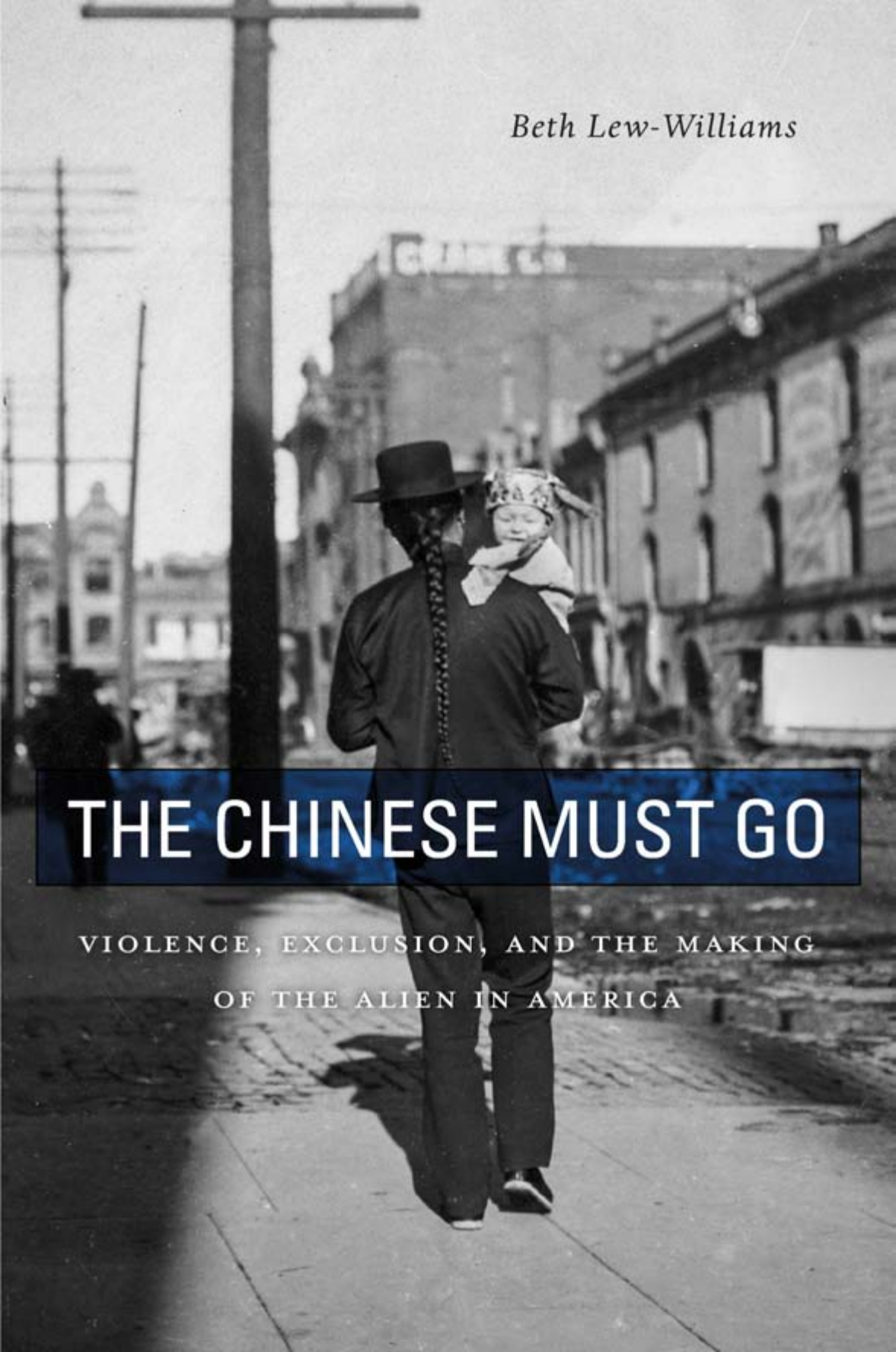




Beth Lew-Williams

THE CHINESE MUST GO

VIOLENCE, EXCLUSION, AND THE MAKING
OF THE ALIEN IN AMERICA

THE
Chinese Must Go

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In memory of Lew Din Wing

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INTRODUCTION

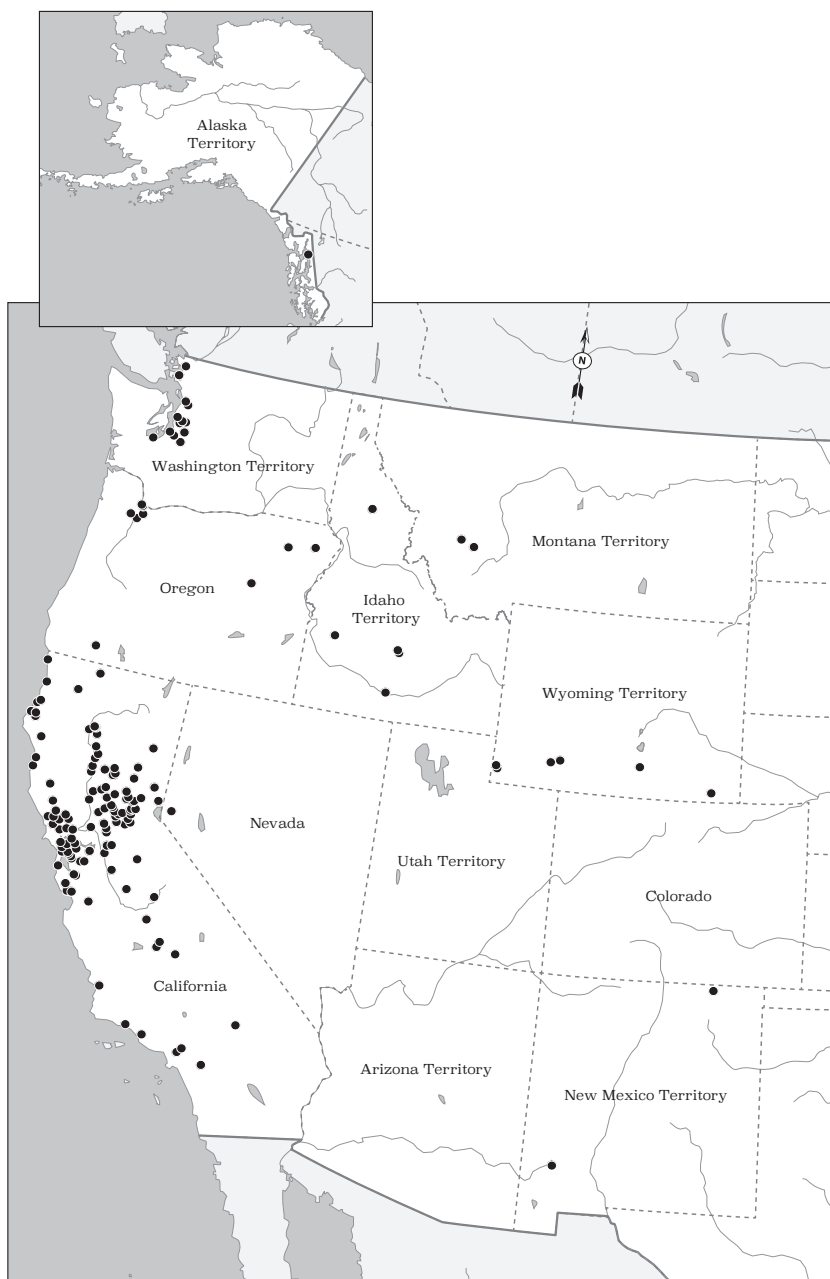
The Violence of Exclusion

THEY LEFT IN driving rain. Three hundred Chinese migrants trudged down the center of the street, their heads bowed to the elements and the crowd. They were led, followed, and surrounded by dozens of white men armed with clubs, pistols, and rifles. As if part of a grim parade, they were encircled by spectators who packed the muddy sidewalks, peered from narrow doorways, and leaned out from second-story windows for a better view. One of the Chinese, Tak Nam, tried to protest, but later he remembered the mob answering in a single voice: “All the Chinese, you must go. Everyone.”¹

The date was November 3, 1885, and the place was Tacoma, Washington Territory. But that hardly mattered. In 1885 and 1886, at least 168 communities across the U.S. West drove out their Chinese residents.²

At times, these purges involved racial violence in its most brazen and basic form: physical force motivated by racial prejudice and intended to cause bodily harm.³ The vigilantes targeted all Chinese people—young and old, male and female, rich and poor—planting bombs beneath businesses, shooting blindly through cloth tents, and setting homes ablaze. Once physical violence had become a very real threat, the vigilantes also drove them out using subtler forces of coercion, harassment, and intimidation. They posted deadlines for the Chinese to vacate town, leaving unspoken the consequences of noncompliance. They locked up leaders of the Chinese community and watched as the rest fled. They called for boycotts of Chinese workers and waited for starvation to set in. This too was racial violence.

While historians often claim that racial violence is fundamental to the making of the United States, rarely are they referring to the Chinese in the



Sites of Anti-Chinese Expulsions, 1885–1886. Vigilantes drove out Chinese residents through harassment, intimidation, arson, bombing, assault, and murder. Map based on data collected by the author (see Appendix A).

U.S. West. Instead, they are thinking of moments when racial prejudice fueled the violence of colonization, enslavement, and segregation.⁴ It has long been recognized that these transformative acts of racial violence anchor not only the history of Native Americans and African Americans, but also the history of the entire nation. Anti-Chinese violence, however, is routinely left out of the national narrative.⁵

It is easy to see this omission as simply due to the relative numbers. There were comparatively few Chinese in nineteenth-century America, and fewer still who lost their lives to racial violence, making casualty counts from anti-Chinese violence appear inconsequential. The 1880 census recorded 105,465 Chinese in the United States; at least eighty-five perished during the peak of anti-Chinese violence in the mid-1880s. However, these numbers do not capture the full extent of the violence, since some of the most egregious incidents occurred before or after this period. In 1871, for example, a mob in Los Angeles lynched seventeen “Chinamen” in Negro Alley in front of dozens of witnesses and, in 1887, the “citizens of Colusa” (California) took a commemorative photograph after the lynching of sixteen-year-old Hong Di. Events like these have drawn attention for their exceptional brutality, but often anti-Chinese violence was not fatal or recorded. By relying on the metric of known fatalities, historians have often viewed anti-Chinese violence as a faint echo of the staggeringly lethal violence unleashed against Native Americans and African Americans.⁶ When we use black oppression and Indian extermination to define racial violence in nineteenth-century America, Chinese expulsions seem insignificant. Or, even more inaccurately, they appear not to be violent at all.

The omission of this history can also be explained by the violence itself. Chinese migration to the U.S. West began in the 1850s, when thousands of Chinese joined the rush for gold in California. While other newcomers claimed a place in America and American history, however, violence pushed the Chinese to the outer recesses of the nation and national memory. In Tacoma, there were no Chinese after 1885 and, thanks to arsonists, there are no physical remnants of what once had been. Indeed, the city of Tacoma, in a present-day effort at “reconciliation,” spent over a decade searching for descendants of the Tacoma Chinese, but has yet to find any.⁷ Successful expulsions left little behind, even in the way of memories.

Above all, this history has been neglected because it has been misunderstood. The violent anti-Chinese movement was not a weak imitation of



It was rare for Chinese migrants to be lynched, and rarer still for a lynching to be photographed. Hong Di was a convicted murderer sentenced to life in prison, but unnamed “citizens” removed him from jail and hanged him on a railroad turnstile. “Hong Di, Lynched by the citizens of Colusa, July 11, 1887 at 1:15 a.m.,” BANC PIC 2003.165. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

racial violence elsewhere. It was a distinct phenomenon that must be considered on its own terms. Even without lethal force, anti-Chinese violence had profound and lasting consequences, although not the ones we might expect.

What made anti-Chinese violence distinct was its principal intent, together with its method and result.

The intent was exclusion. At the local level, anti-Chinese advocates fought to prohibit Chinese from entering spaces and working in occupations deemed the sole entitlement of white citizens. At the national level, they fought to bar Chinese migrants from entering the United States and to deny citizenship to those already in the country. At the international level, they fought to exclude China from the conversation about immigration, hoping to turn a bilateral policy into a unilateral one. Though scholars sometimes separate these demands into disparate strains of racism, nativism, and imperialism, respectively, anti-Chinese advocates rarely drew these distinctions. In their minds, the threat of Chinese immigration demanded exclusion across multiple spheres.

At the time, national exclusion was a particularly radical objective. Although border control may seem natural and inevitable today, the United States began with a policy of open migration for all. In the early nineteenth century, the federal government was more concerned with attracting “desirable” immigrants than prohibiting “undesirable” ones. Though individual states sometimes regulated immigrants they deemed criminal, poverty-stricken, or diseased, the federal government was not in the business of border control.⁸ This meant that there was no need for passports, no concept of an “illegal alien,” and no consensus that the United States should determine the makeup of its citizenry by closing its gates.

Anti-Chinese advocates demanded that the federal government change all this. Chinese exclusion warranted extreme measures, they argued, because the Chinese posed a peculiar racial threat to nineteenth-century America. Popular thought of the day held that the Chinese race was inferior to the white race in most ways, but not all. The Chinese were heathen and servile, but also dangerously industrious, cunning, and resilient. Chinese migrants hailed from an ancient and populous nation, which Americans granted had

once been home to an advanced civilization. Assumed to be permanently loyal to China, the Chinese appeared racially incapable of becoming American. While white citizens worried that Native Americans and African Americans would contaminate the nation, they feared the Chinese might conquer it. One anti-Chinese leader in Tacoma, for example, openly worried that if “millions of industrious hard-working sons and daughters of Confucius” were “given an equal chance with our people,” they “would outdo them in the struggle for life and gain possession of the Pacific coast of America.”⁹ Therefore, as Americans turned to dispossession, subordination, and assimilation of Indians and blacks in the late nineteenth century, they advocated exclusion for the Chinese. Behind these divergent racial scripts lay callous calculations. White Americans coveted Indian lands and required black labor, but many saw no reason to tolerate the Chinese.¹⁰

Not all white Americans agreed, however. In the mid-nineteenth century, many U.S. traders, capitalists, and missionaries saw Chinese migration as key to American profits and power. Businessmen eyed luxurious Chinese products and vast Chinese markets, while Protestant missionaries saw an opportunity to convert “heathens” on both sides of the Pacific. In the minds of cosmopolitan expansionists, American people and goods crossing the Pacific would extend U.S. power abroad, while the reverse movement of Chinese migrants would accelerate the development of the West and strengthen U.S. claims on China.¹¹ Envisioning America’s future beyond the Pacific Ocean and the rewards they personally would reap, these influential elites strongly opposed the movement for exclusion. This resistance, however, only emboldened the movement’s advocates and drove them to more dramatic tactics later in the nineteenth century.

The principal method of anti-Chinese violence became expulsion. Since their arrival in the 1850s Chinese migrants had been popular targets for harassment and assault, but systematic expulsion became the method of choice by the 1880s. In western states and territories (where 99 percent of Chinese resided), vigilantes used boycotts, arsons, and assaults to swiftly remove the Chinese from their towns and prevent their return.¹² And while the campaigns to drive out the Chinese sometimes produced casualties, these were rarely by design. Two men died on the forced march from Tacoma, but according to Tak Nam, the deaths did not directly result from physical assault. At a redress hearing following the expulsion, he described

how the crowd used clubs, poles, and pistols “to shove[] us down” and “drive us like so many hogs.” It was in this context that, after an eight-mile forced march and a night “in the drenching rain,” “two Chinamen died from exposure.”¹³

Though the vigilantes set their sights on ridding themselves of Chinese neighbors, the expulsions were not simply local means directed toward local ends. Using sweeping rhetoric and direct petitioning, vigilantes translated their violence into a broader cry for exclusion. Anti-Chinese violence, in other words, was a form of political action or, more specifically, what could be termed “violent racial politics.” By directing racial violence against local targets, vigilantes asserted a national political agenda. These vigilantes, of course, lacked the power to determine U.S. law or diplomacy; a host of political forces and contingent events created the ultimate policy of exclusion. But the vigilantes made Chinese exclusion possible, even probable, when their violent protests drew the national spotlight. The federal policy of Chinese exclusion, touted as a solution to Chinese migration, was also designed to combat the more immediate threat of white violence.

That violence held power over U.S. politics in the nineteenth century should not come as a surprise. Transformative moments of state violence—including the Mexican-American War (1846–1848), the Civil War (1861–1865), and the Indian Wars—clearly mediated politics through force, but so too did a host of extralegal battles. Violent racial politics swelled in popularity in the Reconstruction South and in western territories where white citizens lacked more recognized forms of political power. This racial violence terrorized local populations, shaped local politics, and, at times, advanced a national agenda. In the mid-nineteenth century, political violence, and the rhetoric that accompanied it, challenged the federal government’s reservation of Indian lands, enfranchisement of African Americans, and toleration of Chinese migration. By the century’s end, the federal government had acquiesced to violent demands for Indian dispossession, black oppression, and Chinese exclusion.¹⁴

The principal result of anti-Chinese violence was the modern American alien. The term “alien” has long referred to foreigners, strangers, and outsiders, and in U.S. law has come to define foreign-born persons on American soil who have not been naturalized. Admittedly, “alien” has become unpleasant or even offensive to our modern ears, and recently scholars and

journalists have begun to replace it with “noncitizen.” This more neutral alternative, however, is too imprecise for the subject at hand. In the nineteenth century, the term “noncitizen” would have encompassed a large and diverse group, including, at various times, slaves, free blacks, Native Americans, and colonial subjects.¹⁵ We cannot simply do away with the word “alien,” therefore, since it offers historical accuracy and specificity. In this book, the term is used cautiously to describe a particular legal and social status, not an intrinsic trait. The Chinese entered America as migrants and were made into aliens, in law and society. Through a halting process of exclusion at the local, national, and international levels, the Chinese migrant became the quintessential alien in America by the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁶

At the local level, violence hardened the racial boundaries of the U.S. West. Men like Tak Nam had established themselves in polyglot communities, living and working alongside white and Native Americans. He had resided in Tacoma for nine years before his expulsion, and in the country for thirty-three. Then violence made neighbors into strangers, figuratively and literally, as vigilantes disavowed any connection to the Chinese and drove them into unfamiliar surroundings. In addition to killing scores in the mid-1880s, the violence displaced more than 20,000. In the process, it accelerated Chinese segregation in the U.S. West, spurred a great migration to the East, and hastened return migration to China.¹⁷

As violent racial politics removed Chinese from local communities, it proved similarly effective at excluding them from the nation. Before the outbreak of violence in 1885 and 1886, Congress attempted to balance competing demands to close America’s gates and open the door to China. In 1882, American leaders created a temporary bilateral compromise: a law known as the Chinese Restriction Act. Only after the law’s public failure and the ensuing violence did Congress turn to a long-term policy of unilateral “Chinese exclusion” in 1888. The change in nomenclature signaled a major shift in law, enforcement, and intent, as Congress narrowed the avenues for Chinese migration, dedicated more resources to enforcement, and expanded U.S. imperialism in Asia. Historians, with their eyes trained on what Chinese exclusion would become, have overlooked the distinction between the Restriction Period (1882–1888) and Exclusion Period (1888–1943). To understand the radicalism of Chinese exclusion and the contingent

history of its rise, we must recognize the period of restriction, experimentation, and contestation that preceded it.¹⁸

Together, the restriction and exclusion laws dissuaded untold thousands of Chinese migrants from settling in the United States and, by separating men from women, stunted the growth of an American-born Chinese population. With time, Chinese exclusion became Asian exclusion as policies first practiced on the Chinese provided a blueprint for laws targeting Japanese, Korean, South Asian, and Filipino migrants in the early twentieth century.¹⁹ As a consequence, in 1950 these groups made up only 0.2 percent of the U.S. population; even in the twenty-first century, only a small fraction of Asian Americans can trace their American roots back more than one generation.²⁰ We can appreciate the significance of exclusion if we imagine what could have been.

To describe this history, scholars have relied on metaphors, resorting to towering walls, global borders, and closed gates. Despite their power, these metaphors can be misleading. They suggest that Chinese exclusion successfully excluded the Chinese, but it did not. Though the laws slowed Chinese migration, historians have estimated that there were more than three hundred thousand successful Chinese arrivals between 1882 and 1943.²¹ These metaphors also imply that exclusion's power was specific to a particular place and time, that is, the territorial boundary and the moment of entry. In fact, long after they walked through America's gates, Chinese migrants continued to carry their alienage with them in their daily lives, along with its legal and social disadvantages. Moreover, these metaphors, by orienting our gaze toward the edges of the nation, can inadvertently make Chinese exclusion appear marginal to histories of Reconstruction, Indian dispossession, and Jim Crow.

Though Chinese migration was a transnational phenomenon that spanned much of the Pacific World, the making of the alien in America must be understood within a national context. It was not coincidental that Chinese became aliens at a time when the federal government was dramatically re-making the concept of the citizen. After the Civil War, Congress constructed a new form of national citizenship with the Fourteenth Amendment, explicitly granting citizens certain rights and immunities, and extending formal citizenship to broader numbers of African Americans and Native Americans. At this critical moment, the social and legal meaning of alienage was also

transformed. During a period known for the invention of the modern American citizen, the forces of local expulsion, national exclusion, and overseas imperialism produced the modern American alien and an illegal counterpart.²²

Traditionally, assumptions of scale and field have divided Chinese American history into disparate stories of local expulsion, national exclusion, and international imperialism.²³ It would be straightforward to synthesize these stories, to take these three narrative strands and weave them together to make a strong, tidy braid. This would be a multiscale approach. But the intent here is not to combine the strands, but rather to break them down into their constituent fibers and to begin again. Only in starting afresh is it possible to see how lines of causation cross traditional scales of analysis. This approach is better understood as “transcalar.”

This transcalar history takes a single phenomenon in a specific place, namely the anti-Chinese violence of the U.S. West, and shifts across traditional scales of analysis to unearth its interlocking roots and sprawling ramifications. This retelling recognizes that federal failures created local problems, and local crises had national and international consequences. Seeking to reveal the entanglements between local and global processes, it emphasizes that history is multilayered. Each layer must be seen as distinct—with different forces at work, state logics in play, and constraints on human agency—but linked by ideas, structures, and networks. This transcalar history keeps these multiple layers simultaneously in view, with an eye for conflicts and connections. In doing so, it reveals how Tak Nam could be defenseless on the streets of Tacoma but could still influence diplomatic relations through his demands for redress.²⁴

Central to this transcalar history is the recognition that scale itself is constructed, first by the historical actors and again by the historians who tell their tales. In the nineteenth century, people defined the local, national, and global (to the extent they existed) through loose and shifting networks, institutions, ideologies, and flows of capital. These nested levels of human activity and the terms used to describe them were born of practice and belief. Historians also construct scales, name them, give them bounds, and imbue them with meaning.²⁵

Once formed, scales have the power to shape the thoughts and actions of historical actors and the scholars who study them. Instead of naturalizing the effects of scale, this book seeks to expose them. Part I, "Restriction," traces the contested politics and geopolitics that gave rise to the Chinese Restriction Act and then considers how uneasy compromises at the national level affected immigration enforcement at the local level. These chapters contend that Americans' views on Chinese migration were determined, in large part, by the scale in which they viewed their world. Part II, "Violence," examines the outbreak of anti-Chinese violence that followed the public failure of restriction. Whether enacting violence or resisting it, Chinese migrants, anti-Chinese vigilantes, and white elites made bids for political power across multiple scales and through various means. Part III, "Exclusion," explains how local racial violence became an international crisis and spurred a new federal immigration policy. By the turn of the century, the confluence of local violence, national exclusion, and imperial expansion shifted the nature of U.S. border control, extending it deep within the domestic interior and across the Pacific.

In addition to moving across scales, this book uses multiple perspectives. Its three central chapters, which make up Part II, tell the history of expulsion from three distinct viewpoints. These narratives capture the triangular conflict between the banished Chinese, anti-Chinese vigilantes, and cosmopolitan elites who fought to end the violence. The intent of these chapters is not to suggest moral equivalence between different viewpoints, nor to reconcile conflicting perspectives. Instead, it is to make these viewpoints, with all their apparent contradictions, simultaneously intelligible.²⁶

Seeing this conflict from three distinct perspectives risks erasing the diversity within each group while naturalizing the divisions between them. In fact, "the Chinese," "anti-Chinese," and "pro-Chinese" factions were all rife with internal divisions. Before they arrived in America, few migrants from China would have seen nationality as a central marker of their identity. Trade, clan, guild, dialect, and native place divided the so-called Chinamen, and it was these forms of social membership that defined their community and sense of self.²⁷ Similarly, the men and women who spearheaded the anti-Chinese movement differed by class, national origin, language, religion, and citizenship status. Though the vast majority proudly claimed whiteness, their ranks occasionally included African Americans and

Native Americans, who were hardly unified themselves. Finally, cosmopolitan expansionists who opposed the violence, while united by their class status, conservative politics, and stance on Chinese migration, shared little else. Even so, the rifts that divided the three groups ran deeper than the fissures within each group during the mid-nineteenth century. For a time, these three constructed identities played an outsized role in determining an individual's loyalties, actions, and memories. This book's thrice-told tale bares the depth and complexity of this conflict, its shifting terrain, and human toll.

While previous histories sought to catalogue numerous anti-Chinese incidents, this book dives into a carefully selected case study to capture these multiple perspectives. Along the way, we meet a Chinese woman who was driven insane by expulsion, a white vigilante who offered a "good cussing" to anyone too cowardly to join him, and a gun-toting preacher who declared he would defend his Chinese servant. The three chapters of Part II focus on expulsions in Washington Territory as examples of anti-Chinese violence in the mid-1880s. The violence there was disproportionately significant and emblematic of the larger phenomenon. This was made clear by media reports that quickly declared the Tacoma expulsion to be an "ideal model." "Now that the example of lawlessness triumphant has been set and copied," opined the *Los Angeles Times*, "we may expect it to find ready advocates in every town on the coast."²⁸ This prediction proved prescient as the violence spread across the U.S. West. Earlier acts of historical recovery make possible this case study of the Pacific Northwest and its interpretation of the violence at large.

The Pacific Northwest has received only limited attention in the history of Asian America, and yet it boasts a more complete archive of the lived experience of anti-Chinese violence than all other regions. This is due, in part, to the federal government's involvement in Washington Territory, which resulted in more extensive record keeping. It is also due to the destruction of many California records in the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906.²⁹ Even in Washington Territory, however, the historical record is incomplete. Not surprisingly, educated white men produced vastly more records than anyone else. In the archives it is especially difficult to hear voices of the working-class Chinese, whose illiteracy and transiency make them particularly elusive. These archival silences represent a central problem for the history of the Chinese in America. With few first-person accounts, historians

risk depicting the Chinese in simplistic terms, either as hapless victims of events beyond their control or as valorous heroes resisting the mob at every turn. Through a cautious reading of imperfect sources, this book strives to be faithful to the uneven nature of the migrants' knowledge, power, and suffering.

Near where Chinese homes once lined the Tacoma harbor, Reconciliation Park now stands. It is built in the style of a Chinese garden of no particular provenance. Down a winding path of crushed rock, across the "string of pearls bridge," there is a "dragon mound," a series of historically sensitive placards, and a red pavilion that can be booked for weddings. This is Tacoma's bold attempt to remember the violence against the Chinese long after most of America has forgotten.³⁰

Yet it is an odd sight, out of place and from another time. Chinese migrants like Tak Nam lived near here, alongside a spur line of the Northern Pacific Railroad and among buildings of the Hatch Lumber Mill in make-shift wooden shacks on stilts.³¹ But there is nothing from that unkempt world in this manicured space. Standing in the elegant waterfront park, separated from Tacoma by a bustling highway, it is impossible to get to know the Chinese residents of 1885, to imagine how they lived, and to tell what Chinese Americans have become in the 130 years since.

Like many Chinese gardens in the United States, the park seeks authenticity that proves unobtainable.³² It offers an image of China reflected through American eyes, rather than a memory of the Chinese in America. Even within this laudable act of public remembrance, the Chinese remain elusive, alien to their surroundings.

Perhaps it is only fitting. Tacoma, after all, helped to make them so.

Part 1

Restriction

The Chinese Question

WHEN CHINESE MIGRANTS arrived in the U.S. West in the 1850s, they were met with violence. They dodged rocks thrown by children as they labored in Sacramento, guarded against armed prospectors as they mined the rivers of Placer County, and fled angry mobs in the streets of Los Angeles.¹ And while this violence did not arise every day or affect everyone, it was common enough to loom large over every encounter across the color line. The traces of this white-on-Chinese violence are at once ubiquitous and hidden in the historical record, overwhelming in their abundance and yet difficult to see. Even when records exist for a given incident, the particular nature of the violence is often obscured. Then, as now, it was hard to distinguish between interpersonal violence, which had little to do with color or creed, and political violence, which articulated vicious messages about race and nation.

Take, for example, the death of Hing Kee. On December 16, 1877, the Chinese laborer was murdered in his bed in the company town of Port Madison, Washington Territory. It was not a clean death. He was found with cuts to the fingers (suggesting a struggle), two cuts on the side of the head (deep enough to penetrate the skull), and a slit throat (inflicted by an “ax or cleaver”). The violence against Chinese workers in Port Madison did not end with this grisly killing; it was quickly followed by expulsion and arson. Within days, Hing Kee’s countrymen were driven out of town and the housing they had once shared was burned to the ground. In flight, these two-dozen Chinese workers left behind their homes and livelihoods. But they carried with them, no doubt, the haunting image of Hing Kee’s body and the terror that they would be next.²

From this incident of violence and so many others, the only surviving account is a few paragraphs in the pages of a local English-language newspaper. But the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, even as it reported the crime, helped erase it from our historical memory of racial violence. Despite the brutality of the killing, the newspaper dismissed the crime as an act of larceny, emphasizing that the deceased was known to have been in possession of “a gold watch and some money.” To local white journalists, this was just another unfortunate act of personal violence in a society all too familiar with foul play. A brief investigation turned up nothing, so local authorities, along with the newspaper, declared the crime to have been committed by a “person or persons unknown.” When the remaining Chinese were “ordered to leave” Port Madison only days later, the newspaper did not report the expulsion as an act of violence, or even as a crime. Instead, it was “a solution” to the problem of Chinese labor, one tacitly endorsed by the editors.³

Curiously, on Christmas Day, the paper issued a correction and apology. It had failed to note that the superintendent of the mill company had ordered the Chinese to leave and the housing “pulled down, and the material afterwards burned.”⁴ Who this retraction was intended to appease is unclear. Perhaps the correction was meant to insist to readers, especially those who read between the lines of print an untold tale of violence, that nothing nefarious had happened. After all, it was a company town so the company could do as it pleased. Or perhaps the paper simply wanted to give credit where credit was due. Either way, the effect was the same: this moment of racial violence was buried under layers of justification, obfuscation, and euphemism.

And then there was the anti-Chinese violence that never made it to print: violence that occurred behind closed doors, as mistresses beat on houseboys and johns assaulted prostitutes. There was violence that happened outside the bounds of white society, in the backcountry of the lumbering industry, along isolated railroad lines, or within the recesses of Indian reservations. But there was also plenty of violence in plain sight of authorities and newspapermen, who simply chose to turn away. To white observers, the value of Chinese lives was so little, and the violence against them so abundant, that most forms of harassment seemed unremarkable.

For the Chinese, these incidents were, of course, far from banal. No one cared to record the migrants’ experiences at the time, but decades later a team

of academics visited elderly Chinese who remembered the U.S. West in the 1860s and 1870s. Read together, the old-timers' testaments of fear and abuse are relentlessly repetitive. "When I first came," Andrew Kan remembered, "Chinese treated worse than dog. Oh, it was terrible, terrible. At the time all Chinese have queue and dress same as in China. The hoodlums, rough-necks and young boys pull your queue, slap your face, [throw] all kind of old vegetables and rotten eggs at you. All you could do was to run and get out of the way." "O, I awful scared. I think we gonna get killed," Law Yow recalled, "they stand on side throw rock, club, say God Damn Chinaman." The slurs that most stayed with Daisy Yow were those of the white school children who called her "Chink," "yellow face," and "cheater." As the white Americans lobbed objects and insults, the Chinese feared worse was to come. "Two or three times," Andrew Kan testified, "I remember Chinese killed by mob in San Francisco." In his memoir, Huie Kin wrote, "We were simply terrified; we kept indoors after dark for fear of being shot in the back. Children spit upon us as we passed by and called us rats." "This make me very mad but what can I do[?]" Chin Chueng testified, "I can't do anything." From the abuse and their own feelings of helpless anger, the Chinese learned harsh lessons about a new country and their place within it. As Daisy Yow put it, "I think they feel that we are a very inferior race of people."⁵

The mid-nineteenth-century U.S. West saw the rise of anti-Chinese violence and an anti-Chinese movement, but they were not one and the same. A wide range of people, many of whom had personal rather than political aims, participated in scattered incidents of harassment and assault. In attempting to prohibit Chinese labor migration, a loosely organized political movement sometimes turned to violence but also relied on political lobbying, sandlot demonstrations, journalistic exposés, congressional petitions, third-party candidates, and union strikes. From the 1850s to the 1870s, anti-Chinese violence and anti-Chinese politics overlapped, fed off each other, and must have seemed indistinguishable to Chinese migrants. But in retrospect it is clear that racial violence, though ubiquitous, was not yet the mainstay of the anti-Chinese movement.

It was in these first three decades after their arrival that Chinese migrants, anti-Chinese advocates, and cosmopolitan elites established the terms of a

debate that would continue into the next century. Though the anti-Chinese movement began almost as soon as the Chinese arrived, the campaign for Chinese exclusion did not find immediate success because its radical aim to halt Chinese migration had many detractors. While white Americans lamented the “Indian *Problem*” in the West and the “Negro *Problem*” in the South, they continued to be at odds over the “Chinese *Question*.” At the time, Native American and African American inferiority was considered a known problem in need of a solution, but Chinese migration represented uncharted territory. What did the arrival of Chinese migrants mean for America? And what should the federal government do about it? The Chinese Question proved difficult to answer, because it arose out of a fundamental conflict between distinct visions of America’s imperial future.⁶

In the nineteenth century, the United States expanded dramatically, extending its territory across the continent and its commercial interests across the Pacific. As Americans conquered and settled lands that would become the western states of the Union, they relied on capital expansion and diplomatic coercion to gain nonreciprocal access to Chinese territory, ports, and markets.⁷ While in many ways these were twin projects of American imperialism, the fraught issue of Chinese migration revealed the underlying tension between domestic and overseas expansion. Elite cosmopolitan expansionists saw Chinese migrants as integral to American penetration of Chinese markets, whereas working-class colonial settlers of the U.S. West saw the Chinese as an existential threat to their imagined free white republic.

Thus, the Chinese Question was not simply a question about race. The vast majority of Americans agreed that the Chinese were a distinct and inferior race, although they continued to quibble over the details. More fundamentally, it was a question about the nature of the American empire. Though they shared a similar belief in white supremacy, those who dreamed of overseas expansion saw its fruition in opening China for exploitation, while others invested in white settler colonialism saw its culmination in Chinese exclusion. How white Americans viewed Chinese migration depended, in part, on the scale they used to imagine their world. Comprehending these divergent worldviews, then, requires us to shift between scales.

There were times that this growing conflict became violent, but more often it remained in the realms of rhetoric and politics, as people on all sides voiced divergent dreams for America. The arrival of tens of thousands of

Chinese migrants at mid-century thrust this seemingly intractable debate onto the national stage.

A Migrant's Journey from China to California

One of those migrants was Huie Kin, the third of five children born in a tiny, two-room farmhouse in a small village in the Taishan District of Guangdong (Canton) Province, China. His family had lived in the village for two hundred years, and Kin might have lived and died there if not for rumors of gold. In the 1860s a cousin returned from California, known locally as "Jinshan" or "Gold Mountain," and recounted "strange tales of men becoming tremendously rich overnight by finding gold in river beds." News of a gold strike at Sutter's Mill in California quickly traveled to China in 1848. Within a year, 325 Chinese joined the gold rush, followed by 450 in 1850, 2,176 in 1851, and, suddenly, 20,026 in 1852.⁸

The talk of gold held power. Even as a child, Kin wrote many years later, he "knew what poverty meant. To toil and sweat year in and year out, as our parents did, and get nowhere." He dreamed of crossing the "great sea to that magic land where gold was to be had for free." At age fourteen, he summoned the courage to ask his father for permission to go, and for money to cover the cost. To Kin's surprise, his father readily borrowed the price of the ticket, thirty U.S. dollars, from a wealthy neighbor, with his farm as security. "Probably [my father] had also dreamed of going abroad," Kin hypothesized in his memoir, "but he was married and had a family on his hands. His son was plucky to want to go, and he might be equally lucky as the other cousins; then they would not have to toil and struggle any more." If Kin struck it rich, the United States could mean salvation for the entire family.

Kin followed the same path that thousands of Chinese migrants took before and after him. In 1868, he traveled in a small boat or "junk" over the waterways of the Pearl River Delta, first to Guangzhou (Canton) and then to Hong Kong, carrying with him only a roll of bedding and a bamboo basket containing clothes and provisions. When he reached Hong Kong, he found a bed in the home of a friend or relative. There he awaited the arrival of an international steamship bound for America.⁹ When Kin left his village, he was part of a wave of predominately young, male, lower-middle-class

migrants venturing out of Guangdong Province in search of opportunity. For generations, this same demographic group had left home to seek work in neighboring towns, provinces, or nations. Now with the help of new transportation lines, they crossed the Pacific. Except for a few merchants' wives, servant girls, and prostitutes, Chinese women did not follow. Most men planned a temporary journey, to leave China only long enough to earn seed money to support their family in the future. This "sojourner's mentality" arose from Chinese cultural traditions and religious beliefs that emphasized filial duties, but was reinforced by the conditions they found in America.¹⁰

When the day for departure arrived, Kin boarded a large sailing ship, powered by giant billowing white sails. He lined up on deck in front of the white captain for inspection and descended to his quarters below. Foreign vessels, mostly owned by American or British companies, first traveled north along the Chinese coast through the Formosa Strait and then took the west-erlies across the Pacific. Most emigrants could not afford the thirty- to fifty-dollar one-way ticket to the United States, so they borrowed the money (as Kin did) or used the credit-ticket system, signing contracts with Chinese brokers promising to repay the price of their ticket through their future earnings.¹¹

Kin spent most of his journey on the lower deck, in the dark and crowded space between the top deck and cargo hold. There, Kin and his countrymen passed two months sleeping, gambling, smoking opium, and talking of the land they had left behind. Disease killed several passengers, including Kin's eldest cousin who traveled with him. Their bodies were lowered overboard into a "watery grave" far from the land of their ancestors.¹²

When Kin finally disembarked in San Francisco, California, in 1868, he was tremendously relieved and excited. He remembered: "On a clear, crisp, September morning . . . the mists lifted, and we sighted land for the first time since we had left the shores of [Guangdong] over sixty days before. To be actually at the 'Golden Gate' of the land of our dreams! The feeling that welled up was indescribable. . . . We rolled up our bedding, packed our baskets, straightened our clothes, and waited."¹³ When Kin arrived in the port of San Francisco, his appearance was as foreign as his language. He wore his hair in a long, braided queue and dressed in a loose shirt, wide-legged trousers, a broad-brimmed straw hat, and a pair of wooden shoes. As their ship docked, Kin and the other Chinese migrants entered a scene of loud

confusion. Boatmen, merchants, draymen, customs officials, and spectators crowded onto piers strewn with baskets, matting, hats, bamboo poles, and other cargo. Kin remembered, "Out of the general babble someone called out in our local dialect and like sheep recognizing the voice only, we blindly followed and soon were piling into one of the waiting wagons." Other Chinese migrants followed Chinese labor brokers on foot, walking single file with bamboo poles slung across their shoulders, to the Chinese quarter of the city. By the time Kin arrived in 1868, there were approximately 57,142 Chinese on the Pacific Coast.¹⁴

Kin remembered, "The wagon made its way heavily over the cobblestones, turned some corners, ascended a steep climb, and stopped at a kind of clubhouse, where we spent the night." The Chinese Six Companies, a mutual benefit organization established by community leaders in the United States, had dormitories where they housed newly arrived migrants until they found labor contracts or a relative came to pay their bill. Despite being an ocean away from home, the Chinese enclave had a familiar feel to the newcomers. Kin recalled, "In the [eighteen] sixties, San Francisco's Chinatown was made up of stores catering to the Chinese only. . . . Our people were all in their native costume, with queues down their backs, and kept their stores just as they would do in China, with the entire street front open and groceries and vegetables overflowing on the sidewalks."¹⁵ Kin had found a piece of home in this distant and exciting new land.

Kin may have dreamed of gold when he left China, but the Gold Rush was long over by the time he arrived in 1868, and he needed to find wage labor. First he acquired a job as the domestic servant of a white American family in Oakland, California. Even as a servant, Kin could make a wage that was unimaginable in China. He earned about thirty dollars a month, rather than the two to ten dollars he could have expected as a domestic in Guangdong. (In his home village, working as an agricultural laborer, he could have earned eight to ten dollars a year in wages.) Even after room and board in America, Kin could afford to send thirty dollars or more in annual remittances, a sum that was enough to purchase rice to sustain a small family for a year. Eventually, he could hope to earn enough wages and respect from his betters to buy into a Chinese restaurant, laundry, or store in America. The ultimate dream was to become a wealthy elder, the sort of man who would loan money to the next generation of emigrants.¹⁶

To Kin, this was a personal journey with personal stakes. His success would mean rescuing himself and his family from poverty; failure could devastate them all. But in truth, Kin's individual choices, and his eventual fate, were mediated and enabled by larger transformations in the Pacific world.¹⁷ Kin moved through a growing transpacific network of communication, trade, and diplomacy as he listened to his cousin's stories, embarked on an American ship, and entered a Chinatown filled with people and goods. He traveled through a rapidly changing Pacific world and arrived in the United States during a long conversation on the meaning of his migration.

An Expansionist's Dream for China and the Chinese

For William H. Seward, Kin's journey was an inevitable product of America's nascent imperial project in China. Seward, an antislavery Whig turned Republican, had an illustrious political career as governor of New York, a senator representing the same, and in 1860, a favorite for the Republican ticket (before he lost to Abraham Lincoln at the Republican convention on the third ballot). From 1861 to 1869, Seward served as secretary of state in the Lincoln and Andrew Johnson administrations. From his perch near the top of the federal government, Seward imagined America's future on the largest scale, envisioning the young nation as the conduit between Western and Eastern civilizations.

For "near four hundred years," Seward told the Senate in 1852, "merchants and princes have been seeking how they could reach, cheaply and expeditiously, 'Cathay,' 'China,' 'the East,' that intercourse and commerce might be established between its ancient nations and the newer ones of the West." The discovery of America, he continued, was "ancillary to the more sublime result, now in the act of consummation—the reunion of the two civilizations."¹⁸ Seward was one of a polyglot group of cosmopolitan expansionists: diplomats, traders, investors, and missionaries who believed that America's destiny lay across the Pacific.

American dreams of the China Trade were as old as the nation itself. At the close of the Revolutionary War, U.S. merchants swiftly repurposed the privateer *Empress of China* into a trading vessel. These traders, and the many who followed, hoped to sell U.S. products to China's vast population and buy valuable Chinese exports such as tea, silk, and porcelain. But U.S. traders

could only gain limited access to Chinese markets. In 1757, the Qing (Ch'ing) Court had designated Guangzhou the only port through which Westerners could trade and severely curtailed business there. Even with these restrictions, Guangzhou and the southeastern province of Guangdong became the gateway through which Western influence began to penetrate China. Western imperialism sped the development of a market-oriented economy in the Pearl River Delta, as farmers grew more profitable crops such as oranges, sugar cane, and tobacco for trade, instead of local staples like rice.¹⁹

American and other Western merchants easily found domestic markets for goods imported from China but had trouble finding items of equal value to export to China. This trade imbalance continued until the British discovered that the Chinese would buy opium for recreational use and began transporting it in large quantities from India to China. American merchants, also eager to profit from drug trafficking, managed to control about 10 percent of the opium trade in the early nineteenth century. Fearing the spread of addiction, a special commissioner in Guangzhou in 1839 confiscated and burned approximately 3 million pounds of opium owned by British and U.S. traders. In response, Britain declared war on China. In the first Opium War (1839–1842), Britain fought both to legalize the opium trade and open China to Western influence. Capitulating, China surrendered the island of Hong Kong to Britain, along with access to other Chinese ports, and extraterritoriality for British subjects. Since China was eager to avoid conflict with another Western power, U.S. diplomats negotiated similar trade concessions from China.²⁰ Through a series of unequal treaties signed over the next decades, and their enforcement by Western militaries, China continued to lose power over its territory, economy, military, government, and society.²¹

Western commercialism and violence opened China but also set off mass Chinese emigration at mid-century. In the wake of the war, Guangdong Province was shaken by competition from foreign goods, poor agricultural harvests, the devastating Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864), and the subsequent rise of violent interethnic feuds. Guangzhou remained a busy and prosperous metropolis, but the surrounding districts and their workers benefited unevenly.²² As Western influence grew in China, the people of Guangdong began, like Kin, to hear more of the “Country of the Flowery-Flag.” American traders opened agencies in Guangzhou to coordinate their commerce, and through these local bases, interacted daily with Chinese laborers, interpreters,

and merchants. American missionaries arrived on the traders' heels, acquired at least a rudimentary knowledge of Cantonese, and began proselytizing to locals. Starting in 1862, Congress promoted these transpacific connections to Guangdong through a half-million-dollar annual contract with the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.²³

Amid growing connections between Guangdong and the United States, news of the discovery of gold in California in 1848 quickly made its way to Guangzhou and rural regions surrounding the bustling port. Soon, Chinese men arranged passage to join other "forty-niners" in the mines.²⁴ After the California gold fields ran dry in the 1870s, Chinese workers continued to journey to America. They fueled the rapid development of the Pacific Coast, performing the arduous labor necessary for an economy based on the extraction of natural resources: felling trees to build American railroads, clearing fields for white agriculturalists, and peddling vegetables to white miners.²⁵ By 1880, the U.S. census counted 105,465 Chinese in the United States, 99 percent of whom lived in the West.²⁶

To Seward and his allies, the arrival of tens of thousands of Chinese on America's shores was unavoidable and perhaps beneficial. "The free migration of the Chinese to the American and other foreign continents will tend to increase the wealth and strength of all Western nations," argued Seward, "while at the same time, the removal of the surplus of population of China will tend much to take away the obstructions which now impede the introduction into China of art, science, morality, and religion."²⁷ For the most part, cosmopolitan expansionists' support for Chinese migration was not based on radical ideas of racial equality.²⁸ Most white elites shared with white workingmen assumptions that the Chinese race was "inassimilable" and innately "servile." Indeed, the very same racial traits that white workers loathed were prized by white elites. As traders and capitalists, they saw an abundant need for unskilled labor to extract natural resources and serve the leading households of the U.S. West. They assumed that the white working classes, as well as their own elite ranks, would benefit from this rapid development. As Senator Oliver P. Morton of Indiana explained, "Chinese labor has opened up many avenues and new industries for white labor, made many kinds of business possible, and laid the foundations of manufacturing interests that bid fair to rise to enormous proportions."²⁹ By taking the lowest-

paid jobs, in Morton's estimation, Chinese workers raised the status of white laborers and helped to bring prosperity to the U.S. West.

Viewing the Chinese as reserve armies of cheap and expendable labor, Seward optimistically claimed that the migration would only continue as long as recruitment did. "If . . . the people of the Pacific States need Chinese labor, they may safely encourage immigration," wrote Seward, "when they cease to need it, the Chinese will cease to come to their shores."³⁰ Cosmopolitan expansionists saw a place for the Chinese in America as long as the migrants were temporary, subordinated, or (on occasion) assimilated.³¹

Protestant missionaries, adamant that the Chinese had the capacity to be saved, advanced the most inclusive vision for Chinese migrants. They argued that Chinese migration, and the racial uplift that would result, could speed their conversion efforts on both sides of the Pacific. In this fantasy, the "heathen Chinese" presented an unparalleled opportunity to fulfill the destiny of Christian America. Huie Kin had the fortune to cross paths with one such missionary, Reverend James Eells, who "loved the Chinese people and . . . believed that the best way to reach the Chinese people was through the Chinese themselves." Reverend Eells tutored Kin in English, arranged his baptism, and guided Kin toward becoming a minister who could convert and Westernize his countrymen. Protestant missionaries held men like Kin up as proof that the Chinese could become American, but other cosmopolitan elites were not so sure.³²

As American territorial expansion reached the Pacific and industrial expansion increased in the 1860s, U.S. leaders felt pressure to secure a new treaty with China that contained a clearer expression of its rights and privileges, which could expand the market for American goods.³³ After decades spent reaping concessions won by the British navy and securing unequal treaties based on British models, U.S. diplomats like Seward questioned whether the United States could ever get ahead in the China Trade by simply following Britain's lead. Seward secretly drafted a treaty based on a new vision of a cooperative open door in China. Instead of winning concessions and territory from China by force, as Britain had done, the United States would support Chinese territorial sovereignty in return for China's commitment to allow all Western powers equal access to its markets. If Chinese markets were open to all, Seward believed that the Western power with the

most commercial muscle and substantial friendship would pull ahead in the race for China.³⁴

In 1867, the Chinese Imperial Court, in an unusual move, appointed Seward's good friend and fellow U.S. diplomat Anson Burlingame to represent their interests. Having served as the U.S. minister to China, Burlingame now became the Chinese minister to the United States. China placed high trust in Burlingame and thought him better suited to navigate the intricacies of U.S. diplomacy than a Chinese courtier. The following year, Burlingame accompanied Chinese officials on a tour of the United States and adopted Seward's treaty proposal. Seward and Burlingame agreed that the United States needed to "substitute fair diplomatic action in China for force" and use "sincere" "co-operation" with China "to win . . . respect and confidence."³⁵ Despite American misgivings about China's "uncivilized" status, in 1868 the United States agreed to Seward's treaty, which recognized China as "a most favored nation" and agreed to "free migration and emigration" between the two countries.³⁶ Expansionists believed this new approach would open China to U.S. influence, expand missionary efforts to spread Christianity, and spur commercial efforts to Westernize China. The so-called Burlingame Treaty, and its premise of a cooperative open door, was unanimously ratified by Congress and hailed in the press as a triumph. So began a "special relationship" between the United States and China, born of America's imperial vision but seeking Chinese goodwill.³⁷

A Settler's Nightmare of a Chinese Invasion

California writer Pierton W. Dooner drew wildly different conclusions as he watched the arrival of Huie Kin and others like him. It was the beginning of the end of America. In the futuristic novel *Last Days of the Republic* (1880), he told a fictionalized history of Chinese migration to the West Coast, conjuring a dystopian future. Chinese differed from white Americans, according to Dooner, in "manners, dress, habits of life, religion and education," but more important, "they were also incapable of assimilation, or of social intercommunication" and remain a "race alien alike to every sentiment and association of American life." This rejection of American culture, in Dooner's account, is intentional. Chinese migrants are harbingers of a planned invasion,

organized by the Six Companies, with the aim of conquering the United States. Expansionists like Seward, who “never suspected the treachery that lay hidden,” are duped into advancing the Chinese cause through treaty negotiations.³⁸

In his dark narrative, the white workingmen of California are the first to discover the surreptitious Chinese invasion of America. “Without stopping to consider treaty stipulations, or the rights of foreigners in our country,” he writes, “the whole of the citizen producing-class at once declared that the Chinese must go!”³⁹ Although California workingmen beseech the government to protect the country, they cannot convince elites. The U.S. government allows the Chinese to naturalize, and with their citizenship comes America’s destruction.⁴⁰ Soon, a quarter-million Chinese are enfranchised, and they elect their own countrymen to lead the nation. The white working class is driven into destitution and the institution of marriage crumbles, yet cosmopolitan expansionists will still not listen. When Chinese armies arrive in South Carolina, it is too late to save the union. By the end of the race war, “the very name of the United States of America [is] blotted from the record of nations and peoples” in favor of an “alien crown.”⁴¹

Fantastical as *Last Days of the Republic* may seem, Dooner echoed racial ideology that was commonplace in the nineteenth-century U.S. West.⁴² An ethnically diverse group of American citizens (and aspiring citizens)—including unskilled and skilled workers, homemakers, and small businessmen—viewed the Chinese as an existential threat to their vision of a free white republic. While cosmopolitan expansionists were preoccupied by hopes of an American commercial empire stretching across the Pacific, these men and women focused on a smaller scale: America’s settler colonial project in the western states and territories. A representative of their ranks, Cameron King of San Francisco, explained to a congressional commission that it was “a selfish and short-sighted policy to allow this coast to be occupied by the Chinese” to advance the China Trade. “Our broad territory will in the future be demanded as a home of our own people,” he continued, “and should be preserved as the heritage of the generations to come after us.” Describing the Chinese as “filthy, vicious, ignorant, depraved, and criminal,” he maintained that they were “a standing menace to our free institutions, and an ever-threatening danger to our republican form of government.” King did

not simply dislike the Chinese race; like Dooner, he believed that Chinese migrants endangered America's westward expansion and, ultimately, the nation itself.⁴³

The Chinese arrived at a critical moment in America's lengthy, tangled conversation about race, labor, and citizenship. It was a time of war—the Mexican-American War (1846–1848), the Civil War (1861–1865), and a series of wars with Native American tribes—and a period of reconstruction—as the federal government remade the South and West in the years that followed.⁴⁴ During these battles and attempts at peace, the United States saw western expansion, a crisis over black slavery, and the ascent of racial science. Beneath this turmoil lay central questions for American democracy: Who could claim U.S. citizenship? What power came with that privilege?

The U.S. constitution offered no definitive answers. Since the founders had not created a singular form of national citizenship, the states reserved the rights to grant citizenship and its privileges in the antebellum period. This resulted in the fragmentation of citizenship, as states granted disparate civil rights based on distinct criteria. Though natural-born citizens fell under the purview of the states, the federal government handled the naturalization of the foreign-born. In 1790, Congress reserved the privilege of naturalization for “free white person(s)” “of good moral character.” Whether granted by the state or the federal government, citizenship status still carried only limited social and formal meaning. Other forms of social membership, including sex, race, freedom, property, and marital status, were more likely to determine an individual's status and rights. Aliens could not vote in many states, for example, but neither could women or free blacks. And in New York and Massachusetts, where state-based immigration control targeted Irish paupers, U.S. citizenship was not enough to shield against deportation. At a time rife with social divisions, the line between citizen and alien was not particularly salient.⁴⁵

It was not until after the Civil War that the federal government created a singular form of national citizenship. Through the 1866 Civil Rights Act and the Fourteenth Amendment, Congress began to enumerate the rights and privileges of citizenry, extending its ranks to include African Americans and many Native Americans. Congress foresaw a future in which these new citizens would become incorporated into the nation through Christianization, economic integration, and education.⁴⁶ This vision arose

in part from radical ideas of racial inclusion, but also rested on more pragmatic grounds. The process of assimilation would help dismantle the Confederacy, guarantee the availability of black labor, and facilitate the acquisition of Indian land. In this arrangement, blacks and Native Americans never achieved the full benefits of citizenship, since discriminatory laws and practices guaranteed that race would continue to determine an individual's power. Still, in the postwar era African Americans and many assimilated Native Americans found a place within the citizenry, albeit a subjugated and often compulsory one. In contrast, the status of the Chinese in America remained unclear.

During the racial and legal transformation of U.S. citizenship, rapid industrialization and incorporation also gave rise to new concepts of economic citizenship. America's founders envisioned the ideal citizen as a propertied producer. Through financial independence, the property-owning man could claim the moral self-sufficiency required to sustain a participatory democracy. But by the end of the Civil War, wageworkers outnumbered self-employed men by 2.5 to 1, as independent producers found it difficult to compete with corporations producing cheap goods. Late nineteenth-century America faced repeated recessions, a growing income gap, and expanding rolls of wage laborers. This new financial reality challenged old notions of the ideal citizen and raised pressing questions. How could white wageworkers maintain their freedom while under the thumb of their employer? And, if a white wageworker could be a self-governing citizen, then what about the Chinese?⁴⁷

Anti-Chinese advocates like Dooner sought to draw a hard line between white citizens and Chinese aliens. Though anti-Chinese forces lodged many complaints against the Chinese, their two-pronged trope of the "heathen coolie" became the primary rationale for exclusion. The term "heathen" was both a racial and religious marker, connoting the pagan, wild, uncivilized, and savage. Similarly, "coolie" was both a racial and economic formation, signifying cheap, slavish, and alien laborers.⁴⁸ Together, these representations provided the scaffolding on which the anti-Chinese movement would be built.⁴⁹

Fears of the "coolie" arose in the context of a regime of racial slavery in the U.S. South, and only grew in the wake of black emancipation. Starting in the 1840s, plantation owners in Cuba began importing Chinese indentured

laborers to supplement enslaved Africans. The American public, reading frightening accounts of trafficked Chinese and indentured labor, began to imagine Chinese migrants as unfree workers. (In his novel, Dooner states this as simple fact: "Asiatic coolieism is a form of human slavery.") As Union armies fought to end black slavery during the Civil War, Congress also passed its first law to regulate the "coolie trade" in the Caribbean. The 1862 law expressly allowed Chinese "voluntary emigration," but suggested that the trafficking of Chinese workers in Cuba was anything but. As Chinese migrants arrived in California, so did their reputations as unfree laborers.⁵⁰

In the minds of anti-Chinese advocates, the end of the Civil War and the beginning of black emancipation added urgency to the coolie threat in the U.S. West. The anti-Chinese movement, like the fight for abolition in the South, was based on the premise that racial slavery threatened white freedom. The meaning of freedom shifted considerably during the nineteenth century. In the antebellum period, Americans needed to be self-employed to prove their freedom and economic citizenship, but after the Civil War Americans simply needed to contract their own labor and demonstrate their financial independence through consumption.⁵¹ Chinese workers threatened white freedom by undercutting these tenets of economic citizenship. According to their detractors, the Chinese drove down white wages through labor competition while refusing to consume American products.

In the West, anti-Chinese agitators argued that coolies were the new slaves, while monopolists were the new slaveholders. Monopolists could use pliable Chinese coolies to deny white workers their freedom and manhood, that is, their ability to negotiate a living wage and provide for dependents. The growing antimonomopolist movement adopted the anti-Chinese cause as their own, describing the coolie threat in terms that intertwined racial and economic logic. Chinese coolies would always be cheap and pliable labor, they maintained, because the Chinese possessed an inherently servile nature. The Chinese could not be proletarian allies in the fight against capital; instead, they were destined to be tools in the hands of monopolists. Furthermore, they demonstrated an uncanny ability to survive without consumption, for they lacked an innate desire for the trappings of civilization. According to prevailing stereotypes, coolies did not eat red meat, buy books or nice clothes, engage in leisure, or provide for women and children. In other words, they showed no evidence of the financial independence nec-

essary for economic citizenship. Instead, they remained an alien presence in America.⁵²

If the image of the “coolie” stoked fears of slavery reborn, that of the “heathen” fueled nightmares of the American republic undone. Whereas most Americans assumed that European migrants would permanently settle in America, learn its ways, and become its citizens, they believed that Chinese migrants could never be enfolded into the nation. Not only did the Chinese heathen worship idolatrous gods, eat rats, and tell lies under oath, but white Americans feared that these pagan beliefs, uncivilized ways, and immoral conduct could never be reformed. These notions of the Chinese heathen were at once ancient and new. Their genealogy could be traced back through centuries of orientalism, which positioned the barbaric East as the foil to the civilized West, but the prevailing stereotype owed a great deal to advances in racial science, which confirmed that the Chinese were innately inferior to Anglo-Saxons. In the mid-nineteenth century, it was common sense to most Americans that Chinese migrants would always be queer, barbarous, and inassimilable strangers. While an authoritarian state might be able to subjugate an “indigestible” minority race, a republic, it was believed, required a homogenous citizenry to survive.⁵³ How would a government of the people and by the people endure if those people were incapable of assimilation and self-government? If the Chinese became U.S. citizens, Dooner’s dystopia would be close at hand.

In the U.S. West, America’s nascent settler colonial project added incentive for recently arrived European migrants to rally against the “heathen Chinese.” When the United States claimed the lands of northern Mexico in 1848, U.S. colonial settlers traveled west to plant the seeds of American “civilization.” The United States claimed this new territory using white settlement, white reproduction, and elimination or assimilation of the land’s previous Native American and Mexican occupants.⁵⁴ Eager to establish a white American society in the imagined wilderness, West Coast settlers developed a more inclusive definition of whiteness in hopes of expanding their own ranks. Based on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), Mexicans were granted formal citizenship and legal whiteness, although they continued to be treated as racially ambiguous. Whereas East Coast Americans portrayed Irish and Eastern Europeans as probationary members of the white race, West Coast settlers saw more potential for assimilation in European migrants.⁵⁵

White ethnics would simply “mingle their blood” to “become perfectly assimilated with the country,” maintained American citizens. But “the idea of thus assimilating the Chinaman is of course repugnant and not to be tolerated.”⁵⁶ By rallying around the anti-Chinese cause in the U.S. West, white ethnics could downplay their own cultural diversity and seize a rare opportunity for racial upward mobility.⁵⁷

So powerful was the image of the heathen coolie that the anti-Chinese movement united white colonial settlers in the U.S. West across traditional divisions of class, politics, and ethnicity. But did white Americans’ fear of the “heathen coolie” have any basis in economic and social reality? Were the Chinese unfree workers who were uninterested in assimilating into American society in the nineteenth century? The simple answer to these problematic questions is no.⁵⁸ These representations of the Chinese, widely accepted at the time and repeated too often ever since, do not stand. Even the most adamant anti-Chinese agitators at the time recognized the disjuncture between ideology and reality. In many ways, it was the Chinese migrants’ violations of the heathen coolie stereotype that made them such a menace.

Though Chinese men in the United States encountered many forms of economic exploitation, they were not bound or indentured laborers. Women and girls sometimes experienced human trafficking, but Chinese men were compensated for their work, albeit scantily, and were free to leave their place of employment if they could find a better one.⁵⁹ That said, free and unfree labor were never dichotomous categories, and at times, circumstance could push individual Chinese workers toward the unfree end of the spectrum. Some arrived in the country heavily indebted to those who had paid their passage, others were coerced into gang labor, and all encountered a dual wage system based on race. Still, Chinese workers never fully embodied the coolie trope.⁶⁰ It is important to recognize the discrepancy between racial representations and the actual social relations of production, not only to disprove old-time slurs, but also to understand the multidimensional nature of the Chinese threat. As free labor, the Chinese held a certain degree of economic power and with it the dangerous potential for upward mobility.

While the Chinese constituted less than 10 percent of the population of California in 1870, they accounted for approximately 25 percent of the work-

force. During the rapid development of the U.S. West at mid-century, Chinese workers, who were invariably relegated to unskilled and low-paid positions, upgraded the status of white workers who claimed more coveted occupations.⁶¹ But once the Central Pacific Railroad was completed in May 1869, and goods from the U.S. East began to flood western markets, the economy was no longer so elastic. After the panic of 1873, Chinese workers, who had acquired technical skills during their decade in the West, began to move into jobs considered desirable by skilled white workers. As racially based job divisions began to break down, the Chinese entered a wide range of industries.⁶² In 1882, a Trades Assembly investigation reported this with great alarm:

We find [the Chinese] employed in the manufacture of boots and shoes, barrels, boxes, brushes, brooms, blankets, bricks, blinds, clothing, canned goods, cigars and cigar boxes, cloth, cordage, furniture, flannels, gloves, harness, jute bagging, knitted goods, leather, matches, paper, ropes, soap, straw boards, sashes, saddles, shirts and underclothing of all kinds, slippers, twine, tinware, willow-ware, wine and whips; also employed as cooks, carpenters, domestic servants, expressmen, farm laborers, fishermen, firemen on steamers, laundrymen, locksmiths, miners, painters, peddlers, sign-writers, waiters, and at repairing clocks and watches. We find them employed in breweries, chemical works, flourmills, lumber and planing mills, distilleries, smelting works, powder factories, vineyards, woolen mills, tanneries, on railroads, and as laborers in almost every department of industry.⁶³

The same could be said, of course, of many Irish, German, or Italian migrants in the U.S. West, but assumptions about racial difference made the Chinese foreign competitors instead of future compatriots. While Chinese workers found broader employment, Chinese entrepreneurs grew in ranks, partially through migration of the merchant class, but also through local socioeconomic mobility, against all odds. The encroachment of Chinese small businesses began to disquiet white employers as well as their white employees, widening the class base of the anti-Chinese movement.⁶⁴

Soon it was Chinese economic success, and not just their slavish reputation, that fed fears of the “yellow peril.” As anti-Chinese advocates struggled to reconcile assumptions about Chinese inferiority with obvious signs of their success, they produced a contradictory racial formation. Dooner

portrays the coolie as “servile to the last degree,” but he also allows that the Chinese were capable of “incredible cunning,” “remarkable . . . industry and indomitable perseverance.” “Their capacity for business, like their authority, seems illimitable,” he writes. “They have invariably vanquished opposition in every department of trade or manufacture in which they have succeeded in educating their people; and no sooner has this success been achieved in one department than their energies are directed to new fields.”⁶⁵ This danger was visualized in an 1882 political cartoon titled “What Shall We Do with Our Boys?” In the workingman’s newspaper *The Wasp*, George Frederick Keller depicts the Chinese coolie as a simian beast, who, with the help of a dozen arms, simultaneously performs numerous trades and sends his earnings back to China. The Chinese represented a perversion of economic citizenship: endless and industrious wage labor without becoming free, civilized, and investing in America. The result of the coolie’s industry, the title of the cartoon makes clear, is unemployment for white young men, who now have little hope of escaping delinquency. At once, the coolie was a pliable instrument of the monopolists and a dominating presence in his own right.

If the Chinese were not coolies, were they inassimilable heathens? Certainly, arriving at America’s shores, the Chinese were distinct from American citizens. They looked different (especially with their hair in long braided queues), spoke an unfamiliar language, knew little of Judeo-Christian beliefs, wore loose tunics instead of button-up shirts, and preferred pork and rice to beef and potatoes. But it was racial assumptions that made these cultural differences seem insurmountable. Native Americans and recent European migrants also possessed distinct cultural norms, but many white Americans in the late-nineteenth-century West trusted that these groups could be enfolded into the nation.⁶⁶ The ubiquitous belief in Chinese racial difference, and discriminatory laws and practices that followed from that belief, made Chinese amalgamation difficult, but not impossible. The longer Chinese migrants lived in the U.S. West, the more they adapted to American customs, developed English language skills, and formed social bonds within the white community.

Though anti-Chinese advocates emphasized their spatial and cultural distance from the Chinese, archeological studies and textual accounts make clear that these groups were not so neatly divided. Social relations of pro-



“What Shall We Do with Our Boys?” In this 1882 political cartoon by George Keller, the Chinese coolie takes all available jobs while white juveniles stand idle. *The Wasp*, F850.W18, vol. 8, no. 292: 136–137. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

duction in the U.S. West necessitated contact between white people and the Chinese. With the Chinese working in the sixty-three industries listed by the Trades Assembly, they could not help but interact with white coworkers, employers, and customers on a daily basis. Chinese men bought steaks from white butchers and joined white congregations. White women picked up their clothes from Chinese laundries, purchased produce from Chinese vegetable peddlers, and sought remedies from Chinese apothecaries. White men employed Chinese servants to watch their children, dress their wives, and manage their households. A few Chinese migrants found their way onto Indian reservations in the West or into black communities in the Deep South, selling goods and alcohol, or becoming husbands and fathers. This frequent contact across the color line did not prevent anti-Chinese advocates from believing that the “Chinaman” fell outside their imagined American community. To do so, however, meant unseeing social reality.⁶⁷

Even that icon of Chinese spatial and cultural ghettoization, “Chinatown,” was not a racially bounded space in the 1860s and 1870s. Previous

scholars have noted that missionary work, white slumming, and occasional interracial liaisons existed within segregated Chinatowns.⁶⁸ In fact, interracial contact within Chinatowns was a much wider phenomenon. In small Californian towns like Riverside, Eureka, Auburn, or Placerville, Chinatown was simply a few Chinese-occupied buildings surrounded by a white-dominated downtown. In urban centers like San Francisco, Los Angeles, or Seattle, Chinatown was a more distinct and segregated district, but this did not preclude all spatial integration. In Seattle, the 1880 census recorded two hundred Chinese living in forty-nine distinct households. Census takers noted sixteen mixed-race households, nine of which consisted of Chinese domestics living in white family homes, while the remainder were mixed-race boarding houses. Most Chinese in Seattle lived in racially segregated households, but 84 percent of the Chinese population lived next to non-Chinese neighbors.⁶⁹ In all of Washington Territory, 81 percent of Chinese-headed households could be found next door to a non-Chinese-headed household in 1880. The rate of spatial integration was lower but still sizable in Oregon and California, with 71 percent and 58 percent of Chinese-headed households living alongside non-Chinese neighbors, respectively.

The same could not be said of San Francisco, where there was an unmistakable Chinese enclave occupying a twelve-block area in the city. In 1880, segregation in San Francisco County was staggering, with only 14 percent of Chinese-headed households living alongside a non-Chinese-headed household.⁷⁰ And yet, even in segregated San Francisco, a Wells Fargo Directory reveals that Chinese businesses spilled outside of Chinatown. The vast majority of Chinese in San Francisco lived within a racial ghetto, but many traveled outside to conduct business.⁷¹

It is vital to recognize the degree to which Chinese were interwoven into the multiracial fabric of the U.S. West: spatially, economically, and socially. When anti-Chinese advocates depicted the Chinese as segregated aliens, they were attempting to erase interracial encounters necessitated by daily life. No doubt it was the frightening familiarity of the Chinese, and not just their heathen reputation, that drove racial anxieties. While advocates were lamenting the heathens' incapacity to Americanize, they also warned that the Chinese would infiltrate white society and pollute the white race. This imagined conquest provides the climax for Dooner's *Last Days of the Republic*, which predicts a day in the future when "[t]he Mongolian ha[s] proved him-



San Francisco Chinatown and Chinese Businesses (1882). Although contemporaries described “Chinatown” as a twelve-block segregated space, the *Wells Fargo Directory of Principal Chinese Business Firms* (San Francisco, 1882) lists Chinese businesses in many other areas of the city.

self a soldier, a statesman, a politician, a philosopher and a laborer.” As Chinese penetrate all realms of American society, he imagines profound consequences: the elite Chinese are “recognized in the brotherhood of men,” “intermarry with the daughters of America,” and enter “the society of their white fellow-citizens.”⁷²

This calamity is pictured in one of the novel’s illustrations, titled “The Governor of California.” The Chinese-born governor, still decked in all the

trappings of the barbaric Orient, occupies a room filled with symbols of occidental civilization. Despite his new seat of power in America, the governor is unchanged, no more assimilated than his alien countrymen, but now he sits tantalizingly close to a marble corbel in the shape of a nude white woman. The heathen may not have been capable of self-government, but Dooner still feared that he was cunning enough to wrest the United States, and its white women, from the grasp of American men.

Much of the terror the heathen coolie provoked arose from his contradictory nature, his imagined ability to be what he was not. He appeared eminently stupid yet a keen trickster, slavishly obedient yet dominating at the workplace, inferior in all matters of morality and learning yet superior in his will to survive and succeed.⁷³ When it came to the Chinese, Americans did not have complete confidence in white supremacy, especially within the newly acquired U.S. West. White citizens feared the Chinese would not easily be exterminated, assimilated, or subordinated, as were the “vanishing” Indians, “conquered” Hispanics, or “enslaved” Africans of the past.⁷⁴ “If we throw wide our doors and invite these Asiatic people to a full, free equal competition with us for supremacy,” warned anti-Chinese agitators, “we shall get worsted.”⁷⁵ Because Chinese could emerge victorious from a war of the races, white Americans had to avoid entering such a contest in the first place. For this reason, anti-Chinese advocates believed that this alien menace could only be stopped through exclusion.

In the 1860s and 1870s, an unwieldy grassroots anti-Chinese movement coalesced around the call for exclusion. As it spun along the West Coast, the movement pulled into its orbit the vast majority of white workers and small business owners. In California, the unanimity of opinion was staggering: on an 1879 ballot, 99 percent of California voters declared they were “against Chinese immigration.”⁷⁶ Tens of thousands of white Californians joined anti-Chinese rallies in San Francisco’s unoccupied sandlots and in public meeting houses up and down the state. One of the most visible anti-Chinese groups to emerge was the Workingmen’s Party of California, and one of the most colorful anti-Chinese spokesmen was its leader, Dennis Kearney.

Born in Ireland, Kearney worked at sea until he arrived in San Francisco in 1868 at age twenty-one. After working for a steamship company, he opened his own business as a drayman, hauling heavy carts across town. In the



“The Governor of California” imagines a dystopian future in which an unassimilated Chinese immigrant has been elected to high office. Illustration by G. F. Keller from P. W. (Pierton W.) Dooner’s *Last Days of the Republic* (San Francisco: Alta California Publishing House, 1880). Image reproduction courtesy of Glenn R. Negley Collection of Utopian Literature, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University Libraries, Utopia D691L.

summer of 1877, during a national economic downturn, workingmen across America struck for higher wages and better conditions. What started as a railroad strike in Virginia spread to coal miners in the rural Midwest, meat-packers in Chicago, and blue-collar workers in St. Louis. The sympathy strike in San Francisco quickly turned into a race riot targeting the Chinese. From these violent beginnings, the Workingmen's Party of California emerged.

Californians thronged to Kearney and the party to hear his message of white working-class solidarity. Kearney was not a towering presence or a refined speaker; he was "compactly and solidly built," and his diatribes were punctuated by curses and grammatical mistakes. But he had charisma. "Drive all the Chinamen out of San Francisco and hang all the thieves and politicians," he told an angry crowd in San Francisco in 1877. "The monopolists who have made money by employing cheap labor had better look out. They have built themselves fine residences on Nob Hill, have erected flagstuffs upon their roofs. Let them take care that they have not erected their own gallows."⁷⁷ Kearney's epithets against the Chinese rarely received rebuke, but this rhetoric targeting white employers landed Kearney in jail on charges of incendiary language.

