UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Diversions of Progress: Popular Culture and Visions of Modernity in the Transpacific Borderlands

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

In

Literature

By

Lauren Chase Smith

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The Dissertation of Lauren Chase Smith is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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2012

I dedicate this dissertation to Dr. Adrian Charles Smith, Jr.

"But my heart is not weary, it's light and it's free
I've got nothing but affection for all those who sailed with me"
-Bob Dylan

Thanks for being there, Pop, in ways both great and small.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Diversions of Progress: Popular Culture and Visions of Modernity in the Transpacific Borderlands

By

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Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

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"Diversions of Progress" reconstructs the North American West and Pacific as a borderland that materialized through the interplay of cultural economies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. By the 1890s, the U.S. West was widely regarded as a symbol of both the nation's primitive past and promising industrial future. Literary Naturalism helped perpetuate the image of this region as an *old* and *new* frontier, becoming a genre known for its fantasies of how regenerative contact with the wilderness might still be possible, even if only through nostalgic reproduction. Similar to visions of modernity in commercial pastimes, such as side

shows and regional tourist attractions, these stories expressed longing for the nation's fading pastoral landscapes and lost days of white egalitarianism through fears of growing racial diversity and expanding U.S. boundaries. However, as they circulated in the borderlands of California, Mexico, and Hawai'i—regions tied to the U.S. West and to other political, economic, and social cartographies—these cultural forms mirrored as well as diverged from the frontier myth. Popular conceptions of *Old* California, *Old* Hawai'i, and *Old* Mexico as lagging behind the Eastern U.S., moreover, are also contradicted by patterns of borderlands modernization, such as cattle ranching in Hawai'i, cotton growing across Southern California and Baja California, and agriculture in California.

Drawing on literary analysis, archival research, and current trends in transnational American studies, I trace the role of material culture in shaping the multiple, converging, and contradictory modernities of this transpacific terrain. I analyze novels by Jack London, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Frank Norris in relation to Wild West and Pacific amusements at San Diego's 1915 world's fair; vice districts in Tijuana and Mexicali; the postcard industry at the U.S.-Mexico border; and Wild West shows featuring Hawaiian cowboys in Hawai'i and the mainland U.S. I contend that these cross-border entertainments illuminate how the West was not a discrete frontier but a border zone in which those deemed racial threats to U.S. national progress—such as Mexicans, native Hawaiians, and Asian immigrants—were both objects and agents of modernity.

INTRODUCTION: Romances of the West

The U.S. West appeared in turn-of-the-century popular culture as a symbol of the nation's primitive past and promising industrial future. Narratives of the "Wild West" that had first gained wide readership through dime novel westerns from the 1860s to the 1890s were performed off the page in live action of Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Shows. After the heyday of Cody's shows, between 1900 and 1917, the Wild West continued to captivate American audiences in new forms of entertainment.[1] Early cinemas drew the public together into dark theaters to watch heroic gunslingers stave off Indian attacks in bygone times and places. As the U.S. seemed to be moving further from the frontier days at the dawn of the twentieth century, the popular picture of the west seemed less and less of a real place and more a remembrance, an image on a postcard, a souvenir photograph. For the modern American, the frontier was as much the manifest destiny of the United States as it was a tourist destination. Nostalgia for national origins was most famously articulated in Frederick Jackson Turner's popular "Frontier Thesis," which he delivered to the national audience at Chicago's 1893 world's fair. In this speech, Turner casts a mythic history of the United States that begins with the first pilgrims in Plymouth and ends with the discovery of gold in California. According to his narrative, the American national character was formed by westward expansion across the "successive frontiers" of the Atlantic coast, Alleghany Mountains, the Mississippi River, Missouri River, the Rocky Mountains, and finally

[1] From this point forward, I will use the capitalized "Wild West" to refer to this real and imagined region of the U.S.

California.[2] As they pursued this steady geographic movement across mountains, deserts, and rivers, American pioneers encountered new and different primitive societies that compelled at once their return to primitive conditions and, through adaptation to change, their "perennial rebirth" to even greater states of social evolution.[3] For all its wildness, the west in Turner's imagination represents a place that does not deter or defeat bur rather stimulates, contours, and improves: it is the fate of generations of pioneers whose westbound footfalls gradually produced a highly evolved and uniquely American democratic social order.

For Turner, the Great West *is* history, the time and space that now figures self-consciously in the national imaginary as the ennobling and legitimating origin of American identity. From his historical perspective, it was also those literal geographic sites that still lagged behind the more evolved, more civilized, more modern time and space of the Atlantic Coast. In his writings after the famed 1893 speech, Turner strives to apply his spatio-temporal map of American modernity to the changing contexts of nation building, which, according to his story, have shifted from the older agrarian economy and the business of settling the frontier to *modern* forms of industry, the domination of the laboring class by *foreign immigrants*, and the new role of the United States as an *empire* with political and commercial interests overseas.[4] In "The Problem

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[2] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significant of the Frontier in American History," originally read at the American Historical Association meeting in Chicago, July 12, 1893. Reprinted in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935). Web. Hypertext available through the University of Virginia American Studies Program.
[3] Ibid.
[4] The emphasis here is mine.

of the West," he aims to account for how these changes have brought about differential development across the various frontier lands in his schema. Here, he frames his idea of "the west" as an analytic referring to "a form of society, rather than an area" and to "a phase of social organization."[5] Recalling his earlier pronouncement in 1893, he elaborates on how western territory operated in the past and became the blueprint for American nation building. "It is the term applied to the region whose social conditions result from the application of older institutions and ideas to the transforming influences of free land…Decade after decade, West after West, this rebirth of American society has gone on, has left its traces behind it, and has reacted on the East."[6] In the essay that follows, he shows how the "traces" of the frontier are apparent to varying degrees in the successive frontier zones running from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Having already defined the physical geographies of these frontiers and their roles in the past, Turner is concerned with identifying the social traces of frontier life in the present day. In the course of his survey, he upholds the region he calls the *Old Northwest* (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin) as emblematic of the nation's capacity more generally to progress beyond frontier conditions. The *Old Northwest*, in his analysis, is a kind of middle ground between the old frontier life of the West and new modern life of the East. Here, the ideals of the self-made man are alive and well even as these states have developed corporate economies and thus demonstrated that they have "assimilated to the East." Compared to ideal Old

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[5] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Problem of the West," in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935). Web. Hypertext available through the University of Virginia American Studies Program.
[6] Ibid.

Northwest, the "new South" (southern states) and the "new West" (states on West Coast) are progressing along paths forestalled by debt, unrest, and ongoing construction. Nonetheless, finding reassurance in his teleological frontier narrative, Turner views these unevenly developed frontier zones as "seeking an equilibrium" whereby "diverse elements are being fused into national unity." The industries, economies, and institutions of the "new west" (land west of the Mississippi) for example, which he sees as presently lagging behind those of the Atlantic, will eventually achieve a higher degree of civilization.[7]

According to Turner's organic vision of the nation, the expansion of national *space* has determined national *time* since the beginning, making continued territorial acquisition the necessary and justified means of carrying the nation from its point of origin into the future. He in fact drew on his frontier thesis to rationalize the U.S. acquisition of Guam, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and annexation of Hawai'i in 1898 as the "logical outcome of the nation's march to the Pacific" and the start of a new political role for the U.S. as an empire.[8] Turner's expansionist rhetoric echoed many of his contemporaries who wished to continue the "winning of the west" from the

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[7] Ibid.

[8] Turner, "Social forces in American History," Annual address as the president of the American Historical Association, delivered at Indianapolis, December 28, 1910. Reprinted by permission from *The American Historical Review*, January, 1911 in Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Problem of the West," in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935). Web. Hypertext available through the University of Virginia American Studies Program. Also see Turner, "Contributions of the West to American Democracy," originally published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1903. Reprinted in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935). Web. Hypertext available through the University of Virginia American Studies Program.

nineteenth century into the twentieth.[9] In this view, the U.S. had realized its potential as free, democratic, industrial society through the formative frontier days and was now empowered to compete on the global stage for land beyond its continental shores. Turner was notably concerned about how industrialization occurring in the nation's interior and territorial acquisition occurring overseas would affect the carefully cultivated and singular ideals of American democracy. However, his vision of the nation as a living, growing, evolving organism was based on a faith in its ability to adjust and improve in the face of changing environments—even if these environments now lay in the unfamiliar oceanic borderlands of the Caribbean and Pacific. [10]

The Borderlands of American Exceptionalism

Although he looks ahead to the harmony and unity promised by his developmental narrative, Turner's idea of the West remains a deeply nostalgic one. All time and space exist on a continuum from old to new, primitive to civilized, premodern to modern, along an endless progressive path. Yet his romanticization of the 1830s as the culminating period of agrarian democracy in the U.S., when more "free lands" of the West still lay ahead and were thus still productively shaping the American character, inhibits Turner's celebratory projections of the nation's next steps. In spite of his faith in metaphors of natural growth, rejuvenation, and reproduction, Turner remains skeptical of equating new forms of corporate capitalism

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[9] Matthew Frye Jacobsen. *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 257.
[10] Turner, "Social forces in American History."

with the good, noble, egalitarian, agrarian economies of Jackson and Jefferson's eras.[11] He marvels at the unprecedented accumulation of wealth by individual capitalists but, given the class stratification that has accompanied their ascendancy, regards them as part of a change that is not necessarily an improvement on the original pioneer hero.[12] In the end, he maintains a reverence for the Wild West, a longing for the good old days that many of Turner's contemporaries shared and shaped historical paradigms to come.

Turner's notion of "history as progress" aspires to account for twentieth-century U.S. imperialism as an outgrowth of nineteenth-century manifest destiny, as simply the next sequence of national evolution.[13] This contradiction, as David Noble and other scholars in the field of American studies over the past two decades have argued, perpetuated notions of U.S. exceptionalism popular in Turner's day and influential to the present. This was basically the belief that through its independence

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[11] David W. Noble. *Death of a Nation: American Culture and the End of Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 15.

[12] "In a word, the old pioneer individualism is disappearing, while the forces of social combination are manifesting themselves as never before. The self-made man has become, in popular speech, the coal baron, the steel king, the oil king, the cattle king, the railroad magnate, the master of high finance, the monarch of trusts. The world has never before seen such huge fortunes exercising combined control over the economic life of a people, and such luxury as has come out of the individualistic pioneer democracy of America in the course of competitive evolution." Turner, "Social forces in American History."

[13] As David Noble explains, Turner viewed the nation as following a progressive path like an evolving, adapting, and improving organism. "Progressive history existed because it was an expression of a dynamic nature. Nature was an unfolding process carrying humanity ever upward on a progressive course. This was a universal nature that transcended particular national landscapes. One should not assert the possibility of a universal national because the universal was transnational. A nation was provincial. It was an expression of an ephemeral state." Noble, 7.

from British colonial control, westward expansion across the frontiers of North America, and the unique democratic social order such encounters produced, the United States was a free nation with a God-given right to spread democracy around the globe.[14] Because all who were not Anglo, male, and Protestant lacked history, according to this exceptionalist ideology, their conquest, exploitation, enslavement, genocide, or exclusion from citizenship did not pose a contradiction to this national image.[15] It also did not appear to render the U.S. an empire. In *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*, Amy Kaplan argues that the disavowal of the U.S. as a continuously operating empire hinged on a key spatial and temporal distinction. Namely, this is the "central geographic bifurcation between continental expansion and overseas empire, and the related, yet not identical, division between territorial annexation and deterritorialized forms of global domination."[16] In her readings of popular novels, journalistic accounts, films and other cultural texts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Kaplan investigates how U.S. imperialism operates in disorderly, non-linear, and fragmented ways, and how its networks of power reveal the myriad overlaps, and indeed collapses, of a supposed imperial center

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[14] In her critical definition of "empire," Shelley Streeby foregrounds key contradictions in the ideology of manifest destiny from which Turner's frontier thesis emerged. "The concept of Manifest Destiny derived in part from earlier ideas about he Puritan settlers as God's chosen people, who were working out their destiny in the Promised Land. It also built on eighteenth-century Lockean arguments that possession of land was justified by use, as well as the Jeffersonian notion that the extension of agrarian democracy was coterminous with the extension of freedom." *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, eds. Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler. (New York: New York University Press: 2007), 98.

[15] Noble, 10.

[16] Amy Kaplan. *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 17.

and its distant peripheries—or in her analysis, the blurring of the domestic and the foreign. Her project writes against those histories of the U.S. that reiterate Turner's frontier narrative through their representation of 1898 and the United States' continued global expansion in the twentieth century as the activities of a new, aberrant, even inadvertent empire.[17] It also contributes to revisionist studies of the U.S. that disrupt the liberal narratives of greater unity, democracy, and equality for all. Such stories often tell of the universal national subject with little regard for the terms of difference through which this subject is defined—the racial, class, gendered, religious, and national outsiders who consolidate the ideal citizen.[18] As I discuss in what follows, American exceptionalism relies on the clear distinction between nineteenth century continental expansion and twentieth century overseas annexation; it also relies on the production of the U.S. West as a region forever teetering on the verge of savagery and civilization, the past and the future, in short, a long-lost frontier whose continual recovery and reproduction in the thick of modernity's relentless advance is a necessary part of the national fiction.

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[17] Kaplan, 17.

[18] In his analysis of the contradictions between liberalism and civic-republicanism, Nikhil Singh demonstrates how both the subject of the market and the subject of the nation depend upon the perpetuation of racial inequalities. "In the US context, the ideal national subject has actually been a highly specific person whose universality has been fashioned from a succession of those who have designated his antithesis, those irreducibly *non-national* subjects who appeared in the different guises of slave, Indian, and, at times, immigrant. The capaciousness of American nationalism was due not to its inclusiveness, but to its ability to accommodate significant national, class, and religious diversity among its settler populations." See Nikhil Singh, "Rethinking Race and Nation," in *American Studies: An Anthology*, eds. Janice A. Radaway et al., (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 8.

