structures, environmental technologies fuel violent resistance to the social structures they reproduced.[19]

These fundamental texts detail the ways environmental technologies are able to reproduce social structures, marginalizing people according to race and class. However, these

[17] Ellis Hawley, "The Politics of the Mexican Labor Issue, 1950-1965" in *Agricultural History* 40, 3 (1966), 176.

[18] Wiebe E. Bijker, "Dikes and Dams, Thick with Politics" (*Isis* Volume 98, No. 1, 2007), 123.

[19] Thomas G. Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Harvard University Press, 2008), 15.

texts have placed a high value on the violent means of resistance, ignoring the non-violent efforts taken to dismantle a reproduced social structure in the West. Federal laws, like the Reclamation Act of 1902, attempted to prevent the reproduction of an Eastern social structure by preventing farms bigger than 160 acres from receiving irrigation water. The law legitimized the existence of marginalized communities and served as the backbone in a nonviolent resistance led by the NLP against the oppressive social structure brought by irrigation. Thus, I propose that nonviolent methods to dismantling oppressive social structures should be more closely examined, thereby intervening on current scholarly approaches hyper-focused on violence as the only means of resistance to an elite class that mobilizes technology to their advantage.

Research on disenfranchised communities has followed the trend of focusing on the "broken" aspects of those communities. Intending to highlight an often unseen problem for unfamiliar audiences, the hope is that a declension focus can bring forth change.[20] In the case of California's Central Valley, this is as simple as detailing how economically behind the Valley is to the rest of California. However, this approach to research is highly problematic given the outcomes. Oftentimes, damage-centered research results in an exploitative relationship favoring the researcher over the disenfranchised community at the center of the research.[21] Damage-centered research incentivizes researchers to depict communities as broken by rewarding researchers' careers for highlighting problems, as opposed to making an effort to improve those communities. This contributes to the distrust that disenfranchised communities have against researchers, making it increasingly difficult for future research into disenfranchised communities.[22] Furthermore, in depicting disenfranchised communities as "broken," researchers

[20] Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," *Harvard Education Review* 79.3 (Fall 2009), 409 & 411.
[21] Ibid., 411-412.
[22] Ibid.

effectively discard the historical reasons for why the communities are disenfranchised, which prevents certain solutions from being proposed to improve those marginalized communities.[23]

In an effort to break away from the trend of damage-based research, this paper will instead use desire-based research. Desire-based research, as described by Eve Tuck, attempts to understand the complexities and self-determination of disenfranchised communities.[24] Thus, this paper will not largely focus on why the Westlands continues to remain among the most impoverished regions of California. Instead, I will focus on the historical successes the people of the Westlands have had in bettering their lives. Although their efforts ended fruitlessly, their many accomplishments were no small feat. Today, the idea of redistributing land from agribusiness to farm workers to create multiple family farms has been reduced to an ideal because of the perception that agribusiness is far too profitable and influential for replacement. Yet the people of the Westlands nearly achieved this ideal less than forty years ago, meaning the dismantling of agribusiness in favor of family farms is attainable. Through a desire-based research framework, this paper will capitalize on those victories to emphasize the viability of creating a valley of family farms. The use of a desire-based research framework will also serve to recreate the valley's image from a helpless, disenfranchised community to a disenfranchised community capable of improving if given the proper amount of aid. Furthermore, the use of non-violent resistance demonstrates the desire for farm workers to improve their own situation.

1960s: The Beginning Battle Against Agribusiness

Excess landholders stopped at nothing to undermine the Reclamation Act because it limited their ability to profit. The 160-acre limit prevented agribusiness from dominating

[23] Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," *Harvard Education Review* 79.3 (Fall 2009), 415-416.
[24] Ibid., 416.

Westlands' agriculture, but agribusiness was not the only victim of the Reclamation Act. Much of the land held in the Westlands was held primarily for speculation, as opposed to farming, evidenced by corporations like the Southern Pacific owning 106,000 acres in the Westlands in 1976.[25] The Southern Pacific, a railroad corporation uninterested in farming, only sought to sell land at the best price as opposed to farming it. The Reclamation Act's anti-speculation clause prevented speculators like the Southern Pacific from selling off their lands for a hefty profit.[26] The two conditions, the 160-acre limit and anti-speculation clause, aimed to redistribute 70% of all land owned by excess landowners, but the wealth held by these excess landowners offered them the ability to retaliate against the law. For example, agribusiness used their wealth and influence to dominate all negotiations between the Westlands and the US government, primarily by crafting the by-laws of the Westlands' governing body to favor excess landholders. The elections created an illusion of democracy and fair play, but in fact were far from it. Voters receive more votes with the more land they own, so elections give significantly more influence to excess landholders over individuals residing in the Westlands.[27]

Not only were elections rigged to favor the excess landholders, but mechanisms were put in place to regulate who could run for office. Candidacy for the Westlands governing body was essentially limited to excess landholders. A key requirement for candidacy, being a landowner in the Westlands,[28] restricted city-dwellers and farm workers from office. Only excess landholders and family farmers remained eligible to run for office, an unlikely course for family farmers given another clause in the by-laws. The by-laws made positions for the governing body too costly for anyone, aside from the wealthy, to seriously consider, offering only a modest salary for

[25] B.E. Martin to Senator Gaylord Nelson, March 24, 1976, 7.
[26] Ibid.
[27] *Resolutions Approving By-Laws of Westlands Water District*, March 7, 1966, 3.
[28] Ibid., 5.

all positions except for the directors and president.[29] Based on their salary, the Board of Directors and president appear as only minor positions. In reality, the Board of Directors and the president together wielded all the real power in the Westlands' governing body through by-laws specifying their responsibilities as the duty to "manage and conduct the business and affairs of the District."[30] Leaving the position of most importance without a salary was not coincidental, but was instead an intentional deterrent to unfavorable candidates attempting to take power from the landowning elite. Therefore, the lack of salary, coupled with land requirements, served to prevent all but excess landholders from serving on the Westlands' governing body. Although this undemocratic voting system was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1971 because it clearly favors the wealthy and large landowners, governor Ronald Reagan protected this election system by passing special legislation.[31] As late as 1976, the over-representation of excess landowners is visible through their positions among the Board of Directors.[32] When a seat on the Board of Directors opened up for election in 1975, the NLP offered a candidate, who would have been the first-ever family farm-friendly representative of the WWD. This campaign, supported by newspapers denouncing the undemocratic nature of the election, revealed hopes of having the federal government intervene and create fairer elections.[33] Unfortunately for family farmers, there was no federal intervention, and under the rigged election system, agribusiness utilized their overwhelming influence to place one of their representatives on the Westlands governing board.[34] This resulted in excess landholders negotiating all irrigation projects with the Federal government, without allowing family farmers and farm workers to voice their concerns. In other

[29] *Resolutions Approving By-Laws of Westlands Water District*, March 7, 1966, 6-7.
[30] Ibid., 5.
[31] George L. Baker, "SP, Standard Oil May Benefit Under Westlands Water Deal" in *Fresno Bee*, March 17, 1974, A10.
[32] Ralph M. Brody to Westlands Landowners, August 2, 1976, 2.
[33] John Keller, "Westlands Water District Board wins re-election" in *Fresno Bee*.
[34] Richard Hall, "The 'Corporate Seats' On Westlands Board" in *Fresno Bee*, March 7, 1978.

words, excess landowners and agribusinesses were in charge of the government agency specifically tasked with regulating and replacing them with family farmers. Despite the massive conflict of interest, the Board of Directors deemed the matter "too inconsequential" to force board members to recuse themselves.

Without farm workers and family farmers at the bargaining table, the Westlands often signed irrigation contracts that benefited excess landholders with the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary of the Interior and Bureau of Reclamation strongly supported the 160-acre limitation, but were unable to prevent subtle wording in contracts from benefitting excess landholders. For example, the original 1963 contract for the San Luis unit reserved 1,008,000 acre-feet of water for the Westlands, which averages about 2 acre-feet of water per acre.[35] Unfortunately, this clause did not specify the amount of water eligible lands could receive, which empowered excess landholders to strategically have project water delivered in abundance to carefully selected plots of land. When done correctly, excess landholders were able to pump out irrigation water from the ground, or have water from one acre of land spill into another acre of land nearby that did not receive irrigation water. In practice, this essentially allowed excess landholders to irrigate most, if not all, of their land. This practice quickly caught on among excess landholders and became known as "checkered compliance" [image 4].[36] The "unavoidable clause" of the 1963 contract specifically protected checkered compliance by claiming there was no way of preventing water from spilling onto excess land.[37] Given that a solution to this problem came to fruition two years later, it is unlikely that all parties involved truly believed that water flowing onto excess lands was inevitable. The 1963

[35] Kenneth Holum to James L. Vizzard, October 8, 1964, 4.
[36] Kenneth Holum to Thomas L. Pitts, September 7, 1965, 4.
[37] Ibid., 3.

contract was only able to heavily favor excess landholders because labor groups were left out of the bargaining table entirely. The lack of labor organizations during negotiations naturally sparked outrage that grew stronger once the contract was made public.

Despite the bureaucratic advantage held by agribusiness, farm workers and family farmers had a strong desire to improve their situation through non-violent forms of activism. More specifically, the NLP rose up to lead a coalition of farm worker organizations. The 1963 contract was unbearable for family farms, and without any opportunity for representation in the governing board, family farmers resorted to directly appealing to the federal government. The NLP frequently met with and wrote to the Secretary of the Interior along with various members of Congress in an effort to convince them of the harm the negotiated contract would bring to the Westlands.

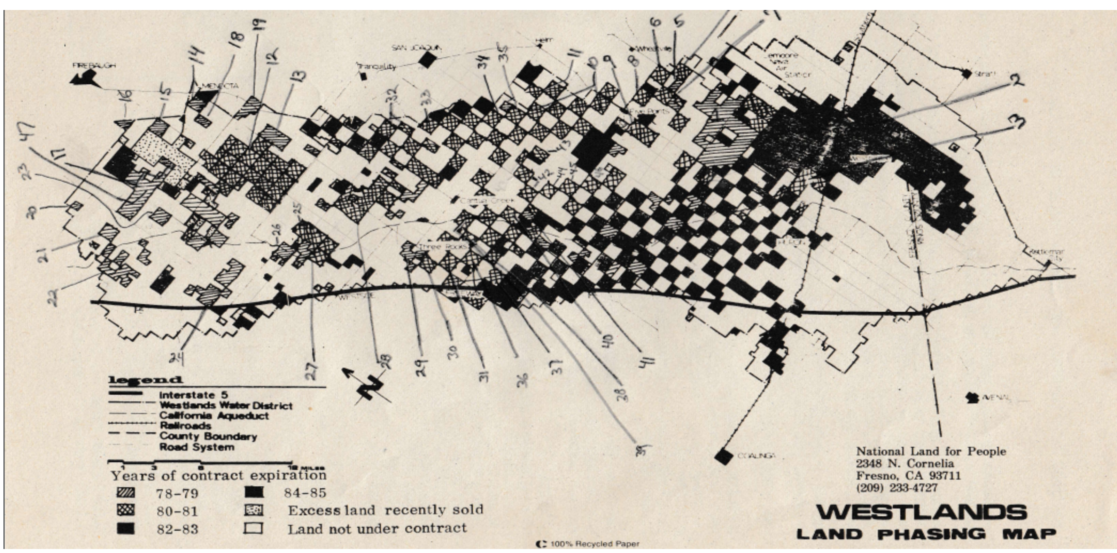

Image 4: Map of land sales in the Westlands Water District in 1975. The portion on the right with black and white squares depicts "checkered compliance."[38]

The NLP began their attack on the 1963 contract by meeting directly with the Secretary of the Interior throughout 1964. They expressed their concerns of the 1963 contract having the

[38] "Westlands Land Phasing Map," 1977.

potential to be exploited by excess landholders. These meetings, pursued by family farmers, proved to be highly effective, convincing the Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, to agree to various amendments before 1965.[39] The amendments to the 1963 contract removed the "unavoidable clause," limited the amount of water eligible lands could receive and created a tax on land to incentivize excess landholders to sell their unused lands.[40] The NLP did not stop their efforts after receiving approval from Udall on the amendments, immediately beginning to lobby Congress to approve of the amendments as well.[41] These efforts did not go to waste and resulted in the amendments receiving approval from all sides. Although acceptance of the amendments in 1964 was a decisive legislative victory for family farmers against agribusiness, it was only the result of one legal battle in the midst of the continued campaign by excess landholders to undermine the Reclamation Act. For the following battles, the strategy employed in the approval of the 1964 amendments set a precedent for the NLP to follow in future battles against excess landowners.

In theory, the 1964 amendments prevented the San Luis unit from benefiting excess landholders. And yet, some issues remained unresolved with the biggest problem being tied to the creation of the San Luis unit. The Bureau of Reclamation approved the San Luis to be fully built, despite 70% of land in the Westlands being held excess landowners.[42] Meanwhile, multiple ownership remained highly controversial because it allowed excess landholders to claim "technical compliance" with the Reclamation Act of 1902.[43] The tax proposed in the 1964 amendments only incentivized excess landholders to sell their unused lands, but did not guarantee

[39] Kenneth Holum to James L. Vizzard, October 8, 1964, 4.
[40] George Taylor to Andrew J. Biemiller, October 9, 1964, 1-2.
[41] Ibid., 1.
[42] Kenneth Holum to Thomas L. Pitts, September 7, 1965, 5.
[43] Ibid., 2-3.

their compliance. The NLP was not ignorant to these concerns, and successfully developed the Operator Agreement of 1965 and got the Secretary of the Interior to sign off on it. The agreement almost guaranteed that excess landholders would sell their excess lands, by limiting water deliveries to 3 acre-feet for every acre of eligible land and requiring the Westlands to return any unused water to the San Luis drain.[44] Furthermore, the operating agreement established an ad valorem tax (property tax proportionate to the value of the land) on all land in the Westlands.[45] With their wealth being slowly taxed away, excess landowners were pressured into redistributing their lands. The operating agreement did not strictly guarantee that excess landholders were going to sell off all of their excess lands. However, this operating agreement, alongside the Reclamation Act's anti-speculation clause, which required excess lands to be sold at pre-irrigation values, did create a situation where excess landholders would not benefit from holding onto their excess lands. The requirement of having surplus water returned to the drain essentially ended the possibility of "checkered compliance." In short, the NLP forced excess landowners into a position where they were unable to profit from their excess lands because water deliveries were limited while the anti-speculation clause of the Reclamation Act prohibited land sales at market rates.