His arrest did not silence him and neither did mockery of his character and tactics by East Coast newspapers. While in jail, Kearney wrote to the local newspapers and to President Rutherford Hayes demanding the expulsion of all Chinese. When Kearney was acquitted, he helped lead a Thanksgiving Day anti-Chinese parade with over ten thousand men through the streets of San Francisco. Not satisfied with local agitation, Kearney traveled to Chicago, Boston, New York, and Washington, D.C.⁷⁸ Touring the country with an antimonopolist and anti-Chinese message, Kearney made famous the rallying cry, "The Chinese Must Go!"⁷⁹

East Coast newspapers attempted to dismiss Kearney and his followers as uneducated Irish rabble, but Kearney decried this underestimation of the movement. "We don't meet here as Irish, English, Scotch, nor Dutch, nor are we Catholics, Protestants, Atheists, or Infidels," he proclaimed to a crowd in Boston, "Let there be no sect. But we meet here as honest workingmen, and let your issues be pooled."⁸⁰ While the Workingmen's Party often spoke in a language of white supremacy, they attempted to knit together all U.S. citizens (and aspiring citizens) using claims of common nationalism, freedom,

and belonging. Kearney, for example, rallied African American workers in California to the anti-Chinese cause, helping them form their own (that is, segregated) anticoolie club.⁸¹

In the Pacific Northwest, the anti-Chinese movement paled in comparison to California's. This was in part because in Oregon and Washington Territory, white workers had less to fear from Chinese labor competition. In the 1870s, few Chinese migrants had found their way north, and the area's rapidly developing economy created a surplus of jobs until a national downturn in 1883.⁸² Still, Oregon and Washington Territory newspapers echoed the anti-Chinese rhetoric popularized elsewhere and diligently reported on events in California, including moments of local anti-Chinese agitation and racial violence. At times, Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest, viewing the Chinese as labor competition or foreign invaders, also struck out against them.⁸³

West Coast politicians, inspired by state-level regulation of (mostly Irish) paupers and criminals on the Eastern Seaboard, passed state statutes designed to curb Chinese migration between 1852 and 1879. To take a single example, in 1863 Washington Territory passed "An Act to protect free White labor against competition with Chinese coolie labor, and to discourage the immigration of the Chinese into this territory," which instituted a quarterly tax of six dollars on every male and female "Mongolian" in the territory. The title of the act left little room for doubt about the legislature's intent. Though there were only a few hundred Chinese recorded in the territory, the leaders of Washington still believed the Chinese posed a threat to free white workers.⁸⁴ While California, Oregon, and Washington Territory successfully curtailed Chinese rights and implemented discriminatory taxes, more severe measures often faced judicial scrutiny.⁸⁵ When drafting a new state constitution in 1879, California delegates passed measures to prohibit the employment of Chinese by corporations, to require that all incorporated cities and towns move all Chinese outside of their boundaries, to bar aliens ineligible for citizenship from acquiring business licenses, and to deny those aliens the right to fish. Quickly found to be in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment, these discriminatory state statutes were struck down.⁸⁶ As courts delineated the limits of state power, it became clear that federal action would be necessary to halt Chinese migration.

Violence and the Politics of Restriction

Federal lawmakers, struggling to reconcile visions of the cooperative open door for China with dreams of a free white republic, found no simple answers to the Chinese Question. Twenty-five years after Chinese migrants first arrived on the West Coast, and the cry from anti-Chinese advocates grew, Congress had yet to act. Historians have shown that an escalating need to appease the western electorate eventually produced federal legislation regarding Chinese in America. But they have paid little attention to how the threat of racial violence infused these national politics.⁸⁷ During the 1870s, anti-Chinese violence was local and erratic, but in political discourse the threat of violence was national and recurrent. The threat of white violence was not the only or even the central argument anti-Chinese advocates used to press their case. Nevertheless, these warnings, made credible by incidents of local vigilantism, proved a potent element in congressional debates.

“Do you want to have the Chinese slaughtered on the Pacific Coast?” Republican senator William Morris Stewart of Nevada bellowed on the Senate floor in 1870. “Do you want their extermination?” The question at hand was whether to allow Chinese immigrants to obtain U.S. citizenship. Since 1790, the United States had only extended the right of naturalization to “free white persons,” but in the wake of black emancipation and enfranchisement, the Senate was considering a bill that would have struck the word “white.” West Coast statesmen, however, opposed racially neutral citizenship by evoking the threat of white violence alongside images of the heathen coolie. If Congress eliminated the racial prerequisite for naturalization, Stewart claimed that the U.S. West would be “overpowered by the mob element that seeks to exterminate the Chinese” and “they will be slaughtered before any one of them can be naturalized under your bill.” Such rhetoric commanded attention given the “extermination” campaign waged against Native Americans in California in previous decades. Cowed by talk of a Chinese invasion and a looming race war, Congress extended the right of naturalization only to people of African descent.⁸⁸

Republican representative Horace Page of California took a different tack when he presented a law to restrict involuntary “importation” of “any subject of China, Japan, or any Oriental country” to the United States in 1875. He emphasized how peaceable the anti-Chinese movement had been to date,

but implied that this commitment to nonviolence could soon end.⁸⁹ His proposed solution, which became the Page Act, barred Americans from transporting Chinese “without their free and voluntary consent, for the purpose of holding them to a term of service.” In addition to excluding indentured Asian laborers, the Page Act also targeted another form of involuntary migration, the importation of Asian prostitutes. While the act did little to slow Chinese labor migration, it drastically reduced female emigration from China. The Chinese sex ratio in America had always been imbalanced, but now accusations of immorality tipped the scales further. The 1880 U.S. census counted only 4,779 Chinese women, or a mere 4.5 percent of the Chinese population.⁹⁰

As the first law to explicitly restrict Chinese migration to the United States, the Page Act was landmark legislation. Its effects, however, were limited and largely hidden from view. The narrow law intended to prohibit specific undesirable migrants, not to exclude the Chinese. And it was implemented through remote control, enforced by U.S. consuls stationed in faraway Hong Kong or Guangzhou, instead of officials in San Francisco or Seattle.⁹¹ The act failed to provide any visible relief to the West Coast.

The first hotly contested federal election since the Civil War took place in 1876, and with it came a new desperation to court western voters. The national platforms of Republicans and Democrats, who both vied for the anti-Chinese vote, included promises of restriction.⁹² Acting on assurances made on the campaign trail, Congress introduced a dozen bills to restrict Chinese migration in the months that followed and launched a series of investigations over the next few years. The investigations and subsequent debates in Congress returned to the threat of white violence and working-class revolution. “Treason is better than to labor beside a Chinese slave” was the open declaration of the Workingmen’s Party of California. “The people are about to take their own affairs into their own hands and they will not be stayed either by ‘Citizen Vigilantes,’ state militia, nor United States Troops.” While some congressmen dismissed this incendiary language as abhorrent, California senator Aaron Sargent urged them to listen. “The unreasonableness, or even violence, of discontented people does not,” Sargent told Congress in 1876, “make the cause of their discontent any the less important.” A joint congressional committee in 1877 confirmed there was already “abuse of individual Chinamen” and “sporadic cases of mob violence” in the U.S.

West. But the committee predicted that “as long as there is a reasonable hope that Congress will apply a remedy for what is considered a great and growing evil, violent measures against the Chinese can be restrained.”⁹³ The promise of federal intervention kept the violence in check, at least temporarily.

For a short time, anti-Chinese advocates saw their salvation in the Fifteen Passenger Bill, considered by Congress in January 1879. The bill proposed limiting the number of Chinese passengers on any vessel bound for the United States to fifteen and to punish any captain who transported more with a hundred dollar per-head fine and six months’ imprisonment. Responding to the “almost unanimous sentiment of the people of the Pacific slope,” proponents of the bill argued that a racially based quota was imperative. In debates, Democrats and western Republicans faulted the Chinese for their many “sordid, selfish, immoral, and non-amalgamating habits.”⁹⁴ They also made clear that Chinese competition meant the threat of white unrest and the disruption of American businesses. Without Chinese restriction, California Republican Newton Booth warned the Senate, “the discontent of labor will take the form of violent anger or sullen despair” and “become an element of revolution.” Talk of rebellion was powerful in a nation still nursing the wounds of Southern secession.⁹⁵

While Democrats unified behind the Fifteen Passenger Bill, the Republican Party was divided between those who feared Dooner’s dystopia in the U.S. West and others who subscribed to Seward’s imperial vision of China. The latter maintained that Chinese migration was needed to develop both the U.S. West and the China Trade, that racially discriminatory laws would undo the racial liberalism of Reconstruction, and that honoring U.S. treaty agreements was imperative above all else. The bill, which would unilaterally abrogate stipulations in the Burlingame Treaty, risked a commercial backlash from China and the very idea of the cooperative open door. Thus, while the Fifteen Passenger Bill passed Congress, it did so with only limited Republican support. In the House, Democrats voted in favor 104 to 16, but Republicans split 51 to 56; in the Senate, Democrats voted in favor 36 to 27, but Republicans split 18 to 17.⁹⁶ Despite the bipartisan anti-Chinese rhetoric of the previous campaign cycle, Congress remained divided on the issue.⁹⁷

The Fifteen Passenger Bill arrived on the desk of Republican president Rutherford B. Hayes. Before publicly announcing his opinion, President Hayes wrestled with the bill and the two competing visions of U.S. imperi-

alism in his diary. He agreed with citizens of the U.S. West that Chinese migration endangered the future of the free white republic. He wrote, "I am satisfied the present Chinese labor invasion—it is not in any proper sense immigration—women and children do not come—is pernicious and should be discouraged." The "invasion" not only posed an economic threat, in Hayes's opinion, it also threatened the morals of American citizens. "Our experience in dealing with the weaker races—the negroes and Indians, for example—is not encouraging." Hayes concluded, "We shall oppress the Chinamen, and their presence will make hoodlums and vagabonds of their oppressors." The president, like his Congress, feared white cruelty was an inevitable result of Chinese migration. Despite these concerns, Hayes believed his hands were tied. In his diary, he noted, "Our treaty with China forbids me to give [the bill] my approval," and "important interests have grown up under the treaty, and rest upon faith in its observance."⁹⁸ Hayes held America's diplomatic promises as sacrosanct and maintained faith in the cooperative open door. In his public veto message, the president acknowledged the "grave discontents of the people of the Pacific States," but urged that "more careful methods" be used to stop the Chinese menace. He could not sign a bill that would so clearly threaten merchants and missionaries in China and "endanger . . . the growing commerce and prosperity" of the China Trade.⁹⁹

Invested in the cooperative open door, the Hayes administration sought China's approval for immigration restriction. In the summer of 1880, with another presidential election looming, Hayes sent James Angell, president of the University of Michigan, to negotiate a new treaty. Chinese diplomats initially resisted American efforts to modify the Burlingame Treaty, but were preoccupied with other potential crises, including threats of attack by Russia and Japanese encroachment. Viceroy Li Hongzhang (Lin Hung-chang), who oversaw foreign affairs, believed that the United States would prove an essential ally. To maintain U.S. support, the Chinese Imperial Court eventually agreed to most of the Angell Commission's demands.¹⁰⁰ The Angell Treaty of November 17, 1880, reversed the language of the Burlingame Treaty, granting the United States the right to "regulate, limit, or suspend" Chinese migration. But the treaty still curbed America's ability to legislate, explicitly denying Congress the right to "absolutely prohibit" Chinese migration and further stipulating that any "limitation or suspension shall be reasonable

and shall apply only to . . . laborers.”¹⁰¹ Ratified in May of 1881, the Angell Treaty made Chinese restriction possible, but also defined its limits.

More than a dozen anti-Chinese bills were introduced when Congress reconvened the following winter, but it was California Republican John Miller’s bill that got the attention of the Senate.¹⁰² Senate Bill 71 suspended the migration of Chinese laborers for the next twenty years. But to avoid violating treaty stipulations, it made exceptions for any Chinese laborer currently residing in the United States or any Chinese who was present in the country the day that the Angell Treaty was signed in 1880. All Chinese migrants, whether laborers or not, would be required to secure a passport from the Chinese government and approval from a U.S. diplomat before embarking on the journey from China. Any Chinese found forging such passports could be fined a thousand dollars and imprisoned for up to five years. In addition to specifying fines for any person aiding a Chinese to illegally enter the country, the bill also made unauthorized immigration a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of a hundred dollars, plus one year in prison, followed by “removal” by the U.S. government. Two important amendments were eventually added to the bill, one explicitly prohibiting Chinese migrants from obtaining citizenship and another that defined Chinese “laborers” broadly as skilled workers, unskilled workers, and miners.

The coalition of Democrats and western Republicans in favor of the Fifteen Passenger Bill supported this new measure in the name of American labor. Citing an Education and Labor Committee report on the floor of the House, Democrat Albert Shelby Willis of Kentucky argued that “the question had assumed dangerous proportions. The conviction that Chinese immigration was a great evil was so deep-seated and unanimous that mob violence was openly threatened, and in many instances the arm of the law seemed powerless to protect.”¹⁰³

A sizable minority opposed the legislation, however, arguing that it was an “extreme . . . sweeping and oppressive” bill that breached the new Angell Treaty with China.¹⁰⁴ As Connecticut Republican Orville Platt reminded the Senate, “We made this contract which we call a treaty with the Chinese Government. . . . We must keep it or stand forever disgraced in the eyes of the world.”¹⁰⁵ Some congressmen went further, questioning Congress’s right to unilaterally exclude Chinese migrants. George F. Hoar, a Republican sen-

ator from Massachusetts, pointed out that the United States had described immigration as an “inalienable right of man” in the Burlingame Treaty. “It has been asserted that we have the right to exclude any man for any length of time, or all men for all time, according to our own judgment,” said Connecticut Republican Joseph Hawley. “Perhaps so; perhaps not. Perhaps we are confounding right and power.”¹⁰⁶ Egalitarian impulses lay behind this bold opposition, but so did the economic interests of northeastern elites. They continued to envision America’s empire on a wide scale and held a large stake in the importation of Chinese tea and silk and exports of cotton textiles to China.¹⁰⁷

Although they did not defend the merits of Chinese migration, these Republican holdouts fought to amend the bill to make it less severe. They argued that the twenty-year period should be shortened and the passport section dropped, or that the restriction should apply only to certain undesirables: contract laborers, criminals, paupers, and the diseased. With this fight for amendments, East Coast Republicans indicated their willingness to support some form of Chinese restriction but also showed steadfast determination to avoid complete exclusion. In the end, Republicans failed to appreciably weaken the bill before it passed, with Senate Democrats voting in favor (20 to 1) and Republicans divided (9 to 14). Soon after, the House also passed the bill, Democrats again united in favor of the act and Republicans splitting their votes, with 60 in favor and 62 opposed.

Whether President Chester Arthur would sign the bill was anyone’s guess. When he joined the winning Republican ticket as vice president in 1880, he had never held elected office or spoken publicly on the topic of Chinese migration. The assassination of President James A. Garfield in the summer of 1881 suddenly elevated Arthur to the presidency. When Senate Bill 71 passed Congress, Arthur held three cabinet meetings before he ultimately decided to veto it. Along with his veto, he sent a lengthy note to Congress explaining that the legislation was “a breach of our national faith” and threatened American commercial interests in Asia. Arthur wrote to Congress: “Experience has shown that the trade of the East is the key to national wealth and influence. . . . It needs no argument to show that the policy which we now propose to adopt must have a direct tendency to repel oriental nations from us and to drive their trade and commerce into more friendly lands.” He feared

the twenty-year ban violated the spirit of the Angell Treaty and he called the system of personal registration “undemocratic and hostile to the spirit of our institutions.” Echoing the arguments of cosmopolitan elites, Arthur also maintained that Chinese workers had helped to develop America. “No one can say that the country has not profited by their work,” he wrote. “Enterprises profitable alike to the capitalist and to the laborer of Caucasian origin would have lain dormant but for them.”¹⁰⁸ He deemed this bill unreasonable, but encouraged Congress to consider “a shorter experiment.”

Given the sizable number of Republican holdouts, Congress could not hope to pass the law over Arthur’s veto. The Republican opposition made it clear that they stood with the president and only favored, according to Republican representative Cyrus Prescott of New York, “a trial of restrictive legislation within such reasonable bounds as shall fully keep good faith with the treaties between our Government and China.” Ohio Republican senator John Sherman explained, “There is but little dispute that some provision of law should be made to restrain the importation of the class of Chinese laborers into this country,” but he opposed Bill 71 because “under the pretense of regulating the importation of Chinese laborers Congress passed a bill which prohibits Chinese immigration for twenty years.” Sherman reminded the Senate: “We have now secured the right and consent of the Chinese Government to regulate and limit immigration, but not to prohibit it.”¹⁰⁹ Few congressmen stood in favor of Chinese immigration, but many urged legislative restraint and diplomatic caution. They used careful rhetoric to draw distinctions between the desire to “restrict” and to “exclude,” and between the right to “limit” or to “prohibit.” After so many years of migration unfettered by federal legislation, they argued that any turn toward gatekeeping should be on a “trial” or “experiment[al]” basis.¹¹⁰

Republicans in Congress had to do something. Arthur’s veto provoked a national outcry and, not surprisingly, more threats of violence. Republican senator John F. Miller believed that the veto would “make it certain that [the Republican Party] cannot carry the Pacific coast for some time,” and Democratic senator James T. Farley described the veto as “the political ruin of Mr. Arthur.” The *New York Tribune* reported that “some [western congressmen] went so far as to say that the Republican Party had elected its last president.” In Philadelphia, the Knights of Labor, a national labor union opposed to monopolies, organized a mass meeting of 10,000 workers to pro-

test the veto. In several towns in California, President Arthur was burned or hanged in effigy.¹¹¹ “My information from home is that there is very great excitement among the people,” California senator James Farley reported. “Violence may break out to-day in San Francisco.”¹¹² John Sherman, for one, took offense at the implied threat “that fires may occur, that murders may be committed, or that outrages may be perpetrated in California,” urging Congress to avoid being “herded” by fears of violence.¹¹³ Still, the public backlash against Arthur’s veto made it clear that opposing Chinese restriction was politically untenable.

Only a few weeks after the veto, Congress considered a new Chinese bill that was a watered-down version of its predecessor. The vetoed Senate Bill 71 had already made significant efforts to avoid aggravating the Chinese government, but the new bill went even further, placing diplomatic concerns above desires to limit Chinese migration. Not only did Congress halve the term of restriction to ten years, it also eliminated the section that instituted an internal registration and passport system and one that made illegal immigration a crime punishable by imprisonment and a fine.¹¹⁴ With additional Republican support, Congress passed the weakened bill, and on May 6, 1882, President Arthur signed it into law.¹¹⁵

The name of the act is telling. Its lengthy formal title, “An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese,” acknowledged its diplomatic origins while its moniker in the press, “the Chinese Restriction Act,” reflected its limited intent. Tempered by Republican fears of violating America’s treaties with China, the Restriction Act was deliberately narrow in scope. Congress did not design the Restriction Act to “exclude” Chinese migrants from America; many members even questioned whether they had the legal prerogative to do so against China’s wishes.¹¹⁶

Instead, American lawmakers made an uneasy compromise between U.S. imperialism at home and abroad. On behalf of the colonial settlers of the U.S. West, Congress restricted Chinese entry and continued to bar Chinese naturalization, helping to guarantee that the heathen coolie would remain forever alien. For cosmopolitan elites who dreamed of imperialism on a wider scale, Congress carefully preserved the cooperative open door and kept the nation’s gates propped ajar. With no national consensus supporting Chinese exclusion, the Restriction Period (1882–1888) became a time of uncertainty, experimentation, and diplomacy.¹¹⁷ Even the law’s supporters acknowledged

its limitations and openly questioned if it would be enough to quell anti-Chinese violence. For example, Representative Willis, who had supported the more severe Senate bill, also backed the Restriction Act but did so under protest, describing the act as “insufficient, crude, weak, and imperfect.” Giving voice to the worries that pervaded Congress, he wondered aloud, “could such a bill as this bring back peace and order?”¹¹⁸

Experiments in Restriction

THE CHINESE RESTRICTION ACT broke the river of legal Chinese migrants to the United States into several illicit streams. One flowed into the country surreptitiously across the U.S.-Canadian border, a smaller branch covertly crossed the U.S.-Mexico border, and the main fork entered through San Francisco Bay, now under the cover of fraud. Tens of thousands of Chinese gained official admission to the United States between 1882 and 1888, when the Chinese Restriction Act was in place, and untold thousands more slipped into the country undetected.

The situation in Washington Territory was particularly dire. Fraud plagued immigration control in San Francisco but there, at least, customs officials could see, count, and document migrants as they disembarked at America's primary Pacific port. It was not so simple along the nation's land borders, where hundreds of miles of desert and forest proved nearly impossible to patrol. While few Chinese lived in northern Mexico in the 1880s, there were thousands just across the northern U.S. border in British Columbia. "I believe they are coming to our side every day, by water and by land, and by boats and canoes," Deputy Collector of Customs Arthur Blake wrote desperately to his superiors in 1884, "between British Columbia, and this country, it seems to me the Restriction Act, is almost worthless."¹

As local officers panicked in Washington Territory, federal bureaucrats in D.C. published rosy statistics boasting of restriction's effectiveness. The Treasury Department had recorded tens of thousands of Chinese migrants in the decade before restriction, but claimed that only forty Chinese immigrated to the United States in 1886, ten in 1887, and twenty-six in 1888. Over

a century later, historians continue to reprint these implausible numbers and use them as evidence that the 1882 law dramatically aggrandized the federal government.² In truth, there is little to indicate that the law slowed Chinese migration or that it transformed federal power overnight.

Given the century or so of permeable borders since, it will come as little surprise that the United States failed to seal its borders on its first federal attempt. What is more striking is that the law was never intended to close America's gates. Chinese migration continued not just because the state was clumsy in its efforts at restriction, but also because these efforts were intentionally circumscribed. After decades of conflict over the Chinese Question, Congress did not write the Restriction Act to massively expand the federal government and stop Chinese migration once and for all; rather Congress offered a temporary stopgap and began a halting first experiment in federal border control.

To understand the nature of Chinese restriction we must comprehend the workings of the American state in the nineteenth century, and to comprehend the American state we must understand this critical test. The Restriction Act realized American ideals of government checks and balances; it was the product of a split Congress recently cowed by presidential veto. But instead of solving the political divisions over the Chinese Question, the law simply reflected them, pairing bold declarations against Chinese migration with diplomatic concessions to China. The result was an ambiguous and porous act.

The law's implementation also reflected the government's conflicted aims of Chinese restriction at home and commercial expansion in Asia.³ Top officials in the Treasury Department, assigned the task of enforcement, were highly invested in America's transpacific commerce. Federal and state judges, charged with adjudicating challenges to the law, often held similar sympathies. Though scholars have lauded western judges for a progressive approach to racial equality and immigrant rights, in fact they were sometimes swayed by less altruistic concerns, including U.S. interests in China. Both arms of the U.S. state sought to enforce Chinese restriction without compromising an imperial vision of America's Pacific future.

While statesmen at the nation's core continued to be divided over the Chinese Question, officials at its periphery showed few reservations about this border-making project.⁴ Local authorities, immersed in local politics and

operating on a local scale, showed singular investment in ending Chinese migration. In Washington Territory, customs officers attempted to make the law stronger than was ever intended. When Deputy Blake, for example, realized that the Restriction Act was “almost worthless,” he and the other local officers along the U.S.-Canadian boundary went beyond the letter of the law. They developed a homegrown system of identifying, apprehending, and deporting Chinese migrants without trial. These local arms of the federal government, more determined to prevent Chinese migration than their superiors back in Washington, D.C., sought to close the border by blurring the distinction between public and private enforcement.

This marriage of legal and extralegal efforts reenacted a time-honored tradition in U.S. statecraft. Chinese restriction is emblematic of the divided, diffuse, and often hidden nature of U.S. government at the time.⁵ The power of the nineteenth-century American state did not rest in centralization or despotic authority; it derived from the state’s ability to mobilize forces outside formal state institutions and to permeate all levels of society.⁶ By shifting scales, we can see how Chinese restriction blurred the lines between local and federal governance, private and public persons, and legal and extralegal actions. Chinese restriction, like so many elements of U.S. state-building, became a community affair. The blending of public and private methods of enforcement may have aided local officials in the short term, but it also had unintended consequences. When they recruited community members to enforce the law, officers both encouraged a form of vigilantism and broadcast their own inability to control Chinese migration.

Documented Migration at San Francisco’s Gates

The Restriction Act did little to create the U.S. border control we know today. The law did not produce a corps of federal officials trained to monitor migrants, a network of detention centers, a bureau of immigration, or a designated system for administrative review. All this came later. Congress simply charged the Department of Treasury and its collection of customs houses with the job of enforcement. By doing so, the federal government, which had limited power during this period, handed Chinese restriction to one of its strongest and most centralized arms. But Congress offered Customs few resources to further extend its reach, adding merely five thousand

dollars in annual funding to a budget that was regularly measured in the millions.⁷

Officially, the law took effect across the nation, at every land and sea border, but the reality of transportation and migration networks meant that in practice America's first broad attempt to stop unauthorized migration was in the hands of a dozen customs officers stationed in San Francisco, California, and Port Townsend, Washington Territory. These two gates faced two distinct forms of unauthorized migration, although at the time neither was described as such. Before being allowed to disembark in San Francisco, most Chinese migrants stood before customs officials to plead their case, sometimes with the help of fraudulent documents. In Washington Territory, most Chinese passed into the country undetected, making them both unauthorized and undocumented. In short, more than geography distinguished border enforcement in California from its counterpart in Washington.

In San Francisco, Chinese migrants relied on the numerous exceptions written into the Restriction Act. The law attempted to impose rigid occupational categories on a complex and shifting population, drawing a stark legal line between newly arrived Chinese workers and everyone else. In turn, Chinese migrants and their smugglers learned to reinvent themselves as anything but new Chinese laborers.⁸ Most migrants made one of three claims to skirt the law: they purported to belong to the exempted elite, to have previously resided in America, or to be merely "in-transit" across the United States.⁹ During the Restriction Period, all three assertions provided easy avenues into the country.

Congress deliberately made a broad exemption for Chinese elites, including diplomats, merchants, students, and tourists, in efforts to preserve commercial and diplomatic ties with China. As a further gesture of goodwill, the law gave the Chinese government the power to determine which men and women would receive these exemptions and the coveted designation of "section six" migrants. It was not long before the San Francisco collector of customs complained that China used "very loose" and "indiscriminate" definitions, opening the possibility of widespread fraud. Moreover, local customs officials' attempts to challenge China's definitions of section six migrants usually came to naught. For example, on November 14, 1883, 137 Chinese passengers holding section six certificates arrived on the steamer *Peking*. Fearing fraud, the collector of customs denied them landing.

But the shipping company telegraphed the Treasury Department, arguing that their papers were in order and “had we refused to bring them our steamers would be barred from [the] China Trade.” Facing pressure from D.C., officials in San Francisco eventually relented and admitted the *Peking’s* passengers. It was Congress’s expansionist dreams that opened the door to these exemptions and now U.S. businessmen successfully lobbied to keep the door ajar.¹⁰

It took resources and connections to be designated a Chinese elite, but many Chinese migrants found easier openings in the law. The law barred all new Chinese workers but allowed the migration of “returning laborers.” It proved difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish new migrants from old because Congress struck the provision that mandated passports, fearing that China would take offense. In lieu of passports, custom officials began issuing “return certificates” to Chinese departing from U.S. ports, granting them permission to return in the future. Even this level of federal surveillance was unprecedented at the time. Except as an emergency measure during the Civil War, the United States had never previously required identification at its national borders. It was not enough, however, to stop unauthorized migrants from claiming returning status.¹¹

By August 1885, Special Agent O. L. Spaulding found that 35,235 return certificates had been issued at the Pacific ports and 20,506 migrants had yet to claim their right to return. “With this number [of return certificates] outstanding,” observed Spaulding, “some will find their way back in the hand of wrong persons.” Since photographs were far beyond the enforcement budget, return certificates merely included a short description of the migrant’s features. This was hardly a failsafe way to distinguish legal returning migrants from others who had purchased a return certificate on the black market. Physical attributes noted by officials were often as vague as “flat nose,” “large features,” or “small features.” In other cases, attributes could easily be imitated, since one could create, with some determination, a “hole in right ear,” “scar on forehead” or “mark over right eye.” The problem of vague description, believed Special Agent Spaulding, was largely unavoidable. “Chinese laborers cannot be easily described,” he complained, “they look much alike.”¹²

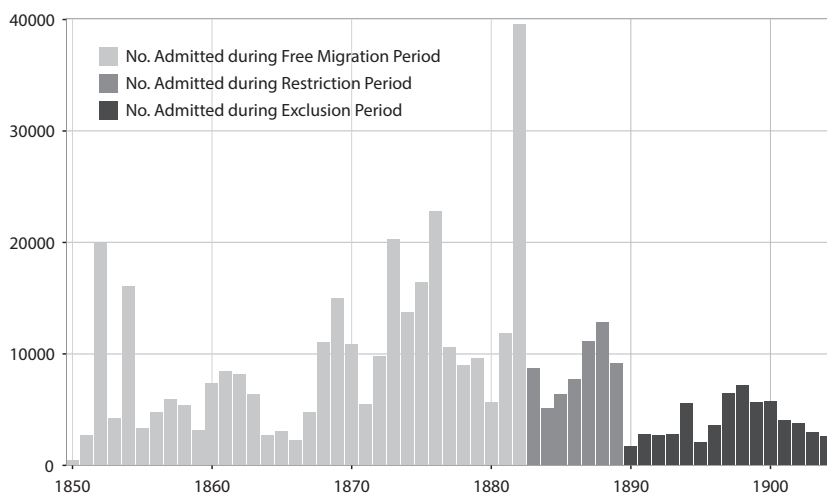
The Treasury Department passed up an inventive and cheap idea: fingerprinting. An entrepreneur from California wrote to the Treasury Department in 1883 recommending that they implement a “system of detection by thumb

mark,” because “in a million impressions of the thumb no two are alike.” This system had been used previously in India, and Western scientists were beginning to believe in its accuracy. However, an anonymous internal Treasury Department memo dismissed the idea outright: “It seems to me the regulations we have already issued are sufficient.” Fingerprinting was not implemented in the United States until decades later, when the New York State Prison Bureau began the practice in 1903.¹³

Fraudulent return certificates posed difficulties for officials in San Francisco, but the larger problem was that returning Chinese migrants did not even need the certificates to land. The Restriction Act’s provisions gave the right to return to any Chinese laborer who had resided in the United States prior to the signing of the Angell Treaty in 1880. This pathway for fraudulent entry was created to avoid abrogating treaties with China. In practice, it meant that any Chinese migrant could claim to have been in the United States before the Customs Department began issuing return certificates. In lieu of documentation, these migrants could offer a cursory knowledge of San Francisco geography as sufficient evidence.

Special Agent Spaulding proclaimed this “one of the most embarrassing questions presented under the law . . . leaving a wide open door for fraud and perjury from which even the courts have not been able to protect themselves.”¹⁴ California congressman William Morrow complained, “The practical effect of leaving our doors open to Chinamen who will assert and prove this claim of prior residence is to defeat the whole purpose of [the] treaty stipulations and legislation.”¹⁵ During the Restriction Period, the primary way that Chinese entered the United States was by asserting returning status. It was impossible for officials at the time, as it has been for historians ever since, to determine how many of these migrants had in fact previously resided in the United States.¹⁶

Federal reports claimed that few Chinese migrants arrived during the Restriction Period, but this was inaccurate. Documents from the port of San Francisco make it clear that federal statistics did not include numerous Chinese who entered the United States as returning laborers. The federal government claimed that only ten Chinese migrants arrived in 1887. However, 11,162 Chinese were admitted that year as returning laborers in San Francisco alone. Migration under Chinese restriction reached its peak in



Annual Totals of Chinese Admitted to the United States, 1850–1904. Compiled annually in June, these totals recorded new and returning Chinese aliens who had arrived in the previous year. Migration reached a high-water mark in 1882, when news of an impending restriction law crossed the Pacific. Admission totals during the Restriction Period represent an undercount, because data on returning Chinese are only available for the Port of San Francisco. Chart based on data collected by the author (see Appendix B).

1888, with at least 12,816 entries. Before Congress shifted to a policy of exclusion, the year 1889 was on track to surpass these numbers.¹⁷ When returning migrants are included in the annual totals of Chinese arrivals, restriction's ineffectiveness becomes clear. Between 1851 and 1882, a period of free Chinese migration, the mean annual number of Chinese entries was 10,388.¹⁸ Between 1883 and 1889, the Restriction Period, the mean number of documented migrants admitted in San Francisco per year was 8,746, an annual reduction of only 16 percent.

Several congressmen even claimed that the number of Chinese migrants actually increased during restriction. They may have reached this conclusion by including in their estimates the annual number of Chinese admitted who were "in transit" across America. The law was silent on the topic of Chinese laborers who traveled through the United States en route to international destinations such as Cuba, South America, Canada, or China. But

concerns about U.S. commerce pushed the U.S. attorney general to create yet another loophole in Chinese restriction. Before the law even went into effect, U.S. shipping companies began lobbying the secretary of treasury, secretary of state, and U.S. attorney general to exempt “in transit” Chinese migrants. An agent of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway Company reported that forty thousand to sixty thousand Chinese laborers were expected to soon leave Cuba and return to China. At a hundred dollars per capita, “American interests” could earn at least four million dollars from the transportation of these Chinese workers. The agent urgently argued for an exception for these “in transit” Chinese so that the “United States [would] reap the benefit of this capital, not England.”¹⁹ Likewise, C. P. Huntington, vice president of the Central Pacific Railroad, reminded the secretary of state that the Southern Pacific Railroad Company was building a railway connecting California to the Gulf of Mexico in hopes of efficiently exporting grains grown in the U.S. West across the Atlantic. To make this endeavor successful, the company desperately needed westward-bound traffic, namely the transportation of Chinese migrants from Cuba. If the U.S. government denied transportation to Chinese workers, argued Huntington, it would jeopardize an American venture that could earn fifteen to eighteen million dollars a year. Even after the Restriction Act was passed, U.S. commercial interests sought continued profit from Chinese migration.

At first, Attorney General Benjamin Brewster interpreted the law strictly, barring the entry of “in transit” Chinese on July 18, 1882. But by December of that year, under additional pressure from the Chinese government, Brewster reversed course and declared his earlier interpretation erroneous. Starting on January 23, 1883, Chinese who declared their intention to merely cross the continent, bound for another country, could gain admittance to the United States.²⁰ U.S. officials counted 2,151 non-immigrant Chinese in 1883; 3,194 in 1884; and 5,330 in 1885. Officially, all in-transit aliens and tourists departed the United States, but both local officials and federal politicians feared widespread fraud. Congressman William Morrow complained to the secretary of treasury in 1886, “In San Francisco it is generally believed that a large number of those who have been landed on this claim have, in one artifice and another, managed to remain in the United States, or if they have departed, it has only been to return.” If non-immigrant Chinese are included for the years from 1883 to 1889, the mean annual number of arrivals

during restriction was 12, 165, or 15 percent higher than during the period of free migration.²¹

American judges further weakened the law, in part because they sympathized with U.S. interests in China. For example, Judge Stephen Field, who was serving on the California Circuit Court (and would later join the Supreme Court), made his diplomatic prerogatives clear in the case *Re Low Yam Chow* (1882). Low Yam Chow, a Chinese merchant with connections to American enterprises, arrived in San Francisco from Panama after the passage of the Restriction Act. Though a merchant, he was denied landing because he lacked a section six certificate from the Chinese government. Chow appealed the decision because he had traveled from Central America, not China, and therefore had no way to obtain a certificate. The court found for the petitioner and used its ruling to scold San Francisco customs officers. Field wrote that the Restriction Act was intended to “put restriction upon the emigration of laborers” and “not to interfere, by excluding Chinese merchants, or putting unnecessary and embarrassing restrictions upon their coming, with the commercial relations between China and this country.” “Commerce with China is of the greatest value, and is constantly increasing,” declared Field; therefore, U.S. officials should avoid legal interpretations that would “tend to lessen that commerce.” He admonished “certain officers of the government” for possessing “more zeal than knowledge” and directly threatening U.S. interests in China.²²

Matthew Deady, a circuit court judge in Oregon, was also outspoken about the importance of American imperial interests. In October 1882, only a few months after the Restriction Act was passed, Deady heard his first case, *Re George Moncan*. It involved two Chinese seamen who signed labor contracts with a U.S. vessel that arrived in Portland in October 1882 to load a shipment of wheat bound for Europe. While the vessel was docked, a federal marshal arrested the two Chinese crewmen on the grounds that they had violated the Restriction Act. The Chinese seamen petitioned for a writ of habeas corpus, and Judge Deady found for the petitioners. He argued that Chinese seamen fell outside the scope of the act. “True, their vocation is labor,” admitted Deady, “but they are not brought here to remain and enter into competition with the labor of the inhabitants of the country.” Furthermore, he argued that barring Chinese crews on vessels bound for the United States would “impede or cripple” America’s trade with China. The judge told

his courtroom that his job was to enforce the act “without spitefully straining it to cover a few doubtful or extreme cases, and thereby eventually bringing it into deserved odium and disrepute.”

Fearing that restriction would undermine U.S. commercial interests in China, Deady did not hide his disdain for the new law. He maintained that restriction was denounced by the most “intelligent and influential people of the country,” because it was seen “as fraught with danger to our commercial relations with China, as inconsistent with our national policy, as obstructing the spread of Christianity, and as violative, not only of the treaty, but of the inherent rights of man.”²³ Given his distaste for the legislation and concern about U.S.-China relations, Deady was reluctant to avidly enforce the Restriction Act.²⁴

Despite these problems with enforcement and conviction, federal officials touted statistics indicating that more Chinese were departing than arriving in the United States. At the Port of San Francisco, officials reported a net departure of 1,633 Chinese migrants in 1883, and 4,788 in 1884. This offered a ray of hope that restriction was turning the tide of Chinese migration, because San Francisco had only seen a net loss of Chinese migrants six times in the previous thirty years.²⁵ Californians, however, paid more attention to those arriving than to those departing. It was clear to them that San Francisco continued to be a bustling entry point for thousands of Chinese every year, many of whom were in fact returning, while others were arriving in America for the first time. As anti-Chinese spokesman Dennis Kearney remembered, “When the first restriction act went into effect in 1882 less than 40 Chinamen came here that year; then, of course, they began to increase as rapidly as ever.”²⁶

Undocumented Migration in the Pacific Northwest

Federal statistics on Chinese migration also failed to account for the thousands of Chinese who entered the country undetected during the Restriction Period. After San Francisco, Washington Territory was the second most popular entry point for Chinese in the 1880s. And unlike San Francisco, where customs officials could monitor the arrival of international steamships and demand a list of Chinese passengers before they were allowed to disem-

bark, Washington's long border with Canada offered an ideal route for Chinese laborers hoping to slip unnoticed into the United States.

Then, as now, estimating how many made the crossing is difficult. Contemporary local newspapers did not agree; some stated that by fall 1885, one hundred were crossing per month, while others claimed it was closer to one hundred per week. National newspapers also offered estimates: in 1884, the *New York Times* claimed that thousands of Chinese had already been smuggled across the border, and in 1891, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* estimated that fifteen hundred had been smuggled annually. During an 1890 congressional investigation, a U.S. customs official stationed in Washington argued that the number was more like twenty-five hundred annually. It is probable that one to two thousand Chinese entered the country this way each year, suggesting that any reduction in Chinese admissions in San Francisco saw an equal or greater increase in migration through Canada. In short, it is unlikely the Chinese Restriction Act slowed Chinese migration at all.²⁷

In 1846, the United States and Britain had drawn a line at the forty-ninth parallel delineating their territory in the Pacific Northwest. But giving meaning to this territorial border, an imaginary line on the map, involved a much longer process of social construction and maintenance.²⁸ The experiences of a small band of customs officials in Washington Territory dramatize the factors underlying the act's failure to harden the U.S.-Canadian boundary. At the time, the man in charge was A. W. Bash, collector of customs at Port Townsend, who managed the entire customs service in Washington Territory, including the half-dozen smaller port cities near Puget Sound and the hundreds of miles of land border with British Columbia.

After only two weeks of attempting to enforce the act, Bash could see that he was woefully understaffed and turned to the federal government hoping for aid and guidance. He wrote to his superiors in Washington, D.C., "The new anti-Chinese law . . . has caused some perplexity and a great deal of work. I have learned that 17 seventeen chinamen [*sic*] have crossed into this territory, east of the Cascade Mountains where there is but one officer to guard two hundred miles of frontier." Two more officers, argued Bash, would at least give "a show of resistance or watchfulness," and, he admitted, this was "really all that can be made on so extensive a frontier, with so very

few officers.” In addition to the problem of manpower, Bash noted that questions regarding the act were “arriving at this District almost each day,” many of which could not be answered by the language of the law. What was he to do about Chinese seamen who arrived on American vessels, or Chinese laborers who were naturalized British subjects? Between the difficulty of capturing unauthorized Chinese migrants and the confusion over who was in fact unauthorized, “So far,” explained Bash, “we have been unable to enforce the law.”²⁹

The Department of Treasury did not grant Bash additional staff or funds, but it did send a special inspector to assess the U.S.-Canadian border. Special Agent J. C. Horr toured the district in May 1883 and submitted an overwhelmingly optimistic report. While he admitted there were ten thousand Chinese in British Columbia just across the boundary line, Horr wrote, “I . . . can without fear of truthful contradiction aver that no Chinese from British Columbia have entered Washington Territory or Oregon without production of proof of professional or mercantile vocation or proof of previous residence in the United States.” The land border posed no threat, according to Horr, because there were only five possible trails, which “pass through a mountainous, densely wooded country, interspersed by many creeks and rivers so swollen by the Winter snows and Spring rains as to be impassible for six months in a year.” When they were passable, mounted customs officers guarded all but one. The last trail, which led from Fort Slope, British Columbia, to the Skagit mines of Washington Territory, was not a problem because the “white miners at Skagit are hostile to the Chinese and would promptly notify the Customs Officers of any violations of the law.”³⁰

Horr admitted that “the thousand miles of coastline on the mainland of Washington territory and the many islands adjacent thereto would seem to indicate that the law could easily be evaded,” but again insisted that there was no danger of infractions. Horr believed the Chinese were not mentally capable of utilizing this route. “The British Columbia chinaman,” he maintained, would have to “tax[] his ingenuity” to travel by canoe because customs officers were stationed at the most accessible points, and the collector’s steamer, the *Revenue Cutter*, was constantly crossing the waters of San Juan and Puget Sound. Moreover, “any such attempts, to be successful, would require the cooperation and the good will of the people, neither of which . . . is likely to be extended.” “If a stranger should seek entrance by the Islands,”

argued Horr, "the hostility of the people would lead to discovery before he could reach a settlement or a town." He counted on the people of Washington Territory to aid the customs service in their fight to protect the border. With the help of inhospitable terrain and civilian vigilance, four customs inspectors could successfully defend over a thousand miles of coastline and border.³¹ Even at the time, contemporaries charged that Horr's low estimation of Chinese intelligence and high estimation of local anti-Chinese sentiment reflected his own prejudices. The U.S. consul in Victoria, B.C., warned that Horr was "imbued with animosity against the Chinese race. . . . He appears to think the Chinese have no souls, and that the brightest of them is as degraded as the lowest."³²

When Bash read a copy of Horr's report a few months later, he was dismayed. To counter Horr's assertion that hostile whites would prevent migration, Bash argued that there were also developers who found Chinese labor useful for their businesses. He counted twelve large sawmills and lumbering forts on Puget Sound as well as the Puget Sound Railroad, which already employed two thousand Chinese. As Chinese laborers left these jobs to seek other employment, "it is rumored that the contractors are endeavoring to fill their places with Chinese from British Columbia."³³

Bash's view was echoed by local officials. After traveling to British Columbia to investigate in July 1883, Inspector Ira B. Meyers reported: "I talked with several Chinese, to whom I was unknown, and they were anxiously enquiring for some way to get into the United States, they offered me \$25.00 a piece if I would get them through. I know there are scores of them only awaiting a favorable opportunity to smuggle across. My opinion is that unless very closely watched hundreds of them will cross over, as new ones are coming in frequently from China."³⁴ Captain C. L. Hooper, of the Revenue Marine, agreed with Meyers's assessment. In an 1884 letter to the territorial governor, he wrote, "There are thousands of Chinaman just without the border, waiting for an opportunity to get in. Plenty of worthless characters are ready to assist them, and all passenger steamers ready to carry them, provided it can be done without risk." With so many avenues into the country and so few customs officials, Captain Hooper thought that the United States had little hope of stopping undocumented migration. There may have been many white residents of Washington Territory who hated Chinese labor, but there were also powerful and unscrupulous men who sought it.³⁵



"Birds-Eye View of Puget Sound." This 1891 map depicts the land and sea border between the United States and Canada. The maze of waterways and islands in Washington and British Columbia facilitated clandestine entry, undermining border control. University of Washington Libraries Map Collection, C. G. Maring, map-maker, Charles H. Baker & Co., publisher, UW29556z.

In addition, Bash argued that there were nine possible overland trails, not five, and that Horr's descriptions of treacherous terrain had been exaggerated. Illegal entry using these trails was highly probable because "a number of Chinese mining camps are located near the Boundary line in British Columbia" and "the department allows but one man in Eastern Washington and consequently the balance of the trails must necessarily remain unguarded." As for the coastline and islands, it was Bash's opinion that "not a few have already crossed over in Indian canoes and small boats and others will surely follow," because "it would be difficult to apprehend Chinese . . . in an archipelago of more than fifty Islands with only two customs officers stationed in that quarter and one of them being obliged to remain at Friday harbor the Sub Port of entry."³⁶ With his colleague based at Friday Harbor, the only man free to patrol the islands and coastland—the most porous part of the U.S.-Canadian boundary—was Deputy Inspector Arthur Blake. On

his shoulders fell much of the task of enforcing Chinese restriction north of California.

A Night with Deputy Arthur Blake

Blake began his work as a customs inspector in the villages of Sehome and Semiahmoo one year before the Chinese Restriction Act went into effect. When recommending Blake for the position, Bash described him as a “shrewd, sober, industrious and staunch Republican,” whom he was convinced would make “an efficient officer.”³⁷ Born in Boston, Massachusetts, Blake worked as a civil engineer, but at age fifty he migrated three thousand miles to Washington Territory. Washington was a far cry from the developed towns of New England he had left. According to the 1880 census, fewer than 72,000 white people lived in the expansive territory. The largest city, Seattle, had a population of only 3,553, and Blake was bound not for Seattle but for a tiny village in the wilderness. He was to guard the northwest corner of Washington Territory from people smuggling goods from Canada without paying American taxes. This was not a simple job. His territory included the many small winding waterways and hidden bays of the San Juan Islands: a smuggler’s paradise. Mainland terrain was not much easier: twenty-five miles of densely forested and scarcely populated coastland between Sehome (present-day Bellingham) and Semiahmoo, adjacent to the Canadian border. He left his wife and son in Port Townsend, likely deciding that his destination was too rough and unsettled for his family.

It was clear from Blake’s first day in Sehome that he did not have the natural constitution to perform the strenuous task of patrolling the border. August 11, 1881, was a “fine warm day,” but Blake recorded in his diary that he felt “very unwell from headache, indigestion, and a cold in the chest and back.” In the first week, he wrote his wife daily and, in a rare show of emotion, wrote in his diary that he “felt very lonesome, so far.” As the weeks and months passed, his list of physical complaints grew to include insomnia, asthma, and chest pain. Still, Bash was right about him. Blake’s illnesses did not stop him from performing his duties: meeting locals, walking along the coast, riding to neighboring towns, inspecting steamers that passed through, and writing detailed reports to his superiors.³⁸

Although the Restriction Act went into effect in August 1882, by the following May Blake had only arrested a handful of Chinese migrants and believed that few were eluding him. He wrote to Bash, "I saw an article in the [Port Townsend] *Argus* recently, stating that Chinamen were constantly coming over the line, from New Westminster, Port Moody etc. and in large numbers. If they are so coming, which I doubt, they must cross the line further to the north and east, for they do not come through here or Semiahmoo."³⁹ A year after the Restriction Act was passed, Blake felt confident that he could defend the coastline and islands from the trickle of undocumented migrants from British Columbia. Every arrest he made, Blake believed, deterred future undocumented migration.

Blake spent every day fighting Chinese migration, but in his professional correspondence and personal diary he never said a word against the Chinese. Unlike Special Inspector Horr, Blake did not underestimate the ingenuity of Chinese migrants, and he showed moments of recognition of their humanity and suffering. Blake complained to his superior that the jail cells where Chinese were kept seemed "unsafe, and unfit to confine human beings in. . . . They are about 6'×6' feet, cold and filthy. The sheriff does not furnish blankets, there is no stove on that floor and the cold nights of winter, prisoners will stand a good chance of freezing."⁴⁰ While many of his colleagues did not shy away from insulting Chinese migrants, Blake was either too professional or too sympathetic to these "human beings" to record any harsh words.

Still, he fought to protect the northern border, especially once he discovered, in the fall of 1883, that a flood of migrants was pouring across it. Blake quickly realized that few Chinese had attempted the crossing during the first year of restriction. In October 1883, he reported to Bash that he had captured eleven Chinese laborers from Victoria. But he was not excited about the large arrest, merely worried that "many are crossing over." By the end of November, Blake's letters to his superiors were sobered by fears of defeat. He vowed to do the "best I can to detect and capture them," but he believed "that Coolie immigration in this quarter, cannot be checked *even temporarily*."⁴¹

Blake found his work undermined by a weak federal commitment to preventing Chinese migration. At 5 P.M. on November 25, 1883, a typical day, he received word that six Chinese were spotted departing the Ferndale ferry

coming toward Sehome. He hired two men, as he often did, and ordered them to track the Chinese through the woods. As the sun set, Blake heard rumors that the migrants had stopped at the China Wash House, so he rushed there with the town sheriff. By the time they arrived, they found only Ah Hing, the proprietor of the laundry, who admitted that five Chinese had approached him, but said he had not allowed them to stay. Ah Hing believed that they had gone aboard the steamer *Idaho*. So Blake rode to the docks and boarded the *Idaho* and found five Chinese passengers.

But when he questioned them individually, they “would not understand anything” or state where they had come from, answering only “no sabe”—an ungrammatical Spanish version of “I don’t know.” Without their own admissions, Blake had “*no evidence*” that these Chinese men had crossed from British Columbia, or even that these were the Chinese he had tracked all night. He noted that their descriptions did not match his original tip, since he had been looking for six Chinese men, three of whom were supposed to be carrying umbrellas, but these five held none.

Blake was unsure if it was worth arresting and sending them to Port Townsend at government expense to face trial when they could easily be found not guilty. “Could they have been tried here,” he wrote, “[I] would have arrested them, and do not doubt they would have been convicted on their own evidence—for I do not doubt that they had recently come from B.C.” But they could not be tried locally for the simple reason that neither Blake nor the local judge had a copy of the Chinese Restriction Act. He disembarked the *Idaho* to telegraph Bash for advice, but found that the wires were down. Finally, with great regret and frustration, he decided to let the Chinese go. The *Idaho* left port that night with the Chinese onboard. The next morning at 9 A.M., a steamer arrived from Port Townsend bearing a copy of the Chinese Restriction Act and a letter from Collector Bash. “Had I [received] it a few hours sooner,” Blake bemoaned in his diary, “I would have arrested the Chinese.” To Bash he wrote, “Now that I have a copy of the law, I shall in future try any prisoners I take, at this place, and then send them down to you.”⁴²

Blake’s farcical chase through the woods reveals blunders large and small. Sixteen months after the Restriction Act went into effect, the primary man in charge of catching undocumented migrants did not possess a copy of the law, showing the limited reach of federal bureaucracy in the western territory.

More fundamentally, Congress, imagining major ports like San Francisco and Port Townsend as America's western gates, had designed a law ill-suited to the reality of a continuous border like the one in Washington Territory, where points of entry abounded. Blake was undermined, in part, by the federal government's missteps and lack of power.

Many of Blake's difficulties, however, were due to congressional compromises and choices that had deliberately weakened the law. Congress's small appropriation meant Blake alone had the impossible task of inspecting all incoming traffic in a district too large for one mounted inspector to adequately monitor. The lack of a passport system—a concession to maintaining America's good relations with the Chinese government—meant Blake was forced to rely on subjective and vague descriptions provided by local residents to distinguish between new, unauthorized migrants and current legal residents. The presence or absence of umbrellas was hardly a failsafe form of identification. The challenges Blake faced included not only harsh and expansive terrain and the difficulties one would expect in the operations of a large, young bureaucracy, but also a distinct lack of enthusiasm on the part of Congress to truly end Chinese migration.

Smugglers in the Borderlands

As the Restriction Act forced Chinese migration underground, it created a booming business in smuggling. Chinese workers had long relied on middlemen to help them secure transpacific passage, the required fare, and work on arrival. The law was intended to halt this business, but it may actually have expanded the trade, as Chinese migrants found it increasingly difficult to arrange their own passage. Rumors circulated constantly about who was running Chinese and how much money they earned in the process: fifteen to twenty-five dollars per head during the early years of Chinese restriction and over one hundred by the late 1880s.⁴³ If such rumors were accurate, smuggling Chinese "contraband" was often more lucrative than smuggling actual goods.

Since customs officers were more concerned with capturing smugglers than regulating their business, traces of this history of exploitation are few and far between. Blake, for his part, did show moments of concern for the undocumented migrants. In the summer of 1883, he heard a disturbing

rumor that Lummi Indians, hired to smuggle Chinese migrants, were actually killing them. To investigate, Blake spoke to Jason Taylor, a white man whose wife was the daughter of the chief of the Lummi tribe. Taylor did “not credit the report” but promised to “enquire further.” Obviously concerned, Blake approached Taylor again a week later to find out if there was any truth to the story, but Taylor did “not think it is so.”⁴⁴ Blake and his fellow officers also turned their attention to identifying smugglers and their tactics. While the Restriction Act mandated deportation for undocumented migrants, it came down harder on smugglers, threatening a thousand-dollar fine and one year of imprisonment. But this, like so many aspects of the law, proved difficult to enforce.

It was rare for officials to witness smuggling; more often they only heard rumors. The deputy of Roche Harbor learned from his boat carpenter, who had recently returned from British Columbia, that “Chinamen [were] paying \$25.00 per head on safe deliver[y?] and \$100 in advance.”⁴⁵ Sometimes, of course, the rumors proved false. “I received information,” Deputy J. H. Price reported, “that a man by the name of Willey had told a number of persons that he Willey was engaged in carrying Chinamen across from Victoria in a sloop” at the price of fifteen dollars per man and “a share of the opium that they brot [*sic*] with them.” But he also added, “This man Willey was drunk the time he told this, and it is likely that there is nothing in it.” A month later, Price reported that he had investigated the matter and found no evidence, so his tall tale must have been due to his “state of intoxication.”⁴⁶ Whether or not Willey’s words held truth, it is curious that he found smuggling Chinese a subject worth bragging about publicly. Despite general anti-Chinese sentiment, some must have believed the risky business of bringing Chinese into the country was an exciting and manly endeavor.

Customs officials also heard rumors that Indians as well as white smugglers were aiding undocumented migrants. As Blake patrolled the northern section of his district, he was highly aware that Chinese “might easily pass there without detection” because “there are so many Indians and canoes, in that vicinity.”⁴⁷ Blake would watch Indian canoes coming and going along the coastline, carrying passengers from logging camps in British Columbia. He noticed when “a large canoe left the Indian camp opposite the spit, keeping well out in the Gulf and heading for Lummi island. There were three men in her, one only, paddling.” Finding it suspicious that the canoe

carefully stayed far from shore, Blake watched through his telescope. The passengers “seemed to wear the loose blouses of Chinamen” but were too far away to capture. Although Blake often reported suspicious behavior of this sort, he never successfully arrested any Indian smugglers.⁴⁸

No doubt there were also Chinese smugglers, but they proved particularly difficult for customs officers to identify. When deputies managed to capture a group of undocumented migrants, the officers could rarely discern who among them had organized the crossing.⁴⁹ But as Blake investigated undocumented migration, one name came up repeatedly: Wa Chong.⁵⁰ Though he believed this to be the name of a man, it was in fact the name of a company. Wa Chong Company, formed in Seattle in 1868, was one of the oldest Chinese import/export businesses in Washington Territory. It was a partnership between Chin Ching-Hock, Seattle’s first Chinese resident, and Chin Gee Hee.⁵¹ Although the company’s original business was merchandising, Chin Gee Hee was more interested in labor contracting. He traveled the territory seeking labor contracts for Chinese workers in coal mining, railroad construction, farming, and domestic labor. When he found willing employers, he would negotiate a contract, then providing gangs of Chinese workers and a bilingual boss. After the passage of the Restriction Act, rumors circulated that Chin Gee Hee continued his contracting business with the help of a network of smugglers.⁵²

Blake’s investigations give some credence to rumors that Chin was deeply involved in smuggling. In July 1883, a community informant brought in a Chinese man whom he had captured on the road. The migrant’s name was Ah Sin and he was in possession of a return certificate, written by Blake, which proved he was a legal resident in the territory and could come and go as he pleased. After a long conversation with Ah Sin, Blake reported to Collector Bash: “In my opinion, he is the man who is piloting the Chinese across.” “He speaks English very imperfectly,” he explained, “but as well as I could make out, he offered to pay me \$2 per head, on all Chinamen I would allow to come in.” Blake pretended to consider the offer to learn all he could from the man and noted that Ah Sin mentioned “Wa Chong’s name frequently, tho’ I could not understand what he said about him.” Despite Ah Sin’s apparent confession to smuggling, Blake “did not detain him.” While the Restriction Act made the act of aiding an unauthorized migrant a punishable misdemeanor, it did not criminalize the *intent* to smuggle Chinese.

Ah Sin could directly offer Blake a bribe, and the deputy could still not press charges.⁵³

Though he monitored the border every day, Blake saw only glimpses of the growing trafficking business. And even when he had credible evidence and a smuggler within his reach, the law denied him the power to intervene. "I doubt not the man has been engaged in piloting them in," Blake complained, "but *can prove nothing*."⁵⁴ Blake fought to stop undocumented migration, but limited congressional appropriation and the language of the law repeatedly undermined his battle to control the northern border.

Communal Border Control

As a result, Blake and other customs officials in Washington Territory turned to extralegal solutions. Frustrated by his inability to tell authorized Chinese from unauthorized ones, Blake devised his own system of identification. When the act first went into effect, he traveled through his district to visit white men who employed Chinese, instructing them to give these Chinese laborers "certificates of discharge when paying them off" at the end of a job. With such a certificate, the now-unemployed laborers could travel within the territory, looking for work without arousing suspicions that they were undocumented migrants. Blake asked Collector Bash to institute a similar extralegal system on a regional level. He believed "a system of *local passes, checks, or certificates*" would prevent "Chinese contraband" from moving through the area undetected. With such a system in place, Blake could arrest any Chinese migrant not in possession of a certificate of discharge. Blake eagerly drew up a sample certificate and included it with his proposal, not realizing that Congress had deliberately rejected provisions for internal passports. When Bash ignored the suggestion, Blake gave up the project.⁵⁵

Blake's solution to the lack of federal appropriations for enforcement and the resulting lack of manpower was to enlist members of the local community as informants. Blake asked for information from anyone he met on the road and eventually built up a network of collaborators who sent tips when they encountered unfamiliar Chinese in the district. For example, on September 20, 1884, he recorded in his diary that while riding to Lummi "to look for Chinamen" he "met a man who said he had passed two coming

towards Whatcom, five minutes before. Rode on but did not meet them, probably hid in the brush." The same day he met two men from Semiahmoo "who said 6 Chinamen crossed ferry at Ferndale at 10.30 a.m. and took either the Diagonal or 10 mile road." He tried to intercept the six men on the trail, and when that failed, he tried the Chinese laundry in Whatcom. There he "found three men only."⁵⁶

By the time he received a tip, Blake often discovered he was too late. He complained to his supervisor, "At midnight of the 26th inst. three Chinamen came to a saloon here, got drinks here, and asked for food, stating that they had just come from Westminster [British Columbia]. A man who was in the saloon at the time, came to my hotel to inform me, and went all over the house, but could not find me. I was not informed of this until the evening of the 27th." As such sightings of Chinese mounted and Blake felt increasingly powerless to stop the flow of undocumented migrants, he envisioned a possible solution. He wrote to Bash: "The question is frequently asked of me, 'Has a private citizen the right to arrest Chinese entering this country, across the Border line?' Also I am asked, 'If he has the right, will the Government support him in so doing?'" Locals were clearly aware that Blake was struggling single-handedly to protect the border and wished to offer help.⁵⁷

Bash was more receptive to improvisation in this area. Without writing to the Treasury Department, he responded that "a private citizen has the right to arrest a Chinese entering this country across the border and also a right to arrest the smuggler or man in charge." He granted Blake permission to promise three to four dollars a day to any citizen who arrested an unauthorized Chinese migrant, and told him to visit citizens who live "on the line" to encourage them to make such arrests. In December 1883, Bash was particularly worried about infractions because he had heard reports that the Canadian Pacific Railway had recently discharged three hundred Chinese laborers for the winter. "If a very large number comes in your way," he urged Blake, "call upon as many citizens as are necessary to help corral them." Bash was aware, however, that citizens alone might not be able to stop such a large number of Chinese from crossing, writing: "In the meantime, I want you to see General McPherson, and quietly inform him that I may be obliged to [request,] through the Governor, for assistance of the militia." He was pre-

pared to use members of the community—civilians and militiamen alike—to enforce the Chinese Restriction Act.⁵⁸

As it turned out, three hundred Chinese did not attempt to storm the line. Blake did, however, spread the news that citizens could arrest Chinese and would be paid for their labor. Whether motivated by hostility toward the Chinese or desire for the reward, within a few days citizens arrested six Chinese, and others sent information of “large gangs on their way down.” On December 3, a group of five Chinese were arrested by Solomon Allen, a farmer who lived within a half mile of the border. In an expense report submitted to the collector the next day, Blake requested bounty payments for helpful citizens, warning that smugglers were willing to pay those who looked the other way. “Permit me to say, that I think a little liberality on the part of the Gov’t towards the farmers, in this Chinese matter, will have a beneficial effect. . . . Wa Hing, the proprietor of the wash house here, asked me ‘if it would not pay officer better to take \$2 or \$3 a head and let chinaman [*sic*] go.’”⁵⁹

Federal liberality was not forthcoming. Two months after Allen arrested the Chinese, Blake wrote to his supervisor to remind him that the farmer had never been paid. “Allen,” he wrote, “is a poor man, and has already asked me twice for the money.” Finally, in April, Blake gave up and rode out to Allen’s farm to pay him out of pocket the six and a half dollars promised for the “Chinese affair.” The Treasury Department did not authorize reimbursement until October 13, 1884, ten months after the original arrest. Although paying citizens to arrest Chinese was far less expensive than hiring additional customs officers, the federal government was still reluctant to pay out of their small enforcement budget.⁶⁰

Despite the lack of federal support, locals continued to contribute to the enforcement effort. Blake was never able to raise the posse of citizens that Bash originally envisioned, but men like Allen continued to arrest Chinese and report their movements. Some locals did not need the promise of reward to launch vigilante attempts to defend the border. One American citizen traveling on a ferry from British Columbia to Port Townsend spotted two Chinese workers on board and alerted a policeman as soon as they landed. On Orcas Island, less than three miles from the U.S.-Canadian boundary, a group of white community members created their own defense

against Chinese migration without any government support, organizing sea-borne patrols of the San Juan Islands.⁶¹

White locals were not the only ones who aided customs officials in the arrest of Chinese migrants. In August 1883, Native Americans reported to the local deputy collector stationed in eastern Washington that ten Chinese had crossed the line from British Columbia. Unable to leave his post at O'Sooyoos Lake, the deputy appointed Aleck Macaulay, a white community member, as a temporary "special inspector" and "dispatched him after the celestials" in the direction of Fort Colville. When word came a few days later that six more Chinese were "traveling along the line on the British Columbia side with the probable intent of crossing to the United States," the deputy at O'Sooyoos Lake hired an Indian messenger to send word to "special inspector" Macaulay. With the help of Indian informers and messengers, Macaulay was able to arrest ten Chinese. The Indian messengers and temporary inspector were paid for their trouble. Although the customs deputy could not leave his post, he reported that he was confident that he could protect the border with the help of Indian informants.⁶²

Even a few Chinese residents were willing to aid in the search for smuggled Chinese migrants. Deputy Price got a tip from a Chinese man that "parties were shipping Chinamen into the United States and were using Port Discovery as the port and that they landed after night." The Chinese informant said that white men were organizing the operation and he would attempt to tip off Price when the next group came in. The deputy was not sure this was truthful information, but thought it best to report it anyway. Similarly, Blake was approached by a Chinese laundryman who promised to show him three undocumented Chinese "if I would give him \$5.00 a piece." Although Blake reported the offer to Bash, he did not dignify it by asking if he should pay.⁶³

Though Blake would offer a bounty to a white man, he did not trust the Chinese man's intentions. But perhaps he should have. Chinese shared many of the white and Indian informants' motivations, since undocumented Chinese meant labor competition; reporting on them could bring compensation and good favor. Although the Chinese appeared clannish, separatist, and organized to white outsiders, there were many internal divisions within the Chinese community. Since the Chinese Restriction Act, one of the largest divisions was between legal residents and unauthorized newcomers.⁶⁴

Although many legal Chinese felt solidarity with their undocumented kinsmen, they may have resented how the actions of others cast suspicion on all.

Local media took note of widespread community involvement in policing the U.S.-Canadian border, and some newspapers, like the *Olympia Courier*, looked with disfavor on this practice. Commenting on a case where two private citizens had named themselves “temporary inspectors” to arrest nine Chinese, the *Courier* wrote, “It is humiliating to reflect that Uncle Sam’s powerful government must depend upon the generosity of private citizens for the aid necessary to enforce its laws.”⁶⁵ Such reports in the newspapers made the public deeply aware of the customs officers’ struggle to enforce the act and the integral role the community played in supporting them.

The customs service relied on private support not just to capture unauthorized migrants, but also to deport them. Rather than seeking conviction in the district courts and deportation by U.S. marshals, local officers often sent undocumented migrants directly back to Canada with the help of shipping companies. By its very nature, this extralegal system of deportation, which existed alongside the formal process prescribed by the Restriction Act, was not well documented. But in 1885, an extralegal deportation gone awry landed participants in a U.S. district courtroom, and the details of both the particular incident and the wider practice were recorded in the resulting trial transcript, *U.S. v. Eliza Anderson* (1885).

According to the prosecution, on October 23, 1885 the steamer *Eliza Anderson* arrived at Port Townsend from Victoria with thirty Chinese passengers on deck. Their conspicuous arrival was observed by Deputy Blake and the crew of a U.S. customs ship, the *Wolcott*. While Blake presumably inspected the return certificates of Chinese migrants on deck, the *Wolcott* crew, usually engaged in policing the smuggling of goods, began searching below deck for human contraband. The *Wolcott* fireman, George Burns, went down to look at the *Eliza Anderson*’s fire room, where he saw a suspicious looking plank. Pulling down the plank, he found eight Chinese migrants crammed into the small area between the water tanks and the coal bulkhead. They were dressed like laborers and, unlike those above deck, did not possess return certificates. Charles Davis, a customs inspector, “joshed” to the master of the vessel that there must be “\$600 in it for somebody.”⁶⁶

Although eight Chinese were found concealed below deck, Captain Wright was (for unknown reasons) charged with smuggling only two Chinese

boys, Ah Wy and Ah Yuk, who testified for the prosecution. Through an interpreter, Ah Wy stated that he was the fourteen-year-old son of a school-teacher. He had spent his time in China attending school. When he arrived in Victoria he found “nothing to do” and managed only to work for one day as a cook, so he made the attempt to enter America because he had family in San Francisco. Ah Wy testified that he agreed to pay thirty dollars to the fireman of the *Eliza Anderson* for concealing him onboard. Ah Yuk was also just fourteen. Although he had found a job working for a family in Victoria, he was still eager to go to America and jumped at the chance when a man in Victoria’s Chinatown offered to smuggle him across the line. The two adolescents did not know each other before the trip, but they spent four hours below deck together and two or three hours in the small hiding place by the coal bulkhead.⁶⁷

Instead of arresting and trying the undocumented Chinese passengers and the white men who were trafficking them, as the Restriction Act required, Blake simply “told Captain Wright to take them back” to British Columbia. The *Eliza Anderson* was due at Seattle before returning to Victoria, so Blake put the Chinese “in irons” on the trip to Seattle. During the trial, he explained to the defense lawyer, “That is the custom. We always send them back with the master of the vessel.” When questioned further, he admitted that “sometimes we put them in jail,” but more often captains were told “they must take them back.” Blake testified that this was “general practice” among the masters of ships caught smuggling and was “sanctioned by the officers of the Government.”⁶⁸ He must have been referring to local government, because there is no record that such deportations were ever reported to the Department of the Treasury. Whether sanctioned or unsanctioned, this informal and extralegal system of deportation was much simpler (and cheaper) than the alternative, which required detention, trial, and an escorted trip back across the border.

To make sure Captain Wright was complying with the orders to return the undocumented passengers to Canada, Blake again boarded the steamer after it returned from Seattle and confirmed that the eight undocumented migrants were still aboard. The *Eliza Anderson* then proceeded to Victoria, and Blake trusted that the captain would land the Chinese passengers there. It was only when Captain Wright was unable to land Ah Wy and Ah Yuk in Victoria, because Canadian customs refused them, that the case entered the

U.S. legal system and the “customary” practice of extralegal deportation in Washington Territory left a trace.⁶⁹

The Contested U.S.-Canadian Border

After several years of successful deportations to Canada, why did the Canadian government suddenly turn away Ah Wy and Ah Yuk? The *Eliza Anderson* case brings to light an unrecognized history of contestation along the U.S.-Canadian border. Previous scholars have characterized Chinese exclusion as a “binational” or “intercolonial” project in which the United States and the British Empire, through the auspices of the Canadian government, worked together to police Chinese mobility.⁷⁰ But such cooperation was scarce during the Restriction Period when the United States and Canada clashed over their mutual desire to bar Chinese migrants. As the governments dueled over control of the border, Chinese migrants were caught in between, figuratively and literally.

In many ways, the history of Chinese migration to British Columbia, and of subsequent anti-Chinese legislation there, parallels events in the U.S. West. Chinese migrants, along with white miners, first poured into British Columbia in 1858 after gold was discovered in the Fraser River. At first the Chinese came from California, and later they came directly from China. The gold-driven economy lasted less than a decade, and eventually Chinese migrants went into agriculture, lumbering, and railroad work in the sparsely populated but growing British colony. Early reaction to Chinese migrants was mixed. Some white Canadians saw Chinese as valuable members of the community, but others feared that they would undercut white wages. In the 1870s, some British Columbians formed outspoken but short-lived anti-Chinese societies, including the Workingman’s Protective Association and the Anti-Chinese Association. At a time of economic downturn, they claimed that white workers “would rather starve than go to work alongside a Chinaman.”⁷¹

Although they heard the clamor of anti-Chinese British Columbians, officials in Ottawa and London prioritized the needs of the developing Canadian economy and British trade in China. In 1881, the Canadian federal cabinet assisted the Canadian Pacific Railway Company in arranging with the governor of Hong Kong for the importation of Chinese labor. In 1882,

6,784 Chinese arrived in British Columbia, raising the total population of Chinese to around 12,000.⁷² With the recruitment of Chinese railroad workers and news that the United States had passed the Chinese Restriction Act in 1882, many British Columbians began to fear that Chinese migrants would soon overrun the province.

Circumstances worsened when it became clear that the railroad could not reliably sustain its workforce year-round, and British Columbia saw a sharp increase in starvation, crime, and strikes in the winter months. The British Columbia provincial government responded by passing two anti-Chinese bills in 1884: "An Act to prevent the immigration of Chinese" and "An Act to regulate the Chinese population in British Columbia." While the first banned all new immigration of Chinese to British Columbia, the second taxed current Chinese residents, banned the use of opium for nonmedical purposes, prohibited exhumation of Chinese bodies, placed minimum size requirements on rooms occupied by Chinese, and shifted the "burden of proof" onto Chinese defendants.⁷³ Both laws were struck down by the British colonial government, but prompted Prime Minister Sir John MacDonald to instigate an investigation of the Chinese problem in British Columbia.

British Columbians were not so easily placated; the provincial government again passed an act to prevent Chinese immigration in February 1885. The law was nearly identical to the one that had been disallowed by the dominion government the previous year, so there was little chance Ottawa would let it stand. Nevertheless, the British Columbian government attempted to put its provisions into practice. On April 2, 1885, a U.S. commissioner of customs wrote to the American attorney general to complain that customs officials had attempted to deport a group of undocumented Chinese migrants to Canada, "the country from whence they came," but the British Columbian officials had refused to receive the migrants. The letter was quickly forwarded to local and federal officials in the United States and Canada, but within a month the issue was moot. The dominion government had again disallowed the act on March 28, 1885, and U.S. deportation of Chinese to Canada continued unabated in the spring of 1885. The incident gave both the Canadian and American governments notice that if Canada were to pass a restriction act in the future, it would affect U.S. deportation policy. But the United States did not heed this warning.⁷⁴

In the summer of 1885, with railroad construction drawing to a close, the dominion government finally yielded to pressure from British Columbia and passed an act designed to restrict Chinese migration. The law placed a fifty-dollar tax on each new Chinese migrant (the equivalent of two months' wages for an unskilled laborer) and was designed to discourage Chinese, especially poor workers, from migrating to Canada. The Canadian government anticipated that this new policy would interfere with U.S. immigration policy and sent the U.S. government a copy of the new act.⁷⁵ Under the new law, the U.S. government would have to pay fifty dollars for every Chinese migrant they wished to deport to Canada. But the U.S. federal government took no proactive steps in addressing the inherent conflict in the two governments' laws and did not warn customs officials in Washington Territory to expect problems.