The Old Days in Modern Times

The notion of the belated entry of the U.S. West into the drama of modernity begun in the Northeast had important consequences not only for the stories the Northeast told about the West but those the West told about itself. A salient feature of representations of California, Hawai'i, and Mexico in literature, world's fairs amusements, Wild West shows, tourism advertisements, and other popular media at the turn of the century is their antiquity. Echoing the dominant narrative, they represent California as *Old* California, Mexico as *Old* Mexico, and Hawai'i as *Old* Hawai'i. Visitors to San Diego in 1915, for example, arrived expecting to enjoy the city's many modern attractions—the luxury hotel on Coronado island, the ease of light rail and automobile transportation, the landscaped grounds of Balboa Park where a world's fair was currently being held. They also anticipated the allure of tourism across the border in Tijuana where, as local papers advertised, they could still encounter traces of the old days. In an advertisement for the "Typical Mexican Fair" in this Mexican border city, the *San Diego Union* informed the reader that the "romance of the West is still to be found at Tijuana—the old West, of which but memories now remain."[19] A full description of the myriad entertainments offered by the fair follows, giving a preview of the ways the tourist will experience this space it characterizes as "the last stand of the old days."[20] A separate brochure informs tourists that this fair was an opportunity for them to "study Native Life in Old Mexico," only thirty minutes from San Diego by automobile. Here they could eat Spanish and Mexican food and

[19] *San Diego Union* September 5, 1915.
[20] Ibid.

enjoy "fifty amusement concessions, Mexican Games of all kinds, Bull Fights, Cock Fights, Spanish Dances, Mexican Wild West Shows."[21] If they came for the fair's grand opening on July 4th they could even celebrate "American Independence Day in Old Mexico."[22]

Across the Pacific in Hawai'i in the early years of the twentieth century, another version of the Old West was being staged. In December of 1907, the *Hawaiian Gazette* advertised an upcoming Wild West Show in Honolulu, where attendees could watch native Hawaiian and Anglo-American cowboys compete against one another for the title of world championship. The roots of cattle ranching and cowboy culture in both Hawai'i and the mainland U.S., the article reminds the reader, lie in Spanish Mexico. A major draw of the competition, therefore, was to see which roper has mastered the art of the original Mexican cowboy. "Has the Hawaiian cowboy improved on the skill of his Mexican teacher to the same extent as the American cowboy? This remains to be see when the best American and Hawaiian twirlers of the lariat meet in competition for the world's championship in the baseball park next Friday and Saturday afternoons."[23] Cowboys would test their abilities in a range of contests similar to those of Wild West shows made popular by Buffalo Bill Cody on the mainland: a bronco busting contest, wild steer race, wild cattle roping, and riding and calf catching. According to the program provided in the *Maui News*, there was also a "grand parade in the morning by cowboys, cowgirls, native boys

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[21] *Welcome Tijuana Typical Mexican fair, Tijuana, Old Mexico: open from July 1st to December 31st* 1915, San Diego: Elite Printing Co., 1915 (UC San Diego Mandeville Special Collections).
[22] *San Diego Union* September 5, 1915.
[23] *Hawaiian Gazette* December 10, 1907, 5.

dressed in Indian costumes, and old stage coach representing the pioneer days." It also included a "stagecoach holdup" performed "by cowboys in wild Comanche Indian costumes" that was to show "hardships endured by pioneers of the western plains."[24]

Wild West shows continued to be a popular affair in Hawai'i and, similar to those on the mainland, their format eventually shifted away from Cody's trademark "stagecoach holdup" towards roping competitions similar to those found in today's rodeo shows. If the Anglo-American cowboy's violent defeat of indigenous populations (whether native American, or, as was the case in Honolulu, native Hawaiians in native American masquerade) became less of a popular spectacle by 1917, the pageantry of westward expansion lived on in other arenas and in other Wild Wests. On the eve of Prohibition, for example, a *Los Angeles Times* article announced to its readers, "Prohibition in this Country to Make Old Mexico Paradise for Sportsmen." Navigating the reader east of Los Angeles and south of the Calexico border, the author locates "Old Mexico" in Mexicali, Baja California. Here, you could satisfy your thirst for liquor prohibited on American soil within the cavernous Owl club, an establishment meant to invoke the saloons frequented by cowboys of the silent screen. You could even imagine yourself in the company of Hollywood western star William Hart. But, as the Owl's American manager reassures the journalist, tourists wishing to relive the gold rush days could expect all of its diversions with none of its real dangers: "There is little noise though there are nearly 500 people in the combination saloon, gambling hall, dance hall, theater. There is no voice lifted, no

[24] *The Maui News* Saturday November 30, 1907.

fighting and no one ever hurt or ever has been or will be…Picture a place like this in the days of '49 at San Francisco. There would be a murder every few minutes. Here people are as safe as they would be on Broadway, New York or Los Angeles."[25] In this bustling tourist town, a sense of "Old Mexico" was made available for visitors to explore and consume. A glass of beer, a poker game, or a dance card offered the pleasures of the lawless frontier in a space where such indulgent, illicit, or deviant behaviors were permitted but also monitored. The vice district in Mexicali promised an authentic experience of original frontier conditions that was also a self-conscious production, or, more accurately, a reproduction. This version of the Wild West was less an untouched primitive space as much as it was a very modern, American space that promoted itself as a vendor of frontier life for the modern American consumer eager to spend a dollar or a weekend on leisure activities. Sidling up to the bar in an American-owned saloon, the visitor could "picture" themselves in a tamer, quainter version of the "days of '49," while at the same time they were encouraged to feel as safe as they would on the streets of modern American cities like Los Angeles and New York.

Transpacific Borderlands: Visions of Modernity in California, Hawai'i, and Mexico

These accounts from the early twentieth century conjure up the cities of Tijuana, Honolulu, and Mexicali as old or primitive, places on the vanishing point of modernity, closer to what the original Anglo-American pioneers might have

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[25] Spayde, F. C. *Los Angeles Times* Apr 20, 1919. Originally CTD in Paul J. Vanderwood, *Satan's Playground: Mobsters and Movie Stars at America's Greatest Gaming Resort* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 83.

encountered. I juxtapose them in order to dramatize how the American frontier took on a range of meanings within and across this region, a space I refer to in my dissertation as the transpacific borderlands. I read these border spaces as acting less like mirrors and more like prisms that transmit as well as bend, scatter, multiply, and distort dominant national scripts. As I mention above, Cody's "stagecoach holdup" was a prominent feature of his wild-west productions. Yet the *Maui News* describes the "Indians" in the Honolulu show as "cowboys in wild Comanche Indian costumes"—cowboys who would, at a later moment, be the main feature of the show as masterful ropers and bronco busters. The advertisements for the Typical Mexican Fair in Tijuana invoke a similarly uncanny image of the west, depicting Tijuana as at place where one could witness scenes of the "old days" through spectator sports and games associated with very different nationalist pasts— a "Mexican Wild West Show," on the one hand, and a Fourth of July celebration, on the other. How would American tourists reconcile celebrating U.S. independence from imperial Britain in a Mexican town, and at a border created through the United States' own imperialist conquest of Mexico in 1848? Was this a performance of solidarity between neighboring nations, or a replay of historical antagonisms? Who were the natives representing the "Native Life in Old Mexico" and what was their role in this reenactment of the "romance of the West"? Americans drawn across the border further east in Mexicali were also promised an authentic old west experience in the city's saloons and gambling halls. At what point did they cross the border simply to enjoy the prohibited pleasures of their contemporary moment, and when did they experience these as the Old West, as Old Mexico?

I question the reproduction of the West in these spaces to show its dissonances, instabilities, and divergences. I also do so to show how the presumably singular, stable U.S. frontier has always been a borderlands. Irrespective of its significance for the U.S., the west represented something very different for Mexican states whose northern boundary was shaped by the U.S-Mexico war, and for the Hawaiian islands whose sovereign status was denied with their annexation to the U.S. in 1898. Moreover, the "Wild Wests" recreated on Mexican and Hawaiian soil did not only refer to the American frontier or to American imperialism but tied these spaces to other colonial histories in this transpacific crossroads. Contrary to Turner's idea of the west as an underdeveloped outpost of the nation, the transpacific borderlands I examine in my dissertation were also growing through their own forms of capitalist development. Vice economies in Tijuana and Mexicali; cotton growing across California's Imperial Valley and Baja California's Mexicali Valley; and the sugar industry spanning the Hawai'i-California border shared many features of what had become recognized as "modern" economies in the periods of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. By the turn of the century, for example, many were businesses modeled after what historian Allen Trachtenberg calls the "legally sanctioned fiction" of the corporation, wherein a group of individuals bound by contracts were entitled to own property, pursue investments, integrate disparate steps of industrial processes under one company and manage multiple companies through a central administration.[26] If the corporation was becoming the unit of the American economy and to incorporate was becoming the new

[26] Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 83.

sign of American individualism, then corporately run sugar and agriculture industries in the borderlands of the West were contributing their share to the narrative of national modernity. Cross-border enterprises exemplify how peripheral sites and populations were necessary for the growth of the nation-state. In this respect, non-white immigrant and indigenous groups encountered in or recruited to these borderlands underpinned these regional economies. As cheap labor or colonial subjects, they occupied precarious and exploited positions but, more than outsiders to national modernity, they were also active participants in these modern times and places.

As a whole, my dissertation takes for granted that Turner's frontier thesis was the dominant national narrative in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. That the myth of the frontier shaped popular ideas of national origins and future progress has been well examined in many works of history and cultural studies.[27] What I investigate are how this narrative is reiterated in as well as distorted, broken down, resisted, and reconfigured in the borderlands of California, Mexico, and Hawai'i. I examine how divergent modernities took shape in material cultures spanning these border regions, and disrupt the assumed uniformity, linearity, and universality of the frontier myth. The popular cultures I examine include Wild West Shows in Hawai'i, vice tourism in Baja California, and cheap amusements at San Diego's 1915 world's fair. I read these with attention to how they produced the West and Pacific as the edge of a "new empire" and as deeply rooted in the primitive past—spaces lost to modernity that could only be recuperated through nostalgic commodity forms like the

[27] See Patricia Limerick (1988); David Noble (2002); Richard Slotkin (1992); Alan Trachtenberg (1982).

souvenir, the curio, and the memento. Postcards, tourist brochures, photographs, restored Spanish missions—all were commodities that sold on the idea of their authenticity, on the idea that they bore at least a trace of an original culture whose recovery was still possible through its purchase. My study of the modern self-reflexivity of these border zones pivots around how memorialization itself became an industry that worked through other modern industries (agriculture, transportation, etc.) to produce consumable versions of places imagined to be suddenly vanishing, or, as the *San Diego Union* says of Tijuana in the above-mentioned article, places that are "the last stand of the old days." I also look at literature by Helen Hunt Jackson, Frank Norris, and Jack London—U.S. authors traveling to or living in these border regions—that popularized visions of modernity often in correspondence with the amusement cultures I study. Following culture through its materialist productions, I trace patterns of capitalist interests, such as the Hawai'i-California sugar trade and cotton industry between Southern California and Baja California, that often acted out of line with and sometimes in direct opposition to the interests of the nation-state.

Method

Modern Times and Places

Beginning in the nineteenth century, the sense of what it meant to be modern was constituted through a self-reflexivity that allowed the modern subject to distinguish the present as *new* and thus as a break from the past or from what now appears *old*. It asserted a linear, developmental order and universal condition to human life, whereby some spaces and populations were marked as modern and others were

defined as lagging behind (pre-modern) or as antithetical to (primitive) the modern world.[28] Claims to modernity by one society or another is nothing new, and while these claims may be rooted in a common belief that a given society is new, different, and improved upon in comparison to its own past or to other societies, past or present, modern societies themselves take on different defining characteristics over time. "It sometimes seems that what is quintessentially 'modern'," Stuart Hall writes "is not so much any one period or any particular form of social organization so much as the fact that a society becomes seized with and pervaded by this idea of ceaseless development, progress, and dynamic change; by the restless forward movement of time and history; by what some theorists call the compression of time and space (Giddens, 1984; Harvey, 1989)."[29] Without exceptionalizing the transpacific borderlands as a unique locale in this respect, I investigate the conditions of emergence of modernity here as well as its contradictions.

I draw upon social theorists of modernity like Hall and others to analyze how dominant and divergent modernities took shape in the U.S. West and its borderlands. Their mode of inquiry into such spatio-temporal cartographies of modernity lends me terms for dislodging Turner's "Great West" from the order of national time imagined as continuous, universal, and developmental and the map of nation building imagined along a geographic gradation from urban centers in the East to wild frontiers of the West. In her work of new western history, *The Legacy of Conquest*, Patricia Limerick

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[28] Chandan Reddy, "Modern," *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. Eds. Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler (New York University Press: 2007), 161.
[29] *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, eds. Stuart Hall et al. (Cambridge, Mass. : Blackwell, 1996), 17.

writes, "A belief in progress has been a driving force in the modern world, as a depository of enormous hopes for progress, the American West may well be the best place in which to observe the complex and contradictory outcome of that faith."[30] I approach cultures and economies in the transpacific borderlands with a similar eye for contradiction, and an eye for how space and time are more than mere coordinates on a grid. I am interested in how these regions appear in both Turnerian historiographies and contemporary cultures of the period under study in step with the dominant national narrative and operating along different temporalities. In what he calls a "geohistorical" methodology, Peter Taylor approaches modernity as "a single interconnected story and map," while at the same time remaining attuned to how particular hegemonic modernities have emerged in certain times and places. In viewing modernity as a "combined story-and-map," he argues: "The modern does not simply exist as a continuous geographical gradient from high to low: there are discontinuities between core and periphery zones of the system creating quite different forms of what it is to be modern."[31] Building on this geohistorical model, my aim is not to interpret borderlands modernities as automatically counter, resistant, or exceptional to the prevailing "story and map" of U.S. nation building. On a schematic level, I likewise do not aim to read these spaces with an eye for how their particularities take the place of or are produced in answer to a generalized, hegemonic

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[30] Patricia Limerick, *Legacies of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 29-30.
[31] Peter J. Taylor, *Modernities: A Geohistorical Interpretation* (*Minneapolis*: University of Minnesota Press: 1999), 12.

modernity, but instead to see how the periphery and center, local and global, frontier and borderland shape one another.