The NLP cornered excess landowners into selling their lands at pre-irrigation rates, but alas, the economic pressure placed on excess landowners was not enough to force them into compliance with the Reclamation Act. In a perfect world, this strategy may have been enough to effectively redistribute land, but excess landowners exploited loopholes in the law to avoid compliance. Shortly after establishing the ad valorem tax, the Bureau ceded control of the tax over to the governing body of the Westlands in return for a promise to speed up land

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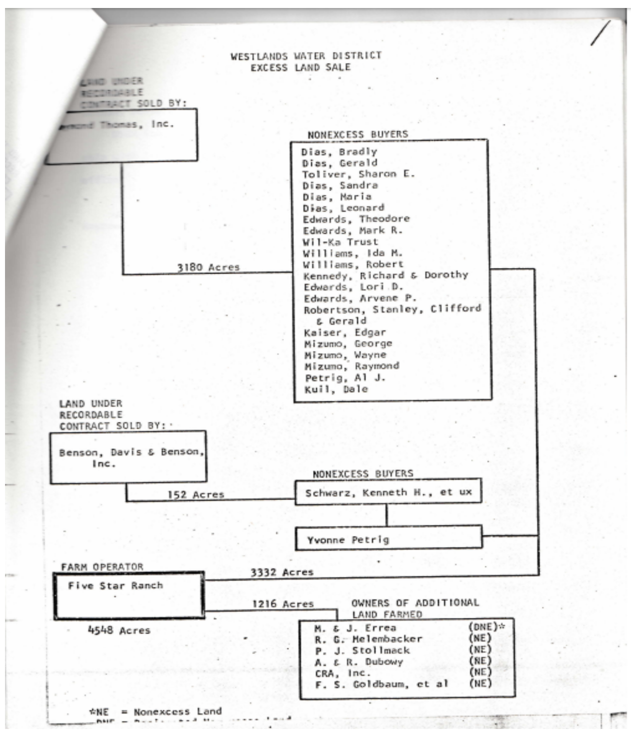
[44] Kenneth Holum to Thomas L. Pitts, September 7, 1965, 6.
[45] Ibid.

redistribution.[46] The tax was also meant to even out the tax burden on growers in the Westlands and assure meeting a 40-year repayment plan for irrigation technologies. On paper, the ad valorem tax does serve as excellent economic pressure for unused excess lands to be sold, but ceding control to the Westlands limited its effectiveness. Only the Westlands Water District's Board of Directors decided how much and when to levy the tax.[47] The Board of Directors, very much controlled by excess landowners, empowered their compatriots to tax themselves, which effectively nullified the intended impact of the ad valorem tax. As a result, excess landowners easily kept possession of their lands in spite of the operating agreement's intent to redistribute land.



[46] George J. Lanning to David Weiman, July 12, 1975.

[47] Paul S. Taylor, "SOME REASONS WHY IT IS NECESSARY TO HOLD A FURTHER HEARING ON NON-ENFORCEMENT OF THE EXCESS LAND LAWS ON CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT, AND ESPECIALLY ON ITS SAN LUIS UNIT AT WESTLANDS," February 15, 1966, 3-4.

Image 5: Chart shows the movement of land from a former excess landowning corporation to a sister corporation. Lands were sold to friends and family, then those individuals would allow for the same corporation to operate their lands, allowing for all land to be irrigated legally.[48]

Apart from using "checkered compliance" on excess lands for production, the Westlands actively approved sales that allowed for agribusiness to lease all lands. For example, in 1975, 32,497 acres of land were sold to 272 people, but only 23 operators existed in the water district.[49] This was the result of land buyers leasing those lands to a corporation they had personal connections to, allowing excess landowners to irrigate all of their lands effectively [Image 5]. Thus through operatorships, large landowners managed to find a new loophole to continue profiting off their excess lands. In short, the Westlands cooperated with the Bureau of Reclamation to secure water deliveries but actively sought compliance in the legal sense, while avoiding actual land redistribution as the Reclamation Act intended. Thus, land redistribution can not be brought by economic pressure alone because agribusiness has the resources to actively seek methods that minimize economic pressures. Direct administrative action is the only means for land redistribution to actually occur.

In summary, farm workers demonstrated their desire to achieve upward mobility by swiftly mobilizing in the 1960s to solve issues with contracts associated with the San Luis unit, prior to its construction. The NLP utilized non-violent forms of activism by lobbying federal officials, which proved successful in the passing of new legislation that aimed to address the concerns described by the NLP. However, the new legislation did not go far enough to effectively redistribute land from agribusiness for family farms, because excess landowners exploited a few loopholes in the Reclamation Act. As a result, agribusiness maintained a strong presence well into the 1970s.

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[48] "Westlands Water District Disposition of Excess Land as of June 1975," 10.
[49] "Westlands Water District Disposition of Excess Land as of June 1975," 1.

The Collapse of the NLP: The End of an Era, but the Fight Continues

Image 6: Secretary of the Interior James G. Watt (Left) and U.S. President Ronald Reagan (Right) at the signing of the Reform Reclamation Act.

The battle over the Reclamation Act in Congress was far from successful for National Land for People, due to the passing of the Reform Reclamation Act (RRA) in 1982. The RRA essentially eliminated the land limit by allowing all land to receive irrigation water, but any land excess of 960 acres had to pay three times the normal water rate. However, the tripled water rate covered less than half the actual cost of water.[50] Thus, the RRA guaranteed the survival of excess landowners into the present day and allowed for all water excess landowners received to be heavily subsidized. The NLP fought valiantly through the use of newspapers, documentaries, and lobbying, but were ultimately unable to overcome the influence excess landowners had over Congress.

Upon learning about the RRA, the NLP expanded their traditional approach to combating agribusiness by appealing to the public at large. More specifically, the NLP began to frequently publish in newspapers across the West arguing in favor of the Reclamation Act. These articles spotlighted academic studies that backed family farms, but avoided using academic language that

[50] Leo Rennert, "Panel triples price of water for big farms" in *Fresno Bee*, June 12, 1980.

plagued those studies.[51] Furthermore, alternative sources of news, like the radio and television, were utilized to spread the NLP's message. The NLP did this by participating in and promoting documentary films, such as "The Battle of Westlands," which, like the newspapers, informed audiences of reports that painted family farms in a positive light.[52] All three avenues, newspapers, film and radio, aimed to raise awareness of the RRA among the general public and all three urged audiences to let their Congressional representatives know their stance on the RRA.[53] Thus, the NLP continued their non-violent activism by appealing to a much larger audience through accessible news outlets.

Appealing to the public struck fear into excess landowners as they responded by limiting the audience for NLP's media campaign. For example, the documentary, "The Battle of Westlands" was prohibited from being aired on public television in the state of Washington for over a month, and once it was allowed to be aired (after a lawsuit threat), a postscript show that was added.[54] Washington's PBS station described the show as an unbiased discussion of the RRA, but it turned out to be a debate that overcomplicated the issue for the average viewer that devolved into a shouting match, preventing anyone from understanding what was being said.[55] Thus, agribusiness sabotaged the NLP's efforts to raise public awareness of the RRA. Furthermore, excess landowners channeled their wealth through the farmowner group, Westside Farmers to fund various research projects, like William McFarlane's "Productivity -- The Cornerstone of Rural Development" which argued large farms were better for the economy than family farms were.[56] Funds were provided for similar research projects to be presented at public

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[51] George Ballis, "'What Is The Truth?'" in *Fresno Bee*, December 26, 1976.

[52] Bernice Woolf to Carol Mon Pere, February 18, 1980.

[53] Michael Kernan, "Watered Down 'Westlands' on WETA" in *The Washington Post*, March 20, 1980.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] William F. McFarlane, "Productivity - The Cornerstone of Rural Development," presented to the International Geographical Union Symposium, "Rural Development: Theory and Practice" April 24, 1981.

conferences attended by people of various backgrounds.[57] Apart from their funding of research projects, excess landowners managed to channel their wealth into donations to buy favor and influence from Congress members.[58] Taken together, they helped offset the influence NLP had over Congress. As a result, the RRA was signed into law, assuring agribusiness a legal existence up to the present.

The Reform Reclamation Act effectively repealed the Reclamation Act of 1902, reverberating into the Westlands following its application. The RRA ended all possibility of family farmers replacing agribusiness in the Westlands. Despite this, it is important to note that prior to 1980, it effectively limited excess landowners from exploiting the law. Rather than fighting violently, seizing land for family farmers, or mirroring the United Farm Workers by protesting and boycotting agribusinesses that marginalized farmworkers, the NLP resisted with legal activism. The NLP maintained a strong presence in all contract negotiations, rallied citizens to urge Congress to limit the injustices in the Westlands, and placed pressure on the Bureau of Reclamation and Secretary of the Interior by denouncing the bad practices of the Westlands. The NLP struggled, but they managed to fight just enough to prevent excess landowners from enjoying complete impunity as they exploited loopholes in the Reclamation Act of 1902. Ultimately, the NLP met defeat, but their demise should not overshadow the effectiveness of farm workers in holding excess landowners to a standstill. Nor should the disbandment of the NLP describe farm workers as a helpless community. Despite their economic disadvantages to landowners, through activism farm workers demonstrated a strong desire to improve their situation and nearly succeeded.

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[57] William F. McFarlane, "Productivity - The Cornerstone of Rural Development," presented to the International Geographical Union Symposium, "Rural Development: Theory and Practice" April 24, 1981.

[58] "Water," in *Fresno Bee*, 2.

Communities in the San Joaquin Valley continue to feel the ramifications of the NLP's defeat to this very today. Numerous unincorporated communities in the Valley, shown below, suffer from the lack of clean affordable water. These farm-worker dominated communities are surrounded by farms that have no trouble securing enough water to support their crops, but refuse to give up its water allocations to improve the quality of life for their farm laborers. Rural communities in the Valley continue to suffer from great wealth disparities, but they are in no way a broken community. Although unsuccessful, the NLP demonstrates that farm workers not only desire to improve their situation, but are more than capable of battling the injustices of water districts through activism. The NLP has shown that the battle is difficult to wage, but if a reinvigorated resistance arises again, they will enjoy some level of success. Furthermore, a sustained resistance against corporate farms can successfully transform the Valley into a place for family farmers to flourish.

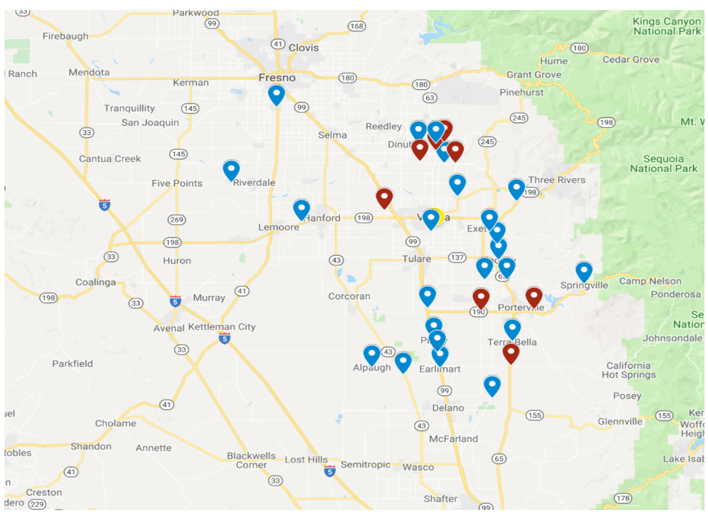

Image 7: Map showing unincorporated communities that suffer from a lack of clean water. These communities are condensed in the San Joaquin Valley between Fresno and Bakersfield, not too far from the Westlands.[59]

[59] "Where We Work," (Community Water Center), https://www.communitywatercenter.org/where_we_work.

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A Failure to Care: Colonial Power and Healthcare in Africa, 1850-1939

By Brandon Stilson

The colonization of Africa was a pivotal and transformative period in the modern era, especially for the indigenous people who felt the weight of colonial oppression. From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, European powers scrambled to acquire territories and establish colonies in Africa. For example, the notorious King Leopold II of Belgium referred to the continent as a "magnificent cake" before annexing large portions of the Congo in West Central Africa.[1] In establishing colonies across Africa, European powers transformed these societies in countless ways, from the introduction of new education systems, religious beliefs, patterns of labor organization, and more. Among the major expansions of colonialism was the implementation of new forms of healthcare and health services across the continent. This paper assesses European colonial health initiatives in Africa. It argues that European medical services in Africa were ineffective and provided inadequate care to African colonial subjects.

Missionary healthcare services represented the first examples of European influence over healthcare in Africa, but they failed to provide adequate care to indigenous populations. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) stands as the precursor to colonial medicine in Africa. They attempted to acquire a European foothold in Africa through the establishment of missionary medical services. Their goal was not to heal local native populations, but instead to evangelize and convert as many Africans as possible. For example, when the CMS founded its first hospitals in nineteenth-century Yorubaland, a region within West Africa, missionaries acknowledged that the Yoruba people believed in a connection between their own religion and healing. In fact, the

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[1] *The Magnificent African Cake,* (Arts International /African Video Centre, 1983).

colonizing British wrote that the Yoruba "heathen mind" could only understand healing as akin to religion.[2] Therefore, the missionaries believed one of the best ways to attract more converts was to preach evangelism alongside providing healthcare services. Also, in order to gain favor with local populations, the missionaries slandered indigenous priests and doctors to discredit them. CMS officials specifically branded indigenous healers as "frauds, tricksters, and money hungry deceivers."[3] With such an active focus on converting Africans, the CMS rarely focused on practicing medicine because they viewed it as just another evangelical tool. The religious mission of CMS' medical officials is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that surgeons were told that medicine "was only to be an occasional occupation."[4] In other words, surgeons were instructed to provide medical care only if it would guarantee a new convert. Due to the indigenous natives' strong beliefs that their medicine was sufficient, the CMS came to understand that they needed to actually put effort into their healthcare services if they wished to attract more Africans to the church.

Because medical resources and services were often only deployed to meet the needs of Europeans, colonial healthcare and public health initiatives in Africa never adequately cared for Africans. For example, in South Africa's Cape Colony, racism became institutionalized within the healthcare system. This led to a difference in medical care between Europeans and indigenous South Africans, the latter receiving much poorer quality of treatment. In rural areas of Cape Colony, where populations consisted mostly of poor African farmers, the town jail functioned as both a hospital and a homeless shelter.[5] For these farmers, this combined space

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[2] Temilola Alanamu, "Indigenous Medical Practices and the Advent of CMS Medical Evangelism in Nineteenth-Century Yorubaland," *Church History and Religious Culture* 93, no. 1 (2013), accessed April 15, 2019, doi:10.1163/18712428-13930102, 26.