It was the Canadian head tax law that prevented the *Eliza Anderson* from returning Ah Wy and Ah Yuk to Victoria, threatening legal U.S. deportations as well.⁷⁶ The head tax went into effect on August 27, 1885, and immediately U.S. customs officers found it impossible to deport Chinese migrants. The new collector of customs at Port Townsend, Herbert F. Beecher, wired the Department of Treasury: "On 25th inst. Ah Teck an alleged Chinese Merchant arrived here from Victoria B.C. . . . was refused admission by me sent back to Victoria on 27th. [He] was returned here same day having been refused admission by Victorian authorities except upon payment of \$50. . . . He has no money. Brought him before court yesterday on habeas corpus which remanded him back to Victoria. Cannot lawfully imprison him. What shall I do with him[?]" The Treasury Department did not respond quickly, so Beecher sent another urgent message the following week: "Shall I pay [the head tax] in order to carry out order of court[?] If not he comes back on me again." The eventual response from the Treasury was short and to the point: "Chinese appropriation exhausted. Authority for payment of fifty dollars denied."⁷⁷ Beecher was disturbed to learn that at a time of economic downturn, the Treasury Department had run out of funds to enforce Chinese restriction. Even if the Treasury Department had the money, it was unclear whether they could legally apply their funds to paying Canadian taxes. Once again, the customs service in Washington Territory was undermined by federal indifference, inflexibility, and parsimony. Since Blake's job was dependent on this fund, Beecher was forced to

officially fire him on September 1, 1885, and rehire him as regular customs inspector.⁷⁸

Just as it became nearly impossible to deport Chinese during the summer of 1885, the number of Chinese trying to enter the United States suddenly increased, a product of continued new arrivals in Victoria and limited job availability in British Columbia. Collector Beecher reported to the Department of Treasury: "Some 800 or 900 Chinese arrived at Victoria last week, direct from China. Six hundred more are expected to arrive very shortly." This was particularly concerning because "[t]he construction of the Canada Pacific R.R. is drawing rapidly to a close," meaning that the six thousand Chinese working on the railroad were gradually being discharged. Beecher predicted that it would be "impossible for that Province to employ all these men, and every effort will be made to smuggle large numbers of them into this country." This was particularly easy during the summer months, when the space between British Columbia and Washington Territory effectively narrowed, as Chinese migrants found it increasingly fast and simple to cross the divide in small boats or canoes. Beecher believed that few on the East Coast understood the true threat of Chinese undocumented migration, but warned that "public feeling upon the subject here is very strong."⁷⁹

Violence broke out on September 7, 1885. When thirty-seven Chinese workers arrived in the small town of Squak Valley, Washington Territory, to work as hops-pickers, some local workers decided to strike back. White and Indian men attacked the Chinese camp at night, blindly shooting at their tents, attempting to drive them out of town. On September 23, Collector Beecher sent a long, pleading letter to the Secretary of the Treasury. He did not know how to continue enforcement of the Chinese Restriction Act and knew that his inaction could lead to further anti-Chinese violence. In the letter, his distress is palpable:

As it now stands in this District we are unable to decide how to act. . . . I am met with a demand for fifty dollars per head by the Canadian Customs authorities before I can land them, this of course I cannot pay from my own pocket, nor can I get it from the funds now already exhausted, hence I have to bring the Chinamen back to our shores again, paying again their fares and meals, for the steamboat company will not transport them free. I have so far turned them over to the U.S. Marshal pending a decision and he has impris-

oned them in the U.S. Penitentiary, which is illegal, but even if I did not do this, how am I to act? . . . This is a question that unless some settlement is made between the two Governments, will soon lead to Trouble, as the Chinamen are being run over the line in large numbers and the citizens of this Territory have already begun to take very decided steps and much fear is felt here that open bloodshed will be the result if something decided and definite is not done before long. . . . Will the Department give me a decision how under the circumstances to act[?]⁸⁰

Beecher could find no way to enforce the Chinese Restriction Act along the U.S.-Canadian boundary given the Canadian head tax and complete lack of funds. For the previous three years, local customs officials had gone outside the law to make enforcement more manageable and affordable, but the situation was now beyond such local ingenuity. Beecher could not negotiate with Canada or raise funds for enforcement; the federal government in D.C. needed to step in.

The Treasury Department's initial reaction was to pass this problem onto another department. Forwarding Beecher's letter to the attorney general, the treasury secretary asked for any "opinion as to what action can be taken" to relieve government officers from "serious embarrassment." Although the letter did not directly ask if the Department of Justice could offer any financial assistance, the attorney general understood the subtext. In his reply he made it clear that "the appropriation for expenses of the United States courts will cover only those expenses of the Chinese emigration cases in Washington Territory, which are incurred in the courts proper." The Department of Justice would not pay for the cost of deportation or the Canadian head tax. The attorney general admitted he saw "no way of immediately relieving the difficulty mentioned" and suggested that the issue "must be laid before congress."⁸¹

The Department of the Treasury did not reply to Collector Beecher until October 15, more than three weeks after he wrote his pleading letter. The response detailed the lengths to which the department had gone to investigate the matter, but in the end offered no advice. It assured Beecher that the matter had been "deemed of considerable importance" and had been forwarded to the U.S. attorney general. Unfortunately, it appeared that there was "no appropriation whatever available for the purpose of paying the

expenses of carrying out the said act, and that the attorney general sees no way at this time of relieving the difficulties mentioned." The only option remaining was to lay the expenses before Congress and ask for additional appropriations, which the secretary of the treasury promised to do. The letter concluded, "The Department is unable to issue any definite instructions for your guidance in carrying out the requirements of the said act under the existing circumstances."⁸² Its message was clear: the collector of customs in Washington Territory would receive no federal aid in resolving the brewing migration crisis.

Local officials in Washington Territory had several alternatives for responses to this legal and financial deadlock. One solution was to simply ignore the stream of undocumented Chinese migrants crossing the U.S.-Canadian boundary. Collector Beecher was well aware that his officers were failing to enforce the Restriction Act, focusing instead on the policing of imports and exports. In July 1887, Collector Beecher wrote to the secretary of the treasury that the present circumstances had created "a tendency among our officers to disregard this law, and allow Chinamen to enter the United States, without let or hindrance."⁸³ Beecher had no recourse to stop this negligence.

Those officers who remained dedicated to border control had to find creative ways to deport or punish the Chinese they captured. Sometimes customs officers decided to defy Canadian law and "force [the Chinese] back into British Columbia" surreptitiously.⁸⁴ This practice began after the Canadian head tax law went into effect and continued for years. During an investigation in 1890, several Washington customs officials admitted that when they caught Chinese near the border, they often "sent them back even across the line a few miles, which of course we had no right to do, but we did." One official claimed that he had been instructed by his superior to "put back" Chinese instead of bringing them before a commissioner. Another popular solution to the dilemma was to have Chinese fund their own deportations. Since customs officials could not pay the head tax, they would push arrested Chinese to raise fifty Canadian dollars. A federal judge stationed in Washington reported that most detained Chinese managed to pay the tax themselves, by borrowing the money from their friends, or to establish that they had previously paid the tax.⁸⁵

Arrested Chinese who could not pay their own way found themselves in an unenviable state of limbo. The most vivid example comes from the East, where attempted entries by Chinese were far less common but not unheard of. On October 11, 1888, four Chinese attempted to cross the international border via the Niagara Suspension Bridge. Literally suspended in the air between the two countries, the Chinese men found themselves trapped. U.S. officials refused their entry because they were Chinese laborers without return certificates, and Canadian officials refused their return because they had no papers proving they had paid the head tax and no money to do so. A U.S. official reported that the unwanted men remained on the bridge, "where they were certain to suffer much discomfort, to say nothing to the annoyance of the bridge companies." Declared unauthorized migrants by both the United States and Canada, these men had nowhere to go, and U.S. officials legally had nowhere to put them. Their eventual fate is unknown.⁸⁶

The crisis produced the first known incidents of indefinite immigrant detention in the United States.⁸⁷ When Chinese were turned away at the U.S.-Canadian border starting in August 1885, U.S. marshals in Washington Territory began to bring them to the U.S. penitentiary at McNeil Island, in southern Puget Sound. Collector Beecher acknowledged that this practice was "without any reason or allowance by the law," but he did not know what else to do. The unlawful detention of unauthorized migrants began as an occasional and unofficial practice but soon became common procedure for U.S. commissioners in Washington. Prison and court records reveal that between 1885 and 1890 more than a hundred Chinese men were unlawfully detained for unauthorized migration, including Ah Wy and Ah Yuk, the young men found aboard the *Eliza Anderson*. Thirty-one of these men had received six-month sentences from local judges, even though incarceration was not authorized by the Chinese Restriction Act. While a few of these prisoners were released after their terms ended, most were kept at McNeil Island for additional time without explanation. Seventy-one Chinese were detained without defined terms and ended up serving between one month and nearly three years while they "awaited trial" or "instructions from the Attorney General."⁸⁸

In June 1889, Chief Justice of Washington Territory C. H. Hanford wrote to President Benjamin Harrison to plead mercy for some of the

longest-detained Chinese. He explained that nineteen Chinese men were arrested two years earlier, found to be unlawfully present, and ordered deported to British Columbia. U.S. marshals were unable to deport the Chinese, however, because they were refused at the U.S.-Canadian border. The nineteen men were returned to an American courtroom where they were again convicted and ordered deported. After this second deportation attempt failed, U.S. marshals detained the Chinese migrants at McNeil Island, where they remained when Hanford wrote to the president. Although Hanford had not presided over this particular case, the Chinese fell under his new jurisdiction and their predicament clearly weighed on him. "[I]n my humble opinion," he wrote, "the spirit and letter" of the law "required such persons to be taken out of the country rather than to be detained within it for the purpose of undergoing punishment for no other reason than that the officers do not know what else to do with them." He believed it was "contrary to the fundamental law of this nation that any being should be subjected to repeated imprisonments, amounting to perpetual incarceration for not doing that which he is powerless to do." He begged the president from the "goodness of [his] heart" to find a way to "relieve the officials in this territory from further embarrassment" and "set at liberty nineteen poor miserable captive strangers."⁸⁹

Hanford's letter was forwarded to Secretary of State Thomas Bayard, who contacted the Canadian government in hopes of a diplomatic solution. The Canadian privy council launched an internal investigation into the case to determine whether there was evidence that these Chinese could be legally returned to Canada. Local officials in British Columbia, including a Chinese translator working for the Canadian government, insisted that there was no evidence that the nineteen Chinese men came from Canada. Therefore, the Canadian government refused to receive them without payment of the head tax.⁹⁰ As the two governments argued the case, showing none of the cooperation they would display in later decades, the nineteen Chinese men remained locked on an island prison off the coast of Washington for another year.

Restriction may not have slowed Chinese entry to the United States, but it still had a profound effect on the lives of Chinese migrants. A few Chinese faced indefinite detention, many more lived in fear of federal officials, and

all found themselves occupying a newly precarious legal status. Anti-Chinese advocates had long maintained that the Chinese could never become American, and now federal laws helped make it so. The American state held the power to turn presumptions of racial difference into categories of legal disadvantage. Prohibitions on naturalization and restrictions on entry made all Chinese migrants into permanent aliens and some into illegal aliens. The latter term had not yet gained popularity. There was no need for such a phrase. The Chinese were the only group to face systematic border control, so all unauthorized migrants could be called “coolies,” “Chinese contraband,” or simply “Chinamen.” Without a system of identification, this meant that all Chinese, due to their appearance alone, could be suspected of fraudulent entry. Thanks to federal law, the Chinese wore their alienage on their bodies, and their bodies could serve as evidence of a crime.⁹¹

While the Restriction Act had an unmistakable impact on the meaning of race and alienage, its role in federal centralization and border-making remains more ambiguous.⁹² Congress may have begun hesitant experiments in state-building, but it was local officials on the periphery who vigorously worked to give the law substance. Restriction did little to centralize state power in the nineteenth century; the law created no new federal agencies and, at first, few new jobs. And yet, it did expand the government’s reach. Restriction was enacted by a vast army of existing government officials (including diplomats, customs officers, federal marshals, police officers, judges, tax collectors, and jailers) and a polyglot group of private individuals (including militiamen, deputy sheriffs, ship captains, employers, informers, witnesses, and vigilantes). What appears to be a top-down effort was, primarily, a story of border-formation from the margins in.⁹³

Notably, the Chinese Restriction Act had this in common with the Federal Immigration Act of 1882. The general immigration law, which followed on restriction’s heels, applied to all aliens and sought to regulate “any convict, lunatic, idiot, or any person unable to take care of himself or herself without becoming a public charge.” The law was designed to federalize the regulation of undesirable European immigrants, which had previously been conducted on the state level. Though the law was federally authorized and funded, state agencies continued to administer it on a daily basis.⁹⁴ In short, the general immigration law, like Chinese restriction, expanded the federal government’s reach without centralizing state power.

Since local officials steered the enforcement of restriction, their choice to enlist private citizens had significant implications. When Deputy Blake engaged in communal border control in Washington Territory, he sped up the U.S. border-making process, helping to turn the legal border into a social reality. But his extralegal actions also had the contradictory effect of undermining the federal government's control over its national borders. By recruiting community members, Blake helped create a form of participatory border control that blurred the line between state and nonstate actors. In an attempt to shore up U.S. sovereignty, customs officers handed state power to the people.

Federal officials had encouraged a form of vigilantism, but balked when this extralegal border enforcement took a violent turn. In the summer of 1885, when the federal government exhausted its appropriation and deportation to Canada became untenable, it was clear to all that the government had lost any semblance of control. "There is no longer any hope of obtaining relief from this Chinese curse through the laws enacted by Congress," declared the *Seattle Call*. "Their inefficiency to prevent Chinese immigration has been demonstrated. To this northern country, bordering on British Columbia, they absolutely afford no protection whatever." Since the federal government had failed, the paper concluded, "we must protect ourselves or be overrun by these heathen."⁹⁵ Abandoned by the state, "the people" must intervene to enforce the law.

Part 2

Violence

The Banished

FOR GONG HENG, the job started like any other. He met a labor contractor in Seattle, Chin Lee Chong, who offered him a few months' work before winter came. Soon, he and thirty-six other Chinese workers started the fifteen-mile trek to Squak Valley, Washington Territory. As they walked through the countryside, their progress drew onlookers and hushed conversations. This was also to be expected. Even from a distance, their wide-brimmed straw hats, braided queues, and poles slung across their shoulders set them apart from the familiar sight of white workers. To be Chinese in America was to be conspicuous. But they arrived at the Wold Brothers hop farm without incident and pitched sixteen small tents. It was Saturday, September 5, 1885.

Was Gong aware that three days earlier twenty-eight Chinese miners had been massacred in Rock Springs, Wyoming Territory? There is no way to know. The story was on the front page of every American newspaper, but few Chinese workers could read the headlines. Perhaps rumors of faraway violence gave him some inkling of what was to come, or perhaps he was taken by surprise when twenty-five men descended on his camp that afternoon, brandishing weapons and lobbing insults. Gong did not have to understand English well to comprehend the mob's meaning. This was a warning.

On Sunday all was quiet. Then Monday work began. Since it was harvest time, the hop fields were thick with vines that towered above him and made it impossible to see more than a few feet ahead. Though Gong feared trouble, he witnessed none. The vigilantes, it turned out, were busy elsewhere; as Gong labored in the fields, the mob intercepted a second group of Chinese



Puyallup Valley (1889). Chinese and white workers harvesting hops near the site of the 1885 Squak Valley murder and expulsion. University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Boyd and Brass, photographer, UW38226.

workers bound for the Wold Brothers farm. What exactly happened between the vigilantes and the newcomers is unknown, but the outcome speaks for itself. The Chinese turned and fled.

Monday night, Gong was asleep in his tent when the vigilantes returned without warning in the darkness. “So many shot fired it sounded all same [as] China New Year,” he told a coroner’s jury a few days later. As bullets blew holes through the workers’ tents, all was chaos. Gong ran for the forest, hunkered down at a safe distance, and watched as the tents burned. He returned to the camp to find the bodies of men he had labored beside only hours before. There was thirty-five-year-old Fung Wai, shot in the chest, and thirty-two-year-old Mong Goat, shot in the belly. Beside the bodies was a gravely wounded man, Yung Son. “Yung Son was shot through left arm, through both thighs and through ankle,” testified Gong. After Yung passed the next morning, the Chinese packed up their remaining possessions and took the road out of Squak Valley.¹

Gong stayed behind, minding the bodies of the three who died, bringing shell casings to the local sheriff as evidence, and serving as a witness in the coroner's inquest and criminal trial. He had been defenseless against the mob, but now he could fight for retribution. In emotional testimony, Gong tried to convey the anguish of Yung's death. He told the jury that "[Yung] was sorry to die. Got a son [at] home, too young, no one to send him money. [Yung] did not talk much, but hollered through the night." Even in the courtroom, Gong proved powerless. He knew the men who had died, but nothing of the shooters. All he could say was, "Monday night white men come to kill Chinamen." Who were these "white men"? Why did they kill the "Chinamen"? Gong did not know.²

For the Chinese, this is how the violence began, with shock, fear, and lingering questions. Histories of violence, however, rarely start this way. It is difficult to begin the history of anti-Chinese violence with its victims because the story of racial violence is, inevitably, a narrative of action and reaction, perpetrator and prey. Searching for cause and effect, history favors stories of people who instigate events over those who suffer the aftermath. The Chinese make unnatural protagonists because they did not set these violent episodes in motion, nor did they hold the power to stop them. They also make problematic narrators because, like Gong, they often could not name their attackers or pinpoint their motivations.

Racial violence against the Chinese relied on the power of surprise. The Chinese did not know when threats would turn to violence, what form the violence would take, or when it would end. While vigilantes sometimes depended on bullets to rid their community of Chinese, they often expelled them through threats alone. To fully understand the potency of this psychological violence, we must start our exploration of racial violence with the Chinese, adopt their vulnerable state of ignorance, and attempt to understand what it means to live in terror.

Foregrounding the Chinese perspective also guards against their voices being drowned out by others.³ The inequalities of the past have produced disconcerting gaps in our present-day archives. Thousands were expelled from towns and cities in the U.S. West in 1885 and 1886, but only a handful of firsthand Chinese accounts still exist. Telling the story of the expelled

entails searching for these uncommon records but also requires reading silences left behind by those who had no voice. To this end, Part II focuses on the expulsions in Washington Territory. A combination of dramatic events and happenstance created the best-preserved Chinese records there. Many of these accounts come in the form of legal testimony collected by county courts and federal investigators. This testimony, primarily provided by Chinese merchants or labor contractors, hardly offers a full picture, and is often translated and incomplete. These contemporaneous accounts can be supplemented by oral histories conducted by sociologists in the 1920s. Even these remembrances, which include working-class narrators, are often guarded and invariably marked by the passage of time. Imperfect as these sources are, they offer rare a glimpse of how Chinese migrants in the U.S. West gave meaning to the violence and navigated its effects. Though the vigilantes were fond of describing the Chinese as an undifferentiated mass, the diversity of Chinese responses reveal they were anything but. Even within the severe constraints of their position in society, Chinese migrants maintained some power to interpret the violence and make individual choices in response.

At times, these responses took the form of outright resistance.⁴ Indeed, Chinese labor contractors and merchants, who had significant financial reasons to stay put, often attempted to challenge the vigilantes' authority both in real time and after the fact. They did so in part by drawing on multiple relationships with local white leaders. Given that charges of "inassimilability" and clannishness formed the core of the vigilantes' expulsion campaign, it is ironic that the Chinese response reveals the extent of Chinese integration into the white community. The Chinese businessmen of the Pacific Northwest were strikingly bilingual and bicultural and, at times of crisis, used all the social capital they could muster to prevent expulsion. But their local power usually proved inadequate to shield them from violence.⁵

Chinese businessmen were more successful at containing violence when they operated on an international scale. On the streets of Seattle, for example, the Chinese appeared defenseless against an armed mob, but their pleading telegrams to the Chinese consulate helped summon U.S. troops to their aid. While their status as "aliens ineligible to citizenship" was usually to their disadvantage, in this circumstance it was a potential source of power. As Chinese nationals entitled to treaty rights of a "most favored nation," the Chinese held status claimed by no other racial minority in the United States.

By drawing on their transnational connections, Chinese merchant-contractors thrust the issue of local anti-Chinese violence onto the international stage. In so doing, they reinforced their status as aliens in the United States and changed the course of Sino-American relations. Geographers have described similar strategies as “scale jumping.”⁶ The Chinese jumped scales when they harnessed resources available on the international level to overcome the constraints encountered on the local level. The Chinese may have been metaphorically and literally outgunned in their own backyard, but they found power on an international stage.

That said, it is important not to assume that direct resistance was the only form of Chinese agency.⁷ While some Chinese elites fought to stay, many Chinese workers chose to leave. Like their more privileged countrymen, members of the lower classes maintained the ability to make individual choices, albeit within tight parameters. Facing a cascading series of events beyond their control, many Chinese workers decided that retreating and regrouping elsewhere offered the best hope of finding peace, work, and a prosperous future. After all, they were migrant laborers accustomed to seasonal work, and they lacked financial stakes in the local community. Having crossed the Pacific and traveled inland, they were practiced at using mobility as a strategy for survival.

This chapter recovers stories of Chinese resistance and flight in the face of white violence, but this is not its sole intent. A long and troubling tradition exists that renders the history of Chinese in America as primarily a history of white oppression.⁸ There are dangers to selectively shining the spotlight on moments when Chinese migrants were objects of white prejudice. Doing so reinforces the biases of the past and threatens to deprive the Chinese of their full humanity. While we consider the Chinese reaction to racial violence, we must also attend to what these spectacular events reveal about their everyday lives. Moments of crisis and the unique sources they produce can expose aspects of the Chinese American experience that usually remain hidden, in this case, critical divisions between workers and merchant-contractors. Contemporary observers and historians have described a community tightly bound by vertically organized businesses and village kinship networks. The pressure of white violence, however, revealed and accentuated divergent class interests within a seemingly unified Chinese community.⁹

“Like So Many Hogs”

In Squak Valley, the Chinese were banished on arrival. But as violence spread in the fall of 1885, it took hold in communities where Chinese were far from newcomers. Chinese laborers had worked in the nearby Coal Creek mines for several years when, days after the Squak Valley murders, fifteen masked white men armed with pistols came to their camp at midnight. A Chinese worker, Ching Poy Hing, later reported the shocking scene when men suddenly “kicked the door of the house[,] forced an entrance and took hold of him and other Chinese and forced them out of the building.”¹⁰ One man escaped, running from the house with his clothes in his hands. But others were not so lucky, suffering beatings before they fled. In an eerie reprise of Squak Valley, once the Chinese stumbled into the dark woods, they looked back, seeing all of their possessions go up in flames. If Chinese and white miners had built any familiarity over three years of daily labor side by side, the darkness, masks, and violence suddenly washed it away.

In nearby Tacoma, the Chinese dated their presence back more than a decade, which was a long time in a port town dominated by recent arrivals. Even before the town got its name in the early 1870s, the Chinese had arrived as railroad and lumber workers. By 1885, when the Chinese made up only 2.6 percent of the nonindigenous population in Washington Territory, the Chinese represented 9 percent of the population in Tacoma and surrounding Pierce County (and 12.5 percent of the male population). Though some of the Chinese workers lived together in wooden shacks along the bay, Chinese businessmen began to buy plots in the center of town. An early chronicler of Tacoma bemoaned that “having a Chinese for a neighbor” was one of the perils of living in town. Indeed, the Chinese elite in Tacoma were not strangers to the white community.¹¹

In retrospect, it is tempting to see the anti-Chinese violence that rocked Tacoma as evidence of a wide racial gulf in the community. But Chinese testimony, gathered by Territorial Governor Watson Squire after the fact, reveals a more complicated story. In the process of detailing the expulsion, Tacoma’s Chinese merchant-contractors described their strong ties across the color line and attempts to use these connections as a means of contestation.

Warnings of violence to come made retreat and resistance possible in Tacoma. Kwok Sue, a Chinese merchant-contractor, testified that twenty

white men gathered in front of his store in October 1885. The vigilantes declared that “the Knights of Labor and all the people wanted the Chinamen to go,” giving them until November 1 to vacate town. Sue estimated that this deadline alone drove out more than two hundred Chinese workers. “The reason they were frightened,” explained Sue, “was because the parties who notified us to go said if the Chinese did not leave they were going to cut their throats, kill them and destroy their property.”¹² Hundreds more packed up and left town after white employers began to bow to public pressure and fire Chinese workers indiscriminately. Still, threats alone did not clear Tacoma of Chinese. The wealthiest Chinese merchants, who had large financial stakes in the territory, and the poorest Chinese laborers, who could not easily travel, decided to stay.

Sue, like many merchants, did not immediately take flight. When the notice to leave arrived, he had lived in the United States for twenty years, resided in Tacoma for twelve, and worked as a merchant and labor contractor for six. He had painstakingly constructed a life and livelihood in his adopted country and hesitated to abandon all that he had built. Instead, Sue drew on his many connections to the elite white establishment of Tacoma. Seeking advice and protection, he visited a banker, a merchant, and the land agent of the Northern Pacific Railway. They all told him, he recounted, that “this business is nothing but talk. The government will take care of you. Go and behave yourselves, attend to your business and everything will be allright [*sic*].” Sue believed them.¹³

Another Chinese merchant-contractor in Tacoma, N. W. Gow, sought advice more widely. In November 1885, Gow had only been in the city for a year, but in that short time, using his excellent English and his status as a successful businessman, he had already embedded himself in the local community. In addition to making business contacts, Gow joined the First Baptist Church, became a regular attendant at Sunday school, and earned the respect of the local pastor. When he received the notice to vacate, Gow visited a local judge to ask if the vigilantes had any legal standing. He was assured that there was no American law that could compel the Chinese to leave.

Even so, Gow reached beyond the local community to contact regional and international powerbrokers. He first sought help from the Chinese government, notifying the consulate in San Francisco of growing anti-Chinese agitation in Tacoma. He was not the only Chinese merchant to jump scales,

calling on faraway diplomats to solve local problems. Frederick A. Bee, an American lawyer hired to represent the consulate, received multiple reports that “evil-disposed” people had threatened violence and that “in fact, the Chinese are to be expelled from [Washington] Territory.” After relaying the news to China, Bee wrote to Governor Squire demanding that local government stop the mayhem. When Squire pledged that every effort was being taken to prevent violence, Bee telegraphed Gow to stand his ground.¹⁴

A telegram alone could not calm Gow’s fears. He traveled to the territory’s capital, Olympia, to meet the governor. There, Squire advised Gow and other Chinese who came to plead their case “to quietly withdraw, if they can do so, until the present period of excitement passed away.” If the Chinese insisted on remaining in the territory, Squire promised to protect them.¹⁵ With assurances from both Chinese and U.S. officials, Gow decided to remain in Tacoma past November 1.

The deadline came and went. At first it seemed there would be no repercussions for Gow, Sue, and the other Chinese in Tacoma. But then, on the third day of November at 9:30 A.M., a short blast of whistles sounded across the city. Chinese residents could only watch as several hundred white men, armed with pistols and clubs, marched en masse from the foundry. There was no residential segregation in Tacoma, so the vigilantes had to crisscross town to round up Chinese. They started at a laundry on the southern extremity of C Street, then proceeded to houses in downtown, “Chinatown,” and finally “old town.” Some Chinese opened their doors to the marauders, while others futilely locked their homes. The vigilantes entered in both cases, ordering frightened Chinese to pack up and leave town by 1 P.M. or face unspoken consequences.¹⁶

After working diligently to establish his right to stay in Tacoma, one can only imagine Gow’s thoughts when he saw “a large mob of white men in the street both in front and back of [his] store.” Gow’s pastor, Barnabas McLafferty, rushed to the store and was disturbed by what he found: white men grabbing items off the shelves and passing them out the door while Gow watched, unable to stop them.¹⁷ Even in the face of an armed mob, Gow continued to try to talk his way out of expulsion. A little after noon, he went to the store across from his, owned by a white man named H. O. Ball, and asked for help. Together, Ball and Gow found the mayor of Tacoma, Jacob Weisbach, and begged him to stop the vigilantes. Gow later testified, “[The



Chinese-Occupied Buildings in Tacoma (1885). This reconstruction of a Sanborn Insurance map shows the location of buildings where Chinese lived and worked. Although contemporaries described the Chinese residences along Commencement Bay as “Chinatown,” the map shows little sign of Chinese residential segregation.



Pacific Avenue (1876). During the Tacoma expulsion in 1885, unknown arsonists destroyed the Chinese residences in the foreground. Contemporaries described these buildings along Commencement Bay as Tacoma's "Chinatown." Courtesy of the Washington State Historical Society Cecil Cavanaugh Collection, 1979.1.101.

Mayor] told me the crowd would not hurt me. That I will be safe, but the Chinese must go." Gow's persistent advocacy could do nothing to protect the larger Chinese community in Tacoma, but it did garner an individual reprieve. The mayor offered a handwritten note urging the vigilantes to give Gow, a prominent and wealthy merchant, additional time to pack his goods.¹⁸

Like Gow, Sue did not leave Tacoma without protest. The mob came to Sue's waterfront house by boat. "They invaded my house," he remembered, "took a great many of my goods and carried them into the boat. They also put me out of the house." Still Sue did not leave. He called on his acquaintance, the sheriff, to petition for an additional forty-eight hours to pack his remaining goods. He too was granted leniency, leaving with a note of temporary reprieve.¹⁹

While Gow and Sue fought for local protection, other Chinese merchants sought federal aid. Ten Sin Yee Lee telegraphed Governor Squire from Tacoma: "Mob driving Chinese out of town. Will you not protect us?" From nearby Puyallup, Goon Gau echoed the message: "People driving Chinamen from Tacoma. Why sheriff no protect[?] Answer." All they got was a brief

and guarded response. "Telegram received," replied Squire, "I have telegraphed facts to government in Washington." Nobody came to their aid.²⁰

Chinese workers, lacking the social and economic capital that Gow and Sue enjoyed, faced immediate expulsion. Lum May, another Chinese merchant, was permitted to stay temporarily, but his wife was driven out with Chinese laborers on November 3. Standing in his store across the street, May watched helplessly as the mob approached his home. "Where the doors were locked," remembered May, "they broke forcibly into the houses, smashing in doors and breaking in windows. Some of the crowd were armed with pistols, some with clubs. They acted in [a] rude boisterous and threatening manner, dragging and kicking the Chinese out of their houses. My wife refused to go, and some of the white persons dragged her out of the house." May's wife was one of hundreds of Chinese who were driven out of town, as promised, at 1 P.M. on November 3.²¹

The Chinese merchants could only watch. "The wind was billowing a gale. It was raining hard," recalled Sue, "Some of the Chinese lost their trunks, some their blankets. Many were crying. . . . The Chinese people were driven out like a herd of cattle."²² Tak Nam, a merchant who had failed to win reprimand, also likened the Chinese to defenseless animals. Some vigilantes held clubs and poles, testified Tak, "and they used these to drive us like so many hogs." They were "scared sheep" chased by "dragons," reported Tacoma and Portland merchants to the Chinese consulate, "afraid of losing their lives." With their destination unknown, many feared they were marching to their deaths. In the end, two workers died after falling ill during a forced eight-mile trek to a train station in Lake View.²³

Gow refused to watch the expulsion of his employees and kinsmen without knowing what had become of them. That evening, he hired a carriage to make the journey to Lake View. He tried to buy bread in Tacoma to bring to the expelled, but white storekeepers refused to sell him any. He arrived at 9 P.M. with foodstuffs he scrounged from his own supplies. There, he saw fifty or sixty armed white men guarding several hundred Chinese.²⁴ The vigilantes had found shelter for most of the Chinese workers in the railroad station, at a nearby house, and in open sheds that lacked flooring. A few remained out in the rain. The Chinese were allowed to build fires, but many were already hopelessly wet and cold. With the help of his note from the mayor, Gow dropped off the provisions without harassment and headed back for

Tacoma. That night, half of the banished Chinese boarded the first available train to Portland, a freight that arrived at the station at 3 A.M., while others took a passenger train at 7:30 the next morning. The seventy-seven Chinese who could afford to pay their fare rode 150 miles to Portland, but those who could not were sent off the train after eight miles and forced to walk along the tracks to the nearest town, or wait in the wilderness to be rescued. "The suffering was beyond description," reported Portland merchants to the Chinese consulate. "Their cries could be heard miles away."²⁵

The merchants' reprieve, it turned out, was short-lived. At 9 P.M. on the night of the expulsion, thirty men came to Sue's residence. "Four or five of them pulled their pistols out of their pockets," Sue testified, "and said [']you are a son of a bitch. You must get out of the house.'" He pleaded for the forty-eight hours the sheriff had promised him, but the crowd ignored his appeals. Frightened for his life, Sue fled Tacoma and hid about a mile from town at an Indian agency. Under constant threat, Gow survived a few more days in Tacoma. When he arrived back at his store after visiting Lake View, the vigilantes demanded his keys and locked him in the building. Enduring six days of house arrest while he packed his goods, Gow finally managed to flee Tacoma when unknown arsonists set Chinatown ablaze. Despite the extra time to pack, Gow later declared a loss of more than thirteen thousand dollars and Sue claimed more than fifteen thousand.²⁶

By November 7, two months after the Squak Valley massacre, there were no Chinese left in Tacoma. And yet, the merchants' many acts of resistance had made a mark. Their extensive connections to the local white community bought them a little time, but it was their links on the regional and international scales that made the largest impact. In desperate appeals to the governor and reports of suffering to the Chinese consulate, they transformed the expulsion at Tacoma from a local skirmish into an international incident. When China demanded answers, the U.S. government set Governor Squire on a mission to investigate the need for redress. In response, Squire collected affidavits from six Chinese merchant-contractors who had formerly called Tacoma home. Inadvertently, he produced an unparalleled collection of Chinese narratives of racial violence.

“We Ask You to Secure Protection for Us”

If anyone could fend off an expulsion in Washington Territory, it was Chin Gee Hee of Seattle. When the violence erupted, Chin had wealth, power, and connections that dwarfed those of the Chinese in Tacoma. He regularly fielded deferential letters from leading white ladies and businessmen and counted himself among the acquaintances of prominent lawyers, judges, and the governor. But it had not always been that way. Chin came from a family of petty merchants in southwestern China, found domestic work for meager wages in California, and then traveled north to work as a cook at the Port Gamble Lumber Mill in Washington Territory. Along the way, he encountered white Protestant missionaries who introduced him to Christian scripture along with the English language and American customs. Once he had saved some money, Chin chose to send for his wife from China instead of returning to his homeland. In 1873, he moved with her to Seattle, where he bought a position as junior partner in the Wa Chong Company, the same firm that Deputy Collector of Customs Arthur Blake would later link to migrant smuggling. While his business partner, Chun Ching Hock, focused on trade, Chin Gee Hee saw the profit in contracting. For those who wanted Chinese workers, Chin was the man to know.²⁷

Chin was one of the first Chinese merchants in Seattle, and with his help, a Chinese community grew up around him. By 1880, census takers counted two hundred Chinese in Seattle, twenty-nine of whom lived in Chin's boarding house. By the fall of 1885, there were (depending on the season) four hundred to eight hundred Chinese in Seattle, spanning seven blocks surrounding Washington Street and 3rd Avenue. Seattle's Chinatown, however, was not a bounded racial space. Outside, Chinese domestics lived with their white employers, but inside, some Chinese workers lived in mixed-race boarding houses, many Chinese merchants had shops alongside white businesses, and most Chinese residents lived next to white neighbors. In other words, Chinatown was a polyglot community that included European immigrants, Native Americans, African Americans, and the working poor. The vast majority of Chinese in Seattle lived in Chinatown, but they did not live there alone. That was before the violence.²⁸

Chin's road through the violence in Seattle was jagged, reflecting the uneven nature of his power. Like the elite Chinese of Tacoma, Chin attempted



Chin Gee Hee (c. 1904). After crossing the Pacific in the 1860s, Chin (1844–1929) began life in the United States as a miner, railroad worker, and domestic servant. By the 1870s, he had become a successful businessman and labor contractor in Seattle. University of Washington, Special Collections, Asahel Curtis, photographer, A. Curtis 01281.

to use his local connections to protect himself and his community from expulsion. This local influence offered little defense, but scale jumping provided more. Through connections to the Chinese government, Chin marshaled the means to withstand local hostilities.

For Chin, the violence at Tacoma was a warning of what was to come. When he learned of the expulsion, he immediately alerted the Chinese consulate in San Francisco. “Chinese residents of Tacoma forcibly driven out yesterday,” telegraphed Chin. “From two to three hundred Chinese now in Seattle. Imminent danger. Local authorities willing but not strong enough to protect us. We ask you to secure protection for us.” When Chin sent this desperate appeal to the Chinese consulate, he did so as a man of great wealth and prominence. The consul general, Owyang Ming, took notice. Quoting Chin’s message verbatim, Ming reported to the Chinese minister in Wash-

ington, D.C., that “outrages are still going on” in Washington Territory and “strong appeals for protection arrive here hourly.” In turn, the Chinese minister wrote to the State Department forwarding Chin’s telegram once again and beseeching the U.S. government to protect Chinese citizens from violence. Soon Chin’s words were sitting on the desk of U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Bayard. Before Chin could hope to receive a response, he was arrested.²⁹

Chin held surprising power on a national and international scale, but locally he was subject to sudden and arbitrary arrest. The district attorney filed an indictment against him for the crime of “maintaining a public nuisance” on November 4, a day after the Tacoma expulsion. The indictment alleged that since January 1, 1885, Chin had maintained an acre of land next to his store where he was “slaughtering a great number of hogs and other animals and storing large quantities of decaying vegetable matter and filth.” These “offensive substances” were “occasioning noxious exhalations, offensive smells and stenches” which were “injurious and dangerous” to the “entire community.” According to the complaint, Chin’s actions were contrary to the “peace and dignity of the territory of Washington.” This standard legal language took on special irony in light of the recent violence.

On November 5, the sheriff, warrant in hand, arrested Chin just as anti-Chinese agitation in Seattle threatened to break into open violence.³⁰ There is no evidence that this indictment ever resulted in a settlement or trial. In fact, Chin spent less than a day in jail. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the arrest was timed to influence the outcome of a pivotal meeting to be held that afternoon. Only hours after he was released, Chin and four prominent Chinese merchants sat down with anti-Chinese leaders to discuss plans for voluntary exile. Under the looming threat of violence, Chin and the other Chinese merchants agreed to send away all Chinese workers as fast as funds would permit. For Chinese businessmen like themselves, they requested additional time to pack up shop. Chin pointed out that Wa Chong Company was owed some thirty thousand dollars by the city and they had property in Seattle worth a hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars, so he could hardly be expected to leave overnight. It appeared that the merchant-contractors were good to their word and began sending away Chinese workers. Within two days, an estimated one hundred and fifty Chinese left Seattle by train or boat.³¹

This “voluntary” withdrawal from Seattle suddenly ended on November 6 with news that Tacoma’s Chinatown was burning. Arson added new urgency to appeals for federal protection. By the morning of November 8, 350 federal soldiers marched into Seattle to prevent all further expulsion. For the Chinese, the ten-day presence of the troops meant a temporary end to expulsion, but not the end of harassment. One soldier knocked down a Chinese man who was walking down Front Street, grabbed his basket of laundry, and threw it over a bluff onto the beach. Another soldier grabbed a Chinese man, cut the queue from his head, and nailed it to a railroad car. In addition to physically harassing Chinese, some soldiers decided to turn a profit at the Chinese community’s expense. A group of soldiers went door to door in the Chinese quarter demanding a “special tax” from each man, netting \$150. In spite of the soldiers’ dubious loyalty, the Chinese consulate trusted that the violence would end. On November 9, the consul general telegraphed Chin: “Tell the Chinese to remain in Washington Territory.” The workers appear to have listened; the exodus from Seattle slowed.³²

With the crisis averted, Chin found time to focus on justice and redress. For redress, he turned to the Chinese consulate and the U.S. federal government. He gathered together over forty Chinese workers who had been expelled from nearby Coal Creek and had them declare him their “lawful attorney.” Chin prepared an affidavit, swearing to each worker’s individual losses—ranging from \$14 to \$191—and to his businesses’ collective loss at more than \$1,000. Then he submitted these claims to the Chinese consul, who forwarded them to the secretary of state.³³ Seeking justice, Chin turned to the local court system. He testified before a grand jury in a case against fourteen vigilantes. According to the indictment, the men had engaged in a conspiracy “to threaten, intimidate, harass and annoy” all Chinese in King County. But the defense argued that all the men did was exercise their right to free speech. While Chin would ultimately win his bid for federal redress, he lost his local fight for justice. In January 1886, a jury found all fourteen defendants not guilty.³⁴

This local loss portended that worse was to come. On February 6, anti-Chinese agitators celebrated their legal victory. The next day, Seattle’s Chinese community awoke to a white mob marching through Chinatown, a scene that must have borne eerie resemblance to Tacoma three months ear-

lier. Armed vigilantes knocked on each door, telling the Chinese that they had to vacate Seattle by 1 P.M. No one was exempted.³⁵

When the mob came to Chin's boarding house, he learned a horrific lesson about the limits of his local power. The mob pushed their way into his house, stormed upstairs, and found his pregnant wife, who was known by the family as Madam Wong. Was he there to witness the scene that followed? Perhaps not, but either way, it must have left a vivid imprint. From the mob, someone caught ahold of his wife by the hair, dragging her down the stairs and pushing her into the street. In a matter of minutes, the vigilantes had violated all that Chin held dear: his business, his household, his first wife, and his unborn child. All he could do was later tell this story. He wrote to the Chinese consul, which later described the violent scene to Secretary of State Bayard. "The fright and bodily injuries received made her seriously ill," Minister Zhang Yinhan (Chang Yen Hoon) explained, "and three days afterwards she was prematurely delivered of a child." Madam Wong, after much time and pain, eventually regained her health. But the child perished.³⁶

Yet Chin successfully resisted expulsion from Seattle. When others fled, he refused, and soon federal troops returned. To keep federal protection for as long as possible, Chin again used his surprising line of communication to the State Department. On May 6, he telegraphed the Chinese consulate: "United States troops ordered from Seattle. See President and have them retained two months." If troops were to withdraw, Chin explained, "[the] Knights of Labor say they drive us out in thirty days." Chin's appeal was forwarded to Secretary Bayard, who quickly granted the request. The troops remained through late July.³⁷

As the violence abated, Chin once again turned to the fight for redress. When the Chinese consulate opened an investigation into the Seattle expulsion, Chin was the first to file a claim. Leaving aside the personal assault on his wife, he instead focused on his financial losses. With the help of a lawyer, he estimated that his business lost \$67,000, "caused by the nontenancy of [his] houses, debts owed by Chinese uncollected & discontinuance of their labor-brokers business in several coal mines and other places." In addition, he had invested \$85,000 in fifteen buildings that now remained unoccupied, and \$4,500 in eight farm lots that now lay fallow. Chin's claims not only speak to the magnitude of his personal losses, but also to the crumbling of

Seattle's Chinese community. He had nobody to whom to rent rooms, nobody to hire out, and nobody to farm his land. Chin may have successfully resisted expulsion, but his workers were long gone.³⁸

"We Got to Get Out of Here"

Chin believed he could speak on behalf of the Chinese lower classes. After all, it was a labor contractor's job to represent his workers. During more peaceful times, contractors recruited workers, supplied their provisions, and hired them out to wealthy white men in the territory for a per-head fee. Chinese workers, lacking English skills and knowledge of the local community, needed contractors to help them find work and negotiate their wages. Contractors, in turn, needed a ready supply of pliable workers to profit. Notably, neither group saw this unequal relationship as a permanent class division. Merchant-contractors would draw their future shareholders and business partners from the ranks of wage laborers. Workers knew that dreams of social mobility depended on social connections with their betters. The result was a labor regime built on codependence, exploitation, and an uncommon allegiance between social classes. Violence tested these bonds of kinship and capital. While Chin fought diligently for the right to stay in Seattle, few Chinese workers proved willing to follow his lead.³⁹

One who tried hard to stay was Kee Low. By the time a sociologist interviewed Low in 1924, he had "amassed a respectable fortune" and "established connections . . . that are enviable by any of the Americans or Europeans [in Seattle]." But at the time of the expulsion, Low described himself as an unskilled worker earning "pretty small wages." By the winter of 1886, Low was invested in his life in Seattle. He had settled in, found work, and formed friendships. But he did not have the same stake in the community as a Chinese businessman. He had no real estate, no wife, no children, no connections to speak of, and no debts owed. In other words, he had few weights to tie him down, but also few sources of power.⁴⁰

Low was living on the edges of Chinatown when, he recalled, "they told me to get out one day." Nearly forty years later, he still remembered it was a Sunday. "Sunday morning," he told the interviewer, "they come together and drive Chinese out." The vigilantes marched Low to the nearby wharf, where he joined Wong Chin and nearly four hundred banished Chinese. There they

waited under armed guard to embark on the *Queen of the Pacific*, bound that afternoon for San Francisco. But before the steamer could depart, it was halted by a writ of habeas corpus. A merchant named Wan Lee had managed to escape the expulsion and, with the help of an attorney, filed a legal complaint with Chief Justice Roger Greene on behalf of his partner Gee Lee. Judge Greene, a known sympathizer of the Chinese community, demanded that the vigilantes deliver all the Chinese to his courtroom the following morning.⁴¹

"We stayed on the wharf all night," recalled Low, "they bring us little black coffee and little bread in morning. We pretty hungry." When they arrived at Greene's courtroom, the judge informed the crowd of Chinese men that they had a legal right to remain in Seattle. Greene reportedly told the Chinese, "You need not fear. All the power of the territory and of the United States stands ready to defend you. . . . Those of you who remain will be safe." In addition to these reassuring words, Greene also made it clear that the "general sentiment of the community is against the Chinese staying here." With Chinese merchants in the courtroom to translate, the workers understood the warning.⁴²

Although Wan Lee had fought to save them from expulsion, more than half of the Chinese workers decided to leave Seattle immediately. Perhaps they did not trust merchants to protect them against overwhelming violence. Perhaps they resented contractors who were complicit in their exploitation on the labor market. Most likely, they simply felt that better opportunities lay elsewhere. Strategies of mobility had served them well in the past, when they traveled across the ocean and then through the U.S. West in search of opportunity, and it could save them once again. The workers, many of whom moved seasonally in search of contracts, had made far fewer financial and social investments in the local community than their social betters. Why stay and brave the violence in Seattle, when they could take free passage to San Francisco, finding safety in numbers and the next job? Once the Chinese were escorted back to the wharf, 196 men and women, as many as could fit, embarked on the *Queen of the Pacific*.

Low, for his part, "didn't intend to go." Then the violence escalated. Since the *Queen* was not large enough to hold all the Chinese who wanted to leave, Low recalled, "some has to go back to the city and stay until next steamer." But as the Chinese returned to their damaged and vacant homes, escorted

by local militia, they were met by shouts from an angry mob. Amid flying insults and high excitement, the Chinese could only watch as a fight broke out between vigilantes and militia. "Chinese people get excited when gun begin to sound," recounted Low, "so they throw [down their] shoes, blankets and everything and run."⁴³

Though he had declined the one-way ticket to San Francisco, Low now thought better of it. He gathered a few friends and ran for the woods, telling them "we got to protect ourselves. We got to get out of here." The danger was too great. After hours of frantic discussion, they decided to sneak back into Seattle that night hoping to stow away on a steamer bound for Victoria, British Columbia. They made it to the wharf undetected, but they found the harbor dark and empty. As night turned to day, Low tried to hide among bales of hops stacked for shipment, but a watchman quickly discovered him. Fortunately, the watchman sympathized with his plight and went in search of a militiaman. Together the two white men approached the bales of hops and called to Low: "John, John, Come out . . . we gonna feed you." But finding somewhere that would serve a Chinese man proved difficult. While the first restaurant refused their business, eventually the militiaman procured sandwiches. The kindness of strangers bought Low a meal and the time he needed to avoid expulsion. "Next day soldiers come," remembered Low, "then we all right."⁴⁴

With the arrival of troops, Low abandoned his plan to flee. The archive privileges men like him who stayed behind and had the chance, months or years later, to tell their story. In truth, Low's final decision was an uncommon one. The next steamer bound for San Francisco took approximately a hundred and ten Chinese migrants, while the following steamer loaded another ninety. As departures mounted, reasons to stay dwindled. Shops and buildings stood empty, labor agreements broke down, and social networks crumbled. Chinese workers continued to pour out of Seattle, seeking safety and opportunity in California, Oregon, British Columbia, and China.⁴⁵

The Chinese who chose to depart left behind no written explanation of their decision, but perhaps their logic was simple. Decades later, a Chinese worker in San Francisco, Chin Cheung, remembered those days of riot and agitation, when "young fellows thr[e]w stones, cans, bricks; make lots trouble all the time." "But I always run away," Chin Cheung recalled, "I have no trouble that way because I never stay a[nd] fight." His explanation for fleeing

was a quick calculation of power: “Many white people; same number Chinamen, lots of fight; not many Chinamen, no can fight.” That is, when the odds are long, run.⁴⁶

Over a period of eighteen months in 1885 and 1886, Chinese across the U.S. West experienced violence on an unprecedented scale. Chinese remembrances of this time make it clear that each story of survival was highly personal and specific to the individual, to the time, and to the place. And yet violence also had collective and cumulative effects. Kee Low, for example, considered himself a witness to violence he did not see. Though he was living in Seattle at the time, Low described the Squak Valley massacre in his personal history. He recalled, “they start[ed] some Chinese picking hops out in Squak Valley” but then “at night [the vigilantes] go out around Chinese tents and they kill three.” Though he told the interviewer, “I was there at that time. I see that. I know,” his words were not meant to be taken literally. He was safely in Seattle, but still felt the massacre’s rippling effects and experienced its trauma as his own. Low understood that these expulsions were not isolated incidents, but a collective campaign to “drive Chinese out of the country.” He was not in Squak Valley but knew the bullets were still meant for him.⁴⁷

For the Chinese, the outbreak of violence seemed a coordinated attack toward a specific end. Ah Hung, a Chinese migrant, told California’s *Marysville Appeal* in February 1886, “The Chinese . . . have come to the conclusion that the present movement is different from preceding ones, that it will prove to be a permanent one.” The scope of the violence had convinced Hung that “[the people of the] Pacific Coast are earnest in their desire not only to restrict [us] coming into the country, but to expel those already here.” Hung understood immigration restriction and violent expulsion as two prongs of a single attack. Together, law and violence sought to deny the Chinese any place in America.⁴⁸

The Chinese minister, Zheng Zaoru (Cheng Tsao Ju), came to a similar realization in the wake of the Seattle expulsion. In pleading letters to Secretary Bayard, Zheng wrote, “The Chinese have been driven by violence out of many places, their dwellings burned, their property robbed, and, in some instances, the people murdered, without any serious attempt being made by

the authorities to prevent these acts or afford protection.” The violence no longer appeared to be a series of isolated incidents. Zheng heard rumors that “many other towns and cities” were forming groups “with the avowed purpose of expelling the Chinese.” He feared this was the beginning of a mass movement “not only to drive [the Chinese] from their localities, but to secure their expulsion from America.” If the federal government did not intervene, Zheng believed the Chinese would be banished from the country.⁴⁹

As the violence spread, it also continued to divide the Chinese community between laborers and the elite. While many Chinese merchants demanded the right to stay, most workers decided the right choice was to leave. At first, Minister Zheng pleaded for the United States to save the Chinese from banishment, echoing the demands of the merchant class. But soon he saw the logic behind the workers’ actions. Zheng wrote to the Chinese Foreign Office that it was foolhardy for Chinese migrants to remain in this violent land. The only way to stop the violence and protect Sino-American trade, he came to believe, was to prevent Chinese workers from coming to the United States in the first place. The only solution was to build Chinese exclusion on Chinese terms.⁵⁰

The People

IT IS TEMPTING, in retrospect, to believe it all began in Eureka. In 1885, the United States had entered its third year of recession, the Customs Department was struggling to guard the nation's borders, and a Chinese man shot a white man in Eureka, California. The shooting, all parties acknowledged, was accidental. On February 6, City Councilman David Kendall was crossing the street when he was mortally wounded, caught in the crossfire between two Chinese men. Despite the circumstances, the white community was up in arms, chanting "Let's go and burn the devils out!" and "Hang all the Chinamen!" Fearing a riot, police arrested a group of Chinese men and dispatched the local militia to protect the county jail. Dissuaded from immediate violence, the mob gathered at Centennial Hall to discuss what was to be done. After dismissing proposals for a massacre and arson, the vigilantes, who described themselves as "the people," announced they would drive out all the Chinese by the following afternoon. That night, as vigilantes ran through the town and neighboring farms announcing the expulsion, leaders erected gallows and hanged a "Chinaman" in effigy. Within forty-eight hours, the vigilantes had expelled the entire Chinese community (perhaps as many as eight hundred people) from Eureka.¹

Although most newspapers criticized the violence, a few lauded the expulsion. The *Stockton Mail*, for example, noted "This is one town rid of its obnoxious alien element," and said the expulsion "conveys a lesson which other communities might learn to their advantage." This "lesson," at least at first, attracted little interest. The expulsion proved contagious only in

Eureka's immediate proximity. Nearby Arcata expelled dozens of Chinese a week later, but Eureka was not patient zero in the epidemic of violence that was to follow. One local incident did not so easily trigger a mass movement against the Chinese. Across the U.S. West, many white Americans shared Eureka's hatred of the Chinese and fear of economic hard times, but they were not yet ready to copy the city's example.²

Take, for example, James Beith, who lived near Eureka and, like most of his neighbors, was no friend to the Chinese. He believed that all members of the "Caucasian race" shared "the altar of common civilization," whereas the Chinese "notoriously despise our religion, customs and habits." And yet he was disturbed by the one copycat incident that occurred in Arcata. He penned in his diary, "Eureka has partial justification for her action" because of the murder of Councilman Kendall, but he was concerned that "Arcata without a shadow of provocation insists upon measures equally severe." Although he supported the anti-Chinese cause, Beith believed "the men of Eureka had a real grievance—those of Arcata none."³ He had put his finger on what impeded the spread of anti-Chinese violence in the spring of 1885. The violent anti-Chinese movement would not take shape until men like Beith were convinced that all communities in the U.S. West had a "real grievance," and that the very presence of Chinese was sufficient "provocation" for expulsion.

An element of violence always existed within the anti-Chinese movement in the U.S. West, but it was not until 1885 that violence formed the basis of the movement. That year, a political phenomenon (with occasional bursts of violence) became a violent one (with more than occasional bursts of politics). On its face, the tactics of this new, virulent anti-Chinese movement were simple and effective: local white community members terrorized their Chinese neighbors until they left town. This seemingly parochial, not-in-my-backyard phenomenon had a wide, cascading effect as more than a hundred and fifty communities joined the fray. Lacking central leadership, local communities claimed victories for the movement through boycotts, harassment, coercion, arson, roundups, and assaults.

Why did the anti-Chinese movement turn to violence? Individuals joined the mob for personal, heterogeneous, and often unknowable reasons. And

yet, certain societal structures and discourses laid the tinder, and specific people and events lit the spark. The societal structures that undergirded the movement were not new. In the U.S. West, there had long been gaping economic disparities between workers and capitalists, a racially divided labor system, and a pervasive belief in white supremacy. Then in September 1885, the dominant discourses about these conditions shifted. In the wake of a massacre of Chinese miners early that month in Rock Springs, Wyoming Territory, anti-Chinese spokesmen constructed a compelling narrative that Chinese migration posed an existential threat to white settlement in the U.S. West. The federal government had failed to protect American citizens from imminent danger, went the story, rendering the massacre justifiable. It was an act of preemptive self-defense.⁴

The massacre at Rock Springs launched a national conversation about the meaning of anti-Chinese violence, but it was the expulsion of Chinese from Tacoma two months later that gave the violent movement its widespread appeal. The violence at Tacoma differed from incidents at Eureka and Rock Springs. The Tacoma expulsion was not a spontaneous act by a mob angered by a triggering incident. Rather, it was cold and deliberate collective action that was publicly announced well in advance. The vigilantes in Tacoma helped normalize tactics of terror, lowering the threshold for violent action and providing a strategic blueprint for communities across the U.S. West. In part, the Tacoma method proved contagious because anti-Chinese spokesmen, labor organizations, and sympathetic newspapers laid channels for communication among communities. But the violence also spread because it worked. Anti-Chinese expulsions redrew the racial landscape of the U.S. West and reordered power relations within local communities, giving white workers uncommon power over white elites. And, more surprisingly, it shifted power on the national stage.⁵

The anti-Chinese movement's turn toward local violence in 1885 can obscure its continued connection to national politics. No doubt for some vigilantes, the movement was simply a local exercise toward local ends. For others, the local campaign to terrorize the Chinese was an act of scale jumping; they used physical force on the local scale to secure national political power. Vigilantes may have joined the movement hoping to get rid of the Chinese cook next door, but they often articulated loftier communal goals before or after the fact. Their violence was a call to end Chinese

migration, prevent Chinese labor, and settle a race war. It arose from the abject failures of the Restriction Act to settle these matters. Since more conventional forms of politics had failed, they used violence to reaffirm their rights as American citizens and demand the exclusion of Chinese aliens.⁶

Although the vigilantes themselves often denied that their actions constituted violence, these expulsions represented both ethnic cleansing and political terrorism. The term “ethnic cleansing” encompasses a wide range of practices, ranging from mass murder to mass displacement and forced assimilation. What these disparate forms of violence hold in common is the deliberate removal of a specific population on the basis of their assumed ethnicity.⁷ The term “political terrorism,” in its broadest sense, connotes the systematic use of violence, and threats of its use, to intimidate a civilian population and secure political goals.⁸ When anti-Chinese vigilantes committed intentional expulsions of Chinese civilians, they sought to incite fear among the Chinese, their employers, and anyone who defended their right to remain. The vigilantes hoped to rid their territory of all Chinese people, regardless of class or immigration status, and draw fresh attention to their political demands for Chinese exclusion.

The terms “ethnic cleansing” and “political terrorism” apply to the anti-Chinese movement, but lack specificity and are borrowed from other times and places. It is more fruitful to consider the peculiarities of anti-Chinese violence, rather than placing it within nebulous and controversial categories. Anti-Chinese expulsions are better understood as a form of violent racial politics, that is, group violence intended to make a national political statement but meted out against a local racial minority. In 1885 and 1886, vigilantes expelled thousands of Chinese from western communities to advance a campaign for federal exclusion and, in so doing, reinvented the anti-Chinese movement.

“Much as Violence Is to Be Deplored”

In Eureka, it was the death of Councilman Kendall. In Rock Springs, it was a fistfight over the rights to a coalmine. In Tacoma, it was merely a newspaper article that began talk of expulsion. On Thursday, September 3, 1885, the *Tacoma Daily Ledger* described the massacre in Rock Springs:

Driving Chinamen out of Town.

Special from Rock Springs, Wyoming: . . . This afternoon, the entire force of whites about 150 strong, organized and armed with shot guns, marched to Chinatown. After firing a volley into the air they ordered the Chinese to leave. Their order was obeyed at once; the Chinese fleeing to the hills like a drove of sheep, closely pursued by the miners who fired several volleys at the fugitives with fatal effect. The Chinese quarters were then set on fire.⁹

In the end, at least twenty-eight Chinese miners were killed and fifteen wounded, while the remaining several hundred fled. The Rock Springs massacre was the deadliest outbreak of anti-Chinese violence in the country until that time, but it held additional significance in the minds of many Tamomans reading the morning paper. In a single day, white miners in Rock Springs had achieved the complete expulsion of Chinese from their town.

Most conservative and East Coast newspapers discounted the violence as “wanton and unprovoked.” But the West Coast press, especially workingmen’s newspapers, cast the incident as a justifiable reaction against the urgent threat of Chinese migration. The *Daily Ledger* declared the expulsion “altogether an effective way of settling the Chinese question . . . much as violence is to be deplored.” The paper paid no attention to the local circumstances of the expulsion, attributing the violence, instead, to a universalized grievance: “the past twelve months of distress and suffering” and the “disabled condition” of the Restriction Act. This workingman’s newspaper called for lawmakers to take notice, because soon “the contagion of this Rock Springs episode will be universal” and lead to “a simultaneous concert of action in expelling the Chinamen from the country.”¹⁰ Within a few sentences, the *Ledger* had transformed the violence at Rock Springs from a local riot to the opening shots of a race war.

The Rock Springs massacre set a critical example for the people of Washington Territory by demonstrating that violent grassroots action was a viable means of ending Chinese labor competition and achieving local racial purity. In Squak Valley, white and Indian hop-pickers had needed no more than this model. Angered by the arrival of Chinese workers only days before, vigilantes drove them out with bullets and fire. But for the violence to spread to communities that had no immediate provocation, anti-Chinese advocates required more than a template. They needed a motive. In the U.S. West,

white Americans had long understood the Chinese to be racially inferior, but this belief alone was not usually enough to incite violence. In the weeks after Rock Springs, however, local anti-Chinese spokesmen translated abstract notions of Chinese inferiority into urgent signs that the Chinese would soon destroy the U.S. West. In doing so, they articulated a new rationale for the necessity of preemptive violence.

Many outspoken anti-Chinese leaders had personal reasons for supporting the movement. Daniel Cronin, for instance, was in search of recruits. Leaving behind his wife and five children in California, Cronin journeyed to Washington Territory in the summer of 1885, planning to establish new assemblies for the Knights of Labor. The Knights, a national labor organization, advocated for the cooperative ownership of industries.¹¹ During the boom-and-bust economy of the 1870s and 1880s, the Knights endorsed the popular notion that government should break up monopolies to promote free market competition, prevent cyclical recessions, and redistribute wealth. On paper, it was a highly centralized union fighting corporate capitalists and the excesses of the Gilded Age. In practice, it was a loose collection of local assemblies that contained many impulses and ideas. Though the national platform included talk of racial equality in the form of “universal brotherhood,” local assemblies were guided by regional beliefs. In the U.S. West, this meant that the Knights of Labor were at the forefront of the anti-Chinese movement. And in Washington Territory, the Knights bore Cronin’s personal stamp.¹²

When the Rock Springs massacre renewed interest in the anti-Chinese movement, Cronin saw a recruiting opportunity. He knew from personal experience how anti-Chinese fervor could unify a white community; he had witnessed firsthand the Eureka expulsion. Now he hoped anti-Chinese agitation could boost the fortunes of the Knights in Washington Territory. He was not shy about discussing his pragmatic motives. “The Chinese question is only a local affair; useful for agitation and education,” he told an anti-Chinese rally. “The object of the Knights of Labor [is] not to drive the Chinese out; that was merely a side show.” The primary objective of the Knights of Labor, and of Cronin himself, was “to free the laboring man from the shackles that he now bears.” To this end, Cronin used the anti-Chinese “side show” as a ploy to strengthen local assemblies.¹³

With Cronin's help, the Knights gave structure to the anti-Chinese movement in Washington Territory. Though they were the largest single group to advocate Chinese expulsion in the 1880s, the Knights were not alone. The anti-Chinese movement was quick to attract the largest demographic group in the U.S. West: recently arrived European migrants, and their children, who performed unskilled or semiskilled labor.¹⁴ Though these citizens and aspiring citizens dominated the movement, small businessmen also joined the ranks, showing sympathy with the antimonopolist cause. In Tacoma, this meant that most white men played a part, including the mayor, sheriff, chief fireman, and members of the chamber of commerce.¹⁵

Tacoma's political leadership, like Cronin, claimed that Chinese migration posed an urgent crisis. Standing before swelling crowds, Cronin connected longstanding economic arguments against Chinese labor to the local realities of the recession. Visiting Seattle, he claimed he saw "100 families destitute, who did not know where the next sack of flour would come from." Traveling through the small mining town of Newcastle, Cronin found sixty-five unemployed white men. And in the nearby Black Diamond mine, the foreman told him "there had been 25 men every day traveling over the railroad looking for work for the last three months who did not expect to get any work."¹⁶ The problem, Cronin said, was that capitalists were using servile and cheap Chinese workers to undercut white wages. He decried the current "racket" in which "moneyed power" only looked out for the interests of Chinese "pigtailed." The only answer was for employers to "let [their] Chinamen go and give us their places."¹⁷

In other words, Cronin rehashed old rhetoric that linked anti-Chinese and anti-monopolist beliefs. Though couched in economic terms, these arguments were primarily based on racial assumptions. Allegedly, it was Chinese workers' innate servility and productivity that enabled monopolists to post high profits.¹⁸ James Wickersham, Tacoma's probate judge and another leader of the local anti-Chinese movement, agreed that the Chinese represented a unique form of racial peril. "The fear I have always had was not that the Pacific coast would be overrun by [Chinese] criminals and a foreign race of base and immoral character," explained Wickersham, "but that we would be confronted by millions of industrious hard-working sons and daughters of Confucius who, if given an equal chance with our people, would

outdo them in the struggle for life and gain possession of the Pacific coast of America.”¹⁹ Despite his belief that white Americans were more civilized and advanced than the Chinese, Wickersham feared that if it came to a fair fight, the white race might very well lose.

Media reports of swelling undocumented migration brought new urgency to these preexisting racial anxieties. When Congress passed the Restriction Act in 1882, many citizens believed that the federal government had finally listened to their pleas to close America’s gates. But it did not take long before newspapers reported that Chinese workers were still entering the country. In Washington Territory, warnings came almost daily. In September 1885, the *Seattle Daily Call* reported, “Chinese are being smuggled across the border from British Columbia at the rate of 100 a month and the tide is increasing.” Days later, the *Tacoma Daily Ledger* claimed that the rate was more like a hundred a week. Citing the expected completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the workingmen’s newspapers believed the current flow of unauthorized migrants was a sign of an imminent flood. The *Ledger* predicted “twelve thousand of these buff imps” would cross the border upon driving the last spike and called for immediate action to “stem the tide of barbaric invasion.”²⁰

If the government could not or would not save the West Coast from alien invaders, anti-Chinese spokesmen argued that the white people of the West Coast had to take the law into their own hands. Anti-Chinese advocate James H. Lewik, speaking to a mass meeting in Seattle, joined a chorus arguing that the people had the right to rebel when federal policies endangered the nation’s welfare. It appeared to Lewik that the federal government had abdicated all responsibility on the Chinese Question. This was simply a matter of self-defense. The government “must protect you,” Lewik argued, “or you must protect yourself. I trust peaceably if you can, but forcibly if you must.”²¹

Anti-Chinese advocates in Washington Territory argued it was possible to expel the Chinese “in a cool, business-like manner.” Based on the premise that “if the Chinese are asked to go, they will leave,” Cronin proposed a series of resolutions to organize and publicize the anti-Chinese cause. He believed that the movement had to carefully skirt the law to garner broad support and avoid legal repercussions. This would avoid the bloodiness of the Rock Springs massacre and the bad press that followed. The stakes were

high. Any public acts of violence could have long-term consequences for the fledgling territory. "To plunge the city into lawless disturbance and riot," argued the *Seattle Call*, "would tend to unsettle values, tighten the grip of hard times, diminish customers, and embarrass debtors, check both immigration and investment, throw labor out of employment, lessen the population and set the city back where it was four or five years ago." Cronin believed that a campaign based on coercion, ultimatums, and harassment would prevent an open war. If these indirect efforts at expulsion did not succeed, prophesied Cronin, "there will be riot and bloodshed this winter."²²

Though the Chinese in Tacoma remembered death threats, smashed windows, and hurled rocks, local papers described the anti-Chinese agitation as "peaceful" in September and October 1885. In Seattle, newspapers made proud declarations about the "perfect quietness and order" of anti-Chinese rallies and parades. The movement was even a family affair. One torchlight procession in Tacoma, for example, was "headed by the Tacoma band; then followed by five or six boys with arms full of sky-rockets and fiz-pops"; next came the "representatives of the press" and the "Tacomante Country Treasurer John Murray," who led "100 or more sons of freemen, ranging in age from 10–12 years." Townspeople and visitors made up the rest of the parade, which stretched a half-mile in length.²³

Other towns joined in this seemingly nonviolent movement. In Whatcom, hundreds of residents signed a pledge to stop "directly or indirectly" giving Chinese employment in "any manner."²⁴ Soon, the Black Diamond and Newcastle mines fired all Chinese workers, middle-class Seattle women let their Chinese servants go, and the Tacoma Chamber of Commerce adopted the anti-Chinese resolutions put forth by the Knights of Labor. In addition to depriving the Chinese of work, anti-Chinese agitators simply told the Chinese to leave. Then in Tacoma, the Committee of Fifteen presented local Chinese with the circular demanding their exit by November 1.²⁵

Agitators further legitimized their cause by joining forces with law enforcement. When the Territorial governor asked the Tacoma sheriff to increase his police force to prevent a riot, fifty-five Knights of Labor volunteered to be deputized. In nearby Puyallup, the U.S. attorney swore in forty-five special deputies to "preserve order," but the *Seattle Call* reported that "they are a unit in wanting the Chinese to go." In Seattle, agitators combined with the police force to increase monitoring of Chinatown. Several

THE Chinese Must Go!

Mayor Weisbach

Has called a MASS MEETING for
this (Saturday) evening at
7:30 o'clock

AT ALPHA OPERA HOUSE.

To consider the Chinese question.

TURN OUT.

“The Chinese Must Go” (1885). This advertisement for a mass meeting led by Tacoma’s mayor features the ubiquitous slogan of the anti-Chinese movement. Courtesy of the Washington State Historical Society, Edward N. Fuller Ephemera Collection, 1903.1.4.

members of the Knights accompanied Police Chief Woolery and Constable Van Doren during an evening raid made on “two opium dens in Chinatown” across the street from Chin Gee Hee’s store. When they allied with local law enforcement, anti-Chinese agitators blurred the lines between state and nonstate action and between legal force and extra-legal violence.²⁶

Many Tacomans hoped that boycotts, threats, and harassment would be enough to make the Chinese leave. But when the November 1 deadline came and went, it was clear that the campaign was not a complete success. There were “Lingering Mongols” in town, declared the *Tacoma Ledger* in an article that acknowledged that while the “great majority” of Chinese had “accepted the situation” and vacated town, an estimated fifty to one hundred remained in Tacoma. To the agitators, this dramatic decrease in the Chinese population was not enough. “If any are allowed to remain others will come,” declared the *Ledger*. “There must be a clean sweep and a thorough application of disinfectants after the sweeping is done.” The paper hinted at what was to come: “Proper means will be found to induce compliance with the popular demand.” At 9:30 A.M. on November 3, anti-Chinese vigilantes massed at the foundry outside of Tacoma and, armed with rifles and clubs, marched into town. They certainly knew where the Chinese lived, and may have known a lot more. In their depositions after the fact, some vigilantes referred to their victims by name. The Chinese had been their neighbors, before violence made them akin to strangers.²⁷

Later the mayor of Tacoma, R. J. Weisbach, and the sheriff, Lewis Byrd, would be asked to account for failing to halt the “riot.” Both claimed there was no riot to stop. Sheriff Byrd remembered telling the mayor that “a body of men” were headed “to the China houses for the purpose of driving the Chinese out.” To ensure peace and civility, Mayor Weisbach accompanied the sheriff to observe the expulsion. They watched as hundreds of white men moved from house to house, banged on doors, and demanded that the Chinese depart. The mayor turned to the sheriff and asked if he considered this a mob. “No,” Sheriff Byrd replied, “Their men [are] orderly and [do] not demand any interference.” The mayor agreed it was simply “the anti-Chinese committee notifying the Chinese to leave.” As long as the vigilantes did not fire the rifles that they carried at readiness, the mayor saw no wrongdoing in this “peaceful” expulsion.²⁸

The crowd fostered the appearance of nonviolence. In a bid to maintain moral high ground, the vigilantes tried to uphold their vows to act without violence, malice, or disorder. More practically, anti-Chinese leaders also wished to avoid any legal consequences. "If by any accident or through any disorder on account of drunken men or otherwise some Chinamen should be killed," explained Judge Wickersham later, "the Committee of Fifteen would be on the road to Walla Walla [Penitentiary]. With this horrible vision before us all day we certainly did what we could to protect the Chinamen."²⁹ In deference to their standing, the vigilantes gave Chinese merchants additional time to pack their belongings. And, after they had forced the Chinese to march eight miles in the pounding rain, they delivered the refugees three wagons full of food. Three days later, when Tacoma's Chinatown was set on fire, the vigilantes denied any responsibility.³⁰

The expulsion from Tacoma was neither orderly nor nonviolent, but the vigilantes remembered it as such. Despite beatings, the death of two Chinese from exposure, and the burning of Chinatown, anti-Chinese vigilantes maintained that the expulsion had been peaceful. The populist press congratulated the agitators in Tacoma, declaring, "No blood has been shed, no one has been hurt; the long agony is at an end [and] the Chinese have gone." This discourse of nonviolence helped normalize the expulsion as a mundane event. "We in Tacoma assisted the Chinese pests who infested our burg to transfer their belongings to a point outside of town," explained the *Tacoma Daily News*, "strictly in accordance with time-honored custom."³¹

It was true that America had a long history of vigilantism. Using the rhetoric of popular sovereignty and revolution, Americans had claimed the right to bypass the legal procedures of the state and inflict direct punishment on supposed wrongdoers for decades. In the U.S. West, groups of self-appointed citizens often justified public participation in violence by citing the limits or absence of law enforcement in newly settled territories.³² In their eyes, these American citizens were not committing an illegal act in defiance of the state; they were committing an extralegal act in extension of the state's interests. The intention was not to contest America's legal system of border control but to aid it. After driving out the Chinese from Tacoma, the vigilantes declared that "the federal government endorsed 'the Tacoma method'" when they authorized U.S. marshals to deport undocumented Chinese migrants. Vigilantes drew little distinction between lawful and unlawful immigration, or between federal deportation and vigilante expulsion.³³



“Tacoma’s Twenty-Seven” (1885). This commemorative photograph shows the men indicted for the Tacoma expulsion, including Mayor Jacob Weisbach (seated center), two members of the city council, a probate judge, the chief of the fire department, and the president of the Young Men’s Christian Association. The woman pictured, Mrs. J. A. Comerford, appears to have posed with her child on behalf of her absent husband, the editor of the *Tacoma Daily Ledger*. University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, William P. Jackson, photographer, UW1528.