Borderlands, Heterotopia, Holographs: theorizing the production of modern spaces

I use the term "borderlands" to emphasize these as regions defined through and against one another, where the fiction of the discrete, homogeneous, and geographically circumscribed nation falls apart. I find this spatial metaphor helpful for denaturalizing space, so often represented in U.S. national narratives as both a "neutral grid" and as a living organic medium itself directing the growth of the nation.[32] As José David Saldívar proposes in *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies*, the idea of the borderlands allows for cultural studies that "problematize the notion that the nation is 'naturally' there."[33] Saldívar and others in the field of Chicana/o Studies have developed a theoretical lens for reading borderlands as sites where the equivalences of geography and nation, and of nation and culture, break down, compelling investigation into the mobility and mutability of cultural forms and their contextualization in global histories.[34] Borderlands are places where the racial, ethnic, and gendered norms of citizenship are tested, scrutinized, surveyed, and circumvented. In my dissertation, I emphasize the ways that social norms are produced

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[32] James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference." *Cultural Anthropology* 7.1 (1992): 6.
[33] José David Saldívar, *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies* (University of California Press: 1997), 13.
[34] In his keyword entry for "Modern," Chandan Reddy explains that critiquing the ways that modernity is historicized should "situate the formations of modern knowledge within global histories of contact, collaboration, conflict, and dislocation, examining in each instance how the category of the modern has distorted those global histories, producing unity out of hybridity and development out of displacement." Reddy, 164.

and policed in border zones and show how they reflect prevailing ideas of national belonging and take on new significances. Approaching California, Mexico, and Hawai'i as "spaces where the nation either ends or begins," I examine how uneven power relations are articulated within and across geopolitical divides and how these divisions, though unnatural, effect very material realities for border dwellers.[35]

National borderlands, in this regard, comprise of both sites and counter-sites, what Michel Foucault calls heterotopia. In his essay "Of Other Spaces," Foucault describes the spaces of society as divided between utopias and heterotopias. Whereas utopias are "sites with no real place" and spaces that "present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down," heterotopias are counter-sites that are both in the real place of society and outside society, sites in which real places are "simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted."[36] Heterotopias are relational spaces that constitute the boundaries of any given society. As such, Foucault writes, they either "create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory" or "create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled." Given the ways heterotopias juxtapose multiple incompatible sites and mirror, distort, and divert altogether from "real Society," I find Foucault's formulation helps throw into relief how power operates through cultures and economies in the transpacific borderlands. That is, approaching the intersections of California, Hawai'i, and Mexico as heterotopia enables a contrary reading of the

[35] Saldivar,13.
[36] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16.1 (Spring, 1986). Web. Article available through Foucault.info.

ways the nation-state maintains boundaries of belonging and how these outer limits find expression in the real and unreal places of the national border itself. Foucault offers the metaphor of looking in the mirror to describe heterotopia as spaces that are there and not there, that reveal the way that one's absence *out there* in the reflection defines one's presence *in here* in real space and time, and vice versa, and on and on. I would elaborate on this metaphor by suggesting that interpreting visions of modernity in the interstices of California, Hawai'i, and Mexico is akin to viewing border spaces as themselves holographic; that is, they behave as a kind of graphic whose definition, contour, and dimensionality relies on points of analogy that are not, in fact, true analogies. Instead, these are points of correspondence that turn on multiple axes, that materialize as different social, cultural, and political forms from one point of view to the next. These spaces produce optical illusions of modernity that are real experiences and refractions of the real.[37] I draw upon the idea of heterotopia alongside border theory and social theories of modernity throughout my study to analyze how coordinates of time and space, when used to produce interiors and exteriors and other stratifications of "modern" society, are revealed in their most abstract and concrete

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[37] I appreciate Emily Hicks analysis of more contemporary narratives of the U.S.-Mexico border region as emerging from a decentered subject position, one she also describes as holographic: "A border person records the interference patterns produced by two (rather than one) referential codes, and therefore experiences a double vision thanks to perceiving reality through two different interference patterns…The border metaphor reconstructs the relationship to the object rather than the object itself: as a metaphor, it does not merely represent an object but rather produces an interaction between the connotative matrices of an object in more than one culture. The holographic 'real' is less solid, and as a result it cannot be dominated as easily as the monocultural or nonholographic real." Emily Hicks, *Border Writing: The Multidimensional Text* (Minneapolis and Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), xxix.

states. The literature, photographic images, and commercial amusements I examine capture the ways national culture performs claims to authenticity—particularly in spatial, temporal, and racial terms—as well as how such performances are interrupted, sometimes by their own reflection and other times by an unfamiliar visage.

Incorporating the Borderlands

If modern American society at the turn of the century was defining itself and its others through "progress," ideas of what was new and what was different about this moment were not uniformly animated across the national landscape. In each chapter, I study how corporations that formed across the borders of the U.S. West shaped perceptions of what modern "progress" was for this region, and I show the contradictions particular to these economies. According to the primary idea of economic progress I study, the rise of corporate capitalism beginning in the 1870s (in often monopoly forms) was an evolutionary step forwards from prior agrarian, entrepreneurial systems. As Edward Soja explains, the turn of the century marked a moment when capital was expanding across geographies and intensifying in corporate monopolies. "Accompanying the rise of this new political economy of capitalism," he writes "was an altered culture of time and space, a restructured historical geography taking shape from the shattered remains of an older order and infused with ambitious new visions and designs for the future as the very nature and experience of modernity—what it mean to be modern—was significantly reconstituted."[38] The sugar industry between Hawai'i and California, agriculture in Southern California, and

[38] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), 26.

cotton growing across the Calexico-Mexicali exemplify the diversity and contradictions of the "ambitious new visions and designs" of this modern moment. Generally run by American capitalists, sometimes in collaboration with Mexican or Hawaiian governments, these industries relied on the exploitation of the nation's borders with Mexico and Hawai'i and the exploitation of nonwhite labor for their success. Their pursuit of profit sometimes upheld and at other times was decoupled from the nationalist imperative to preserve a territorially bounded and internally homogeneous society. In my readings of these industries, I take their "aggregate effect" to borrow David Harvey's analytic, to be one of imperialism, where imperialist activities exceed the model of absolute domination of peripheral sites by a national center.[39]

To trace the uneven development of American capitalist development I look towards the enterprises of the wealthy Spreckels family who made their fortune and fame across California, Hawai'i and, Northern Mexico. Claus Spreckels, patriarch of the family, was a German immigrant who owned a successful sugar refinery in San Francisco. Seizing upon the opportunities for profit after the passage of the 1876 Reciprocity Treaty, which permitted free trade between Hawai'i and the U.S., Spreckels set up his own sugar plantation in Maui and quickly gained monopolistic

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[39] In *The New Imperialism*, Harvey argues that empires and states are not always driven by capitalism, and imperialist and capitalist activities are often at odds with one another. On the one hand, capital accumulation occurs through capital's expansion across territories, and on the other, states tend to consolidate their power through fortification of fixed, territorial boundaries. Often, states exploit the spatial asymmetries that capital creates, but this is not an automatic, steady, or uniform phenomenon. See David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2003), 31.

control of the sugar industry. I examine the material formation of his industry as an example of how Gilded Age and Progressive Era corporate capitalism gained ascendancy within urban centers on the mainland as well as through border-crossing enterprises, like the transpacific sugar trade.

Spreckels arranged the various stages of his sugar production across different regions. He had raw material harvested in his plantation in Hawai'i, shipped in his steamers across the Pacific, and refined and marketed in California. While his main interest was profit with little regard for nationalist ideology, the network he established between the raw sugar in Hawai'i, refining and marketing in California, and export to the global market set up conditions for the eventual annexation of Hawai'i to the U.S. in 1898. The tourist industry he pursued in the 1880s (which I trace from Hawai'i to the U.S.-Mexico border in Chapter Two) contributed to popular ideas of Hawai'i as "Old Hawai'i"—a landscape both central to the forward march of U.S. modernity and out of time and place altogether. In these respects, he helped to naturalize the asymmetrical relationship between Hawai'i and the mainland U.S., an outstanding feature on the cartography of transpacific modernity.

John Spreckels would later use the riches of what his father Claus referred to as the family "sugar empire" to develop the emergent city of San Diego. He too controlled many elements of the city's first modern industries—transportation lines, the Hotel Del Coronado, the *San Diego Tribune*—and was heavily involved in promoting the city's 1915 world's fair. As I examine in Chapter Two, the growth of Spreckels' personal wealth and that of San Diego more broadly also relied on

investments across the national border. If the Maui sugar plantation had amassed the Spreckels family initial fortune, tourism in San Diego and Tijuana helped maintain it. John Spreckels and his brother Adolph, among other American as well as Mexican businessmen, ran the horse racing track, casinos, saloons, and curio shops in Tijuana, popularizing the region as a place where noble "Old Spanish California" and depraved "Old Mexico" were equally accessible to visitors.

As I illuminate in Chapter Three, the Spreckels' exploitation of national border zones for regional development (and personal profit) was in good company, so to speak, in Southern California. Contemporary magnate, Harry Chandler, followed a similar pattern. Most famous for being the owner and publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, he promoted industries of modernization and memorialization throughout Los Angeles, emerging as a major real-estate developer and businessman involved in steamship line, hotels, clubs, mission revival tourism, and other features of the growing metropolis. He expanded his regional investments across the national border when joined a corporation that owned cotton-growing land in California's Imperial Valley and across the border in the Mexicali Valley in Baja California. Similar to John Spreckels in Tijuana, Chandler collaborated with the Baja California government to set up this scheme, and, comparable to Claus Spreckels in Maui, he too came to rely on cheap Chinese "coolie" labor (as well as Mexican laborers) for what would become the largest cotton growing industry in the world. The Spreckels family and Harry Chandler each illustrate how a dominant feature of modernity in the U.S. West at the turn of the century was the cross-border monopoly corporation. This is not to say they

somehow operated unconstrained by permissions and restrictions of the nation-state and its ideological apparatuses, but is it to say that the "incorporated America," to expand upon Allen Trachtenberg's term, they were building relied on exploiting transnational spaces and "non-national" labor.[40] Reading against received stabilities of the modern times and places in these economic terms, I view "progress" as a prominent but contested keyword in this period.

Constitutive Outsiders

My study of the divergent modernities at work in these border spaces examines broader spatial asymmetries and their relationship to the formation of the racial, class, and gendered limits of the modern subject. To this end, I attend to ideas of social progress commonly associated with Progressive-Era urban reform. While I do not trace any one reform movement, I do show how racialized ideas of vice, deviancy, and degeneracy generated through projects of urban reform were manifest in "peripheral" cities like San Diego, Tijuana, and Mexicali. I view the production of racial difference in these terms as emblematic of the conflict between social norms of the state and the demands of capital. Capital's recruitment of non-conforming surplus labor disrupts the "illusory universality" of the modern nation-state, and new, proliferating divergences from racial, class, and gender norms are likewise introduced through territorial

[40] In "Rethinking Race and Nation" Nikhil Singh writes, "In the US context, the ideal national subject has actually been a highly specific person whose universality has been fashioned from a succession of those who have designated his antithesis, those irreducibly *non-national* subjects who appeared in the different guises of slave, Indian, and, at times, immigrant." Singh, 8.

expansion under an imperialist state.[41] In the periods before and after Hawai'i was annexed to the United States, sugar planters' exploited native Hawaiian labor and, after diseases introduced by colonialists decimated their population, planters recruited Asian immigrant workers to sustain levels of productivity. Both groups were at once necessary for sugar industry profits while at the same time they faced shifting terms of race-based exclusion from national membership. In a similar way, American cotton growers managing land in the Imperial and Mexicali Valleys relied on Chinese immigrant labor during the era of Chinese exclusion from the United States, suggesting that this borderland economy grew in direct contradiction with the spatial and racial boundaries of the nation-state.

In this case and others, borderlands modernity was constituted by exploitative imperialist relations as well as by the active role of "surplus laborers" in producing their own social worlds. Rather than simply colonial subjects or abject outsiders to American modernity, Chinese immigrants in Mexicali, for example, were strategizing for control over their labor and living conditions. As I state above, my study of the multiple "story-maps" of modernity in this borderland does not view these as necessarily resistant or oppositional spaces. As Lisa Lowe shows in her analysis of global capitalism and gender, rearrangements of capitalist system within and against the exclusions of the nation-state produces the conditions for its own interruption.[42] Even those cultures of U.S. imperialism that exhibit and exacerbate the

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[41] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 17.
[42] Lisa Lowe, "Work, Immigration, Gender: New Subjects of Cultural Politics," in *American Studies: An Anthology*, eds. Janice A. Radaway et al. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 180.

commodification of racial difference—such as tourism and world's fairs—contain within them possibilities for displacements. Native Hawaiians performing at San Diego's Exposition, Chinese working in Mexicali's cotton fields and gambling halls, and native and multiethnic Hawaiian cowboys performing in Wild West Shows on the mainland and Hawai'i—all are instances of how racialized others were not simply objects but agents of modernity in the transpacific borderlands. Drawing attention to their divergent modernities is less a project of retrieval that of revision. Historicizing subaltern pasts entails a self-conscious approach to them as heterogeneous, non-reductive to existing formulations of particular times and spaces. As Dipesh Chakrabarty observes, they intersect with dominant histories as "supplements" that define the very discipline of history as well as its limits, revealing not only what it cannot fold into its homogeneous narratives but also that "the idea that *everything* can be historicized or that one should *always* historicize" is part of history's totalizing impulse.