[3] Alanamu, *CMS Medical Evangelism*, 24.

[4] Ibid, 24.

[5] Harriet Deacon, "Racism and Medical Science in South Africa's Cape Colony in the Mid- to Late Nineteenth Century," *Osiris* 15 (2000), accessed April 15, 2019, doi:10.1086/649326, 200.

was the only option for any medical assistance because major cities were simply too far away. Conversely, Europeans typically did not have to rely on rural hospitals, often receiving medical care in urban towns, where they were given preferential treatment by doctors. Europeans always prioritized themselves over African patients because of European ideas of race embedded within colonial healthcare services.[6]

European colonizers came to Africa with perceptions of race, based on stereotypes and false information. Racism became ingrained within the medical treatment of African subjects from mental health to tropical disease. In terms of mental health, colonial doctors treated African and European patients very differently. Many doctors believed and theorized that Africans responded to physical treatment better because of their alleged "lower developmental status."[7] In simpler terms, racist pseudoscience of the day framed Africans as unintelligent beings incapable of mental health problems. Leprosy treatment for African was equally ineffective. A popular colonial belief of Africans and African Muslims in Cape Colony was their inherent susceptibility to leprosy. Once identified as a public health problem, leprosy was understood as a societal threat, with African groups identified as carriers of disease. To combat this disease, colonial authorities started to integrate segregation into urban planning as a means of stopping the disease from spreading. Rather than adequately treating afflicted Africans or addressing the socio-economic conditions that caused the disease to spread in the first place, colonial governments used the threat to justify and solidify their power. In the case of Cape Colony, authorities signed the Leprosy Repression Act of 1891 into law. This act gave authorities the power to infringe on the civil rights of Africans by segregation because of the racist medicine identifying them as the

[6] Deacon, *Racism and Medical Science*, 200.
[7] Ibid, 200.

only transmitter of the disease.[8] These policies of racial segregation, rather than preventative care, illustrate the overall inadequacies of European health initiatives in colonial South Africa.

In Zanzibar, a colony in East Africa, island natives also faced similarly ineffective and racist colonial medical programs. When the Europeans first colonized Zanzibar, they faced many hardships from the tropical climate, such as malaria, cholera, and typhoid fever. With the aid of technology and engineering, however, their quality of life improved, eventually surpassing the indigenous population, who were denied access to these advances. For example, Europeans used technologies like draining swamps, quinine to stop fever, and improved sanitary practices, all of which they made no effort to share with the African population.[9] When Europeans noticed the disparity in African and European deaths, they developed a superiority complex attached to hygiene and race.[10] Specifically in Zanzibar, Europeans believed the discrepancy between European and African deaths meant Africans were the cause and primary carriers of tropical diseases, like malaria, yellow fever, and sleeping sickness.[11] These ideas of race started to make their way into urban planning, as European colonial officials disguised segregation as sanitation and public health projects. According to historian William Bissel, sanitation and urban planning in Zanzibar "were never just technical measures or tools for improvement, but instead were strategies of power intimately linked to the essential inequalities of colonial rule."[12] Once again, like with the treatment of natives in Cape Colony, with the natives of Zanzibar considered the main cause for the spread of diseases, colonial authorities segregated them from the main

[8] Deacon, *Racism and Medical Science*, 204.

[9] William Cunningham Bissell, "Disease, Environment, and Social Engineering: Clearing Out and Cleaning Up the Colonial City," in *Urban Design, Chaos, and Colonial Power in Zanzibar* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 165.

[10] Bissel, *Cleaning Up the Colonial* City, 166.

[11] Ibid, 166.

[12] Ibid, 167.

European population. The colonial strategy left the socioeconomic situations that allowed such stereotypes of race and health to endure completely unexplored and unaddressed. In this way, public health initiatives, such as the sanitation and segregation projects of Zanzibar, did not help to heal or even benefit African colonial subjects, but rather sustained and intensified the material constraints of colonialism on the body.

The effects of racism and colonial power on health were not restricted to East African countries alone. In West Africa, racist pseudoscience permeated anti-mosquito sanitation projects. Sierra Leone started initiatives to expel mosquitos that fared well, but these initiatives were never meant to benefit native Africans. Europeans and Africans shared many of the same hardships together, such as the callous conditions of waste management in Freetown and the mosquitos that carried lethal diseases.[13] In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, African mosquitoes were a much more serious threat to life than in present day. Mosquitos are capable of transmitting deadly diseases, such as malaria or yellow fever, very quickly within cities and towns. Although both Europeans and Africans shared a common struggle against the mosquito, the two groups shared no camaraderie.[14] To remedy the mosquito situation, the British first sought to eliminate their breeding grounds, such as streams, puddles, and wells. The Freetown wells, left in an atrocious state of disrepair, remained full of garbage and needed to be addressed first.[15] Expeditions made some considerable improvements, such as the ones made by the Colonial Surgeon of Sierra Leone Dr. Ronald Ross. Ross' gangs, named after mosquito species, made rounds around Freetown to remove garbage from as many as 6,500 houses over the course

[13] Leo Spitzer, "The Mosquito and Segregation in Sierra Leone," *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1968), doi:10.2307/483997, 53.
[14] Spitzer, *The Mosquito and Segregation*, 50.
[15] Ibid, 53.

of two months.[16] Although the anti-mosquito cleaning gangs made some improvements, they could not account for all mosquito infested areas. In reality, the cost of cleaning the massive amounts of garbage was too high for government officials.[17] The high cost gave enough incentive for Europeans to focus on helping themselves, rather than the indigenous population. Unfortunately, this incentive fueled segregation along racial lines.

Officials doubled down on segregation to combat the spread of deadly diseases. The use of segregation to combat mosquitos was not solely based on the wellbeing of colonial subjects. The practice also stopped the economic drain the colonial government faced because of rampant tropical disease.[18] The idea to relocate to higher ground to avoid mosquitos was never for the health of colonial subjects, but rather for British officials to have a place to govern without the fear of mosquito-spread diseases.[19] They built their new neighborhood, called Hill Station, six miles out of Freetown at a higher elevation, designed and certified by European scientists to be out of range of mosquito breeding grounds. Despite the attempt to escape and the scientists' claims, the new settlement failed, as mosquitoes still managed to breed on the hill. The situation became so dire that in 1914, ten out of forty eight government officials contracted malaria and needed treatment.[20] In the end, colonial subjects were never considered in the countermeasures against mosquitoes in Sierra Leone, and Africans faced a great deal of discrimination and racism in the failing settlement of Hill Station. The British failed to remedy the diseases that many Africans faced because of mosquitos. Not only did they fail their subjects, but the British failed

[16] Ronald Ross, *First Progress Report of the Campaign against Mosquitoes in Sierra Leone* (Liverpool: University Press, 1901), 8.

[17] Spitzer, *The Mosquito and Segregation*, 53.

[18] Ibid, 55.

[19] Stephen Frenkel and John Western, "Pretext or Prophylaxis? Racial Segregation and Malarial Mosquitos in a British Tropical Colony: Sierra Leone," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 78, no. 2 (June 1988), doi:10.1111/j.1467-8306.1988.tb00203.x 213.

[20] Spitzer, *The Mosquito and Segregation*, 60.

themselves by creating a settlement based on the idea that segregation would solve their mosquito problem.

Transportation challenges and funding issues also hindered the delivery of adequate health care services to Africans during the colonial period. The Kenya-Uganda railway, built in 1901 by the British Empire, transported building materials to the Kenyan highlands. This allowed European settlers and Africans easy access to the railroad, but travel to a proper medical professional in town still took a day or more.[21] In terms of funding, it was very expensive to have a doctor come out of town into these communities. Many farmers in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia faced these transportation issues. One farmer in Southern Rhodesia, Hylda Richards, wrote in her memoir that doctors were too expensive to consult, and in the rainy season, a flooded river cut off her farm from telephone communication.[22] With limited options, Africans living in these remote regions were forced to turn to undertrained, white female doctors for medical services. Amateur medicine became so common in non-urban centers that handbooks for living in Africa mention the necessity of amateur practice. These handbooks portrayed the African subjects as primitive people with no understanding of healing, while framing the amateur practitioners who treated them as humanitarians.[23] Many of the tasks performed by amateur practitioners consisted of cleaning and dressing wounds, burns, and ulcers. Many white and African settlers often faced the same issues and diseases, but when it came to detailing them, Europeans often spared the gory details about European sickness, instead focusing on the horror stories from African patients in order to preserve the illusion of European strength.[24] In the end,

[21] Julia Wells, "“I Was Doctor”: White Settler Women’s Amateur Medical Practice in East and South-Central African Communities, 1890–1939," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*92, no. 3 (Fall 2018), doi:10.1353/bhm.2018.0054.
[22] Wells, *Amateur Medical Practice*, 416.
[23] Ibid, 414.
[24] Ibid, 422.

any health care initiative from colonial officials failed to reach these white, rural communities, leaving medical responsibilities to the European settlers. Therefore, any African who needed medical assistance had to rely on an amateur practitioner, rather than a trained medical professional. Many of these medical amateurs would go on in their memoirs to portray themselves as benevolent, only taking note of successful operations and not mentioning the negative effects their practices had on the indigenous population.[25] The Colonial Empire had the responsibility to heal and treat people in medical need, but they failed to perform this duty by allowing amateurs to practice medicine which brought more harm than good.

Not only was colonial healthcare inadequate across Africa, but these medical services were used to commit mass atrocities against African colonial subjects. Medical experimentation in Africa originated from the quest to map out disease in the environment, or "bioprospecting." To bioprospect, many travelers and government officials would travel around Africa and take blood samples of local Africans.[26] By World War I, many vampire stories started to spread across the continent because the bioprospectors resembled vampires from African folklore.[27] Once the Europeans had an idea of what diseases were affecting their respective regions, they started to make efforts in defeating those diseases through human experimentation. Usually, human experimentation across the world had been done within the confines of a developed medical system and was non-therapeutic. For example, in developed countries such as the United States, medical experiments under a developed medical system were typically much safer for the volunteer. On the African continent, however, developed medical systems were severely lacking.

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[25] Wells, *Amateur Medical Practice*, 421.

[26] Helen Tilley, "Conclusion: Experimentation in Colonial East Africa and Beyond," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 47, no. 3 (2014):, 497.

[27] Luise White, ""They Could Make Their Victims Dull": Genders and Genres, Fantasies and Cures in Colonial Southern Uganda," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 5 (1995): 1380, doi:10.1086/ahr/100.5, 1380

Colonial officials were aware of the deficient medical systems and took advantage of the situation. Some colonial scientists depended on this advantage, believing their ability to apply therapeutic treatment through trial and error a real boon.[28] Africa, for these scientists and officials, became one continent-sized laboratory with a native population that had no say in what methods of practice these doctors could use.

The degree of experimentation that medical scholars and colonial officials took was irresponsible and dangerous to the Africans they experimented on. In Colonial Africa sleeping sickness, a parasitic disease, rampantly infected African natives. While many suffered, the fatality rate of the disease was relatively low, but could have been avoided altogether. For example, in a German East African border district, out of thirty three cases of sleeping sickness, only twenty eight survived.[29] Many European countries were researching the disease in the early twentieth century, but scientists in German East Africa took a more ill-advised approach in treating the disease. Robert Koch, a German scientist known for his work in microbiology, took on the challenge of finding a cure for sleeping sickness. He made an expedition to the British East African Sese Islands, where a large portion of the local African population suffered from sleeping sickness.[30] Koch and his team started to treat patients with arsenical Atoxyl, however, as noted by Koch's assistant, he was administering Atoxyl in unorthodox ways, giving patients much larger doses than traditionally recommended. [31] At points throughout the treatment, there were dosages as large as one gram, double the recommended dosage. Generally, doctors give dosages this size over the course of a month, but Koch administered these dosages in as little as a

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[28] Tilley, *Experimentation in Colonial East Africa*, 500.

[29] Wolfgang U. Eckart, "The Colony as Laboratory: German Sleeping Sickness Campaigns in German East Africa and in Togo, 1900-1914," *History & Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 24, no. 1 (November 22-23, 1996): doi:10.1080/03919710210001714323, 71.

[30] Eckart, *The Colony as Laboratory*, 72.

[31] Ibid, 73.

week. This led to many medical complications ranging from vertigo, sickness, and in some cases, blindness.[32] Overall, Koch's experiments and efforts were a reckless endeavor that offered no solution to the epidemic.

The practice of negligent and dangerous experimentation was not limited to British East Africa, however. In colonial Tanganyika, medical experimentation was defined by a careless system that gave no value to African lives. There, the head of the Tinde Laboratory, J. F. Corson, deliberately infected healthy Africans with the sleeping sickness parasite so that he could monitor the symptoms and "complications" of the drug Bayer 205.[33] Corson was so insidious in his experiments that he infected himself and a few assistants.[34] Even though Bayer 205 successfully treated the disease in early stages, Corson's disregard for medical safety would prove fatal in one case, and detrimental to the health of many others. After his experiments ended, he returned to check on the health of his human subjects. One man had died three months after the experiments, while thirteen of the original forty three faced symptoms such as body pain, diarrhea, and fever. In his later years, Corson acknowledged his role in actively placing many Africans at risk during his human experimentation.[35] European biomedical research, meant to treat tropical diseases, was imprudent and unregulated because racist colonial medicine had no value for African life. These Africans victims were treated improperly, left with a host of "complications," and became victims of an unregulated biomedical industry.