These public retellings of the Tacoma expulsion made the incident into more than it was. Newspaper stories and sandlot speeches turned a mob of individuals motivated by personal interest into a unified group engaged in a self-righteous crusade. And they turned a local event based on local circumstances into a template for all to follow. These narratives transformed racial violence into vigilantism.

“Lawlessness Triumphant”

For the editors of the *Los Angeles Times*, the Tacoma expulsion forced a reassessment of the meaning of anti-Chinese violence. The *Times* had assumed that the Rock Springs massacre was “a sudden outburst of lawlessness due to special grievances.” After observing the expulsion at Tacoma, the paper reconsidered how “special” those grievances were. While condemning the use of force, the *Times* seemed convinced by the logic behind the Tacoma Method. The *Times* realized that “the same condition of affairs” that existed

in Rock Springs “exists all over the coast; the same dissatisfaction with the workings of the Restriction law, the same chafing under restraint so long imposed under the promise of speedy relief.” The editorial opined, “Now that the example of lawlessness triumphant has been set and copied, we may expect it to find ready advocates in every town on the coast.”³⁴

As the agitation and violence spread in the spring of 1886, no single spokesperson or organization emerged to lead the movement. There were a few men like Daniel Cronin who were involved in multiple anti-Chinese expulsions. After the successful expulsion of Chinese from Tacoma, Cronin made his way to Portland, Oregon, where the Knights and “anti-coolie clubs” provided a hero’s welcome. But his anti-Chinese message did not prove as powerful there. Although anti-Chinese agitators succeeded in driving Chinese out of surrounding towns, they failed in Portland, where they met firm resistance from the upper classes. This failure marked the end of Cronin’s career as a labor organizer and anti-Chinese agitator. He joined a utopian commune in Oregon and disappeared from public life.³⁵ Although Cronin had played a pivotal role in Washington Territory by offering to organize an eager group of anti-Chinese agitators, the expulsions were not the work of just one rabble-rouser. Sometimes men like Cronin spread rumors of the anti-Chinese crusade from town to town, but telegraph wires meant that news cables traveled faster.

In the weeks following the Tacoma expulsion, California newspapers began extensive coverage of anti-Chinese activity along the Pacific Coast. On a single day, for example, the *Daily Alta California* reported on a “very enthusiastic meeting” in Dutch Flat, resolutions adopted in Yreka “declaring that the present restriction law [was] useless,” the beginning of a boycott in Carson where “some 700 people have signed a pledge to discharge Chinese,” and the expulsion of 180 Chinese from Albina, Oregon, by eighty masked white men. Newspapers portrayed anti-Chinese violence as an everyday occurrence, which helped to make it so. Empowered by the example of others, local communities believed they could do what they wanted with their Chinese neighbors. Though vigilantes primarily worked within their local communities, they viewed their actions in a broader frame. “It is not in the power of any town to drive the Asiatics out of the State,” argued the *Truckee Republican*, “but the policy of continued ‘moving on’ must ultimately induce John [Chinaman] to depart for his native shores.” The power of the movement would be cumulative.³⁶

Unauthorized immigration, rumored to be fast increasing, helped spur communities to action. "As things are now shaping themselves," declared *The Sacramento Daily Union*, "the effort to exclude the objectionable class of Chinese is doomed to failure." Under the headline "How the Heathen Evade the Restriction Act," the *Daily Alta California* agreed: "The Restriction Act appears to be a failure."³⁷ "If laws cannot be made that will protect [us] from [the Chinese] presence," wrote the *Sonora Union Democrat*, "the people must exert their innate right and with moral sentiment drive him from our shores."³⁸ Newspapers on the East Coast began echoing dire reports of unauthorized migration, common in the U.S. West. *The Philadelphia Press* observed, "A trial of nearly four years of the restriction act has shown that it is little better than a rope of sand as a bulwark against the Mongolians. The frauds that can be practiced under it are numerous and the wily Chinese were not slow to find the loopholes and take advantage of them." Even from afar, the *Philadelphia Press* sensed imminent danger and warned its readers, "The knowledge of these facts has aroused the people of the Pacific slope as they were never aroused before on the subject."³⁹

Back in February 1885, James Beith had lauded the Eureka expulsion but had been deeply skeptical of the copycat incident in Arcata, which was based on no "real grievance." A year later, these reports of unauthorized migration were beginning to change his thinking. Writing in his diary, Beith bemoaned the law as "restriction which does not restrain." He was starting to suspect that this debacle was due to more than government ineptitude. "The public have come to the conclusion, that [the law's] errors & inefficiencies were not from the lack of ability to realize its weakness," observed Beith, "but were the result of careful study and consummate design. This idea is gaining strength day by day as the powerlessness of the Federal authorities is witnessed."⁴⁰ Increasingly, it appeared to some that the federal government never meant to stop Chinese migration in the first place. Terence Powderly, leader of the Knights of Labor, endorsed this view. "The recent assault upon the Chinese at Rock Springs is but the outcome of a feeling caused by the indifference of our law-makers," Powderly declared to his followers, "nothing short of the enactment of just laws and a full and impartial enforcement of the same will prevent other and far more terrible scenes of bloodshed."⁴¹

Moreover, the Restriction Act itself—and not just its failure—offered a powerful justification for expulsion. The law clearly signaled to West Coast workers that the federal government supported their fight against Chinese

labor migration and endorsed deportation as a solution. By layering new legal classifications on top of old racial divisions, the law had a profound effect on how everyday Americans viewed racial difference. Being Chinese had become a badge of alienage and, increasingly, a marker of illegality. When vigilantes drove thousands of Chinese from their homes, they were reacting to and reinforcing new legal lines of difference. Federal law and racial violence converged to make the Chinese into outsiders within the nation.⁴²

Though anti-Chinese advocates shared a common goal of ousting the Chinese, they were divided over expulsion tactics. Radical factions, like the Mechanics' and Laborers' Anti-Chinese League in California, pushed for "total expulsion of the coolie race" through white worker "rebellion." Others hewed more closely to the Tacoma Method, which began with coercion and ended with violence. Echoing Tacoma's Committee of Fifteen, the *East Side Times* of Millville, California, declared, "The Chinaman 'must go,' peaceably if he will, forcibly if he must."

Newspapers often downplayed the use of such force. Even so, their brief descriptions summoned images of hidden terror. For example, the *Sacramento Record Union* reported that vigilantes outside Roseville, California went to a Chinese camp in the dark of night, "roused" Chinese workers from their sleep, "escorted them to the next train," and "told them they would be killed if they returned." After this brief but disquieting description, the *Union* assured readers that "no violence" had been used.⁴³

Others disavowed all forms of force and believed that boycott was the nonviolent answer. James Beith, for example, recorded a poem in his diary that advocated for only indirect tactics. The ditty was in the style of the classic children's rhyme "Little Bo-Peep":

Little Ah Yip
Has lost his grip
And does know where to find [']em.
Let him alone
And he'll go home
Bringing his tail behind him.

The answer, suggests the poem, is boycott. If the Chinese were simply "let alone," that is, denied any form of employment, they would eventually "go

home.”⁴⁴ For some, boycott was a “quiet” method of expulsion that avoided direct confrontation or force. For others, it represented a far more controversial tactic than violence, because it targeted white employers alongside their Chinese workers. In retrospect, the line between expulsion and boycott appears blurred, almost to the point of irrelevance. Some observers recognized this at the time; the *Los Angeles Times* described boycotts as an invitation to “strife” and “anarchy,” while the *Santa Barbara Independent* feared that boycotts would mean “innocent immigrants slaughtered.”⁴⁵

As expulsions swept the U.S. West, white Americans increasingly argued that they had no choice but to join the movement. The *Daily Transcript* argued that Nevada City in California, which had seen little agitation, must participate or risk becoming “an asylum for Mongolians.” In nearby Truckee, vigilantes had successfully driven out hundreds of Chinese, and refugees were pouring into Nevada City. “Will our citizens do some of this agitating,” queried the editors of the *Transcript*, “or do they want Nevada City to become a harbor of refuge for all the Mongolians who will not be tolerated in other towns of the coast?” The answer came in the form of rallies, boycotts, and harassment. Violence begot more violence.⁴⁶

“Heroes and Genuine Men”

As anti-Chinese violence became a common occurrence, it also became a vital expression of working-class manliness. Then, as now, manliness was not explicitly defined by a prescribed list of traits; instead, it was a dynamic process by which men claimed power based on the nature of their bodies. In the late nineteenth century, there were several competing images of manliness in America, including the middle-class ideal of the moralistic, respectable, civilized, “restrained” man and the working-class ideal of a rough, physical, sexual, “martial” man.⁴⁷ Anti-Chinese agitators drew from both loose definitions, highlighting their bravery and pugnacity, but also their moral superiority and restrained methods. They defined their manliness in direct opposition to the servile Chinese and high-minded white elites who refused to participate alongside them.

In a letter seized by the police, one workingman, J. M. Montgomery, offers a colorful example of the link between gender and vigilantism. On February 9, 1886, Montgomery participated in a planned expulsion from

Olympia, capital of Washington Territory. Reminiscent of the Tacoma expulsion months earlier, events began early in the morning with the loud pealing of fire bells and the sight of white men marching double-file down Main Street. The procession halted in front of each Chinese dwelling to deliver orders to vacate by 2 P.M. But in the territory's capital, the vigilantes' efforts were for naught. The sheriff, backed by a hundred deputies, quickly stopped the expulsion by arresting several ringleaders, including L. L. Bales, J. J. Hetzel, W. Frazier, and E. Gooding. Unable to post the \$2,500 bail, the leaders were sent to the U.S. penitentiary on McNeil's Island.⁴⁸ Two weeks later, Montgomery decided to write to the imprisoned men. His letter was intercepted by law enforcement and later used as evidence against them.

Despite the failure in Olympia, Montgomery maintained in his letter that the attempted expulsion was the epitome of manliness. He believed his four "comrades" on McNeil's Island should be "lauded to the sky as heroes and genuine *Men*," while "the finger of *scorn* is pointed at every Knight of Labor who was not found in the 'Line of Duty.'"⁴⁹ Those who refused to participate were no more than "white chinamen." "Many Knights have expressed their regrets that they were not in line," Montgomery told his friends, "but I only gave them a good cussing and told them plainly that we wanted nothing more to do with them." The capital's elite had denounced the violence, but this did not give Montgomery pause. "I sally out down town every day and some of the old stiffes look at me as though I was some highwayman," he boasted, "and I throw my hat back on my head and show the Gents I am an American citizen." Elites might see him as a lowly lawbreaker, but Montgomery knew his fight was on behalf of the nation.

With disapproval, Montgomery reported that even the local Knights of Labor assembly had retroactively denounced the expulsion. Angered by the betrayal, he declared the assembly a "Chinese Ring" and pledged to maintain loyalty to the anti-Chinese cause even if they "whoop me out of the assembly for my lip." To Montgomery, anyone who failed to participate in the expulsion was a traitor to his sex and his race. He infantilized his adversaries, calling the pro-Chinese "mothers sons [*sic*]" and the territorial governor a "government Titsucker."⁵⁰

Now that his leaders were behind bars, Montgomery believed himself to be the manliest man still in Olympia. He bragged, "This town is now in the

worst shape you ever seen it & Every man is afraid of his own life,” with the notable exception of himself. He was “not afraid of ‘God, man nor Devil’ when it comes to the Chinese question.” While other men feared arrest, Montgomery claimed to think little of such concerns. In fact, he wrote, “were it not for my family,” he would find some way of becoming “one of your *Honorable Body* on McNeil’s Island.” While praising his friends’ imprisonment as the height of manliness, Montgomery begged pardon because of his patriarchal responsibilities.⁵¹

Montgomery’s preoccupation with manliness in this private letter echoes public rhetoric from anti-Chinese leaders. Manhood was a common trope in anti-Chinese speeches. “If we do not come up this [Chinese] question manfully,” one spokesman declared to a crowd in Seattle, “we deserve to be slaves.” Expulsion, he implied, was the “manful” course of action. The *Tacoma Ledger* agreed that “no secret society, no Masonic or Odd Fellows dandy” better embodied “upright manhood” than did anti-Chinese agitators marching for the cause of free white labor. Montgomery, then, had internalized the movement’s gendered rhetoric. Now, in public and in private, he “lauded” the heroism of the vigilantes and “cussed” at the cowardice of the pro-Chinese, loudly dividing the city into “genuine” men and (white) Chinese.⁵²

Although men were the primary force behind the anti-Chinese movement, women also participated in the agitation, albeit in less powerful or public roles. Female agitators, like their male counterparts, saw their participation in gendered terms. At a time when domesticity was a pillar of womanhood, women adorned banquet halls and cooked for anti-Chinese rallies. For a mass meeting in Tacoma, Mrs. H. S. Bixler presented a “handsomely decorated” cake, which read “in ornamental candied letters” the words of “living truth”: “The Chinese Must Go.” When agitators launched a boycott of Chinese businesses in Seattle, sympathetic white women vowed to do their own washing to avoid Chinese laundries.⁵³

Mary Kenworthy, who was known as “Mrs. Kenworthy” in the Seattle papers, was one of the few spokeswomen to emerge from the movement. Originally from Illinois, she moved to Seattle in the 1870s with her husband, who worked as a tailor. After she was widowed in 1880, she joined the Women’s Suffrage Association and opened her house to leaders of the Knights of Labor. In September 1885, Kenworthy was elected to organize a committee of five women charged with visiting the “ladies of Seattle” to “induce” them

to lay off their Chinese domestic servants. By the end of October, she had risen to vice president of Cronin's organizing committee and began to speak publicly for the cause. At a Seattle procession of over twenty-five hundred agitators on October 24, she addressed the enormous crowd, condemning Chinese migration and praising white workingmen. She declared, "I shall always stand by the working men. Abraham Lincoln said, 'keep near the working man, and you will always be right.'" According to Kenworthy's rhetoric, her role in the movement was as a helpmate to the men, not as an advocate in her own right. Following the gender norms of the day, she would go where the workingmen led.⁵⁴

In November 1885, the workingmen led her into an indictment for conspiracy. In the wake of a failed expulsion attempt in Seattle, Kenworthy became one of two female agitators to be arrested and indicted by a grand jury. Again she spoke out, this time in her own defense. "I feel a diffidence in standing before you this evening; I feel a pride in so doing, also," she proclaimed to a cheering crowd, "I stand before you as a criminal tonight (cheers) charged with a crime, indicted by a grand jury. . . . I know that my heart has been at work in your interests and for those of my people and my country." She likened the anti-Chinese movement to the recent fight to end slavery. In the 1860s, she had supported the Union over the "terrible slaver[s]" because she was "a loyal-hearted woman" who wanted her children "to live in a free country." As a woman and a mother, Kenworthy believed it was her duty to save her children from the curse of competing with slaves. Now, she believed she was face-to-face with the reincarnation of black slavery: Chinese coolieism.⁵⁵

When the Seattle courts tried Kenworthy for conspiracy in January 1886, she was quickly found not guilty along with fourteen other agitators. On January 16, the vigilantes gathered to celebrate their legal victory. After being introduced as "our sister and martyr," Kenworthy took the stage. She retold the story of Molly Pitcher, an apocryphal tale about a woman who fought in the American Revolution. According to legend, Molly Pitcher joined her husband at the front and supported the troops by bringing water to the men during battle. When her husband was shot, Molly took his place and continued firing his cannon. A widow herself, Kenworthy vowed, like Pitcher, to continue "pouring hot shot into the enemy till I see you noble sons where you belong." Through this analogy, she justified her public fight against the

Chinese and her break with traditional femininity as a necessary service to the nation.

Though she began with common claims against Chinese labor, Kenworthy concluded her speech with a radical call for women's rights: "The women are the safeguard of the Nation. When everything else fails, come to the mothers for relief. Three cheers for women's suffrage!"⁵⁶ She proclaimed a feminism of difference, using her female moral authority to lend righteousness to her cause. Although it was the anti-Chinese movement that made Kenworthy rise to the public stage, her goals went beyond the expulsion of the Chinese. She paired her denouncement of the Chinese alien with a plea for the full rights of citizenship for white women.⁵⁷

Through their participation in the anti-Chinese movement, agitators like Montgomery and Kenworthy brandished their credentials as white men and women, free workingmen and their wives, patriarchs and mothers, comrades and suffragists—and, above all, citizens and aspiring citizens. Implicit in their rhetoric was the assumption that Chinese aliens could never claim these forms of status and belonging.

"A Cry of Distress"

The vigilantes may have acted on a local level, but they dreamed of change on a national scale. As they worked to establish color lines in their own communities, they envisioned a racial boundary at the nation's borders as well. For decades, the anti-Chinese movement had fought for Chinese exclusion, but electoral politics did not seem to be working. Despite having far more political, economic, and social power than their Chinese foes, anti-Chinese agitators held limited sway over federal policy. This was especially true of American citizens in the U.S. territories of Washington and Wyoming, who were unable to vote in national elections, elect their own governor, or send delegates to Congress. Lacking more traditional forms of influence, they discovered, in part by happenstance, that racial violence held a particular form of political power. Through terrorizing the Chinese in their own backyards, the vigilantes broadcast their demands for Chinese exclusion across the nation.⁵⁸ Through regional meetings and petition campaigns, the vigilantes made their scale-jumping ambitions clear to all. The movement was, for the most part, loose and disorganized, but at times

a subset of anti-Chinese advocates met to coordinate and regulate the campaign. While these delegates did not create a unified movement, they did refashion the local anti-Chinese violence into a clear political message aimed at Washington, D.C.

In February 1886, an anti-Chinese convention in San Jose, California, sent a letter signed by three thousand citizens urging Congress to abrogate the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 and pass laws that would prevent all future Chinese migration. A month later, five thousand anti-Chinese delegates from all classes of society gathered in Sacramento to draft a more radical letter to Congress. Unlike the previous petition, which stated that Chinese already in possession of certificates should be allowed to return, this convention demanded that Congress “take immediate steps to prohibit absolutely this Chinese invasion.”⁵⁹ The letter included a lengthy justification for total exclusion. Under a section titled “Necessity for Resistance,” delegates warned that the existence of Chinese on the coast kept the white worker “in a perpetual state of anger, exasperation, and discontent always bordering on sedition, thus jeopardizing the general peace and creating a state of chronic uneasiness, distrust, and apprehension throughout the entire community.” The petitioners’ language left Congress little room for doubt about what might arise from this state of “anger, exasperation, and discontent.” With oblique references to the now rampant expulsions, the petitioners reminded Congress that this “uneasiness” would alarm investors and slow the development of the U.S. West. The Chinese, and the violence they inspired, threatened white workers and white employers alike.⁶⁰

The delegates understood that exclusion could not be obtained without abrogating America’s treaties with China and they urged Congress to do just that. The Burlingame Treaty, alleged the letter, made a tragic mistake by giving up “a sovereign attribute never before surrendered by any free people,” that is, the right to determine who could enter the nation. Quoting Emmerich de Vattel, the renowned eighteenth-century philosopher and diplomat, the petitioners argued that international law gave every nation the sovereign right to forbid entrance to its territory. Local vigilantes could only drive Chinese from their towns, but they urged the federal government to end the Chinese menace for good.

The California Knights of Labor echoed this plea, asking the federal government to prohibit all further Chinese migration through either legisla-

tion or treaty. They gathered fifty thousand signatures in support of their petition, including those of California's governor and prominent judges, mayors, city supervisors, and sheriffs. Some eastern branches of the Knights took up their brethren's cause. Throwing their support entirely behind the vigilantes, the Indiana Knights responded to "a cry of distress from our brothers of the Pacific Coast" by chastising the president for protecting the Chinese instead of the white workingmen. The real crime, they implied, was the government's "neglect" of these American citizens, which "robbed [them] of their rights and privileges." In order to "save unnecessary bloodshed," the Knights of Indiana believed that all Chinese migration must "be forbidden under the penalty of law."⁶¹

Some petitions believed that these veiled threats of violence were ill-advised. At the convention in Sacramento, Mr. McElrath of Alameda County argued against the use of boycott and the petition to Congress. Facing an angry crowd, he declared that the talk of unrest was "impolitic." "If the proceedings of this Convention create an impression in the East that we are riotous out here," he argued, "it will do our cause great harm in Congress." However, his was the minority opinion.

Others believed that boycott and violence were necessary, because "the law-makers must be made to keenly feel our demands." The *Daily Alta California*, using graphic language, described the convention as a warning to Congress that should not be ignored. "The State is diseased by the presence of the Chinese," wrote the paper, "and the Convention was the throbbing boil thrown up as a warning." If delegates' anger was a boil, then the only remedy was for "Congress to prick it, for the State suffers and will suffer more from metastasis if action is not promptly had." Immediate congressional action was required to "prevent the violence that will come."⁶²

Vigilantes intended their local actions to affect the national stage, but they also knew there could be international repercussions. Many agitators understood that the expulsion violated U.S. treaties with China, but they argued that "they were acting in obedience to a higher law . . . that of self-preservation and the maintenance of purity, the integrity, the welfare and the institutions of their nation and race."⁶³ In their view, the needs of white Americans trumped dreams of overseas expansion.

Congress heard the political message behind this racial violence. Even amid nationwide labor unrest in the spring of 1886, the eruption of anti-Chinese

expulsions in the U.S. West commanded federal attention.⁶⁴ In May, Senator John H. Mitchell of Oregon declared that the Restriction Act was “absolutely dead letter upon the statute-books, a sublime pretense, a stupid make-believe, a legislative delusion and a snare.” Quoting dire reports of contagious violence in West Coast papers, he urged the Senate to immediately enact “absolute prohibition” of Chinese migration for “the preservation of domestic peace.” Representative William Morrow of California read aloud to the House from the vigilantes’ petitions, arguing that “this powerful and urgent appeal should arrest the attention of Congress.” “The people of California,” he proclaimed, “are past further endurance.” In veiled reference to the expulsions, Morrow explained that the petitioners had tried “every apparently effective form of expression and declaration” to make their demands for Chinese exclusion “known to Congress.” Representative Samuel Cox of New York stated the situation more plainly. It was clear to him that the “manifold evasions of the [Restriction] law” have “precipitat[ed] the disastrous conflicts and bloodshed which have recently been witnessed in the Territories of the far West.”⁶⁵

Willard B. Farwell, a supervisor in San Francisco, offered a stark assessment of the choice before Congress. “These massacres—horrible as they are to contemplate, humiliating and shameful as they are to the American people—are by no means the most serious side of this phase of the Chinese question,” he wrote in a two hundred-page treatise. “They are but warnings, but mutterings of a danger that gathers like the thunder-clouds in the distant horizon, soon to develop into the restless cyclone of destruction.” He predicted America would again be convulsed by revolution “if the government of the United States persists in refusing to put an end to the evil, and thus put an end to the possibility of outbreaks and massacres.”⁶⁶ Congress could end white violence by enacting Chinese exclusion, or it could expect a race war.

The Loyal

WHEN VIOLENCE CAME to Seattle, Granville O. Haller's first thought was of Jin, his Chinese cook. Early that morning in February 1886, Haller grabbed his pistol, peered through the windows of his house, and prepared to resist any attempt by "the people" to "remove" Jin. Months previous, when he had been sworn in as deputy sheriff, he had pledged to protect the Chinese from any attempt to "burn their property or persecute them."¹ He did not take his oath lightly. But in the end, the mob spared Haller's house and his servant, perhaps guessing his plan of resistance.

Soon Haller received word that Mayor Henry Yesler had not been so lucky. By the time he "buckled on a revolver" and rushed to the mayor's house to lend his assistance, however, the vigilantes had already come and gone. The only person who remained was the mayor's wife, Sarah Yesler, who was still "much alarmed," Haller noted in his diary. While her husband was out, seven vigilantes had invaded the house and demanded she relinquish her Chinese servants. Watching the woman weep, Haller decided "it was time to check such insolence." He headed to his son's law offices to rendezvous with the governor, the mayor, the sheriff, and the leaders of the local militia. With certainty drawn from his military career, Colonel Haller declared that "the loyal" were outnumbered by the mob and needed to call for federal troops immediately.²

When he decided to brandish a pistol against white workingmen to protect his Chinese cook, Haller seemed to be violating the ties of race. To him the decision was simple: he was fighting to protect himself, other elites of Washington Territory, and the supremacy of American law. As a successful

businessman interested in defending his own particular form of racial privilege, he had little respect for the unruly lower classes and their rough treatment of the Chinese. He complained that the anti-Chinese movement had attracted “every socialist and anarchist who could walk or steal a ride to Seattle.” Privately in his diary, Haller called the vigilantes “insolent” “bummers” of “the lowest element,” and publicly he declared that labor unions could lead to “the most selfish of ends.”³

It was not just the vigilantes’ lowly birth and radical politics that Haller disdained; it was also their methods. He scoffed at the claim that their tactics were “peaceful and law abiding,” arguing that there was no such thing as a legal expulsion under American law. He understood that the United States had pledged, through multiple diplomatic accords, to protect the life and liberty of Chinese nationals on American soil. To Haller, this made the expulsions illegal and the rioters disloyal. To hand over his Chinese cook would mean “show[ing] servile submission to a set of self-appointed Law-Breakers.” This he refused to do.⁴

Many West Coast elites opposed the violent anti-Chinese movement, but the plight of the Chinese was not always at the forefront of their minds. They were more concerned with what the Chinese represented. Locally, the Chinese signified fuel for western development. For American investors who sought to tame the lands and peoples of the U.S. West, Chinese migrants were the abundant, affordable, and compliant workforce of their dreams. They would fell forests, plant hops fields, catch salmon, keep house, and lay tracks toward faraway markets. The white man’s frontier could be built on the backs of Chinese migrants.

On a larger scale, Chinese migrants represented the promise of U.S. imperialism in Asia. Imagining a brilliant future for their nascent community, many white elites of Washington Territory looked west across the Pacific. If only the Pacific Northwest could become the conduit to China, then it would gain national significance and prestige. Importers would feed America’s hunger for Chinese goods, exporters would capture an inexhaustible Chinese market, and missionaries would find ready converts. In this imperial ambition, Chinese migrants, especially the upper classes, meant increased access to Chinese wealth and Chinese souls.

For cosmopolitan white elites, the Chinese presence represented a continuation of the status quo. These men and women enjoyed their place at top of the political, economic, and social ladder, and they wanted more of the same.⁵ Their success had been built, in part, thanks to Chinese workers, Chinese parishioners, and the China Trade, so they feared the end of Chinese migration would undermine their continued ascent. The status quo they fought to preserve was dominated by conservative politics and conservative manners. They loathed the populist leanings of the anti-Chinese movement, its radical antimonopolist stance, and the “rough” men and women who filled its ranks. These conservative elites were far outnumbered by the workingmen, but their elevated class status gave them outsized power. As leaders of the territory, they had the backing of the federal government and its standing army in the U.S. West. On the eve of the anti-Chinese violence, these elites held a large stake in Chinese migrants and the power to protect them.⁶

Then violence changed what the Chinese represented to the elite. As expulsions multiplied, the Chinese came to mean a widening class divide, a decline in profits, and a divided congregation. Where Chinese remained, there was sure to be labor unrest, economic instability, and white violence. Even as conservative elites in the U.S. West fought to suppress anti-Chinese violence, they began to rethink their stance on the Chinese Question. They called themselves “the loyal,” but it became increasingly unclear what that meant. Were they loyal to the Chinese workers or simply to the profit their work had produced? The stories of five white elites in Washington Territory—Governor Watson Squire, First Lady Ida Squire, businessman Alexander S. Farquharson, Rev. W. D. McFarland, and militiaman Thomas Burke—reveal how violence caused a personal and collective shift, one that would have dramatic repercussions for the nation.

Watson C. Squire: “These Trying Events Led Me to Understand”

When he lived on the East Coast and all he knew of the U.S. West came from the daily paper, Watson Carvosso Squire was “inclined to think there was too much prejudice against the Chinese and perhaps persecution of them.”⁷ That was before he moved to Seattle.

Born in 1838 to well-to-do parents with roots in New England, he attended Wesleyan University and read law in New York until the Civil War

broke out. When President Abraham Lincoln called for volunteers, Watson Squire was the first man to enlist in Company F, 19th Regiment of New York Volunteers. Later he became captain of an independent company of sharpshooters, served as a trial judge-advocate overseeing thousands of cases, and received a promotion to the rank of colonel. When he was honorably discharged at the end of the war, Colonel Squire accepted a secretarial position at the Remington Arms Company and worked his way up to manager. Squire was an East Coast gentleman, highly educated, well-traveled, and attentive to fashion. He married the boss's daughter, Ida Remington, in 1868 and purchased a large tract of land in Seattle from his father-in-law in 1876. Three years later, he moved to Seattle with his family, began to develop his vast land holdings, and became a major investor in railroads in Washington Territory. Thanks to his connections to Republican leaders back East, he secured an appointment as governor of Washington Territory in 1884.⁸

It was in Seattle that Squire first encountered Chinese migrants. He did business with Chinese merchants, including Chin Gee Hee, and found them to be "able and honorable" businessmen. He was not so sure, however, about the Chinese working class. After a few years steeped in the West Coast view of Chinese labor, he came to believe that most Chinese were "of a different order" and "deleterious to the best interest of society." He condemned the Chinese for migrating without their families, living in "disreputable" quarters, working for disturbingly low wages, and sending their earnings abroad.⁹

Squire, ever the businessman, still saw the merits of the Chinese workforce. Washington Territory was seeing rapid commercial growth and needed workers to support its flourishing economy of extraction. As late as 1886, Squire maintained that "the presence of Chinese in large numbers has heretofore been necessary," because there were not enough white laborers to complete "works of great magnitude like our transcontinental railways." Squire believed that Washington Territory needed Chinese workers and, moreover, that Washington, D.C., needed to tread carefully with China. Years later, he explained to historian Hubert Bancroft that the United States must avoid offending China because "we want her trade, that is, we want whatever material good can come from her." Therefore, the federal government had to be cautious about restricting Chinese migration or risk losing the race to open China. Squire was not just concerned about his corner of the nation but also about the future of America's "great empire."¹⁰

On the eve of the anti-Chinese violence, Governor Squire supported Chinese migration but was more concerned with bringing American “civilization” to this rough territory. During his tenure as governor, Squire established new institutions to maintain social order, including a penitentiary at Walla Walla, a hospital for the insane at Steilacoom, and a school for “defective youth” at Vancouver. “On the Pacific Coast we must take into consideration manhood,” explained Squire, “and all our efforts there should be to develop manhood, ability, character and intellect.”¹¹ Envisioning a society led by an educated and manly elite, he expanded both the University of Washington and the local militia.

What Squire sought, above all, was statehood. Statehood would bring a steady stream of American citizens, a flood of investors, and the right to vote in federal elections.¹² In a bid to convince Congress that Washington was ready, Squire began, in the fall of 1885, to prepare a report on the territory’s many advancements. The territory, boasted Squire, was full of “intensely loyal citizens” who “universally desire admission” to the Union.¹³ But as Governor Squire compiled the report, white workingmen murdered Chinese in Squak Valley and mass protests began throughout Puget Sound. Immediately, Squire realized that the violence could overshadow the territory’s accomplishments as well as his own. His worries proved more than warranted. In the end, his eleven-page territorial report contained a forty-eight-page appendix to explain the riots and justify his own reaction.¹⁴

The governor anticipated that grassroots violence would tarnish the territory’s reputation but knew that using state violence to suppress it would bring more unwanted attention. Calling in local militia or federal troops was tantamount to admitting he could not control his own population, so Governor Squire tried to stop the expulsions without the use of military force. He brushed aside the advice of Granville Haller, who told him as early as September to call for “U.S. troops or at least advise the Sec[retar]y of State, Mr. Bayard, of the imminent danger of an uprising.”¹⁵ Hoping that law enforcement alone would be enough to prevent bloodshed, Squire wrote to the sheriffs of King and Pierce Counties to make his desires clear. “I think you are fully aware,” he said, “of my determination to enforce the law by all the power and influence I officially possess, and at the same time you know how much I deprecate the necessity of any military interference whatever.” Both sheriffs swore to aid his cause. Squire reported to his mother in late

October 1885, "I have been getting the sheriffs in each of the disturbed counties to organize a strong force of reliable deputy-sheriffs, to preserve order. . . . This plan works splendidly so far." He boasted to his mother that he had already received compliments for handling the situation "with energy, but with moderation."¹⁶

There were plenty of signs that all was not well, but Squire ignored them. When he wrote to the mayor of Tacoma asking for his support in "the preservation of order and thereby the preservation of the good name of the Territory," he received no response.¹⁷ It must have also seemed troubling when the sheriff of Pierce County reported that all the recently sworn deputy sheriffs in Tacoma and Puyallup belonged to the Knights of Labor.¹⁸ The Knights, Squire was well aware, were a driving force behind the call for expulsion. There was also the matter of the well-known November 1 deadline for the Chinese to vacate Tacoma. Publicly, the vigilantes had left unspoken the consequences of missing that deadline, but privately a friend of Governor Squire explained the Tacoma method in detail.¹⁹ If any outbreak did occur, the governor's wife explained in a private letter to her in-laws, Watson could not claim it was unexpected, for the roughs had "given notice of what they intend to do." "I wish," Mrs. Squire wrote in mid-October, "the 1st of Nov. was over and past."²⁰

As the governor continued his half-hearted attempt to beef up law enforcement, he also began to encourage a "quiet" exit for the Chinese. When N. W. Gow and other leaders of the local Chinese community petitioned him for protection, he advised them to "quietly withdraw." He repeated this sentiment to the Chinese consul at San Francisco. "I really believe it to be for the best interest of the Chinese residents on this coast to scatter themselves throughout the United States," he explained, "thus so thinning [*sic*] out their numbers that they will not be offensive."²¹ Writing to an anti-Chinese agitator, Governor Squire was more direct. Explaining that he "sympathize[d]" with American workingmen, he advised the vigilantes to "maintain law and order" so "victory finally [will] be yours." His letter appeared to subscribe to the vigilante's own narrow definition of violence, endorsing the concept of a "peaceful" and "orderly" expulsion. In so doing, Squire turned a blind eye to the frequent physical assaults and rampant intimidation tactics that already plagued the territory. Agitators seized on his letter and had it reprinted in the *Seattle Daily Call* on November 2.²²

The following day, vigilantes drove the Chinese out of Tacoma. As unrest spread quickly to Seattle, Governor Squire may have begun to regret his tacit support for the anti-Chinese movement. Reporting the situation to the secretary of the interior, he seemed genuinely distressed to have received pleading telegrams from Chinese residents “imploing” him for protection.²³ And yet, the governor still hesitated to call for troops. Instead, he issued a public proclamation to his “fellow-citizens” calling for “peace and good order” to protect “the good name and prosperity of the Territory.” The Tacoma vigilantes maintained they had achieved a nonviolent expulsion, but Governor Squire made it clear in his proclamation that, to his mind, they had crossed the line between agitation and violence. If the vigilantes could not control their “spirit of lawlessness,” he warned, they should expect the “speedy interference of United States troops.” Two days later, after Haller and other leading citizens begged once again for military reinforcements, Governor Squire finally decided his words of warning would not be enough. “It is evidently impossible [*sic*],” he telegraphed the secretary of the interior, “to protect the Chinese at Seattle without United States troops immediately.”²⁴ When federal troops marched into Seattle, they quickly quelled the threat of expulsion and the territory returned, briefly, to a relative state of calm.²⁵

After that violent autumn, Governor Squire lost any remaining desire to defend the merits of Chinese migration. “These trying events led me to understand, as I had never done before, the intense feeling of antagonism that is seated in the breasts of the great body of our labouring people in reference to the Chinese,” he reflected a few years later. Squire had come to believe it was necessary, in the name of “domestic tranquility,” for the United States to “adopt more vigorous measures . . . to enforce the exclusion of the Chinese.” And besides, he was beginning to suspect that the Chinese had outlived their usefulness. The completion of the Northern Pacific Railway in 1883 meant fewer jobs for Chinese migrants and more white migrants traveling the rails west in search of work. If only white workers would stop their violent protests, Squire believed, their swelling numbers might be adequate fuel for the development of the West.²⁶

When violence returned to Seattle without warning in February 1886, Governor Squire found himself with a second crisis and chance to prove his leadership. While his earlier reaction was lackluster, this time he acted swiftly.



“At the time of the Chinese Troubles” (1886). The leading men of Washington Territory who stood against the anti-Chinese violence included Granville O. Haller (lower right) and Governor Watson C. Squire (seated beside him). University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Watson C. Squire Photograph Collection, PH COLL 1230, UW296047.

When he received word that the vigilantes had transformed Seattle into a “scene” of “terrorism,” Squire rushed out of his Seattle hotel room without breakfast, quickly called up the militia, issued a proclamation denouncing violence, and telegraphed the secretary of the interior asking for U.S. troops.²⁷

While taking robust and public action to stop the violence, Squire also privately worked to speed the Chinese retreat from Seattle. He summoned a group of Chinese men and asked them whether they wished to stay or go, although he was not shy with them about his own opinion. “If they wanted to go,” Squire explained to the frightened men, “we would pay their passage to San Francisco; indeed we would [be] very glad to do so.” A sizable number took him up on the offer, he recalled, and he “paid the passage of eight of

them [himself].” While he believed forcible expulsion by a mob to be criminal, he saw his own actions as simple charity.²⁸

By 1889, when he ran for U.S. Senate, Squire had no doubt on the Chinese Question and advanced a strong anti-Chinese platform. “I don’t believe in the persecution of a race,” he insisted, but he still feared that the unrestricted migration of Chinese “would tend to drag down our standard of elevation.” “I have nothing against the Chinese themselves,” explained Squire, “but I take a great deal more interest in my own people and I wish that American citizens should have the preference always.”²⁹

Ida R. Squire: “The Poor Things Were Going as Fast as They Could”

“I don’t see what the people in this country will do—if they succeed in driving away the Chinaman,” first lady Ida Remington Squire wrote to her mother-in-law in October 1885. “There are very few [Chinese] employed about here that do any work that *white men* would do,” she continued, “and there are few girls or women to be had for housework and washing.” Before the expulsion from Tacoma and Seattle, Ida Squire, like her husband, believed that Washington Territory needed Chinese workers. Who else would wash her clothes and cook her meals?³⁰

Ida Remington was born far from the Pacific Northwest in the village of Ilion, New York, in 1842. When Watson Squire became governor of Washington Territory, Mrs. Squire rose to prominence as the wife of a wealthy politician. A memorial sermon, written after her death in 1919, describes her as a pious woman who was “quiet,” “genuine,” and “unassuming.” But she was no wallflower. “With all her modesty and humility, she had a strong personality,” it explained. Mrs. Squire’s “strong personality” comes through in the handful of letters and the short diary she wrote during the anti-Chinese violence in Washington Territory. With her husband occupied with political affairs, she took it on herself to keep her mother-in-law, who was living in Ohio, and her two sons, who were attending a military academy in New York, abreast of the “excitement.” She herself was very well informed. During the riots, Governor Squire had grave difficulty with his eyesight and relied on his wife to read him all reports, telegrams, and newspapers articles. Every day, Mrs. Squire read herself hoarse.³¹

As the daughter of a wealthy industrialist, Ida Squire shared many of her husband's convictions as well as his fondness for the status quo, but she described the conflict in more emotional and moral terms than her husband. Her writing is full of pity for the Chinese and dread of the working-class "ruffians." It was her overwhelming fear of the lower classes, and the harm they could inflict on her family's reputation, station, and safety, that ultimately made her eager for the Chinese to depart. The vigilantes, her personal writings make clear, did more than terrorize the Chinese; they intimidated their social superiors.

When it came to the Chinese, Mrs. Squire saw a clear distinction between intimidation and violence; the former she could condone, the latter was inexcusable. In a letter to her mother-in-law she explained, "We were hoping the anti-Chinese agitators would be satisfied with their meetings and intimidation—as that was doing such effective work—the poor things were going as fast as they could." Though she seemed tolerant of these methods of harassment, Mrs. Squire was infuriated at the news of outright expulsion in Tacoma. She chided the lower classes for committing "such an outrage" and causing "real injury" to the territory's bid for statehood.³²

Ida Squire had secondhand knowledge of the expulsion from Tacoma, but she lived through the one in Seattle and recorded her experiences each night on hotel stationery. On that Sunday morning of February 7, 1886, Mrs. Squire awoke at the Occidental Hotel, which was located only a few blocks from Seattle's Chinatown. When she went down to breakfast, she overheard two men say, "They are moving out the Chinese." She looked out the window and could see an express wagon working its way down the street, loaded high with Chinese goods. Before she could wake her sleeping husband, the sound of a fire bell, announcing that something was amiss, roused him from his sleep. The governor raced out the door without breakfast, leaving his wife to wait and worry. That afternoon, she went to see the vigilantes' triumph: "three hundred [Chinese] were crowded on the wharf—trembling and crying." "Poor things," she penned in her makeshift diary, "how cruel."³³

Dissatisfied watching from the sidelines, she tried to help those she could. On the Monday, two of Mrs. Squire's acquaintances, Ching Ing and How Ing, came to her and the mayor's wife, asking for help. Ching Ing wished to withdraw his deposit from a local bank before he and his wife fled Seattle,

but he was afraid to enter the building. Despite her own fears, Ida Squire agreed to escort the “poor frightened Chinaman.” “So we march out. Mrs. Y[esler] first, Ching next—and I bring up the rear,” she recorded in her diary. Luckily, the vigilantes were busy minding the wharf and “nobody [paid] any attention to us.” “The poor fellow [got] his money,” she wrote, “and will go I suppose.”³⁴

But in her diary, compassion for the Chinese is overshadowed by fear of the “roughs.” “I get into a fearful *panic*,” wrote Mrs. Squire when she heard rumors of “lynchers organizing in the woods.” As the unrest continued and federal troops failed to materialize, her concern mounted. On the third day she wrote, “Altogether I am in the most dreadful state of mind—we have so few men—and they are getting so worn out.” It was clear to her that the vigilantes intended to terrorize the elite alongside the Chinese. When a vigilante was killed in a scuffle with the militia, she described how the Knights of Labor made “a circus of the dead rioter,” displaying his body on a wagon “covered with *white* and *red*—to imitate the streams of blood running down.” As the angry funeral procession marched through town, Mrs. Squire looked on with dread. When it came to the safety of her family and white elites, she drew few distinctions between intimidation and violence.³⁵

After a few days of terror, Ida Squire wanted the Chinese gone, even if it meant sending them away herself. The vigilantes’ progress in Seattle had slowed, she recorded in her diary, so “if we want [the Chinese] to go[,] we must pay their fare—and send them ourselves.” Mrs. Squire and the white elites of Seattle decided to do just that. “*Our people* went around collecting the money to pay the passage,” she recalled, because the Chinese were “very anxious for tickets” out of Seattle. Free tickets out of town were not always enough. Most of the Chinese departed, but Mrs. Squire watched apprehensively as a few Chinese merchants across the street from her hotel began to take the boards off their windows, opening for business again. She wrote to her father-in-law, “They don’t mean to go—they say they may as well be killed here as some other place.” Mrs. Squire bemoaned the persistence of these holdouts, fearing there were “enough Chinese still left in town to make trouble.” She knew very well that the Chinese were not the ones making trouble, but nevertheless, in her mind, their presence was the source of danger.³⁶

As Mrs. Squire hoped, by March most of the Chinese had vacated the Puget Sound region and the crisis seemed to be at an end. Finally at ease,

she had time for more practical concerns, writing to her mother-in-law to complain that with all the Chinese laundrymen gone, she did not know “what we will do about clean clothes.”³⁷

Alexander S. Farquharson: “I’m Not Taking Orders”

When he established Barrel Works in 1877 in Puyallup, twenty miles south of Seattle, Alexander S. Farquharson recruited a few skilled wheelmen, but for the remaining unskilled jobs he hired young, white, unmarried men “of the floating labor element.” Only six weeks after the factory opened, he was already displeased with the unreliable work of these “rough” laborers. When he went to visit their boarding house to learn why they were behind on the job, the answer was self-evident. Farquharson observed, “cards and whisky over night [were] not conducive attributes to labor, if morning was drizzly and damp.” Surveying his hungover workmen, Farquharson quickly decided he needed “a change of labor.” He traveled to Seattle, hired sixty “Chinamen” with an English-speaking “China boss,” built rough living quarters for his new workforce, and discharged many of his white workers. Common knowledge of the day dictated that these new Chinese workers would be more docile, servile, and cheap. Sure enough, Farquharson found the Chinese to be “prompt, efficient and rapid, always on hand rain or shine, ready at call night or day.” As a western capitalist, Farquharson was not directly invested in the China Trade, but he sought to benefit from the resulting stream of unskilled Chinese migrants. He had paid his white workers two dollars a day, but now he paid the Chinese only one. Clearly, Chinese labor was a good deal, at least before the violence began.

Alexander S. Farquharson was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1842. His mother was the daughter of slave-owning planters in Alabama, and his father was a retired officer of the English army. Farquharson attended Andover College until 1861, when he joined the Boston Light Infantry to fight for the Union. His mother had strong Southern sympathies and Farquharson himself “thought that slavery was not wrong,” but decided to join the Union as much out of loyalty to his northern classmates as distaste for Southern secession. When he was honorably discharged at the close of the war, he found himself at a loss as to what to do next. His brother had been killed in battle, his extended family had been pulled apart, and his mother died a few

months after his return. He found himself “unfitted for business, restless and dissatisfied”; he knew that he “longed for something” but did not know what. After “having words” with his father, he decided to seek “new adventures out West.” Farquharson bought a ticket for Omaha, Nebraska, the westernmost point on the existing railway lines. There, he found that extending the railroad into Indian country and the resulting Red Cloud War “gave many opportunities for adventure.” He learned the barrel-making trade in Kansas City in 1870, traveled to California in 1872, and decided to settle in the “wild” of Washington Territory in 1877.³⁸

Farquharson saw opportunity in the forested land of the Puyallup Valley, a region bordered on one side by the small town of Tacoma and on the other by a federal reservation for the ousted Puyallup tribe. He started a barrel-manufacturing operation, paying local farmers for cottonwood trees they cleared from their land, and eventually employing a few hundred men. During the 1880s, he registered as a Democrat, but after years of feeling at odds with his party he became a Republican.³⁹ In 1917, Farquharson wrote a short unpublished memoir about his time in Puyallup, including the anti-Chinese expulsions of 1885 and 1886. In his account, which tends toward the dramatic, he recounts incidents in brash, unapologetic style. He describes himself as “restless, adventurous . . . gifted with attributes of making warm friends and bitter enemies—possessed of large personal pride—too little policy—with no tinge of hypocrisy—reckless in money affairs, careless and indifferent as to peoples [*sic*] opinions.”⁴⁰ With such a bold spirit, Farquharson was not a restrained Victorian man, but neither did he view himself as one of the irreverent roughs of the territory. Farquharson embodied a western version of elite manliness, which combined self-righteous moralism with brash valor.⁴¹

When Farquharson hired Chinese workers to replace white “roughs” in 1877, he faced immediate resistance. The white workers approached the “China shacks” at night and shot their revolvers into the air, hoping to scare away the newly arrived competition. When he learned of the incident, Farquharson told the Chinese to buy revolvers of their own and return fire if attacked, promising to “protect them from the law.” “They did so,” recalled Farquharson, “the second night they were attacked, they swarmed out like a swarm of bees, and began firing in the air, it was a genuine surprise to the Mill men, they scattered to their beds glad enough to let the Chinamen

alone.” For the following few months the mill operated quietly, shipping loads of barrels out of Tacoma twice a month, and Farquharson believed the agitation was over.

In fact it was only “slumbering.” He recalled, “One afternoon, the China Boss came rushing into the office fearfully excited, saying Jim Allen, our stave Cutter man, to whom we were paying five (5) dollars per day, an expert, had beaten one of the [Chinese] wheelman over the head with a stick of wood, and cut and bruised [*sic*] him in a fearful manner.” On hearing this report, Farquharson rushed to the mill to see the Chinese worker bleeding from cuts on his head and his fellow countrymen congregated nearby in witness. He ordered the mill shut down, gathered the workers together, and declared he would not tolerate such “cowardly” behavior. He would fire the next man who struck a “Chinaman,” even if he had to shut down the mill while he recruited a skilled replacement from the East. According to Farquharson, the threat worked and Chinese troubles ended for several years.⁴²

When anti-Chinese violence began to sweep across Washington Territory in the fall of 1885, two members of the Knights of Labor came to Farquharson’s office, demanded that he get rid of his Chinese workers, and threatened to burn the Chinese quarters to the ground if he did not. Farquharson’s response was characteristically bold: “Go back to your Knights of Labor and tell them to burn the buildings and be damned, that I’m not taking orders from them or any body else.” In response, more Knights from Seattle and Tacoma descended on Puyallup, surrounded Farquharson’s residence, and began “hooting,” “howling,” and calling “bring him out, hang him & etc.” Like Haller, Farquharson was outraged by the rioters’ violation of his household, and he was prepared to mount a defense with the help of several Winchester rifles. In his memoir he claimed, “If any attempt had been made [to storm the house] they might have hung [*sic*] me, but several of them would have announced my coming into the other world.” After a short standoff, the mob moved on, parading through the streets of Puyallup, before returning to their homes.⁴³

It was not until the next morning that Farquharson could see from his window that the mob had hanged him in effigy, and that thirty Knights stood guarding the scaffold. He grabbed two revolvers and told his wife he was going to the post office to get his mail. Rose Farquharson, her eyes heavy with tears, begged her husband not to go. But he insisted that every morning

he went for his mail, and that today would be no exception. Years later, he vividly recalled his state of mind as he walked into the post office: "I have felt the blood lust to kill, in battle, it took possession of me that morning. . . . I saw nothing, blood was boiling in my veins, not a word was spoken, not a laugh or sneer, a pin dropped could have been heard; many a time have I thanked God it was so, as I was ready to have dropped those letters, pulled those revolvers and gone to shooting, I gave no thought to my life, I was unquestionably insane, for the time being." As he walked back to his house with his mail, he ran into a friend who asked what the vigilantes had said when he passed the scaffold. "Nothing," answered Farquharson, "those effigies [*sic*] hanging there have more brains than the whole cowardly crew." But Farquharson was not entirely foolhardy, and in the following weeks, he stopped going out at night because he did not want "to be shot in the back by some cowardly cur behind a corner."⁴⁴

Soon, he heard that the rioters had forcibly driven the Chinese out of Tacoma with "the little Sheriff of Pierce County following like a little poodle dog, instead of giving protection." Within days, the roughs attempted the same in Puyallup Valley by forming a line of eighty men, marching with fife and drum, rounding up every Chinese migrant they could find, and driving them through town. When they came to downtown Puyallup, the rioters left the Chinese under guard there, and continued over to Farquharson's barrel factory, intending to enter the Chinese quarters and bring out any men they might find.

Before they could reach the buildings, Farquharson stepped from the line of onlookers and strode toward the leading vigilante, Dr. Taylor.⁴⁵ "I want you to understand those buildings are mine," he said, "any man that attempts to enter them will do [so] at his peril." An old man from a neighboring town walked up to him and, shaking his fist, snarled, "You'r [*sic*] a China lover are you?" Farquharson answered, "Its [*sic*] none of your dam'd business what I am, you keep your dirty fist out of my face." Taylor asked if Farquharson would guarantee that there were no Chinese in the buildings, but the businessman refused to make any such promise. In response, Taylor deployed "squads" to march to each building and demand entrance. When rioters banged on the doors without response, they "did not dare to break in" because Farquharson threatened to have them arrested. Unwilling to test his resolve, the vigilantes merely shouted through the closed doors that the

Chinese had three days to leave. But the vigilantes did not return in three days, at least not openly. In the dark of night, a bomb exploded near one of the Chinese residences. It did little damage, at least physically.

Farquharson prided himself for single-handedly standing up to the ruffians through a display of brave and righteous manliness, but he was not immune to the vigilantes' threats. As the agitation died down, he decided, on second thought, that his Chinese workforce was not worth "push[ing] the matter to extremes." He allowed the Chinese to remain in his buildings only until preparations could be made for them to be quietly sent away. In his memoir, he still claimed victory in the matter, declaring that the vigilantes "did not have the satisfaction of saying they took [the Chinese] out of Puyallup."⁴⁶

While Farquharson staunchly opposed the expulsions, he did so because they violated his right to control his business, not because he had uncommon sympathy for his Chinese workers. As a veteran of both military and business wars, he saw the Chinese as pawns in a battle between workers and capitalists, which he was determined to win at all costs. But once he had won the showdown and proved his courage, he realized that law and order were better for business than cheap Chinese labor. In the face of agitation, boycott, and violence, Farquharson and other capitalists found employing Chinese workers to be untenable. Production cost was only one side of the equation; on the other was community support, contented (white) workers, confident investors, and reputation. If the expulsion of the Chinese meant peace and prosperity would return to the West, capitalists like Farquharson were willing to reconcile themselves to the vigilantes' demands. And so, over the winter of 1885–1886, Farquharson was among scores of employers who discharged thousands of Chinese workers from the mines, farms, factories, and railroads of the U.S. West.⁴⁷

W. D. McFarland: "There Is a Worse Evil than the Presence of the Chinese"

It was well known in Tacoma that Reverend W. D. McFarland hoped to convert the Chinese. So when the vigilantes went door-to-door to announce the boycott of Chinese workers, they made sure to visit McFarland's house. Since the reverend was out, they delivered their message to his wife, demanding that she fire their Chinese domestic help before the No-

vember 1 deadline.⁴⁸ When McFarland returned and learned what had happened, he was outraged and announced that he would preach on the subject the following Sunday.

McFarland was a newcomer to Tacoma when he stood before a crowded church to deliver a sermon on the Chinese Question. Only the barest facts of McFarland's life have been preserved in the historical record. Born in Scotland and raised in Baltimore, he was described as a gaunt, red-haired man with a fiery temper. In October 1884, he took a job teaching deaf-mute children at a school in Salem, Oregon. After a year there, he moved to Tacoma, where he became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, joined Tacoma's Protestant Ministerial Union, and founded the first school for deaf-mute children in Washington Territory.⁴⁹

From the pulpit, McFarland denounced anti-Chinese rabble-rousers not only for their immoral treatment of the Chinese but also for their insolent attempt to violate his right to employ whomever he chose. If he had been home, he declared, "I would have kicked them out into the street." Many congregation members then stood up, turned on their heels, and walked out of the church in protest against the "pro-Chinese fanatic." This only riled the preacher: "Go! Go!" McFarland yelled, "I will preach on till the benches are empty!" The next day the *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, a workingman's newspaper, commented that McFarland would be "permitted to preach to empty benches until such time as he shall depart in peace with his yellow brethren—say about November 1st." Facing expulsion and death threats, McFarland strapped two "big army revolvers" to his waist under his double-breasted coat and "went about his pastoral duties, visiting businessmen in their homes and taking tea with his feminine parishioners."⁵⁰

McFarland's stance on the Chinese Question was hardly surprising. Since the Chinese had first arrived in the U.S. West, many Protestant missionaries preached a decidedly unpopular message of egalitarianism: that the Chinese should be brought into the folds of the nation and Christendom. While the vast majority of western parishioners questioned whether assimilation and conversion were possible, Protestant preachers and missionaries had greater confidence in the ability of American civilization to enlighten the heathen race. While most supported Chinese migration, some Protestant missionaries publicly and repeatedly maligned the Chinese race. Missionaries working in China wrote highly emotional and widely disseminated

tracts about the barbarism they found across the Pacific, hoping to generate support for conversion efforts. Though the intention was to support the Chinese through a familiar form of paternalism, the missionaries' representations of Chinese perversion, immorality, and exoticism also fed anti-Chinese rhetoric.⁵¹

America's first Chinese mission was founded in 1853 in San Francisco with only four members. This Presbyterian mission was joined in the 1860s and 1870s by Methodist, Episcopal, Congregational, and Baptist counterparts. Along with regular church services and Sunday schools, these Chinese missions offered newly arrived Chinese migrants lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic that were interlaced with religious instruction. Reverend Otis Gibson, a widely published minister of the Methodist church, saw lofty goals for such missionary efforts. "It has been reserved for this nineteenth century and this Republican Government of these United States of America," he declared, "to witness the first great experiment of aggregated paganism in actual contact with the best form of Christian civilization which the world has ever seen." He called for American Christians to rise to the occasion and demonstrate the power of American society to reform the pagan Chinese. But Christianization efforts fell short of these bold ambitions. Although some migrants welcomed the education that missionaries offered, many Chinese left the schools once they had acquired basic, but highly valuable, English skills. Even though most Chinese proved uninterested or resistant, Chinese migrants had joined eleven denominations and participated in 271 Sunday schools in thirty-one states by 1892. In addition to preaching to Chinese in America, Protestant missionaries crossed the Pacific Ocean to bring the gospel to China, an effort McFarland supported through personal donations. American Protestant missionaries imagined their conversion project on a transpacific scale.⁵²

Facing swelling anti-Chinese violence in Tacoma, McFarland joined with seven other local religious leaders to denounce anti-Chinese violence in a tract entitled "Sentiments of the Ministerial Union of Tacoma Respecting the Present Anti-Chinese Question." While ministers acknowledged that their primary task was to "preach [our] gospel," they argued that as religious leaders they had a responsibility as "God's watchmen" to weigh in on moral questions of the day. It was their duty to explain God's will, especially at moments when "prejudice, self-interest or political ambition" caused a com-

munity to make “wrong” and “evil” decisions. Pastor McFarland and the Tacoma Ministerial Union saw the violence brewing in October 1885 as just such a moment. “A community . . . which forcibly substitutes its own will for the law of the land,” they warned, “covers itself with disgrace, & gives occasion for fear & gloom in the hearts of all friends of freedom.” Violence against the Chinese was a threat to American freedom.⁵³

A week before the expulsion from Tacoma, the ministers declared that the Chinese were already victims of “a reign of terrorism.” While government officials and leading citizens for “law and order” described the agitation in September and October as peaceful, the ministers stated the situation in no uncertain terms. The explicit intimidation of the Chinese, they argued, was a form of “impersonal violence,” which had already prompted men to flee for “their lives.” Although few Chinese had been injured in Tacoma, the ministers described an “organized persecution of the Chinese” that could not be denied. “The cry is sounded, by day & by night, ‘The Chinese *Must* go!’” they wrote, “Stones are hurled against their houses, in many of which the windows are riddled as by a hailstorm. Daily, by the time the sun has fairly set, they, with boarded windows & barred doors, sit in silence & fear in their houses. It is well understood that it would not be altogether safe for the Chinese to be upon our streets in the night time.”⁵⁴

The ministers advanced an uncommonly broad definition of violence, but gained support from a few educated elites. Historians B. F. Alley and J. P. Munro-Fraser, who happened to be in the territory finishing up a history of Washington, wrote, “It does not require much ability to see, that the anti-Chinese movement means violence. It is not force merely contemplated, but force applied, whenever incendiary and seditious speeches and resolutions are uttered.” These public intellectuals insisted that Tacoma’s November 1 deadline for the Chinese “is not leading to riot, it is riot. . . . The words used in delivering the cowardly message may be covert but the act is overt.” Rarely did Americans citizens so boldly condemn the anti-Chinese movement.⁵⁵

Tacoma’s ministers, for their part, stopped short of defending the right of Chinese to live and work in Washington Territory. Although national Protestant leaders preached conversion, McFarland and others sympathized with their parishioners, openly conceding that the presence of Chinese in the city was “undesirable.” Since expulsion seemed inevitable, the ministers reconciled themselves to the fact that the Chinese must go, but they believed

it was possible to tamp down the violence. Using teachings of the “peaceable religion of Christ,” they entreated agitators to respect U.S. treaty obligations and put aside violence. “There is a worse evil than the presence of the Chinese,” the ministers wrote, “& that is their expulsion from among us by lawless force.” They counseled, “If the community could rid itself of their presence by the enforcement of law, or by a refusal to avail itself of their services, no occasion for complaint would exist.” The ministers’ main concern was not to save the Chinese from expulsion; it was to protect white men’s souls, and the society they were fighting to construct, from damnation.⁵⁶

Of course the vigilantes in Tacoma did not listen, massing early in the morning of November 3, 1885. Pastor McFarland watched the spectacle in horror with his friend Captain Albert Whyte, a recently deputized sheriff. “My God,” McFarland said to Whyte, “is this America? Why do we stand and do nothing?” Before McFarland could rush into the crowd, Whyte held him back. “See that man,” cautioned Whyte, “He’s the mayor, remember? And that, he’s a judge. And that one; he’s on the council. And that one; he’s the sheriff. And most of the rest of them have been deputized. . . . Don’t matter what you do, you can’t stop this thing. You can only make it worse.” “Perhaps you’re right,” admitted McFarland, and he left the mob alone to do as they would.⁵⁷

As promised, the vigilantes drove the Chinese out of Tacoma and, it seems, pushed McFarland out as well. After only a year in Tacoma, he left and moved to the small town of Vancouver in southern Washington Territory. Although Reverend McFarland acquiesced to the anti-Chinese movement, many religious leaders on the East Coast continued to protest the treatment of the Chinese. In Boston, for example, Methodist and Episcopal churches held a meeting in March 1886, where they drafted resolutions to Congress decrying “grievous outrages” against Chinese in the western states and territories. “That the failure to keep our treaty obligations, and the inhuman persecutions and brutal massacres which have been perpetrated upon these strangers in our midst,” declared the petition, “have disgraced our country in the eyes of the civilized world, and subject us to the just judgments of a righteous God.” Dozens of copies of the petition were circulated to eastern churches and hundreds of parishioners signed to show their support. Religious leaders were not only worried about American souls, they were also concerned about missionaries currently working in China. The petition re-

minded Congress that “the safety of our citizens in China is imperiled by these frequent and unredressed wrongs to Chinese subjects in the United States.” Since the 1870 massacre of French missionaries in Tianjin, anti-Western violence in China seemed an ever-present threat. Religious leaders feared that American missionaries in China could suffer the same fate as the Chinese in America.⁵⁸

While some missionaries on the East Coast continued to support Chinese migration, western religious leaders offered up an alternative in the wake of the violence. If the Chinese were driven out of America, missionaries could concentrate their conversion efforts on China. In 1886, the *San Francisco Evening Post* reported that notable leaders of the Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Baptist churches had declared their support of the anti-Chinese movement. “It was [once] thought that the pro-Chinese view was necessarily the Christian view,” wrote the *Post*. “Long experience has shown, however, that it is no easier to convert the Chinaman here than on his native soil.” Since “the presence of the Chinese means poverty, suffering and moral and religious blight to many of our own race,”⁵⁹ religious leaders increasingly turned their attention abroad. When Reverend McFarland fled in response to the anti-Chinese violence, he was not alone.⁶⁰

Thomas Burke: “I Favor the American Method”

Thomas Burke seemed unlikely to decry the expulsions, given his ethnic heritage and political leanings. Born in 1849 in upstate New York to Irish farmers, Burke, no doubt, would have followed the family trade, like his four siblings, if a childhood injury to his arm had not put manual labor out of the question. Earning tuition by working as a clerk, Burke attended college at Ypsilanti Seminary and read law in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Two years after passing the bar exam, at the age of twenty-five, Burke decided to move to the frontier town of Seattle to begin his career. He arrived with political ambitions. He made a successful bid to become probate judge of King County and ran twice, without success, as a Democratic candidate for territorial delegate to Congress in 1882 and 1884. Though he shared immigrant roots and Democratic politics with many of the vigilantes, Burke had no sympathy for the violence. In November 1885, he told a mixed crowd of vigilantes and officials in Seattle exactly what he thought of the Tacoma expulsion. “200

human beings were driven out of Tacoma like dogs, and compelled to face a driving storm all night, during which two of their number died from exposure," he roared. "Dumb animals are deserving of better treatment than that."⁶¹

Burke may have hailed from a humble immigrant family, but in Seattle he became an elite businessman, and as his fortunes rose he developed a transpacific vision of America's future. He saw the Pacific Ocean as "a great highway" and believed "nothing could be more natural than that a commerce should spring between" the United States and China. In the 1870s, he worked as a lawyer, representing railroad corporations and Chinese contractors (including Chin Gee Hee) who supplied their labor. His investment in China grew in the 1880s, when he became a railroad developer and began promoting Seattle as a gateway to Asia.⁶²

However, Burke's support of Chinese labor was tenuous from the beginning. Days after the Chinese were driven from Tacoma, Seattle's mayor, Henry Yesler, convened a public meeting that drew seven hundred people on both sides of the issue. Haller, who knew Burke well and often dined with him, stood in the crowd that night and recorded the event in his diary. The Civil War colonel noted (with approval) that many speakers urged the crowd "to be loyal to our Government" and "use legal means to drive out the Chinaman." Speakers reviewed "the whole Chinese history: how England forced open its ports, when for ages they had been closed to Foreigners, and Chinese prevented from going abroad. The Burlingame Treaty opened China to our people and we allowed Chinaman to come here under our national protection."⁶³ At the end of the evening, Burke took the stage. According to his biographer, he was not a commanding figure, standing "below medium height" at a little over five feet. Burke was heavily invested in Chinese labor and the China Trade, but by the time he spoke at Frye's Opera House, he had already reconciled himself to the vigilantes' demands. Although he decried the expulsion, Burke readily admitted to his audience that it was in "our interest" to see the Chinese go. "There should be no substantial difference of opinion among the people of this city on the Chinese question," he said, "We are all agreed that the time has come when a new treaty should be made with China restricting Chinese immigration to this country."⁶⁴

Still he opposed the violent, extralegal tactics of the anti-Chinese movement. Acutely aware of the rampant prejudice against the Irish in America,

Burke was particularly incensed that members of his ethnic community would invite criticism by participating in lawlessness. He spoke directly to the many workers in the audience who shared his Irish ancestry, arguing that the Irish, of all men, should “be true to American ideals of law and order.” Given the history of oppression of the Irish in their home country, Burke believed they should know better than to persecute “any of God’s creatures no matter how lowly he may be or the color of his skin.” Furthermore, the Irishman should be especially grateful for America’s hospitality toward immigrants and not dare “such black ingratitude as to raise his hand in violence against the laws” of their adopted home. Participating in the nativist anti-Chinese moment would not Americanize or whiten the Irish race, Burke believed. It would only offer fodder to its detractors. “Shall we act as becomes free, law-abiding and justice-loving Americans or as turbulent and lawless foreigners?” Burke’s answer to this own question was clear: “I am an American and I appeal to Americans,” he declared. “Of the two methods, the lawful and unlawful, I favor the American method.”

Burke believed that “the American method” was already working; agitation and boycotts alone were convincing white employers to discharge Chinese workers, and jobless migrants were fleeing Puget Sound. To Burke, intimidation was a legal and nonviolent means of driving out the Chinese, but forcible expulsion was a punishable crime, a crime of insurrection, riot, or conspiracy. He saw a clear division between the vigilantes and himself, but he did not think it was a division of class, politics, or even racial beliefs. The divide was between the “true men” who respected U.S. law and the “wicked” “un-American” vigilantes who did not.⁶⁵ By supporting law and order, Burke hoped to shore up his own manliness, whiteness, and citizenship, and encouraged other Irish Americans to do the same. Fearing the effects of anti-Irish nativism, Burke unintentionally unleashed his own brand of scorn.⁶⁶

Few Irishmen were receptive to his message. One worker professed astonishment at hearing “a man of Judge Burke’s caliber heap such burning insults upon Irishmen.” Calling his speech nothing but “slurs and insolence,” vigilantes accused Burke of caring only about the effect of the agitation on his Chinese clients.⁶⁷ It was true that Burke continued to represent Chinese clients throughout the violence in Washington Territory, but mostly he was helping them flee. He wrote to customs collector H. F. Beecher, for example,

on behalf of Wan Lee, a merchant based in Seattle. Explaining that “public prejudice” and “depression in his line of business” were forcing Lee to sell out and permanently leave the country, Burke asked the collector to allow him to travel to Victoria and back to settle his affairs. His advocacy only sped Lee’s departure from Seattle.⁶⁸

When the expulsion began in Seattle on February 7, 1886, Burke heard the news from “a frightened Chinaman.” Leaving his half-eaten meal, he rushed to his office and began sending messages to spread the news to supporters of law and order. Soon Governor Squire, Haller, and other community leaders arrived at his law office and turned it into a temporary headquarters for the militia. The territory’s militia, unlike its law enforcement, was primarily composed of Washington’s cosmopolitan elite, including former military officers, lawyers, businessmen, petty merchants, and a few skilled laborers. Burke himself was a member of the Home Guard, one of several militia companies organized in Seattle. Unlike the police and deputy sheriffs in Seattle and Tacoma, the militia raised armed resistance against the vigilantes, but it came too little and too late. That afternoon the militia could not successfully stop the vigilantes from driving hundreds of Chinese to the docks of Seattle.⁶⁹

When the militia proved unable to stop the expulsion, Burke turned to the law. He helped draft a plea of habeas corpus in the name of Gee Lee and delivered the petition into the inviting hands of Judge Roger Greene, a Republican known to be sympathetic to the Chinese and distrustful of workingmen. Fearing the anti-Chinese violence was part of a “socialist conspiracy,” Judge Greene was eager to stop the expulsion and ordered all expelled Chinese to his courtroom the next morning. There, he told them they could stay, but most declared their intention to go.⁷⁰

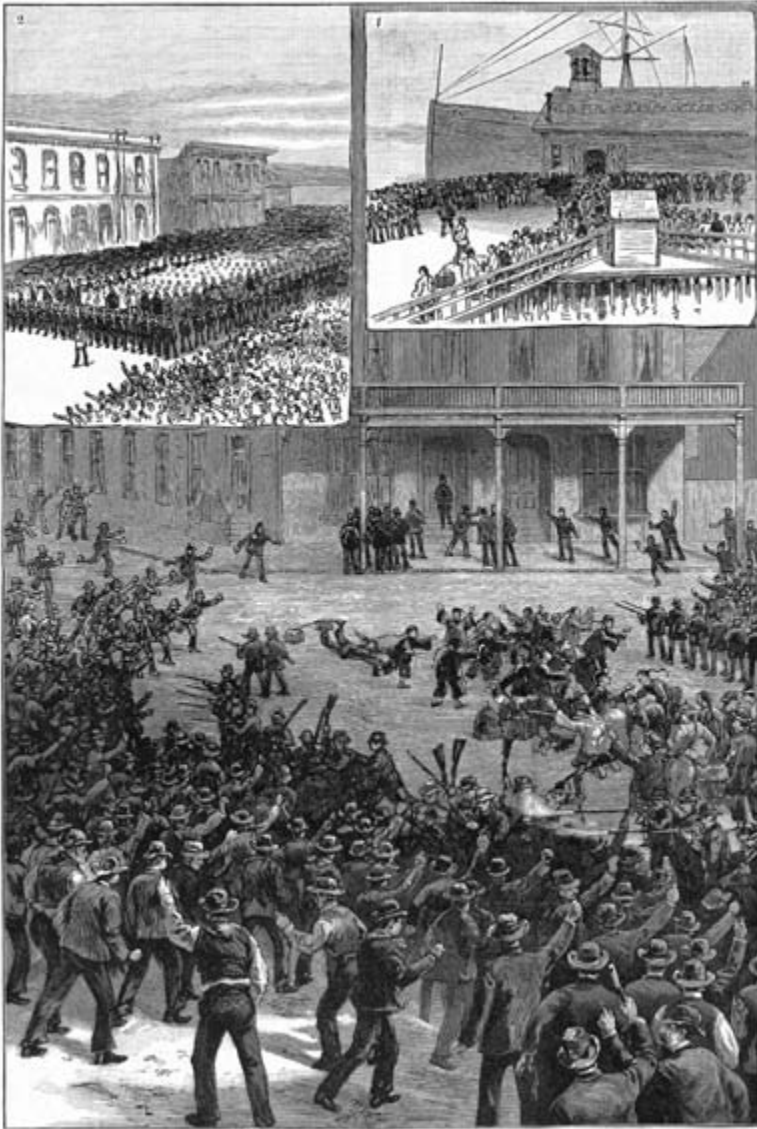
It had been easy enough for the militia to escort the Chinese to Greene’s courtroom. But returning them to their homes in Seattle, while they awaited the next available steamer, proved difficult. A crowd of irate workingmen met the militia downtown and refused to disperse. The commanding officer, Captain John Haines, tried to make the situation clear: the militia was only returning the Chinese to their homes temporarily, as a first step in an imagined orderly and voluntary exiling of the Chinese. “The Chinese are going,” he told the crowd; they “must go.”⁷¹ But the vigilantes did not believe him. Burke’s biographer believed that Burke’s presence among the militia,

holding a double-barreled shotgun at the ready, helped further antagonize the rioters. His speech the previous November had made him a prominent leader of the so-called white Chinese and a few cries of “Burke, Burke, give us Burke” rose from the crowd.

Threatened by the jeers, militiamen fired their guns in warning, chaos ensued, and several men fell wounded.⁷² It was a battle of white elites versus white workingmen, with the unarmed Chinese trying to dodge the fray. Years later the pattern of buckshot that hit the door of the nearby New England Hotel was remembered as “Burke’s mark,” but Burke never admitted to having fired his weapon that day. That did not, however, stop the vigilantes (with the help of sympathetic policemen) from swearing out an arrest warrant for Thomas Burke and three other men, for the murder of their fallen comrade, Charles F. G. Stewart.⁷³

As a lawyer and a militiaman, Burke believed he represented the interests of American law, but the warrant for his arrest showed that he was not the only one who claimed the law to be on his side. The agitators found willing supporters in the courts, the police force, and the press. Haller, for one, blamed the *Seattle Daily Call* and its “insolent and outrageous account” of the shooting. In his diary, Haller accused the paper of “throwing blame on the Deputy Sheriffs, and exciting the populace against law and order, by such headings as ‘*Peaceful and law abiding measures of Expulsion*’ when the laws in the premises protect the Chinaman.”⁷⁴ The militia acted in the name of the law, but, to Haller’s disgust, the agitators did as well.