Material Culture in Canons and Archives

I use an interdisciplinary framework that combines close textual analysis of literary, visual, and performance cultures with historical synthesis. Instead of treating capitalist economies as deterministic, I strive to illuminate not only how capital shapes culture, but also to study how the capitalist economy is, "saturated by and cannot exist apart from cultural meanings and identities."[43] To analyze the interfaces of capital and culture, I bring archival sources I have collected from each transpacific site, including

[43] David F. Ruccio, "Capitalism," in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, eds. Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler (New York: New York University Press: 2007), 36.

Tijuana and Mexicali in Baja California, San Diego and Salinas in California, Honolulu (Oahu), Wailuku (Maui), and Kamuela (the Big Island), to bear on canonical studies of U.S. literature. By situating works by Jack London, Charmian London, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Frank Norris within a transpacific context, I show how American literary naturalism's fixation on forms of social otherness in urban centers extends to the edges of the nation as well, relying on the attributed racial, spatial, and temporal difference of these borderlands to define the ideal and proper modern subject. As June Howard observes in her classic study, "In naturalism, the feature who defines humanity by negation and represents a problematical area of existence is imagined as living not outside the bounds of human society, not in the wilderness (where images of the American Indian as savage placed it), but within the very walls of the civilized city."[44] The literary works I examine that emerge from the U.S. West and its border spaces reveal how the oppositions between city and wilderness, center and boundary, civilization and primitivism, are not so rigid as they might seem.

These global contexts compel attention to how mythologies of the savage frontier were rehearsed in California, Mexico, and Hawai'i at the turn of the century while at the same time they introduced divergent narratives of national modernity. I am particularly interested in how the cultural archive of Hawaiian rodeo shows, Japanese, Hawaiian, and Chinese entertainments at San Diego's 1915 world's fair, vice tourism in Tijuana and Mexicali, works through and against representations of the West in turn-of-the-century naturalist literature—a genre that heightened nostalgia for

[44] June Howard, *Form and History in American Literary Naturalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 80.

the nation's fading pastoral landscapes, on the one hand, and fears of an increasingly modern, multiracial society, on the other. Moreover, I read a naturalist author in relation to popular entertainments in each chapter to draw attention to how public reception to images of the west in a range of media—in the novel, the Wild West show, the vice tour, the cheap amusement—all fashioned ideas of what it meant to be a modern American, what it meant to be excluded from this social status, and the shifting parameters of the modern subject in different cross-border spaces. To return to Foucault's idea of heterotopia, I analyze visions of modernity in literature and popular entertainments alike as mirrors for national culture that do not simply reflect back a recognizable, unified, consolidated American identity but reshape it, often in ways that distort the original and, in doing so, challenge the very idea of cultural authenticity.

I became interested in using archives largely through my encounters with very site-specific studies of border spaces. Cultural histories of the connections between Progressive-Era Southern California and vice tourism in Tijuana include those by Lawrence Taylor, Mike Davis, Paul Vanderwood, and Vincent de Baca.[45] On Mexicali's vice district and Chinatown, I turned to the substantial body of work on Asians in Latin America by historian Evelyn Hu-Dehart as well as dissertations by historians Eric Schantz and Robert Chao Romero. Their use of quantitative analysis of

[45] See Lawrence D. Taylor, "The Wild Frontier Moves South: U.S. Entrepreneurs and the Growth of Tijuana's Vice Industry, 1908-1935," *The Journal of San Diego History* 48.3 (Summer 2002); Mike Davis, Kelly Mayhew, and Jim Miller, *Under the Perfect Sun: The San Diego Tourists Never See* (New York: New Press, 2003); Vincent Z.C. de Baca, *Moral Renovation of the Californias: Tijuana's Political and Economic Role in American-Mexican Relocations, 1920-1935*. Dissertation. University of California San Diego, 1991; and Matthew Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

Chinese immigration and vice taxation schemes, for instance, combined with their attention to cultural and social practices that emerged at the U.S.-Mexico border gave me a sense of how a cross-border perspective would open up objects, places, and populations for my own cultural study. That is, they were important models for how, working from a transnational perspective within American literary and cultural studies, I might pursue research about this border region and link it to other global spaces.[46] Rob Wilson, Arif Dirlik, John Eperjesi, and other cultural historians working on Hawai'i and the Pacific have helped me think through how regional identities in this borderland took hold through historical and global processes, such as the idea of the "Asia-Pacific" or of Pacific sites like Hawaiian as part of an "American Pacific" serving the interests of U.S. imperialism.[47] Their critical studies of the interactions between the global and the local in the context of Hawai'i enabled me to consider the relationships between the emergence of material cultures in this specific space and in other global crossroads. Altogether, the above scholarly work inspired me to consider

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[46] See Evelyn Hu-Dehart, "The Chinese of Baja California Norte, 1910-1934," in *Baja California and the North Mexican Frontier, Proceedings of the Pacific Coast Council on Latin American Studies*, 12, (San Diego: San Diego State University Press, 1985-86); Michael Eric Schantz. *From the "Mexicali Rose" to the Tijuana Brass: Vice Tours of the United-States-Mexico Border, 1910-1965*. Dissertation University of California Los Angeles, 2001; and Robert Chao Romero, *The Dragon in Big Lusong: Chinese immigration and settlement in Mexico, 1882-1940*. Dissertation University of University of California Los Angeles, 2003.

[47] John Ryan Fischer, "Cattle in Hawai'i: Biological and Cultural Exchange," *Pacific Historical Review*, 76. 3 (2007): 346-372; Arif Dirlik, "The Asia-Pacific Idea: Reality and Representation in the Invention of a Regional Structure," *Journal of World History* 3.1 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992): 55-79; John R. Eperjesi, *The Imperialist Imaginary: Visions of Asia and the Pacific in American Culture (*Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2005); Rob Wilson, *Reimagining the American Pacific: From South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and Beyond* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); John Whitehead, "Hawai'i: The First and Last Far West?" *The Western Historical Quarterly* 23. 2 (May 1992): 153-177.

ways of combining my own methods of literary analysis with archival research and, more particularly, the importance of conducting archival research across border spaces themselves for meaningful comparative study. They also helped me consider ways of setting archival material in dialogue with the U.S. literary canon, which often meant taking into consideration audience reception of very different popular media. Altogether, if these scholars produce culturally minded histories of specific national crossroads, I would characterize my efforts as those of a historically minded cultural study of multiple borderlands.

Sometimes archival material shows up in the dissertation as a directly cited text or image; sometimes I needed to go to an archive to retrace steps and sources of historians I found inspiration from to see them for myself, get a sense of other possible narratives to pursue, verify if historians I was using were saying what I thought they were saying; and sometimes contact with or immersion in sources helped me to discern the limits of these historians' analysis and formed the basis of my own contribution. My immersion in archives has been uneven: each has their own way of organizing sources, making certain histories visible and others obscured, and generally controlling accessibility (i.e. depending on if they are state archives, historical societies, university special collections, etc.). Archives opened up negative spaces, rabbit holes, verification, elaboration; they supplemented, confirmed, confounded; archival sources at times seemed to drive the project but, over time, I have seen how they always worked dynamically against my own shifting theoretical models to shape the final analysis.

Contributions

This is a project that emerges from studies of U.S. empire that have critically examined the notion of U.S. exceptionalism and it has become the dominant paradigm in the field of American studies and related disciplines since the 1930s. I view my study as building on scholarship that challenges the central frameworks, methods, objects, and objectives of exceptionalist U.S. histories, such as *Post-nationalist American Studies*. In their introduction, contributors to this volume offer instructive distinctions between the effects that nationalist paradigms have had on historiographic and popular narratives of the U.S. They present their chapters as examples of a new approach to American Studies that is, "less insular and parochial, and more internationalist and comparative," and that interrogate the givenness of the nation-state, national identity, national borders, and national myths.[48] They draw attention to how American Studies working under the influence of Turner's frontier thesis reiterate his narrow geographic focus on the continent; chart U.S. nation-building as a unilateral, homogeneous (or at least homogenizing) process synchronized with westward expansion; have little regard for the United States' imperialist role in domestic or foreign contexts or for the operations of U.S. imperialism across national borderlands; and celebrate U.S. democracy while ignoring legacies of racial, ethnic, and gendered exclusion from national citizenship.

As a self-reflexive methodology, post-nationalist American studies work against nationalist paradigms without replacing them with celebratory

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[48] "Introduction," *Post-nationalist American Studies*, ed. John Carlos Rowe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 2.

multiculturalism. I contribute to this method by eschewing readings of border spaces, crossings, and crossers as necessarily alternative, resistant, or oppositional to the nation in favor of reading them for displacement, dissonance, and uncanny resemblance. My study of how modernity is envisioned in material cultures throughout California, Hawai'i, and Mexico, in this regard, addresses recent trends in *trans*national studies that find the global an insufficient model for understanding the uneven distribution of power across territories. Whereas a global framework is more organized around more rigid global-local, universal-particular binaries, a transnational model accounts for more dispersed relations of power and "designates spaces and practices acted upon by border-crossing agents, be they dominant or marginal."[49] In my analysis of how multiple, uneven modernities emerge in the U.S. West, I draw on a transnational perspective to illuminate how cultural and economic practices emerge through, across, and away from national spaces, sometimes in the form of the cross-border corporation and other times in the hands of the immigrant, the colonized subject, the non-national.

I began my introduction with Turner's frontier thesis as a way to stage my own revisionist cultural study of how his West is made, unmade, and memorialized. I strive to bring a transnational perspective to bear on Turner's West by focusing on borderlands and border-crossing agents that alienate the West from nationalist narratives. In this regard, I contribute to new western studies that "defamiliarize the continental West," to draw upon Stephanie LeMenager's phrase, by looking at the

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[49] *Minor Transnationalism*. eds. Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 5.

edges of the nation after the putative closing of the frontier, a moment when new, heterogeneous discourses of empire proliferated.[50] In her study of nineteenth-century literary works about the west, LeMenager shows how American authors became self-conscious about the resistance of western terrain to discourses of manifest destiny; diverting from this popular scripts, they produced influential representations of the west that "reveal the internationalism, incomplete nationalization, and even de-nationalization that actually defined western places."[51] In my interpretation of material cultures in the Hawai'i, California, and Mexico borderlands, I illuminate how these spaces were contoured by dominant ideas of national progress—economic, social, and cultural—and other processes altogether. I strive to do so through my chosen methodology and objects of study, that is, through my transnational framework and readings of literature by canonical U.S. authors in relation to popular cultures documented in regional archives.

Through a historically situated cultural study of this transpacific terrain, my project moves beyond Americanist studies of the frontier by expanding "the west" to include the Hawai'i-California border. Similarly, I re-orient Border Studies' focus of the formation of national cultures along a North-South axis to illuminate understudied East-West flows of culture between the U.S.-Mexico border and Hawai'i in the late

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[50] I draw on LeMenager's term, "defamiliarize," from her following usage: "Nineteenth-century theories of commercial empire that took the oceans rather than the agricultural homestead as the originary site of national character defamiliarize the continental West by situating it within the emergent system of international capitalism. These commercial versions of Manifest Destiny foretell contemporary transnational or global articulations of the nation-form." Stephanie LeMenager, *Manifest and Other Destinies: Territorial Fictions of the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 2-3.

[51] Ibid., 15.

nineteenth and early twentieth century. Building on Patricia Limerick's argument that "Turner's frontier was a process, not a place," I aim to show how ideas of modernity formed across transpacific regions in ways that did not always, or exactly, mirror the nation-state, as well as the stakes of the frontier myth for dominant and marginal subjects traversing this terrain.[52]

Chapter Summaries

In **Chapter One**, "The Beauty Ranch: Hawaiian Ranch Tourism and the Londons' Material Dreams," I read literature by Jack and Charmian London that is based on their repeated trips to Hawai'i in the early twentieth century, and of their time on Hawaiian cattle ranches in particular. I show how Hawaiian ranching life emerges from the edges of Jack London's writings as a kind of familiar strangeness. The ranching lands and native cowboys appear almost in the peripheral vision of his short stories about Hawai'i and *Cruise of the Snark*, figures that catch his eye but are often overtaken by the Hawaiian sights and sounds London famously introduced to a national readership. Never as prominent as the hula dancers, ukulele performers, lepers, or surfers that populate his stories, Hawaiian cowboys and ranch lands are nonetheless conspicuous topoi in London's transpacific borderlands. I read elements of naturalism in his works alongside his wife Charmian's travel memoir *Our Hawai'i*, in which she recounts details of their experiences on cattle ranches, recollections that convey how the couple imagined Hawaiian ranches as counter-sites to their utopian ranching dream on their property in Sonoma, California. Ranches they visit on

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[52] Limerick, 26.

Molokai, Maui, and the Big Island become repositories of a kind of imperialist nostalgia, one that, I argue reanimates the perceived lost Eden of Hawai'i in their (next) venture in alternative agriculture in California. In this chapter I also draw out the capitalist investments of Claus Spreckels in the Hawai'i-California sugar industry in order illuminate parallels in his spatial arrangement of capital, industry, and imperialist dreams in this transpacific region. Whether through Spreckels traditional capitalist modes of interest or the Londons' more fanciful ones, the Hawai'i that emerges here is one that is unevenly profitable and promising for emergent American tourist-monopolists.

Chapter Two, "'Gambling, Liquor, Ponies, Girls, High Life 'n Everything': Cultures of Entertainment at the San Diego-Tijuana Border," examines popular amusements at San Diego's 1915 Exposition and tourism attractions spanning the border into Tijuana. The Southern California industry was largely inspired by Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 novel *Ramona*, which offers a sympathetic portrayal of mission Indians suffering from displacement and extermination under Anglo American government in the 1870s and 1880s. Although Jackson intended her novel to advocate for reform of U.S. federal policy towards Indians, her political message is ultimately overshadowed by her romantic portrayal of Spanish rule in California as an idyllic period noticeably free of the exploitative conditions of mission system. I trace how what Carey McWilliams calls the "Spanish fantasy heritage" in *Ramona* shaped the mission revival theme in early twentieth-century tourism and particularly the 1915 Exposition in San Diego. This world's fair celebrated the regional progress promised

by the opening of transisthmian trade through the Panama Canal and its direct link to Southern California's rapidly modernizing agricultural industry.