European colonial healthcare services failed to heal or even help African colonial subjects. Many Africans had to rely on white amateur practitioners for many simple ailments, like cuts and burns. Africans who lived in rural towns and villages faced poor socioeconomic

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[32] Eckart, *The Colony as Laboratory*, 73.
[33] Tilley, *Experimentation in Colonial East Africa*, 502.
[34] Ibid, 503.
[35] Ibid, 504.

conditions that healthcare failed to address. Africans who were lucky enough to reside in larger towns and cities had to face the racist colonial medical institutions that would choose white European settlers over African lives. When Europe scrambled for Africa in the late nineteenth century, many European colonizers couched their expansionism in savior rhetoric and a paternalistic quest to liberate a "barbaric" continent. However, in terms of medical care, they failed horribly, and Africans faced medical blunders that would not only harm natives, but the Europeans themselves. This harm was apparent in medical solutions, such as the idea to segregate living communities in Sierra Leone to allow Europeans respite from malaria-carrying mosquitos at the expense of indigenous populations. The new settlement, Hill Station, instituted racist color lines and ultimately failed to keep the mosquitos away from Europeans. Even with racial segregation meant to combat the spread of disease, treatment of these diseases in hospitals was poor. Biomedical scientists in colonial Africa, such as Koch and Corson, abused the unregulated biomedical industry to test risky therapeutic methods on African natives. Many of the patients and volunteers they treated would face harsh medical complications later in their lives. Koch's overdosage of arsenical Atoxyl caused incurable blindness in his patients, and Corson's patients faced hardships such as fever and, in one case, death. These therapeutic experiments were so unregulated that medical professionals would purposefully infect their volunteers with sleeping sickness and treat them so that they could see the results of their experiments. In the end, colonialism in Africa was a complete failure for Europeans and especially Africans. Healthcare was just one cog of the European imperial machine that ravaged Africa of its resources. It is important that we study the way Africans were treated by Europeans because their voices matter and is an important chapter in African history that needs to be told. The legacy of European racism can still be seen today, long after imperial powers have left the continent. Africa today still faces crushing epidemics such as the Ebola virus and the AIDS epidemic, calling into question the continuing failure to care.

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Chinatown Declared a Nuisance: Creating a Public Health Crisis in Merced, California, 1883-1908

By Madelyn Lara[1]

San Francisco, the city with the largest Chinese population in California during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, used the anti-Chinese tactic of creating a public health crisis, well documented in local policy and rhetoric. The white establishment frequently brought to light the overcrowded living conditions of the Chinese and characterized it as innate uncleanliness in order to racialize and subjugate Chinese communities at the local level. This research examines the degree to which this phenomenon was present in Merced, California during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By using newspaper archives, Merced City and County Ordinance Books, as well as contemporaneous public health reports from San Francisco and Sacramento, this research seeks to understand the attitude of white Merced residents towards health and safety in and around Merced's Chinatown. This project argues that anti-Chinese legislation adopted in Merced was consistent with efforts made by other localities to prevent Chinatowns from infringing on white spaces, thereby reproducing and adapting a common anti-Chinese tactic to address local racial tensions.

The action taken by Merced officials mirrors anti-Chinese efforts in San Francisco. The first recorded instance of a Chinatown in California being declared a public health nuisance came in March of 1880, when the San Francisco Board of Health performed a raid on Chinatown and reportedly discovered unsanitary living conditions throughout the community. Officials recalled "smoke...stench and rottenness" overwhelming them as they entered Chinese tenement

[1] The author, being also an editor, recused himself from the editing process regarding this article. It received no special treatment and was required to conform to all standard requirements.

buildings.[2] They also claim to have encountered rooms filled with "poor wretches suffering from a loathsome disease."[3] In describing their findings, the Board of Health laid out exactly what laws the Chinese violated, listing two health ordinances and sixteen subsections, as well as the Fire Ordinance and Cubic Air Ordinance. While this assessment seems comprehensive, many of the provisions cited were extremely subjective and vague, such as Section 18 of Health Ordinance 1.074, which prohibited "dangerous or detrimental pursuits" and Section 6 of Health Ordinance 1.196, which declared "foul or offensive privies" a nuisance.[4] Local legislators gave words like 'dangerous' or 'foul' no definition in these provisions, which made their interpretation and enforcement entirely subjective. Vague provisions such as these gave law enforcement officers full discretion to police residential spaces, allowing for, if not inviting, racial bias. As a result, health officers were empowered to use their anti-Chinese prejudices when performing raids on Chinatown.

Anti-Chinese rhetoric across California was woven with political strategy and propaganda. Mayor Isaac Kalloch, the first and only member of the Workingmen's Party of California (WPC) to serve as Mayor of San Francisco–a party whose slogan was "The Chinese Must Go!"–received the full support of the San Francisco Board of Health.[5] The Board smeared both Democratic and "vile" Republican leadership, arguing that the WPC and Mayor Kalloch were taking necessary steps to protect the people of the city from the "filthy conditions" of Chinatown by declaring it a "nuisance," an issue previously ignored by San Francisco's

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[2] Isaac Kalloch, "Resolutions of Condemnation Adopted" in "Chinatown Declared a Nuisance" (San Francisco Board of Health, 1880), 3.

[3] Kalloch, "Chinatown Declared a Nuisance," 4.

[4] Ibid. 5.

[5] Huping Ling and Allan W. Austin, *Asian American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia* (Routledge, 2015), 382.

leadership.[6] The public perception of Chinatown as a threat to the health and safety of San Francisco's white population bolstered the white nationalist platform of the WPC. The Board of Health intentionally and skillfully crafted a piece of political propaganda that fabricated, or at least vastly overexaggerated, the health crisis in order to deepen racial divides and justify local anti-Chinese legislation.

Upon their arrival to America, most Chinese migrants passed through, if not permanently remained in, San Francisco where they could receive lodging, financial assistance, and employment from organizations such as The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, (known in the American press as the Six Companies.)[7] As most migrants were single males, dormitory style housing was the norm and was often, out of necessity, widely overcrowded. These men frequently sent remittances back to family in China; in 1860 it was estimated that about $10 million was shipped by Chinese laborers back to China every year.[8] As a result, tenants lacked the resources to improve their living conditions. Furthermore, legal segregation from white neighborhoods increasingly marginalized the Chinese migrants, as the tactic allowed cities to spend most, if not all, of their budget in developing white communities over Chinatowns.[9] On July 29, 1870, San Francisco signed the Cubic Air Ordinance into law. As Historian Shirley Moore notes, this measure is an anti-Chinese piece of legislation that set out to break up Chinese tenement houses.[10] The ordinance stated that more than one person per 500

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[6] Kalloch, “Introduction” in “Chinatown Declared a Nuisance,” 2.

[7] Sucheng Chan, *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943*. (Temple University Press, 1994), 153.

[8] Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California*. (University of California Press, 2000), 66.

[9] Jessica Trounstine, *Segregation by Design: Local Politics and Inequality in American Cities*. (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 107.

[10] Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, “‘We Feel the Want of Protection’: The Politics of Law and Race in California, 1848-1878." (*California History Vol. 81 No. 3-4*, 2003), 112.

cubic feet of space would be prohibited in residences within the boundaries of San Francisco's Health District.[11] In the Board of Health's Chinatown raid of 1880, officers discovered rooms of 10 by 12 feet where "12 persons eat and sleep," as well as a single tenement house that held "200 Chinamen."[12] Whether or not the numbers in the Board of Health's report were exaggerated, many, if not all, Chinese tenement houses were likely in violation of the Cubic Air Ordinance, fulfilling the laws intended purpose of expelling the Chinese from San Francisco.

Merced's press acknowledged the enforcement of the Cubic Air Ordinance in San Francisco, amplifying the anti-Chinese tactic to Merced and the surrounding area. The *San Joaquin Valley Argus*, Merced's most prominent newspaper in the late nineteenth century, used its platform to project the success of the Cubic Air Ordinance to its audience. Several times between September and December 1887, the paper cited police raids on Chinatown, claiming, "there were 169 Chinese pulled in two nights of last week for violators of the cubic-air law."[13] The cases of Cubic Air Violations cited in the *Argus* always included dozens, sometimes hundreds, of Chinese who were jailed for their violations. If there were smaller, perhaps less successful raids, they were not reported in the *Argus*. In tandem with these reports of successful raids under the Cubic Air Ordinance, the paper often included in the same column the number of Chinese migrants that disembarked on California soil. The 1887 *Argus* stated just below the Cubic Air violations, "the steamer Gaelic arrived from China…last week… there were 246 Chinese aboard."[14] The fixation on the number of Chinese coming in and out of San Francisco's Chinatown alongside the projection of the Cubic Air Ordinance's success reflects the increasing

[11] Joshua S. Yang, "The Anti-Chinese Cubic Air Ordinance." (*American Journal of Public Health*, 2009), 440.

[12] Isaac Kalloch, "Chinatown Declared a Nuisance," 4.

[13] Rowena Steele, "San Francisco Happenings." *The San Joaquin Valley Argus*, September 21, 1887, Merced County Library.

[14] Ibid.

anxieties Merced's white establishment had with its own growing Chinese population. San Francisco officials channeled their racial anxiety into concrete laws in order to expel the Chinese; Merced chose to follow their lead.

As the population of Chinatown grew, the area of Merced's Main Street occupied by Chinese homes and businesses grew similarly apace. The *San Joaquin Valley Argus* included an editorial piece about three Chinese washhouses and "ten or twelve houses of ill-repute" that spilled out of Chinatown and onto Main Street, cutting it "in two." The editor of the *Argus*, Rowena G. Steele, called on the local government to use "lawful means" to eradicate what she thought to be a nuisance.[15] As the *Argus* in particular had a fascination with anti-Chinese legislation in San Francisco and its effectiveness in jailing Chinese in large numbers, this call to action to restrict the local Chinese population from the public and economic space of Merced's Main Street seemingly drew inspiration and legitimacy from San Francisco's already well established and institutionalized anti-Chinese legislation and rhetoric.

Merced's Board of Trustees laid out a set of city ordinances, including provisions for a health district. Ordinance no. 10, enacted in 1889, was established to "define and punish" any public health nuisance found within Merced's city limits. Section 13 of this Ordinance specified that "every house, room, or place…where opium, or any preparation or compound thereof is… distributed or given away" shall be declared a nuisance.[16] San Francisco's Board of Health had a similar provision prohibiting "houses of ill-fame" and "gambling houses."[17] White Californians associated opium smoking and addiction with Chinese populations and, while opiate addiction

[15]Rowena Steele, "Should Be Made to Move On." *The San Joaquin Valley Argus*. December 1, 1883, Merced County Library.

[16] Archives of the City of Merced, California, Clerk's Office, Merced, California (hereafter ACMC), April 16, 1889, Ordinance no. 10, Section 13, "To Define and Punish Any Public Nuisances and Offenses Against the Public" *Ordinances of the City of Merced*, Volume 1 (1889-1910), 4.

[17] Isaac Kalloch, "Chinatown Declared a Nuisance." 5.

was a problem across lines of race and class, the justice system shifted much of the blame and attention to Chinese people. Merced County Ordinances also included anti-Chinese provisions, including Section 20 of Ordinance no. 82, enacted in 1908, which called for all cases of "Asiatic Cholera" to be reported to the county Board of Health. Any discovery that a resident had not reported any such case resulted in a misdemeanor charge.[18] Asiatic Cholera was widely thought to be the result of Chinese trade and immigration. The California State Board of Health, in their biannual report of 1886, published an address by Dr. John H. Rauch, who argued that "assaults of foreign pestilence" such as Asiatic cholera, (as well as other diseases he thought to be the fault of Chinese migrants including syphilis and smallpox), should be treated by the United States Congress as if it were "an armed enemy."[19] The County Ordinance distinguished between Cholera and Asiatic Cholera, implying that Section 20 targeted Merced's Chinese population specifically.

The most shocking and important provision, Ordinance no. 96, enacted in 1908, lays out the responsibilities of the Health Officer. Section 5 of this ordinance states that the health officer, appointed by the Board of Health, can enter any premises and should he find a residence "liable from overcrowding" he has the right to "remove the nuisance therein named."[20] Recall San Francisco's Cubic Air Ordinance, which called for any more than one person per 500 cubic feet of space to be removed from that residence. The county provision in Merced is incredibly similar. While the likelihood of San Francisco officials following zoning laws down to their exact number is questionable, in Merced County's ordinance, no specific number of cubic feet

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[18] Merced County Board of Supervisors "Ordinance Book of Merced County," Ordinance 82, Section 20. 1908, 52.

[19] California State Board of Health, "Report of the State Board of Health of California." (Sacramento, California, 1886), 61.

[20] "Ordinance Book of Merced County," Ordinance 96, Section 5. 1908. 65

per person is offered at all. With "overcrowding" lacking a clear definition, the health officer, an unelected official, was empowered to interpret the law. The health officer could enter any premises within the limits of the Merced Health District without a warrant, and should he find that there were too many Chinese people for his liking, he had the legal power to 'remove the nuisance,' which would mean arresting them on a misdemeanor charge. The health officer was essentially empowered to arrest Chinese bodies at his discretion, with only the oversight of the Board of Health, the writers of this law.

Much of the dealings of the Board of Health still lie under a shroud of mystery. Most of the subsequent minutes from the Board of Health meetings are not included completely or regularly in the local newspapers, and copies of them elsewhere have yet to be uncovered. What is known, however, is that at its inception in August of 1884, the board was comprised of Dr. G. P. Lee, Chairman, Dr. E. S. O'Brien, Secretary, Dr. H. N. Rucker, and C. E. Fleming, Health Officer. The circumstances under which Fleming was appointed, as well as his occupation outside of the Board of Health, are also unknown. In their first meeting, the board took care of a few pieces of business. One being empowering the health officer "to hire men and teams to proceed to work in the alleys of the town," as well as making a statement to the public that should they wish to make "complaints of any nuisance that may exist" to do so in writing.[21] That familiar word 'nuisance' was used in this call for complaints from Merced citizens. While this certainly pertained to infrastructural and health issues in all of Merced, the call also allowed the opportunity for additional complaints from Merced residents about Chinatown, a space characterized as a public health threat to the white population by the local news media.

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[21] Rowena Steele, "Proceedings of the Board of Health." *The San Joaquin Valley Argus*. August 22, 1884.

The use of the term ‘nuisance,’ while common in these discussions, is also purposefully vague. The conditions that were necessary to declare a nuisance varied with time and place, allowing health officials to adapt criteria to fit whatever conditions Chinese residents lived in, thereby maximizing their restrictive power. The overcrowding of dormitories and tenement houses was common among all Chinatowns, as Chinese laborers often did not have access to better living conditions. However, sanitation issues with exposed sewers and privies were not unique to the Chinese, shown by the *San Joaquin Valley Argus'* claim that the Main Street Sewer was a “disgrace to the town.”[22] Yet, white establishments and households were certainly not the subject of criminal prosecution for their lapses in sanitation in the same way their Chinese counterparts were. Further, these laws only placed offenders in jail for a period of time, rather than addressing the sanitation and public health problems that were ever present, which ensured an endless cycle of prosecution of Chinese residents.