The warrant for Burke’s arrest was not immediately served, only because Governor Squire declared martial law to quell the violence and to protect his militiamen.⁷⁵ In the meantime, Burke continued to serve as part of the militia and wrote to friends declaring his innocence. To Mrs. Louisa Ackerson, Burke explained that ever since his speech at Frye’s Opera House “the hoodlum element here, and some well meaning but misguided people have felt very bitter towards me.” He did not mention having any part in the shooting, but justified the actions of the militia. He admitted that the shootout was “very mortifying” but believed “it is infinitely better than letting the law be trampled under foot and let[ting] this town be run by a mob.”⁷⁶ Burke was more direct when writing to another friend, Reverend J. F. Ellis. He explained that “*the order to fire* was given by the proper officer, and that every step taken by the militia was within the law.” He went on



“The Anti-Chinese Riot at Seattle.” This illustration by W. P. Snyder appeared in *Harper’s Weekly* on March 6, 1886. Panel 1 depicts Chinese migrants who have been forced to gather at Seattle’s harbor awaiting passage to San Francisco. Panel 2 shows the militiamen marching the expelled Chinese to Chief Justice Roger Greene’s courthouse following a writ of habeas corpus. The largest drawing shows the violence that followed Greene’s order to return the Chinese to their residences. Digital reproduction courtesy of Harp Week, LLC.

to further disparage the mob as a group of unpatriotic immigrants. "The man Stewart who was killed," wrote Burke, "was a foreigner, and didn't value the distinction of American citizenship enough to become naturalized." As he had in his infamous speech, Burke continued to condemn the agitators as disloyal foreigners and, in turn, strengthened his own claim to American citizenship and belonging.⁷⁷

As he awaited trial, Burke cofounded the Bar Association of King County, which took a public stand against the action of the "roughs" and in support of the militia's resistance. Repeating the themes of Burke's opera house speech, the Bar Association's resolutions declared that the violence "ought to meet the strongest condemnation of every honest, loyal man residing in [Seattle], and of every true American in the whole country." The association appealed to the white people of Washington Territory to unite behind law and order. In this frontier community, argued the drafters, "the prosperity of one class is intimately associated with the prosperity of all" and therefore there was "no occasion for jealousy, animosity or strife." Recognizing that class warfare had recently bloodied the streets of Seattle, they urged a cease-fire among the white community.⁷⁸

In June 1886, a grand jury was finally convened for the murder trial, the *People v. Thomas Burke et al.* The primary evidence used against the accused was the hastily recorded statement of Charles Stewart, the murdered man, which was taken on February 8. According to his dying words, Stewart was "struck" in the arm by "something," but he did not realize it was a bullet until he had been carried away from the scene. "I did not see anybody shoot me," he testified.⁷⁹ While the jury lacked evidence that an order had been given for the militia to fire, they did find that the shooting was warranted. The grand jury found that the rioters had met the militia with "jeers and hisses," refused to move aside to let the Chinese pass, and attempted to seize the guns of the militiamen. Considering these circumstances and the "excited state of men's minds during those troublous [*sic*] days," there were grounds "to render it unsafe and dangerous to await an order to fire." The grand jury ruled the shooting an act of force, not a murderous assault, drawing a legal line that divided state violence from vigilantism.⁸⁰

With the case dismissed, Burke could rest assured that his good name as a loyal patriot had been preserved. And this was everything to him. His fight against the vigilantes was a bold declaration of his patriotism, made more

urgent by his status as a probationary citizen in a probationary state. Under western eyes, he may have passed as an elite white businessman, but he knew that to many East Coast nativists he would always be the lowly son of Irish farmers. Burke trumpeted law and order, in front of that imagined eastern audience, more in the interest of proving his loyalty to America than in the interest of ending the expulsion.

The violence certainly cooled Burke's public enthusiasm for Chinese workers, but the effect proved only temporary. Once the violence had ended and Chinese exclusion was in place, Burke found it possible again to hire Chinese workers and invest in China. When his law offices burned in the Great Seattle fire of 1889, he sought out Chin Gee Hee's help to find Chinese builders. And when he joined investors of the Great Northern Railway in the 1890s, he recruited Chin to serve as a labor contractor and, eventually, as a ticket agent. In 1916, Burke became the first president of Seattle's China Club, a group of white financiers, industrialists, and policymakers in a bid to expand Seattle's role in the China Trade. For Burke, it seems, endorsing Chinese exclusion while facing the heat of violence was more a matter of expediency than of conviction.⁸¹

The anti-Chinese violence struck a blow at everything white elites held dear: their government, social standing, profits, congregations, and position at the top of the racial order. Instead of standing behind the Chinese, whose labor and migration they had profited from, white elites decided that acquiescence was the best course of action. Some simply looked the other way as violence consumed their communities, while others used their own money and expertise to speed expulsions. They convinced themselves that sacrificing the Chinese was the only way to quiet the threat of white working class violence. In the end, their loyalty to their Chinese neighbors proved weak compared to their desire to reestablish a semblance of social order and to preserve their positions at the top. It is clear from the stories of these cosmopolitan elites that their decisions were personal, sparked by individual beliefs and circumstances. Nevertheless, together they represented a collective turnaround on the Chinese Question that reverberated across the nation.

Haller, for one, watched with disapproval as his friends and colleagues resigned themselves to the demands of the "anti-Chinaman party." The gov-

ernor's "failure" to use force had, according to Haller, "obliged our best men to dicker with the lowest element, and aid them virtually in carrying out the violation of the treaty with China." In private, Haller continued to rail against the "roughs." (After a particularly biased piece of reporting in the *Seattle Daily Call*, he remarked that "the publisher should be arrested, his press and things packed . . . and he be put on board a steamer and sent off—thus pass the chalice to his own lips, to see how that which has been given to the Chinaman suits.")⁸² In public, however, even Haller stood behind the governor.

Governor Squire quickly helped to broadcast the elite's new stance on Chinese migration. Only one month after the Tacoma expulsion, he requested that the Washington Territorial Assembly, a body ruled by local elites, petition Congress in favor of Chinese exclusion. The petitioners asserted, rather defensively, that the "masses" of Washington Territory were "law abiding, treaty respecting citizens of the Republic and neither encourage nor believe in mob violence." But on the Chinese Question, they now stood with the vigilantes. Their letter to Congress, signed by the governor, declared that the people of Washington Territory "unanimously" agreed, except for a few "sentimentalists," that the presence of Chinese on the West Coast would mean the "complete degradation of American labor" and the end of "Christian civilization." The only solution was Chinese exclusion.⁸³

Part 3

Exclusion

The Exclusion Consensus

WHEN NEWS OF THE MURDERS at Rock Springs, Wyoming, reached China in the fall of 1885, it was rumored that only five whole bodies lay among the dead, and that of the rest, only burned fragments of bone remained. The violence, of course, did not end with Rock Springs, and neither did the rumors, true and false. In the winter of 1886, the people of Guangdong Province heard whispers that thousands of Chinese had been murdered in San Francisco.¹ Wild fears seemed to be substantiated when a Cantonese newspaper printed a telegram from Chinese merchants in San Francisco to the Zongli Yamen, or Chinese Foreign Office, on February 23, 1886. The telegram claimed there was “great suffering and destitution among the laboring [*sic*] classes” and requested that the Foreign Office “immediately issue a proclamation warning our people not to let any Chinese come to the United States.” Public outrage at these reports of violence came most strongly from Guangdong, the birthplace of most Chinese migrants in America. There, newspapers printed speeches by Cantonese merchants calling for military retaliation. “I hope some day [*sic*],” one merchant declared in fluent English, “to see our fleets so powerful that we can point our guns at San Francisco, and *demand* of them the rights they have rested [*sic*] from us, and reparation for the wrongs they have done us.”²

As news of anti-Chinese violence spread, U.S. officials feared that there would be reprisals against U.S. diplomats, merchants, and missionaries in China. America’s minister to China, Charles Denby, worried in particular that hostility would turn to violence in Guangdong. Denby, a relatively unknown Northern Democrat and Civil War colonel, had been appointed to

his position by President Grover Cleveland in 1885. He had no training in foreign relations or the Chinese language, but his service in China was lauded by both Democrats and Republicans. He served thirteen years in China, through three administrations and part of a fourth.³ In the weeks following the expulsion from Seattle, he urgently wrote to the Chinese Foreign Office that “the late outrages in America” had created “great excitement at Canton [Guangzhou] against Americans.” Hearing reports that the viceroy in Guangdong Province was promoting violence against Americans, Denby swiftly demanded that the Foreign Office officially renounce all forms of retribution. Although Chinese officials complied with his request, he still feared the worst.⁴ There was only one U.S. naval vessel off the shores of China, so Denby wired, asking for reinforcements and further security, and visited European diplomats to request military assistance if it became necessary.⁵

By summer 1886, it became clear that there would be no mass uprising against Americans in China, but Denby was still anxious. He reported to Secretary of State Thomas F. Bayard that, since the rumors began, “hostility to the United States confronts me at every point—in diplomatic circles and in private life.”⁶ Chinese anger meant more than uncomfortable social encounters: it threatened to undermine America’s relations with China and, in so doing, limit access to Chinese goods and Chinese souls. As he struggled to contain the fallout from anti-Chinese violence in the U.S. West, Denby complained bitterly, “all our evils in China” seem to grow “out of troubles in America.”⁷

Was it possible to close America’s gates while keeping China’s open? Anti-Chinese violence forced this question to the forefront of both national politics and U.S.-Chinese negotiations in the mid-1880s. While violent racial politics pushed for Chinese exclusion in America, the subsequent outrage in China applied countervailing pressure on American statesmen to protect the rights of Chinese nationals. Indeed, white violence exposed the enduring conflict between the dreams of West Coast workers hoping to build a white republic and cosmopolitan imperialists with their sights set on China. Recognizing the national and international stakes of this local violence, U.S. leaders knew that they needed to put an end to the unrest. Instead of meeting the violence on a local scale, however, federal leaders jumped scales. The

Cleveland administration offered only sporadic aid for local suppression of the violence and turned most of its attention to international diplomacy. America's leaders recognized that the expulsions stemmed, in part, from transpacific processes and imperial relations that reached beyond America's borders.

White violence made Chinese exclusion into a political necessity in the mid-1880s, but the form this exclusion would take was born from a contingent and unforeseeable sequence of events. At first, U.S. leaders seized on an opportunity to negotiate their way out of this quandary, as they had in the past. Only when diplomatic solutions failed did Congress move toward unilateral border control. This extraordinary shift in tactics set a new precedent for U.S. immigration law. With the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1888, Congress dramatically extended U.S. sovereignty by claiming sole authority to close America's gates, regardless of treaty obligations.

At the same time, the law signaled a pivotal shift in U.S.-Chinese relations. For the previous two decades, American diplomacy had relied on direct communication and good favor, but now Congress swung America's gates shut without China's approval. Once exclusion was decoupled from diplomacy, a closed gate no longer seemed to preclude the possibility of an open door. By the turn of the twentieth century, Chinese exclusion and U.S. imperialism had become synergistic projects, drawing parallel lines to divide citizens from aliens at home and Western civilization from Eastern barbarism abroad.⁸

American Visions of an Open Door

Like Minister Denby, Secretary Thomas Bayard found himself walking a narrow diplomatic line when anti-Chinese violence broke out in 1885. As America's chief diplomat, Bayard denounced the anti-Chinese expulsions in the name of U.S. interests abroad but also shared the vigilantes' deep anxiety about Chinese migration. Before he was appointed secretary of state, Bayard was a Democratic senator who represented Delaware from 1869 until 1885. Like his father, James Bayard Jr., Thomas Bayard was a proud statesman and an unabashed white supremacist. While the father opposed emancipation during the Civil War, the son decried Reconstruction. Thomas believed that both black men's "defects" and white men's prejudices were God-given,

so fighting these innate tendencies was “futile.”⁹ He extended his racial views to the Chinese Question, explaining to reporters, “I am a strong believer in blood and race . . . and am convinced that the downfall of a man or nation is near at hand when disregard for such facts is permitted. . . . All over this broad land we should watch and combat the stealthy step towards Mongolianism.” As senator and then as secretary of state, Bayard’s personal views on the Chinese had large political ramifications.¹⁰

He was certainly not the first U.S. diplomat to question the worthiness of the Chinese. In the wake of the Opium Wars, British and U.S. diplomats negotiated a series of unequal treaties with China predicated on the belief that the Chinese were “uncivilized.” Just as Western countries had previously divided the world by religion, into Christendom and heathen lands, liberal Western thinkers in the nineteenth century divided the world by culture: into “civilized” nations and the “barbaric” realm that lay beyond. European countries, through a series of treaties, began to formulate “standards of civilization,” creating what they believed to be a benevolent and modern system that granted equal status to all “civilized nations” and guided their conduct through a code of international laws. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the standards for civilization were nebulous, but by century’s end treaties and international conventions had at least implicitly defined them. To be deemed civilized, a country had to have a modern bureaucratic state capable of self-defense, basic human rights, Western norms of diplomacy and international law, and legal power over all people within its territory, whether native or foreign. Not only did the Chinese government fall short of these standards, but the Chinese people’s “barbaric” and “heathen” customs, such as polygamy and Confucianism, made it clear to Western nations that they could not be classified as civilized. And, by defining China as “uncivilized,” Western nations gave themselves license to establish indirect control over the weak Chinese state.¹¹

What form this control would take was a matter of debate across the Western world and in America. While the United States consistently pledged to preserve China’s territorial and governmental integrity in the nineteenth century, U.S. diplomats’ visions of this open door policy shifted many times. The first accord between the two nations, the Wangxia (Wanghia) Treaty of 1844, read as a list of U.S. demands and Chinese concessions. But the give and take of the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 and the Angell Treaty of

1880 show a shift in America's approach, namely a move to promote U.S. commercial domination through Chinese cooperation. Key to maintaining this new cooperative open door policy, and its façade of equality, was sustaining direct communication and friendly relations between the two nations.¹²

Though Bayard supported an open door with China, he questioned the wisdom of the *cooperative* open door. During debates surrounding the Chinese Restriction Act in 1882, Bayard, then a senator, advocated exclusion and denounced the Burlingame Treaty in no uncertain terms. He believed that by declaring China "an equal among nations," U.S. diplomats had "overlooked or disregarded the difference of race." "[T]hey saw but one thing—a profitable commerce, and they rushed with haste into a treaty that considered Americans and Chinamen as if they were all of the same race, habits, and characteristics—all equally and alike entitled and fitted to become citizens of the Republic of the United States." According to Bayard, the rash treaty was a product of American ignorance in 1860s, but by 1882 Americans knew better. Chinese aliens could never become American citizens because the "inundation" of a "wholly different" race will "destroy the labor of our own people."¹³

Despite his misgivings about the cooperative open door, when he became secretary of state, Bayard promoted a friendly relationship between the United States and China. "Whatever may be the differences in our systems of government and their policies, both are governments of *men*," he wrote to the Chinese minister at Washington, D.C., Zheng Zaoru (Cheng Tsao Ju). "For you and your country, my good Friend, I have nothing but good will and friendship."¹⁴

Though Minister Zheng was often at odds with American statesmen, Bayard was not the only one in D.C. to regard him as a "distinguished" diplomat and "courteous friend." Zheng had served as minister to the United States, Spain, and Peru since 1882, and before that was viceroy of Tianjin. A native of Guangdong, a man of humble beginnings, and after 1883, father of a U.S. citizen, Minister Zheng had deep sympathy for the suffering of Chinese in America.¹⁵ When he wrote to Bayard that Chinese laborers had been "attacked by a mob of American citizens" in Rock Springs, Wyoming, he was pleased that his complaint did not fall on deaf ears. The secretary quickly granted Zheng's request for a Chinese investigation of the massacre.

A month later, when Zheng wrote warning of possible expulsions in Washington Territory, Bayard contacted Governor Squire to instruct him to protect the Chinese. After the governor's efforts failed in Tacoma, Bayard drafted a presidential proclamation threatening federal intervention if the populace continued such "unlawful acts." Then, for the president's annual message to Congress in December 1885, Bayard drafted a clear denunciation of anti-Chinese violence. "Every effort has been made by this Government to prevent these violent outbreaks" in Wyoming and Washington Territories, declared the president, adding, "Race prejudice is the chief factor in originating these disturbances . . . jeopardizing our domestic peace and the good relationship we strive to maintain with China."¹⁶

There were high stakes in maintaining the cooperative open door. Especially during the boom and bust economy that followed the Civil War, Americans began to fear that their internal market could no longer consume all U.S.-produced products. In 1885, *Bankers Magazine* argued that foreign markets were of "pressing importance" while *The Age of Steel* suggested that America's excess of industrial products "should be relieved and prevented in the future by increased foreign trade." During a decade that saw multiple economic recessions and labor uprisings, many U.S. businessmen and politicians looked to China for a solution.¹⁷

Recognizing the dire ramifications of violence, Bayard worked to assuage the fears of the Chinese minister after the Tacoma expulsion. Unfortunately, Bayard's efforts were quickly undermined by continued attacks against the Chinese on the Pacific Coast. Days after the Chinese were expelled from Seattle in February 1886, Minister Zheng wrote a lengthy complaint to Bayard. Not only did he demand protection for the Chinese in the United States, but he argued, on the principle of "reciprocal justice and comity," that the United States should indemnify China for the loss of property and lives. Bayard's twenty-six page response denounced "with feeling and indignation the bloody outrages and shocking wrongs" inflicted on Zheng's countrymen. Then it explained that the attacks were perpetrated in "remote" territories of the United States where Chinese laborers had voluntarily migrated despite the arm of the law that was "inchoate and imperfect." The crimes committed were between "private individuals" who did not represent the American or Chinese governments. Furthermore, relations between the two countries, argued Bayard, were not governed by the principle of reciprocity,

but by the statutes of treaties. According to these statutes, the United States was not bound to grant China indemnity for these crimes, but the president would consider repayment purely out of his own benevolence.¹⁸

Bayard was not alone in his efforts to calm Chinese officials. While Bayard negotiated with Minister Zheng in Washington, D.C., Denby negotiated with the Chinese Foreign Office in Beijing. Denby and Bayard, both northern Democrats, were on particularly friendly terms, exchanging both official and private letters while they served together. (Denby even helped to pick out and ship a set of china for Bayard's wife.) While Zheng petitioned Bayard in Washington, D.C., members of the Chinese government in Beijing visited Minister Denby to make similar demands. Like Bayard, Denby explained to Chinese officials that reciprocity had never governed Sino-American relations. He pointed out that while Americans were confined to a few specified areas in China, Chinese were allowed to roam through all of America. Therefore, Chinese in America could not expect the same degree of protection as Americans in China.¹⁹

Denby complained to Bayard that Chinese officials would not understand this reasoning. "Of course," he wrote, "if we were dealing with a fully civilized race and with one familiar with International Law and the history and condition of other nations of the world there would be little trouble in pointing out the difference." But, he implied, the Chinese government was neither civilized nor well-informed. Nevertheless, he assumed there was a diplomatic solution as there had been in the past. In March 1886, Denby suggested that President Cleveland send a commission to China because the question of immigration "can only be solved by some definitive treaty."²⁰

Chinese Visions of Self-Exclusion

Chinese officials, for their part, felt they fully comprehended the situation in the U.S. West. "American business made a profit of millions through exploitation of Chinese workers," the viceroy of Guangdong, Zhang Zhidong (Chang Chih-tung), reported to the Imperial Court, but recently "Irish Party men, who were jealous of Chinese workers . . . cruelly burned the Chinese to seize their property and force employers to fire the Chinese." Viceroy Zhang and other Chinese officials lamented this "extreme tragedy" but saw the migrants' suffering as only the beginning of China's worries. In internal

correspondence, they expressed deep concern about the effects of white violence on growing U.S.-Chinese trade, swelling antifoigner unrest in Guangdong, and China's uncertain position in the world. From his seat in Guangdong, Zhang was particularly concerned that the anti-Chinese movement might prove contagious, spreading across the ocean to other regions of the world. If the Chinese diaspora in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Southeast Asia suddenly came running for home in great numbers, surely the province would be overwhelmed. "We have no place to hold them," he fretted, "Their conditions certainly deserve sympathy, but they also constitute a huge problem for us." A mass return would spell "a disaster beyond imagination."²¹

The obvious solution was to beg, cajole, or threaten the United States until federal officials managed to stop the expulsions. When Viceroy Zhang met with Minister Denby, he attempted all three tactics, pleading for the United States to protect Chinese nationals, promising to quell anti-American unrest in China in return, but warning that he could make no guarantees if expulsions continued. "In addition," he cautioned Denby, "news will spread in the international community about the failure of American legal system to punish violent mobs. This will hurt the reputation of the United States worldwide." How could the United States allow "mobs [to] control employment, make extortion, and agitate social disorder?" Zhang reported to his superiors that the American minister acted "quite guilty" and "emphasized the friendly relationship between China and America." Still the violence continued.²²

Frustrated by the seeming inability of the U.S. to protect Chinese nationals, Minister Zheng Zaoru wrote to his Foreign Office from Washington, D.C., proposing a new solution in the spring of 1886. To his mind, China did not have the military might or political clout to enforce its treaty rights, so the government had to find other means to protect overseas Chinese and, with them, China's reputation. Minister Zheng suggested that China impose its own ban on the emigration of Chinese laborers to the United States.²³ A self-imposed prohibition, he reasoned, could save ignorant Chinese workers both exploitation by labor brokers and expulsion by American citizens. And if these workers no longer competed with American laborers, Zheng hoped that Chinese merchants would face less resentment and hostility in the United States. For Zheng, the fate of Chinese merchants,

and the international trade they promoted, was a higher priority than the lives of peasants. China could sacrifice the migration of the lower classes to protect the prospects of the upper. The workers, Zheng reassured the court, could go instead to Hawai'i, Mexico, or Panama.²⁴

Zheng assured the Foreign Office that his self-restriction treaty would appease the Cleveland administration while ending the humiliating anti-Chinese violence in the U.S. West. He explained, "This plan is not intended to help the Americans mistreat us, but to save Chinese from misfortune. The United States is unable to stop the undesirable type of Chinese from coming, so we must stop them from leaving." Zheng believed a program of self-restriction would lay blame on the United States for "being unable to protect the Chinese." He predicted that the American response would be deep self-reflection and, ultimately, the end of discriminatory immigration laws "in order to avoid the ridicule of the nations of the world." Self-restriction, then, promised to shame the United States and save face for China.²⁵

Prohibiting emigration from China was not without precedent. Since the Qing conquest in 1644, the Imperial Court had discouraged, restricted, or barred Chinese emigration to prevent political adversaries from amassing followers abroad. But as Qing power diminished in the nineteenth century, the prohibition became little more than rhetoric. "The old prohibitory law has not been repealed," one Chinese envoy observed, "but it has repealed itself." Without officially rescinding the prohibition, China signaled its support for emigration, starting with the Burlingame Treaty in 1868. Indeed, when Chinese diplomats began protesting U.S. immigration restrictions in the 1870s and 1880s, they were tacitly condoning emigration once again.²⁶

With the upsurge of violence against overseas Chinese, the Foreign Office returned to the idea of prohibiting emigration, although such a policy would be nearly impossible in practice. The Imperial Court did not have a tight grip on the mobility of its subjects. Nevertheless, the Foreign Office accepted Zheng's proposal, recommending it to the Imperial Court, and finally sent it to Denby in Beijing in August 1886.²⁷ After bitterly complaining that the U.S. government had failed to stop "outrages" or punish the offenders, the Foreign Office's dispatch outlined the proposed treaty. Like the Chinese Restriction Act of 1882, the new treaty would continue to allow the unfettered movement of Chinese merchants, students, or diplomats.

However, it would “strenuously prohibit Chinese laborers who have never visited the United States . . . from proceeding therein” and bar returning Chinese workers “who have no families, valuables or property” in the United States. This measure of self-exclusion would help Chinese workers avoid “treading whence the source of danger springs.”²⁸

Negotiating Chinese Exclusion

When Minister Denby received word of China’s proposal, he tried, with little success, to contain his excitement, fearing that appearing “too eager” could tip America’s hand. “If China of her own volition enlarges the restrictive operation of the treaties,” he wrote to Bayard, “she will be doing exactly the best thing for the United States.” Such a treaty could achieve exclusion of Chinese workers with China’s blessing. If this came to pass, Denby realized, U.S. congressmen would no longer be legislating with their hands tied by diplomatic agreements.²⁹

Like Bayard, Denby believed that Chinese exclusion was imperative. If the United States did not find a way to stop the invasion of Chinese, Denby later wrote in his memoir, he believed that “the pacific slope would be submerged, and its civilization would be wrecked. The ‘yellow peril’ would attack our institutions, our customs, and habits, and overwhelm them.” He allowed that the Chinese “unquestionably” had “good traits”—including industry, honesty, and admirable temperament—but these attributes only made them more threatening to white workers. Furthermore, the Chinese were “excessively stubborn” in maintaining their “own peculiar customs” and “never assimilate with any other people wherever they are.” He further noted that in the years following emancipation, “we are having a sufficiently difficult task in managing the black race,” which should “cause us to pause in undertaking to make citizens of the people who belong to the yellow race.” When Denby forwarded the treaty proposal to Bayard, he did not feel the need to reiterate these well-known reasons for prohibiting Chinese migration. “The Department,” he stated, “is already in full possession of my views touching the question of Chinese emigration and the desirability of restricting it in any proper and lawful manner.”³⁰

Although Denby sent the State Department several letters and a telegram regarding the proposed treaty in August of 1886, he did not manage to reach

Bayard, who was away from Washington, D.C. The secretary of state did not learn of the Chinese proposal until months later when the new Chinese minister at Washington, Zhang Yinhuan (Chang Yen Hoon), raised the matter. The previous Chinese minister, Zheng Zaoru, had been forced to abruptly retire when he suffered a paralyzing illness. His replacement was a wealthy native of Guangdong Province. As a young man, Zhang Yinhuan had failed his district examination so he purchased the title of student at the Imperial Academy and later the rank of magistrate. He served briefly in the Foreign Office before being dismissed in scandal, but still managed to secure the position of minister to the United States, Peru, and Spain. In Washington, D.C., Zhang became known for his lavish parties, great love of entertainment, and fierce determination to finish what his predecessor had started.³¹

When Zhang told Bayard of China's proposal to ban emigration in January 1887, the secretary immediately began negotiations to make the idea a reality. Bayard drew up terms that would be ideal for the United States, namely, a thirty-year prohibition of all Chinese laborers with automatic renewal if neither country abrogated the treaty. Zhang met Bayard's ambitious proposal with a new sense of empowerment. With the United States obviously eager to negotiate an exclusion treaty, he realized the time had come to press again for redress. In his response to Bayard, Zhang stated it was "premature" to negotiate a treaty when the matter of compensation had yet to be settled. At their next face-to-face meeting, he reiterated to Bayard that the U.S. government "should close the Rock Springs case as soon as possible, if it wanted to maintain a friendly relationship between the two nations. Otherwise we cannot suppress our own people's anger." Much to Zhang's chagrin, Bayard refused to say a word in response.³²

Following the awkward conversation, Zhang complained to the Foreign Office, "This is just like someone in heavy debt, not thinking about how to pay for it, but sparing no effort to make new regulations preventing debtors from entering their home." "It is a typical American way," he wrote, "making laws to adapt to their own needs." In fact, although Bayard stayed silent in person, he secretly began lobbying for redress, writing a confidential letter to Perry Belmont, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Representatives, to urge him to push forward indemnity for China. On February 24, 1887, President Cleveland signed into law a bill that granted

the Chinese government \$147,748.74 in damages for the massacre in Rock Springs. Bayard personally went to Zhang's residence in Washington, D.C., to present him with payment, with the hope that negotiations would then go forward.³³

One payout, amid continuing violence, could not silence the Chinese on the matter of redress. Zhang offered Bayard a counterproposal a few days later, but only after raising the matter of another expulsion (this one in Juneau, Alaska) and complaining that the "population of the western Territories" now look on "acts of expelling and burning out the Chinese as sources of pleasure." Instead of America's desired prohibition period of thirty years, Zhang proposed that China prohibit labor emigration "from time to time in such a manner as may be required by circumstances." He then insisted on making exceptions from this already lax proposal for Chinese laborers who had family, property, or debts in the United States. In reply, Bayard demanded more specific and restrictive terms: a prohibition of working-class emigration for twenty years with a few exceptions for laborers who had "a lawful wife, child or parent in the United States" or property valued at one thousand dollars or more.³⁴

Zhang acceded to Bayard's terms on emigration, but the issue of anti-Chinese violence continued to complicate negotiations. In May 1887, word came that white miners had massacred dozens of Chinese on the Snake River in Oregon.³⁵ That same month, unknown arsonists burned the Chinatown in San Jose, California, to the ground. Zhang wanted additional indemnity paid and demanded that the new treaty contain stipulations for the protection of Chinese in America. Bayard explained that the U.S. federal government had little power over the populace on the American frontier, so he could offer no assurances. Incensed, Zhang told Bayard that the United States must offer Chinese migrants "the same *measure* of protection as is extended to Americans in China." After months of pleading letters, Zhang's tone finally turned scornful. "If this is impossible under [the American] system," he continued, "then it must be inferred that the Government of the United States is impotent to discharge its international obligations." Bayard offered no response to this irate letter. Negotiations stalled for six months.³⁶

By this point, more than two years had passed since the violence in Eureka, California, and the wave of expulsions that followed. In the interim, Congress did not stand idle. Between 1885 and 1888, congressmen intro-



Chinatown Fire in San Jose, California. Five thousand onlookers came to watch as Market Street Chinatown burned on May 4, 1887. Following this act of arson, Chinese residents relocated to the outskirts of the city, building Woolen Mills Chinatown and Heinlenville Chinatown. History San Jose Photographic Collection, 1997-300-1683. Courtesy of History San Jose.

duced eight bills with the purpose of strengthening the Chinese Restriction Act, but none earned widespread support. There were only a few legislators ready to abandon the possibility of a diplomatic solution and the cooperative open door. Senator John H. Mitchell, a Republican representing Oregon, became the spokesman for congressmen who were unwilling to wait for the long-promised treaty. Claiming to speak for the people of the Pacific Northwest, he introduced a bill “abrogating all treaties . . . [that] inhibit the United States from absolutely prohibiting the coming of Chinese to the United States.”

Mitchell was aware, he informed the Senate, that “men hold up their hands in holy horror” at even the suggestion that Congress should violate existing treaty agreements and the delicate trust built between the two nations. But unlike his fellow statesmen, he did not hold high hopes for the China Trade. Armed with financial reports, he argued that “the balances

are all against us and the benefits with China.” China produced many products that Americans wanted to buy, but the United States produced few commodities that sold well in China. The result was an imbalance of trade and power. While America could risk losing the transpacific trade, Mitchell observed, China could not. Mitchell wagered that China would never close its ports to American merchants, no matter what insults Congress inflicted, because of these stark economic realities. Therefore, he urged immediate unilateral exclusion and presented a bill to that effect. West Coast representatives echoed his opinion. In the summer of 1887, a Senate foreign relations subcommittee heard evidence from five senators and seven representatives from California, Nevada, and Oregon. The congressmen asserted, without exception, that 90 percent of their constituents would abandon all commerce with China rather than accept Chinese migration. Most of the West Coast was willing to sacrifice the cooperative open door for the sake of Chinese exclusion.³⁷

Many other congressmen, however, viewed Mitchell’s assessment of the China Trade as shortsighted and his call for abrogation reckless. The Senate referred his unilateral exclusion bill to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, where it languished. Though white violence had convinced many skeptics that exclusion was necessary, Congress remained committed to a diplomatic solution. Senator John Sherman, an Ohio Republican and chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations, had been one of the holdouts in 1882, urging limited restriction and diplomatic caution. But Eureka, Rock Springs, and Tacoma made him into a ready advocate for exclusion in 1886. “[I]n the opinion of the committee [on foreign relations], and I may say in the opinion of the Department of State and of the Treasury Department as well,” he declared, “the time has come when the exclusion must be absolute.” Still, Sherman, along with the majority of Congress, believed that the burden fell on the executive branch. Congress earnestly and repeatedly petitioned the president for a new treaty “to absolutely exclude Chinese laborers from this country.”³⁸

After half a year of inaction, the looming presidential election of 1888 brought Bayard back to the negotiating table. President Cleveland was facing an uphill battle for a second term. He was the first Democrat to win a presidential race since the Civil War and did so, in 1884, without carrying any western states. This time, Cleveland believed he needed a wider base of sup-

port. In December 1887, he wrote to Bayard to complain, privately, that unlawful Chinese migration constantly made the national news. Such “frauds and evasions” must be prevented, insisted Cleveland, “by us, that is *our party*.” Clearly, the president did not want Republicans like Senator Mitchell to pass a bill excluding the Chinese and receive the political payoff. If Democrats could resolve the “Chinese question,” Cleveland believed, it would be another important “string to our bow.” In part, politics drove Cleveland’s anti-Chinese stance, but so did his earnest belief that the Chinese could not assimilate into American society. “Our immigration laws were designed to invite assimilation,” he wrote to Bayard, “not to provide an arena for endless antagonism.” In order to end this antagonism and score a political win, Cleveland pressed Bayard to conclude negotiations with China.³⁹

Bayard and Zhang finally came to terms on March 12, 1888, more than two years after China first proposed the idea of self-prohibition. Ultimately, the Bayard-Zhang (Bayard-Chang) Treaty prohibited all Chinese from migrating to the United States for the following twenty years, save only for merchants, students, diplomats, and laborers who had immediate family or a thousand dollars in property or debts in the United States. The final clause stated that the United States would grant China \$276,619.75 for losses sustained through mob violence in the Pacific states and territories, including Washington. Bayard and Zhang signed the agreement and then presented the treaty to their respective governments for ratification.⁴⁰

In Bayard’s mind, the treaty had the potential to solve three problems at once: the threat of white violence, the danger of Chinese aliens, and the inadequacy of U.S. border control. In his public letter to the president, he described the treaty as a remedy to “manifest discontent in the states bordering upon the Pacific,” the “obvious lack of assimilation” of Chinese laborers, and the “demonstrated inefficiency” of the Chinese Restriction Act. After lauding this diplomatic solution, Bayard spent several paragraphs justifying the additional indemnity promised by the treaty. Americans needed to admit “a failure of justice” in the “lawless violence of which the Chinese were the victims,” he argued. “The payment will, in measure, remove the reproach to our civilization caused by the crimes.” The treaty, then, at once denounced anti-Chinese violence and gave in to the vigilantes’ demands.⁴¹

Privately, Bayard feared that the treaty would not make it through Congress. He believed that the Republican majority in the Senate was “wholly

devoid of comity, courtesy, or common justice to the Administration.” Nothing that might offer a feather in the cap of the Democratic president, no matter how “serviceable to the Country,” could “run the gauntlet of small politics in the Senate successfully.” In a confidential executive session, some Republican senators, including Senator Mitchell, voted against ratification, likely arguing that the treaty did not go far enough to exclude Chinese migrants. But most of Mitchell’s fellow Republicans took a different approach. Eager to claim some credit for the prohibition of Chinese migration, Republican senators insisted on several amendments, which amounted to mere rhetorical flourishes and slight clarifications, before they would ratify the treaty.⁴²

“Whatever excuse is put forward for these amendments,” complained President Cleveland, “of course their object is largely political.” He anxiously asked Bayard if the Chinese would agree to the amendments, hoping to keep Republicans from slowing negotiations and gaining any “political advantage.” Given the looming election of 1888, Cleveland desperately wished to have the Chinese Question settled. Bayard agreed that the amendments were not bona fide improvements to the treaty, only intended to “obstruct our negotiations,” but he hoped these “small politics” would do little harm. It proved easy to convince Minister Zhang that the amendments did not materially change the content of the treaty, but their addition still delayed the negotiations for several months. In the meantime, apparently confident of China’s response, Congress ratified the amended treaty and passed legislation to put its provisions into practice. It appeared to all that the Cleveland administration had finally achieved Chinese exclusion while maintaining the cooperative open door.⁴³

The president celebrated victory while unbeknownst to him, trouble was brewing across the Pacific. When word leaked to the Chinese public about the treaty, Chinese merchants in San Francisco, Hong Kong, and Guangzhou petitioned the Imperial Court to reject it. They argued that the self-imposed ban would spell the end of the Chinese American community and their lucrative trade. Without new Chinese migrants to America, the population would dwindle to zero within twenty years as migrants died or returned to China. The merchants’ import and export businesses depended on overseas Chinese as workers in American industries, consumers of Chinese goods, and passengers on transpacific steamers. And what if other coun-

tries followed suit? It would be disastrous if thousands of laborers were driven back to Guangdong Province. In their protests, the Chinese targeted Minister Zhang, who was already an unpopular figure due to his extravagant lifestyle. When Chinese workers who had recently returned from America mobbed Zhang's residence in Guangdong, it became clear that China was not immune to the power of violent unrest. Minister Zhang denounced the protesters as slanderers—calling them “trafficking dealers” only concerned about their “profits” and who “spared no effort in destroying the treaty”—but the demonstrators had struck a fatal blow. Citing “many complaints,” the Imperial Court rejected the treaty in July 1888.⁴⁴

A Unilateral Solution

On Saturday, September 1, 1888, the *New York Herald* announced that the Imperial Court had rejected the Bayard-Zhang Treaty. Although China had not sent any official communication, Democratic leaders across the country feared that their diplomatic solution had failed. In San Francisco, the chairman of the Democratic State Committee, William D. English, telegraphed Cleveland's private secretary in panic. Given national public support for Chinese exclusion, Democrats feared that the failed treaty would mean the end of Cleveland's reelection campaign, unless congressional Democrats immediately pushed for unilateral exclusion. Pennsylvania congressman and chair of the Democratic National Committee, William L. Scott, also read the article in the *Herald*. Early Monday morning, he conferred with President Cleveland about how to contain the political fallout. No one consulted Secretary Bayard.⁴⁵

When the House, controlled by the Democrats, began proceedings at noon, Representative Scott asked for the floor to introduce a bill for the total exclusion of Chinese workers. When congressmen protested that they had recently ratified a treaty and passed legislation to address this matter, Scott explained that there were indications that China had rejected the treaty. If speculation proved true, argued Scott, “then this bill is essential, and is the only possible way by which Chinese laborers can be kept out of the United States.” The exclusion bill he proposed, which would come to be known as the Scott Bill, amended the Chinese Restriction Act. Instead of barring the coming of new Chinese laborers, the Act would bar all Chinese laborers

whether or not they had previously resided in the United States. Return certificates that U.S. Customs houses had been issuing to departing Chinese during the previous six years would become null and void.⁴⁶

Most of the House was shocked by this sudden turn of events. As statesmen conferred in hushed voices, rumors spread that the bill had come from the president himself. Congressman William W. Morrow, a Republican representing California, grumbled that he had not had time to review the bill. But Morrow and other members of the House soon grasped the gravity of the situation. Given the fervor of anti-Chinese sentiment in the country—from western workers and from western developers as well—they could not oppose the bill without severe political repercussions. This bill, then, was their best chance to end the migration of Chinese workers once and for all. Within minutes, the bill passed without a dissenting vote. The next day's *New York Times* blared, "To Shut Out Chinamen: A Total Exclusion Bill Passed by the House."⁴⁷

The bill's path through the Republican-controlled Senate was not as swift or as simple. The Senate had been busy discussing whether to admit Washington Territory as a state when news came that the House had passed an exclusion measure. Over the following month, the Senate found much to debate about the Exclusion Bill. They fought over who was to blame for the failed treaty: Senate Republicans for their meaningless amendments or the Democratic administration for its botched negotiations? They returned to the debate over the open door: Would this bill undermine Sino-American relations or not? And they argued about the motives behind the legislation: Was this a matter of necessity, or simply politics?⁴⁸

What was not up for debate was the need for Chinese exclusion. It was hardly surprising that Senator Mitchell, who had long called for Congress to abrogate U.S. treaties with China, was "earnestly and decidedly" for the Exclusion Bill. His only reservation was that it did not go "one step further" to absolutely exclude all Chinese from migrating to America forever.⁴⁹ But even among those who had championed Chinese migration, no one dared speak against exclusion, given the political climate. Republican senator John Sherman, who argued against exclusionary measures in 1882, now summed up the Senate's attitude: "Whatever may have been said in the past, there is no doubt current sentiment in this country that we should prohibit races so distinct, so alien, so different in habits, civilization, religion, and character

from ours, from coming to our country.” While Sherman referred, obliquely, to the “current sentiment of the country,” Democratic senator John Tyler Morgan explicitly invoked the role of anti-Chinese violence. “These little mobs rise, but they cannot exterminate [the Chinese], and we cannot prevent [the mobs],” he argued, “All we can do is to keep [the Chinese] out of this country.” Chinese exclusion was more than politically expedient, it was also the best answer to the danger of white violence in the U.S. West.⁵⁰

Bayard followed the debate in the Senate with growing alarm, fearing that legislative haste would undermine the diplomatic relations he had worked so hard to cultivate. He wrote to Denby in Beijing asking for any news of the fate of the treaty, but the reply was not what he had hoped. On September 5, Denby telegraphed that he believed the treaty had been rejected. Before he found “positive information” to confirm this, the Senate passed the Exclusion Bill on September 17, 1888, and sent it to the president’s desk for his signature. Denby contacted the Chinese Foreign Office, pressing for ratification of the Bayard-Zhang Treaty. Finally, he received a clear response. The Chinese government declared its intent to renegotiate the treaty to reduce the period of prohibition and exempt Chinese laborers who owned property in the United States. To Denby, these new demands amounted to a “rejection of the treaty.” This time, there would be no diplomatic solution to the problem of Chinese migration.⁵¹

Once Denby realized that there was little hope for ratification, he sent an urgent telegraph and letter to the State Department. Describing China’s conduct as “eminently unjust and indefensible,” he advocated for President Cleveland to sign the Exclusion Bill. He favored the bill because “our self respect would be seriously impaired if we allowed ourselves to be treated with the indecent disregard shown us.” Denby understood that the Exclusion Bill would violate current treaty stipulations with China, but believed such action was justified by China’s violation of “her plighted faith.” Likening uncivilized China to an unruly child, he argued, “our national honor demands that China should be taught that she cannot with impunity make us the foot ball [*sic*] of her foreign policy.” It was not just national dignity that was at stake; it was also the future of U.S. society and government. The American republic, which he believed was founded on homogeneous citizenry, could not continue to function with “large bodies of people who remain perpetual aliens to our system of government.” Ultimately, Denby placed national

honor and Chinese exclusion above any fears surrounding the future of the cooperative open door.⁵²

Although Bayard usually supported Denby's opinions, he dissented on this issue. Even if China had rejected the treaty, Bayard disapproved of Congress's hasty actions. He believed the 1888 Exclusion Bill was in "manifest violation of the existing Convention with China" and feared negative repercussions for diplomatic and mercantile relations. He was aware that many Democrats, including President Cleveland, believed the passage of this bill was essential before the November elections. In Bayard's eyes, the Democratic Party's anti-Chinese record was "perfectly clear, and needs no such reckless action as the 'Scott bill [*sic*]' proposes." He wrote to President Cleveland, begging, in no uncertain terms, to reject the bill in the name of "international courtesy, good faith and self respect."⁵³

The Exclusion Act

President Cleveland signed the Exclusion Act into law on October 1, 1888. Then, in an unusual move, he sent a special message to Congress to explain his decision to the nation and, indirectly, to China. Acknowledging that the United States had once encouraged Chinese migration to America, Cleveland argued that it was now clear that "the experiment of blending the social habits and mutual race idiosyncrasies" has been "in every sense unwise, impolitic, and injurious to both nations." He acknowledged that the Restriction Act had failed to slow Chinese migration and using oblique and tactful phrasing, blamed the recent anti-Chinese violence on that failure. He wrote, "The inoperative and inefficient condition of the treaty and law has produced deep-seated and increasing discontent among the people of the United States, and especially with those resident on the Pacific Coast." Ending this "discontent," Cleveland made clear, would mean "danger averted and lives preserved." He sympathized with "the earnest popular demand for absolute exclusion for Chinese laborers," because these migrants had "purposes unlike our own and wholly disconnected with American citizenship." He lamented that the Chinese Restriction Act had not been enough to quell white unrest and that the Bayard-Zhang Treaty had failed to offer a diplomatic solution. Arguing that China's unexpected rejection of the treaty had created an "emergency," he maintained that the U.S. government must "act

in self defense by the exercise of legislative power.” His words echoed those of anti-Chinese workingmen in the U.S. West, who had long believed that self-defense against Chinese migration trumped treaty stipulations. Perhaps that was his intent.⁵⁴

Despite America’s long history of negotiating immigration policy with foreign nations, Cleveland now asserted that immigration control was America’s sovereign right. In his official message to Congress, he argued that “exclud[ing] from its border all elements of foreign population which for any reason retard its prosperity” was “the admitted and paramount right and duty of every Government,” a right that “must be regarded as a recognized canon of international law and intercourse.” There was precedent in seventeenth-century international law, but in the United States, it was Cleveland who signed the sovereign right of exclusion into law. With his signature and message of support, the president lessened the executive branch’s power to negotiate gatekeeping and placed immigration law firmly in the hands of Congress. To make the act more palatable for China and recognize the wrongs of anti-Chinese violence, he urged Congress to issue the indemnity previously requested by Chinese diplomats. Congress complied, granting China \$276,619.75 for damages caused by anti-Chinese violence, including the expulsions in Washington Territory.⁵⁵

Cleveland’s message to Congress was carefully diplomatic to China, but elsewhere, his words to the American electorate assumed a different tone. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the president was in “full sympathy” with the people of the Pacific Coast. “I am compelled to say in all fairness that the Chinese are an undesirable people. Our ports are open to all people of all climes who can assimilate,” Cleveland told the press. “We cannot assimilate Chinese and consequently do not want them.” It was only one month before the presidential election, and Cleveland was saying exactly what Pacific Coast voters wanted to hear.⁵⁶

The West Coast erupted in celebrations. In California, the Democratic State Central Committee ordered a one-hundred-gun salute. An assistant U.S. attorney in California exulted, “Every bill that has thus far been framed succumbed to the artifices of the slave-dealers and their lawyers. In the Scott bill [*sic*] we have a law that is invulnerable.” Across the country, newspapers declared that “total exclusion” had finally been achieved. “At last, at last, the East has discovered the truth from which many of us have suffered on this

coast,” declared a Seattle newspaper. “At last Congress has listened to the cries of the Pacific coast against this curse.” Democrats celebrated the law as a victory for their administration, but Republicans claimed their control in the Senate had played a pivotal role.⁵⁷

Although most white Americans celebrated the passage of the Exclusion Act, not everyone lauded the manner in which Congress had finally ended Chinese labor migration. The Republican-leaning *Harper's Weekly* lamented “hasty and discreditable” actions by Congress. Such a blatant abrogation of treaty stipulations, wrote *Harper's* editors, with any stronger nation than China, “would lead probably to war.” The *New York Times* chided Congress for its “unseemly haste” in passing the act, but recognized that the United States had the “undoubted right . . . to exclude those of any class or race” for the “well-being” of America’s people and institutions. These conservative-leaning newspapers did not agree with Congress’s means, but did approve its ends. Despite the near consensus supporting Chinese exclusion, the law was not enough to tip the presidential race in Cleveland’s favor. In November, he lost his bid for reelection, failing to carry any of the western states.⁵⁸

The Closed Gate and the Open Door

Shock and dismay were foremost in Minister Zhang’s mind when Congress passed the Exclusion Act in 1888 in violation of Sino-American treaties. “I was not prepared to learn that there was a way recognized in [U.S. law],” he wrote to Bayard, “whereby your country could release itself from treaty obligations without consultation or consent of the other party.” Certainly, the United States had violated the spirit of diplomatic agreements before, but it had never blatantly and knowingly abrogated a treaty with China through federal legislation. Watching this unlikely turn of events, other Western powers openly wondered if the United States was trying to provoke war with China to advance U.S. commercial ambitions. Chinese diplomats, however, attributed the slight to U.S. domestic politics. In internal correspondence, Zhang called the Exclusion Act a “scheme” brought on by the “presidential election year,” and Cleveland’s desire to “appeal to the public opinion.”⁵⁹

While Chinese diplomats complained, in vain, about the Chinese Exclusion Act, the people of Guangdong Province launched their own protests.

Denby reported home that Chinese newspapers in Guangzhou teemed with discussions of the law. The *Kuang Pao*, for example, urged the Chinese government to ban Americans from China and recall its subjects from America.⁶⁰ Others called for China to retaliate by halting commercial relations between the two countries for ten years. In a pointed critique, Zhang Zhi-dong, viceroy of Guangdong, suggested that China prohibit imports of kerosene, a lucrative American product. He likened American kerosene to Chinese laborers; each could accidentally set society aflame. If America had the right to ban the migration of Chinese laborers because they were “injurious” to the nation, then China had an equal right to prohibit imports of kerosene because it was a “menace” to the Chinese Empire. Some Chinese merchants put calls for a boycott into practice, refusing to buy or sell U.S. petroleum, calico, watches, firearms, flour, and ginseng. But the boycott found few adherents among the merchant class. The Exclusion Act, as drastic as it was, targeted Chinese workers, leaving Chinese elites relatively unscathed and thus often unmoved. For a time, U.S. officials worried that the lower classes, unable to mount their own boycott, would resort to retaliatory violence in China. Denby readied five U.S. naval vessels to meet any emergency, but violence did not ensue. In the end, America would suffer few geopolitical consequences for its sudden abrogation of the treaty.⁶¹

This shift toward unilateral exclusion, in blatant violation of treaty stipulations, cemented into law the imbalance of power between the United States and China. China had tipped its hand with the Bayard-Zhang Treaty, signaling for the first time its willingness to allow the exclusion of Chinese workers. In this moment of political urgency and Chinese wavering, U.S. statesmen gambled that they would be able to abrogate their treaty obligations with impunity. And they won.

Though the two nations regularized relations in 1894, they never returned to the cooperative open door. No longer did U.S. leaders assume Chinese “cooperation” to be a prerequisite for commercial expansion in China. It was telling that, several years later, when Secretary of State John Hay sent missives, known as the Open Door Notes, he did not even bother to send China a copy. Once America’s vision of the open door had required direct diplomacy, but now it hardly seemed necessary. Though the United States continued to advocate for other colonial powers to respect China’s territorial integrity, it participated in the erosion of Chinese sovereignty.⁶²

America's turn toward more coercive forms of diplomacy allowed for more draconian immigration policies at home. Adversaries of Chinese exclusion continued to argue that the law could undercut America's imperial ambitions, but their arguments had lost much of their force. The shift away from the cooperative open door, and its façade of equality in U.S. relations with China, freed the United States to erect a gate of its own choosing. The law's few remaining diplomatic concessions did little to negate the fundamental alignment between America's newly fashioned policies of exclusion and the open door. From then on, American exclusion and imperialism flourished in each other's company: China's geopolitical weakness allowed for Chinese exclusion, and Chinese exclusion confirmed China's inferiority.⁶³

The Exclusion Act itself represented a severe tightening of border control for Chinese migrants. Like the Chinese Restriction Act, the Exclusion Act declared that no new Chinese laborers could migrate to the United States. But it went far beyond its predecessor, forbidding the return of Chinese laborers who had previously resided in the United States, declaring null and void approximately thirty thousand return certificates issued to Chinese laborers since 1882, and rendering thousands of men and women who had temporarily left the United States unable to return. The law took effect immediately, which meant that six hundred Chinese en route to the United States were out of luck. They included a Chinese laborer named Chae Chan Ping, who had resided in America from 1875 until 1887, when he made a short trip to China. Arriving in San Francisco on October 7, 1888, only days after the Exclusion Act went into effect, with a return certificate in hand, he was prohibited from landing. The Chinese Six Companies raised over a hundred thousand dollars to challenge the law on his behalf. The result was not in his favor: in 1889, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled the Exclusion Act constitutional and denied the petitioner's right to land.⁶⁴

This decision represented a major shift in American jurisprudence, in which the court declared immigration a matter of inherent sovereignty. With the Constitution silent on the topic of immigration, the court had often presumed that immigration law fell under the Commerce Clause. But in *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* (1889), the Supreme Court held that "the power of exclusion of foreigners" was an "incident of sovereignty belonging to the government of the United States." This right, explained the opinion, "cannot be granted away or restrained on behalf of any one." To justify this claim,

the court relied on common understandings of international law, not any specific provision in the U.S. Constitution. The ruling enshrined the “plenary power doctrine,” which ensured the political branches of the government complete power over matters of national security.⁶⁵

Steeped in the racial beliefs of the day, the court deemed the “hordes” of Chinese migrants an urgent security risk and asserted the right of any sovereign nation “to protect . . . against invasion and domestic violence.” The plenary power doctrine recognized the political branches’ absolute power to exclude aliens, affirmed their ability to do so on the basis of race, and exempted immigration matters from judicial review. In the coming decades, the United States occasionally attempted to achieve border control through diplomacy when it proved expedient, but for the most part Congress acted unilaterally. Indeed, the power the federal government marshaled to exclude the Chinese in 1888 would soon be used to sift, select, or bar all aliens at America’s gates.⁶⁶

For decades, Americans had debated, sometimes violently, whether the United States could erect strict racial boundaries at home while pursuing unfettered expansion abroad. The Exclusion Act of 1888, and subsequent Supreme Court rulings, proffered the plenary power doctrine as one answer to this enduring question. With it, the United States could continue to expand into new lands without extending the privileges of citizenship to the resulting mass of racial outsiders. After defining the plenary power doctrine to curtail the rights of the Chinese, the court used it to strip power from Native Americans and, following the Spanish American War, to deny U.S. nationals many constitutional guarantees.⁶⁷ Thus the doctrine, which fueled the expansion of a racially based immigration regime in the twentieth century, also became a cornerstone of U.S. imperialism. Americans had once feared that commercial and territorial expansion at home and abroad would lead to racial contamination of the citizenry. But the plenary power doctrine offered added legal protections against outsiders within American territory, whether they were alien, native, or colonial. With these new safeguards in place, racial anxiety no longer held the same power to check American expansion.

Afterlives under Exclusion

AS CAPTAIN JOHN RINDER prepared for the maiden voyage of the steamship *Mongolia* in February 1904, he received last-minute instructions from R. P. Scherwin, vice president and general manager of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. The instructions seemed straightforward: he was to sail America's largest steamship from Norfolk, Virginia, around Cape Horn to San Francisco, where he would prepare the vessel for a transpacific journey to China and Japan. In a sealed envelope, Rinder found additional instructions, which Scherwin warned were "not to be opened until you have been at least twenty-four hours at sea." He dutifully waited until he had been at sea for two days before he opened the letter¹ and learned that he would be smuggling Chinese migrants into the United States.

The carefully worded orders from Scherwin did not explicitly refer to smuggling. Instead, Rinder was supposed to stop off the shores of Manzanillo, Mexico, to meet the steamer *Chin Wo* arriving from Hong Kong and receive 189 Chinese "to make up the Deck, Engine and Commissary Departments of your ship." Once Rinder was "in waters beyond the jurisdiction of the Mexican Government," he was to write up employment contracts for the Chinese "crew" listing the day they left Hong Kong as the start of a one-year term. Scherwin explained that the Chinese crew was "not to perform any labor aboard ship." Though Rinder was supposed to tell U.S. officials that the Chinese were crewmembers, he was to tell Mexican officials that they were "transits" bound for China again. In addition, Scherwin advised Rinder to keep the transfer as quiet as possible "to avoid any opportunity for the sea lawyers that may be in the crew to make trouble."²

The SS *Mongolia* arrived with great fanfare in the port of San Francisco on April 19, 1904. News reports boasted that America's largest ship was 615 feet and 8 inches long, could travel as fast as 16 knots, and could hold 15,000 tons of cargo, which was the capacity "of a freight train five miles long." The ship received additional press because aboard was third assistant secretary of state Herbert Pierce on a diplomatic trip to Asia. San Francisco customs officials landed the ship without comment about the Chinese "crew." For decades, it had been commonplace to see Chinese employed on government-subsidized Pacific Mail Steamships so this was a familiar scene. There is no record of how the unauthorized migrants landed without a trace, but it is likely that after docking they were exchanged for other Chinese migrants who wished to return to China.³

It took another eleven years for the U.S. customs service to finally catch unauthorized Chinese aboard the SS *Mongolia*. When the steamship returned from its final transpacific journey in October 1915, Customs received an anonymous tip written in Chinese alleging that the *Mongolia* had "stow-aways on board," each of whom had paid a hundred dollars in gold to enter the United States. When U.S. officials searched the ship, they found eighty-six unauthorized migrants. Some were dressed as crewmembers while others "were found hidden under an enormous steel bucket which had been buried under the coal in the bunkers." These gripping details made for the largest smuggling scandal to date. The well-publicized case resulted in the deportation of eighty Chinese migrants and the indictment, but not conviction, of U.S. officials and the *Mongolia's* officers. While San Francisco newspapers questioned whether the "*Mongolia* Affair" was part of an organized, ongoing, and effective conspiracy to evade border control, American officials dismissed such speculation as "almost unbelievable."⁴

Chinese exclusion failed to end Chinese migration, although U.S. officials were loath to admit it at the time. American steamship companies, in a race for profits, continued to ferry thousands of Chinese migrants across the Pacific. U.S. officials rarely discovered these trafficking plots, and when they did, they only managed to implicate shipboard crews, not their illustrious employers. Captain Rinder's instructions, which he saved and passed down to his children, offer an unusual glimpse of traders' brazen smuggling

schemes. He arrived in San Francisco Bay during the heyday of Chinese exclusion, when policies were at their strictest and deportation rates hit a record high. But the more extensive the state apparatus of border control became, the more elaborate the schemes smugglers and migrants developed to evade it.

The Chinese community contested America's policy of exclusion through actions both large and small. To protest exclusion, imperialism, and violence, they launched national and transnational movements, using coordinated acts of civil disobedience and boycott. At the same time, unauthorized migrants continually outwitted immigration control by charting new territorial and legal routes into the United States. On the surface, these two tactics—open protest and clandestine entry—appear as divergent strategies of resistance, enacted on different scales toward separate ends. In fact these tactics had much in common. Unauthorized migration, like mass protest, was a form of collective action, and both relied on sprawling transpacific networks of people and knowledge. While public demonstrations often fell short of their designs, the largest protest movement of them all—the continued arrival of hundreds of thousands of individual Chinese—deeply undercut the law.

Even so, Chinese exclusion and the violence that enabled it dramatically transformed American gatekeeping at the turn of the twentieth century. At the border, in the empire, and within local communities, law and violence redefined the nation's racial landscape and the lived experience of Chinese migrants. Most scholars have directed their attention to exclusion's dramatic impact on the laws and bureaucracy governing America's territorial borders.⁵ But the process of exclusion and expulsion also shaped America's imperial project in the Pacific and refashioned the lives of Chinese migrants within the U.S. West.

During the Restriction Period, border control had been confined to discrete points along America's Pacific Coast, but during Chinese exclusion, federal legislation and Supreme Court rulings extended it across the overseas empire and deep within the domestic interior. As a result, Chinese migrants carried their alien status with them always, and federal agents had the legal power to deploy the border anywhere. It is impossible to comprehend the changing nature of the border without widening our view to encompass the Pacific world and narrowing it to see the individual migrant. The scale of the U.S. border shifted during this period, and so too should its history.

Exclusion at the Territorial Border

There is little doubt that the Exclusion Act brought change to America's borders. The 1888 law blocked all legal avenues for Chinese workers to enter the United States and eventually produced a functioning bureaucracy in an effort to preclude illegal ones. It was backed by \$50,000 in annual funding, ten times the yearly appropriation for the Restriction Act, and this appropriation doubled in subsequent years. Additionally, it placed "the burden of proof upon the Chinese applicant," according to Attorney General William Miller, making "exclusion the rule and admission the exception."⁶ The law transformed U.S. immigration control into something we might recognize today, inspiring new systems of centralization, identification, and deportation that would lay the foundations for modern border control. Still, it was not clear that this transformation would be enough to maintain control of the border, or even a semblance of it. Would this new law stop Chinese migration and placate the anti-Chinese movement?

In 1890, Congress sent Watson C. Squire, now a U.S. senator representing the new state of Washington, and two U.S. representatives to find out. The special commission traveled to where they imagined the far western border lay: the Pacific states. Visiting Spokane Falls, Tacoma, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego, they interviewed customs officials, police officers, U.S. attorneys, union members, newspapermen, white employers, and Chinese merchants. After taking 589 pages of testimony, Squire and the rest of the commission submitted a three-page summary. In it, they reiterated that Chinese aliens still represented a dire threat to American citizens. Without a continued policy of exclusion, they proclaimed, "the whole Pacific Coast would be overrun" by the Chinese and "serious labor troubles would surely arise." These conclusions echoed federal reports from a decade earlier, but this time the congressmen added two novel findings: that the new Exclusion Act was working and that the local white population was pleased with it. "If this law is strictly enforced it will not be many years before the race will, in all probability, be extinct in this country," predicted the commission. Declaring success, the commission simply recommended that Congress extend the law and "mak[e] the exclusion of coolies permanent."⁷

But hundreds of pages of testimony collected by the special commission belied this simple, optimistic summary. As legitimate avenues of entry

narrowed, Chinese migrants had turned to illegitimate ones, clandestinely crossing America's borders with Canada and Mexico.⁸ Even though new funds meant that four "Chinese Inspectors" were now deployed along the western section of U.S.-Canadian boundary, their assignments were still unrealistically extensive. Chinese Inspector Fred H. Oliver, for example, had 150 miles of the U.S.-Canadian border to patrol, a distance so vast he could only manage, in his first five months in office, to traverse it eight times. During this lengthy patrol, he encountered fewer than twenty Chinese and estimated that three or four hundred slipped by unnoticed. It certainly did not help, as his partner T. L. Savage commented, that several Chinese men had married Native American women, lived on reservations along the border, and helped smuggle workers across it. The Chinese inspectors requested at least three more men to enforce the law in eastern Washington, and when pressed by the commission, admitted it would take "a very large force" to exclude the Chinese altogether.⁹

In western Washington, federal officials had invested their new funds in controlling the U.S. border from the outside. One inspector was permanently deployed in British Columbia to keep a lookout for ships with Chinese passengers headed for the United States. This new tactic had only limited success. The inspector usually spotted suspicious ships leaving late at night and, much to his chagrin, his urgent telegrams went unread while stateside officials slept. Though the details had yet to be worked out, the remote enforcement of U.S. immigration law had profound implications. Endeavoring to exclude the Chinese, the United States detached systems of border control from the nation's territorial border and sent them abroad.¹⁰

Still, customs officials struggled to implement the law. In the hundreds of pages of the Squire commission's testimony on the effects of the Exclusion Act in Washington State, numbers speak the loudest. In all of 1889, Washington's thirty customs officers only managed to capture thirty-six unauthorized migrants. The officers knew this was only a tiny fraction of all migrants who had crossed into the state from Canada. Based on Chinese arrival and population statistics from their Canadian counterparts, local officials estimated that six hundred to "several thousand" undocumented migrants crossed each year.¹¹ Knowing his department's limitations, the collector of customs for Washington requested twenty-four additional Chinese inspectors and declared that a new steamer that would cost \$12,000 was an "absolute necessity."¹²

While detection continued to pose insurmountable challenges along the northern border, deportation practices had become more efficient. The Exclusion Act, and its more generous funding, made it possible to deport Chinese back to China. The previous policy, to return Chinese to “the country from whence he came,” had proven deeply problematic along the northern and southern borders. Before the shift in policy, San Diego U.S. Deputy Marshall A. W. Marsh recalled that he once arrested and deported the same migrant five times in twenty-four hours. He wrote that this “farce” continued until “eventually [the Chinese migrant] got through.” In 1891, Attorney General Miller affirmed transpacific deportations, declaring that it was legal to deport Chinese who had arrived via Canada or Mexico directly to China.¹³

In fact, transpacific deportations began as an ad hoc policy the previous year to deal with nineteen Chinese men who had been detained indefinitely at McNeil Island Penitentiary in Washington. In May 1890, two and a half years after they were first incarcerated, six of these nineteen Chinese men were placed on the steamer *Batavia* at a total cost of \$240. When local officials reported that the deportation was complete, the Treasury Department asked what had happened to the other thirteen Chinese who had been illegally detained. If local officers mailed any explanation, the letter has been lost, along with any hope of discovering the men’s fate.¹⁴ We do know that the experience of indefinite detention, followed by deportation, would become ubiquitous in twentieth-century U.S. border control.¹⁵

When the special commission arrived in San Francisco, the new collector of customs, Timothy Phelps, boasted of significant changes since implementation of exclusion. The law had done away with return certificates, closing the loophole that allowed tens of thousands of Chinese workers to arrive during the Restriction Period. In addition, new resources meant more manpower: Phelps had hired additional Chinese inspectors, translators, and an assistant attorney general to represent the Customs Department in court. Gone were the days when customs officials tried to distinguish migrants with brief descriptions of scars and peculiarities; now Customs required photographs on all certificates for arriving merchants, students, and diplomats. Thanks to exclusion, Inspector of Customs S. J. Ruddell bragged, “I would say it would be nearly impossible for a Chinaman to come into this port without our knowledge.” There is little doubt this was brash overstatement, especially given the 189 Chinese who arrived undetected in Captain Rinder’s steamer a decade later.¹⁶

Moreover, detection was only the first of many enforcement challenges. Collector Phelps reported that, since the enactment of exclusion, only 5 percent of the 6,656 Chinese arriving at San Francisco had been deported to China. Customs officials had attempted to exclude another 20 percent of arrivals, but their cases were appealed to the courts. The remaining 75 percent of Chinese arrivals were permitted to land: 26 percent gained admission as members of exempt categories or as U.S. citizens (whose status came from being native born or was derived through a citizen father), and 49 percent were allowed as in-transit passengers bound for neighboring countries. Despite officials' confidence, this statistical snapshot reveals that the law still contained wide avenues for unlawful entry. Through transpacific networks, migrants and smugglers had developed successful strategies of subterfuge targeting the exemptions in the law. Chinese migrants learned how to masquerade as exempted students, diplomats, or merchants when standing before immigration officials, how to make fictive claims of kinship with the help of carefully orchestrated testimony, and how to find the spatial limits of U.S. border control.¹⁷

U.S. officials had every indication that fraud continued. Inspector Rudell was particularly troubled by the fact that "95% of those who come here without proper credentials to land" claimed to be natural-born U.S. citizens. Given that fewer than five thousand Chinese women lived in the United States in the 1860s and 1870s, inspectors found the number of applicants claiming birthright citizenship to be highly improbable but hard to counter. When Chinese inspectors attempted to deport alleged merchants or citizens, Chinese migrants filed writs of habeas corpus and often won the right to appear in court. San Francisco officials asked the commission to amend the law to deny bail while these cases were adjudicated or, better yet, to deny judicial review. In the meantime, local officials experimented with both practices, but these ad hoc measures lacked federal backing.¹⁸

Officials also found the high rate of in-transit migrants alarming, because they suspected that Chinese workers bound for Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean would later find their way back to the United States. In April 1890, Chinese Inspector George Pattison received a tip that fifty in-transit Chinese workers bound for Mexico were planning to unlawfully return across the southern border. Hoping to foil the plot, he boarded their ship and traveled undercover to Mexico. Pattison observed fifteen Chinese workers

disembark at Ensenada, less than seventy-five miles south of the border, and, with the help of an urgent telegram and a quick response from officials at San Diego, the Customs Department succeeded in apprehending them. The remaining Chinese workers stayed aboard until Guaymas, where they caught a train headed toward the U.S.-Mexico border. Pattison telegraphed agents in Arizona, who succeeded in capturing some of the undocumented workers at Nogales, Tombstone, and Tucson. Though the elaborate undercover operation was a success, it only made officials anxious that the southern border would present the next great challenge.¹⁹

Earlier in the 1880s, only a few hundred Chinese had chosen to live in northern Mexico, deterred by limited transportation systems and harsh work environments. For this reason, the Restriction Act, according to one U.S. marshal, “was never enforced on the southern border at all.” Exclusion prompted the first federal patrols of the U.S.-Mexican border and, by 1890, two Chinese inspectors were assigned to San Diego. They bemoaned an endless border that included more than a hundred and fifty roads where “the Chinamen can cross.” And yet they reported that their efforts were “measurably efficient,” largely due to the fact that there were only “400 or 500 Chinese in the whole of Mexico.” The population was closer to one thousand Chinese, but would not remain that low for long. As exclusion narrowed the avenues into U.S. ports, and head taxes made Canada an expensive alternative, Mexico became a popular back door to the United States.²⁰

Traveling the length of the Pacific Coast, Senator Squire and the commission found much to admire. In the two years since the Exclusion Period began, the U.S. customs service had dramatically expanded surveillance along the northern and southern borders, launched remote control in Canada, developed new systems of identification, made deportation to China the norm, and employed additional inspectors, translators, and attorneys. With these changes, the Exclusion Act significantly slowed documented Chinese migration.

Under Restriction, the mean annual number of Chinese admitted to the United States fell by 16 percent. Between 1888 and 1893, when the first Exclusion Act was in effect, mean annual admissions saw a 75 percent decrease from pre-1882 levels.²¹ Furthermore, the census recorded a drop in the total population of Chinese in the United States from a high in of 107,488 in 1890 to 89,863 in 1900 and 71,531 in 1910. Still, these statistics do not fully

account for unlawful migration across the U.S.-Canadian and U.S.-Mexican borders. Since these unauthorized migrants often went undocumented and uncounted, any assessment of the law's impact is part conjecture. It is highly likely that the Exclusion Act slowed Chinese migration, and it is certain that the law forced the movement underground.²²

One strong indication of the persistence of unauthorized migration is that the Chinese population in the United States remained perpetually young. If Chinese exclusion laws had successfully prevented new Chinese migrants, we would expect to see a graying Chinese population reflected in the U.S. census. Instead, scholars have found that the Chinese community continued to be comprised primarily of males of prime working age. It is likely that Chinese migration to the United States resembled a "revolving door," in which older Chinese migrants returned to China and new unauthorized migrants replenished the U.S. labor pool.²³

Still, the semblance of control appeared to be enough to satiate the public in 1890. Up and down the coast, locals greeted the commission with positive impressions of U.S. border control. Even the infamous exclusionist Dennis Kearney agreed that since 1888, "the laws are more rigidly executed," and that he had seen "a decrease in Chinese immigration."²⁴ Exclusion had failed to end Chinese migration, but it quieted anti-Chinese vigilantism for the time being. As long as the federal government appeared vigilant at the border, the people need not intervene.

But not everyone was satisfied. Before the law went up for renewal in May 1892, Representative Thomas J. Geary, a California Democrat, saw an opportunity to further strengthen exclusion. He introduced a bill that prohibited the migration of Chinese to the United States in absolute terms, with the sole exception of Chinese diplomats, and explicitly "abrogate[d], set aside and repeal[ed]" all treaties that contradicted his proposed law. Any unauthorized migrant discovered crossing the border would be subject to five years' imprisonment in addition to deportation. Furthermore, the law would require all Chinese currently living within the United States to register and carry internal passports to prove their right to remain in the country. Any Chinese person found to be unregistered would be summarily deported to China.²⁵ This would take the territorial border, which the commission had recently surveyed, and move it deep into the nation's interior.

Though Congress uniformly supported the concept of exclusion, many members hesitated to support these extreme measures. Senator John Sherman argued that the Geary bill was “harsh and cruel, against the spirit of our civilization, far beyond anything before in severity,” and Congressman Charles Hooker complained, “The bill proposes to abrogate every treaty that has ever been made with the Chinese Empire.” In response, Geary touted the severity of the bill and dismissed all diplomatic concerns. “The bill passed four years ago by Congress was itself an abrogation,” he asserted, and at that time the Supreme Court had affirmed Congress’s plenary power. Geary saw no reason to allow diplomacy to guide U.S. immigration law.²⁶

Detractors of the bill managed to weaken it slightly before it gained broad congressional support and was signed into law on May 5, 1892, by President Benjamin Harrison.²⁷ The Geary Act continued to exempt Chinese merchants, students, and diplomats, but required exempt classes to demonstrate “affirmative proof” of their right to land. It also denied bail to those who sought court appeals, subjected unlawful migrants to a year of prison and hard labor, required all resident Chinese to obtain a “certificate of residence,” and gave the secretary of the treasury broad powers to “make such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the efficient execution of this act.”²⁸ The act formalized many of the policies that officials had experimented with since 1888, including imprisonment and registration. The former would be declared unconstitutional in *Wong Wing v. United States* (1896), but the latter would prove transformative. Local and federal officials could demand Chinese migrants’ papers anytime and anywhere. As contemporaries observed, this new registration system effectively transformed the Chinese Exclusion Act into a Chinese expulsion act by targeting long-term residents.²⁹

The Chinese community in the United States met the 1892 law with unprecedented levels of resistance.³⁰ Long before passports or government identification of any kind became common, the Chinese community perceived the internal registration system as dehumanizing. The Chinese Six Companies in San Francisco urged all Chinese in the United States to defy the order to register. “The law degrades the Chinese and if obeyed will put them lower than the meanest people,” declared the Six Companies. “Let us stand together . . . then we can and will break this infamous law.” In an act of mass civil disobedience and a display of fealty to Chinese leaders, tens of

thousands of Chinese workers refused to register. Once the deadline passed on May 5, 1893, these men and women became subject to summary deportation.³¹

The Six Companies raised a hundred thousand dollars to challenge the law, informed the federal government of their intent, and arranged to immediately test its constitutionality. While the Supreme Court considered the test case, *Fong Yue Ting v. U.S.* (1893), the attorney general instructed local officials to refrain from any arrests, and the secretary of state urged western governors to take “precautions to preserve the peace and prevent riotous proceedings against the Chinese.”³² The court’s answer did not take long. Within two weeks, the Supreme Court upheld the law by a 6 to 3 majority. The court ruled that Congress not only had an “absolute and unqualified” right to “prohibit and prevent” migrants from entering the country but also had the right “to expel or deport foreigners who have not been naturalized.” (As the court well knew, Chinese aliens were ineligible for naturalization.) Furthermore, the majority ruled that Chinese migrants had no claims to due process when facing deportation because immigration proceedings were “in no proper sense a trial” and deportation was “not a punishment.” In 1889, *Chae Chan Ping* had established Congress’s plenary power to exclude aliens at America’s borders. Now, *Fong Yue Ting* established the authority to expel aliens residing within the United States. From this point forward, border control was no longer confined to the nation’s borders but stretched into the interior.³³

The verdict took the Chinese community by surprise and flummoxed the second Cleveland administration. Only 13,243 Chinese had registered by the deadline, leaving as many as a hundred thousand Chinese in the United States subject to immediate deportation.³⁴ For the first time, the United States could perform mass ethnic cleansing through immigration law. The federal government, however, was not prepared to take this step.