City and Exposition officials promoted San Diego as emblematic of progress through the hard work of Anglo American agribusiness, yet they also popularized the region as a place where prohibited social vices were readily available. Tourists could enjoy gambling at the Exposition's "Camp of '49" gold mining amusement, or cross the border to Tijuana's saloons, casinos, and horse racing track—transportation made easy through automobiles, the city railroad line, or busses. These attractions promoted an image of California's deviant, degenerate, vice-ridden past—namely, of "Old Mexico"—that were very popular with all but moral reformers. Through close readings of photographs, films, performances, postcards, and newspaper accounts, I show how the attractions of noble, Anglicized "Old Spain" to the north and immoral, *mestizo* "Old Mexico" to the south were not opposed but mutually dependent. Also drawing on these texts, I show how tourists to the Exposition and Tijuana were instructed in the state's Spanish-Mexican past as much as they were its future in Pacific commerce. I illuminate how popular ideas of the border between the U.S. and Mexico were triangulated with amusements portraying San Diego's border to the east. Recalling San Diego's economic roots in the Hawai'i sugar industry and new relationship to trade through the Panama Canal, I read the Exposition's Hawaiian Village, Japanese Tea Garden, and Underground Chinatown as casting nonwhite immigrant and colonial subjects as antithetical to state racial and sexual norms, even as their labor was essential for capitalist development.

Chapter Three, "Wish you were here: Mementos from the West and Elsewhere in Frank Norris's *The Octopus* and the Early Twentieth Century U.S.-Mexico Borderlands" elaborates on how the triangulation of the Asia Pacific, California, and Mexico appears in Frank Norris's vision of modernity in his novel, *The Octopus*, and the cotton and tourism industries spanning the borderlands of the Imperial-Mexicali Valley. One of the central preoccupations of Norris's protagonist, Presley, is how to properly represent "the West" in an era of U.S. commercial expansion beyond the continental border into Asian markets, wherein the frontier is no longer the operative symbol of the national narrative. In this West, the romance of Old Spanish California made famous by Helen Hunt Jackson's novel has become a tourist attraction devoid of romance. In my reading of *The Octopus*, I show how features of Norris's literary naturalism do not merely point to his nostalgia for prior literary modes, the lost frontier, or a vanishing homogeneous, white agrarian citizenry. Rather, I argue that Presley's search for a proper poem of the West thematizes the author's broader formulation of an emergent visual regime of modernity that reconstitutes the romantic past precisely through the commercial terms of the present. New representative modes, such as popular regional fairs, can salvage traces of the past through endless, commercial reproduction.

The new empire of the West that Norris depicts is one of a recuperated Anglo Saxon race that can continue its march across the globe through expanding commercial networks and continued exclusion of Indians, *mestizos*, and Asian immigrants. As his wheat ranchers of the San Joaquin Valley announce, the

developing West can no longer look to the East Coast, or back to its "Old Spanish past," but instead towards its future in Asian markets. This future is also, as I show, a continuation of the westward march of the Anglo Saxon empire that depends on Asian markets as much as it fears and excludes Asian immigrants from the U.S. In this chapter, I read Norris's representations of racial difference within the state economy and its transnational market in Asia in relation to the cross-border industries of cotton growing and vice tourism at the Mexicali-Calexico. As a collaborative enterprise of U.S. businessmen and Baja California state officials, cotton growing became the major economy spanning the border at this time and sustained its levels of productivity by recruiting cheap Chinese immigrant labor. Thousands of Chinese seeking work in the North American West during the era of Chinese exclusion from the U.S. found receptive markets along the northern border of Baja California, and a Chinatown emerged in Mexicali, serving as both social center for Chinese immigrants and, eventually, a destination for border tourists seeking illicit pleasures in its games of chance and opium dens. Adjacent to this Chinatown was the American club called the *Owl* and curio shops that, I argue, purveyed a nostalgia for "Old Spanish California" that resonates with that in Norris's novel.

I focus my textual analysis of Mexicali's border tourism on postcards that were, similar to the regional fair depicted in *The Octopus*, a popular medium that perpetuated racially exclusive ideas of U.S. citizenship through their reproduction of "Old Mexico" and their simultaneous dependency on Asian labor and markets.

The **Epilogue,** "Steering the West: Hawaiian Cowboy Culture and Transpacific Modernity" returns to Hawai'i to examine the origins of Wild West shows that first took place on the islands in 1907. Resembling the transpacific formation of the Hawaiian cattle ranching industry of the early nineteenth century, popular cowboy shows on Oahu, the Big Island, and Maui also took shape through the circulation of the image of "the west" between Hawai'i and the Americas. I explore how these shows emerged through the context of Hawai'i's annexation to the U.S. as well as through native Hawaiians' participation in this cultural economy in a variety of roles, such as performers and entrepreneurs. Overall, performances by native Hawaiian, Japanese-Hawaiian, Anglo American, and cowboys of other racial and ethnic identification offer a different view of the social actors involved in Hawai'i's transpacific cattle ranching industry—a vision of Hawaiian modernity that shifts considerably in meaning and representation than that, for instance, encountered in Jack and Charmian's literature. This epilogue is intended to suggest the future direction of my study the transpacific borderlands as spaces where the mythology of the U.S. frontier is reenacted in ways that scramble the original script. This is terrain that sometimes seems to serve as a stage for national dramas of the past and dreams of the future, as much as at other times they seem to upstage modernity itself, drawing attention towards its other diversions.

CHAPTER ONE: The Beauty Ranch: Hawaiian Ranch Tourism and the Londons' Material Dreams

Settling in to their journey from San Francisco to Hawai'i, the tourist on board an Oceanic Steamship Company liner could consult the Company's brochure to plan their destinations upon arrival. The booklet first provides them with a number of ways to relax on board, including the familiar bourgeois leisure spaces of a saloon, a library, a room to play musical instruments, among others. When they land, the tourist can expect to see other structures common to modern American life—prisons, roads, planted groves—among scenes of Hawai'i's natural landscape, uninhabited and apparently untouched by all but native Hawaiians themselves, also rendered in natural settings of the beach and the tropical forest.[53] A page featuring a collage of snapshots of island life includes the extinct volcano of Haleakala. "So far we have talked only about those places and things that fall in the routes of ordinary tourist travel," the book explains "the itineraries that people choose who have only six weeks or so to spend on the whole trip from San Francisco and back to it again. If time serves there are many, many more little journeys that may be taken, having the special charm of being off the beaten paths and showing native life less modified by the presence of whites. There are the trips to Mauna Loa, and the greatest crater in the world, Haleakala, the "House of the Sun" (xiii). Nestled between two images of the volcano is one of "Horned

[53] Charles Warren Stoddard, *A Trip to Hawai'i: by Charles Warren Stoddard*. San Francisco. Issued by Passenger department. Oceanic Steamship Co, 1897 (University of Hawai'i Manoa, Hawaiian Collection).

Cattle"; though the presence of these animals in Hawai'i would likely be a strange one for Californians unaccustomed to associating this Pacific territory with cattle or ranches, no further explanation is provided about them. The guidebook moves on to other attractions, leaving them more or less *off the beaten path* for the tourist to encounter on their own.

At the turn of the century, the growing Hawaiian tourist economy contributed to new spatial understandings of the islands, making Hawai'i more than just a place you visited out there in the Pacific. It was also a place you could see, consume, and interact with in increasingly diverse commodity forms. Images of Hawai'i circulating in contemporary mainland popular culture—postcards, hula shows at world's fairs, advertisements—marketed the islands as a place out of time and inhabited by charming primitives. These objects brought the mainlander in touch with the islands even if they had never been there. Hawai'i was fast becoming knowable and known to outsiders, leaving few places, even as early as this 1897 guidebook describes, not yet "modified by the presence of whites."

In this chapter, I begin my study of modernity in the transpacific borderlands by examining a relatively understudied part of the Hawaiian tourist industry: Hawaiian cattle ranching and cowboy culture. Attention to this cultural economy is often eclipsed by studies of the sugar and pineapple industry and its relationship to the Hawaiian tourist industry. I find this a compelling place to examine the contradictions of capitalist modernity in the borderlands between Hawai'i and the U.S. West in part because the iconic figure of the cowboy is so central to cultural histories of the West—and yet the Hawaiian cowboy, laboring in the far west of the West, is all but invisible.

My staging and understanding of these events begins with an investigation into the cross-border investments of industrialist Claus Spreckels in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century, which, as I explain, exemplify a vision of the borderlands of the U.S. West and Pacific that reflects the intersecting developments of monopoly capitalism and global economy in this region. I wish to emphasize that the story of Claus Spreckels' monopoly over the Hawai'i-California sugar industry in the 1880s and early 1890s tells not simply of a bold and enterprising individual. His patterns of investment, incorporation, property ownership, and expansion can certainly be understood as part of rapid, nation-wide industrialization in the Gilded Age U.S. However to historicize his economic activities through a national framework bound by continental geography is to miss how his sugar enterprise both intersects with narratives of "incorporated America," to build on Allan Trachtenberg's concept, and diverges from these altogether.

From there, and leading to my examination of native Hawaiians' performance in Wild West Shows featured in the Epilogue, I will focus on how Hawaiian cattle ranching and cowboys are represented in works by one of the most popular U.S. authors of the period, Jack London, and by his wife Charmian London in *Our Hawai'i* (1917), all drawn from their trips to Hawai'i in 1907-1908 and again in 1915-1916. One of the central ironies of the Londons' writings on Hawaiian cattle ranches I illuminate is that, unlike surfing, hula, and other aspects of Hawaiian culture that Jack London helped popularize for a mainland readership, ranches and cowboys comprised a significant part of their attraction to Hawai'i yet it remained largely documented in Charmian's autobiographical narrative, published after Jack London's death. As I

show, Hawaiian ranching life emerges from the edges of Jack London's writings as a kind of familiar strangeness. The ranching lands and native cowboys appear almost in the peripheral vision of his short stories and *Cruise of the Snark*, figures that catch his eye but are often overtaken by the Hawaiian sights and sounds London famously introduced to a national readership. Never as prominent as the hula dancers, ukulele performers, lepers, or surfers that populate his stories, Hawaiian cowboys and ranch lands are nonetheless conspicuous topoi in London's transpacific borderlands.

I approach Jack London's writings about Hawai'i through my project's larger inquiry into the role of U.S. literary cultures in the formation of the transpacific borderlands. I wish to position Jack London in relation to the other authors under study: Helen Hunt Jackson and Frank Norris. As with the linked geographies of Southern California and Mexico in Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* and Northern California and Asia in Frank Norris's *The Octopus*, London narrativizes California and Hawai'i as spatial correlatives. They are both defined against and dependent upon one another. In the opening of the travel diary, *The Cruise of the Snark*, London explains that the idea for the trip around the Pacific came to him from the swimming pool on his home in Sonoma, California. "It began in the swimming pool at Glen Ellen," he wrote, and goes on to explain that he and Charmian had plans to build a house and ranch on the property but that they realized they could nurture two dreams at once: while they were immersing themselves in Pacific worlds, their young seedlings would grow back on the ranch.[54] "I've got to work at my trade of writing in

[54] Jack London, "Forward." *Cruise of the Snark* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1913). Web. Available through the Sonoma State University Library.

order to feed us and to get new sails and tackle and keep the Snark in efficient working order," he writes. "And then there's the ranch; I've got to keep the vineyard, orchard, and hedges growing."[55]

California and what would become the Londons' Beauty Ranch fade into the background as the Snark pushes off for Honolulu. However, as his encounters with Hawaiian ranching in his travel diary and short fiction show, Jack London never loses sight of his ambitions to run a scientifically managed ranch on his Northern California property. In fact, his dreams of exploring a Pacific paradise and of cultivating a utopian California ranch were less parallel than they were intersecting. For one, his ranching enterprise begun in Sonoma in 1905 not only motivated his travel writing but also his and Charmian's retreats on cattle ranches on Molokai, Maui, and the Big Island. The Hawaiian cattle ranches and cowboys that the Londons' literary and touristic imaginary surface in their narratives as remnants of Hawai'i's untouched primitivism. Over the course of their trips, and especially in the last years of Jack London's life, what they encounter as an Edenic, multiracial community on Hawaiian cattle ranches becomes reconstituted as the foundation of Beauty Ranch in California. In her biography of her husband, Charmian captures Jack's transition from his life on the seas to his life on the soil, recalling, "as he loved the name of Sailor, Skipper, Captain, for the love he bore the sea, so he now loved as well to be greeted Farmer, what of his overmastering desire to make blossom the exhausted wilderness. Beauty, in his precincts, began to reveal itself more and more in the light of tillable soil, of

[55] Ibid.

food-getting efficiency."[56] Through the Londons' itinerant and shifting focus, Old Hawai'i and Old California comprise a transpacific heterotopia. Lying across the mirror of the Pacific from one another, they reflect back both a familiar semblance and a negative space of difference, absence, and backwardness.

In my reading of the Londons' travels and texts, I especially analyze how an image of Old Hawai'i develops in relation to one of Old California. Literary scholars often analyze Jack London's fiction in particular by region (the Klondike, Japan, California, etc.). I read within and across regions. His tourism of Hawai'i and the Hawaiian tourist industry he helped produce, after all, grew out of the sugar industry that had established circuits of trade between California and Hawai'i. His interpretation of this geography following the annexation of Hawai'i to the U.S. elaborates on these cultural, economic, and political relationships even further. Like picture postcards lying adjacent in an album, these regions exist in Jack London's touristic imaginary as destinations he chose seemingly at random or on a whim. My study will investigate his activities (both material and literary) in the transpacific even further by tracing these souvenirs back to the contexts of their production and by revealing the larger commercial and political networks that link them together. In this sense, my analysis will pan across the topography of London's borderlands, discerning how different features come to be defined by parallelism, opposition, relationality, or triangulation. I will illuminate, for instance, how his nostalgia for (an imagined) native Hawaiian way of life can be seen as a kind of relief of his nostalgia for Spanish

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[56] London, Charmian. *The Book of Jack London* (New York: The Century Company, 1906), 267. Web. Available through archive.org.