White Californians’ aversion to Chinese people forced these communities to be pushed to the margins of a city. While out of sight of most of the population, Chinese communities were left infrastructurally underserved in the way of sewers and waste management, leading to an increased risk of illness. Services such as sewer, alley, and road maintenance, a city or county responsibility, were ignored in Chinatowns almost universally, contributing to the dilapidated conditions Chinese populations often found themselves in. Historian David Torres-Rouff, in his study of Los Angeles’ Chinatown claims that most tenants were renters, therefore few “would have the opportunity to request sewers for their neighborhoods.”[23] The same was likely the case in Merced, making landlords, not the Chinese themselves, responsible for the lack of adequate

[22] Rowena Steele, “Nearing Merced.” *The San Joaquin Valley Argus*, February 5, 1887, Merced County Library.

[23] David Samuel Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.: Race, Space, and Municipal Power in Los Angeles, 1781-1894*, (Yale University Press, 2013), 223.

sewer infrastructure in Chinatown. However, this inaction on the part of city officials and property owners was instead framed as an inherent character flaw of the Chinese. Rather than acknowledging the marginalization of these communities and providing services to assist them, local government and authorities argued instead that the Chinese were inherently unsanitary. This, in combination with the spatial segregation of white and Chinese communities, allowed for the racialization of Chinese people, that the local government then used to justify its anti-Chinese legislation.

While Chinese people made up one of the first waves of non-white immigrants to receive such severe treatment, discrimination disguised as concerns for public health has not stopped with them. Today, in cities all across the United States, housing and infrastructure are neglected in communities inhabited by black and brown bodies. In Queens, New York, illegal basement apartments house an estimated tens of thousands of both documented and undocumented migrants.[24] Cities like Los Angeles and Seattle have rapidly growing homeless populations, with entire streets taken up by people sleeping in tents or on cardboard, while local services do not provide adequate assistance.[25] Again, as in the case of Merced's Chinatown, conversations on these topics in the press often pull focus from the institutions that force people into poverty and prevent them from escaping it, and diverting focus onto marginalized and racialized populations. Public health concerns in Chinatowns all across California were real just as they are today in many localities. The causes and solutions presented by white establishments, however, fail to address the underlying issues.

[24] Stewart, Nikita, Ryan Christopher Jones, Sergio Peçanha, Jeffrey Furticella, and Josh Williams. "Underground Lives: The Sunless World of Immigrants in Queens." *The New York Times*, October 23, 2019

[25] Beason, Tyron. "As We Vent over Homelessness in Our 'Jewel' of a City, Let's Not Forget Our Shared Humanity." *The Seattle Times*, April 1, 2019.

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Clean Sweeps and Chain Gangs: Extending the Carceral Net in Merced, California, 1880-1890

By Sarah Lee[1]

In the latter years of the nineteenth century, the budding Central Valley city of Merced, California was in crisis. While the rest of California basked in the glow of a real estate boom, Merced's boosters struggled to inspire sufficient community action to realize their dreams of an equally impressive local boom amidst population pressures, inadequate urban infrastructure, and near constant public health concerns.[2] Rather than solely address these issues however, Merced's local press located the crisis elsewhere, specifically in bounded ethnic enclaves on the West Side of the tracks. There, the press situated reports of Main Street overrun by Chinese owned houses of ill-repute alongside a surging population of white male "tramps" and raucous fandango houses in the city's Mexican Quarter, echoing Foucault's warning of a delinquency crisis, "as very close and quite alien."[3] According to Merced's local press, the city's very soul hung in the balance. Threatened by a potentially devastating social contagion where Merced's upstanding youth came in direct contact with a 'known,' "festering cancer," they urged for decisive spatial disciplinary actions, meant to both contain racialized and criminalized bodies and produce Merced's imagined place along the lines of other booming California cities.

Merced's nascent professionalized law enforcement heard the message of spatial crisis loud and clear. On February 26, 1887, District Attorney John W. Breckinridge announced his remedy to the crisis of criminality hindering Merced's economic and moral growth, through "…a

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[1] The author, being also an editor, recused himself from the editing process regarding this article. It received no special treatment and was required to conform to all standard requirements.

[2] "Nearing Merced," *San Joaquin Valley Argus,* February 5, 1887, 3, Merced County Library.

[3] Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 286.

clean sweep of the dance houses, opium dens and criminal roosting places that exist in Merced."[4] The "clean sweeps" campaign continued for several months, while the press discursively located the criminal roosting places in Merced's Mexican Quarter,[5] to the point where the site itself was marked by an infectious criminality. While Breckinridge orchestrated the "clean sweep" campaigns that spatialized Othered bodies in Merced, the Board of Supervisors announced in the *Merced Express* on March 19, 1887 Ordinance no. 25, which ordered all prisoners arrested for a misdemeanor and "guests" in the county jail to serve their time on a chain gang.[6] While Merced had a pre-existing chain gang, Ordinance no. 25 expanded the Sheriff's ability to exercise state-sponsored violence against residents. The clean sweeps targeted Mexican, Chinese and transient white males; Ordinance no. 25 allowed those swept up to be put to work on public and private projects. These efforts thus worked in tandem to discipline alleged threats to the city's growth and transformed those same people into cheap labor for public works that would become key booster selling points.

Taken together, the simultaneous emergence of targeted police raids, an expanded chain gang, and an investment in producing imagined place reveal part of the process whereby a professionalized police force became entrusted arbiters and producers of place in Merced. Using Merced's local papers the *San Joaquin Valley Argus,* the *Merced Express,* and the *Merced Star*, this paper situates Merced in a larger conversation concerning space, race, and class in the American West amidst the overlapping national and imperial projects. To grapple with the protean nature of policing the American West, I offer a Foucauldian Marxist reading of

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[4] *The Merced Express*, February 26, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.

[5] *Merced Express*, March 26, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, April 2, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, May 7, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.

[6] "Board of Supervisors-March Term," *Merced Express*, March 19, 1887, 3, Merced County Library.

differentiated policing across bounded, racialized spaces as a means of unlocking the spatial codes that undergirded different, racialized disciplinary mechanisms. Traditionally, policing is thought only to discipline racialized Others, which it most certainly does. However, social investments in cartesian space meant to manifest boosters' aspiration of white, male Western places made the policing of white bodies imperative. The presence of white bodies did not explicitly threaten the national and imperial American projects, but the social, cultural, and economic practices of undisciplined white bodies did. Therefore, I offer a conceptual framework for thinking about the disciplinary mechanisms of the police: class and colonial panopticism. I use class panopticism here to articulate the urgent and pervasive class concerns attached to whiteness in the West,[7] where policing white bodies requires examination according to normalized, middle-class performance. I use colonial panopticism to describe the racial spatialization of marginalized Others through marked criminality, constant policing, and captivity within the carceral net.[8] In Merced during the late 1880s, rhetoric surrounding the "clean sweep" initiative in the Mexican Quarter and its connection to racialized pathology, coupled with Ordinance no. 25 and the push for a real estate boom, reveal both class and colonial panopticism as mutually constitutive disciplinary functions of the police in the American West.

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[7] See Stacey L Smith, *Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction.* (University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Sidney L Harring, *Policing a Class Society: The Experience of American Cities 1865-1915* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017); Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000); Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Peter Boag, *Re-Dressing America's Frontier Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

[8] See Angela Y Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, 2003; Eric A Stanley, Nat Smith, and CeCe McDonald, *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex, Second Edition.* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2015), http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=4548733; Hernandez, *City of Inmates*; Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 2016, http://ebook.3m.com/library/neworleanspubliclibrary-document_id-kpt4kr9; Rashad Shabazz, *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015), http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=4306044; Langegger, Sig, *Rights to Public Space Law, Culture, and Gentrification in the American West.* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), https://login.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/login?url=http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-3-319-41177-4.

Constructing Imagined Place: The Press and Future Visions of Merced

Merced's urban development into a city on par with the rest of 'booming' California, and thus the nation, was an ever present concern. The local press worked feverishly to construct the imagined place of Merced, publishing instructive pieces on the proper behavior of towns folk to produce a boom, focusing on home ownership, economic independence, and patronizing respectable local businesses.[9] As explained in the *Express* in April 1887, "The Merced citizen who lives to see 1890 will witness great changes in Merced county. Small farms, canals, irrigating ditches, neat residences and long avenues of shade trees will be seen all around Merced."[10] Amidst the active construction of Merced's imagined place were persistent lamentations that Merced had come up so short in containing its problematic people and places, thus destroying any hope of becoming a fully formed, legitimate American city. Rowena G. Steele, the editor of the *San Joaquin Valley Argus,* advocated for disciplinary mechanisms to bring the 1890 version of place praised by the *Express* into being on Merced's unruly landscape as early as 1883. Steele reported "ten or twelve houses of ill-repute," adjacent to Chinese wash houses on Main Street, resulting in a "…festering cancer which is slowly but surely eating its way into the very heart of town."[11] It neither mattered if Chinese businesses were legitimate, legal enterprises or decidedly not–to the *Argus,* this ethnic intrusion into the heart of town presaged only devastating consequences for the production of a future Merced that matched the white, bourgeois ideal for Western cities: infrastructurally sound, politically orderly, with

[9] "How To Improve a Town," *Merced Express*, February 26, 1887, 3, Merced County Library; "How to Make Lively Times," *The Merced Star*, February 17, 1887, 2, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, April 16, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, March 5, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, February 26, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, January 15, 1887, 2, Merced County Library.

[10] *April 16, 1887, 3.*

[11] "SHOULD BE MADE TO MOVE ON," *San Joaquin Argus*, December 1, 1883, Merced County Library.

citizens engaged in appropriate occupations and governed by the rule of law. Through an explicit sociospatial solution facilitated by police action, the press supported disciplinary mechanisms adapted to ideas of place and race, meant to contain the crisis of criminality and produce the imagined place Merced's boosters so desperately desired. The result left no room for any criminalized space or its residents, informing the community, and the local police as a part of that community, to who did and did not belong in Merced.

Place Becomes Territory: Criminalizing and Racializing Merced's Mexican Quarter

The spatial solution to Merced's crisis of criminality necessitated a dialogic between place and territory as a mechanism of both class and colonial panopticism. Newspaper rhetoric tied cartesian space, occupied by those deemed useless and societally dangerous, to race and criminality in order to justify a regime of territorialization executed through police raids. On March 26, 1887, the *Express* alerted the general public to a gang of escaped convicts from San Quentin that had taken up residence "in the tules near Lone Tree." The announcement called for immediate police action, claiming

> That they have visited the Mexican quarter [*sic*] of this town on several occasions recently, is certain. That they and their associates are connected with the recent horse-stealing in Merced, is probable. That they should be captured or driven out of Merced county is a public necessity.[12]

The *Express* rhetorically tied the outlaws' identity to the cartesian space of the Mexican Quarter, as their definitive visit there signified criminality on par with the alleged horse theft. Police and community alike understood the expected behavior of those in the Mexican Quarter as inextricably linked to crime and subversion of community values, and thus those who *visit* stood in antithetical opposition to the imagined place of Merced as a growing, prosperous, and orderly

[12] *Merced Express*, March 26, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 2, Merced County Library.

Western city. In this way, the press supported District Attorney Breckinridge's push for police intervention into the Mexican Quarter through his "clean sweeps," as Merced's placehood necessitated control over territorialized space.

As Breckinridge's "clean sweep" targeted the Mexican Quarter, the press ensured that reports of successful sweeps included mentions of Chinese vice, thereby using the territorialization of one criminalized space to spatialize Chinatown residents as well. Amidst the vitriolic praise for Breckinridge's success making Merced "too hot for evil doers,"[13] the *Express* reported dissatisfaction among some business owners whose "…trade is injured by the decrease of population in the Mexican quarter [*sic*]." However, the report interjected, "…public sentiment is in favor of the District Attorney and his active crusade against the fandango *and* opium dens."[14] The *Express* facilitated further 'public sentiment' through subsequent police reports focusing on the 'crisis' of Chinese vice specifically, like that of six Chinese men arrested for opium related crimes on the same day; one for owning the 'joint,' three for "hitting the pipe," and two for later attempting to smuggle the drug to their associates in the county jail.[15] Thus, the public message conveyed conditional support to the police for raids in the Mexican Quarter, where negative economic consequences must be offset by the inclusion of all ethnic undesirables into the colonial panoptic gaze. The result used the police's extension of territory to maximize the efficiency of panoptic measures.

Further maximizing the efficiency of policing the Mexican Quarter was the extension of the chain gang ordinance. Meant to resolve a long standing tramp menace through territorialized space, the ordinance constructed class panopticism alongside colonial panopticism. The 'genus

[13] *Merced Express*, March 5, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.
[14] *Merced Express*, April 2, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library; emphasis added.
[15] *Merced Express*, April 16, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.

tramp,' as dubbed in the press, presented direct challenges to spatial practices influencing Merced, particularly in light of the frequent press coverage of tramps and their refusal to work, their petty crime, and their building of shanty towns.[16] As such, their nonnormative white performance presented a similar threat to the 'festering cancer' of fandangos and opium dens, with their own targeted disciplinary mechanisms meant to work with the colonial compartmentalization of Mexican and Chinese residents. "There is a certain element of the population that is not valuable to any community," the *Express* lamented, "Pity there is not something more useful for these healthy specimens to do than to ornament the sidewalks[...]."[17] Ordinance no. 25, passed a month after Breckinridge began his initiative, was a targeted response to solve the crisis of Merced's white, tramp population, who typically took up residence in the West Side's irrigation ditches and could be arrested in "clean sweep" raids on misdemeanor vagrancy.[18] The *Express* reported that while on the chain gang, arrested tramps, "…work diligently on the streets...,"[19] followed a few months later by the paper's pleasant surprise that the Court House grounds could be kept, "…as attractive as…any public grounds on the coast," at such a small expense.[20] The choice presented to white bodies through the discourses undergirding differentiated policing and the disciplinary mechanism itself was to work toward a boom independently or to work toward a boom as a ward of the state. Either choice produced something that undeniably favored bourgeois interests: a disciplined and docile population of the right kind of white bodies and a constrained, cheap source of carceral labor to build Merced.

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[16] "SHOT AND KILLED," *Merced Express*, September 21, 1881, 3, Merced County Library; "TRAMPS AND THEIR PRIVILEGES," *San Joaquin Argus*, January 25, 1879, 2, Merced County Library; "Belligerent Tramps," *Merced Express*, April 16, 1881, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, February 5, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, January 29, 1887, 3, Merced County Library; *Merced Express*, December 27, 1881, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.

[17] *Merced Express*, February 26, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.

[18] "Los Banos Items," *The Merced Express*, March 26, 1887, 3, Merced County Library.

[19] *Merced Express*, March 26, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.