In September 1893, Secretary of the Treasury J. G. Carlisle reported to the Senate that the law had caused a financial crisis. He estimated that at least eighty-five thousand Chinese were “liable to deportation under the law” and the “lowest cost for transporting Chinamen from San Francisco to Hong-kong is \$35 per capita.” Assistant U.S. Attorney Willis Witter put the figure much higher. “I have been laughed at,” he complained, “for stating that \$10,000,000 would be required to deport the Chinese in this country,

and yet I maintain that I have not overestimated the sum necessary." He priced passage from San Francisco to China at fifty-five dollars per capita, marshal's fees at three dollars, attorney fees at ten, detention for at least two weeks at seven, and for Chinese captured anywhere other than San Francisco, the cost of transportation to the port. In the fall of 1893, the U.S. Treasury had only \$25,502.13 available to enforce the law. In addition, the customs service did not have the resources to arrest and process more than ten thousand Chinese per year, which meant that deportation of all unregistered migrants would likely take a decade or longer. Exclusion had expanded U.S. border control, but it remained a poorly funded arm of the federal government. By failing to comply with internal registration in large numbers, Chinese residents had rendered the Geary Act unenforceable.³⁵

Money and manpower were not the only obstacles to mass deportation. Congressional backing of the act began to waver in the face of Chinese protests. Most congressmen had supported the measure as a form of stringent exclusion, but many balked at the prospect of wholesale removal. President Cleveland shared this growing ambivalence, as Chinese diplomats threatened to expel Americans from China and withdraw their delegation in the United States. Cleveland's concern turned to alarm when rumors surfaced that anti-American sentiment was brewing in China and could threaten U.S. trade interests. The *New York Times* observed that "any European power of the first class" that faced similarly offensive immigration policy would find "ample cause of war." Cleveland, having made a similar calculation, hastily ordered two additional gunboats to join the naval fleet in the Pacific.³⁶

As another recession hit the nation and the federal government continued to refuse to enforce the Geary Act, homegrown violence became the more palpable threat. U.S. Attorney George Denis in Los Angeles reported, "The wage-earners and farmers, instigated no doubt by the financial stringency of the times, have been doing everything in their power to remove the Chinese from the country." Since "these people have gone beyond the pale of public discussion and meeting," he wrote that local and state law enforcement was preparing for "impending riots and threatened bloodshed."³⁷

Violence came in August and September 1893, when local police and state militia clashed with anti-Chinese vigilantes in four California cities: Merced, Stockton, Redlands, and Selma. Near Fresno, arsonists torched businesses

employing Chinese workers, extremists bombed Chinese shops, and gangs forced Chinese laborers out of vineyards and fruit fields. The violence was not limited to California; in the remote mining town of Como, Colorado, white arsonists set fire to Chinese cabins, while in Butteville, Oregon, a white mob blew up two Chinese houses and dragged Chinese hop-pickers out of town. As vigilantes attacked their Chinese neighbors, the *San Francisco Call* declared an “open war—Californians against the Administration.” Although the violence held a political message aimed at Washington, D.C., yet again, the Chinese, not the administration, seemed to be the ones bearing the brunt of that war.³⁸

While some anti-Chinese activists urged violence, others believed that violent action could undermine the effort to expel the Chinese. Instead, they advocated using the legal system to compel the government to enforce the Geary Act. The Labor Council of San Francisco urged all union members to “ascertain the names and addresses of every unregistered Chinaman living or working in your vicinity.” With the help of these lists and union lawyers, citizens could walk into the federal district court to make complaints against specific Chinese aliens. Through a deliberate and organized system of citizen surveillance, the Labor Council hoped to make it impossible for the federal government to avoid deporting unregistered Chinese. This extralegal system of reporting proved laborious and expensive, but county judges played their part and began to issue warrants. Soon sixty-four Chinese were detained in San Francisco jails, awaiting deportation. Exclusion, like restriction, had become a collaboration between private and public forces.³⁹

Local crises demanded federal intervention, but what form it would take remained an open question. Congressman Geary, for one, argued that growing anti-Chinese violence was a reason to enforce the law as written. “We know,” he told Congress, “that [the Chinese] are liable at any time to be imposed upon by mobs, their property destroyed, and probably their lives taken.” This grisly fact made deportation financially expedient, argued Geary, since the government was “liable for the protection of every chinaman [*sic*] within our borders.” He reminded Congress that the U.S. government had already paid China hundreds of thousands of dollars to redress the Rock Springs massacre and violence on the West Coast, implying that deportation would be cheaper than continuing to pay for Chinese lives lost in America.⁴⁰ This callous calculation did not persuade many.

In November 1893, Congress amended the law to grant Chinese migrants six additional months to register and avert mass deportation. To appease ardent exclusionists, the McCreary amendment also took several new steps to tighten the law. It required two non-Chinese witnesses to prove a merchant's class, required that certificates of residence include photographs, denied bail to Chinese awaiting deportation, required U.S. marshals to carry out all orders for deportations, and ordered the immediate deportation of all Chinese convicted of felonies. The extended registration period succeeded in alleviating the situation at hand. After the failed legal challenge by the Chinese and their imprisonment in San Francisco, and in the face of spreading anti-Chinese violence, Chinese workers and diplomats abandoned their protests. In 1894, the Treasury Department reported that 106,811 Chinese had registered.⁴¹ That same year, China retroactively approved the essential aspects of the Geary Act in the Gresham-Yang Treaty. The United States apparently held sufficient power to unilaterally exclude the Chinese and to force Chinese diplomats to go along.⁴²

Although U.S. judges, officials, and diplomats managed to quash the anti-registration movement, the Chinese did win one implicit concession. By refusing to comply with federal law, they had tested the nation's commitment to a policy of deportation and found that American leaders lacked the ability and desire to expel the Chinese population en masse. In addition, Chinese migrants soon learned how to use the registration system to their own advantage. While registration aided U.S. officials in identifying undocumented migrants, it also allowed registered Chinese workers the ability to exit and reenter the United States with the aid of their new passports. At first, passports increased the number of Chinese arrivals, providing a pretext for fraud, just as return certificates once had.⁴³ Yet again, the Chinese proved nimble in their strategies of resistance. Facing a new technology of control, Chinese migrants saw a new mechanism for subversion.

Besides the implementation of a registration system, the most transformative section of the Geary Act turned out to be the powers of discretion it granted to federal administrators. In 1898, President William McKinley appointed Terence V. Powderly, former leader of the Knights of Labor, to the post of U.S. commissioner-general of immigration. Enforcing exclusion with the utmost vigor, Powderly and his successor Frank Sargent attempted to use their administrative discretion to prohibit all Chinese migrants except

diplomats. Attorney General John W. Griggs helped narrow the definition of exempt classes to promote this end. He ruled that while the Exclusion Act exempted “merchants,” it did not exempt traders, salesmen, buyers, and clerks. Similarly, the Treasury Department affirmed the exemption of students, but not teachers, and demanded that all Chinese students declare their intent to repatriate. To combat the problem of “in transit” migrants, Powderly made a new regulation in 1900 requiring those in transit to present a through ticket, furnish a bond of five hundred dollars, produce four photographs, and convince the collector of customs of their true intent to travel through, rather than remain in, the United States.⁴⁴

“The true theory is not that all persons may enter this country who are not forbidden,” explained Griggs in 1898, “but that only those are entitled to enter who are expressly allowed.” Local immigration raids, from San Francisco to Chicago to Boston, brought border control into the nation’s interior. In 1902, the Exclusion Act was renewed again, and two years later it was extended indefinitely. Court rulings further broadened the power of the law. In *United States v. Ju Toy* (1905), the Supreme Court ruled that even Chinese claims of U.S. citizenship stood within the realm of plenary power and did not necessitate judicial review. In the wake of this ruling, Chinese were presumed to be alien and denied the ability to contest this presumption in court.⁴⁵

Even with new regulations, immigration officials never managed to exclude the majority of Chinese migrants arriving in the United States. Between 1894 and 1905, the acceptance rate averaged 85 percent, reaching a low in 1904 when the customs service rejected a record 29.4 percent of Chinese arrivals.⁴⁶ But even at this height of exclusion, undocumented migrants continued to enter the country undetected, streaming across the northern and southern borders, or smuggled into San Francisco harbor by men like Captain Rinder of the steamship *Mongolia*. While exclusion certainly fell short of its proclaimed purpose, an enhanced system of border control left a lasting mark on the nation. In the short term, it deterred countless would-be migrants from attempting the hazardous journey and former vigilantes from continually renewing their violence. In the long term, it set legal and procedural precedents that stripped aliens of many judicial rights and expanded state surveillance targeting them. From this time forward, aliens encountered the border at the territorial edges of the nation and deep within them.

Table 7.1 Arrivals and Rejections of Chinese at U.S. Ports, 1894–1924

Year	No. Arrivals	No. Rejected	Percent Rejected
1894	6,840	1,241	18.1%
1895	2,732	657	24.0%
1896	4,031	415	10.3%
1897	6,919	402	5.8%
1898	7,475	280	3.7%
1899	6,668	950	14.2%
1900	6,859	1,065	15.5%
1901	4,982	918	18.4%
1902	3,768	335	8.9%
1903	3,549	567	16.0%
1904	4,409	1,295	29.4%
1905	3,086	481	15.6%
1906	2,937	205	7.0%
1907	3,514	259	7.4%
1908	4,988	364	7.3%
1909	8,072	564	7.0%
1910	7,860	969	12.3%
1911	5,972	692	11.6%
1912	6,023	400	6.6%
1913	6,532	386	5.9%
1914	6,908	410	5.9%
1915	6,723	268	4.0%
1916	6,448	437	6.8%
1917	6,000	321	5.4%
1918	3,805	308	8.1%
1919	3,851	151	3.9%
1920	5,658	125	2.2%
1921	10,686	296	2.8%
1922	12,832	515	4.0%
1923	13,663	706	5.2%
1924	13,583	751	5.5%

Source: Adam McKeown, "Ritualization of Regulation: The Enforcement of Chinese Exclusion in the United States and China," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 2 (April 2003): 390. Totals include immigrants, aliens, and Chinese who claimed U.S. citizenship.

Exclusion in the Overseas Empire

At the turn of the twentieth century, U.S. imperialism and Chinese exclusion went hand in hand. As immigration officials worked to seal America's territorial borders, the U.S. armed forces pushed to extend those borders abroad. Following the ten-week Spanish-American War in 1898, the U.S. military

took control of the former Spanish colonies of Puerto Rico, Guam, Cuba, and, following another three-year war with local forces, the Philippines. As part of the war effort, the United States also annexed Hawai'i in 1898, which would serve as a way station to Asia. Following a long history of continental expansion through war and settler colonialism, America emerged from the conflicts of the turn of the twentieth century with a new island empire.⁴⁷

Of these territories, Cuba, Hawai'i, and the Philippines already had sizable Chinese populations. The global forces of empire and capitalism that drove Chinese migrants to the U.S. West had also landed them in these other economies of extraction. There were approximately fifteen thousand Chinese in Cuba, twenty thousand in Hawai'i, and as many as a hundred thousand in the Philippines. Over the previous decades, the two Spanish colonies and the Kingdom of Hawai'i had experimented with importing Chinese workers and, subsequently, restricting and regulating them. In 1883, Hawai'i limited Chinese arrivals to 2,400 a year, but made an exception for agricultural guest workers in 1890. The Spanish crown had long levied steep taxes on Chinese foreigners, and regional authorities in the Philippines also sporadically excluded or expelled local Chinese.⁴⁸ With the arrival of U.S. forces and bureaucrats, a new brand of stringent and systematic exclusion came to all these islands.⁴⁹

Vigilante violence had played a pivotal role in the creation of Chinese exclusion, and now state violence expanded its reach. Congress wrote provisions for Chinese exclusion into its joint resolution to annex the Hawaiian Islands in July 1898.⁵⁰ In the Philippines, the U.S. military administration announced a policy of Chinese exclusion two weeks before the United States officially wrested control from Spain. For over a year, Chinese exclusion in the U.S.-occupied Philippines was more extreme than any previous iteration, barring all Chinese, regardless of class, until December 5, 1899. Through military decree, the United States also extended exclusion to Puerto Rico in 1899 and Cuba in the final days of U.S. occupation in 1902. That year, when Congress renewed Chinese exclusion for another decade, it enshrined the policy in all insular territories.⁵¹

As America's empire expanded into the Pacific, controversies erupted over what to do with America's new colonial subjects of questionable racial status. Congress and the public debated the place that Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, and Hawaiians should occupy in the nation, but they continued to set the Chi-

nese apart. American leaders believed that extending Chinese exclusion to the territories was essential to safeguard “native” populations from “alien” labor competition, dissuade interracial marriage with inferior “Mongolians,” and prevent a backdoor entrance into the mainland. Touting American imperialism as a benevolent act, U.S. administrators described Chinese exclusion as a policy of protection for their new colonial subjects. Despite protests by American businessmen, William Howard Taft, who served as the first civilian governor of the Philippines in the decade before he became U.S. president, argued that exclusion was essential. If the U.S. allowed Chinese laborers to enter the country, he claimed it could “arouse the enmity” of the Filipinos “and induce them to a belief that the American Government would exploit the islands.” As one newspaper opined, exclusion in the Philippines would promote the goal of Filipino “self-government” and uphold American ideals of “benevolent assimilation.”⁵²

Chinese diplomats watched with obvious distress as exclusion enveloped America’s insular territories. When exclusion came to Hawai‘i, Chinese Minister Wu Tingfang protested. “To single out the Chinese alone for exclusion from the islands is to lower the whole nation in the eyes of the world,” he wrote to Secretary of State John Hay. “Particularly if there is no discriminating legislation against any other Asiatic people.” When exclusion was extended to the Philippines, Wu became worried about more than symbolism. He believed the policy would have exceptionally “evil effects” in the Philippines, because “for centuries” there had been “very intimate and important relations” between China and neighboring islands. Many of the Chinese in the Philippines were “native-born” or “intermingled by marriage with the Philippine race,” and these overseas Chinese maintained “extensive social and commercial relations” with China. Wu found it deeply troubling that the United States had brought its border to China’s backyard.⁵³

Though Chinese diplomats had effectively acquiesced to exclusion in the Gresham-Yang Treaty of 1894, they found this brazen expansion of the policy intolerable. In January 1904, the Imperial Court announced its decision to terminate the treaty in hopes of negotiating a new pact. The result bore an eerie resemblance to the crisis of 1888. As U.S. diplomats scrambled to put a new treaty in place, Congress was determined to settle the question unilaterally. With a unanimous vote in the House and strong support in the Senate, Congress passed a simple bill to abrogate the treaty and extend Chinese

exclusion indefinitely. On April 27, 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the final Chinese Exclusion Act into law.⁵⁴

Chinese diplomats denounced the act, but the loudest voice of protest came from the Chinese public. Shanghai, which had become a hub for U.S. imports, became the central organizing point for a transnational protest movement. On May 10, 1905, the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce declared its intent to boycott the United States, starting August 1, urging joint action by telegraphing merchant guilds in twenty-one cities across China. The merchants imagined a comprehensive boycott organized through native-place organizations, in which longshoremen refused to unload U.S. goods, students walked out of U.S. schools, employees resigned from U.S. companies, merchants banned U.S. imports, and consumers rejected U.S. products. The *Baohuang hui* (Protect the Emperor Society), a political reform association of overseas Chinese, pledged financial support from Chinese merchants in the United States and spread the news to Japan, Hawai'i, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. The transnational movement was built on preexisting Chinese networks of communication, kinship, trade, and migration that spanned the Pacific world.⁵⁵

In China, intellectuals launched a campaign to educate the public and rally them to the cause, writing anti-American editorials, speeches, pamphlets, novels, and songs. Though boycotters demanded an end to Chinese exclusion, the movement rallied around more than immigrant rights. Their writings routinely connected the history of anti-Chinese violence, Chinese exclusion, and U.S. imperialism. Boycotters pressed the Imperial Court to avoid signing another unequal treaty, arguing that acquiescence would endanger Chinese migrants, entrench Chinese exclusion, and lower China's status in the world. One protest song, timed for the Mid-Autumn Festival, urged people to avoid U.S. flour while preparing mooncakes for the holiday. "If you use American flour," the song warned, "the cake will not be clean / [because] flour from the Flower Flag [country] / is [made] with Chinese blood." Hoping to convince merchants and consumers to hold firm, boycotters invoked the history of anti-Chinese violence in the United States.⁵⁶

Closely monitoring the spread of the boycott, President Theodore Roosevelt understood that the protest was a response to more than exclusion. In a note to the secretary of the treasury, he described the boycott as largely "due to our own misdeeds and folly." "We have behaved scandalously toward Chinamen in this country," he acknowledged. "Some of the outrages by

mobs which have resulted in the deaths of Chinamen were almost as bad as anything that occurred at the hands of the Chinamen themselves in the Boxer outbreak.”⁵⁷ Attempting to mend relations with Chinese diplomats, Roosevelt publicly called for immigration reform. He instructed the Treasury Department to end all “discourtesy or harsh treatment in connection with the Chinese merchant, traveler or student,” and urged Congress to amend the law to further protect elites from harassment. Though Congress proved unwilling to back down, the customs service scaled back the extreme discretionary policies put in place under Terence Powderly. The effect was substantial: the mean annual rejection rate of Chinese migrants had been 15 percent between 1894 and 1905, but fell to 6.3 percent in the period from 1906 to 1924. In the years following the boycott, enforcement was better aligned with the letter of the law.⁵⁸

But Roosevelt’s reaction was not simply to retreat. He paired defensive efforts to mollify protesters with offensive measures to pry open China’s door. Since the boycott only meant “heavy losses” in a few ports, the U.S. minister to China, William Rockhill, was principally concerned that the boycott could set “a dangerous precedent if not broken.” At Roosevelt’s urging, Rockhill warned the Imperial Court that China was in breach of the Treaty of Tientsin signed in 1858, which granted the United States open access to specific ports. Though China issued an edict barring the boycott and the movement seemed to be losing strength after six months, Roosevelt began to prepare for military action. He sent the gunboat *El Cano* up the Yangtze River on a “cruise,” instructed the large battleship *Oregon* to lie “lazily” off the shores of Guangzhou, and ordered 20,000 troops to the Philippines to be “within fifty hours of China.” Roosevelt warned his secretary of state, “The Chinese Army is far more formidable than it was five years ago. . . . We ought not to take any chances. We cannot afford a disaster.” For decades, American leaders had debated the relative merits of the closed gate and the open door, but now they were determined to advance both projects simultaneously. And if force was necessary, so be it.⁵⁹

In the end, crisis was averted by the quiet dissipation of the boycott. Shanghai merchants originally proposed the transnational movement, but when they began to lose money they also lost their resolve. Chinese wholesalers proved the least cooperative, continuing to buy and distribute U.S. goods. It certainly did not help matters that Chinese consumers found it difficult to determine which goods were made in America. Under pressure from U.S.

diplomats and increasingly from its own subjects, the Imperial Court quashed the boycott in many cities by the end of 1905. The already weakened movement faced a final unexpected blow when, on April 18, 1906, an earthquake and fire reduced San Francisco's Chinatown, along with much of the rest of the city, to ruins. The Chinese community eventually rebuilt, but the boycott, suddenly deprived of a vital source of support, met a swift end.⁶⁰

Chinese exclusion withstood the transnational boycott and so did America's new, more coercive, open door policy in China. Though the boycotters won a few diplomatic concessions, they failed to shake the foundations of U.S. gatekeeping or imperialism. America's imperial designs once reined in its nativist impulses, but as China's power waned at the turn of the century, the rules of the game shifted. Now American leaders declared exclusion wholly compatible with the extension of American empire. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Chinese in the United States faced exclusion on all sides and on all scales, as racial others, unauthorized aliens, and members of a subjugated nation.

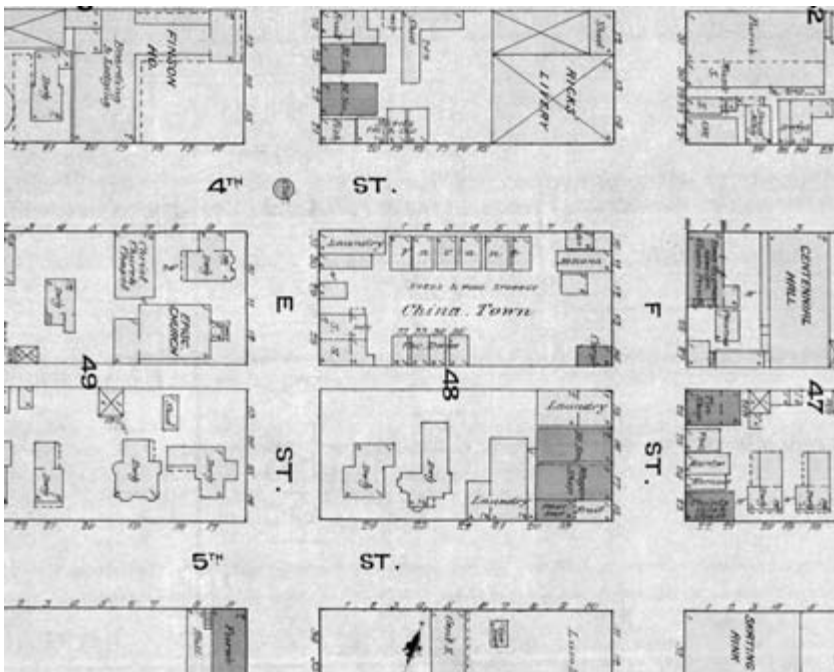
Exclusion in the Domestic Interior

The most immediate consequences of exclusion and expulsion left a paper trail that historians can follow. Across the U.S. West, newspapermen and local officials described scenes of anti-Chinese violence, as vigilantes threatened, beat, killed, and drove out the Chinese. At the border of the nation and the empire, U.S. officials recorded the enforcement of exclusion, as they arrested, interrogated, and deported the Chinese. Expulsion and exclusion, however, also had more quotidian and enduring repercussions on Chinese mobility, status, and subjectivity. At the turn of the twentieth century, Chinese in the United States still felt the legal and social consequences of the anti-Chinese movement. It is vital to recognize the men and women who died as a result of anti-Chinese violence in the U.S. West, but we must also remember those who experienced the far more common outcome: precarious survival.⁶¹ The legal and extralegal devaluing of Chinese lives produced profound and particular forms of vulnerability, including mass displacement, perpetual alienage, and psychological trauma. Unfortunately, the historical archive offers only a fragmentary vision of this aftermath.⁶²

Mass displacement of the Chinese seems the most obvious outcome of a movement predicated on expulsion. Yet unreliable sources and problematic

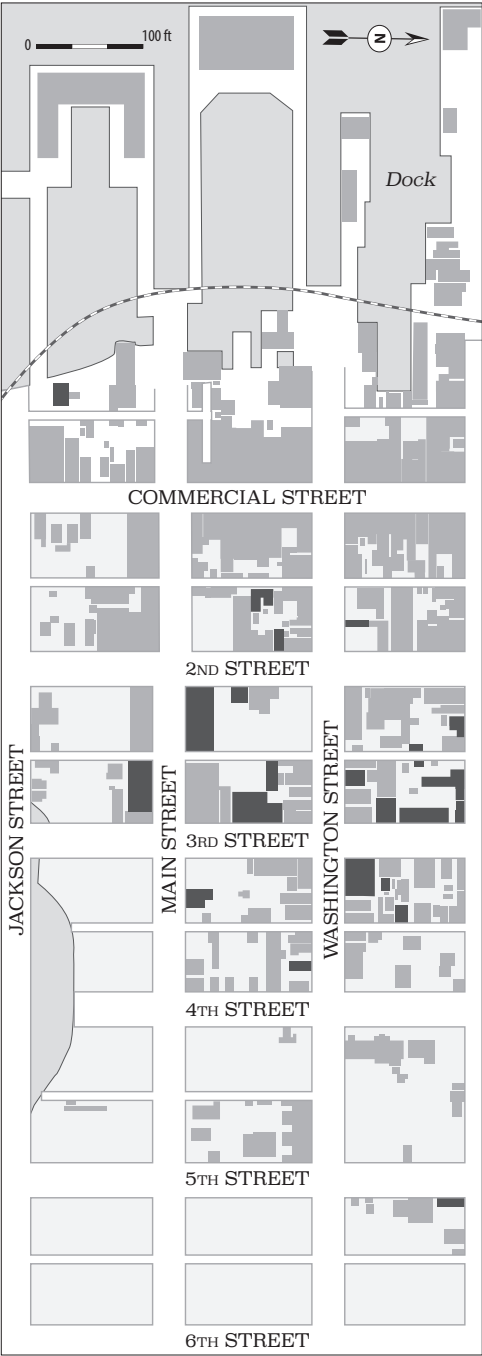
scholarly assumptions have made this forced movement difficult to perceive. Historians have often observed that the Chinese were always in motion but most have attributed this to cyclical migration and seasonal employment, not involuntary displacement. The pervasiveness of anti-Chinese violence demands that we reconsider the nature of Chinese mobility in the late nineteenth century. Did vigilantes successfully drive out the Chinese from West Coast towns and cities? And if they did, where did the displaced go? To these simple questions, there are many answers.

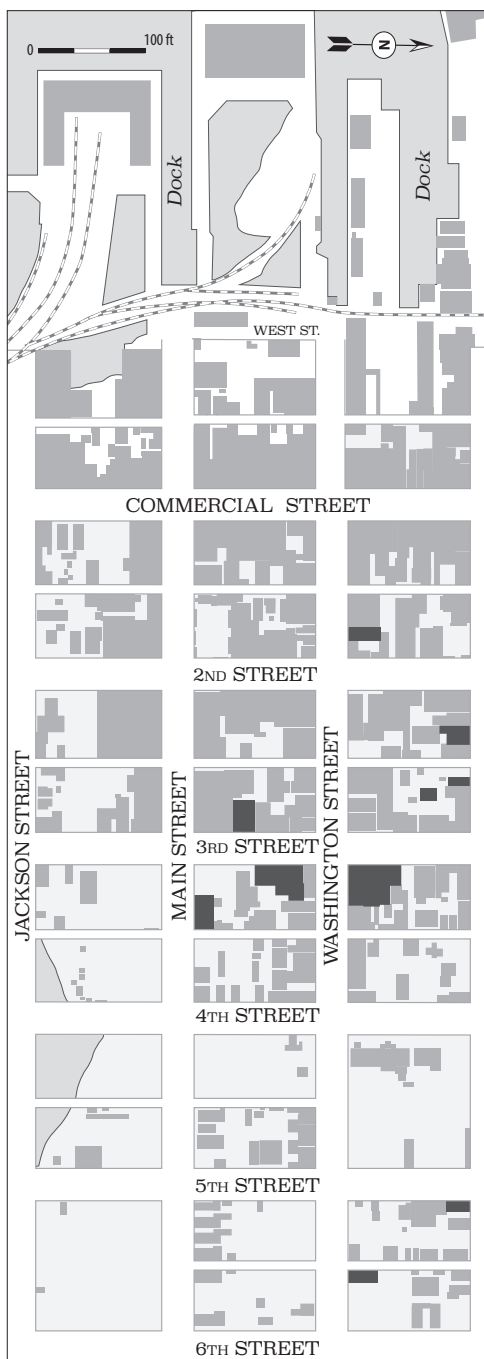
Vigilantes had more success in some towns than others. The records of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, which regularly surveyed and mapped towns, offers a glimpse of the impact on individual Chinese communities. Sanborn agents marked all Chinese-occupied buildings on their insurance maps, perhaps due to assumptions that Chinese occupancy raised the risk of fire. In some locations, surveyors happened to map a town in the years



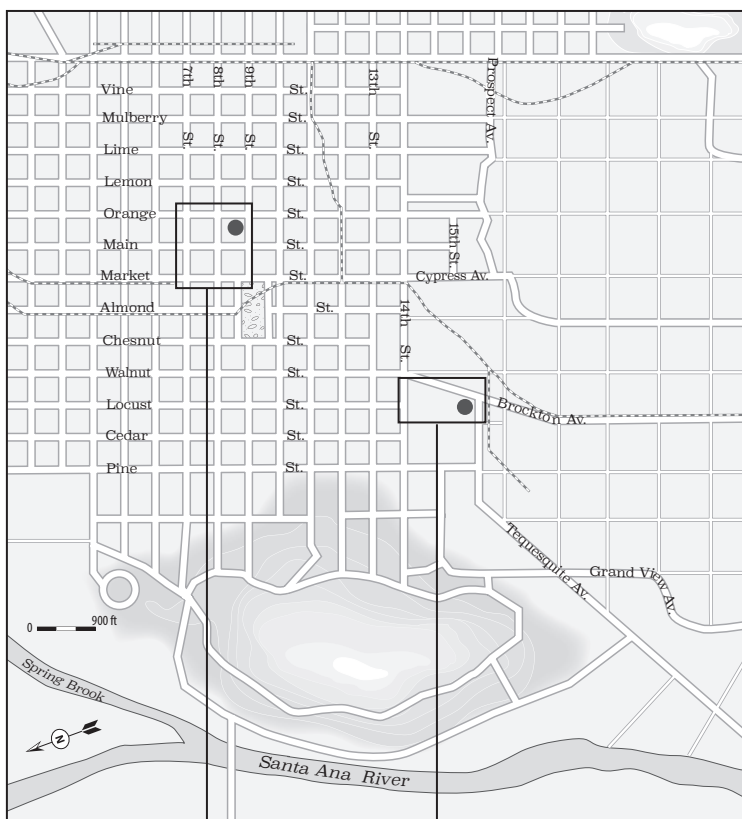
"Vacant China Town" in Eureka, California (1886). This detail from a Sanborn Insurance map shows buildings formerly occupied by Chinese residents. A year after the expulsion, Eureka's Chinatown still stands vacant. Sanborn Map Company, May 1886. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, Washington, D.C.

Chinese-Occupied Buildings in Seattle (1884). This reconstruction of a Sanborn Insurance map shows the location of buildings where Chinese residents lived and worked before Seattle's expulsions began.

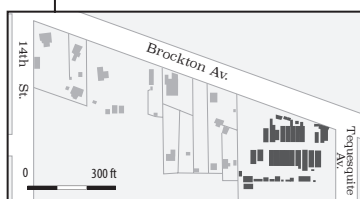




Chinese-Occupied Buildings in Seattle (1888). This reconstruction of a Sanborn Insurance map shows the location of Chinese-occupied buildings following the expulsions. Seattle's Chinatown has contracted and consolidated, with fewer Chinese residences in tighter proximity.



Riverside Chinatown in 1884



Riverside Chinatown in 1895

Chinatowns in Riverside, California. In 1885, local anti-Chinese ordinances and harassment forced Chinese residents to relocate from the center of Riverside to the outskirts. Map based on Sanborn maps from 1884 and 1895.

immediately preceding and following an expulsion. Though these maps do not directly record the size of the Chinese community, they reveal changes in the built environment that imply population shifts. In some towns in California, including Marysville and Nevada City, the maps show no perceptible change in Chinese businesses and residences during the peak of expulsions in 1885 and 1886. In other towns, however, the expulsions literally wiped the Chinese off the map. In Tacoma, Chinese buildings were scattered across town in 1885, but disappeared in the 1888 update. In Eureka, buildings where the Chinese once lived were marked “vacant” in 1886. In Cloverdale, California, they have simply vanished. In some cities, such as Riverside and San Jose, expulsions appear to have moved the Chinese enclave from the town’s center to its outskirts. Seattle shows a pattern of contraction and consolidation; by 1888, the city’s Chinese-occupied buildings were fewer in number and in tighter proximity.⁶³

The erasure of Chinese-occupied buildings on the Sanborn maps hints at the financial toll of expulsion. For Chinese merchants and labor contractors, the destruction of businesses meant the loss of real estate, merchandise, rents, and fees on labor contracting. But this destruction did not only impact the merchant elite, since it was customary at the time for Chinese workers to entrust their savings and future remittances to local Chinese businessmen. In other words, when the Tacoma Chinese listed thirty-five businesses “destroyed by fire,” they were describing the financial devastation of the entire Chinese community. And when Chinese merchants in the Pacific states and territories demanded \$424,368.49 in redress, they were relating the economic ruin of tens of thousands of Chinese workers. Lost earnings meant time lost for workers and lost remittances for their families across the Pacific. Though the United States granted indemnity to China for some of the expulsions, there is no indication that the migrants themselves received a portion of this redress.⁶⁴

Like the Sanborn maps, census data offer indications, but not certainties, about the extent of Chinese displacement. Though the federal census was only recorded every ten years, Washington Territory happened to conduct population surveys in 1885 and 1887. By enumerating the Chinese population immediately before and after the peak of anti-Chinese violence, these surveys capture the mass displacement of Chinese migrants. In King County, which includes Seattle, there were 967 Chinese recorded in 1885

<i>New Tacoma W. T.</i> 的狀吧單被焚燒各舖名開列于票	
北英隆伙食舖	郭非基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Shue King Lung Store</i>	
廣茂昌伙食舖	阮年基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Quong Mon Chong Store</i>	
昌隆伙食舖	阮忠基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Chong Lung Store</i>	
廣信伙食舖	阮三基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Quong Sun Store</i>	
裕昌隆伙食舖	湯順基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Yee Chong Vegetable Store</i>	
占記昌隆伙食舖	阮扶基做 什物尽被焚燒
<i>Yuen Lee Chong Sundry</i>	
賜利隆伙食舖	阮毛基做 什物尽被焚燒
<i>Yuen Lee Family</i>	
廣米隆伙食舖	阮裕仁基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Quong Wo Tai Butch Shop</i>	
阮南隆伙食舖	什物尽被焚燒
<i>Yuen Mone Family</i>	
廣祥源伙食舖	阮慶基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Quong Chong Yuen Store</i>	
廣隆伙食舖	阮建基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Man Lung Store</i>	
均利伙食舖	阮柏基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Quon Lee Store</i>	
廣芳隆伙食舖	阮柏基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Yon Hong Sui Chinese restaurant</i>	
廣南隆伙食舖	阮孔基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Yee Hong Sui Chinese restaurant</i>	
廣昇隆伙食舖	阮培基做 什物尽被焚燒
<i>Wing King Sundry</i>	
合利昌伙食舖	阮輝基做 什物尽被焚燒
<i>Yok Lee Butch Shop</i>	
廣和隆伙食舖	阮德基做 貨物尽被焚燒
<i>Tai Wo Tong Sundry Store</i>	
阮德隆伙食舖	什物尽被焚燒
<i>Yuen My Family</i>	

"These Buildings All Burned" (1886). Following the Tacoma expulsion, Chinese merchants compiled a list of destroyed businesses in order to seek redress. The original list is double-sided and includes thirty-five companies. University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Pacific Northwest Historical Documents, Watson C. Squire Papers, Accession No. 4004-001, Box 2124. UW29605z.

and only 142 in 1887. In Pierce County, which includes Tacoma, there were 959 Chinese recorded in 1885, while only one man remained in 1887. In other words, at least 1,781 Chinese departed from the two most populous counties in Washington Territory at the height of expulsions.⁶⁵ More lightly populated counties in western Washington, including Lewis, San Juan, Clarke, Kitsap, Pacific, and Skamania counties, also saw a dramatic reduction in the Chinese population. Government reports suggest that displaced Chinese found their way to California, Oregon, British Columbia, and China. But they also found new jobs within Washington Territory. The census suggests that Chinese fled western counties where the anti-Chinese movement was strong, pouring into eastern counties with expanding opportunities in agriculture, mining, and ranching.⁶⁶

There were exceptions to this trend. In Pierce County, the one Chinese man left behind became a local legend. At the time of the expulsions, he was a laborer working for a local white farming family. Two years later, he purchased a six-acre berry farm, married a white woman, and eventually adopted a white child. "China Joe" became proficient in English, converted to Christianity, and continued to reside in Puyallup Valley until his death in 1916. In his obituary, he was remembered as an honest, dependable, and outspoken man who declared the water "too damn cold" during his baptism. Instead of seeing his cultural transgressions as threatening, the community proved willing to tolerate this solitary "Chinaman who turned white man." In a county that continued to celebrate the anniversary of Chinese expulsion for decades, this man managed to integrate into the white community through religion, language, marriage, and fatherhood. His singular experience of acceptance contrasts with the stark rejection experienced by hundreds of displaced Chinese.⁶⁷

While the more frequent Washington Territorial census makes possible direct comparison before and after the peak of violence, the decennial federal census does not allow similar precision. Between the federal censuses of 1880 and 1890, the West Coast experienced a sudden spike in Chinese migration, including 39,579 migrants in a single year, and a systematic movement to expel the Chinese in at least 168 communities. The former phenomenon masks the latter. With no census data on Chinese populations at their height, it is easy to underestimate how many Chinese were displaced. In addition, existing population data are deeply problematic. Census takers'

haphazard transliteration of Chinese names makes it nearly impossible to track individuals across census years. Some surveyors did not even bother to record Chinese names, and instead only logged estimates of the Chinese population in each area. To further complicate the matter, all detailed schedules of the 1890 census were damaged by fire in 1921 and subsequently destroyed, limiting the data available for that year.⁶⁸

Still, a close reading of census data reveals telling patterns, especially in California where violence was most widespread. Between 1880 and 1890, a few counties saw a precipitous loss in Chinese population. The most dramatic case is Northern California's coastal Humboldt County, home to Eureka and seven other towns that engaged in expulsion. There, while the county's total recorded population doubled, the Chinese population fell from 241 to 10. Anti-Chinese fervor ran high in much of Northern California, including Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Del Norte, Mariposa, and Shasta counties, which together lost more than 60 percent of their Chinese population in a single decade. Historians have attributed this movement to the declining lumbering and mining industries in these areas. While these northern counties lost population, however, the Chinese population declined at roughly twice the overall rate. The shifting economy and swelling violence worked in tandem to reduce the number of Chinese in northern California. Evidently, anti-Chinese expulsions were more successful in areas where economic conditions rendered Chinese labor unnecessary.⁶⁹

Central and Southern California, where agricultural areas were experiencing rapid growth, saw the inverse of this trend. Counties such as San Bernardino, Monterey, Ventura, Tulare, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara were in desperate need of farm laborers, and in these counties the Chinese population grew at a faster rate than the overall population between 1880 and 1890. Historians have attributed this movement to economic incentives, but the demand for farm labor in these areas may also have meant less anti-Chinese violence.⁷⁰ Finding relative safety in the fields of southern California, Chinese flocked into agricultural areas. Significant labor shortages, especially in the summer of 1887, prompted local, white agriculturalists to guard their Chinese workers and tenants more carefully. In all likelihood, expulsions accelerated the movement of Chinese from north to south, from declining mining regions to flourishing agricultural areas, and from the center of anti-Chinese violence to its periphery. Chinese displacement transformed the racial landscape of California.⁷¹

While many expelled Chinese fled to agricultural areas, others looked to urban Chinatowns for sanctuary. The federal census reveals that the counties of San Francisco and Los Angeles gained 4,088 and 3,264 Chinese, respectively, between 1880 and 1890. Contemporary observations suggest that San Francisco's Chinese population may have temporarily swelled far beyond census counts. Local papers reported that by early 1886, expulsions had sent 7,000 or 8,000 "destitute" Chinese to the city. While an 1885 city report counted 30,360 Chinese in San Francisco's Chinatown, a prominent lawyer for the Chinese, Lyman R. Mowry, estimated that the population grew to 50,000 in the spring of 1886. These figures may be exaggerated, but all estimates suggest that thousands of Chinese sought safety in this urban enclave. Decades later, Chinese merchant J. S. Look remembered the year when "the American people became incensed at the Chinese race" and "the refugees came to San Francisco." As the population of Chinatown reached record numbers, the Chinese in San Francisco also experienced new heights of segregation.⁷²

Altogether, more Chinese migrants fled California. In the period from 1880 to 1900, California experienced a net loss of greater than 30,000 Chinese. Some of these men and women left the country, with out-migration peaking from San Francisco harbor in 1885 and 1886. During the previous decade, the recorded annual departure rate averaged 7,668 migrants, but in 1885, 15,185 departed from San Francisco, followed by 16,915 in 1886. This difference suggests that anti-Chinese violence drove more than 15,000 Chinese from the United States, at least temporarily. Nationally, the Chinese population dropped precipitously, from an estimated high of 132,300 in 1882 to 107,488 in 1890 and 89,863 in 1900.⁷³ Years later, Law Yow recalled living through the violence in Portland, Oregon, and hearing rumors of "riots all over the country." He explained to an interviewer, "If I had enough money then[,] I think I go back to China." Even migrants who did have funds for a return ticket to China faced an unenviable decision. Should they forgo higher wages in the United States to seek safety in China? With Guangdong periodically torn apart by interethnic feuds, famine, and unrest, it seemed unlikely they would find peace in either location.⁷⁴

In short, years of expulsion and exclusion engendered patterns of segregation and migration. Much like the violence and laws of the Jim Crow South, which crowded African Americans into segregated urban spaces and drove a "great migration" north, the anti-Chinese movement created two

Table 7.2 Chinese Population in the United States, 1860–1920

Year	Continental U.S. No.	Western States & Territories* No. (% of total)
1860	34,933	34,933 (100%)
1870	63,190	62,831 (99%)
1880	105,465	102,102 (99%)
1890	107,488	96,844 (90%)
1900	89,863	67,729 (75%)
1910	71,531	51,934 (73%)
1920	61,639	38,604 (63%)

*Includes Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Data Source: *Fourteenth Census of the United States*, vol. 2, *Population 1920: General Report and Analytical Tables* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1922), 29, 31, 37.

distinct patterns of movement within the United States. By the turn of the twentieth century, some Chinese lived in hyper-segregated urban enclaves while others were scattered across agricultural California and the eastern United States. In 1880, the U.S. West was home to 99 percent of the Chinese population, but by 1900, the figure had dropped to 75 percent.⁷⁵ Though Oregon and Washington saw a slight increase in Chinese population, the western states of California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Utah saw a significant decrease by 1900. Some Chinese migrants left the country, while others went east. New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey saw the most dramatic growth in the 1890s.⁷⁶ For the Chinese, there was safety to be found in large numbers or in near-isolation, which explains why the Chinese in the United States emerged from the nineteenth century more isolated and segregated than they had ever been before.⁷⁷

All of the displaced Chinese were survivors, but not all of them had survived the same ordeal. Anti-Chinese expulsions could be sudden and bloody events, or slow and prolonged campaigns. At times, force was applied. At other times, it was only threatened, and sometimes in highly subtle ways. Indeed, there could be vast differences among individuals' experiences, not to mention in their interpretations of them. These interpretations have barely left traces in the historical record; few survivors found occasion to speak of expulsion, and seldom were their words saved for posterity.⁷⁸ If Chinese mi-

grants ever constructed a vernacular history of this violence through verbal storytelling, it has been all but lost. What can be gleaned from the little that remains?

There is no question that expulsion represented a moment of rupture in the lives of Chinese. Rupture was not new to these migrants—they had already uprooted themselves to cross an ocean and remake their lives in a new world—but in the aftermath of violence, they were once again uprooted, this time against their will. As they fled their newfound homes, the Chinese suffered substantive losses: the deaths of their countrymen, termination of work, and destruction of property. As they rebuilt, they also mourned more intangible casualties: a sense of security, the familiarity of routine, and the confidence that came with community. In short, they suffered losses of life, liberty, and happiness.⁷⁹

Though the vigilantes did not distinguish by sex, the violence still had gendered effects. Men suffered the brunt of the expulsions, because they constituted the vast majority of Chinese in the U.S. West, but women suffered collateral damage. As husbands were driven from work, wives in America and China temporarily lost their source of support. And when husbands died, wives lost their life partners, the fathers of their children, and often, their primary means of sustenance. In Seattle, the wife of Chin Gee Hee lost her pregnancy. For both men and women, the destructive force of expulsion was not momentary; past terrors had lasting effects on bodies and souls. In America, survivors carried these physical and psychological scars of violence with them as they navigated white society every day.

On the most basic level, becoming a survivor meant contemplating death. Anti-Chinese violence in the U.S. West put the Chinese on alarmingly intimate terms with their own mortality. Far from the land of their ancestors, the Chinese faced the possibility of a solitary death without mourners, and a restless afterlife without honor. According to Guangdong tradition, burial in one's native place and proper rituals of death were needed to transform the deceased into an ancestor. Denied these rites, the dead would become wandering ghosts, unfed, unclothed, and unable to bring good fortune to their descendants. Mindful of this dreaded limbo and its effects on future generations, Chinese migrants in the United States bought into mutual aid organizations that promised to repatriate their bones and facilitate secondary burial in their native place. The anti-Chinese massacres of the mid-1880s

fueled fears of destroyed or forgotten bones. Even brief moments of violence left the Chinese haunted by the possibility of an eternity spent adrift. After death as well as in life, the Chinese faced a precarious existence.⁸⁰

It was all too easy for Chinese migrants to imagine a restless afterlife given their daily familiarity with rootlessness. Ceaseless wandering is the central theme in a rare anthology of Cantonese folk rhymes first published in 1911 by a Chinese bookseller in San Francisco. In one poem, the anonymous writer describes himself as “a brave man meeting an untimely adversity / All day long, unable to eat or sleep / Rushing about over ten thousand miles, / deep in sorrow. / Every hour, every minute, mind and body toil in pain.” Another bemoaned his “pitiful” life as a “sojourner” who is “Unable to make it home. / Having been everywhere—north, south, east and west— / Always obstacles along the way, pain knitting my brows. / Worried, in silence. / Ashamed, wishes unfulfilled.” It was not the choice to migrate that rendered the Chinese homeless, since the process of migration contained the possibility of finding a new home. Rather, it was the experiences of expulsion and exclusion that set them adrift, stripping them of agency over their own settlement or return.⁸¹

Though their plight was shaped by forces beyond their control, few Chinese escaped the sense of personal failure. For banished Chinese, injuries wrought by expulsion, exclusion, and imperialism were inseparable, and generated cumulative feelings of shame. In a poem titled “Expulsion of the Immigrants,” Huang Zunxian, a Chinese consul-general at San Francisco from 1882 to 1885, describes the multiple and tangled degradations to which the Chinese were subjected.

If a nation does not care for its people,
They are like sparrows shot in a bush
If the earth's four corners won't accept them,
Wandering in exile, where can they rest? . . .
Grave, dignified, I arrive with my dragon banners,
Knock on the custom's gate, hesitant, doubtful.
Even if we emptied the water of four oceans,
It would be hard to wash this shame clean.⁸²

In a few short lines, Huang alludes to fallen China, the banished Chinese, and the threat of border control (even to a diplomat like himself). Together,

these humiliations meant a loss of face, for the individual, the nation, and the race. "Men are no longer regarded as men [here]," Huang wrote in another poem, "mauled like a subhuman species. / In this vast and desolate world / where can they find a foothold?"⁸³

Chinese reflections on this trauma, whether in the form of testimony or poetry, seldom reflected anger, rage, or desire for retribution. Lum May's wife is a rare exception. When May, a Tacoma merchant, testified before Governor Squire in Washington Territory, he claimed his wife as an unquantifiable loss. "From the excitement, the fright and the losses we sustained through the riot [my wife] lost her reason, and has ever since been hopelessly insane," he stated. "She threatened to kill people with a hatchet or any other weapon she can get hold of." Another merchant, Kwok Sue, also testified to the woman's previous sanity and current "homicidal mania." A local white doctor corroborated the merchants' testimony, offering his expert opinion that her "present insanity is due to the experiences there had by her when driven out of Tacoma."⁸⁴ The woman herself was never named and did not testify. Perhaps she was declared insane for expressing a dangerously unfeminine sentiment: a desire to murder those who took her home from her. Or maybe she truly had lost all reason. In any case, she was the sole voice of anger to emerge from Chinese testimony in Washington Territory, albeit one filtered through the words of others. The merchants, standing before U.S. officials, thought better of expressing any fury they may have felt. No doubt there was much that was left unspoken.

As the Chinese experienced mass displacement in the late nineteenth century, they also had to navigate the legal and social terrain of exclusion at the nation's territorial borders and, increasingly, in its interior. The Chinese had long been marked by assumptions of racial difference; now they were marked by assumptions of illegality as well. The result was not a uniformly precarious experience, but one divided by class, gender, legal status, and date of entry. In practice, exclusion and its enforcement produced five distinct social categories of alienage.⁸⁵

Three were forms of illegality. There were the *undocumented* who had surreptitiously crossed into the United States undetected. These migrants paid smugglers to ferry them across the border, but inside the country, they lived in danger of being discovered without papers. There were the *fraudulently documented* who had entered the country through legal channels but with the help of fraudulent immigration documents. These migrants had falsely

claimed an exempt status, likely that of a merchant or returning resident. There were also *fraudulent citizens* who entered the country fraudulently claiming U.S. citizenship. Though Chinese aliens were ineligible for naturalization by virtue of race, they could be U.S. citizens by virtue of birthplace or parentage. Fraudulent citizens, known as “paper sons and daughters,” had managed to buy a false genealogy and with it the privileges of U.S. citizenship, including unfettered entry. Of these three groups of unauthorized migrants, only the undocumented were unambiguously situated outside the boundaries of legal and social legitimacy. But all were in danger of being found out.⁸⁶

The remaining Chinese population occupied two legal but still unenviable positions within the nation. First were legal Chinese residents who had no path to citizenship. They had entered the nation lawfully, but would remain indefinitely “aliens ineligible to citizenship” due to racial prerequisites for naturalization. Most of these *permanent aliens* were old-timers who had first entered the United States before 1882, or elites, exempted by their status as merchants, students, diplomats, or wives of these exempt classes. All Chinese legal residents were denied the rights and privileges of citizenship, chief among them the right to vote, the right to remain in the country, and, in some western states, the right to own land. Despite their legal status, these permanent aliens could be deported for alleged prostitution, criminal offenses, or inconsistent papers.⁸⁷ Finally, there was the small but rapidly growing group of Chinese Americans who were natural-born U.S. citizens, as recognized by the Fourteenth Amendment and confirmed by the 1898 Supreme Court ruling *U.S. v. Wong Kim Ark*. Although these citizens were legally recognized by the state, they were “*alien citizens*” who were presumed to be foreign based solely on their race. After years of restriction, exclusion, and bars on naturalization, being Chinese had come to connote alienage. In the eyes of most white Americans, including some state officials, Chinese Americans, even those born in the United States, remained forever alien.⁸⁸

Whether at America’s borders or within them, all Chinese and Chinese Americans faced the danger of being presumed to be illegal. This made them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by conmen, employers, and state officials. Any Chinese person with questionable legal status risked being extorted (by white and Chinese alike), exposed to inhumane labor practices (with little

hope of redress), and subjected to immigration raids (seemingly at random). These risks were not confined to the territorial border.⁸⁹

One of the least recognized hazards of exclusion was the proliferation of smuggling. As state officials tightened their grip on the border, Chinese migrants increasingly made the risky choice to hire smugglers. U.S. customs officials were deeply concerned that smugglers were “utterly without principle.” In 1887, Special Agent Herbert Beecher reported fears that “at several times while being closely chased by the [U.S.] Revenue Cutter, these men have deliberately killed and thrown over board their cargo of humanity.” Writing to the Imperial Court in 1889, Chinese Minister Zhang Yinhuan agreed that smuggling had made Chinese workers more susceptible to violence. “Some malevolent foreigners conspired with local Chinese to establish migration agencies in Hong Kong,” he explained, “They delivered at least five thousand people every year and [their] annual income is over 500,000 [*yuan*]. They share the profit with Chinese gangs in San Francisco.” According to Zhang, the migrants rarely understood U.S. exclusion policies, and traffickers made no effort to educate them. “The dealers do not care at all whether the Chinese workers they shipped to America may get a job, be expelled or burned,” he complained, “Neither are they concerned about those workers’ well-being or whether they might commit suicide.”⁹⁰ Though the history of unauthorized Chinese migration is often remembered as individual acts of resistance, the increase in human trafficking challenges this narrative.⁹¹ Exclusion further stripped Chinese workers of the power to plot their own journey, rendering them deeply vulnerable to inhumane treatment by smugglers. In yet another arena, exclusion and violence continued to walk hand in hand.⁹²

It should come as little surprise that, lacking security in their surroundings and status, many Chinese migrants remained detached from their new place of residence. Though the Chinese continued to come to America and live there, they became reflexively self-protective, deploying strategies of co-ethnic solidarity when in Chinatown and self-reliance when in isolation. In search of safety and dignity, Chinese migrants in the United States maintained distinct and parallel structures of community, communication, business, medicine, and justice. Though they participated in the mainstream economy and society, they also fashioned alternative ways to save and send money, print and disseminate information, produce and administer medicine,



Ross Alley in San Francisco, California (1898) by Arnold Genthe. Seeking safety and community, some Chinese migrants sought out ethnic enclaves like San Francisco's Chinatown. Arnold Genthe Collection Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., LC-USZC4-3890.

open and maintain businesses, and punish criminals. Those who moved far from Chinese enclaves often entered niche industries, such as hand laundries and Chinese restaurants, rather than directly participating in the mainstream job market.⁹³ These survival strategies were not new—they were common to the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia, Australia, and South America—but exclusion and expulsion help explain their persistence in America.⁹⁴

Still, many Chinese discovered small spaces of racial toleration and, within them, the opportunity to recover from the scourge of violence.⁹⁵ In 1924, when scholars asked Chinese respondents to reflect on race relations in the United States, they recounted a variegated color line. Woo Gen, who had opened a cigar factory in Seattle before the violence of 1886, testified that he successfully resisted expulsion with the help of a gun and an axe. Once the chaos ended and the dust settled, he found that he could no longer sell his cigars. Chinese truck gardeners, he remembered, also had “trouble selling to white men.” The violence had rewritten the racial rules of business, re-

quiring him to learn new codes of conduct by trial and error. In the end, he found it possible to open a laundry in Seattle. This was a step down from his previous trade, but still an avenue toward financial independence.⁹⁶

Another Chinese merchant, Chin Cheung, who arrived in Seattle after the violence, also described a fine-grained color line. When the interviewer inquired about discrimination in shops and restaurants, Chin denied having any trouble with white businesses. He explained to the interviewer, “I know where they treat Chinese all right,—then I go. I stay away from other places.” Some businesses, spaces, and towns were open to Chinese and others were not. Armed with local knowledge, these men believed they could tell the difference. Scholars have found no such clarity, peering at these local encounters from the distance of a century or more.⁹⁷

Repeal and Regrets

As America entered the twentieth century, its policy of exclusion expanded before it contracted. First, the United States slowly shifted from a policy of Chinese exclusion to one of Asian exclusion. In the winter of 1907–1908, the United States negotiated Japanese restriction through a series of confidential diplomatic notes known as the Gentlemen’s Agreement. Under the threat of unilateral exclusion, the Japanese government agreed to prevent the migration of Japanese and Korean workers to the United States unless the laborers had immediate family in America.⁹⁸ In 1917, the United States unilaterally excluded all migrants from the “Asiatic barred zone,” which included India, Burma, Thailand, Asiatic Russia, the Malay states, the East Indian Islands, the Polynesian Islands, and parts of Arabia and Afghanistan. Following an emergency stopgap in 1921, Congress passed the nation’s first comprehensive immigration law in 1924, the National Origins Act (also known as the Johnson-Reed Act), which instituted quotas for all European immigrants and excluded the vast majority of Asians as “aliens ineligible to citizenship.” In 1934, Congress went so far as to bar Filipinos with the Tydings-McDuffie Act, despite their formal status as U.S. nationals.⁹⁹

The United States began to dismantle Asian exclusion in the mid-twentieth century, when World War II and the Cold War shifted geopolitics in the Pacific. China became an essential American ally in the fight against Japan during World War II. In an effort to undermine this military alliance, Japan began propaganda campaigns in the Pacific, which highlighted Chinese ex-

clusion as evidence of American racism and hypocrisy. Fearing this tactic would undermine Chinese morale, President Franklin D. Roosevelt urged Congress to repeal exclusion for the "cause of winning the war and of establishing a secure peace." In response, Congress passed the Magnuson Act of 1943, which repealed Chinese exclusion, allowed China an annual quota of 105 immigrants, and permitted legal Chinese residents to naturalize.¹⁰⁰

The confluence of geopolitical pressure and domestic activism led to the demise of the remaining Asian exclusion laws. In 1946, the Luce-Celler Act extended naturalization privileges to Asian Indians and Filipinos and granted each nation an annual quota of one hundred immigrants. Comprehensive immigration reform began in 1952 with the Immigration and Nationality Act (also known as the McCarran-Walter Act) which ended racial prerequisites for naturalization and extended annual quotas to all nations, including those in Asia. The law, however, still contained vestiges of Asian exclusion. While European immigrants were subject to quotas based on their nation of origin, Asian immigrants were subject to quotas defined by racial ancestry. Whether a person hailed from China or Canada, a Chinese was always a Chinese under the law. In 1965, the amended Immigration and Nationality Act (or the Hart-Celler Act) finally ended this racially based quota system. The new law gave preference to family reunification and skilled migration, but granted the same number of preference visas to every sending nation while capping the totals by hemisphere. This act, along with legislation allowing war brides and refugees, dramatically expanded the number of Asian immigrants and Asian Americans in the United States. Recent immigration rates have made Asian Americans the nation's fastest growing ethnic group in the twenty-first century.¹⁰¹

Though Chinese exclusion is no more, its consequences live on. These discriminatory laws transformed the Chinese American communities in ways that cannot be undone, although the United States has occasionally tried. The federal government temporarily offered status adjustment between 1956 and 1965 to Chinese migrants who were willing to confess their unauthorized status and report on family and friends in similar situations. The Confession Program, designed to root out communists, brought 30,530 Chinese out of the shadows. Many other unauthorized Chinese, fearful of the government's intent, opted not to regularize. To this day, there are Chinese in America who live with the weight of an unlawful border crossing made during the Exclusion Period.¹⁰²

Chinese Americans with direct familial connections to exclusion, however, are in the minority. Less than 10 percent of Chinese Americans today can trace their lineage back three generations in America. This, too, is a legacy of American gatekeeping. Through exclusion, deportation, and deterrence, U.S. immigration law split up Chinese families for over six decades, stunting subsequent generations and creating a lasting absence.¹⁰³

In 2011 and 2012, at the urging of Chinese American community groups, both houses of Congress unanimously passed resolutions of regret for Chinese exclusion. It was only the fourth such expression to date, following resolutions on the enslavement and segregation of African Americans, internment of Japanese Americans, and conquest of the Hawaiian Islands. The Senate version declared deep regret for:

The enactment of the Chinese Exclusion Act and related discriminatory laws that—

- (1) resulted in the persecution and political alienation of persons of Chinese descent;
- (2) unfairly limited their civil rights;
- (3) legitimized racial discrimination; and
- (4) induced trauma that persists within the Chinese community.

Congress's resolutions of regret represent a profound act of recognition. For a moment, which later proved fleeting, American policymakers came together to confront the racism that underwrote the nation's policy of exclusion.¹⁰⁴

Reflecting on the passage of the Senate resolution, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) voiced his hopes that it would "mark a step in the Senate's progress toward greater commitment to protecting the civil and constitutional rights of all Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity."¹⁰⁵ No doubt many members of Congress shared this egalitarian sentiment. His rhetoric, however, glosses over the fact that most Chinese who faced discrimination under exclusion were not "Americans." They were aliens. Congress's declaration of regret reaffirmed its commitment to equal protection for all U.S. citizens, but it sidestepped a critical question that the history of exclusion raises: What rights can an alien claim in modern America?

In the nineteenth century, the "heathen Chinaman" formed the social and legal basis for modern American alienage, but the category itself and its

profound significance has far outlived him. To date, the Supreme Court has not extended the same constitutional guarantees of equal protection and due process to aliens in matters of immigration. Plenary power continues to enable the federal government to restrict migration based on nationality and class routinely, and, potentially, to bar aliens based on religion and race as well. In the twenty-first century, many aliens can be summarily removed without a court hearing and those who do stand before a judge have no guarantee of government-appointed counsel.¹⁰⁶ Inevitably, these legal disadvantages have bled into the social realm. Immigrants, especially those deemed undesirable or unlawful, occupy a particularly vulnerable space in America's neighborhoods, workplaces, and imagined community. If the history of Chinese exclusion teaches us about the perils of racial discrimination, it should also warn us about the dangerous inequalities produced by alienage.

EPILOGUE

The Modern American Alien

"A TOLERANCE OF foreign faces, garbs, and tongues is, perhaps, the birth-right of citizens of New-York," opined the editors of the *New York Times* in 1890. On the streets of the "polyglot city," Americans, Germans, Dutch, British, and Irish now regularly mixed with the people of Scandinavia, Bohemia, Armenia, Japan, Russia, and China. But even when surrounded by other foreigners, "the Chinese within our gates" seemed "more alien than any" according to the paper. And it was not only among immigrants that the Chinese stood out. "The black man and the red man are better liked," commented the editors. "With the proper care and teaching, with fair treatment as citizens, the red and black assimilate and become of us, to the extent that we are willing they should." "Not so the Chinaman," concluded the *Times*. "The Chinese are not to be digested."¹

In retrospect, the making of the Chinese alien looks peculiar against the larger backdrop of late-nineteenth-century America. With the end of the Civil War, after all, came a dramatic expansion of U.S. citizenship to people who stood outside the traditional bounds of whiteness. The 1866 Civil Rights Act and Fourteenth Amendment made America's former slaves into citizens by virtue of their birth on American soil. Though these measures still excluded "Indians not taxed," Congress began, in piecemeal fashion, to extend citizenship to rising numbers of Native Americans in the decades that followed. In part, the postbellum reconfiguration of formal citizenship was driven by pragmatic concerns. In the South, African American citizenship helped dismantle the former Confederacy, and in the West, Native American citizenship accelerated the dispossession of tribal lands. But lofty

ideals of racial inclusion also played a vital role. Radical Republicans envisioned a state-guided process of assimilation and incorporation that would enfold the “black” and “red” races into the nation and its polity. Through the reconstruction of the South and the West, the federal government would mold these “uncivilized” peoples into worthy citizens. Federal projects of prolonged naturalization could be coercive or even violent, but envisioned a more inclusive America.²

Why, then, did Chinese exclusion and the modern American alien emerge at this time? Looking back on this turn toward racial liberalism, the treatment of the Chinese may appear anomalous. But in fact, these histories of rigid exclusion and radical inclusion are two sides of the same coin. The post-bellum period saw both the creation of the modern American citizen and the modern American alien, a synchrony that was not coincidental. There could be no substantive concept of alienage in American law and society before there was a meaningful concept of citizenship. And it was only after the Civil War that the national citizen was born.

Of course, there were both citizens and aliens in the antebellum period, but at that time citizenship and alienage played only a minor role in defining a person's rights and status within society. This was due, in part, to the fragmentary nature of citizenship in the early nineteenth century and, even more so, to the many competing forms of social membership available. Since the Constitution had not created a single, formal, undifferentiated notion of national citizenship, states reserved the right to grant citizenship and enumerate its privileges. This resulted in diverse and disparate civil rights, many of which ended at the state border. In addition, local and state jurisdictions recognized many other forms of social membership from which individuals derived their rights, privileges, and duties. An individual's status was based on sex, race, freedom, property, marital status, church affiliation, state of residence, and more. With these many forms of membership came many forms of exclusion. Instead of a national gate separating Americans from foreigners, there were internal fences dividing masters from slaves, men from women, parents from children, property holders from the landless, and New Yorkers from Rhode Islanders.³

This convoluted system of membership did not stop all attempts at gate-keeping. Since the founding of the nation, nativist movements and immi-

gration laws had targeted small groups of Europeans and Africans for exclusion and expulsion. This regulation of migration was left primarily to the states in the early nineteenth century. As an outgrowth of colonial poor laws, states developed systems to exclude and remove paupers and other “undesirables.” Often, these state regulations targeted aliens, but they also removed citizens born in other states. In addition, southern states often regulated the entry of free blacks (whether or not they were born in America) in order to preserve the institution of slavery. This produced a splintered system of state gatekeeping, which policed the movement of aliens as well as that of citizens, free blacks, and slaves.⁴

Other than the regulation of the slave trade, the only federal laws to restrict immigration before 1882 were the Alien Enemies and Alien Friends Acts of 1798. The former affected enemy aliens solely during times of war, but the latter allowed the federal government to expel any alien based on suspicions of danger. Though a clear precursor to Chinese exclusion, the highly controversial Alien Friends Act was never enforced, quickly expired, and left little judicial trace.⁵ Other attempts to federalize border control were blocked by southern statesmen. In order to preserve their ability to regulate the movement of slaves and free blacks, southerners consistently fought federal intervention in matters of migration. Therefore, on the eve of the Civil War, the United States lacked consolidated notions of citizenship, alienage, and national gatekeeping.

The aftermath of the Civil War spurred dramatic changes in the regulation of aliens and citizens in the United States. With the Thirteenth Amendment’s emancipation of slaves in 1865 came the end of southern resistance to federalized border control. No longer was there such a strong incentive for the southern states to claim the power to regulate the movement of people. And with the Fourteenth Amendment’s promise of equal protection in 1868 came increased judicial scrutiny of state regulations. In the years following, judicial decisions found that the states had little right to police the movement of citizens and aliens. These legal and political shifts paved the way for the federal government to take control of national gatekeeping.

The postbellum era also marked a transformation of U.S. citizenship. Not only did Congress extend citizenship to more people, but it also imbued the idea of citizenship with new meaning. For the first time, Congress

defined a singular form of national citizenship, granted citizens certain rights and immunities, and pledged federal protection of these civil rights. Constitutional amendments did not bring actual equality in law or practice—sex, race, class, and ability continued to influence one's legal and social status—but they provided the theoretical outlines of modern citizenship. To forever protect Americans from slavery or other abuses by the states, Congress enshrined in the Constitution the rights-bearing citizen who lives on to this day.⁶

Once the federal government began to fashion the national citizenry, it was only a matter of time until it defined who would stand outside those ranks. The existence of the citizen demanded the concept of alien—and they developed in tandem.⁷ Though national citizenship had begun taking shape in the late 1860s, it was not immediately clear what alienage in modern America would entail. Who would be considered an alien and for how long? Which aliens would be allowed to enter the nation? What power did the government hold to exclude and expel unwanted aliens? What rights did an alien possess? Could unauthorized aliens claim those same rights? The Chinese were not America's first aliens, but America first drafted national answers to these pressing questions for the specific purpose of excluding the Chinese. As the state and the public made Chinese migrants into the epitome of alienage, they also invented the very concept of the alien in modern America and began to delineate its meaning in law and in practice.

The invention of the modern American alien is closely tied to the postbellum reconfiguration of citizenship. The Fourteenth Amendment opened the possibility that people of Chinese ancestry would someday be U.S. citizens by birth—a prospect that galvanized the movement for exclusion. Long before Chinese migrants arrived in the United States, American leaders feared that social heterogeneity could undermine their republican experiment. In the antebellum period, social hierarchies and internal exclusions promised to mitigate the power of undesirable minority groups, but with the postbellum expansion of citizenship and enfranchisement came heightened fears of the destructive power of cultural diversity on American society.⁸ In response, the public and the state both turned to projects of African American and Native American assimilation with newfound vigor and became particularly obsessed with the “inassimilability” of the Chinese.

With birthright citizenship newly open to the Chinese, anti-Chinese advocates worked to narrow the other two avenues to citizenship: naturalization and immigration. Since 1790, the privilege of naturalization had been

confined to “free white men.” When American diplomats negotiated the Burlingame Treaty in 1868, they reaffirmed Chinese ineligibility. In 1870, Congress returned to the question of naturalization as they debated how to grant citizenship to newly emancipated slaves who were foreign-born. Some believed that it was time to strike the word “white” from America’s naturalization statutes and allow the Chinese to enjoy the same rights as all other immigrants. But many congressmen, including Senator William Stewart of Nevada, argued that the recent extension of citizenship had gone far enough. “Because we have freed the slaves and then given them their civil and political rights, does it then follow that we must extend those political rights to all people throughout the globe?” Stewart queried. For him, the answer was clearly “no,” for this would “render American citizenship a farce.”⁹ As fences came down within the postbellum nation, Stewart believed that walls needed to go up at its borders. In the end, Congress agreed, and naturalization rights were only extended “to aliens of African nativity and to persons of African descent.” Not all congressmen were content with this decision, however. “If you deny citizenship to a large class, you have a dangerous element,” Senator Samuel Pomeroy of Kansas cautioned, “you have an element you can enslave; you have an element in the community you can proscribe.” He recognized that a permanent alien underclass would be in grave danger of abuse. Few heeded his warning.¹⁰

After consigning Chinese migrants to permanent alienage without a path to citizenship, the federal government then moved to restrict their entry and curtail their rights. When anti-Chinese advocates violently asserted their status as rights-bearing citizens, Congress responded with an expanding program of exclusion. First came the Page Act of 1875, which slowed the migration of Chinese women and, as a result, the birth of Chinese Americans. Then the Angell Treaty of 1880 and the Restriction Act of 1882 temporarily limited Chinese labor migration. When pushed by the unprecedented outbreak of anti-Chinese violence in the mid-1880s, Congress turned to a unilateral policy of exclusion in 1888 and, after more violence, expulsion in 1892.

As we have seen, the expansion of border control and the continual efforts of Chinese migrants to challenge it provoked a series of key judicial decisions regarding the rights of aliens. Previously, the Supreme Court had found constitutional grounds to regulate immigration, but in 1889, the court declared immigration an extra-constitutional matter of sovereignty. With the

plenary power doctrine, the court granted Congress absolute power to define, exclude, and expel aliens, virtually abdicating authority to review the political branches in this domain. Nineteenth-century racial fears and prejudices permeated these judicial rulings. The Supreme Court proclaimed Chinese migration “an Oriental invasion” and “a menace to our civilization” as it denied aliens the full constitutional guarantees of due process and equal protection in matters of immigration and naturalization. An alleged Chinese alien could be indefinitely detained, summarily excluded, denied government-appointed counsel, and expelled after an administrative hearing. Through these rulings, the court cemented the disadvantages of alienage and enhanced the privileges of citizenship.¹¹

However, Chinese plaintiffs also made some significant legal gains on behalf of aliens. For example, *Yick Wo v. Hopkins* (1886) and *Wong Wing v. United States* (1896) established that aliens retained certain fundamental rights based on their personhood and territorial presence. In 1898, *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* affirmed the citizenship of all children born within the territorial limits of the United States regardless of their parents’ immigration status. In this case, the Supreme Court ruled against the U.S. solicitor general who, on behalf of the William McKinley administration, argued that the Chinese should be denied even birthright citizenship. In each of these landmark decisions, the rights of the Chinese became a test case for the rights of all aliens in America.¹²

This is not to say that Chinese exclusion single-handedly built the scaffolding of modern American gatekeeping. Only a few months after Congress passed the Chinese Restriction Act, it also federalized the restriction of paupers, criminals, and “unfit” individuals in the 1882 Immigration Act. During the 1880s, Congress federalized both Chinese restriction and general immigration control, but it maintained two separate systems of enforcement until 1909 and enacted separate immigration laws until 1924. For decades, the exclusion of all Chinese laborers and the restriction of certain undesirable immigrants developed along separate but parallel lines. Despite these legal and bureaucratic divisions, officials enforcing general immigration laws borrowed strategies from the enforcement of Chinese exclusion and vice versa.¹³

Although Chinese exclusion was not the sole progenitor of national gatekeeping, it did establish the formal and substantive meaning of modern

alienage. With the General Immigration Act of 1891, Congress used the precedent of Chinese exclusion to deny judicial review in all immigration hearings, and the Supreme Court soon confirmed that the plenary power doctrine applied to all aliens. This removed immigration cases from the judicial system, where aliens had previously claimed constitutional guarantees of equal protection and due process, and placed them within a distinct system of summary administrative proceedings, where federal officials had broad discretionary power. Still, white aliens never felt the effects of plenary power quite as directly as the Chinese. For them, naturalization, or even declaring the intent to naturalize, offered a safeguard against many of the disabilities of alienage.¹⁴

Migrants from other Asian nations, who began to arrive in significant numbers in the 1890s, found their experience hewed more closely to that of the Chinese. Court rulings gradually confirmed that Japanese, Koreans, and South Asians shared with the Chinese legal nonwhiteness and the inability to naturalize. Chinese exclusion laws had inaugurated the practice of restricting migrants by nativity, and in the early twentieth century the federal government extended this policy to migrants from other Asian nations. The comprehensive immigration law of 1924 continued along these lines by creating a three-tiered immigration program. The Johnson-Reed Act excluded all immigrants from Asia, exempted all immigrants from the Western hemisphere, and granted graded quotas for immigrants from Europe (with preference for nationalities believed to be more easily assimilated). To implement this general immigration law, federal officials deployed tactics of surveillance, detention, interrogation, and removal first tested on the Chinese.¹⁵ And, on a more fundamental level, they relied on the consolidated concept of alienage that exclusion had produced.

National gatekeeping certainly helped to construct the modern alien, but so too did local violence and international diplomacy. The modern American alien was a product of the late nineteenth century, a period when racism and imperialism converged with particular force. The outlines of alienage were produced at the intersection of multiple formations of power—racial boundaries, national borders, and imperial relations—and at the intersection of multiple scales—the local, national, and international.

By following the cascading effects of anti-Chinese violence, we have seen how these entangled relations of power pushed the Chinese to the margins

of American society and American memory. Violent racial politics and home-grown border control infused federal law with local prejudices. And as the Chinese became aliens in the eyes of American government, their position fell in the local hierarchy and on the international stage. In turn, America's mounting ambitions in Asia helped to justify the use of plenary power at home. From this confluence of local violence, national law, and international diplomacy came the modern American alien and, not surprisingly, the "illegal" alien as well.