California, much in the way his criticism of colonial enterprises in Hawai'i is a relief of his enthusiasm for Anglo-American agriculture in California. I also aim to compare how his idea of Hawai'i as a kind of racial utopia translated into his utopian vision of Beauty Ranch. I suggest that these circuits enabled the production Old Hawai'i and Old California as national sites and counter-sites—dynamic, contradictory places that were real and virtual and, in Foucault's formulation, heterotopia.

Moreover, I draw on Charmian London's autobiographical writings this for several reasons. In scholarly studies of the Londons, she often figures as a traveling companion for her husband and custodian of his literary and ranching estate after his death. However, Charmian London was far more than a helpmate for Jack London's career or a mere prop in his literary dramas. She helped build the *Snark* and run the Sonoma ranch. She also published her own memoirs of their travels at sea in the *Log of the Snark* (1915) and a focused narrative on their five months in Hawai'i in *Our Hawai'i* (originally published in 1917 and revised 1922). The level of detail in her narrative in *Our Hawai'i* far surpasses that of her husband, who dedicates three of his sixteen chapters in *The Cruise of the Snark* to this leg of their voyage and in these remains narrowly focused on the topics of surfing, leprosy, and Haleakala. In her revised 1922 edition in particular, Charmian provides descriptions of places they stay, conversations they have with hosts and fellow travelers, and sights they see throughout the islands.[57] I especially highlight her recollections of what I refer to as the couple's

[57] In the Forward to the December 1917 edition, Charmian explains her editorial role in including text omitted in previous editions: "During the original writing, many elisions were advised by Jack London, as being too personal of himself for me, being me, to publish. However, in the circumstances of his untimely passing, and in view of

Hawaiian ranching tourism—though, as I will discuss, they both disavowed the identity of "tourist" and insisted on being "kamaaina," or whites adopted as natives.[58] Whereas cowboys and ranch lands appear in Jack London's *Stories of Hawai'i* and *The Cruise of the Snark* as striking but minor or unexplained natural features of Hawai'i, Charmian represents these subjects in great depth.

Metanarratives of Modernity: Situating Spreckels

Spreckels was a German immigrant who left Germany in the 1840s and, after working in a grocery store in Charleston South Carolina and later owning his own store in New York, he traveled to California where he helped organize the Bay Sugar Refinery in 1863.[59] He went back to Germany two years later to educate himself about processes of sugar refining and, equipped with this valuable knowledge, returned to California and organized the California Sugar Refinery, whose cane sugar was supplied by a number of Pacific sites including Hawai'i, the Philippines, China and Java. With the passing of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1875, which allowed sugar and other Hawaiian products to be imported duty-free to the United States, Spreckels saw an opportunity for expanding his enterprise and soon came to dominate the West Coast sugar industry. The Reciprocity Treaty brought about an incredible spike in profits for the U.S. sugar industry on both sides of this Pacific borderlands, both for refiners in

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a desire made evident to me, in countless letters as well as in the press, for biographical work, I have been led to reinstate and elaborate much of the mass of data. Even in the face of his objections at the time, I had stoutly disagreed, maintaining that the lovers of his soul and his work would value revelation of his personality and manner of living life," x-xi.

[58] Charmian London, *Our Hawai'i* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), 33. Web. Available through archive.org.

[59] Jacob Adler, *Claus Spreckels: The Sugar King in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1966), 21-22.

California and for the producers in Hawai'i, where 25 out of the 32 plantations were American-owned.[60] Although it did not stipulate U.S. rights to own Hawaiian land, this treaty accelerated U.S. control of Hawaiian markets and land use and in many ways paved the way for annexation in 1898.

Spreckels himself soon became one of the white American plantation owners when he traveled to Hawai'i in 1876, recognizing both the promising profits in Maui land and a means of securing a lease, began to set up the irrigation and business infrastructure necessary for his own sugar plantation. He acquired rights for the water and eventual cane growing in the Waikapu Commons and the Wailuku Commons in east Maui in 1878, which at that time was owned by Princess Ruth Keeliholani. That same year he incorporated the Hawaiian Commercial Company in San Francisco whose purposes were "to build and maintain irrigation ditches in the Hawaiian kingdom; cultivate, mill, and sell sugar; build mills, railroads, wharves, and other needed structures; acquire lands, leases and water rights' and build or buy ships to sail between the Hawaiian Islands and other ports."[61] He planted the first crop in 1879, completed construction of three mills to handle a large production capacity in 1882, and improved the efficiency of cultivation through use of advanced agricultural technologies like a steam plow and chemical analysis of the soil.

In addition to the profitable operation of the plantation, Spreckels secured even greater control over the sugar industry when he gained the actual title to Princess Ruth

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[60] Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press),10.
[61] Jacob Adler, "The Spreckelsville Plantation: A Chapter in Claus Spreckels' Hawaiian Career," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 40.1 (March 1961): 35.

Keeliholani's crown lands in 1882. This was largely through legal maneuvers and manipulations, which he pursued with the support of Walter Murray Gibson, adviser to King Kalakaua. Spreckels' monopolistic control of the Hawaiian sugar industry was also achieved through his formation of the William G. Irwin and Company in Honolulu, a firm that acted as agent for Spreckelsville and other plantations and was among the dominant sugar agencies in the 1880s and 1890s.[62] In full command of the land, labor, operation, and marketing on both sides of the Hawai'i-California borderland, all that remained was for Spreckels to supervise the means of transportation of his product back and forth across the Pacific, which he did with the establishment of the Oceanic Steamship Company in 1881. As Spreckels historian Jacob Adler observes, he was the first planter in Hawai'i to control the production, shipment, refinement, and marketing of sugar.[63] He owned the largest plantation in Hawai'i (40,000 acres) and dominated the sugar market in the early years of this industry. Following a series of fluctuations in the Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company stock from 1884 to 1898, Spreckels was eventually forced to sell to H.P. Baldwin.[64]

What I wish to emphasize is that this kind of "metanarrative of modernization" relies on a spatial view of the U.S. that fails to account for the fact that global as well as national processes shape regions and, in some cases, the interface between the global and the regional become central rather than incidental to national

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[62] Ibid., 38.
[63] Ibid., 38.
[64] Adler, "Claus Spreckels, The Sugar King in Hawai'i," 85.

development.[65] It also assumes a correspondence between capitalist development, nation-state formation, and nationalism that similarly cannot explain the activities of a wealthy industrialist like Claus Spreckels. It was precisely through the investment of capital across the California-Hawai'i borderland, among other business strategies devised to exploit this geographic relationship, that Claus Spreckels achieved a monopoly on the west coast sugar industry from his initial investments in 1876 until 1886.[66] His business strategies required a vision of Hawai'i as a space of untapped capacity that would necessarily take time to realize. His economic aspirations also intersected with changing U.S. political aspirations in the Pacific, such as the Tyler Doctrine of 1842 that declared Hawai'i within the "U.S. sphere of influence" and Secretary of State William H. Seward's call to purchase Hawai'i, both underpinned by manifest destiny.[67] U.S. interest Hawai'i in this sense did not comprise a uniform, unilateral, or coordinated takeover but was staggered and uneven.

Though he might appear in to be operating in the wilderness of the nation and for the accumulation of his own private wealth, Spreckels's enterprise helped set the pattern for other American sugar planters whose economic power in turn lead to the annexation of Hawai'i to the U.S. in 1898.[68] By "linking United States nation-building and empire-building as historically coterminous and mutually defining," we can better understand the heterogeneity of modernization in different (trans)national spaces like

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[65] Arif Dirlik, "The Global in the Local," in *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary,* eds. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake (Durham: Duke University Press), 25.
[66] Adler, "Claus Spreckels in Hawai'i," 27.
[67] Trask, 8.
[68] Adler, "The Spreckelsville Plantation," 38.

the Hawai'i-California borderland; the contradictions of capital and the nation-state in these spaces; and the stakes of these contradictions at local, national, and global levels. Turning the to activities of the Hawai'i-California industrialist Claus Spreckels provides an example of how developments in national borderlands are not (in temporal terms) lagging or (in spatial terms) exterior to nation-state formation; over the course of their intensifications and expansions they can in fact underpin national projects, such as imperialist expansion, as well as merge with expressions of nationalism, such as the cultural economy of Hawaiian tourism.[69] Turning to formations of modernity in national borderlands can also shed light on what Arif Dirlik calls "local narratives" of resistance or complicity that are otherwise overlooked in narratives of modernization characterized by homogeneity, teleology, and progress.[70]

Infrastructure of Asymmetries

The principles of capitalist development informing Spreckels were certainly at work in the hands of industrialists elsewhere on the mainland U.S., as were many of the technologies he required to carry out his vision. He seized upon modern modes of transportation (railroads and steamships), communication (telephones), and agriculture (steam plows) as the infrastructure for his cross-border enterprise. His use of these technologies of time-space compression spurred rapid development and accumulation of capital. What distinguished Spreckels from his mainland contemporaries was his interpretation of the space in which he would operate these technologies. In *The New*

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[69] Kaplan, " 'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture." *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald E Pease (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993), 17.
[70] Dirlik, 25.

Imperialism, David Harvey argues that capitalist accumulation under imperialism not only heightens social inequalities but *spatial* inequalities as well. "Imperialist practices, from the perspective of capitalist logic," Harvey writes "are typically about exploiting the uneven geographical conditions under which capital accumulation occurs and also taking advantage of what I call the 'asymmetries' that inevitably arise out of spatial exchange relations. The latter get expressed through unfair and unequal exchange, spatially articulated monopoly powers, extortionate practices attached to restricted capital flows, and the extraction of monopoly rents."[71]

Spreckels' sugar industry relied on a similar geographical unevenness. His profits were based producing Hawai'i as a space of dependency and the mainland U.S. as a space of dominance, and representing this asymmetry as natural. The desire for greater profit was indisputable to Spreckels, and the need for his industry's spatial arrangement—production in Hawai'i, shipment across the Pacific, and refining and marketing in California—was legitimated by the profits gained. As a borderlands monopolist, he relied on this tautology—economy explained geography, and geography explained economy—as well as strategies for legitimizing his industry in the face of constant contradictions. For one, his investments in Hawaiian land were characterized by temporal and spatial displacements; that is, he secured his monopoly over the sugar industry through land leases that eventually became titles, water rights that gradually resulted in sugar cane production, a sugar agency that came to control

[71] David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 31.

multiple plantations, a steamship line whose circulation between the various locations in Spreckels cross-border enterprise was itself a repository of anticipated profits.[72]

By 1890, Spreckels declared the self-evidence of these profits and of the utility of the geography that enabled them. Referring to a list of San Francisco's export and import profits from nations and territories throughout the world, Spreckels declared, "This exhibit demonstrates conclusively the great value of the Hawaiian trade to San Francisco and the country at large. It is of the utmost consequence, therefore, that it should be conserved and extended. There is no other instance on record where so large a trade has been developed with 80,000 people, which is about the total population of the Hawaiian Islands."[73] The rows of sugar in the Spreckelsville plantation, the wake of the Oceanic Steamships, and the sacks of sugar in mainland groceries had impressed into the landscape a circuit of production and sale that came to represent these discrete spaces as continuous.

In her rich study of the cultural and disciplinary roles of law in the colonial history of Hawai'i, Sally Engle Merry illuminates several periods of transition Hawai'i's legal system that are helpful for understanding the borderlands in which a capitalist like Claus Spreckels was maneuvering. Merry's analysis of the interplay of law and culture in the social lives of native Hawaiians is especially invaluable as she underscores throughout how Hawaiians themselves interpreted, translated, negotiated, and resisted Western law. Prior to Spreckels's arrival in Hawai'i, the ali'i had already been adopting laws and norms introduced by Christian missionaries and, as Merry

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[72] Ibid., 9.
[73] Claus Spreckels, "The Future of the Sandwich Islands," *The North American Review* 152. 412 (March 1891): 291.

argues, implementing them through their own epistemologies. Between the 1820s and 1830s, local communities became organized around structuring ideologies of the civilizing mission, including religious values of self-discipline and self-control and disciplinary systems like prisons, judge, and police officers.[74] Another major shift came with the formation of a new legal foundation atop Hawaiian's older religious, political system (called kapu). The years between 1839 and 1852 saw the creation of a Declaration of Rights, Constitution,[75] and, crucially, land laws that defined a new system of private property. The division of all Hawaiian lands in 1850s, called the Great Mahele, mostly benefited alien residents like American missionaries and businessmen and paved the way for their ownership of the highly lucrative sugar plantation system by the 1860s.