[20] *Merced Express*, March 28, 1887, sec. Local Brevities, 3, Merced County Library.

Whether or not tramps physically resided exclusively in the Mexican Quarter or Chinatown, their inclusion in the "clean sweep" campaign tied them to the criminalized territory and implicitly racialized their bodies in order to minimize their threat and maximize their disciplinary potential. Together with the "clean sweep" initiative, it becomes clear that both the crisis and the two mutually constitutive disciplinary mechanisms meant to resolve that crisis, were manufactured for a specific outcome–gaining absolute sociospatial control over Merced's growth.

The specific, inclusive discourses surrounding the Mexican Quarter "clean sweeps," chain gang, and boom demonstrate the potential of using rhetoric of place to justify a regime of territorialization for absolute sociospatial control. Writing about twentieth and twenty-first century gentrification in Denver, Colorado, geographer Sig Langegger noted a dialogic between imagined place and concrete territory. As Langegger explains, "ideas of place are essentially normative; they frame what should and should not occur in specific localities. In this way, place legitimates territorial regimes."[21] Territory, as a concrete boundary that establishes specific temporal and spatial regulations on behavior that is normalized, requires social actors to control it in order to match abstract conceptions of place.[22] In Merced, and the urbanizing American West during the late nineteenth century more generally, I argue, police took on the burden of articulating and enforcing regimes of normalization within territories. Police powers to scrutinize, discipline, and incarcerate, alongside laws and lawyers that supported those powers, played instrumental roles in manifesting ideas of place into Merced's spatial reality to uphold Anglo, bourgeois supremacy.

The work of territorializing the Mexican Quarter lies directly in policing fandangos, opium joints, and tramps amidst collective community support through crisis rhetoric to

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[21] Langegger, Sig, *Rights to Public Space*, 32.
[22] Ibid., 33–41.

criminalize and racialize. Through the targeted oversurveillance and intentional violent arrest of inhabitants or visitors to the territorialized Mexican Quarter, police denied a sense of belonging in place to anyone who did not fit within the regime of normalization, namely whiteness. For Langegger, abstract conceptions of place undergird the "semantic soothing" of gentrification, where rhetoric pathologizing inner cities is replaced by a rhetoric of revitalization. The rhetoric, Langegger argues, "removes the inherent violence of urban renewal…replacing [it] with an apparently irreproachable good,"[23] similar to the rhetoric supporting Breckinridge's "clean sweeps" and Merced's chain gang. The different disciplinary mechanisms conveyed the necessity of being an active contributor to Merced's imagined place, the 'irreproachable good' antithetically positioned to anything associated with the Mexican Quarter. "Thanks to the persistent efforts of our efficient District Attorney," the *Express* praised, "Merced has become a law abiding quiet town,"[24] effectively soothing any potential objections to the violence of police raids and forced labor through the 'irreproachable good' of law and order.

Conclusion

By analyzing the rhetoric that ideologically undergirded the police's actions in Merced, my intention is to begin to expose a process–to demonstrate that Eastern hierarchies and institutions, like the police, did not magically move West under their own power and re-root whole cloth. Instead, individuals and groups carried these ideas as emigres, altered them with everyday decisions as settlers, and reshaped them to serve dynamic and unprecedented local circumstances as residents. And yet, all rationalizing attempts needed to contend with the power of marginalized bodies, who viscerally understood their spatialization, but negotiated and resisted through constructing spaces of their own. Differentiated policing, and all the sociospatial

[23] Langegger, Sig, *Rights to Public Space*, 37.
[24] "Democratic Record," *Merced Express*, April 23, 1887, 3, Merced County Library.

codes that instigate it, reveals the process through which racialized, gendered, hegemonic 'populations' are produced. While navigating spaces within the carceral net of surveillance, normalization, and examination, individuals understand where they are allowed to be subjects and where they are relegated to objectivity. That cognitive map is internalized, driving our behaviors, decisions, and our complicity within hierarchies of power.[25] This research uses the spatial to locate the racial, where police regulate access to space and behavior within it as a reflection of relations of power. Policing decisions determined by the racial perception of place are the physical manifestations of imagined space.[26] Police act as the mobile agents of spatial practice, inscribing racialization as they move, and as territorial agents, are on the front lines of place production as arbiters of what constitutes normative behavior according to their assessment of place formed by their own disciplining and position within the community. The public concerns of police movement within Merced specifically and the Western city more broadly, (to the extent that newspaper rhetoric allows), reflects the importance of professionalized, socially sanctioned mobile enforcers of space. The significance of my research lies in the ability to trace the choices made during "states of becoming," that have shaped what the present moment understands as an unquestionable, timeless state of being.

Examining the process and functions of professionalizing the police as 'becoming' rather than 'being' interrogates larger issues of the American imaginary that have consequences in our present moment. Deconstructing the discourses that legitimized policing in the West forces a tracing of our understanding of the frontier, and thus the collective memory we continue to hold. As Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor explains,

> […]violent policing does not exist in a vacuum: it is a product of the inequity in our

[25] Langegger, Sig, *Rights to Public Space*, 27–39; Shabazz, *Spatializing Blackness*, 8–9, 11–12; Boag, *Re-Dressing America's Frontier Past*, 159–87.

[26] Langegger, Sig, *Rights to Public Space*, 32.

> society. The police exert their authority in a *fundamentally disordered society*. The clearer we can see these threads connecting police mayhem to the disorder in our society, the clearer we can express our need for a different kind of world.[27]

Clean sweeps and a chain gang did not *redeem* the upside-down world of Merced during its perceived crisis of criminality or transform it into the sophisticated, prosperous metropolis it so desperately wanted to become. Recognizing the hidden way that power operated through the mass circulated press and ideas of place help reveal the ways in which the *fundamentally disordered society* in which we live, replete with millions incarcerated, concentration camps on our Southern border, and white cops freely gunning down unarmed black youth in the streets, was imposed through a process that can be undone. Power successfully operates by presenting unwanted solutions that have no seeming alternative, which is particularly true in the case of incarceration and capitalism. Often if alternatives are posited, they are discounted as unsustainable because of their perceived incapability with “human nature.” Understanding that things were not always this way–that America had to work toward institutionalizing violent, racist policing–pushes us to engage with proposed alternatives with more good faith than power wants. It unnaturalizes a constant in our lived experiences, releasing us to imagine a new beginning.

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[27] Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 217–18.

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Constructing Safavid Iran: Space, Pastoralism, Power, and Identity in Safavid Iran 930-1077/1524-1666

By T.R. Salsman

Introduction

Walking through the streets of Isfahan today, the traditional Persian saying, "Eṣfahān nesf-e jahān ast"–Isfahan is half the world–would feel less like hyperbole with every step.[1] The city sports beautiful gardens, elegant architecture, and a bustling social landscape. Moreover, Isfahan did not just pop into existence fully formed. It represented the product of centuries of labor, politics, social invention and interaction, and struggle– the simple phrase, "Isfahan is half the world" succinctly encapsulates the power space can have. A city such as Isfahan can bring together the cultural, social, and political power of a country, pull people into contact with each other and manufacture differences of identity, and even exert power on a global scale. However, it is not enough to look at the city itself. Instead, we must broaden our view outward to the society that made Isfahan seem like half the world. When we do so, we are met with a seeming contradiction. Many of Isfahan's most notable features were constructed under the patronage of the Safavid dynasty (907-1148/1501-1736)[2], yet the Safavids themselves were rooted in the pastoralist Turko-Mongol cultural tradition. In order to understand the pastoralist element in Safavid architecture, we must engage with the scholarly literature on the entwined constructions of space, identity, and power.

[1] I will largely be following the transliteration systems used by Marshall Hodgson in *The Venture of Islam*, except as follows: In Persian I mark the short vowels as a, e, and o, the long vowels as ā, i, and u, and the diphthongs as au and ei. Final ه marking a kasre is written as eh. Final ی is always written simply as i when it stands for a final vowel. Silent و is written as w. The Arabic definite article is always written as al- even when it would be ellided in part or wholly. In the few Arabic names presented, my only diversions from Hodgson are that macron is used instead of circumflex to mark long vowels (except in the case of the dagger alif) and that the ة is marked as ä.

[2] Dates will be provided in the format (AH/CE).

There has been a great deal of scholarship on urban planning and the power of cities from a sedentary perspective. City planners, such as Daniel Burnham, theorists such as Arthur Wright and Paul Wheatley, and historians such as William Cronon and David Torres-Rouff have collectively advanced the idea that a city can be read as a source.[3] Specifically, theorists have argued that cities can be used to understand the complex negotiations of power and identity at work within and between societies. However, far less has been written about the construction of space in less sedentary societies. A city such as Isfahan might be seen as half the world, but the reality is that it was produced within a greater social and cultural context, specifically that of the Safavid dynasty in Iran, in which Isfanan did not always play a central role. The goal of this paper is to examine space and power in Safavid Iran more broadly, tracing continuity and change from their pastoralist origins to their more sedentary later period. To that end, I will be focusing on and comparing two case studies: the reign of early Safavid Shāh Ṭahmāsb (r. 930-984/1524-1576), and that of the late Safavid Shāh ʿAbbās II (r. 1052-1077/1642-1666). I will demonstrate that as the Safavids became more sedentary, they began to build architectural spaces with different purposes, develop new modes of inhabiting space and using it to define social distinctions, and capitalize on new sedentary economies. Nonetheless, through all of these developments the Safavids still maintained elements of their pastoralist culture, which influenced their new sedentary institutions.

[3] Daniel Burnham, *Plan of Chicago*, (Chicago, Il: Commercial Club of Chicago, 1908).; Arthur F. Wright, "The cosmology of the Chinese city," *The City in Late Imperial China*, G. William Skinner, ed. (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1977) 32-73.; Paul Wheatley, "The ancient Chinese city as a cosmological symbol," *Ekistics* 29 (1975): 147-158.; William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*: *Chicago and the Great West*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1991).; David Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.: Race, Space, and Municipal Power in Los Angeles 1781-1894* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).

Historical Background

Before I can begin discussing space, it is necessary to first provide a basic overview of Safavid history as background. While the Safavid state was founded in 907/1501, their origins must be traced further back to the dynastic founder Sheikh Ṣafi al-Din Ardabili (650-735/ 1252–1334). Sheikh Ṣafi was a Sufi, a follower of the Islamic mystical tradition in which a total ecstatic experience of God is sought through special techniques, such as meditation, recitation, and music.[4] Beyond that, his religious views seem to have been largely in line with mainstream Sunni thought, meaning that he saw the caliphs (successors to the Prophet) and specifically the four companions of the Prophet Muḥammad, the Umayyad dynasty (40-132/661-750), and the ʿAbbāsid dynasty (132-656/750-1258), as the rightful successors to the Prophet's role as leader of the Muslim community.[5]

Over time, his descendants became more radical, espousing a kind of religious practice known as *gholuw* (literally exaggeration). Gholuw takes the Sufi search for oneness with God to an exaggerated degree that involves ascribing divinity to entities other than God, such as oneself. At the same time, the Ṣafaviyyeh order became increasingly militant and pastoralist. The Ṣafaviyyeh sheikhs became leaders of a devoted group of Turkic pastoralist raiders, or ghāzis, who came to be known as the Qezelbāsh (literally the red-heads, referring to their red hats).[6] Finally, they began transitioning away from the Sunnism of Sheikh Ṣafi and towards Shiʿism, which holds that the familial descendants of Muḥammad through his son in law ʿAlī are the rightful successors to the leadership of the Muslim community and not the caliphs.

4 Douglas Streusand, *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011) 140-41.

5 Ibid., 27.

6 Streusand, *Islamic Gunpowder Empires*, 141.

Eventually, in 1501, Sheikh Ṣafī's descendant, Esmāʿil (r. 907-930/1501-1524) declared himself Shāh of a new Iranian dynasty and began converting his overwhelmingly Sunni subjects to orthodox Twelve-Imām Shiʿism.[7] While Shāh Esmāʿil was the founder of the Safavid dynasty, it was his successor Shāh Ṭahmāsb (r. 930-984/1524-1576) who was truly responsible for corralling a pastoralist army into a centralised territorial state and converting Iran's people and institutions to orthodox Shiʿism. Nonetheless, the society that Ṭahmāsb ruled remained thoroughly nomadic despite his best efforts,[8] and what progress he was able to make was undermined when his successors, Esmāʿil II (984-985/1576-1577) and Moḥammad Khodābandeh (985-996/1577-1588), proved too weak to control their own Qezelbāsh subjects, presiding over a period of civil war and military defeat at the hands of the neighboring Ottomans and Özbeks.[9]

Then, in 1588 Shāh ʿAbbās I (r. 996-1038/1588-1629) ascended to the throne, successfully undermining the power of the pastoralist Qezelbāsh and creating a stable, centralized, absolute monarchy.[10] While ʿAbbās I remained semi-pastoralist himself, his fear of treachery led him to enact policies that would drive his successors to become even more sedentary. Raised according to the new sedentary court established by ʿAbbās I's policies, the later Safavid Shāhs, Ṣafī (1038-1052/1629-1642), ʿAbbās II (r. 1052-1077/1642-1666), Soleimān (1077-1105/1666-1694), and Ḥosein (1105-1134/1694-1722), became increasingly more sedentary and reclusive, until the eventual overthrow of the Safavids by the conqueror Nāder Shāh.[11] The exception to the general pattern is ʿAbbās II. He is regarded as the most notable of

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[7] Stephen F. Dale, *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 251.
[8] Streusand, *Gunpowder Empires*, 146.
[9] Ibid, 149-50.
[10] Dale, *Muslim Empires*, 92-3.
[11] Rudi Matthee, *Persia in Crisis: Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012) 241.

the Safavid rulers to have come after ʿAbbās I, having contributed significantly to Safavid architecture, as well as having reconquered Qandahār from the Mughals.

Theoretical Conventions

While this paper is primarily historical, it also rests on certain theoretical conventions, which must be explained. Naturally, the most important theoretical convention is spatial constructivism. According to this convention, space is a social construct. Discrete places do not exist objectively in the world. Rather, communities define the boundaries between spaces by assigning different uses and meanings to them. Along the lines of Stuart Hall's work on representations and significance, these meanings often have implications for power, providing or denying access to resources, bringing people into contact with each other or dividing them, and physically instantiating the organization and norms of the society that creates them.[12] As such, space is hotly contested, with different interest groups and individuals vying for a construction of space that suits their needs and interests.