The post-Civil War rise of national gatekeeping drew a legal line between citizens and aliens that would prove transformative and enduring. Increasingly, the American public and the state imagined the nation as "hard on the outside and soft on the inside."¹⁶ Inclusion within the nation seemed to necessitate exclusion at its edges. This popular notion, which remains sacrosanct in many circles to this day, originated with Chinese exclusion.¹⁷

But the true state of affairs in the late nineteenth century did not easily align with this ideal. While the nation's edges grew harder, in practice the center did not quite soften. Women were not entitled to equal rights, duties, and privileges in the post-Civil War era. And despite the extension of formal citizenship, African American, Native American, and Mexican American men never experienced full inclusion or equality. As the Chinese became aliens, others became second-class citizens.

Mexican Americans had been granted U.S. citizenship through the annexation of Texas in 1845 and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo at the close of the Mexican-American War in 1848. With their formal citizenship came legal whiteness, a fact that was confirmed by the courts in 1897. Although the federal government backed Mexican American claims to citizenship, local practices often denied Mexican Americans full social and political membership. Viewed as racially ambiguous, Mexican Americans faced widespread disenfranchisement, *de facto* segregation, and everyday prejudice.¹⁸

For Native Americans, the federal government only granted citizenship to those who were deemed assimilated and cooperative in the postbellum era. Given the decimation of native populations through removal, disease, war, starvation, and extermination, this did not produce a large number of

Native American citizens. Those who did obtain formal citizenship still found themselves unable to claim the same legal rights as white citizens. Even progressive reformers and federal officials who had championed assimilation policies began, by the early twentieth century, to deem Indians racially unsuitable for full citizenship. In 1909, the Supreme Court confirmed a lesser form of citizenship for Native Americans, declaring that the federal government must continue to hold them in a form of wardship.¹⁹

During the same period, African Americans saw their legal rights dramatically curtailed. After the heyday of racial liberalism during Radical Reconstruction, the federal government rapidly retreated from protecting black civil rights. Notably, white violence drove this racial retrenchment in the South. In the 1890s, white vigilantes launched a lethal campaign of racial terror. This vigilantism, like that against the Chinese, was a form of violent racial politics. Through assaults on black communities, southern white supremacists fought to subordinate African American citizens and to assert their own political power. Besieged by violent racial politics, the federal government sought to appease the white vigilantes. For Chinese in the West, federal acquiescence to white violence meant exclusion and the extension of federal power. For African Americans in the South, appeasement entailed federal retreat and tacit endorsement of Jim Crow. Immediately after the Civil War, the federal government had demonstrated the power to suppress white violence, but after a few years it lost its resolve. Instead, Congress began to acquiesce to local demands for black subordination and Chinese exclusion.²⁰

Starting in the 1890s, southern states systematically legislated against black enfranchisement using onerous registration requirements, poll taxes, and literacy tests. Some of these tactics were also employed to diminish Native American and Mexican American enfranchisement, even though the latter group could claim both formal citizenship and legal whiteness. For African Americans, local and state governments in the former Confederacy went a step further and legally proscribed access to public accommodations. Though African Americans retained formal citizenship, the Supreme Court relegated them to second-class status by condoning disenfranchisement and segregation through Jim Crow laws.²¹ While the Chinese primarily met regimes of exclusion at the border, other racial minorities faced structures of subordination in daily life.²²

At the opening of the twentieth century, the full significance of alienage and citizenship remained unclear. Deep fissures within each category continued to obscure the gulf between them. Inside the nation, the federal government had sketched the legal outlines of a universal rights-bearing citizen. But the power of this egalitarian vision was wholly undermined by a lack of execution. At the nation's edges, the state had laid the legal and bureaucratic foundation for a massive national gate. But the power of this exclusionary vision was still checked by limited desire and uneven enforcement. The interior of the nation was not as soft as it should have been; the exterior was not as hard as it could become. While the American concept of citizenship represented an unrealized dream of equality, the legal structures of alienage contained the persistent threat of tyranny.

Despite the dramatic events of the intervening century, these fundamentals continue to define America today.

APPENDIXES

ABBREVIATIONS

NOTES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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APPENDIX A

Sites of Anti-Chinese Expulsions and Attempted Expulsions, 1885–1887

State/Territory	Town/City	County	No. Killed
Alaska	Douglas Island Mines (Juneau)	Juneau	2
California	Alameda	Alameda	
California	Anderson	Shasta	
California	Aptos	Santa Cruz	
California	Arbuckle	Colusa	
California	Arcata	Humboldt	
California	Arroyo Grande	San Luis Obispo	
California	Auburn	Placer	
California	Bald Hill (near Orick)	Humboldt	
California	Bangor	Butte	
California	Bloomfield	Sonoma	
California	Boulder Creek	Santa Cruz	
California	Brentwood	Contra Costa	
California	Bully Choop (near Igo)	Shasta	
California	Calistoga	Napa	
California	Castroville	Monterey	
California	Cherokee	Butte	
California	Chico	Butte	
California	Churn Creek (near Redding)	Shasta	
California	Cloverdale	Sonoma	
California	Coloma	El Dorado	
California	Colusa	Colusa	
California	Corning	Tehama	
California	Crescent City	Del Norte	
California	Cutting (near Ferndale)	Humboldt	
California	Daggett	San Bernardino	
California	Dixon	Solano	
California	Duncans Mills	Sonoma	
California	Dutch Flat	Placer	

(continued)

(continued)

State/Territory	Town/City	County	No. Killed
California	Elk Grove	Sacramento	
California	Emigrant Gap	Placer	
California	Eureka	Humboldt	
California	Ferndale	Humboldt	
California	Florin	Sacramento	
California	Folsom	Sacramento	
California	Forest Hill (Foresthill)	Placer	
California	Forestville	Sonoma	
California	Fort Bragg	Mendocino	
California	Fresno	Fresno	
California	Garberville	Humboldt	
California	Georgetown	El Dorado	
California	Germantown (Artois)	Glenn	
California	Gold Gulch (Coarsegold)	Madera	
California	Gold Run	Placer	
California	Grass Valley	Nevada	
California	Gridley	Butte	
California	Half Moon Bay	San Mateo	
California	Healdsburg	Sonoma	
California	Hollister	San Benito	
California	Knights Landing	Yolo	
California	Lincoln	Placer	
California	Livermore	Alameda	
California	Lockeford	San Joaquin	
California	Lodi	San Joaquin	
California	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	
California	Magalia	Butte	
California	Martinez	Contra Costa	
California	Marysville	Yuba	
California	Merced	Merced	
California	Michigan Bluff	Placer	
California	Millville (near Redding)	Shasta	
California	Modesto	Stanislaus	
California	Mount Pleasant (near La Porte)	Plumas	
California	Mountain View	Santa Clara	
California	Napa	Napa	
California	Nevada City	Nevada	
California	Nicolaus	Sutter	
California	North San Juan	Nevada	
California	Oakland	Alameda	
California	Orland	Glenn	
California	Pasadena	Los Angeles	
California	Pennington	Sutter	

State/Territory	Town/City	County	No. Killed
California	Penryn	Placer	
California	Pentz	Butte	
California	Petaluma	Sonoma	
California	Placerville	El Dorado	
California	Pleasanton	Alameda	
California	Quincy	Plumas	
California	Red Bluff	Tehama	
California	Redding	Shasta	
California	Rio Dell	Humboldt	
California	Rocklin	Placer	
California	Rohnerville (near Fortuna)	Humboldt	
California	Sacramento	Sacramento	
California	San Andreas	Calaveras	
California	San Buenaventura (Ventura)	Ventura	
California	San Francisco	San Francisco	
California	San Jose	Santa Clara	
California	San Leandro	Alameda	
California	San Lorenzo	Alameda	
California	San Pablo	Contra Costa	
California	San Rafael	Marin	
California	Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara	
California	Santa Clara	Santa Clara	
California	Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz	
California	Santa Rosa	Sonoma	
California	Sawyer's Bar	Siskiyou	
California	Sheridan	Placer	
California	Shingle Springs	El Dorado	
California	Sierraville	Nevada	
California	Sonoma	Sonoma	
California	Sonora	Tuolumne	
California	Spanishtown (Yankee Hill)	Butte	
California	Springville	Tulare	
California	St. Helena	Napa	
California	Stockton	San Joaquin	
California	Susanville	Lassen	
California	Tehama	Tehama	
California	Temescal (near Corona)	Riverside	
California	Tiburon	Marin	
California	Todd's Valley (Todd Valley)	Placer	
California	Traner	[unknown]	
California	Truckee	Nevada	
California	Tulare	Tulare	
California	Ukiah	Mendocino	

(continued)

(continued)

State/Territory	Town/City	County	No. Killed
California	Vallejo	Solano	
California	Visalia	San Joaquin	
California	Walnut Creek	Contra Costa	
California	Westport	Mendocino	
California	Wheatland	Yuba	
California	Woodland	Yolo	
California	Yankee Jims	Placer	
California	Yreka	Siskiyou	5
California	Yuba	Sutter	
Hawai'i*	Honolulu	n/a	
Idaho	Boise City	Ada	
Idaho	Broadford (Bellevue)	Blaine	
Idaho	Hailey	Blaine	
Idaho	Pierce	Clearwater	5
Idaho	Snake River Canyon	Twin Falls	
Montana	Anaconda	Deer Lodge	5
Montana	Butte	Butte	
Nevada	Carson (City)	Ormsby	
New Mexico	Raton	Colfax	
New Mexico	Silver City	Grant	
Oregon	Albina (near Portland)	Multnomah	
Oregon	Aurora	Marion	
Oregon	Canyon City	Grant	
Oregon	Enterprise	Wallowa	
Oregon	Hells Canyon Snake River	Wallowa	34
Oregon	Jacksonville	Jackson	
Oregon	LaGrand (La Grande)	Union	
Oregon	Mt. Tabor (near Portland)	Multnomah	
Oregon	Newberg	Yamhill	
Oregon	Oregon City	Clackamas	
Oregon	Portland	Multnomah	
Washington	Anacortes	Skagit	
Washington	Black Diamond	King	
Washington	Carbonado	Pierce	
Washington	Coal Creek Mines (Newcastle)	King	
Washington	Everett	Snohomish	
Washington	Franklin Mines (Black Diamond)	King	
Washington	New Castle Mines (Newcastle)	King	
Washington	Olympia	Thurston	
Washington	Port Townsend	Jefferson	1
Washington	Puyallup	Pierce	
Washington	Renton	King	

State / Territory	Town / City	County	No. Killed
Washington	Seattle	King	
Washington	Sehome (Bellingham)	Whatcom	
Washington	Snohomish	Snohomish	
Washington	Squak Valley (Issaquah)	King	3
Washington	Tacoma	Pierce	2
Washington	Vancouver	Clark	
Wyoming	Almy	Uinta	
Wyoming	Carbon (near Rawlins)	Carbon	
Wyoming	Cheyenne	Laramie	
Wyoming	Evanston	Uinta	
Wyoming	Green River	Sweetwater	
Wyoming	Rock Springs	Sweetwater	28

*Hawai'i was not a U.S. territory until 1898.

This list includes sites of anti-Chinese expulsions or attempted expulsions. As discussed in the main text, these expulsions included a host of tactics, including harassment, intimidation, bombing, arson, assault, roundup, murder, and lynching. I have not notated the particular form of expulsion here, because tactics were often used in combination and the nature of the sources make simple categorization problematic. Because many of these locations experienced more than one incident between 1885 and 1887, I have not included specific dates. This list is not exhaustive; it represents an undercount of the number of Chinese deaths and sites of expulsions.

Compiled by the author from the following sources: Liping Zhu, *A Chinaman's Chance: The Chinese on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1997), 171; Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007), 256–290; Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (Boston: Twayne, 1991), 51; *NYT*, March 1, 1886; John Wunder, “Anti-Chinese Violence in the American West, 1850–1910,” in *Law for the Elephant, Law for the Beaver: Essays in the Legal History of the North American West*, ed. John McLaren, Hamar Foster, and Chet Orloff (Pasadena, CA: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1992), 214–231; Patrick Joseph Healy, Poon Chew Ng, *A Statement for Non-Exclusion* (San Francisco, 1905), 224–244; Bennet Bronson and Chuimei Ho, *Coming Home in Gold Brocade: Chinese in Early Northwest America* (Seattle: Chinese in Northwest America Research Committee, 2015); Mary Gaylord, *Eastern Washington's Past: Chinese and Other Pioneers 1860–1910* ([Portland, OR]: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1993), 66, 84–85; R. Gregory Nokes, *Massacred for Gold: The Chinese in Hells Canyon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2009); *NYT*, September 23, 1885, February 12, March 1, 2, April 12, September 19, 1886; *Daily Miner*, April 17, 1885; *Chicago Tribune*, March 6, 1886; *SFCH*, July 25, 1886; “Newspaper Clippings,” box 7 and 8, SCP.

APPENDIX B

Chinese Immigration to the United States, 1850–1904

Year	No. of Exempt Classes	No. of Returning Laborers to S.F.	Total No. of Alien Entries
1850	n/a	n/a	450
1851	n/a	n/a	2,716
1852	n/a	n/a	20,026
1853	n/a	n/a	4,270
1854	n/a	n/a	16,084
1855	n/a	n/a	3,329
1856	n/a	n/a	4,807
1857	n/a	n/a	5,924
1858	n/a	n/a	5,427
1859	n/a	n/a	3,175
1860	n/a	n/a	7,343
1861	n/a	n/a	8,434
1862	n/a	n/a	8,188
1863	n/a	n/a	6,435
1864	n/a	n/a	2,696
1865	n/a	n/a	3,097
1866	n/a	n/a	2,242
1867	n/a	n/a	4,794
1868	n/a	n/a	11,085
1869	n/a	n/a	14,994
1870	n/a	n/a	10,869
1871	n/a	n/a	5,542
1872	n/a	n/a	9,773
1873	n/a	n/a	20,291
1874	n/a	n/a	13,776
1875	n/a	n/a	16,437
1876	n/a	n/a	22,781
1877	n/a	n/a	10,594
1878	n/a	n/a	8,992
1879	n/a	n/a	9,604

(continued)

Year	No. of Exempt Classes	No. of Returning Laborers to S.F.	Total No. of Alien Entries
1880	n/a	n/a	5,802
1881	n/a	n/a	11,890
1882	n/a	n/a	39,579
1883	8,031	644	8,675
1884	279	4,900	5,179
1885	22	6,410	6,432
1886	40	7,704	7,744
1887	10	11,162	11,172
1888	26	12,816	12,842
1889	118	9,062	9,180
1890	1,716	0	1,716
1891	2,836	0	2,836
1892	2,728	0	2,728
1893	2,828	0	2,828
1894	5,599	0	5,599
1895	2,075	0	2,075
1896	3,510	106	3,616
1897	5,478	1,039	6,517
1898	5,698	1,497	7,195
1899	3,925	1,793	5,718
1900	3,802	1,997	5,799
1901	1,784	2,280	4,064
1902	1,237	2,495	3,768
1903	1,523	1,459	2,982
1904	1,284	1,392	2,676

For the period of restriction, these totals include Chinese “immigrants” from all ports and “return” immigrants from San Francisco only, so this is an undercount. During all periods, admission numbers include Chinese who entered the United States multiple times and do not include Chinese who immigrated undetected across the U.S.-Canadian or U.S.-Mexican borders or those who entered while “in transit” elsewhere. For all years where there are inconsistent federal and state statistics, I have used the largest numbers reported. Chinese immigrated to the United States before 1850, but only in small numbers. Annual totals were counted in June of each year, with the exception of 1882 when totals were tabulated on August 4 as the Restriction Act went into effect. The year 1889 has been included in the Restriction Period because the vast majority of immigrants that year arrived before the 1888 Exclusion Act went into effect. From 1883 to 1904, totals do not include “in transit” Chinese.

Compiled by the author from the following sources: For the years from 1851 to 1882, see Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909), 498. For the years from 1883 to 1891, see Treasury Department, “Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury . . . statement of arrivals of Chinese at the port of San Francisco,” 51st Cong., 1st sess., Ex. Doc. 97 (April 12, 1890) and Commissioner-General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1903), 34–37, 110–111. For 1892, see Bureau of Statistics, *Annual Report and Statements of the Chief of the Bureau of Statistics on the Foreign Commerce, Navigation, Immigration and Tonnage of the U.S. for the year ending June 30, 1892*, 52d Cong., 2d Sess., 3102 Ex. Doc. 6 (November 29, 1892). For 1893, see Treasury Department, *Immigration and Passenger Movement at Ports of the United States during the year ending June 30, 1894*, 53rd Cong., 3rd Sess., 3317 H.R. Ex. Doc. 6 (January 2, 1895). For the years from 1894 to 1904, see William Williams, *Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration*, 58th Cong., 3rd sess., H.R. Doc. No. 404 (1904), Chart 2.

ABBREVIATIONS

NEWSPAPERS

DAC	<i>Daily Alta California</i>
LAH	<i>Los Angeles Herald</i>
LAT	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>
MDA	<i>Marysville Daily Appeal</i>
NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
SDC	<i>Seattle Daily Call</i>
SDRU	<i>Sacramento Daily Record-Union</i>
SFCA	<i>San Francisco Daily Call</i>
SFCH	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>
SPI	<i>Seattle Post-Intelligencer</i>
TDL	<i>Tacoma Daily Ledger</i>
TR	<i>Truckee Republican</i>

GOVERNMENT RECORDS

ARCGI	<i>Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration</i> , 58th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. No. 758 (1903)
RGWT	Watson C. Squire, "Report of the Governor of Washington Territory, made to the Secretary of the Interior" (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1886)
RJSCCI	<i>Report of the Joint Special Committee to Investigate Chinese Immigration. February 28, 1877</i> (New York: Arno, 1978)
USC/CA	United States Census, California
USC/WA	United States Census, Washington State

USC/WT	United States Census, Washington Territory
USCS/ALB	A. L. Blake Diaries, Records of the U.S. Customs Service, RG36, National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA
USCS/CM	Re: Chinese Matters, Records of the U.S. Customs Service, RG36, National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA
USCS/IE	Immigration Entry 134 transferred from the U.S. Customs Service, RG85, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC
USCS/RDC	Reports of Deputy Collectors and Inspectors, Osooyos, Fort Colville, Sehome and Seattle, 1882–1885, Records of the U.S. Customs Service, RG36, National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA
USCS/SJS	San Juan Islands Subport, Records of the U.S. Customs Service, RG36, National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA
USDS/DCO	Despatches from U.S. Consular Offices, Canton, China, 1790–1906, M101, General Records of the Department of State, RG59, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC
USDS/DDO	Despatches from Diplomatic Offices, China, 1789–1906, M92, General Records of the Department of State, RG59, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC
USDS/ML	Miscellaneous Letters of the Department of State, 1789–1906, M179, roll 707, General Records of the Department of State, RG59, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC
WSA/TDC	Territorial District Court, Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Regional Branch, Bellevue, WA

INSTITUTIONAL AND PERSONAL PAPERS

SCP	Sucheng Chan Papers, Immigration History Research Center Archives, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
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SRR	Survey of Race Relations, Hoover Institute, Stanford University, CA
TB	Thomas Burke Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington, Seattle
WCS	Watson C. Squire Papers, Special Collections, University of Washington, Seattle
WJ/CGH	Willard Jue Papers, Chin Gee Hee Subgroup, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle
ZS	Zhu Shijia, <i>Meiguo pohai hua gong shiliao</i> [Historical Materials Concerning America's Persecution of Chinese Laborers] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1958)

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the book, I use romanized versions of Chinese names as they appear in the original sources. Since nineteenth-century romanization was haphazard, contemporary spellings of the same name can vary considerably. When this occurs, I use the most common version. Typically, Chinese surnames precede proper names. When it is difficult to determine a Chinese surname, I employ the name in its entirety throughout the text. To this general rule I make one exception. When writing about prominent individuals or place names, I use the more recent and standardized Pinyin romanization system. In these instances, I note the nineteenth-century romanization at first mention in the text.

1. Tak [Tuck] Nam, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma," Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard and Secretary of the Interior (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML. [Comma inserted by the author for clarity.]
2. This count refers to the number of sites of anti-Chinese violence, not the number of individual incidents. Most locations experienced multiple incidents. This list, which is not exhaustive, was compiled based on "Newspaper Clippings," box 7 and 8, SCP; Liping Zhu, *A Chinaman's Chance: The Chinese on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1997), 171; Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007), 256–290; Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (Boston: Twayne, 1991), 51; *NYT*, March 1, 1886; John Wunder, "Anti-Chinese Violence in the American West, 1850–1910," in *Law for the Elephant, Law for the Beaver: Essays in the Legal History of the North American West*, ed. John McLaren, Hamar Foster, and Chet Orloff

- (Pasadena, CA: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1992), 214–231; Patrick Joseph Healy and Poon Chew Ng, *A Statement for Non-Exclusion* (San Francisco, 1905), 224–244; Bennet Bronson and Chuimei Ho, *Coming Home in Gold Brocade: Chinese in Early Northwest America* (Seattle, WA: Chinese in Northwest America Research Committee, 2015); and digital searches of the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Los Angeles Herald*, *Marysville Daily Appeal*, *Daily Alta California*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *San Francisco Call*.
3. Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2011); Andrew Bell-Fialkoff, *Ethnic Cleansing* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996); Donald L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
 4. Richard Maxwell Brown, *Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); Christopher Waldrep, *The Many Faces of Judge Lynch: Extralegal Violence and Punishment in America* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002); Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society, 1874–1947* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016); Karl Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008).
 5. For the treatment of Asian American history in U.S. textbooks, see Okiyoshi Takeda, “A Forgotten Minority? A Content Analysis of Asian Pacific Americans in Introductory American Government Textbooks,” *Ps-Political Science & Politics* 48, no. 3 (2015): 430–439. On the “forgotten” anti-Chinese violence, see Pfaelzer, *Driven Out*, xxiv–xxix. Anti-Mexican and anti-Mormon violence in the United States is also often overlooked; see William D. Carrigan and Clive Webb, *Forgotten Dead: Mob Violence against Mexicans in the United States, 1848–1928* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) and Patrick Q. Mason, *The Mormon Menace: Violence and Anti-Mormonism in the Postbellum South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
 6. For the Chinese population, see Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909), 498–504. Mary Gaylord, *Eastern Washington's Past: Chinese and Other Pioneers 1860–1910* ([Washington, D.C.]: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1993), 66, 84–85; R.

- Gregory Nokes, *Massacred for Gold: The Chinese in Hells Canyon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2009); *NYT*, September 23, 1885; *Daily Miner*, April 17, 1885; *Chicago Tribune*, March 6, 1886; Stewart E. Tolnay and E. M. Beck, *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 48–50, 269; Madley, *An American Genocide*, 375–480; John Mack Faragher, *Eternity Street: Violence and Justice in Frontier Los Angeles* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2016), 463–480; *LAT*, July 12, 1887; Richard Steven Street, *Beasts of the Field: A Narrative History of California Farmworkers, 1769–1913* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 358.
7. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 500; USC/WT 1885, 1887; *DAC*, February 13, 1886; Larry Hosley, interview with the author, February 22, 2009, Tacoma, WA.
 8. The only federal restrictions on immigration before 1875 were the Alien Enemies and Alien Friends Acts of 1789; an 1803 act prohibiting the importation into select states of “any negro, mulatto, or other person of colour, not being a native, a citizen, or registered seaman, of the United States, or seamen, natives of countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope” and various regulations of the slave trade. “An Act respecting alien enemies,” (Alien Enemies Act) chap. 66, 1 Stat. 570 (July 6, 1798); “An Act concerning aliens,” (Alien Friends Act), chap. 58, 1 Stat. 577 (June 25, 1798); “An Act to prevent the importation of certain persons into certain states, where, by the laws thereof, their admission is prohibited,” chap. 10, 2 Stat. 205 (February 28, 1803); “An Act to prohibit the importation of slaves,” chap. 22, 2 Stat. 426 (March 2, 1807). Hidetaka Hirota, *Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard States and the 19th-Century Origins of American Immigration Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Brendan P. O’Malley, “Protecting the Stranger: The Origins of U.S. Immigration Regulation in Nineteenth-Century New York” (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2015); Kunal M. Parker, *Making Foreigners: Immigration and Citizenship Law in America, 1600–2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); David Scott FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 168–175.
 9. James Wickersham to Herbert Hunt, April 21, 1916, folder 6, Wickersham Collection, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma.

10. Elliott West, “Reconstructing Race,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 7–26; Najia Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans, and Racial Anxiety in the United States, 1848–82* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Richard White, “Race Relations in the American West,” *American Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (1986): 396–416; Desmond S. King and Rogers M. Smith, “Racial Orders in American Political Development,” *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 1 (February 2005): 75–92; D. Michael Bottoms, *An Aristocracy of Color: Race and Reconstruction in California and the West, 1850–1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013); Joshua Paddison, *American Heathens: Religion, Race and Reconstruction in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Edlie L. Wong, *Racial Reconstruction: Black Inclusion, Chinese Exclusion, and the Fictions of Citizenship* (New York: New York University Press, 2015); Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).
11. Gordon H. Chang, “China and the Pursuit of America’s Destiny: Nineteenth-Century Imaginings and Why Immigration Restriction Took So Long,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 15, no. 2 (June 2012): 145–169.
12. For this purpose, the U.S. West includes California, Oregon, Washington Territory, Idaho Territory, Nevada, Utah Territory, Arizona Territory, New Mexico Territory, Colorado, Wyoming Territory, and Montana Territory. California, Oregon, and Washington had the largest number of Chinese, a combined 83 percent of the Chinese population. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 501.
13. Tak [Tuck] Nam, “Affidavit,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
14. On violence in politics, see Steven Hahn, *A Nation under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 266; Gregory P. Downs and Kate Masur, eds. *The World the Civil War Made* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 1–17. On territorial status, see Jack Ericson Eblen, *The First and Second United States Empires, 1784–1912* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968); Earl S. Pomeroy, *The Territories and the United States, 1861–1890: Studies in Colonial Administration* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1947).

15. "Alien, *adj.* and *n.*" OED Online, accessed March 2017, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/4988?rskey=hGViDP&result=1&isAdvanced=false>. Historians have been more attentive to the formal and social status of citizens than to noncitizens. For the U.S. citizen, see James H. Kettner, *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608–1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978); Rogers M. Smith, *Civil Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in American History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); William J. Novak, "The Legal Transformation of Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century America," in *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History*, ed. Meg Jacobs, William J. Novak, and Julian E. Zelizer (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 85–119; Barbara Young Welke, *Law and the Borders of Belonging in the Long Nineteenth Century United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009). On the alien and noncitizen, see Linda Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien: Dilemmas of Contemporary Membership* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Sarah H. Cleveland, "Powers Inherent in Sovereignty: Indians, Aliens, Territories and the Nineteenth Century Origins of Plenary Power over Foreign Affairs," *Texas Law Review* 81, no. 1 (2002): 1–284; Parker, *Making Foreigners*; Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), xix–xx.
16. For cultural studies scholarship on Chinese foreignness and alienage, see Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); Robert G. Lee, *Orientalisms: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999); Edlie L. Wong, *Racial Reconstruction: Black Inclusion, Chinese Exclusion and the Fictions of Citizenship* (New York: New York University Press, 2015).
17. This represents a conservative estimate of the number displaced, based on the number of out-migrants from San Francisco, the population drop in King and Pierce Counties, and the estimated number of displaced Chinese who arrived in San Francisco. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 500; USC/WT 1885, 1887; DAC, February 13, 1886. Estimated Chinese living in counties based on the 1880 federal census. 1880 U.S. Census, Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 6.0* [machine-readable database] (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2015).

18. Today, we remember the 1882 law as the “Chinese Exclusion Act,” but this is an anachronism. Contemporaries referred to the legislation as the “Chinese Restriction Act,” reserving the stronger term “exclusion” for its successors in 1888, 1892, 1902, and 1904. For the nineteenth-century use of “restriction,” see C. S. Fairchild to Acting Collector of Customs, January 30, 1889, file 3, box 14, Letters Received from the Department of Treasury Customs Service, Puget Sound Collection District Letters, U.S. Customs Service, RG 36, NA; Cong. Rec., 50th Cong., 2d Sess. 56 (1888) at 412. For the current use of “exclusion,” see major Asian American textbooks: Ronald T. Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998), 111; Chan, *Asian Americans*, 54; Erika Lee, *The Making of Asian America: A History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015), 94. The actual name of the legislation was “An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to the Chinese,” ch. 126, 22 Stat. 58 (May 6, 1882). Several historians have recognized that contemporaries drew a rhetorical distinction between “restriction” and “exclusion.” Paul A. Kramer, “Imperial Openings: Civilization, Exemption, and the Geopolitics of Mobility in the History of Chinese Exclusion, 1868–1910,” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 14, no. 3 (July 2015): 322; Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer, *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1939), 96–108. In his study of the legal enforcement of Chinese Exclusion, Charles McClain follows a similar periodization. He divides federal Exclusion Act litigation into two phases: 1882–1885 and 1888–1894. Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 147–172, 191–219. For further discussion, see Beth Lew-Williams, “Before Restriction Became Exclusion: America’s Experiment in Diplomatic Immigration Control,” *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 1 (February 2014): 24–56.
19. Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America through Immigration Policy, 1850–1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 17–42.
20. Pew Research Center: Social and Demographic Trends, Pew Research Center, accessed December 2012, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/06/19/the-rise-of-asian-americans/>.
21. For example, Erika Lee, *At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 9–12; Adam M. McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and*

- the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008). Some of these arrivals represent multiple trips by the same individuals.
22. On the post–Civil War transformation of U.S. citizenship, see Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), 107; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 237, 582; Novak, “The Legal Transformation of Citizenship,” 93, 106; Cathleen D. Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service, 1869–1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 18–20, 26–29; Downs and Masur, *The World the Civil War Made*, 8. Mexican Americans had already been granted citizenship based on the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
 23. For local histories of expulsion, see Scott Zesch, *The Chinatown War: Chinese Los Angeles and the Massacre of 1871* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Craig Storti, *Incident at Bitter Creek: The Story of the Rock Springs Chinese Massacre* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991); Jeffrey Alan Dettmann, “Anti-Chinese Violence in the American Northwest: From Community Politics to International Diplomacy” (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 2002); Jules Alexander Karlin, “The Anti-Chinese Outbreaks in Seattle, 1885–1886,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1948): 103–130; Jules Alexander Karlin, “The Anti-Chinese Outbreak in Tacoma, 1885,” *Pacific Historical Review* 23, no. 3 (1954): 271–283; Lynwood Carranco, “Chinese Expulsion from Humboldt County,” *Pacific Historical Review* 30, no. 4 (1961): 329–340; Larry D. Quinn, “‘Chink Chink Chinaman’: The Beginning of Nativism in Montana,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (1967): 82–89. For national histories of exclusion, see Lee, *At America's Gates*; Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America*; Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws as Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995). For international histories of imperialism, see Michael H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 2nd rev. and enl. ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972); Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860–1898*, 35th anniversary ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998). Some histories have broken this pattern; see Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of

- California Press, 2012); Kramer, “Imperial Openings”; Delber L. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy 1900–1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977).
24. This method has much in common with the larger field of global history; see Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).
 25. On scale in historical scholarship, see Richard White, “The Naturalization of Nature,” *Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (1999): 973–986; Sebouth David Aslanian, Joyce E. Chaplin, Ann McGrath, and Kristin Mann, “AHR *Conversation*; How Size Matters: The Question of Scale in History,” *American Historical Review* 118, no. 5 (December 2013), 1431–1472; Bernhard Struck, Kate Ferris, and Jacques Revel, “Introduction: Space and Scale in Transnational History,” *International History Review* 33, no. 4 (December 2011), 573–584; Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 265–273; David Christian, “Scales,” in *Palgrave Advances in World Histories*, ed. M. Hughes-Warrington (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 64–89. See also Hayden White, “The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory,” *History and Theory* 23, no. 1 (1984): 1–33.
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 27. Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), 28–52.
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31. Cecil Cavanaugh, “The Hatch Mill, Pacific Avenue, as It Used to Be,” [Photograph and Caption] (1876), 1979.1.101, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma.
32. Carol Brash, “Classical Chinese Gardens in Twenty-first Century America: Cultivating the Past,” *ASIA Network Exchange: A Journal for Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts* 19, no. 1 (Fall 2011): 17–29.

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2. *SPI*, December 18, 19, 25, 1877.
3. *Ibid.*, December 18, 19, 1877.
4. *Ibid.*, December 25, 1877.
5. Huie Kin, *Reminiscences* (Peiping, China: San Yu Press, 1932), 28; Andrew Kan, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 22, 1924, box 27, no. 178, SRR; Law Yow, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 12, 1924, box 27, no. 191, SRR; Chin Chueng, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 21, 1924, box 27, no. 187, SRR; J. S. Look, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 13, 1924, box 27, no. 182, SRR. See also Long Dong, interview by C. H. Burnett, July 28, 1924, box 27, no. 171, SRR; Woo Gen, interview by C. H. Burnett, July 29, 1924, box 27, no. 183, SRR.
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 9. Kin, *Reminiscences*, 3–22. See also Judy Yung, Gordon H. Chang, and Him Mark Lai, *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 57–67.
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 57. *SDC*, October 2, 1885, September 26, 1885, October 3, 1885. John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987); Ronald T. Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998). The struggle to construct a unified working-class whiteness was one element that helps to explain the collective racial violence against the Chinese in the mid-1880s, but too often scholars of whiteness have implied that whiteness subsumes other categories of difference. On whiteness, see David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Peter Kolchin,

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74. White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own," 102, 320–323; for local examples, see *SDC*, October 27, 1885; *SDC*, October 24, 1885.
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81. *Pacific Appeal*, November 24, 1877, January 19, 1878; *SFCA*, November 10, 1877; *Daily Morning Call*, July 22, 1877.
82. Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*, 76, 83, 492.
83. *SPI*, October 2, 9, 10, 1876; *SPI*, January 24, 1877; *SPI*, March 19, 1877, July 26, 1877; *SPI*, December 1, 15, 24, 1877; *SPI*, January 12, 31 1878; *SPI*, June 7, 1878; *SPI*, May 1, 1880; *SPI*, May 29, 1882. Unfortunately, there is little scholarship on Chinese–Native American relations in the nineteenth century. It is clear that various Native American individuals and tribes participated in anti-Chinese violence, but there has been no systematic

- study to explain this pattern. See Daniel Liestman, "Inter-Ethnic Relations: Chinese and American Indians in the Nineteenth Century West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 327–349; Jordan Hua, "'They Looked Askance': American Indians and Chinese in the Nineteenth Century U.S. West" (honors thesis, Rutgers University, 2012); Cari M. Carpenter and K. Hyoejin Yoon, "Rethinking Alternative Contact in Native American and Chinese Encounters: Juxtaposition in Nineteenth-Century U.S. Newspapers," *College Literature* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 7–42. For Canada, see Renisa Mawani, *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871–1921* (Vancouver and Toronto: University of British Columbia Press, 2009). For theoretical approaches to this nascent study, see Jody A. Byrd, "Arriving on a Different Shore: U.S. Empire at Its Horizons," *College Literature* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 174–181.
84. Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*, 47–53.
 85. On the judicial invalidation of California statutes, see Hirota, *Expelling the Poor*, 88–91; Kurashige, *Two Faces of Exclusion*, 22.
 86. Miller, *Unwelcome Immigrant*, 71–74. For Oregon, see Margaret Holden, "The Rise and Fall of Oregon Populism: legal theory, political culture and public policy, 1868–1895" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1993), 202–218.
 87. For variations of the "California thesis," see Gary Y. Okihiro, *Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 73–99.
 88. 41st Cong. 2nd sess. Congressional Globe 5125 (1870). See also 41st Cong. 2nd Sess. Congressional Globe, 5156 (1870).
 89. 43rd Cong. 2nd sess. Congressional Record, appendix 44 (1875).
 90. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 71; Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy*, 23; "An Act supplementary to the acts in relation to immigration," (The Page Act) chap. 141, 18 Stat. 477 (March 3, 1875); Sucheng Chan, "The Exclusion of Chinese Women, 1870–1924," *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882–1943*, ed. Sucheng Chan (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 94–146.
 91. For the workings of the Page Law, see Elizabeth Sinn, *Pacific Crossing: California Gold, Chinese Migration, and the Making of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 248–249.
 92. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 90.

93. RJSCCI, 309, 364; *Chinese Immigration. The social, moral, and political effect of Chinese immigration. Testimony taken before a committee of the Senate of the state of California, appointed April 3d, 1876* (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1876), 8; Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 48, 109.
94. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 138–141.
95. *Ibid.*, 141; 46th Cong. 2d Sess. Misc. Doc. No. 5 *Investigation by a Select Committee of the House of Representatives relative to the Causes of General Depression in Labor and Business; and as to Chinese Immigration. Dec 10, 1879* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1879), 257; *DAC*, February 14, 1879.
96. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 140, 156, 161.
97. The division was largely regional: northeastern and Atlantic politicians, who represented regions deeply invested in the China Trade, often sided against restriction. Kurashige, *Two Faces of Exclusion*, 48–51.
98. Rutherford B. Hayes, *Hayes: The Diary of a President, 1875–1881, Covering the Disputed Election, the End of Reconstruction, and the Beginning of Civil Service*, ed. T. Harry Williams (New York: D. McKay, 1964), 187–189.
99. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 244–245; Hune, “The Politics of Exclusion,” 14–15.
100. Haiming Liu, “Chinese Exclusion Laws and the U.S.-China Relationship,” *Cal Poly Pomona Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 16 (Fall 2003): 153.
101. *The Statutes at Large of the United States of America, from December, 1881, to March, 1883, and Recent Treaties, Postal Conventions, and Executive Proclamations* (Washington, DC, 1883), 22: 826–827.
102. Miller, *Unwelcome Immigrant*, 92.
103. 13 Cong. Rec., 1974 (1882). See also 13 Cong. Rec., 1672, 1674, 1985 (1882).
104. Nathaniel Deering (R-Iowa) as cited by Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 236.
105. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 223–225; Louis A. Coolidge, *An Old-fashioned Senator: Orville H. Platt of Connecticut* (New York: Putnam, 1910), 154–156; Martin B. Gold, *Forbidden Citizens: Chinese Exclusion and the U.S. Congress: A Legislative History* (Alexandria, VA: TheCapitol.Net, 2012), 85–216.
106. 13 Cong. Rec., 1517, 1640, 1670, 1702, 1705, 1707, 1739, 2041, 2171 (1882).
107. Kurashige, *Two Faces of Exclusion*, 48–51.
108. 13 Cong. Rec., 2551–2552 (1882); Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 242–243.
109. 13 Cong. Rec., appendix 127, 2608 (1882).
110. *Ibid.*; 13 Cong. Rec., 2551–2552 (1882); *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines “restriction” as “a limitation on action” or a “limiting condition or regulation,” and dates this meaning back to the fifteenth century. Starting in the sixteenth century, “exclusion” was understood to mean “shutting

from a place, a society, etc.” “restriction, *n.*” OED Online. Oxford University Press, accessed September 2012, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/164022?redirectedFrom=restriction> “exclusion, *n.*” OED Online. Oxford University Press, accessed September 2012, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/65828?redirectedFrom=exclusion>. Nineteenth-century Americans also used the contrasting terms “restriction” and “exclusion” when discussing liquor laws. For example, the Congregational Churches of Connecticut clarified, “Prohibition is restriction with totality added, or restriction carried to a point of exclusion.” *Minutes of the General Conference of the Congregational Churches of Connecticut at the . . . Annual Meeting* (Hartford, CT, 1886), 4:773–774.

111. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 245; *New York Tribune*, April 5, 1882.
112. 13 Cong. Rec., 2606 (1882).
113. *Ibid.*, 2609.
114. Historians have overlooked the significant difference between these two bills, calling them “virtually identical.” Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 250; *The Statutes at Large of the United States of America, from December, 1881 to March, 1883, and Recent Treaties, Postal Conventions, and Executive Proclamations* (Washington, DC, 1883), 22, 58–61. For diplomatic concessions for students, see Madeline Y. Hsu, *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril became the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 23–54.
115. In the House, ninety Republicans supported the bill and thirty-four opposed it. In the Senate, eleven Republicans supported the bill and fifteen opposed. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 251, 253; “An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese,” (the Chinese Restriction Act) chap. 126, 22 Stat. 58 (May 6, 1882).
116. 13 Cong. Rec., 1517–1516, 1640, 1670, 1702, 1705, 1707, 1739, 2041, 2171 (1882).
117. Beth Lew-Williams, “Before Restriction Became Exclusion: America’s Experiment in Diplomatic Immigration Control,” *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 1 (February 2014): 24–56. In 1882, there was no national consensus supporting Chinese exclusion, which is why previous scholars have struggled to explain how one emerged. See Okihiro, *Columbia Guide to Asian American History*, 73–99; Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 6–16.
118. 13 Cong. Rec., 2968 (1882); Chinese Immigration to accompany bill H.R. 5804, 47th Cong., H.R. Rep. No. 1017, pt. 2 (1882).

2 ■ EXPERIMENTS IN RESTRICTION

1. In the years immediately following 1882, Vancouver Island, which was just across the border in British Columbia, saw a record influx of Chinese migrants. Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 39. For the much more limited migration from Mexico during this period, see Patrick Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines: Border Enforcement and the Origins of Undocumented Immigration, 1882–1930* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 55. For later periods, see Elliott Young, *Alien Nation: Chinese Migration in the Americas from the Coolie Era through World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 176–179; Julia Maria Schiavone Camocho, *Chinese Mexicans: Transpacific Migration and the Search for a Homeland, 1910–1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Grace Pena Delgado, *Making the Chinese Mexican: Global Migration, Localism, and Exclusion in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012). A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, September 24, 1884, box 110, folder 2, USCS/RDC.
2. For the use of these federal statistics, see Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 44; Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America through Immigration Policy, 1850–1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 24, 47. For federal aggrandizement under “exclusion,” see Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 87–113.
3. Paul Kramer, “Imperial Openings: Civilization, Exemption, and the Geopolitics of Mobility in the History of Chinese Exclusion, 1868–1910,” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 14, no. 3 (2015): 317–347. Chang, *Pacific Connections*.
4. For border-making at the periphery, see Peter Sahlin, “The Nation in the Village: State-Building and Communal Struggles in the Catalan Borderland during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” *Journal of Modern History* 60, no. 2 (June 1988): 234–263.
5. Nicholas R. Parrillo, *Against the Profit Motive: The Salary Revolution in American Government, 1780–1940* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 360–362; William J. Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak’ American State,” *American Historical Review* 113, no. 3 (June 2008): 752–772.

6. Desmond King and Robert C. Lieberman, “Ironies of State Building: A Comparative Perspective on the American State,” *World Politics* 61, no. 3 (July 2009): 561–562. This phenomenon in immigration control has been observed more recently in the Minuteman Project along the U.S.-Mexican border. Leo R. Chavez, *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 1–2.
7. Andrew Wender Cohen, “Smuggling, Globalization, and America’s Outward State, 1870–1909,” *Journal of American History* 97, no. 2 (September 2010): 371–398; *Annual Report of the Register of the Treasury to the Secretary of the Treasury in the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1885* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1885), 88.
8. Kitty Calavita, “The Paradoxes of Race, Class, Identity, and ‘Passing’: Enforcing the Chinese Exclusion Acts, 1882–1910,” *Law and Social Inquiry* 25, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 1–40.
9. In 1884, Congress amended the act in order to clarify several points that had caused enforcement problems. The new legislation explicitly defined who was exempt from the law (including Chinese students, diplomats, and merchants), officially instituted the system of “return certificates” that was already in use, and extended restriction to people of Chinese ancestry regardless of their country of origin. “An act to amend an act entitled ‘An act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese,’” chap. 220, 23 Stat. 115 (July 5, 1884).
10. O. L. Spaulding to Charles Folger, December 3, 1883, box 9, USCS/IE; J. B. Houston to W. T. Trisdel, November 14, 1883, box 3, no. 5, USCS/IE. This practice followed a similar system regulating Chinese women under the Page Law; see Elizabeth Sinn, *Pacific Crossing: California Gold, Chinese Migration, and the Making of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 248–261.
11. The United States had previously issued “passports” or “passes” to regulate internal movement of free African Americans and whites journeying into Indian Territory. Some European migrants presented travel passports to U.S. customs officials prior to 1882, but these documents were not required for admission; see Craig Robertson, *The Passport in America: The History of a Document* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 14–16, 142, 171–178.
12. O. L. Spaulding to Charles Folger, December 3, 1883, box 9, USCS/IE.

13. H. N. Morse to Col. J. T. Evans, February 19, 1883, box 3 file 4, USCS/IE; Simon A. Cole, *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 152.
14. O. L. Spaulding to Charles Folger, December 3, 1883, box 9, USCS/IE.
15. William Morrow, "Representative Morrow's Letter to the Senate Committee Showing the Inefficiency of President Cleveland's Treaty" in *The Republican Campaign Text-Book for 1888* by George Francis Dawson (New York, 1888), 149–150.
16. Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909), 500; Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines*, 49.
17. Previous historians have based their estimates for 1883 through 1888 on the number of Chinese admitted to the United States as "immigrants" according to the Commissioner General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903* (Washington [DC]: Government Printing Office, 1903), 34–37, 110–111. For example, see Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America*, 47; Lee, *At America's Gates*, 43–44; Shih-Shah Henry Tsai, *The Chinese Experience in America* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986), 194. Although historians have included returning immigrants in their estimates of Chinese immigration in the 1890s, they have overlooked the Chinese admitted with return certificates during Chinese restriction. In contrast, I have derived an estimate of the total Chinese admitted by including Chinese who were admitted to the Port of San Francisco (other ports being unavailable) with return certificates. See Treasury Department, "Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury . . . statement of arrivals of Chinese at the Port of San Francisco," 51st Cong, 1st Sess., S. Doc. No. 97 (April 12, 1890). In order to determine the effectiveness of the Restriction Act, these return immigrants must be counted in the annual total number of Chinese arrivals. Since the vast majority of scholars have included return immigrants in estimates of annual Chinese migration before and after the Restriction Period, it is clear they should also be counted between 1883 and 1889. When measuring immigration of any other alien group, nineteenth-century officials and twentieth-century scholars have traditionally lumped together new and returning migrants. Moreover, statistics including both new and return migrants more accurately reflect the actual number of Chinese entering the United States. For the inclusion of returning Chinese during other periods see Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America*, 48;

- Lee, *At America's Gates*, 260n29. For the inclusion of returning non-Chinese aliens, see Commissioner General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903*. Returning citizens and a small number of “tourist” or “temporary” aliens were not counted in federal statistics, but otherwise officials failed to note whether European immigrants had been in the United States before or not.
18. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 498; Treasury Department, “Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury . . . Statement of Arrivals of Chinese at the Port of San Francisco,” 51st Cong., S. Doc. 97 (April 12, 1890) and Commissioner General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903*, 34–37, 110–111; Bureau of Statistics, “Annual Report and Statements of the Chief of the Bureau of Statistics on the Foreign Commerce, Navigation, Immigration and Tonnage of the U.S. for the Year Ending June 30, 1892,” 52nd Cong., 3102 H.R. Doc. 6 (November 29, 1892); Treasury Department, “Immigration and Passenger Movement at Ports of the United States during the Year Ending June 30, 1894,” 53rd Cong., 3317 H.R. Doc. 6 (January 2, 1895). Some contemporaries argued that the annual average of Chinese immigrants during the period of free migration should be calculated without including the unusual period between 1880 and 1882 when 45,952 Chinese rushed to enter America before the anticipated Restriction Act went into place. They view this migration as more the product of restriction than representative of free migration. Morrow, “Representative Morrow’s Letter to the Senate,” 150.
 19. Charles J. Folger, “Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting in compliance with Senate resolution of the 7th instant, copies of all papers relating to the subject of the extension of the Act of May 6, 1882, to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese,” 48th Cong., S. Doc. No. 62 (1883) at 8.
 20. *Ibid.*, at 38.
 21. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 498–500. On fraudulent entry of in-transit Chinese, see Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 143; William Morrow to Daniel Manning, March 18, 1886, box 4, USCS/IE.
 22. *The Chinese Merchant’s Case*, 7 Sawy. 546, 13 F. 605, 1882 U.S. App. LEXIS 2042 (C.C.D. Cal. 1882).

23. As quoted by Margaret Kolb Holden, “The Rise and Fall of Oregon Populism: Legal Theory, Political Culture and Public Policy 1868–1895” (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1993), 350–352. In the last quote, Deady is citing the opinion by Judge Ogden Hoffman in *re Low Yam Chow*. However, Deady has taken Hoffman’s quote out of context and imbued it with new meaning, since Hoffman himself appears to support the law. The Chinese Merchant’s Case, 7 Sawy. 546, 13 F. 605, 1882 U.S. App. LEXIS 2042 (C.C.D. Cal. 1882).
24. It is likely that many judges in the U.S. West shared Deady’s opinions. Focusing primarily on San Francisco and federal courts, historian Charles McClain found that between 1882 and 1885 the courts gave the legislation a “reasonable, even liberal interpretation” that took “some of the edge off the exclusion laws.” McClain primarily attributes these sympathetic rulings to judges’ belief “at some level” that they needed to protect minority groups against the excessive power of the majority. But judges were not only concerned about protecting Chinese migrants; they also wanted to preserve America’s interests in China. Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 171–172; Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).
25. In the years 1853, 1855, 1864, 1866, 1867, and 1880; see Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 498.
26. “Chinese Immigration,” 51st Cong., H.R. Rep. No. 4048 (March 2, 1891) at 494.
27. *SDC*, September 25, 1885; *TDL*, October 3, 1885; “Chinese Immigration,” at 67. For scholarly estimates, see Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines*, 49; Young, *Alien Nation*, 160–161; Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 135.
28. Sheila McManus, *The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), xii–xvi; Michiel Baud and Willem Van Schendel, “Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands,” *Journal of World History* 8 no. 2 (Fall 1997): 215–218.
29. A. W. Bash to Secretary of Treasury, August 23, 1882, box 3, file 7, USCS/IE.
30. Special Agent J. C. Horr to Secretary of the Treasury Charles Folger, November 4, 1882, box 3, file 6, USCS/IE; J. C. Horr to Col. J. F. Evans, May 6, 1883, box 3, file 3, USCS/IE.

31. J. C. Horr to Col. J F. Evans, May 6, 1883, box 3, file 3, USCS/IE.
32. Ibid.; Robert J. Stevens to James D. Porter, April 28, 1885, box 2, file 5, USCS/IE.
33. J. C. Horr to Folger, November 4, 1882, USCS/IE.
34. Ira B. Myers to A. W. Bash, July 24, 1883, box 109, file 4, USCS/SJS. A. W. Bash to Secretary of Treasury, July 11, 1883, box 9, USCS/IE.
35. C. L. Hooper to Watson Squire, October 15, 1884, box 2, Watson C. Squire Administration, Territorial Governors, Washington State Archives, Olympia, Washington.
36. A. W. Bash to Secretary of Treasury, July 11, 1883, USCS/IE.
37. A. W. Bash to William Windom, August 6, 1881, A. L. Blake file, Civilian Personnel Records, National Personal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri.
38. A. L. Blake, August 11, 1881, vol. 1, USCS/ALB.
39. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, May 5, 1883, box 109, file 3, USCS/SJS.
40. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, December 13, 1883, box 109, file 5, USCS/SJS.
41. A. W. Bash to Secretary of the Treasury, October 8, 1883, USCS/CM;
A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, November 27, 1883, box 109, file 5, USCS/SJS (emphasis in the original).
42. A. L. Blake, 25 November 1883, vol. 2, USCS/ALB; A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, November 27, 1883, box 109, file 5, USCS/SJS.
43. J. Melzett to A. W. Bash, October 9, 1883, box 109, file 4, USCS/SJS.
44. Blake, June 4, 1883, vol. 1, USCS/ALB.
45. Ibid; A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, September 28, 1884, box 110, file 2, USCS/RDC.
46. J. H. Price to A. W. Bash, July 2, 1883, box 109, file 4, USCS/SJS.
47. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, January 4, 1883, box 111, file 3, USCS/SJS.
48. For personal and mercantile relationships between Chinese and Native Americans, see Daniel Liestman, "Horizontal Inter-Ethnic Relations: Chinese and American Indians in the Nineteenth-Century West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 343–348; Jordan Hua, "'They Looked Askance': American Indians and Chinese in the Nineteenth Century U.S. West" (honors thesis, Rutgers University, 2012), 33–37, 44–45.
49. For example, see A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, May 5, 1883, box 109, file 3, USCS/SJS.
50. Also spelled Wah Chung or Wa Chung.
51. In pinyin, "Chen Yixi."
52. "Guide to the Willard Jue Papers," WJ/CGH; Kornel Chang, "Transpacific Borderlands and Boundaries: Race, Migration and State

- Formation in the North American Pacific Rim, 1882–1917” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2007), 110.
53. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, July 11, 1883, box 109, file 4, USCS/SJS.
 54. Ibid.
 55. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, September 1, 1882, box 111, file 2, USCS/SJS.
 56. A. L. Blake, September 20, 1884, vol. 4, USCS/ALB.
 57. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, November 13, 1883, USCS/SJS.
 58. A. W. Bash to A. L. Blake, December, 1883, vol. 1, USCS/CM.
 59. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, December 4, 1883, box 109, file 9, USCS/SJS.
 60. A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, February 13, 1884, box 110, file 1, USCS/RDC; A. L. Blake, April 24, 1884, vol. 4, USCS/ALB; A. A. Rodgers, Journals, Fees and Cashbooks, Chinese Bills, series 43, vol. 51, Bureau of Customs, Puget Sound Collection District, RG36, National Archives Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA.
 61. A. L. Blake, April 16, 1884, vol. 4, USCS/ALB; A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, November 28, 1883, box 109, file 5, USCS/SJS; Robert E. Ficken and Charles P. LeWarne, *Washington: A Centennial History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 191. Similar forms of community involvement in border control continued in Washington into the beginning of the twentieth century. Chang, “Transpacific Borderlands and Boundaries,” 125, 201.
 62. Americans sometimes referred to China as the “Celestial Empire” and Chinese as “Celestials.” J. C. Horr to Chas. J. Folger, November 24, 1883, box 3, file 1, USCS/IE; A. W. Bash to Charles J. Folger, January 11, 1884, Letters Sent to the Department of Treasury, box 37, file 2, Customs Service, Puget Sound Collection District Letters, RG36, National Archives Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA; C. B. Bash to A. W. Bash, August 9, 1883, box 109, file 4, USCS/SJS; A. W. Bash to Charles J. Folger, January 11, 1884, Letters Sent to the Department of Treasury, box 37, file 2, Customs Service, Puget Sound Collection District Letters, RG36, National Archives Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA.
 63. J. H. Price to A. W. Bash, August 1, 1883, box 109, file 4, USCS/SJS; A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, 7 May 1884, box 110, file 2, USCS/RDC.
 64. As David Gutiérrez found in the Mexican American community in the twentieth century, legal residents could see newcomers as threatening to their livelihoods and their fragile attempts to be accepted in the white community. David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 4, 151, 154.

65. "More about the Chinese," July 9, 1883, *Olympia Courier*, box 4, file 9 (unnumbered), USCS/IE; A. W. Bash to C. F. Clapp, July 7, 1883, vol. 1, USCS/CM.
66. U.S. v. The Steamer Eliza Anderson, case file no. 4691 (King County, 1885), WSA/TDC.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. Chang, *Pacific Connections*, 3, 148; Lee, *At America's Gates*, 175. Examining a later period, David C. Atkinson also finds this characterization overstates the cooperation; see David C. Atkinson, *The Burden of White Supremacy: Containing Asian Migration in the British Empire and the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 2.
71. Patricia E. Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858–1914* (British Columbia: University of British Columbia Press, 1990), 3, 4–8, 48. For the history of Chinese migrants in Canada, see Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Harry Con and Edgar Wickberg, *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982); Henry Yu, "Global Migrants and the New Pacific Canada," *International Journal* 64, no. 4 (Autumn 2009): 1011–1026; Henry Yu, "The Intermittent Rhythms of the Cantonese Pacific," in *Connecting Seas and Connected Ocean Rims: Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans and China Seas Migrations from the 1830s to the 1930s*, ed. Donna R. Gabaccia and Dirk Hoerder (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 393–414; Robert Edward Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, 1850–1910* (New York: Arno Press, 1978); David Dyzenhaus and Mayo Moran, *Calling Power to Account: Law, Reparations, and the Chinese Canadian Head Tax* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Peter S. Li, *The Chinese in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998).
72. Roy, *A White Man's Province*, 38.
73. Ibid., 55. It was customary for Chinese to send their skeletal remains back to China for second burial.
74. "An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to the Chinese," (Chinese Restriction Act), chap. 126, 22 Stat. 58 (May 6, 1882); Governor General's Office, April 22, 1885, T-842, Library and Archives of Canada, Ottawa; William Egerton Hodgins Correspondence, Reports of the Ministers of Justice and Orders in Council upon the Subject of

- Provincial Legislation, Canada Dept. of Justice, Published by MacLean, Roger, 1888 (original from Harvard University, digitized May 21, 2008), 288.
75. Draft letter, August 22, 1885, Governor General's Office, Microfilm T842, Library and Archives of Canada, Ottawa.
 76. U.S. v. The Steamer Eliza Anderson, case file no. 4691 (King County, 1885), WSA/TDC.
 77. H. F. Beecher to Secretary of the Treasury, telegram, August 30, 1885, box 1, file 5, USCS/IE; H. F. Beecher to the Secretary of the Treasury, telegram, September 1885, box 1, file 5, USCS/IE; Treasury Department to Collector of Port Townsend, draft telegram, n.d., box 1, file 5, USCS/IE.
 78. H. F. Beecher to D. Manning, September 1, 1885, A. L. Blake file, Civilian Personnel Records, National Personal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri.
 79. H. F. Beecher to D. Manning, June 30, 1885, Letters Sent to the Department of Treasury, box 37, file 2, Customs Service, Puget Sound Collection District Letters, RG36, National Archives Pacific Alaska Region, Seattle, WA.
 80. H. F. Beecher to D. Manning, September 23, 1885, box 4, USCS/IE.
 81. Secretary of the Treasury to the Attorney General, draft letter, October 1883, box 9, USCS/IE; Attorney General to the Secretary of the Treasury, October 10, 1885, box 4, USCS/IE.
 82. Secretary of the Treasury to the Collector of Customs at Port Townsend, draft letter, October 1885, box 4, USCS/IE.
 83. H. F. Beecher to C. S. Fairchild, July 7, 1887, box 9, USCS/IE.
 84. H. F. Beecher to D. Manning, September 23, 1885, box 4, USCS/IE.
 85. "Chinese Immigration," at 20, 28; C. H. Hanford to President Benjamin Harrison, June 18, 1889, enclosure in W. Hamley to W. G. Parmelee Esq., October 25, 1889, Privy Council Minutes December 17 to 28, 1889, RG2, Privy Council Office, series A-1-a. For Order in Council see vol. 552, reel C-3405.
 86. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 210; L. J. Sargeant to C. S. Fairchild, October 11, 1888, box 6, file 8, USCS/IE.
 87. The Supreme Court ruled indefinite detention of immigrants to be unconstitutional in 2001. *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678 (2001); Daniel Wilsher, *Immigration Detention: Law, History, Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); "Indefinite Detention of Immigrant Parolees: An Unconstitutional Condition?" *Harvard Law Review* 116, no. 6 (2003): 1868–1888.

88. H. F. Beecher to C. S. Fairchild, July 7, 1887, box 9, USCS/IE; Records of Prisoners Received at U.S. Penitentiary on McNeil Island, 1875–1892, vol. 1–3, RG 129, National Archives Pacific Branch, Seattle, WA. The numbers should be viewed as estimates only, because the precision of prison records vary greatly from year to year.
89. C. H. Hanford to President Benjamin Harrison, June 18, 1889, enclosure in W. Hamley to W. G. Parmelee Esq., October 25, 1889, Privy Council Minutes, December 17 to 28, 1889, RG2, Privy Council Office, series A-1-a. He is referring to the 1888 Exclusion Act. For Order in Council see vol. 552, Reel C-3405.
90. Ibid.; Letter to Stanley of Preston, September 10, 1889, RG7 G6, vol. 28, Library and Archive of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.
91. Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 2–3, 8; Kate Masur, “‘A Rare Phenomenon of Philological Vegetation’: The Word ‘Contraband’ and the Meanings of Emancipation in the United States,” *Journal of American History* 93, no. 4 (March 2007): 1050–1084.
92. For Chinese exclusion as a dramatic moment of state centralization, see Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 88, 113; Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 10; Stacy L. Smith, “Emancipating Peons, Excluding Coolies: Reconstructing Coercion in the American West,” in *The World the Civil War Made*, ed. Gregory P. Downs and Kate Masur (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 71.
93. Baud and Schendel, “Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands,” 217–218; McManus, *The Line Which Separates*, xviii.
94. Hidetaka Hirota, *Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard States and the 19th-Century Origins of American Immigration Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 180–204.
95. SDC, September 26, 1885.

3 ■ THE BANISHED

1. Territory vs. Wesley Dodson et al., case file no. 4635 (King County, 1886), WSA/TDC; Territory vs. Perry Bayne et al., case file no. 4600 (King County, 1886), WSA/TDC; Watson C. Squire, “Report of the Governor of Washington Territory, Made to the Secretary of the Interior” (Washington,

- DC: Government Printing Office, 1886), 42–54; Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
2. Territory vs. Wesley Dodson et al.; Territory vs. Perry Bayne et al.
 3. Previous histories of anti-Chinese violence in the Pacific Northwest focus on the anti-Chinese vigilantes or the militia. Carlos A. Schwantes, “From Anti-Chinese Agitation to Reform Politics: The Legacy of the Knights of Labor in Washington and the Pacific Northwest,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 88, no. 4 (Fall 1997): 174–184; Jules Alexander Karlin, “The Anti-Chinese Outbreak in Tacoma, 1885,” *Pacific Historical Review* 23, no. 3 (1954): 271–283; Robert Edward Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, 1850–1910* (New York: Arno, 1978); James A. Halseth and Bruce A. Glasrud, *The Northwest Mosaic: Minority Conflicts in Pacific Northwest History* (Boulder, CO: Pruett, 1977); Jeffrey Alan Dettmann, “Anti-Chinese Violence in the American Northwest: From Community Politics to International Diplomacy” (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 2002); George Kinnear, *Anti-Chinese Riots at Seattle [sic], Wn. February 8th, 1886* (Seattle, n.p., 1911); Clayton D. Laurie, “‘The Chinese Must Go’: The United States Army and the Anti-Chinese Riots in Washington Territory, 1885–1886,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (January 1990): 22–29; Rob Weir, “Blind in One Eye Only: Western and Eastern Knights of Labor View the Chinese Question,” *Labor History* 41, no. 4 (2000): 421–436; Roger Daniels, *Anti-Chinese Violence in North America* (New York: Arno, 1978); Robert Eugene Mack, “Seattle and Tacoma Anti-Chinese Riots of 1885 and 1886” (bachelor’s thesis, Harvard University, 1972); Howard H. Shuman, “The Rise of Seattle’s Newspapers in the Anti-Chinese Agitation of 1885–1886” (master’s thesis, University of Washington, 1968). For previous work on the Chinese response to violence, see Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007); Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 172–190; Liping Zhu, *A Chinaman’s Chance: The Chinese on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1997), 129–158; Xiaoyan Zhou, “Qing Perceptions of Anti-Chinese Violence in the United States: Case Studies from the American West” (master’s thesis, University of Wyoming, 2008).
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5. On Chinese merchant-contractors, see Mae M. Ngai, *The Lucky Ones: One Family and the Extraordinary Invention of Chinese America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010); Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada’s Exclusion Era, 1885–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 17–53.
 6. Here I am building on the concept of “scale jumping” as outlined by Neil Smith, “Contours of a Spatialized Politics: Homeless Vehicles and the Production of Geographic Scale,” *Social Text* 33 (1992): 54–81; Neil Brenner, “Beyond State-Centrism? Space, Territoriality, and Geographical Scale in Globalization Studies,” *Theory and Society* 28, no. 1 (1999): 39–78; Willem van Schendel, “Geographies of Knowing, Geographies of Ignorance: Jumping Scale in Southeast Asia,” *Environmental and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, no. 6 (2002): 647–668.
 7. Walter Johnson, “On Agency,” *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 1 (Autumn 2003): 113–124; James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).
 8. For example, see Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909).
 9. On relations between Chinese workers and merchant-contractors, see Todd Stevens, “Brokers between Worlds: Chinese Merchants and Legal Culture in the Pacific Northwest, 1852–1925” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2003), 145–147; Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900–1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 67–70, 78–80; Mar, *Brokering Belonging*, 55–57.
 10. Edward Wood, “In the Matter of Chinese Quarters at Coal Creek,” Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 11. Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*, 493–494; Herbert Hunt, *Tacoma: Its History and Its Builders A Half Century of Activity* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1916), 1:229–230; Robert E. Ficken,

- Washington Territory* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2002), 94, 105.
12. Kwok Sue, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma," in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 13. Ibid.
 14. F. A. Bee to Watson Squire, October 15, 1885, in *Report of the Governor of Washington Territory to the Secretary of the Interior, 1885*, by Watson C. Squire (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1885), app. 15–16; Edward W. Taylor, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma," in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 15. Taylor, "Affidavit"; Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 16.
 16. Tacoma (1885), Sanborn Map Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
 17. Barnabas McLafferty, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma," Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 18. N. W. Gow, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of Chinese from Tacoma," Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 19. Sue, "Affidavit."
 20. Watson Squire to Goon Gau, November 3, 1885, in Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 20.
 21. Lum May, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma," in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 22. Gow, "Affidavit."
 23. Tak Nam, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma," in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; Ouyang Ming, "Report to San Francisco Consul General by Board of Portland Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association," November 28, 1885, part 2, item 13, in ZS, 84–85.
 24. Gow, "Affidavit."
 25. Ming, "Report to San Francisco Consul General," 84–85; Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard and Secretary of the Interior (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; M. M. Kider, "Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of Chinese from Tacoma," in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard

- (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 12–33; Cheng Tsao Ju to the Department of State, April 5, 1886, *Notes from the Chinese Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1863–1906* (microfilm), vol. 2, no. 98, RG39 M98, Pacific Regional Branch of the National Archives, San Bruno, CA.
26. Although the U.S. government eventually granted China redress, it is unclear whether the Chinese merchants ever received any payment. Herbert Hunt to the Secretary of the Treasury, May 20, 1916, “Chinese in Tacoma,” box 1, file 3d, Washington Historical Society, Tacoma, WA; Gow, “Affidavit”; Sue, “Affidavit.”
 27. Willard G. Jue, “Chin Gee-Hee: Chinese Pioneer Entrepreneur in Seattle and Toishan,” *Annals of the Chinese Historical Society of the Northwest* (1983): 31–38; Willard G. Jue, “Chin Gee-Hee,” WJ/CGH; Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration Between the United States and South China, 1882–1943* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 156–175; Judy Yung, Gordon H. Chang, and H. Mark Lai, *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 125–128; Chang, *Pacific Connections*, 35–43; Stevens, “Brokers between Worlds,” 16–58; Beth Lew-Williams, “The Remarkable Life of a Sometimes Railroad Worker: Chin Gee Hee, 1844–1929,” in *The Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford*, ed. Gordon Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, forthcoming)
 28. Doug Chin, “How and Why the Chinese Associations Developed,” *International Examiner*, January 20, 1982; USC/WT 1880, 1885; Seattle 1885, Sanborn Map Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, accessed October 2014, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/>; Coll-Peter Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2007), 66–78.
 29. Owyang Ming to Cheng Tsao Ju, November 5, 1885, *Notes from the Chinese Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1863–1906* (microfilm), vol. 2, no. 98, RG39 M98, Pacific Regional Branch of the National Archives, San Bruno, CA.
 30. *Territory v. Chin Gee Hee*, case file no. 4694 (King County Court, 1885), WSA/TDC.
 31. SDC, November 5, 1885; Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*, 220, 237; Karlin, “The Anti-Chinese Outbreak in Tacoma,” 112;

- Granville O. Haller, “Diary,” November 5, 1885, box 4, vol. 2, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA.
32. Karlin, “The Anti-Chinese Outbreak in Tacoma,” 113; *SDC*, November 10, 1885; Chin Gee Hee, Account Book 1880–1901, WJ / CGH.
 33. Wood, “In the Matter of Chinese Quarters at Coal Creek”; Ouyang Ming to Chinese Consul at San Francisco, October 20, 1885, part 2, item 9, in *ZS*, 80–81.
 34. U.S. v. Daniel Cronin et al., case file no. 4702 (King County, 1885), WSA / TDC.
 35. Zheng Zaoru to Imperial Court, February 16, 1886, part 3, item 6, *ZS*, 111–112.
 36. Chang Yen Hoon to Thomas Bayard, Washington, March 3, 1888, doc. 254, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Part I*, ed. Jules Davids (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1979), 389–390; Zhang Yinhaun (Cheng Yen Hoon), *Sanzhou riji* [Diary of the Three Continents] 1896, entry for March 3, 1888.
 37. Chang Yen Hoon to the Chinese Legation, May 4, 1886, *Notes from the Chinese Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1863–1906* (microfilm), vol. 2, no. 98, RG39 M98, Pacific Regional Branch of the National Archives, San Bruno, CA. For similar petitions for protection from San Francisco, see Zhang Zhidong to Imperial Court, June 16, 1886, part 3, item 14, *ZS*, 115–119.
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 40. Kee Low, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 4, 1924, box 27, no. 179, *SRR*.
 41. *Ibid.*; Jules Alexander Karlin, “The Anti-Chinese Outbreaks in Seattle, 1885–1886,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (April 1948): 103–130;

- Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*, 260; SDC, February 8, 1886; Thomas Burke to Hon. H. F. Beecher, Collector, February 15, 1886, box 22, file 17, TB; Wan Lee, “*Writ of Habeas Corpus*,” case file no. 4819 (King County Court, 1886), WSA/TDC. Wan Lee himself eventually decided to leave the territory. Thomas Burke to H. F. Beecher, February 15, 1886, box 22, file 17, TB.
42. Kee Low, interview by C. H. Burnett; Arthur S. Beardsley, “Lawyers and Anti-Chinese Riots,” in *The Bench and Bar of Washington, The First Fifty Years, 1849–1900* (unpublished manuscript), box 1, file 37, Arthur S. Beardsley Collection, Washington State Historical Society, Olympia, WA; Karlin, “The Anti-Chinese Outbreaks in Seattle,” 119–121; Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*, 262.
 43. Kee Low, interview by C. H. Burnett.
 44. Ibid. “John” or “John Chinaman” was a common moniker for Chinese migrants.
 45. Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*.
 46. Chin Cheung, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 21, 1924, box 27, no. 187, SRR. For moments of worker resistance to expulsion, see Jeffrey Alan Dettmann, “Anti-Chinese Violence in the American Northwest: From Community Politics to International Diplomacy” (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 2002), 56–57, 128–129, 169.
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 49. Cheng Tsao Ju to Mr. Bayard, February 15, 1886, doc. 33, in Jules Davis, ed., *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China*, Series 2, *The United States, China, and Imperial Rivalries, 1861–1893* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1979), 12:174.
 50. Zhang Yinhuan (Chang Yin-haun) to Imperial Court, August 14, 1886, part 2, item 21, ZS, 94–96; Zhang Yinhuan to American Foreign Ministry, August 14, 1886, item 22, ZS, 96–98; “Regulations of Chinese Labor,” 1886, part 2, item 23, ZS, 98–99; Zhang Yinhuan to Imperial Court, memorial, May 18, 1888, part 3, item 22, ZS, 123–124.

4 ■ THE PEOPLE

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- Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007), 121–166; James Beith, “Diary,” February 8, 1885, vol. 7 (Banc film 3088), Bancroft Library, Berkeley, CA.
2. As quoted by *SDRU*, February 13, 1885; James Beith, “Diary,” vol. 7 (Banc film 3088) February 8, 1885.
 3. James Beith, “Diary,” vol. 7 (Banc film 3088), February 8, 1885, September 11, 1886.
 4. Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 20, 233–240; Paul R. Brass, ed., *Riots and Pogroms* (London: MacMillan, 1996), 42–44; Lisa Arellano, *Vigilantes and Lynch Mobs: Narratives of Community and Nation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012).
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 6. Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, 233; Neil Smith, “Contours of a Spatialized Politics: Homeless Vehicles and the Production of Geographic Scale,” *Social Text* 33 (1992): 54–81; Neil Brenner, “Beyond State-Centrism? Space, Territoriality, and Geographical Scale in Globalization Studies,” *Theory and Society* 28, no. 1 (1999): 39–78; Willem van Schendel, “Geographies of Knowing, Geographies of Ignorance: Jumping Scale in Southeast Asia,” *Environmental and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, no. 6 (2002): 647–668.
 7. On ethnic cleansing, see Andrew Bell-Flalkoff, *Ethnic Cleansing* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1996), 1–3; Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11. On the nature of expulsion, see Matthew F. Fitzpatrick, *Purging the Empire: Mass Expulsions in Germany, 1871–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 3–5.