For example, he was among the West Coast sugar refiners who at first opposed the 1876 Reciprocity Treaty on the grounds that he could not compete with Hawaiian grown and refined sugar. But, upon realizing the possibility of running his own sugar plantation in Hawai'i, he quickly changed his tune. In his 1891 article, "The Future of the Sandwich Islands," Spreckels presents the clear benefits of this Treaty for American capital as well as native Hawaiians themselves. His main concern was the preservation of what he calls American "influence" and "interest" in Hawai'i as it was currently in operation, with the addition of the U.S. possession of Pearl Harbor as a military base to, "protect its commerce and the investment of its citizens against any

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[74] Sally Engle Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i: The Cultural Power of Law* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), 44-45, 82.
[75] Ibid., 78.

possible combination or attack from without."[76] He changed his mind again when, after facing more and more opposition from other planters and fearful that annexation would threaten his Asian labor supply, he had began to invest in sugar-beet growing near Salinas, California as way to once again establish control over the conditions of production. At this juncture, he revisited his prior arguments to protect "investment of American capital in this State [California] instead of paying millions each year to foreigners—not Hawaiians—who largely control the sugar product of the islands."[77]

Spreckels' return to his opposition to the Reciprocity Treaty on the eve of Hawai'i's annexation to the U.S. is fraught with contradictions. Not only was he of course one of the "foreigners" whose profits from the treaty he now reproves, but he was also leveraging his case on concern for native Hawaiians, whose welfare and sovereignty he and other American businessmen clearly only eroded since their arrival.[78] According to a feeble statement about the benevolent power of U.S. capital abroad, he argued that Hawaiians needed industrial capitalism to turn them into civilized subjects, and the system that had enabled this was of course rapidly accelerated by the Reciprocity Treaty. Though he had the ear of King Kalakaua, he was certainly no advocate of native self-determination. At one point during an earlier discussion of the Provisional Government with an *Associated Press* correspondent in April 26 1893, he had even boasted, "When Kalakaua was King I practically ran the country."[79] Ideally, he wanted to maintain Hawai'i as a kind of satellite to the

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[76] Spreckels, "The Future of the Sandwich Islands," 291.
[77] Cited in in Adler, "Claus Spreckels: The Sugar King in Hawai'i," 254.
[78] Trask, 10.
[79] Cited in Adler, "Claus Spreckels: The Sugar King in Hawai'i," 231.

mainland national economy, an extension of his industry in California that would not be subject to U.S. law, utmost of which were Asian exclusion laws, and where his influence on Hawaiian monarchy would only increase.

Figure 1: Claus Spreckels's Oceanic Steamship Company Brochure (Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum)

Whatever the change to Hawai'i's political status, Spreckels was guided by self-interest rather than any specific nationalist belief. His success hinged on his exploitation of capitalism as a deterritorializing system, that is, on the profits to be gained from seeking out stages of production across different national spaces. He recruited labor primarily from Asia, produced raw material in Hawai'i, and refined and marketed it in California. Though his monopoly was broken in the end, the American dominated sugar industry continued to produce the Hawai'i-California borderlands as disaggregated space. Following annexation, Hawai'i in particular was especially marketed as both part of and totally outside the U.S., a heterotopia of capitalist modernity on the one hand and Edenic escape from modern life on the other. Even in the midst of his argument in favor of maintaining the Hawaiian monarchy, Spreckels could not avoid characterizing Hawai'i as an "American" place:

> The Hawaiian Islands are American in sentiment and sympathy. Visitors from the United States to Honolulu feel themselves at home the moment they land from the steamer. Here is nothing in the social conditions to remind them that they are on foreign soil. Hotels and stores are conducted on the American plan. American money is the circulating medium. Outdoor sports and popular amusements are fashioned on the American pattern, and the Fourth of July is a national holiday. Conversely, when a

> Hawaiian resident visits America, he finds himself at home in San Francisco or anywhere else in the United States.[80]

Spreckels' main objective here was to argue that American culture, along with American capital, had brought much-needed civilization to native Hawaiians and that annexation would only disturb this mutually beneficial arrangement. As he acknowledges, American economic influence in Hawai'i had enabled the emergence of a Hawaiian tourism industry, one that would soon take off after annexation and the dissolution of his sugar monopoly.

Jack and Charmian London's Pacific Travels

Ironically, Spreckels had himself helped create the infrastructure for this tourist industry at the height of his control of the sugar trade. In 1883 Spreckels started the first semimonthly steamer service between Honolulu and San Francisco through his Oceanic Steamship Company.[81] His ships transported freight and passengers with the general vision that this would enhance the efficiency of the sugar industry and increase tourism to Hawai'i, a vision that benefited from likeminded engineer of transpacific modernity, Michael O'Shaughnessy. As the literal Chief Engineer for many Spreckels-family enterprises in California, O'Shaughnessy oversaw projects for their Southern California Mountain Water Company in San Diego and Spreckels Sugar Company in Salinas, but he also brought modern irrigation systems to Hawai'i, such as the Kohala Ditch for the Kohala Sugar Company. He followed (and in doing so helped pave) a similar circuit as the Spreckels in this borderlands, involving himself with engineering for massive cultural events like the 1893 California Mid-winter International

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[80] Spreckels, "The Future of the Sandwich Islands," 287.
[81] Adler, "Claus Spreckels: Sugar King," 104, 259.

Exposition and 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, both held in San Francisco. In his autobiographical "Reminiscences," O'Shaughnessy reflects on how he first learned of the possibility of irrigation in Hawai'i when he saw hula dancers and an exhibit depicting the terrain of the Hawaiian islands at the Mid-winter Expo, suggesting the ways that imperialism operates, expands, and intensifies through the mutual reinforcement of cultural institutions and material enterprises, even if these are spatially dispersed.[82]

O'Shaughnessy's modernizing efforts in Hawai'i, too, did not escape the notice of tourists drawn there at the turn of the century, and sugar plantations among other industrial sites became tourist attractions in their own right. In her entry on the Ditch Country of Maui, not far from the Spreckelsville Plantation, Charmian London gushes that O'Shaughnessy "overcame almost unsurmountable[*sic*.] odds and put through an irrigation scheme that harnessed the abundant water and tremendously increased the out-put of the sugar plantations. And to most intents it remains an untrammeled paradise…"[83] Tourism to the islands grew significantly in the wake of Hawaii's annexation to the U.S., and Jack and Charmian London were among the early crowds to generate interest in island attractions as well as demands for middle-class travel accommodations. During their first visit, Jack and Charmian London stayed on the islands for a total of five months before sailing on to other Pacific destinations including the Marquesas and Tahiti. They were enthusiastic travelers who

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[82] *Michael Maurice O'Shaughnessy papers, 1882-1937,* Carton 34 : 23 "Reminiscences of Hawaii" (1920), Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.
[83] Charmian London, *Our Hawaii*, 194.

had built their own sailing ship, the *Snark*, and sought out adventure while they were young and full of energy. The trip was also motivated by financial need, and Jack had found a way to pay for his voyage with advances from popular periodicals.84 The short stories I examine in this chapter from *The House of Pride and Other Tales of Hawai'i* (1912), for example, were first published in magazines like *The Pacific Monthly* and *The Red Book Magazine*. Likewise, essays from his travelogue *The Cruise of the Snark* (1913) that I read alongside these stories was published in periodicals such as *Women's Home Companion* and *Harper's Weekly*. The magazines provided the funding and the Pacific the muse, while Jack London produced captivating stories for a national readership.

The Londons had access to both popular tourist destinations and more exclusive estates of Hawaiian royalty and white elite. They swam at Waikiki beach, visited Oahu sugar plantations, watched Fourth of July horse races at the leper colony on Molokai, and relaxed on the lanai at Volcano House. Jack London wrote his famous articles about the Hawaiian sport of surfing and about the leper colony (which appear as chapters from the *Cruise of the Snark*) that brought these sights to mainland attention. As I discuss above, the sugar and pineapple industries played a central role in producing a tourist industry in Hawai'i, as Claus Spreckels's 1883 Oceanic Steamship Company brochure illustrates. The Londons were thus not pioneering tourist destinations so much as popularizing existing ones. What is curious about their respective self-presentations in their literary accounts is the fact that Jack and

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[84] Jeanne Reesman, *Jack London's Racial Lives* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 118.

Charmian both insisted that they were decidedly *not* tourists. The London came eschewed the label of tourist in favor of *kamaaiana*, a term that identified them as whites who had earned the status of "native." In his third essay included in Charmian's *Our Hawai'i*, Jack London explains, "Kamaaina means not exactly old-timer or pioneer. Its original meaning is 'a child of the soil,' 'one who is indigenous.'' But its meaning has changed, so that it stands to-day for 'one who belongs'—to Havaii, of course. It is not merely a degree of time or length of residence. It applies to the heart and the spirit. A man may live in Havaii for twenty years and yet not be recognized as a kamaaina."[85]

As Charmian relates in her travelogue, Jack is very eager to maintain a distinction between them, as kamaaiana, and the other white tourists. Foreigners somehow earn this native identity through spiritual connection the place and its native community—as opposed to earning this title through material means such as frequency or duration of residence. To be kamaaina does not mean to abandon class and geographic mobility, but to disavow this privilege in order to take pleasure in a fantasy of organically achieved affinity with an indigenous population.[86] Yet the Londons' itinerary in Hawai'i and access to what they imagined as authentic, native Hawai'i totally depended on the material conditions of their white, middle class status. Every hour spent sipping drinks in rattan chairs at the Moana Hotel, each dinner party the homes of newspaper editors, superintendent of the Molokai leper colony,

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[85] Charmian London, *Our Hawai'i,* 32.
[86] Houston Wood, *Displacing Natives: The Historical Production of Hawai'i* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 45.

commodore of the Hawaiian yacht club, and all vacations on private ranches were invitations extended from island elite who desired the company of a literary celebrity.

As the Londons' travelogues reveal, the imagined racial and spatial affinity with Hawai'i is always mediated by other kamaaiana. When they dine with the MacFarlane family in Honolulu Jack comments in appreciation of "some of the rare privileges that money cannot buy but which his work has earned him in all self-respect."[87] The rarity of these privileges, evident in Charmian's reflections on their invitation-only dinner with this aristocratic family, derives from their conditions of exclusivity. "It is a well-recommended tourist," she explains, "who ever sees behind into the kamaaina social atmosphere of Honolulu."[88] The kamaaina's economy of mutual recognition is insular, self-perpetuating, and exclusive. This fellowship of non-natives imagines themselves cultural insiders who may have arrived in Hawai'i through familiar channels of but nonetheless possess special access to its essence that other outsiders can only encounter through tourism. "Detesting the tourist route, as a matter of private whim or quirk of temperament," Jack London writes "nevertheless I have crossed the tourist route in many places over the world and know thoroughly what I am talking about."[89] He acknowledges that his global travels have followed established tourists routes, but he claims his unique engagement with each space distances him from other tourists.

London also maintains that his degree of insider access entitles him to represent Hawai'i to the world, claiming he must do so because native Hawaiians are

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[87] Charmian London*, Our Hawai'i*, 204-205.
[88] Ibid., 204.
[89]Ibid., 6.

"poor boosters" of their own land.[90] "I shall have to go on and do all the talking myself," he says, which he goes on to do in his discussion of surfing, a sport that, though unique and charming, is a vanishing because native Hawaiians have allowed it to "languish."[91] According to London, it has taken a white promoter like Alexander Ford to see the true value in the sport and a literary booster like himself to restore surfing to the level of visibility it deserves. In London's mind this means transforming it into "a drawing card for travelers that would fill their hotels and bring them many permanent residents."[92] London's essays about surfing and other Hawaiian cultural forms often bare a double impulse: to mourn their passing in the face of "invading whites" and to preserve them through the market of literary advertising. He cannot help himself from admiring Hawai'i's natural beauty and native culture. As his embattled prose and fiction convey, this admiration is always expressed through the promotional rhetoric of the tourist industry.

Off-the-Grid: The Londons' Hawai'i

As I explore in what follows, London promotes and popularizes existing tourist destinations in Hawai'i in his short fiction and travel writing. His texts are themselves a kind of heterotopia in that they present Hawai'i as a utopia of ideal natural settings and welcoming natives–images that traded in their appeal as the familiar, the stereotypical, such as hula dancers or ukulele players. They also present scenes that are so marginal and off-the-grid that they remain unexplained, strange features in the Jack London Hawai'i corpus. References to Hawaiian cowboys and cattle ranching, as

[90] Ibid., 7.
[91] Ibid., 8.
[92] Ibid., 8.

I will show, comprise just these other sorts of places. The production of both the popular and the private image of Hawai'i, I am suggesting, does not run counter to but rather defines modernity in the Hawai'i-California borderlands. Tourism in Hawai'i was an industry that capitalized on the fantasy of unique, exclusive access to sights, sounds, tastes, and touches that were also available in mass reproduced commercial forms. The discontinuity in London's representation of Hawai'i as a place for popular and private consumption is captured in his exclamation atop Haleakala, a volcano he and Charmian visited on one of their ranching vacations in Maui.

As Charmian records, Jack marvels that there are not throngs of tourists to enjoy the majestic view. Measuring the crater's value in terms of the visitors it could attract, he concludes, "there wouldn't be ships enough to carry the tourists." The rarified scene warrants a much wider spectatorship than the current tourism infrastructure could allow. In contrast to surfing, a lesser-known feature of Hawaiian life that he seems equally enthusiastic about promoting, the volcano is far more difficult to access. Visitors could watch surfers paddle through the waves at almost any beach in Hawai'i, but to reach the summit of Haleakala they must follow knowledgeable cowboys hired to guide them on horseback by white ranchers. "I'm glad my wife and I are the only tourists here to-day," he remarks "And we're not tourists, thank God!"[93] Given its height and location away from the bustling center of Honolulu, Haleakala appears almost naturally off the beaten tourist path. Jack London, who can afford to navigate such challenging island topography, relishes the moment of private enjoyment. Like other attractions he accessed through the Hawaiian ranching

[93] Ibid., 185.

economy, his ascent into the rare air of Haleakala affirms his membership in the upper echelons of Hawaiian life.

Figure 2: Toasting Postcards at Haleakala, from "The aloha guide: the standard handbook of Honolulu and the Hawaiian Islands for travelers and residents with a historical resume," by Ferdinand J.H. Schnack, 1915 (University of Hawai'i Manoa, Hawaiian Collection)

Jack and Charmian's climb up Haleakala in July of 1907 was part of an extended visit to the Haleakala Ranch, owned by Louis von Tempksi. Their stay on the von Tempski ranch was one of many vacations on Hawaiian cattle ranches, a remarkable yet lesser examined agenda in their island itinerary. Prior to their first trip to the Haleakala Ranch, the Londons had already visited the ranch on Molokai; later in the summer they stayed they stayed at Parker Ranch on the Big Island. The couple would retrace their path to each of these ranches during their return trip in 1915-1916, once again enjoying the hospitality of the European and American ranch managers and the guided horseback tours of native Hawaiian and Japanese-Hawaiian cowboys.