An important concept tied to space is the distinction between hard and soft architecture. While we generally think of architecture in terms of permanent structures, it is important to recognize that movable and impermanent constructions, such as tents, are also architectural. These temporary constructions are considered soft architectural spaces, and in less sedentary societies they can be just as, if not more, important fixed architectural spaces. However, this is not to say that hard and soft architecture describe a simple dichotomy. In fact, there is a whole spectrum of harder and softer architectures, such as areas permanently reserved for soft architectural structures and seemingly hard architectural structures designed to be assembled and disassembled quickly.

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[12] Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London: Sage, 1997).; see also Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991) 7.

The next set of major conventions is pastoralism, nomadism, and sedentarianism. I will be using all three of these terms to refer not merely to behavior, but also to the social systems that govern it. I consider any society in which seasonal migration is politically, infrastructurally, or culturally normative to be nomadic, and nomadic societies based on raising livestock to be pastoralist. I will also be using the term semi-pastoralist and semi-nomadic to refer to societies that exhibit significant features of both sedentary and nomadic lifestyles, and occasionally to refer to sedentary societies that still maintain a strong historical identity with a past nomadic lifestyle.

Finally, in this paper I will be engaging with discourses on race, gender, and intersectionality. Race and gender are not categories that arise from biological features, but are instead socially constructed when societies assign meanings to the differences between people, thus creating social categories that in turn affect the lives of the people who inhabit them. Additionally, as Kimberlé Crenshaw has argued, social categories do not operate on an individual basis. Rather, different dimensions of a person's social identity, such as race and gender, can interact to produce results that neither category accounts for on its own.[13] To this end, terms such as "racegender" can be used to discuss species of power relations and social categorization that arise from an intersection of identities, rather than being tied to a single identity.

I find it necessary to defend my use of the word race, which is not a term endemic to Safavid society. Many different groups, distinguished by religion, culture, historical place of origin, language, and phenotype lived together and interacted with each other in Safavid society. In an attempt to describe these differences, and the differences in power and lifestyle that they

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[13] Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241-299.

conveyed, I have examined many possible terms. Perhaps most salient in Safavid society was the distinction between religious groups, and a vague notion of ethnicity based on linguistic, cultural, and geographical identities that can arguably be traced back at least as far as the *Shāhnāmeh* in the Persian tradition. However, neither of these terms is adequate when we consider that royal slaves who converted to Islam and adapted to Persian culture still experienced differences of meaning and power tied to their heritage. More damning still, in some cases, phenotype was the distinguishing feature to which meanings were assigned. While ethnicity and religion are constructed identities, and are therefore flexible, I have found that in some cases they are too specific and restrictive to permit analysis necessary for the development of the field. Race– an erratic, vague, and often contradictory construct– is the only social construct that I have found to be adequately flexible to suit this analysis, and while I have attempted to use more specific terms wherever possible, I will be using race when it is useful and necessary.

Literature Review

There has been very little scholarship on space, power, and identity in Safavid history, with the exception of Sussan Babaie's work on Safavid palaces and the architecture of conviviality, which ties Safavid architecture to Shiʿi norms and practices[14] and Ann Lambton's work on land tenure, which provides an exhaustive overview of historical Persian systems of land management, ownership, and taxation.[15] Despite the lack of Safavid spatial history, there has been significantly more scholarship on related topics. The Ottomans have been somewhat more studied, and scholarship such as Leslie Pierce's analysis of space and gender in the Ottoman context will provide necessary theory. Within the literature on the Safavids, there has

[14] Sussan Babaie, *Isfahan and its Palaces: Statecraft and the Architecture of Conviviality in Early Modern Iran* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008).
[15] Ann K.S. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953).

also been a wealth of research on architecture, cultural practices, and ethnic identity, all of which are important parts of spatial history. Finally, the field of spatial history has been thoroughly developed in other historical contexts, including research on both sedentary societies and, to a lesser degree, pastoralist societies. Perhaps most notably Pekka Hämäläinen, whose work has significantly advanced the idea that pastoralist nations can be considered through the lens of empire.[16] My research will build on and complicate spatial history by focusing on a society in transition from a pastoralist culture to a sedentary one.

Primary Source Overview

The central primary sources for this paper will be the spaces themselves. Spaces can be read as texts; they are constructed with a purpose, and their design, location, and use reveal just as much about the societies and individuals that produce them as chronicles do. Many of the buildings, neighborhoods, and cities I will be discussing still exist, and have been well documented. Unfortunately, travelling to Iran exceeds the resources of this project, and I will therefore be relying on archival materials.

I will also be making use of conventional written sources, which contain a wealth of information on the description of spaces, their use, and the politics of their creation. *The Tārikh-e ʿĀlamarā-ye ʿAbbāsi*, the court chronicle of Shāh ʿAbbās I, is an invaluable source for the history of Shāh Ṭahmāsb, as are the accounts of his reign in the Mughal chronicles, the *Akbārnāmeh* and the *Homayunnāmeh*. For descriptions of Qezelbāsh culture during the time of Shāh Ṭahmāsb, I will be using the traveller's account of Michele Membré. Unfortunately, few chronicles exist from the late Safavid period, and those that do, have not been published in translation. As a result, I will be relying on travellers' accounts.

[16] Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008).

The Lived Experience of Space

Now that I have presented a picture of what space looked like under the Safavids, the next step is to examine how space was inhabited. Architecture and urban planning is the most tangible form of space. It can be seen and touched, and its construction is immediately evident. However, space is more than just physical structures. It is also the meanings we attach to spaces and the manner in which we use them, and those meanings and uses have to change significantly when a society transitions from a pastoralist way of life to a sedentary one. Sedentary societies live in one place, and so the spaces they construct are designed to facilitate long-term residence and agriculture. In the case of rulers, the same principle extends to the infrastructure of government, such as palaces and bureaucratic spaces. The situation is entirely different for pastoralists. Pastoralists do not live in any one place for an extended period of time, so we would generally expect them not to construct stationary spaces, which they would then have to abandon. However, the reality is just the opposite. Some pastoralists do build cities and assign a great deal of importance to them. The difference is in the kinds of meaning that is assigned to them.

The Safavids exemplify these differences, and through their transformation from pastoralist to sedentary ways of life, we can also trace changes in how spaces were interpreted, creating new paradigms of political, racial, and gendered power. The Safavids had always had a relationship with cities, especially Ardabil, since it was from there that their dynastic founder, Sheikh Ṣafi al-Din Ardabili, led his Sufi order. Although his descendants became increasingly mobile under the influence of their pastoralist Turkmen followers, the Qezelbāsh, the Safavid dynastic shrine at Ardabil remained significant. According to the official Safavid court history, the *Tārikh-e ʿĀlāmārā-ye ʿAbbāsi*, Ardabil was hotly contested by the Ṣafaviyyeh order and their rivals.[17] Nonetheless, the Safavid dynasty's center had shifted away from the city of Ardabil and towards the camps of the Qezelbāsh. By the reign of Shāh Ṭahmāsb, this situation had become largely untenable, with the mobility of the Qezelbāsh becoming an impediment to centralized, effective rule of the still burgeoning Safavid state.[18] While Shāh Ṭahmāsb–an effective ruler in many regards who presided over an impressive fifty year reign–did attempt to solidify his empire and bring the Qezelbāsh under his control, his centralising program did not succeed in the long term. As a consequence, the architecture and culture of his reign was predominantly pastoralist. The Safavids did not succeed in controlling their pastoralist supporters and establishing a centralized, sedentary capital until the reign of Shāh ʿAbbās I following a major civil war.[19] ʿAbbās I's political reforms would go on to shape not just the politics of his successors, but their cultural norms and lifeways as well. By the time of the reign of Shāh ʿAbbās II, Safavid spatial meaning had shifted significantly, moving away from the purely symbolic and historical spaces of Shāh Ṭahmāsb's reign to a lived-in space that defined new power relations in Safavid politics, race, and gender.

Royal Spaces and the Symbolic City

When comparing the use of spaces under the early Safavid Shāh Ṭahmāsb and his distant descendant Shāh ʿAbbās II, the most obvious difference is the residence of the shāh. Whereas Shāh Ṭahmāsb was constantly on the move, making camp near a variety of cities, ʿAbbās II spent most of his reign in Isfahan. As a result, the significance of cities under the two rulers proved quite different, though they maintained a common thread of Turko-Mongol cultural values. As will be seen in the contrast between Shāh Ṭahmāsb's use of the city of Ardabil and ʿAbbās' use

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[17] Savory, Trans. *The History of Shah Abbas*, 29-33.
[18] Michael Axworthy, *Empire of the Mind: A History of Iran* (New York, Ny: Basic Books, 2008) 134.
[19] Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam Volume 3*, 38-39.

of Isfahan, although the symbolic power of space remained consistent, new infrastructures of power and realities of inhabitation emerged in the later Safavid period.

Under Shāh Ṭahmāsb, Ardabil proved useful as a symbol of Safavid dynastic history, and as a tool for Ṭahmāsb to enhance his political power. Ṭahmāsb's use of Ardabil to humiliate and dominate his political rival Homāyun is a prime example. In the sixteenth century, faced with political upheaval, the Mughal emperor Homāyun fled India and sought refuge with Shāh Ṭahmāsb in Iran. The Mughals and Safavids were rival empires, and Ṭahmāsb took full advantage of the opportunity to show the world his power by bringing Homāyun on a humiliating journey to the dynastic shrine at Ardabil. Eskandar Beg Monshi, the court chronicler for Shāh ʿAbbās I, describes the event with typical courtly Persianate historiographical understatement, writing,

> Since Homāyūn had expressed the desire to visit Tabriz, and to circumambulate the tomb of Shaikh Ṣafi, he obtained permission from the Shah and set off… From Tabriz, Homāyūn traveled to Ardabīl to visit the tombs of the ancestors of the Safavids. There the Šeyḵāvand *seyyeds* offered him their services and escorted him for several stages on his return journey.[20]

To hear Eskandar Beg describe it, Homāyun went of his own volition, but this is actually part of the humiliation. Not only were the Mughals fierce political rivals to the Safavids, they were also orthodox Sunni Muslims. The Safavid dynastic shrine was a monument to the religious side of the Safavid dynasty, which was steeped in Shiʿi, Sufi, and Gholuw traditions, all of which directly conflicted with Homāyun's traditions. By presenting the trip to Ardabil as Homāyun's idea, Eskandar Beg advances the argument that Homāyun accepted both Shiʿism and Safavid superiority, while at the same time painting Ṭahmāsb as a gracious host, kindly permitting Homāyun to visit sacred Safavid space. Notably, Homāyun's journey to Ardabil is absent from

[20] Savory, *The History of Shah Abbas*, 165-166.

the otherwise exhaustive Mughal account of Abu al-Fażl.[21] As innocent as it may seem to us, the Mughals recognized it as the political display of power it actually was, and so, in order to present the event in the least embarrassing way possible, they omitted that particular piece. This kind of political showmanship displays the use that a pastoralist state like the Safavid dynasty had for cities. They had little use for Ardabil as a place to inhabit, but it served a vital role as a symbol of the Safavid dynasty, which could be used to promote Safavid legitimacy and belittle their rivals.

In ʿAbbās II's time, the Safavids were still using space to exercise political power. One of the most striking examples of this is the wide variety of palaces used by the later Safavids. For instance, the Maydān-e Naqsh-e Jahān, a royal city square built by Shāh ʿAbbās I, opens onto two major mosques (one public, the other historically reserved for royal use), the grand bazaar, and the royal palace.[22] Religion, economy, and political power were all brought together in that single space. However, this symbolic unity of powerful institutions underwent a further development under Shāh ʿAbbās II. It seems like a small detail, but the *tālār* (columned porch) and façade that ʿAbbās II added to the ʿĀli Qāpu palace inscribed the space with new meaning. As Sussan Babaie writes:

> Like the Qaysariyye and the portals of the two mosques, the original entranceway of the Ali Qapu receded from the bazaar façade of the Maydan and created a transitional entry space. The addition of the *talar* and its substructure projected the building into the space of the Maydan… the *talar* thrust forth, as if on a tray, the spectacle of royal feasts and receptions.[23]

What had been a space of relative balance and unity, asserting that the Safavids were the representatives of Shiʿi piety and good commerce, was radically transformed into a space of state

[21] Henry Beveridge, Trans. *The Akbarnāma of Abu'l Fazl* (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1907).

[22] Sussan Babaie and Talinn Grigor, *Persian Kingship and Architecture* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015) 186-187.

[23] Babaie, *Isfahan and its Palaces,* 183-184.

ritual and a symbol of royal power over and against the other elements of Safavid society. Just as Ṭahmāsb had used the dynastic shrine at Ardabil to assert his power over foreign political rivals through conspicuous, spatially-mediated performance, ʿAbbās II carried out a remarkably similar maneuver against his rivals within the Safavid state.

However, ʿAbbās II also found other uses for the palace. All Safavid princes, following the reign of Shāh ʿAbbās I, were confined to the palace in order to ensure that succession plots would not destroy the royal family.[24] As such, the later Safavids were far more prone to spending large periods of time in the secluded family space of the harem.[25] This is already a significant change. Although the Safavids did find ways to maintain some semblance of a harem outside of the palace, there is only so much privacy that can be had when a large company is riding together on horseback. Moreover, the transition to a life in the palace drove further developments in private space. For instance, in order to facilitate his heavy social drinking, a practice caught in limbo between the encouragement of the Turko-Mongol tradition and the disapproval of normative orthodox Shiʿi strictures, Shāh ʿAbbās II had several spaces specifically set aside for drinking. These areas, called caves, were described by European traveller Jean Baptiste Tavernier as:

> A square space with a little pond filled with water in the middle. Tapestries covered the floor and at the four corners of the pond there were four large wine bottles each containing some twenty pints or more. Between these large bottles were ranged a number of smaller ones, each containing four or five pints, with whites and clarets alternating. Around the cave there were niches at several levels, with a bottle in each niche. Natural light entered the cave through several windows, with sunlight on the wine having a brilliant effect.[26]

[24] Streusand, *Gunpowder Empires*, 153.; Cf. Rudi Matthee, *Persia in Crisis*.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Rudi Matthee, *The Pursuit of Pleasure: Drugs and Stimulants in Iranian History, 1500-1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) 54-55.