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9. *TDL*, September 3, 1885.
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11. Margaret Kolb Holden, "The Rise and Fall of Oregon Populism: Legal Theory, Political Culture and Public Policy, 1868–1895" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1993), 378.
12. Kim Voss, *The Making of American Exceptionalism: The Knights of Labor and Class Formation in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 3; Tamara Venitt Shelton, *A Squatter's Republic: Land and the Politics of Monopoly in California, 1850–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 133; Hans Birger Thorelli, *The Federal Antitrust Policy: Origination of an American Tradition* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt och söner, 1954), 147–148; Leon Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); Robert E. Weir, *Beyond Labor's Veil: The Culture of the Knights of Labor* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996); Robert E. Weir, "Blind in One Eye Only: Western and Eastern Knights of Labor View the Chinese Question," *Labor History* 41, no. 4 (2000): 421–436; Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), 293–305; Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 40; Robert Eugene Mack, "The Seattle and Tacoma Anti-Chinese Riots of 1885 and 1886" (bachelor's thesis, Harvard University, 1972), 10. For an example of Knights of Labor participation in the anti-Chinese movement, see *SDC*, September 21 and 22, 1885. Carlos Schwantes argues that, while officially organizing for the Knights of Labor, Cronin was also recruiting members for the International Workers Association (IWA), a secret and radical workingmen's group based in San Francisco; see Carlos A. Schwantes, "From Anti-Chinese Agitation to Reform Politics: The Legacy of the Knights of Labor in Washington and the Pacific Northwest," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 88, no. 4 (1997): 174–184.
13. *SDC*, December 1, 1885; *SPI*, January 17, 1886; Robert Edward Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia*,

- 1850–1910 (New York: Arno, 1978), 243; Schwantes, “From Anti-Chinese Agitation to Reform Politics,” 175.
14. A. E. Handford, “Affidavit in the matter of Coal Creek,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 251–257.
 15. George W. France, *Struggles for Life and Home in the North-West: By a Pioneer Homebuilder, Life 1866–1889* (New York, 1890), 529.
 16. SDC, December 1, 1885.
 17. SDC, November 20, 1885; October 2, 1885; see also SDC, September 25, 26, 1885; Amy Dru Stanley, *From Bondage to Contract: Wage Labor, Marriage, and the Market in the Age of Slave Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), ix–xi, 1–3. SDC, October 2, September 25, 26, 1885; Moon-Ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 6–9.
 18. SDC, September 21, October 10, 27, 1885.
 19. James Wickersham to Herbert Hunt, April 21, 1916, folder 6, Wickersham Collection, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma.
 20. SDC, September 25, 1885; TDL, October 3, 1885; TDL, August 26, 1885; SDC, November 16, 1885.
 21. SDC, October 26, September 26, 1885.
 22. TDL, September 22, 1885; SDC, November 3, September 22, 1885.
 23. SDC, October 19, November 2, 1885. It is not surprising that members of the press participated in the parade instead of simply observing it. Prolabor newspapers in the territory (including the *Seattle Daily Call*, the *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, and the *Tacoma Daily News*) were the major mouthpieces of the working class and anti-Chinese movement.
 24. SDC, October 10, 1885; Edward W. Taylor, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 25. “To the Citizens of Tacoma,” October 8, 1885, in Edward N. Fuller Ephemera Collection, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma; SDC, October 17, 1885; Taylor, “Affidavit.”
 26. SDC, October 21, October 17, 1885.
 27. TDL, November 3, 1885; Taylor, “Affidavit.”
 28. Jacob Weisbach, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion at Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML. See also George Ackinson, “Affidavit in the Matter of the

- Expulsion at Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; Lewis Byrd, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion at Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
29. James Wickersham to Herbert Hunt, April 21, 1916. Wickersham appears to have misremembered the penitentiary. In 1885, the Walla Walla penitentiary was only in the planning stages and McNeil Island served as the territory’s prison.
 30. B. R. Everetts, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion at Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
 31. *TDL*, November 4, 1885; *Tacoma Daily News*, January 18, 1886. See also *SDC*, November 4, 1885.
 32. Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 254–276; Arellano, *Vigilantes and Lynch Mobs*, 23; Richard Maxwell Brown, *Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 93; Christopher Waldrep, *The Many Faces of Judge Lynch: Extralegal Violence and Punishment in America* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002); Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society 1874–1947* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).
 33. *Tacoma Daily News*, January 18, 1886.
 34. *LAT*, November 8, 14, 1885. See also *The Daily Gazette* (Kalamazoo, MI) September 6, 1885; 17 Cong. Rec., 1814 (1886); *SDC*, November 23, 1885; *Riverside Press and Horticulturist*, December 15, 1885.
 35. Schwantes, “From Anti-Chinese Agitation to Reform Politics,” 179–182.
 36. *DAC*, February 21, 1886; *TR*, January 27, 1886. The *Truckee Republican* also explicitly advocated that Truckee should be used as a model. “How It Was Done,” *TR*, January 1, 1886. “John Chinaman” or simply “John” was often used colloquially to refer to the Chinese.
 37. *SDRU*, October 29, 1883; *DAC*, July 31, 1885. See also *LAT*, December 6, 1885; “How the Restriction Act Is Evaded,” *LAT*, October 20, 1885; “How Chinamen Get Around the Restriction Act,” *DAC*, November 13, 1886; *LAH*, November 24, 1883.
 38. Pfaelzer, *Driven Out*, 253; *SDC*, September 26, 1885. For other examples of anti-Chinese writers and speakers using the Restriction Act as justification for organizing, see *Portland Oregonian*, October 7, 1885; *Portland Daily News*, October 5, 1885; *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 12, 1886; *San Francisco*

- Examiner*, March 5, 1886; A. A. Sargent, “Wyoming Anti-Chinese Riot,” *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine* 6 (November 1885): 128–129; *TDL*, September 5, 1885. For an excellent discussion of newspaper coverage of the violence, see Jeffrey Dettmann, “Chinese American Violence in the American Northwest: From Community Politics to International Diplomacy” (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2002), 56–57, 128–129, 169.
39. As quoted in 17 Cong. Rec., 1814 (1886); See also *SDRU*, May 10, 1886; *TR*, February 20, 1886; “Report of the Special Committee on the Condition of the Chinese Quarters” in *The Chinese in San Francisco*, ed. Willard B. Farwell (San Francisco: Board of Supervisors, 1885), 208.
 40. Beith, “Diary,” vol. 7, September 12, 1886. See also *SDC*, October 7, 1885; *TR*, February 20, 1886; *SDRU*, February 10, March 11, 1886.
 41. Terence V. Powderly, *Thirty Years of Labor: 1859–1889* (Columbus, OH: Excelsior, 1889), 442.
 42. Erika Lee, *At America’s Gate: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 13, 147.
 43. *SDRU*, January 30, 1886; *TR*, February 20, 1886. In Truckee, California, a movement that began with boycott ended with arson and the death of three Chinese men in the fire. Wallace R. Hagaman with Steve F. Cottrell, *The Chinese Must Go!: The Anti-Chinese Boycott, Truckee, California* (Nevada City: Cowboy Press, 2004), 47–50; *Daily Transcript*, June 18, 1886. For conflicting contemporary depictions of violence in Truckee, see *Daily Transcript*, January 1, 1886.
 44. Beith, “Diary,” vol. 7, June 4, 1886; *SDRU*, February 2, 1886.
 45. *SDRU*, March 13, 16, 1886. See also *MDA*, July 20, 1886; *San Jose Mercury*, February 2, 9, 1886. For variations in the use of boycott, see also Hagaman and Cottrell, *The Chinese Must Go!*, 15–20.
 46. *Daily Transcript*, January 26, 1886. See also *Daily Transcript*, February 25, 1886, March 2, 30, 1886.
 47. Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11–26; Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 7, 17; Matthew Basso, Laura McCall, and Dee Garceau-Hagen, eds., *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 2–5; Karen J. Leong, “A Distinct and Antagonistic

- Race': Constructions of Chinese Manhood in the Exclusion Debates, 1869–1878," in *Across the Great Divide*, 134.
48. J. M. Montgomery, letter to E. Gooding, J. J. Hetzel, L. L. Bales, and W. Frazier, February 25, 1886, in U.S. v. McMillan et al., case file no. 4901 (King County, 1885), WSA/TDC; *TDL*, February 11, 1886; *SDC*, February 15, 1886.
 49. Montgomery, letter to Gooding, February 25, 1886.
 50. Ibid. See also *TDL*, October 25, 1885.
 51. Montgomery, letter to Gooding, February 25, 1886.
 52. *SDC*, September 28, 1885; *SDC*, February 4, 1886; *TDL*, October 4, 1885.
 53. *SDC*, November 21, 1885. See also *SDRU*, February 20, 1886.
 54. *SDC*, October 5, 26, 1885; *TDL*, October 26, 1885.
 55. *TDL*, November 24, 1885.
 56. *SPI*, January 17, 1886.
 57. For discussions of feminism of difference during this era, see Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), 112; Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), xviii–xix.
 58. On territorial status, see Jack Ericson Eblen, *The First and Second United States Empires, 1784–1912* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968); Earl S. Pomeroy, *The Territories and the United States, 1861–1890: Studies in Colonial Administration* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1947). On the local effect of racial violence on national borders, see Katherine Benton-Cohen, *Borderline Americans: Racial Division and Labor War in the Arizona Borderlands* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).
 59. *TR*, January 23, 1886; *SDRU*, January, 27, 1886. These conventions helped to organize fundraising. *MDA*, March 28, 1886. 17 Cong. Rec., 6222 (1886).
 60. 17 Cong. Rec., 6222–6224 (1886).
 61. Ibid.; "Petition of the Knights of Labor of Curtisville, Madison Township, Tiplon County Counties, Indiana," March 6, 1886, HR9A-H9.1, box 125, National Archives, Washington, DC. See also "Knights of Labor Assembly of Aspen, Colorado," February 19, 1886, HR9A-H9.1, box 125, National Archives, Washington, DC. For additional anti-Chinese petitions see HR48A-H9.3, box 140; HR9A-H9.1, February 15–19, box 125; HR50A-F15.8, box 94, no. 172, National Archives, Washington, DC. For a similar

- argument by a leader of the Knights of Labor, see Powderly, *Thirty Years of Labor*, 421–422.
62. *DAC*, March 14, 1886.
 63. *Tacoma Daily News*, January 18, 1886. See also *Marysville Daily Appeal*, February 3, 1886.
 64. After the peak of the anti-Chinese violence, there was the Haymarket Riot on May 4, 1886, and the Great Upheaval (1,400 strikes against 11,562 businesses). White, *Railroaded*, 341–342.
 65. 20 Cong. Rec., 406 (1888); 18 Cong. Rec., 6222, 6226 (1886); *SDRU*, February 17, March 12, 1886; *TR*, February 20, 1886; *DAC* as quoted by *SDRU*, March 15, 1886.
 66. Willard B. Farwell, *The Chinese at Home and Abroad* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft, 1885), 111–116; G. W. Sullivan, *Early Days of California: The Growth of the Commonwealth under American Rule, with Biographical Sketches of Pioneers* (San Francisco: Enterprise, 1888), 1:120–121.

5 ■ THE LOYAL

1. Granville O. Haller, “Diary,” October 3, 1885, box 4, vol. 1, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle.
2. Haller, “Diary,” February 7, 1885, box 4, vol. 2.
3. Haller, “Diary,” October 3, 1885, box 4, vol. 1; *Ibid.*, February 7, 18, 1886, box 4, vol. 2.
4. Haller, “Diary,” September 23, 1885, box 4, vol. 1.
5. On the “pro-Chinese” faction, see Rodger Daniels, *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 51–52; Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer, *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 87; Paul A. Kramer, “Imperial Openings: Civilization, Exemption, and the Geopolitics of Mobility in the History of Chinese Exclusion, 1868–1910,” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 14, no. 3 (2015): 317–347; Gordon H. Chang, “China and the Pursuit of America’s Destiny: Nineteenth-Century Imagining and Why Immigration Restriction Took So Long,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 15, no. 2 (June 2012): 145–169; Lon Kurashige, *Two Faces of Exclusion: The Untold History of Anti-Asian Racism in the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

6. Robert Eugene Mack, "The Seattle and Tacoma Anti-Chinese Riots of 1885 and 1886" (bachelor's thesis, Harvard University, 1972), 24–42; Robert E. Ficken, *Washington Territory* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2002), 190–196.
7. Watson Squire, "Speech of the Honorable Watson C. Squire," box 1, file 9, *Chinese in Tacoma*, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma.
8. Scott Shapiro, "Watson C. Squire: Senator from Washington, 1889–97" (undergraduate thesis, Wesleyan University, 1992), 39–40; Clinton A. Snowden, *History of Washington: The Rise and Progress of an American State*, vol. 5 (New York: Century History, 1911), 87.
9. Squire, "Speech."
10. Ibid.; Watson C. Squire, *Report of the Governor of Washington Territory* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1886), 3–4; Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 184; Watson C. Squire, "Squire, Watson Carvosso, 1838–1926 Dictation and Biographical Material prepared for *Chronicle of the Builders*," 43, Hubert Howe Bancroft Collection (BANC MSS P-B 75–81, FILM), University of California, Berkeley.
11. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 220; Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 307; Squire, "Squire, Watson Carvosso, 1838–1926," 32.
12. Herbert Hunt, *Washington West of the Cascades: Historical and Descriptive: The Explorers, the Indians, the Pioneers, the Modern* vol. 2 (Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1917), 80–100; Dorothy O. Johansen, *Empire of the Columbia: A History of the Pacific Northwest*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 334–337; Williams Farrand Prosser, *A History of the Puget Sound Country, Its Resources, Its Commerce and Its People* (New York: Lewis, 1903), 479–483.
13. Watson C. Squire, "Admission to Statehood," 1884, box 1, file 1, WCS.
14. Squire, *Report of the Governor*.
15. Haller, "Diary," September 22, 1885, box 4, vol. 1.
16. Watson Squire to F. W. de Lorimer [Sheriff of Whatcom], October 24, 1885, in *Report of the Governor*, app. 19–20; Watson C. Squire to Erretta W. Squire, October 26, 1885, box 17, file 21, WCS.
17. Watson Squire to Hon. R. J. Wiesbach, October 20, 1885, WCS.
18. Sheriff Lewis Byrd to Governor Watson Squire, October 23, 1885, WCS.

19. The day after the Chinese were driven out, Governor Squire received a letter from John Arthur in Tacoma, which asked if he “recall[ed] what I told you as to the method which I understood would be adopted on these last days?” The man reported that the method “was strictly followed, with the exception that the train was not special.” John Arthur to Governor Watson Squire, November 4, 1885, in Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 20–21.
20. Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, October 14, 1885, box 17, file 15–17, WCS.
21. Governor Watson Squire to F. A. Bee, October 21, 1885, in Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 16.
22. SDC, November 2, 1885. See also M. Kaufman to Watson Squire, October 29, 1885, in Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 21.
23. Watson Squire to Secretary of the Interior W. C. Lamar, November 4, 1885, in Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 24.
24. Squire, “Proclamation of the governor,” *Report of the Governor*, app. 25; Watson Squire to Secretary of the Interior W. C. Lamar, November 6, 1885, in Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 27.
25. The commanding officer, General Gibbon, was a proponent of law and order, but the federal troops sympathized with the anti-Chinese masses.
26. Squire, “Speech”; Terry Boswell, Cliff Brown, John Brueggemann, and T. Ralph Peters, *Racial Competition and Class Solidarity* (Albany: State University of New York, 2006), 82; Johansen, *Empire of the Columbia*, 301–332.
27. Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, November 23, 1885, box 16, file 7, WCS; Caroline A. Remington to Ida Remington Squire, April 1886, box 16, file 2, WCS.
28. Squire, “Squire, Watson Carvosso, 1838–1926,” 20. See also Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Washington, Idaho, and Montana, 1845–1889* (San Francisco: History Company, 1890), 293–298.
29. Squire, “Squire, Watson Carvosso, 1838–1926,” 43, 45; Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app., 3.
30. Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, October 4, 1885, box 17, file 15–17, WCS. See also Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, September 28, 1885, box 17, file 15–17, WCS.
31. Dr. H. W. Bennett, “Tribute to a Worthy Life: Dr. H. W. Bennett Expresses Beautiful Appreciation of Mrs. Ida R. Squire,” box 15, file 8, *Squire Papers*, UWSC; “Obituaries,” *Proceedings of the New York State Historical Association*, vol. 20 (1922), 262; Ida Remington Squire to Erretta

- Squire, February 14, 1886, box 17, file 15–17, WCS; Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, February 21, 1886, WCS.
32. Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, November 9, 1885, box 17, file 15–17, WCS.
 33. Ida Remington Squire, diary, box 1, file 22, WCS.
 34. Ida Remington Squire, diary; Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, February 9, 1886, box 17, file 15–17, WCS. [Emphasis in the original, punctuation added.]
 35. Ida Remington Squire, diary.
 36. Ida Remington Squire to Orra Squire, February 19, 1886, box 16, file 2, WCS.
 37. Ida Remington Squire to Erretta Squire, March 8, 1886, box 16, file 2, WCS.
 38. A. S. Farquharson, “Reminiscence,” box 1, file 1, *A. S. Farquharson Papers*, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma.
 39. Hunt, *Washington West of the Cascades*, 3:298–301.
 40. Farquharson, “Reminiscence.”
 41. Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 7, 17, 25–27; Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11–26; Matthew Basso, Laura McCall, and Dee Garceau-Hagen, eds., *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 2–5; Karen J. Leong, “‘A Distinct and Antagonistic Race’: Constructions of Chinese Manhood in the Exclusion Debates, 1869–1878,” in *Across the Great Divide*, 134.
 42. Farquharson, “Reminiscence.”
 43. Ibid.
 44. Ibid.
 45. Ibid.; Dr. Taylor was an outspoken member of the anti-Chinese vigilantes and an unabashed white supremacist. *SDC*, September 26, 1885.
 46. Farquharson, “Reminiscence.”
 47. For a similar reaction from railroad developers Leland Stanford and Charles Francis Adams, see *DAC*, May 26, 1886; Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), 313; Robert Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, 1850–1910* (New York: Arno, 1978), 96–105. See also *TR*, January 1, 1886; *SDRU*, February 2, 10, 17, 1886;

- San Jose Mercury*, February 14, 1886; *MDA*, February 16, 1886; Richard Steven Street, *Beasts of the Field: A Narrative History of California Farmworkers, 1769–1913* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 350–351.
48. W. P. Bonnie, *History of Pierce County, Washington* (Chicago: Pioneer Historical, 1927), 465.
 49. Edward Allen Fay, *Histories of American Schools for the Deaf, 1817–1893*, vol. 3, (Washington, DC, 1893), 68, 217; Murray Morgan, *Puget's Sound: A Narrative of Early Tacoma and the Southern Sound, first edition* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 23; Hunt, *Washington West of the Cascades*, 3:300.
 50. *TDL*, October 13, 1885.
 51. Stuart Creighton Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese, 1785–1882* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 57–80.
 52. Yong Chen, *Chinese San Francisco, 1850–1943: A Trans-Pacific Community* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 130–137; Jennifer C. Snow, *Protestant Missionaries, Asian Immigrants, and Ideologies of Race in America, 1850–1924* (New York: Routledge, 2007) xiv, 2, 14, 64–71; Derek Chang, *Citizens of a Christian Nation: Evangelical Missions and the Problem of Race in the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 5; *TDL*, October 13, 1885.
 53. Barnabas MacLafferty et al., “Sentiments of the Ministerial Union of Tacoma Respecting the Present Anti-Chinese Question Adopted at a Regular Meeting,” October 26, 1885, “Chinese in Tacoma,” file 1A, Washington Historical Society, Tacoma.
 54. *Ibid.*
 55. B. F. Alley and J. P. Munro-Fraser, *Washington Territory Descriptive and Historical—Thurston County* (Olympia, Washington Territory, 1886), 80.
 56. *Ibid.* While McFarland and the other Protestant ministers opposed the anti-Chinese rioters, the Catholic priest in Tacoma, Peter Francis Hylebos, tried another tactic. He joined one of the anti-Chinese groups, attended their secretive council meetings, and used his position as an insider to advocate against violence and arson. See *Tacoma News Tribute*, April 7, 1953, and September 18, 1955.
 57. Morgan, *Puget's Sound*, 239–240.
 58. D. H. Ella to the Senate and House of Representatives, March 8, 1886, 49th Cong., HR49A-HR9.1, National Archives, Washington, DC.

59. As quoted by John H. Mitchell, *Abrogation of Treaties with China, and Absolute Prohibition of Chinese Immigration* (Washington, 1886), 16. See also *SDRU*, February 2, 1886.
60. Joshua Paddison, *American Heathens: Religion, Race, and Reconstruction in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 8, 141–154. Derek Chang has documented that the American Home Baptist Missionary Society continued to fight Chinese exclusion in 1892 when the Geary Act was passed. Although he ends his study in the early 1890s, Chang implies that this support of the Chinese continued to wane in the following years. See Chang, *Citizens of a Christian Nation*, 161–162.
61. Thomas Burke, “A Plea for Justice,” box 32, file 2, TB.
62. Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 34.
63. Haller, “Diary,” September 23, 1885, box 4, vol. 1.
64. Clarence Bagley, *History of Seattle: From the Earliest Settlement to the Present Time* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1916), 33; Robert C. Nesbit, “He Built Seattle”: *A Biography of Judge Thomas Burke* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), 26; Thomas Burke, “A Plea for Justice.”
65. Burke, “A Plea for Justice.”
66. Burke’s decisions run counter to the trend observed by Matthew Jacobson and David Roediger that Irish immigrants and Irish Americans denigrated black and Chinese workers to elevate their own racial status. Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991). Other historians have also argued that Irish workers drove the anti-Chinese movement; see Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Holt, 1909), 270; Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant*, 195–199; Alexander Saxton, *Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 27–30; Neil Shumsky, *The Evolution of Political Protest and the Workingmen’s Party of California* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991), 28, 220. Though Irish workers and Irish Americans were involved in the anti-Chinese movement, there is no evidence that the Irish led the movement or viewed it as ethnically based. Rather, it appears that East Coast and nativist presses focused on Irish involvement primarily out of ethnic bias. *The Monitor*, July 24, 1869, and August 6, 1870. In violation of the whiteness thesis, Irish leaders actively

- recruited African Americans to the anti-Chinese movement. See *Daily Morning Call*, July 22, 1877; *SFCH*, November 20, 1877.
67. Nesbit, *He Built Seattle*, 190–191; *SDC*, November 6, 1885.
 68. Thomas Burke to Hon. H. F. Beecher, February 15, 1886, box 22, file 17, TB.
 69. Thomas Burke to Louisa Ackerson, February 21, 1886, reel 10, TB; Arthur S. Beardsley, draft manuscript (1959), box 1, file 37, Washington State Historical Society, Olympia; unknown author, “Organized Militia in the Chinese Incident in Seattle,” box 1, file “Military Affairs: Chinese Riots,” Watson Squire Administration, Washington State Archives, Olympia.
 70. Wynne, *Reaction to the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest*, 274; Clarence Bagley, *History of Seattle*, 468.
 71. *Ibid.*, 469–470.
 72. Contemporaries and historians disagree on who took the first shot. From the evidence presented at the subsequent trial, it was most likely the militiamen. Nesbit, *He Built Seattle*, 203–204; Hunt, *Washington West of the Cascades*, 1:305.
 73. Nesbit, *He Built Seattle*, 203; Hunt, *Washington West of the Cascades*, 1:306; Territory vs. Thomas Burke et al., case file no. 4864 (King County, 1886), WSA/TDC.
 74. Haller, “Diary,” February 9, 1886, box 4, vol. 2.
 75. Squire, “Squire, Watson Carvosso, 1838–1926,” 21.
 76. Thomas Burke to Louisa Ackerson, February 21, 1886.
 77. Thomas Burke to Rev. J. F. Ellis, February 17, 1886, reel 10, TB; see also Thomas Burke to unknown, February 15, 1886, reel 10, TB.
 78. King County Bar Association, “Resolutions Adopted at a Meeting of the King County Bar, Held in Seattle, Wash. Ter. February 27th, 1886,” Special Collections, University of Washington, Seattle. It is unclear how large a role Burke played in drafting these resolutions, but the similarity between the resolutions and his speech the previous November is striking.
 79. Territory vs. Thomas Burke et al.
 80. *Ibid.*
 81. When Burke became counsel for Great Northern, he made Chin Gee Hee the labor contractor and general agent. Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 159–160.

82. Haller, "Diary," November 5, 1885, February 7, 9, 1886, box 4, vol. 2.
83. J. W. Sprague to President Grover Cleveland, December 17, 1885, in Squire, *Report of the Governor*, app. 31; Washington Territory Legislature to Congress, "Concerning the evils arriving from the Presence of Chinese on the Pacific Coast and Praying for Suitable Legislation to Remedy the Same," January 29, 1886, 49th Cong., HR49A-H9.1, National Archives, Washington, DC.

6 ■ THE EXCLUSION CONSENSUS

1. Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, October 10, 1885, USDS/DDO; Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, enclosure from the Chinese Foreign Office, October 9, 1885, USDS/DDO; Charles Seymour (U.S. consul) to James D. Porter (assistant secretary of state), March 7, 1886, doc. 52, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China*, series 2, vol. 13, ed. Jules Davids (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1979), 193.
2. Charles Denby to Foreign Office, March 7, 1886, enclosure telegram, in Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, March 10, 1886, USDS/DDO; *Shanghai Courier*, July, 1886, enclosure, in Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, August 10, 1886, USDS/DDO.
3. Charles Denby, *China and Her People: Being the Observations, Reminiscences and Conclusions of an American Diplomat*, 2 vols. (Boston: L. C. Page, 1906).
4. Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard and enclosures, March 10, 1886, USDS/DDO; Imperial Court to Zhang Zhidong (Chang Chih-tung), March 9, 1886, pt. 3, item 7, ZS, 112; Zhang Zhidong to the Imperial Court, memorial, June 16, 1886, pt. 3, item 14, ZS, 115–119.
5. Negotiation for the Protection of the Chinese in the United States, March 18, 1887, doc. 64, *The United States and China*, series 2, vol. 13, 277.
6. Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, August 10, 1886, USDS/DDO.
7. As quoted by *Shanghai Courier*, December 2, 1886, enclosure, in Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, December 6, 1886, USDS/DDO.
8. Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 4–5; Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 15.

9. Jean H. Baker, *Affairs of the Party: Political Culture of Northern Democrats in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), 198–211.
10. As quoted by Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 149.
11. Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of "Civilization" in International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 6; Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 103–107, 121; Michael Schaller, *The U.S. and China: Into the Twenty-First Century*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 13; Gordon H. Chang, "Whose 'Barbarism'? Whose 'Treachery'? Race and Civilization in the Unknown United States—Korea War of 1871," *Journal of American History* 89, no. 4 (March 2003): 1331–1336, 1362–1365; Bryna Goodman and David S. G. Goodman, eds., *Twentieth-Century Colonialism in China: Localities, the Everyday, and the World* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 1–20; Teemu Ruskola, "Canton Is Not Boston: The Invention of American Imperial Sovereignty," *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 859–888.
12. David L. Anderson, *Imperialism and Idealism: American Diplomats in China, 1861–1898* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Michael H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Delber L. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy, 1900–1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977).
13. 13 Cong. Rec., 2616 (1882).
14. As quoted by Charles Callan Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard, 1885–1897* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1940; New York: Kraus, 1969), 151. Citations refer to the Kraus edition.
15. A. A. Hayes, "The Retiring Chinese Minister," *Harper's Weekly*, April 17, 1886; Ching-Hwang Yen, *Coolies and Mandarins: China's Protection of the Overseas Chinese during the Late Ch'ing Period (1851–1911)* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1985), 221–229.
16. Thomas Bayard to L. Q. Lamar, November 7, 1885, Letter Book, vol. 194, Thomas Bayard Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
17. Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860–1898*, 35th anniversary ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 20; Chang, *Fateful Ties*, 49–89.

18. Thomas Bayard to Cheng Tsao Ju, February 18, 1886, Notes to the Chinese Legation in the United States, 1834–1906 (microfilm copy), RG59 M99, roll 13.
19. Thomas Bayard to Charles Denby, December 26, 1885, Letter Book, vol. 195, Thomas Bayard Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
20. Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, August 11, 1886, USDS/DDO; Denby to Bayard, March 10, 1886.
21. Zhang Zhidong (Chang Chih-tung) to the Imperial Court, Memorial, June 16, 1886, pt. 3, item 14, ZS, 115–119. See also Zheng Zaoru (Cheng Tsao Ju) to the Imperial Court, Telegram, February 16, 1886, pt. 3, item 6, ZS, 111–112; The Board of San Francisco Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association to the General Department, Telegram, February 17, 1886, ZS, 112.
22. Denby to Bayard, March 10, 1886.
23. Zhang Yinhuan (Chang Yin-haun) to Imperial Court, August 14, 1886, pt. 2, item 21, ZS, 94–96; Zhang Yinhuan to American Foreign Ministry, August 14, 1886, pt. 2, item 22, ZS, 96–98; “Regulations of Chinese Labor,” 1886, pt. 2, item 23, ZS, 98–99; Zhang Yinhuan to Imperial Court, memorial, May 18, 1888, pt. 3, item 22, ZS, 123–124. For the Bayard-Chang (Bayard-Zhang) Treaty, see Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*; John A. Grenville and George Berkeley Young, *Politics, Strategy and American Diplomacy: Studies in Foreign Policy, 1873–1917* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966); Yen, *Coolies and Mandarins*; Shih-Shah Henry Tsai, *The Chinese Experience in America* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986); Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 191–192; Adam M. McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 162–171.
24. Yen, *Coolies and Mandarins*, 236.
25. As quoted in McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 162–163.
26. As quoted in Tsai, *The Chinese Experience in America*, 8–12; Kil Young Zo, *Chinese Emigration into the United States* (New York: Arno, 1978), 8–34.
27. Yen, *Coolies and Mandarins*, 235–236; Zhang Yinhuan (Chang Yin-haun) to Imperial Court, August 14, 1886; Zhang Yinhuan to American Foreign Ministry, August 14, 1886; “Regulations of Chinese Labor,” 1886; Zhang Yinhuan to Imperial Court, May 18, 1888.
28. The Foreign Office to the United States Minister, August 3, 1886, doc. 54, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China*, series 2, vol. 13, 211.

29. Denby to Bayard, August 11, 1886, USDS/DDO.
30. Charles Denby, *China and Her People*, 110–111; Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, August 11, 1886.
31. Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, 146; Arthur William Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period, 1644–1912*, vol. 1, *A–O* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 60–3; Yen, *Coolies and Mandarins*, 234–242.
32. Thomas Bayard to Zhang Zhidong (Chang Chih-tung), January 12, 1887, doc. 60, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China*, series 2, vol. 13, 261.
33. Zhang Yinhaun to Qing Court, report, August 14, 1886, pt. 2, item 30, ZS, 102–140; “An Act to indemnify certain subject of the Chinese Empire for losses sustained by the violence of a mob at Rock Springs, in the Territory of Wyoming,” chap. 253, 24 Stat. 418 (February 24, 1887); Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, 147.
34. As quoted by Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, 150.
35. Historians now estimate thirty-four were killed. R. Gregory Nokes, *Massacred for Gold: The Chinese in Hells Canyon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2009).
36. Chang Yen Hoon to Thomas Bayard, August 16, 1887, Notes from the Chinese Legation 1868–1906 (microfilm), RG59 M98, roll 2.
37. 19 Cong. Rec., 406–422 (1888); 17 Cong. Rec., 6226 (1886); Grenville and Young, *Politics, Strategy and American Diplomacy*, 56. The investigation took place in July 1887.
38. 19 Cong. Rec., 1620 (1888). Senator John Sherman recounted previous attempts by the Committee of Foreign Relations in 1886 and 1887 to petition for a new treaty.
39. As quoted in Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, 154; Grover Cleveland to Thomas Bayard, December 18, 1887, Thomas Bayard Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; Alyn Brodsky, *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Character* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000), app. 2, 454–456; Richard E. Welch Jr., *The Presidencies of Grover Cleveland* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1988), 65, 72–73.
40. Thomas Bayard to Charles Denby, March 17, 1888, Letter Book, vol. 7, Thomas Bayard Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; *NYT*, March 28, 1888.
41. “Report of the Secretary of State to the President,” in “Message from the President of the United States,” March 12, 1888, doc. 72, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China*, series 2, vol. 13, 294.

42. Thomas Bayard to Charles Denby, April 21, 1888, Letter Book, vol. 7, Thomas Bayard Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; 18 Cong. Rec., 8364–8367 (1888). The two amendments were as follows: “And this prohibition shall extend to the return of Chinese laborers who are now in the United States, whether holding return certificates under existing laws or not”; “And no such Chinese laborer shall be permitted to enter the United States by land or sea without producing to the proper officer of the customs the return certificate herein required,” doc. 76, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China*, series 2, vol. 12, 298–299.
43. As quoted by Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, 162–163, 165; Thomas Bayard to Grover Cleveland, April 17, 1888, Letter Book, vol. 7, Thomas Bayard Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; “An Act to Prohibit the Coming of Chinese Laborers to the United States,” chap. 1015, 25 Stat. 476–477 (September 13, 1888).
44. Yen, *Coolies and Mandarins*, 238; Li Hongzhang to the General Department, telegram, July 23, 1888, pt. 3, item 23, ZS, 124; General Department to Zhang Zhidong, telegram, July 24, 1888, pt. 3, item 24, ZS, 124; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 169–170; Tsai, *The Chinese Experience in America*, 82; Yen, *Coolies and Mandarins*, 238–240. Structural problems within the Chinese government may also have contributed to the lack of ratification. Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *China and the Overseas Chinese in the United States, 1868–1911* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1983), 1–3.
45. Grenville and Young, *Politics, Strategy and American Diplomacy*, 60; *NYT*, September 2, 19, 1888; Tansill, *Foreign Policy of Thomas Francis Bayard*, 165–166.
46. 18 Cong. Rec., 8227 (1888).
47. *Ibid*; *NYT*, September 4, 1888.
48. 18 Cong. Rec., 8217, 8364–8367, 8297 (1888).
49. It appears Mitchell understood that since the bill was an amendment to the Chinese Restriction Act, it would expire in 1892 if not renewed.
50. 18 Cong. Rec., 8217, 8570 (1888).
51. The General Department to Zhang Yinhaun, telegram, September 24, 1888, pt. 3, item 29, ZS, 126; Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, 167, 173.
52. Charles Denby to Thomas Bayard, September 20, 1888, USDS/DDO.
53. As quoted by Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, 179, 171, 174.

54. 19 Cong. Rec., 9052 (1888); “A Supplement to ‘An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese,’” (The Chinese Exclusion Act; The Scott Act) chap. 1064, 25 Stat. 504 (October 1, 1888). Cleveland also urged allocating funds to pay indemnity to the Chinese for violence in Wyoming Territory and the Pacific Northwest. S. Rep. No. 273, October 1, 1888. See also 19 Cong. Rec., 406, 412 (1888).
55. “An Act making appropriations to supply deficiencies in the appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 13, 1888,” chap. 1210, 25 Stat. 565 (October 19, 1888). When Congress approved the indemnity it also made the first annual appropriation for exclusion, setting it at \$50,000. “An Act making an appropriation for the enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Act,” chap. 1222, 25 Stat. 615 (October 19, 1888). Zhang Yinhaun to General Department, telegram, December 27, 1888, pt. 3, item 33, vol. 2, ZS, 127. On sovereignty in immigration matters, see Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 11; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 177–179.
56. *LAT*, October 1, 1888.
57. As cited by McClain, *In Search of Equality*, 193; *The Model Commonwealth* [Seattle, WA] October 12, 1888; Grenville and Young, *Politics, Strategy and American Diplomacy*, 63.
58. *Harper’s Weekly*, October 6, 1888; *NYT*, October 2, 1888. Scholars have argued that the bill was delayed too long in the Senate and handled too hesitantly by the White House and Cleveland at the polls. The Republican candidate, Benjamin Harrison, who also ran on an anti-Chinese platform, was elected the twenty-third president of the United States. Tsai, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, 93; Grenville and Young, *Politics, Strategy and American Diplomacy*, 63.
59. Zhang Yinhan to Imperial Court, memorial, March 30, 1889, pt. 3, item 34, ZS, 127–134; Charles Denby, *China and Her People*, 2:100–101. Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909), 183, 207; Warren Cohen, *America’s Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 5th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 34.
60. Charles Seymour to Charles Denby, March 20, 1889, USDS/DCO; *LAT*, October 27, 1888.
61. Seymour to Denby, March 20, 1889; *LAT*, February 10, 1889; McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door*, 103–112; Charles Denby to Thomas

- Bayard, December 1, 1888, doc. 88, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China*, series 2, vol. 13, 325.
62. In 1894 the United States and China ratified the Gresham-Yang Treaty, which retroactively approved the exclusion acts of 1888 and 1892 (the Geary Act). But this treaty allowed for exclusion for a period of only ten years, so the exclusion acts of 1902 and 1904 were again passed in violation of U.S.-Chinese treaty stipulations. See Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 237; Paulsen, “The Gresham-Yang Treaty,” 281–297; George E. Paulsen, “The Abrogation of the Gresham-Yang Treaty,” *Pacific Historical Review* 40, no. 4 (1971), 457–477.
 63. Others have focused on these continued diplomatic concessions. See Paul A. Kramer, “Imperial Openings: Civilization, Exemption, and the Geopolitics of Mobility in the History of Chinese Exclusion, 1868–1910,” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 14, no. 3 (July 2015): 317–347; Madeline Y. Hsu, *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 11–17, 39–54; Eric T. Love, *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy*. This shifts dramatically in the twentieth century with the turn against formal empire; see Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).
 64. *Chae Chan Ping v. United States*, 130 U.S. 581 (1889); Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 22.
 65. *Chae Chan Ping v. United States*.
 66. *Ibid.*; Kunal M. Parker, *Making Foreigners: Immigration and Citizenship Law in America, 1600–2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 119; Meredith K. Olafson, “Note: The Concept of Limited Sovereignty and the Immigration Law Plenary Power Doctrine,” *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* 13, no. 2 (Spring 1999): 433–453; Emer de Vattel, *Law of Nations* (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1797), 108; Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 11; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 177–179; McClain, *In Search of Equality*, 197; Gabriel Chin, “Segregation’s Last Stronghold: Race Discrimination and the Constitutional Law of Immigration,” *UCLA Law Review* 46, no. 1 (1998): 56, 58, 12; Natsu Taylor Saito, “The Enduring Effect of the Chinese Exclusion Cases: The ‘Plenary Power’ Justification for

On-Going Abuses of Human Rights,” *Asian American Law Journal* 10 (May 2003): 13–17, 26–30; Gabriel Chin, “Is There a Plenary Power Doctrine? A Tentative Apology and Prediction for Our Strange but Unexceptional Constitutional Immigration Law,” *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* 14 (2000): 257–287.

67. For the evolution of the plenary power doctrine, see Natsu Taylor Saito, *From Chinese Exclusion to Guantanamo Bay: Plenary Power and the Prerogative State* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007), 5–6, 26–34; Sarah H. Cleveland, “Powers Inherent in Sovereignty: Indians, Aliens, Territories and the Nineteenth Century Origins of Plenary Power Over Foreign Affairs,” *Texas Law Review* 81, no. 1 (2002): 1–284. Though plenary power was fully articulated in the Chinese exclusion cases, there are antecedents in U.S. jurisprudence. See *Johnson v. M’Intosh*, 21 U.S. (8 Wheat.) 589 (1823); *United States v. Kagama*, 118 U.S. 377 (1886).

7 ■ AFTERLIVES UNDER EXCLUSION

1. R. P. Scherwin to J. H. Rinder, February 15, 1904, private collection.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *SFCH*, April 20, 1904; *LAT*, July 30, 1904. Mary C. Greenfield, “Benevolent Desires and Dark Dominations: The Pacific Mail Steamship Company’s SS *City of Peking* and the United States in the Pacific 1874–1910,” *Southern California Quarterly* 94, no. 4 (2012): 423–478. The Pacific Mail Steamship Company had received intermittent federal subsidies since its inception in 1848.
4. As quoted by Robert Eric Barde, *Immigration at the Golden Gate: Passenger Ships, Exclusion, and Angel Island* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 209–222.
5. For example, see Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Daniel J. Trichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 87–113; Daniel Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 95–130.
6. W. H. Miller to William Windom, secretary of the treasury, June 30, 1891, box 4, USCS/IE; James J. Brooks, special agent, to William Windom, March 4, 1890, box 4, USCS/IE. Kitty Calavita has noted an increase in authority of administrative officials in 1889. Kitty Calavita, “The Paradoxes

- of Race, Class Identity, and ‘Passing’: Enforcing the Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882–1910,” *Law and Social Inquiry* 25, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 19.
7. “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at iii–iv (1891).
 8. Erika Lee, *At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 153; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 144; Patrick Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines: Border Enforcement and the Origins of Undocumented Immigration, 1882–1930* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 55–57; Elliott Young, *Alien Nation: Chinese Migration in the Americas from the Coolie Era through World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 153, 171–193.
 9. “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 18–22 (1891). For Chinese on Indian reservations, see Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines*, 54. There has been little work on Chinese–Native American liaisons in the nineteenth century. The existence of these relationships was noted in contemporary newspapers; see Daniel Liestman, “Horizontal Inter-Ethnic Relations: Chinese and American Indians in the Nineteenth-Century West,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 327–349; Jordan Hua, “‘They Looked Askance’: American Indians and Chinese in the Nineteenth Century U.S. West” (honors thesis, Rutgers University, 2012).
 10. For “remote control,” see Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: American Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 110–113.
 11. “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 140, 168 (1891). Historians’ estimates have varied, as have their sources of information, but most also fall within this range. Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines*, 49; Young, *Alien Nation*, 160–161; Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 135.
 12. “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 24–25, 65 (1891); Adam M. McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 217–238.
 13. “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 515, 546, ii (1891); W. H. Miller to William Windom, June 30, 1891; George H. Hopkins to O. L. Spaulding, June 27, 1891, box 4, USCS/IE. On the history of deportation, see Daniel Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation*.
 14. W. H. Miller to William Windom, draft, April 1890, box 4, USCS/IE; O. L. Spaulding to C. W. Bradshaw, April 1890, box 4, USCS/IE; Thomas R. Brown to C. W. Bradshaw, May 16, 1890, box 4, USCS/IE; O. L. Spaulding to C. W. Bradshaw, draft, May 1890, box 4, USCS/IE.

15. Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation*.
16. “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 273, 333, 271, 494 (1891).
17. Calavita, “The Paradoxes of Race,” 1–40; Anna Pegler-Gordon, “Chinese Exclusion, Photography, and the Development of U.S. Immigration Policy,” *American Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (March 2006): 51–77.
18. Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 273 (1891); Judy Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 293; Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 150–151, 210.
19. “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 406–407 (1891).
20. Ibid. at ii, 518, 544. Young, *Alien Nation*, 158–159; Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines*, 56; “Chinese Immigration,” H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 515, 546, ii (1891); Grace Peña Delgado, *Making the Chinese Mexican: Global Migration, Localism, and Exclusion in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 13–40, 73–103; Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 157–173, 179–187; Young, *Alien Nation*, 171–193.
21. W. H. Miller to William Windom, June 30, 1891, box 4, USCS/IE. Based on data collected by the author from the following sources: For 1851–1882, see Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909), 498; Treasury Department, “Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury . . . statement of arrivals of Chinese at the port of San Francisco,” 51st Cong., 1st sess., Ex. Doc. 97 (April 12, 1890) and Commissioner General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1903), 34–37, 110–111; Bureau of Statistics, *Annual Report and Statements of the Chief of the Bureau of Statistics on the Foreign Commerce, Navigation, Immigration and Tonnage of the U.S. for the year ending June 30, 1892*, 52d Cong., 2d Sess., 3102 Ex. Doc. 6 (November 29, 1892); Treasury Department, *Immigration and Passenger Movement at Ports of the United States during the year ending June 30, 1894*, 53rd Cong., 3rd Sess., 3317 H.R. Ex. Doc. 6 (January 2, 1895). These figures do not include Chinese migrants who were in transit to other countries.
22. Lee, *At America’s Gate*, 153, 238; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 144; Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines*, 55–57.
23. Kenneth Chew, Mark Leach, and John M. Liu, “The Revolving Door to Gold Mountain: How Chinese Immigrants Got around U.S. Exclusion and Replenished the Chinese American Labor Pool, 1900–1910,” *International Migration Review* 43, no. 2 (2009): 410–430.

24. "Chinese Immigration," H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 493–495 (1891).
25. Martin Gold, *Forbidden Citizens: Chinese Exclusion and the U.S. Congress: A Legislative History* (Alexandria, VA: The Capitol.Net, 2012), 282–283.
26. John Sherman as quoted in Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 215; 23 Cong. Rec. 2912, 2915 (1892).
27. House 186 to 27, Senate 30 to 15. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 215–216.
28. "An act to prohibit the coming of Chinese persons into the United States" (The Geary Act), chap. 60, 27 Stat. 25 (May 5, 1892).
29. Ibid.; "An Act to amend an act entitled 'An act to prohibit the coming of Chinese persons into the United States'" (McCreary Amendment), chap. 14, 28 Stat. 7 (November 3, 1893); Wong Wing v. United States, 163 U.S. 228 (1896). The ruling against punitive imprisonment still allowed for immigrant detention, see Hernandez, *City of Inmates*, 89. For previous experiments with denial of bail, see "Chinese Immigration," H.R. Rep. No. 4048 at 348–350 (1891). For shifting definitions of exempt class, see Calavita, "The Paradoxes of Race," 16. For previous expectations of affirmative proof, see George H. Hopkins to O. L. Spaulding, June 27, 1891, box 4, USCS/IE. For incidental use of registration, see A. L. Blake to A. W. Bash, September 1, 1882, box 111, file 2, RG36, USCS/CM; Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 348n61; Commissioner-General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration*, 34–37. For California's previous attempt to register the Chinese, see Hudson N. Janisch, "The Chinese, the Courts and the Constitution: A Study of the Legal Issues Raised by Chinese Immigration to the United States, 1850–1902" (JSD diss., University of Chicago Law School, 1971), 950; *SFCA*, April 27, 1892.
30. For previous forms of Chinese resistance, see Janisch, "The Chinese, the Courts, and the Constitution," 353, 529.
31. For previous use of passports, see McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 41–42, 102–107; Craig Robertson, *The Passport in America: The History of a Document* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); *Daily Morning Call*, September 20, 1892. See also "Memorial from Yang Ru to Imperial Court," May 5, 1894, pt. 3, item 39, ZS, 139–142.
32. Janisch, "The Chinese, the Courts, and the Constitution," 975; *SDRU*, May 5, 1893; Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 55.
33. Fong Yue Ting v. United States, 149 U.S. 698 (1893); Chae Chan Ping v. United States, 130 U.S. 581 (1889); Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 52.

34. McClain, *In Search of Equality*, 201–211; Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 46–58; Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007), 300–301.
35. 53d Cong. 1st Sess., S. Doc. no. 13, “Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury in answer to a resolution of the senate . . . September 12, 1893”; as quoted by Janisch, “The Chinese, the Courts, and the Constitution,” 985.
36. *SFCA*, August 23, 1893; Pfaelzer, *Driven Out*, 318–327; Yucheng Qin, *The Diplomacy of Nationalism: The Six Companies and China’s Policy toward Exclusion* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), 122.
37. *Sausalito News*, August 25, 1893; Janisch, “The Chinese, the Courts, and the Constitution,” 993; *LAH*, September 3, 5, 27, 1893; *SFCA*, September 3, 1893; Pfaelzer, *Driven Out*, 307–313; Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 55–56; Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 69–87.
38. *SFCA*, September 16, 1893; *LAH*, August 28, 1893.
39. *LAH*, October 17, 1893; McCreary Amendment.
40. 25 Cong. Rec. app. 231 (1893); Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 55–56.
41. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 86; George E. Paulsen, “The Gresham-Yang Treaty,” *Pacific Historical Review* 37 no. 3 (August 1968): 288; *Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1894* [H.R. Ex. Doc. 4] (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1894), 23. An 1894 appropriation act further strengthened the law, declaring the “decision of the appropriate immigration or customs officers, if adverse to the admission of such alien, shall be final, unless reversed on appeal to the Secretary of the Treasury”; see “An Act making appropriations for sundry civil expenses of the Government for the fiscal year ending June 13, 1895, and for other purposes,” chap. 301, 28 Stat. 372, 390 (August 18, 1894); McClain, *In Search of Equality*, 215.
42. Paulsen, “The Gresham-Yang Treaty,” 281–297. For treaty text, see Gold, *Forbidden Citizens*, 516–518; “Memorial from the General Department to the Imperial Court,” August 29, 1894, pt. 3, item 40, ZS, 142–143.
43. Commissioner-General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration*, 34–37.
44. Commissioner-General of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration to the Secretary of Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1897* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1897), 49–50; Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 66; Delber L. McKee, *Chinese*

- Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy, 1900–1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 28–34.
45. Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900–1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 28; *United States v. Ju Toy*, 198 U.S. 253 (1905). Opinion of the Attorney General, July 15, 1898, 22–130, as quoted in *Report of William W. Rockhill, Late Commissioner to China with Accompanying Documents* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), 35.
 46. Calculation based on Adam McKeown, “Ritualization of Regulation: The Enforcement of Chinese Exclusion in the United States and China,” *American Historical Review* 108, no. 2 (April 2003): 390. See also Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 32; McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy*, 31; Beth Lew-Williams, “Before Restriction Became Exclusion: America’s Experiment in Diplomatic Immigration Control,” *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 1 (February 2014): 24–56. All migration was temporarily halted during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900.
 47. Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860–1898*, 35th anniversary ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2006).
 48. The Chinese population in Cuba had reached a peak of 59,283 in 1869, but scholars estimate it fell to 15,000 by 1900. Mauro García Triana and Pedro Eng Herrera, *The Chinese in Cuba, 1847–Now* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), xxxiv; Kathleen M. López, *Chinese Cubans: A Transnational History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2013), 50; Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1983), 24–25; Russell McCulloch Story, “Oriental Immigration into the Philippines,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 34, no. 2 (1909): 168–174; Eleanor C. Nordyke and Richard K. C. Lee, “The Chinese in Hawai‘i: A Historical and Demographic Perspective,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 23 (1989): 196–216; Irene Khin Khin Myint Jensen, *The Chinese in the Philippines during the American Regime: 1898–1946* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1975), 14, 16–17, 42; McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks*, 32–43.
 49. Chinese exclusion brought to the Philippines an apparatus of U.S. surveillance that predates the security apparatus described by Alfred W.

- McCoy in *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 8.
50. Transcript of "Joint Resolution to Provide for Annexing the Hawaiian Islands to the United States" (1898) in John A. Mallory, *U.S. Compiled Statutes Annotated* 1916, vol. 5 (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Co., 1916); Tit. 29 Chap. B 4335 (Res. July 7, 1898, No. 55, 1) Exclusion of Chinese from Hawaii; entry into the United States from Hawaii Prohibited in Augustus H. Oakes and Willoughby Maycock, *British and Foreign State Papers, 1890–1891*, vol. 83 (London, 1897), 899–900; Act of the Hawaiian Islands, to authorize the Introduction of Chinese Agricultural Labourers and to amend Chapter 28 of the laws of 1887, entitled "An Act to Regulate Chinese Immigration," November 14, 1890, in Oakes and Maycock, *British and Foreign State Papers*, 899. Later the United States exempted Chinese who were Hawaiian citizens. Jensen, "The Chinese in the Philippines," 58–59.
 51. *Report of the Commissioner of Labor on Hawaii, 1905* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1906); *NYT*, January 21, 1899; McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy*, 35–39; "An Act to prohibit the coming into and to regulate the residence within the United States, its Territories, and all territory under its jurisdiction, and the District of Columbia, of Chinese and persons of Chinese descent," (Chinese Exclusion Act of 1902), Pub. L. 57–89, 32 Stat. 176 (April 29, 1902).
 52. Clark L. Alejandrino, *A History of the 1902 Chinese Exclusion Act: American Colonial Transmission and Deterioration of Filipino-Chinese Relations* (Manila: Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran, 2003), 15–18, 32; *Washington Star* as cited in Richard T. Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila: Family, Identity, and Culture, 1860s–1930s* (Boston: Brill, 2010), 286–287; *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President*, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), 252–253; Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 157–158. Some American businessmen did argue for Chinese labor. Jensen, "The Chinese in the Philippines," 62–63.
 53. As cited by Qin, *The Diplomacy of Nationalism*, 122; Wu Tingfang to Secretary of State John Hay, September 12, 1899, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1899), 212.
 54. "An Act making appropriations to supply deficiencies in the appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 13, 1904, and for prior years, and for other

- purposes,” (Chinese Exclusion Act of 1904), Pub. L. 58–189, 33 Stat. 394, 428 (April 27, 1904); George E. Paulsen, “The Abrogation of the Gresham-Yang Treaty,” *Pacific Historical Review* 40, no. 4 (November 1971): 473.
55. Guanhua Wang, *In Search of Justice: The 1905–1906 Chinese Anti-American Boycott* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center and Harvard University Press, 2001), 81, 115; Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 183–187. For allegations of further Qing government participation, see Daniel J. Meissner, “China’s 1905 Anti-American Boycott: A Nationalist Myth?” *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 10, no. 3/4 (2001): 175–196. On the importance of the overseas Chinese, see Shih-shan H. Ts’ai, “Reaction to Exclusion: The Boycott of 1905 and Chinese National Awakening,” *Historian* 39, no. 1 (1976): 95–110; Delber L. McKee, “The Chinese Boycott of 1905–1906 Reconsidered: The Role of Chinese Americans,” *Pacific Historical Review* 55, no. 2 (1986): 165–191.
 56. As quoted by Wang, *In Search of Justice*, 163, 149; Arnold Xiangze Jiang, *The United States and China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 39; June Mei, Jean Pang Yip, and Russell Leong, “The Bitter Society: *Ku Shehui*, A Translation, Chapters 37–46,” *Amerasia Journal* 8, no. 1 (1981): 33–67.
 57. As quoted by Howard K. Beal, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), 230.
 58. Based on McKeown, “Ritualization of Regulation,” 390.
 59. *Ibid.*, 241–244; William Rockhill to Elihu Root, July 25, 1905, August 15, 1905, October 30, 1905 in *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China 1861–1893*, series 3, vol. 8, 175, 185, 225; Gregory Moore, *Defining and Defending the Open Door Policy: Theodore Roosevelt and China, 1901–1909* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 126–127.
 60. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy*, 135.
 61. Documented deaths between 1885 and 1887 occurred in Squak Valley, Washington Territory (3); Tacoma, Washington Territory (2); Port Townsend, Washington Territory (1); Rock Springs, Wyoming Territory (28); Juneau, District of Alaska (2); Anaconda, Montana Territory (5); Pierce, Idaho Territory (5); Snake River, Oregon (34); and Yreka, California (5). See Appendix A for further details. Mary Gaylord, *Eastern Washington’s Past: Chinese and Other Pioneers 1860–1910* ([Portland, OR]: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1993), 66, 84–85; R. Gregory Nokes, *Massacred*

- for Gold: The Chinese in Hells Canyon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2009); *NYT*, September 23, 1885; *Daily Miner*, April 17, 1885; *Chicago Tribune*, March 6, 1886.
62. On precarity, see Judith Butler, “Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics,” *Revista de Antropologia Iberoamericana* 4, no. 3 (September–December 2009): i–xiii.
 63. Some city maps, like that of Truckee, California, did not include the area of town where Chinese resided. Marysville, California (1885, 1890); Nevada City, California (1885, 1891); Tacoma, Washington Territory (1885, 1888); Eureka, California (1886); Cloverdale, California (1885, 1888); Riverside, California (1884, 1887, 1895); San Jose, California (1884, 1891); Seattle, Washington Territory (1884, 1888); Sanborn Map Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. On relocation of Chinatown in San Jose, see Connie Young Yu, *Chinatown San Jose, USA* (San Jose, CA: San Jose Historical Museum Association, 1991), 11–47.
 64. “List of Chinese Businesses Burned in Tacoma during Anti-Chinese Unrest,” ca. 1886, box 2, file 24, WCS; Chang Yen Hoon, “Receipt for the Indemnity,” in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1890), 118; Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *China and the Overseas Chinese in the United States: 1868–1911* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1983), 77.
 65. USC/WT 1885, 1887.
 66. Robert Edmund Strahorn, *The Resources and Attractions of Washington Territory, for the Home Seeker, Capitalist, and Tourist* (Omaha, NE: Union Pacific Railway, 1888).
 67. “Chinaman Turned White-Man Dies,” *Tacoma News*, December 19, 1916, Chinese Folder, Tacoma Public Library Northwest Room, Tacoma, WA.
 68. USC/CA 1880, 1890, 1900. The federal census only included taxed Indians.
 69. *Ibid.*
 70. Noting that the number of Chinese agricultural workers in California reached new heights in the mid-1880s and 1890s, Sucheng Chan concluded that Chinese expulsions had no long-term effect. Sucheng Chan, *This Bitter-Sweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860–1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 378–381.
 71. Unfortunately, anti-Chinese violence followed the Chinese migrants south. Sporadic local attacks and expulsions continued in rural areas throughout the 1890s and the coordinated anti-Chinese campaign in 1893 was particularly pronounced in southern agricultural areas. Richard Steven

- Street, *Beasts of the Field: A Narrative History of California Farmworkers, 1769–1913* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 386–391.
72. DAC, February 13, 1886; J. S. Look, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 13, 1924, box 27, no. 182, SRR; Charlotte Brooks, *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends: Asian Americans, Housing, and the Transformation of Urban California* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
 73. Coolidge bases her estimate for 1882 on the rate of in/out migration, the federal census, and an annual death rate of 2 percent; see Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 498. When Congress passed the Exclusion Act a few years later, they made it unlawful for these displaced Chinese workers to return. The population dropped despite the continued entry of undocumented migrants.
 74. Law Yow, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 12, 1924, box 27, no. 191, SRR. See also Sue Fawn Chung, *Chinese in the Woods: Logging and Lumbering in the American West* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 98.
 75. Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration*, 501.
 76. On the movement east, see Huping Ling, *Chinese Chicago: Race, Transnational Migration, and Community Since 1870* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 30; Huping Ling, *Chinese St. Louis: From Enclave to Cultural Community* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 27–28.
 77. On Chinese isolation, see Paul C. P. Sui, *The Chinese Laundryman: A Study of Social Isolation*, ed. John Kuo Wei Tchen (New York: New York University Press, 1987); James W. Loewen, *The Mississippi Chinese: Between Black and White*, 2nd ed. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1988), 32–57; Susan B. Carter, “Embracing Isolation: Chinese American Geographic Redistribution during the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943” (unpublished paper, 2013).
 78. No longer willing to allow perpetrators to narrate histories of violence, scholars have increasingly turned to survivors to comprehend the nature and meaning of trauma. The lack of sources produced by Chinese survivors thus poses a large interpretive challenge. Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 7–8; Veena Das, *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 33–34; Kidada E. Williams, *They Left Great Marks on Me: African American Testimonies of Racial Violence from Emancipation*

- to *World War I* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 10; Veena Das, “Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain,” in *Social Suffering*, ed. Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 88.
79. On physical trauma and Chinese migrants, see Ryan P. Harrod and John J. Crandall, “Rails Built of Ancestors’ Bones: The Bioarchaeology of the Overseas Chinese Experience,” *Historical Archeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 148–161. On “refugee temporality,” see Eric Tang, *Unsettled: Cambodian Refugees in the NYC Hyperghetto* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015), 49–51.
 80. Elizabeth Sinn, *Pacific Crossing: California Gold, Chinese Migration, and the Making of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 265–295; Sue Fawn Chung and Priscilla Wegars eds., *Chinese American Death Rituals: Respecting Ancestors* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira, 2005), 1–14; Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 7. On Chinese fatalism, see Vera Schwarcz, “The Pane of Sorrow: Public Uses of Personal Grief in Modern China,” in *Social Suffering*, 122; Vincent Brown, *The Reaper’s Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).
 81. Marlon K. Hom, *Songs of Gold Mountain: Cantonese Rhymes from San Francisco Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 96, 107. See also Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim, and Judy Yung, eds., *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910–1940*, 2nd ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014).
 82. R. David Arkush and Leo O. Lee, trans. and eds., *Land without Ghosts: Chinese Impressions of America from the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 64–65.
 83. Chang-fang Chen, “Barbarian Paradise: Chinese Views of the United States, 1784–1911” (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1985), 221.
 84. Lum May, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of Chinese from Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; Sam Hing, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of Chinese from Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; Thomas Minor, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of Chinese from Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML; Kwok Sue, “Affidavit in the Matter of the Expulsion of

- Chinese from Tacoma,” in Watson Squire to Thomas Bayard (and enclosed documents), July 17, 1886, USDS/ML.
85. For a contemporary example of variegated forms of alienage and citizenship, see Kamal Sadiq, *Paper Citizens: How Illegal Immigrants Acquire Citizenship in Developing Countries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3–23.
 86. Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 2–6; Estelle T. Lau, *Paper Families: Identity, Immigration Administration, and Chinese Exclusion* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Xiaojian Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America: Immigration, Family, and Community, 1940–1965* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).
 87. Unlike today, marriage to a U.S. citizen did not provide an alternative path to citizenship. If a Chinese man married a woman with U.S. citizenship, she adopted his legal status, not the reverse. George Anthony Pepper, *If They Don't Bring Their Women Here: Chinese Female Immigration before Exclusion* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 9.
 88. For “alien citizens,” see Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 2, 8. For the related concept of “blurred membership,” see Sadiq, *Paper Citizens*, 8.
 89. Lee, *At America's Gates*, 226–235.
 90. Herbert F. Beecher to C. S. Fairchild, July 7, 1887, box 9, USCS/EI; Zhang Yinhuan to Imperial Court, memorial, March 30, 1889, pt. 3, item 34, ZS, 127–134.
 91. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, xvi; Lee, *At America's Gates*, 6; Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines*, 6–7; Young, *Alien Nation*, 4, 156.
 92. For a modern example, see John Salt, “Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective,” *International Migration* 38, no. 3 (2000): 31–56. For trafficking of Chinese women in the nineteenth century, see Sinn, *Pacific Crossing*, 226–261.
 93. Yong Chen, *Chinese San Francisco, 1850–1943: A Transpacific Community* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 2002), 45–47, 125–141; McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks*, 178–180, 209–212.
 94. Brooks, *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends*, 11–38; Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?: Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 15–45; Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

95. For “toleration,” see Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the 19th-Century South* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 3.
96. Woo Gen, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 12, 1924, box 27, no. 183, SRR.
97. Chin Cheung, interview by C. H. Burnett, August 12, 1924, box 27, no. 187, SRR. On opportunities for Chinese elites in the Exclusion Period, see Kenneth H. Marcus and Yong Chen, “Inside and Outside Chinatown: Chinese Elites in Exclusion Era California,” *Pacific Historical Review* 80, no. 3 (August 2011): 369–400; Beth Lew-Williams, “‘Chinamen’ and ‘Delinquent Girls’: Intimacy, Exclusion and a Search for California’s Color Line,” *Journal of American History* 104 no. 3 (December 2017): 632–655.
98. In the Gentleman’s Agreement, Japan agreed to halt the migration of Japanese workers from Hawai’i, Canada, Mexico, and Japan to the continental United States. It was not a formal treaty and was never ratified. It was enacted entirely through informal diplomatic agreements and executive action. The Gentleman’s Agreement drew from the precedent of decades of Sino-America negotiations over Chinese exclusion but came after the United States had abandoned this diplomatic approach with China. Japan’s geopolitical strength by the early twentieth century made it a very different case from China. David FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 98.
98. See also Andrea Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion: Transpacific Encounters with Race, Caste, and Borders, 1885–1928* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).
99. “An Act to regulate the immigration of aliens to, and residence of aliens in, the United States,” (Immigration Act of 1917; Barred Zone Act), Pub. L. 65–301, 39 Stat. 874, 8 U.S.C. (February 5, 1917); Immigration Act of 1924 (National Origins Act; Johnson–Reed Act), Pub. L. 68–139, 43 Stat. 153 (May 26, 1924); Rick Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion: Migration and Empire in Filipino America, 1898–1946* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).
100. Jane H. Hong, “The Repeal of Asian Exclusion,” in *American History: Oxford Research Encyclopedias*, accessed June 29, 2016, <http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-16>; K. Scott Wong, *Americans First: Chinese Americans and the Second World War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 109–124.

101. “To authorize the admission into the United States of persons of races indigenous to India, and persons of races indigenous to the Philippine Islands, to make them racially eligible for naturalization, and for other purposes,” (Luce–Celler Act), Pub. L. 79–483, 60 Stat. 416 (July 2, 1946); Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (McCarran–Walter Act), Pub. L. 82–414, 66 Stat. 163 (June 27, 1952); Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Hart–Celler Act), Pub. L. 89–236, 79 Stat. 911 (October 3, 1965); Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America through Immigration Policy, 1850–1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 1–47; “The Rise of Asian Americans,” Pew Research Center: Social and Demographic Trends (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2012).
102. Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 191.
103. Elizabeth M. Hoeffel, Sonya Rastogi, Myoung Ouk Kim, and Hasan Shahid, “The Asian Population, 2010,” U.S. Department of Commerce, (March 2012), <https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-11.pdf>; Min Zhou, *Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, Ethnicity, and Community Transformation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), xi, 43–44.
104. H.R. Res. 683, 158th Cong. (2012); S. Res. 201, 157th Cong. (2011).
105. 158 Cong. Rec., H 3715 (June 18, 2012); 157 Cong. Rec., H 3809 (June 1, 2011); 157 Cong. Rec., S6352 (October 6, 2011).
106. As Gabriel Chin states, “The power to select immigrants on the basis of race is said to remain at the ready. *Chae Chan Ping* and *Fong Yue Ting* continue to be cited in modern decisions of the Supreme Court; because all constitutional immigration law flows from these cases, even decisions that do not cite them must rely on cases that do.” See Gabriel J. Chin, “Segregation’s Last Stronghold: Race Discrimination and the Constitutional Law of Immigration,” *UCLA Law Review* 46, no. 1 (1998): 15; David C. Brotherton and Philip Kretsedemas, eds., *Keeping Out the Other: A Critical Introduction to Immigration Enforcement Today* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 12–13; Michael A. Scaperlanda, *Immigration Law: A Primer* (Washington, DC: Federal Judicial Center, 2009); *Padilla v. Kentucky*, 559 U.S. 356 (2010); Michael J. Wishnie, “Laboratories of Bigotry? Devolution of the Immigration Power, Equal Protection, and Federalism,” *New York University Law Review* 76 (2001): 493–531.

EPILOGUE

1. *NYT*, July 20, 1890.
2. “An Act to protect all persons in the United States in their civil rights, and furnish the means of their vindication,” (Civil Rights Act of 1866), chap. 31, 14 Stat. 27–30 (April 9, 1866); U.S. Const. amend. XIV; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Elliott West, “Reconstruction Race,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 7–26; Najia Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans, and Racial Anxiety in the United States, 1848–82* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 194–195; Joshua Paddison, *American Heathens: Religion, Race, and Reconstruction in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 114–117; Cathleen D. Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service, 1869–1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 18–20, 26–29; Gregory P. Downs and Kate Masur, eds., *The World the Civil War Made* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 8; Sarah H. Cleveland, “Powers Inherent in Sovereignty: Indians, Aliens, Territories and the Nineteenth Century Origins of Plenary Power Over Foreign Affairs,” *Texas Law Review* 81, no. 1 (2002): 1–284; Steven Hahn, “Slave Emancipation, Indian Peoples, and the Projects of a New American Nation-State,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 3, no. 3 (September 2013): 307–330. Mexican Americans had already been granted U.S. citizenship (and legal whiteness) at the close of the Mexican-American War as part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848). This was confirmed in an 1897 case, *In Re: Rodriguez*.
3. William J. Novak, “The Legal Transformation of Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century America,” in *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History*, ed. Meg Jacobs, William J. Novak, and Julian E. Zelizer (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 85–119. See also Kunal M. Parker, *Making Foreigners: Immigration and Citizenship Law in America, 1600–2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 23–70, 77–85.
4. On slavery as an obstacle to the federalization of immigration control, see Karin Anderson Ponzer, “Inventing the Border: Law and Immigration in the United States: 1882–1891” (Ph.D. diss., The New School, 2012), 14–21, 64; Parker, *Making Foreigners*, 85–99, 104, 121.
5. Cleveland, “Powers Inherent in Sovereignty,” 89–98.

6. On variations of status, rights, and privileges within U.S. citizenship, see Barbara Young Welke, *Law and the Borders of Belonging in the Long Nineteenth Century United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Nancy F. Cott, "Marriage and Women's Citizenship in the United States, 1830–1934," *American Historical Review* 103, no. 5 (December 1998): 1440–1474; Linda K. Kerber, "The Meanings of Citizenship," *Journal of American History* 84, no. 3 (December 1997): 833–854; Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); Parker, *Making Foreigners*, 117, 143; Stephen Kantrowitz, *More Than Freedom: Fighting for Black Citizenship in a White Republic, 1829–1889* (New York: Penguin, 2012); Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), 107; Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligation of Citizenship* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1998); Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration and Citizenship* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).
7. Parker, *Making Foreigners*, 11; Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 20–24; Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 7.
8. There were still nativist impulses in the antebellum period; see John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1955), 5–11; Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.
9. Cong. Globe, 41st Cong., 2d Sess. 5152 (1870).
10. Massachusetts senator Charles Sumner introduced the amendment to strike the word "white" from the statute. Cong. Globe, 41st Cong., 2d Sess. 5169 (1870). Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 13.
11. Cleveland, "Powers Inherent in Sovereignty," 98; Linda Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien: Dilemmas of Contemporary Membership* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 54; Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 18; Daniel Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 95–130; Parker, *Making Foreigners*, 119–130; Salyer, *Laws Harsh as*

- Tigers*, 23. Gabriel J. Chin, “Is There a Plenary Power Doctrine? A Tentative Apology and Prediction for our Strange but Unexceptional Constitutional Immigration Law,” *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* 14 (2000): 257–287; Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 191–219. For the exclusion cases that established the plenary power doctrine, see *Chae Chan Ping*, 130 U.S. 581 (1889); *Fong Yue Ting v. United States*, 149 U.S. 698 (1893); *United States v. Ju Toy*, 198 U.S. 253 (1905); *Tiaco v. Forbes*, 228 U.S. 549, 557 (1913).
12. *Yick Wo v. Hopkins*, 118 U.S. 356 (1886); *Wong Wing v. U.S.*, 163 U.S. 228 (1896); *U.S. v. Wong Kim Ark*, 169 U.S. 649 (1898).
 13. Parker, *Making Foreigners*, 84, 103–110, 123; Hidetaka Hirota, “‘The Great Entrepot for Mendicants’: Foreign Poverty and Immigration Control in New York State to 1882,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 33, no. 2 (Winter 2014): 5–32; Hidetaka Hirota, “Nativism, Citizenship, and the Deportation of Paupers in Massachusetts, 1837–1883” (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 2012); Hidetaka Hirota, “The Moment of Transition: State Officials, the Federal Government, and the Formation of American Immigration Policy,” *Journal of American History* 99, no. 4 (2013): 1092–1108; Brendan P. O’Malley, “Protecting the Stranger: The Origins of U.S. Immigration Regulation in Nineteenth-Century New York” (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2015); Gerald L. Neuman, “The Lost Century of American Immigration Law (1776–1875),” *Columbia Law Review* 93, no. 8 (December 1993): 1833–1901; Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation*, 49–63; Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 23–32; Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 18; Patrick Ettinger, *Imaginary Lines: Border of Enforcement and the Origins of Undocumented Immigration, 1882–1930* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 15–25; Hiroshi Motomura, *Immigration Outside the Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 99. For “American gatekeeping,” see Erika Lee, *At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 7, 10–12. The Page Act of 1875 restricted the immigration of “oriental” prostitutes and “coolies,” but it also targeted a small number of convicts and prostitutes from all nations.
 14. The Supreme Court rulings in the *Head Money Cases* (1884), which challenged the 1882 Immigration Act, did cite international law as a source of authority and declined a theory of plenary powers advanced by the government. After establishing plenary power in *Chae Chan Ping* (1891),

- the Supreme Court then used the doctrine in *Nishimura Ekiu v. U.S.*, 142 U.S. (1892), which reviewed a case of exclusion under the 1891 Immigration Act. *Yamataya v. Fisher*, 189 U.S. 86 (1903) also cited plenary power in an exclusion case under the 1891 Immigration Act. This ruling also established that aliens had a right to due process in matters of procedure. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, 136–138, 149; Cleveland, “Powers Inherent in Sovereignty,” 121, 137, 158. The plenary power doctrine became so deeply engrained in American law that by 1909 the Supreme Court declared, “Over no conceivable subject is the legislative power of Congress more complete” than immigration. *Oceanic Steam Navigation Co. v. Stranahan*, 214 U.S. 320, 339 (1909); Hiroshi Motomura, *Americans in Waiting: The Lost Story of Immigration and Citizenship in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 116.
15. Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America through Immigration Policy, 1850–1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 17–42; Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 21–55. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers*, xiii–xvi.
 16. Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien*, 4.
 17. *Ibid.*, 40–53; Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 38–39; Parker, *Making Foreigners*, 119; Peter H. Schuck and Rogers M. Smith, *Citizenship without Consent: Illegal Aliens in the American Polity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 36. For critiques of this position, see Bas Schotel, *On the Right of Exclusion: Law, Ethics and Immigration Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Bridget Anderson, Nandita Sharma, and Cynthia Wright, “Editorial: Why No Borders?” *Refuge* 26, no. 2 (2009): 5–18; Joseph H. Carens, “Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders,” *Review of Politics* 49, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 251–273.
 18. Rosina Lozano, *An American Language: The History of Spanish in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018); Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Glenn, *Unequal Freedom*; Laura E. Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 138–147; Gregg Cantrell, “‘Our Very Pronounced Theory of Equal Rights to All’: Race, Citizenship, and Populism in the South Texas Borderlands,” *Journal of American History* 100, no. 3 (December 2013): 663–690; In Re: Rodriguez, District Court, W.D. Texas 81 F. 337 (1897).
 19. “An act to provide for the allotment of lands in severalty to Indians on the various reservations, and to extend the protection of the laws of the United

- States and the Territories over the Indians, and for other purposes" (The Dawes Act; The Indian General Allotment Act of 1887), chap. 119, 24 Stat. 388 (February 8, 1887). The act declared that Indians who had already "adopted the habits of civilized life" separate from a tribe or who accepted allotments could be granted citizenship. On federal wardship, see Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*, 32; Cleveland, "Powers Inherent in Sovereignty," 54–81. On the decimation of Native Americans, see Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).
20. Downs and Masur, *The World the Civil War Made*, 3–7; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 457–459, 528–529, 562–563, 582; George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 191; Herbert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 11. On "paramilitarism" and its effects, see Steven Hahn, *A Nation under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 238, 288, 312.
 21. Hahn, *A Nation under Our Feet*, 413–442; Rable, *But There Was No Peace*, 10, 61–2; Joel Williamson, *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Leon F. Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Vintage, 1999).
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