Caves were meant not for public spectacle like the *tālār* of the ʿĀli Qāpu palace, but for the private enjoyment of the Shāh and his companions. That is to say, they were a lived-in space, not merely a symbolic one like Shāh Ṭahmāsb's Ardabil. Moreover, caves indicate a development in spatial meanings. Drinking was a major component of Turko-Mongol culture, as seen in Clavijo's account of the court of Amir Timur, but as Safavid culture became more sedentary, orthodox Shiʿi ʿolemā' began to criticize drinking, pushing it towards the private sphere.[27] Adding to the significance of public-private spatial meanings attached to drinking, there is actually precedent for private drinking spaces as a compromise between piety and the expected excesses of kingship in the Persian literary genre of 'mirrors for princes,' (books dedicated to advise for rulers and courtiers). *The Qābusnāmeh*, an eleventh century mirrors for princes book, admonishes, "Never drink wine in the open or in an orchard; but if you do then return within doors before reaching intoxication… for what is proper within your own dwelling is intolerable under the open sky."[28] While it is not known whether ʿAbbās II was familiar with this particular work, it is clear that drinking took on public-private spatial meanings within an Islamicate Persian context.

Both Shāh Ṭahmāsb and Shāh ʿAbbās used space for political showmanship, however, they did so in distinctive ways. Shāh Ṭahmāsb presided over a largely pastoralist society, and as a result he used sites such as the Safavid dynastic shrine at Ardabil as distant political symbols to be interacted with only when it proved politically useful. By contrast, Shāh ʿAbbās was sedentary, and so had to inhabit the spaces of his symbolic power in his daily life. As a result, he had to carefully balance his public and private behaviors in order to present himself in the most

[27] Roxburgh, "Ruy González de Clavijo's Narrative."; Rudi Matthee, *Persia in Crisis,* 16.

[28] Kay Kāvus, *A Mirror for Princes: The Qabus Nama*, Trans. Reuben Levy, (New York, NY.: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1951), 59.

favorable light possible, developing new spatial meanings that simply would not be feasible under a soft architectural paradigm.

Race and Gender

The public-private spatial division interacted with more than just royal drinking habits. It also became a profound shaper of ideas about gender, race, and ethnicity. One of the best-known (and most badly misrepresented) images of Islamicate gender construction in the west is the partitioning of gendered space into the public/male and the private/female domains, most explicitly rendered in the harem, a female space inaccessible to most men. However, the gendering of space is neither ubiquitous to all Islamicate societies, nor consistent in its character across societies that do it. In Safavid society, gendered space evolved significantly with the transition from pastoralism to sedentarianism, becoming much more fixed and comprehensive.

Gendered public-private spatial constructions did exist to some degree even in the pastoralist early Safavid period, yet it was a necessarily porous institution. The account of Homāyun's exile in Iran from the *Tārikh-e ʿĀlāmārā-ye ʿAbbāsi* contains a long list of gifts given to Homāyun for his convenience and as a sign of Shāh Ṭahmāsb's kingly magnificence. Among the gifts, Eskandar Beg lists "numerous tents suitable for harem and audience pavilions."[29] Further, the account of the Mughal princess Golbadan Begum (929-1012/1523-1603) describes the same event from a female perspective, writing:

> One day Princess Sultanum invited Hamida Banu Begim to a party. The shah said to his sister, "Since you are giving a party, go out of town and make a celebration." Tents and pavilions were pitched in a nice polo field some two leagues out of town, and canopies and arches were also set up. In Khurasan and those parts they make enclosed spaces [for the women], but they do not close them from the back. His Majesty the emperor used to set up an enclosure all around in the Indian manner. The shah's men had set up pavilions, court tents, parasols, and arches and surrounded them all with colorful fences of reeds.[30]

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[29] Savory, *The History of Shah Abbas*, 164.
[30] Thackston, Trans, *The Memoirs of Humáyun,* 48-49.

Fortunately the cultural differences between Safavid and Mughal tent-building customs inspired Golbadan to wax descriptive of something she might otherwise have taken for granted, and we can see that both societies went to considerable lengths to ensure that, even while living a mobile lifestyle in soft architectural spaces, the sanctity of private female space was respected. However, there were limits to the practical observation of gendered spatial divisions. Even from Golbadan Begum's account, we can see that the Safavids were already less strict about the spatial division than the mughals, because their harem tents were not fully enclosed. Looking beyond her account, things dissolve even more. From 946-949/1539-1542 Michele Membré, a Venetian diplomat, travelled through Safavid Iran on a mission to make contact with Shāh Ṭahmāsb. Along the way, he wrote detailed observations of the Qezelbāsh and their way of life. On the one hand, he recounts of a Qezelbāsh wedding, "they all dance, in twos, threes and fours, men in one room and women in another, for the men do not go with the women."[31] This accords with what Eskandar Beg and Golbadan Begum tell us. However, he also describes pastoralist women travelling, saying that they, "pass on fine horses; and they ride like men and dress like men except that on their heads they do not wear caps, but white kerchiefs," a description he later repeats with the addition that Qezelbāsh women keep all their husbands' money.[32] Crucially, rather than transforming public space into private space through veiling, the distinction is almost entirely done away with. Only the most token of acknowledgements, a white kerchief, is made. The reason for this is obvious. Riding any appreciable distance in a chādor is simply not feasible.

[31] A.H. Morton, Trans. *Mission to the Lord Sophy of Persia (1539-1542)* (Warminster: E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1999) 43.

[32] Ibid., 25, 31.

The gendered meanings of public space had to be renegotiated in order to fit into the lifestyle of the Qezelbāsh.

Naturally, the later Safavids faced no such compromises. Without the need to travel vast distances, there was no longer any impediment to a more comprehensive gendered division of space. Unfortunately, few of the existing sources that would illuminate the issues of Safavid gender have been translated or made accessible. However, proceeding with caution, we can make some reasonable conjectures based on the extensive literature on the Ottoman harem. Leslie Pierce explains in her study of space and gender in the Ottoman imperial harem that, while the harem was a private family space, women both exercised power beyond private space and negotiated sophisticated, hierarchical power structures within private space.[33] Moreover, she urges us to reorient our conception of the directionality of power. Specifically, she writes that:

> More prevalent in the Ottomans' self-description is the dichotomy of inner and outer, the interior and the exterior. Two sets of words, one Turkish and one Persian, were commonly used to describe this division: iç/içeri in Turkish and enderun in Persian for the inner or interior, and correspondingly, dış/dışarı (or taşra) and birun for the outer or exterior… power relationships in Islamic society are represented by spatial division more horizontal than vertical… instead of moving up, one moves in toward greater authority. The provinces of the empire were referred to as "taşra"—that which lay outside Istanbul, the charismatic center. In government, "iç/içeri" referred to wherever the sultan was.[34]

Assuming the later Safavid imperial harem was similar–and the use of the Persian enderun and birun certainly suggests a common conception–we can begin to understand gendered late Safavid space as not only more rigid in its demarcation of gendered space, but also correspondingly rigid in its orientation of power along the lines of that demarcation. In fact, just as Membré tells us that Qezelbāsh men loved their wives very much because the women controlled the purse strings,

[33] Leslie Pierce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 7.

[34] Ibid., 9.

so too Pierce tells us that, “As property owners and litigants in property, inheritance, divorce, and other kinds of legal suits, women—or at least women of means—had access to economic and social power.”[35] In all likelihood, elite Safavid women took full advantage of the transition from the more permeable spatial divisions of the earlier period to the rigidly defined divisions of the later period in order to advance their social, political, and economic power.

In fact, some evidence from the Safavid historiography corroborates this likelihood. In her chapter “The ‘Jewels of Wonder’: Learned Safavid Ladies and Princess Politicians in the Provinces of Early Safavid Iran,” historian Maria Szuppe reveals that “since the beginning of the Safavid period, the art of reading and writing… was common among the women of the court, who used it for personal correspondence as well as for diplomatic activities.”[36] Though Szuppe laments the paucity of sources on later Safavid women, she does find evidence of a prominent female poet in the court of Shāh Solaymān (1057-1105/1648-1694), and a woman who practiced medicine in the court of Shāh Ṣafi (1020-1052/1611-1642), which suggests that elite women continued to be well educated in the later Safavid court.[37] If women were being educated in literacy and trained to write diplomatic correspondence, and they maintained a high standard of education in later Safavid society, then it is highly likely that they continued in such a role. If we make the questionable assumption that Pierce’s analysis applies to the Safavid royal harem, then the role of female Safavid diplomats may have become a heavily institutionalized organization, possibly on the order of a fully fledged government bureaucracy. In fact, if we read the historical omissions alonside the inclusions, the limits placed on female power practically confirm the

[35] Pierce, *The Imperial Harem*, 8.

[36] Maria Szuppe, “The ‘Jewels of Wonder’: Learned Safavid Ladies and Princess Politicians in the Provinces of Early Safavid Iran,” in *Women in the Medieval Islamic World: Power, Patronage, and Piety*, ed. Gavin Hambly (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1998) 329.

[37] Ibid. 330.

existence of organized female power in later Safavid Iran. Kathryn Babayan describes in her chapter, "The ʿʿAqa'id al-Nisāʾ ': A Glimpse at Ṣafavid Women in Local Iṣfahāni Culture," that Safavid princesses were blinded to remove them from the succession, circumventing the tradition that all Safavid royalty could, in theory, claim the throne.[38] The blinding of the princesses suggests that they were seen as real political threats in the Safavid court, which would have been extremely unlikely unless they were capable diplomats and politicians with the institutional backing to wield real power. The only reasonable conclusion is that Safavid princesses had access to that kind of power. Spatially, we can conclude that the increased power of the public/private and male/female spatial meaning systems did not limit the power of Safavid women, and may even have enhanced it.

While the public/private meaning system had fairly obvious implications for Safavid gender, it also shaped Safavid notions of ethnicity, race, and religion. Starting in the reign of Shāh Ṭahmāsb, but not successfully carried out until the reign of ʿAbbās I, the Safavids attempted to break the power of the Qezelbāsh leaders by removing the Qezelbāsh from their central position in the military. The replacements were a corps called the gholāms. Gholām can be roughly translated into English as "slave," but the institution bears little resemblance to the chattel slavery and serfdom that have characterised slavery in Western Europe and the Americas. While Gholāms were considered slaves, they were an important part of the royal household, and could advance to incredibly powerful positions within that framework, wielding a great deal of political power. Because the gholāms were drawn from beyond the Persianate world, their power acquired racial, and especially racegendered, meanings. In *The Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of*

[38] Kathryn Babayan, "The ʿʿAqa'id al-Nisāʾ ': A Glimpse at Ṣafavid Women in Local Iṣfahāni Culture" in *Women in the Medieval Islamic World: Power, Patronage, and Piety*, ed. Gavin Hambly (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1998) 352.

Safavid Iran, Sussan Babaie argues that gholām eunuchs "represented a third gender," which made them the ideal people to permeate the discrete gendered spaces of the court.[39] Moreover, Babaie adds a racial dimension, writing that "black eunuchs, who were considered even more repulsive, were retained specifically for harem service."[40] The lack of social standing that race, gender, and enslavement conferred on gholāms actually provided them with intimate access to the private side of the royal court and the shāh's family, as well as a hierarchical institution which they could climb to acquire direct power in addition to indirect influence. That power would have been unimaginable without the development and practical application of the public/private spatial meaning system–a system only made feasible by the new sedentary lifestyle of the Safavids.

Importantly, gholāms were not simply able to achieve power because they were fortunate enough to live in a time of changing spatial organizations. In fact, it was just the reverse, with gholāms driving the spatial transformation. As Sholeh Quinn explains in her book *Shah ʿAbbas: The King who Refashioned Iran*, the gholāms were introduced with the intention of breaking the power of the Qezelbāsh.[41] The racial and ethnic privilege of the Turkic Qezelbāsh, and the lack thereof experienced by Georgians, Circassians, and Africans, made the gholāms the ideal people to disempower the Qezelbāsh. The change in the racial power dynamic brought with it the necessity of accommodating the sedentary gholāms. A court composed largely of non-pastoralists cannot function according to the norms of a pastoralist-dominated court. As a result, the gholāms helped to transform the court into a more sedentary institution, which in turn provided them with more opportunities for power in a wider variety of roles. Taking advantage

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[39] Sussan Babaie, *Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of Safavid Iran*, (London: I.B. Taurus, 2004) 21.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Sholeh A. Quinn, *Shah ʿAbbas: The King who Refashioned Iran* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2015) 22.

of those roles, they continued to manufacture and advance a niche of racegendered power, to the point where slaves could even play a major role in determining the succession. This is precisely what happened when Shāh Ṣafi was elevated to the throne by an influential gholām, called the tutor of the slaves.[42] While the relationship between race and gender and the relationship between gender and space certainly helped to create new racial meanings that were spatially driven and experienced, it must also be remembered that race was directly related to space, and that gholāms actively negotiated racial and spatial meanings in order to advance their power.

The transition from soft architectural space to hard architectural space created new racial and gendered meanings and developed the identities of racegendered groups within Safavid Iran. As a result, new spatial meanings could be assigned to those divisions and new norms could be created. These norms were not neutral, and proved to be a contested set of cultural ideas with the potential to grant considerable power to individuals and interest groups who could successfully manipulate and navigate them. Important among those interest groups are the racial and gendered groups who inhabited the private spaces of the court, who used the new hard architectural paradigm to become powerful gatekeepers and advisors to the court. Spatial norms, in tandem with racial and gendered meanings, developed new identities and power relations within Safavid society.

Conclusion

Space is not just the physical structures we inhabit. It is also the manner in which we inhabit those structures and the meanings we assign to those patterns of habitation. In the early Safavid period, spatial meanings imbued with power did exist; spaces could be used to create or undermine political legitimacy, and even in a paradigm of soft architectural space, some

[42] Babaie, *Slaves of the Shah,* 38.

semblance of public/private spatial distinctions could be maintained. However, under the later Safavids, new power relations and new meanings had to develop. The newfound ability to create permanent private space enabled the shāh to engage in new forms of political and personal activities, took the gendered meanings of public and private space to new heights and developing institutional power for women and eunuchs, and even created a new set of racial meanings in which gholāms could leverage to gain incredible power.

Without a spatial lens, we cannot see the full complexity of the legitimacy, authority, and identity at the center of Safavid Iran's drastic transformation between the early and late periods. Although the field is rapidly developing much-needed research on power, ethnicity, and gender, it is in space where those abstract identities and roles exhibited their most striking effects. To examine identity without examining space is to ignore the ways in which identity actually shaped–and continues to shape–lived experience. Analogously, just as space mediated the interactions between people of various identities, space is also the center of interaction between dimensions of identity. While it is possible to examine the intersection of identities without space, space is the underlying factor that brings them together. Any analysis that neglects space cannot fully account for the complexities of intersectional identity and power.

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