The Londons' first trip to Molokai is well known because of the article Jack London produced about their visit to the island's leper settlement, "The Lepers of Molokai," which was first published in the January 1908 issue of *Women's Home Companion*. What this article does not bring to public attention is the 60,000-acre ranch where the couple stayed while they toured the settlement, learned about the disease from medical professionals, and took in other cultural diversions of the island. This ranch had been managed by German immigrant Rudolph Meyers from 1864 until 1897 when it was taken over by an American sugar company. In her travel diary Charmian recounts many details of their stay with descendants of Rudolph Meyers and

his Hawaiian wife, Kalama Waha, remarking that as there were no hotels on Molokai at the time, "the visitor without friends and friends of friends on the island will see little unless equipped for camping."[94]

As a private guest in a modern home, she delights in the surrounding flora that overwhelms her senses yet is enjoyed from the comfortable distance of her lanai. "This ranch home is buried in flowers," she writes, "and my unbelief in begonias a dozen feet high underwent rude check. A fairy forest of these surrounds the guest cottage, casting a rosy shadow on window and lanai." Spellbound by the natural beauty of this remote ranch, Charmian reflects, "I should have been content to remain here indefinitely."[95] When she and Jack descend from the ranch down the port of Kaunakakai on route to Maui, she notices the dryness of the hills and remarks on the "amphitheatre-shaped valleys on the other side of the island" that receive more rain. The topography of Molokai seems to naturally exhibit the island's verdure for the visitor's enjoyment.

Spectatorship is naturally occurring and encouraged, a stance that Charmian readily extends to native vegetation and Hawaiians like. Just as she and Jack discuss the promising future of modern irrigation that could rescue the "dry creeks" and "thirsty appearance of the lower foothills," they pass by "dashing native cowboys, bound for a wedding luau… teeth and eyes flashing, gay neckerchiefs about their singing brown throats, and hat brims blown back from vivid faces, out-Westing the

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[94] Ibid., 166.
[95] Ibid., 167.

West."[96] For a moment, the cowboys appear almost as a flash of the American West in the tropics of Hawai'i. Unable to make immediate sense of the strange assemblage of cowboy attire on brown skin, Charmian breaks these down and reconstitutes them into something akin to American frontiersmen. She attempts to reconcile the strange and contradictory figure of the Hawaiian cowboy by picturing him in familiar terms. Charmian's fleeting glance assembles a kind of composite of white western masculinity that is, by the same token, anatomizing, disaggregating, and decontextualizing. Similar to her hyperbolic descriptions of Hawai'i's exotic plants, valleys, volcanoes, and beaches, she encounters these cowboys with an available lexicon that, inevitably failing her, is overtaken by a rhetoric of excess. Likeness, metaphor, and mimicry are not exacting enough to account for a colonial landscape wherein natives themselves appear as modernizing agents on the one hand, and racial subordinates on the other. These cowboys, she concludes, are "out-Westing the West." They exceed her idea of American West masculinity, but rather than threatening she finds them entertaining. Their gay handkerchiefs, hat brims, flashing eyes and teeth, vivid faces, and festive air script them into the general theater of Hawai'i. Frozen in time and space by the tourist's captive gaze, these cowboys exist only to amuse and enchant.

In the years following Hawai'i's annexation to the U.S., Hawai'i itself was marketed as a place that had become more valuable through American economic and political intervention. The growing tourist industry that the Londons participate in and contribute to conscripted native Hawaiians into its machinery less as culture workers

[96] Ibid., 167.

and more as culture itself, or more accurately as nature. Eschewing tourist identities, Jack and Charmian consider their contact with Hawai'i to be more immediate and authentic. Of course, as I am arguing, every phase of their ranching vacation on Maui is utterly mediated by imperialism, past and present. For instance, Charmian describes the pleasure in watching ranch activities as spectators. Sitting "fence-high on a little platform overlooking the strenuous scene" of corralling and branding, she claims, "made a Buffalo Bill show seem tame indeed."[97] In the natural amphitheatre of Hawai'i, native Hawaiians appear to them as performers who in fact put on an even more entertaining show than Buffalo Bill's because they are hard at work in their own, more real, and more wild, environment. Rather than a contrived scene of the conquest of the west that has lost its authenticity and wildness through staging, these cowboys provide a rare glimpse of untouched, Old Hawai'i.

According to Charmian's narrative, cattle ranching at Haleakala is no popular amusement. It is exclusively available for private consumption, which she also imagines as free from the relations of global capitalism. As she describes their movements from one spectacle of nature to another, from the Haleakala Crater to a stone-walled corral "where the bright-eyed, quiet-mannered cowboys had lunch waiting," the racial hierarchies underpinning the economy of ranch tourism are explicit. [98] At this phase of their day's itinerary, Charmian recounts consuming a "real roughing-it picnic of jerked beef and salt pork, products of the ranch; and hard-poi, called pai'ai, thick and sticky, royal pink-lavender, in a roomy sack. Into this we dug

[97] Ibid., 179-180.
[98] Ibid., 186.

our fists, bringing them out daubed with the hearty substance."[99] Here, docile cowboys serve a meal they might have on a typical workday, providing the Londons with food they in turn imagine represents the "roughing-it" way of life. Though they would consider this picnic a far cry from typical tourist fare—food and hula dancing at a luau, for instance—their pleasure in consuming it derives from a similar pleasure in commercial mediation of Hawaiian culture. In many ways, their tourism on the ranch replicates colonial power relations that increasingly dispossess native Hawaiians of their land, bodies, and culture, turning these each into commodities for sale and profit. After watching cowboys from afar all morning, the Londons relish the chance to dig in to a tangible, consumable product of Hawai'i. The thick poi signifies an especially potent fetish for them. By ingesting poi in the of native Hawaiians, as Charmian explains, they more fully commune with Hawai'i like "real kamaaina." [100] Their first visit to Haleakala Ranch in fact ends with Louis von Tempsky translating the Londons' names into Hawaiian, confirming their membership in the kamaaiana inner circle.[101]

Their whole experience on the Haleakala Ranch can be summed up by an observation Charmian made at the beginning of her story. "Oddly enough," she writes, "although born and raised in the West, we two have sailed over two thousand miles to take part in our first rodeo."[102] As far as they have traveled from the Wild West of California, the Londons perceive in the Haleakala Ranch something familiar.

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[99] Ibid., 186.
[100] Ibid., 186.
[101] Ibid., 197.
[102] Ibid., 178.

Charmian is not commenting on the irony of simply finding signs of modernization in Hawai'i that they know from California, i.e. the taming of the land and livestock through industrialized ranching. The irony is, I suggest, in encountering a familiar capitalist mode of production that they experience in completely different ways in different transpacific sites. The paternalistic cattle ranch in Hawai'i is a kind of immanent, diversion of nature, while in California it is a product of a deliberate economic scheme. The former they indulge in as tourists, the latter they control as managers. As I will explore in what follows, these seemingly incongruous perceptions of the cattle ranch as tourist attraction and private enterprise only become more and more aligned in the Londons' vision of modernity in the transpacific borderlands. No single literary work of either Jack or Charmian London draws a direct line between their ranching plans in Sonoma, California and their ranching tourism in Hawai'i. But through a reading practice that pans across uneven, variable, and partial literary terrains, we can better discern the formation of this transpacific heterotopia.

The Wilds of Jack London's Hawai'i

Thus far I have drawn on Charmian's *Our Hawai'i* as a rich source for tracing the couple's Pacific travel itinerary and encounters with Hawaiian cattle ranches. Keeping in mind the commonality of hers and Jack's impressions of Hawai'i, I turn now to selected short stories Jack London wrote during his first trip. These stories focus on features of Hawaiian life that mirror his and Charmian's autobiographical accounts while also diverging from them in many ways. Similar to the couple's travelogues, a noticeable refrain in these stories is a lament for the passing of Hawaiian authenticity. Hula dancers, ukulele players, and lepers are all romantic

figures who emblematize the natural, primitive, and beautiful culture of the islands that is vanishing in the wake of colonial contact and in the contemporary global context. The selections from *The House of Pride and Other Stories* I examine below narrate these figures with a kind of nostalgia that also like the travelogues, both acknowledge and obscure Jack London's role in making Hawai'i consumable to a national audience and thus effecting the very loss he mourns.

My reading of these stories builds on June Howard's approach to analyzing U.S. literary naturalism. In *Form and History in American Literary Naturalism* (1985), Howard maintains that naturalism is "a form that unremittingly attends to the large social questions of its period. An investigation of naturalism thus doubly entails an investigation of its historical moment—as the conditions of its production and as the source of discourses embedded within the works" (ix). I similarly interpret London's stories about Hawai'i and later novels about ranching in California as structured by narrative features linked to the genre (such as the opposition of human will and environmental determinism) as well as by the broader context of transpacific modernity in which he was writing. Where I both draw upon and depart from Howard is in her formulation of the spatial boundaries of the genre. "In naturalism," she claims "the feature who defines humanity by negation and represents a problematical area of existence is imagined as living not outside the bounds of human society, not in the wilderness (where images of the American Indian as savage placed it), but within the very walls of the civilized city."[103] I wish to elaborate on her notion of the "wilderness" as the internal other of the urban center by suggesting that, as the

[103] Howard, 80.

example of Jack London's naturalism shows us, the other is also formed in cross-border contexts. The racialized figure of the savage or primitive in his literary works about Hawai'i and California is not spatially bounded but constituted precisely by its production, movement, and reconstitution across the Pacific borderlands.

As London scholars have observed, Jack London wrote about many wildernesses beyond the U.S. West. Any generalization about these multiple wild terrains would risk missing their particular meaning not only in the author's literary career but in their varied contributions to the idea of "the West" in the era after the putative closing of the frontier.[104] In *Recalling the Wild: Naturalism and the Closing of the American West*, Mary Lawlor argues that the narrative forms in naturalist literature about the U.S. West (by Jack London, Frank Norris, and others) included elements of both realism and romanticism. Authors writing in an era of intensified modernization after the closing of the frontier responded to these changes by representing worlds that, on the one hand, were confined by new geographic borders and subject to social, economic, and biological determinants; on the other hand, these worlds referenced mythic images of the West found in antebellum romantic literature where an endless frontier still existed and individual will was still possible. Nostalgia for this earlier romantic West did not counter the determinism in naturalist works but rather it allowed these authors to express an "ambivalence about Western culture and

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[104] Formulations of "multiple wests" by historians examining the Asia Pacific have been informative to my study. *See* Whitehead, John, "Hawai'i: The First and Last Far West?" *The Western Historical Quarterly*. 23. 2 (May 1992): 153-177 and David Igler, "Diseased Goods: Global Exchanges in the Eastern Pacific Basin, 1770–1850." *The American Historical Review*. 109.3 (June 2004).

cultural identity" at the turn-of-the-century where the future of their world emerged from a romantic past that was lost but could be continually reproduced.[105]

Lawlor's theorization of nostalgia in this literature as a process of "recalling" leader her to argue that authors like Jack London recalled a mythic frontier in literary wildernesses like the Klondike. While she focuses on how he "engaged the vocabulary and the literary principles of naturalism to construct a revisionary interpretation of the late-nineteenth-century West" in "exotic frontier zones" like the frozen north, I suggest that his "recollection" of the Wild West in Hawai'i was more than discursive.[106] If we contextualize London's stories in their moment after Hawai'i's annexation to the U.S. and during an era of increased globalization, we can see that he romanticized the literal space of Hawai'i through metaphor *and* reproduced his fantasy through the material terms of the global capitalist market. Hawai'i's romantic appeal as wild and primitive can no longer reside solely in its remote geographic location when, in the global era of time-space compression, it is unclear what it is "remote" from. This appeal, I argue, is recreated in a mobile commodity that can move across borders and influence social life in otherwise geographically distant spaces. London's romantic idea of Old Hawai'i is one based on consumption, where the idea of "Hawai'i" becomes commodified, deterritorialized, and reconstituted in his vision of transpacific modernity. The "West" is recalled through memory, but it is also recalled as kind of manufactured good in need of repackaging.

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[105] Mary Lawlor, *Recalling the Wild: Naturalism and the Closing of the American West* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press: 2000), 43, 45.
[106] Lawlor, 111.

As I will examine below, the recollection of a mythic "primitive" past abounds in Jack London's Hawai'i stories and becomes the foundation of his ranching enterprise in California. The separation of a metaphorical and a material "frontier" is thus impossible, as is, I add, the view of these frontiers as discrete spaces. My reading of Jack London's stories about Hawai'i (and his later novels about California ranching) follows Colleen Lye's analysis of naturalist authors like London in a global context. In the first part of *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893-1945*, Lye demonstrates how the figure of the Asian in naturalist works by authors such as Jack London and Frank Norris exposes this genre as a "failed critique of capitalism."[107] The failed anti-capitalism of these works is often attributed to their ambivalent representation of capitalism as exploitative and oppressive, on the one hand, and inevitable, on the other. Lye refines this analysis by showing how naturalist literature addresses the failed promises of capitalism at a moment of intensified global markets, yet their racialization of "the Asiatic" as both enabling and threatening Western modernity undermines their anti-capitalist potential. As much as London, Norris, and others present the perils of capitalism at the turn of the century, they rely on the exclusion of Asians (whom they stereotype in abstract, economic terms as "coolies") for U.S. global domination through continued economic growth and, thus, for the maintenance of U.S. exceptionalism. Altogether these authors form what Lye argues are "exclusionist critiques of monopoly capitalism"[108]

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[107] Lye Colleen. *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 8.
[108] Lye, 11.

London's stories of Hawai'i represent one of capitalism's casualties as the destruction of native Hawaiians, and he alternately casts Asian immigrants as culpable for this loss and as an exploited labor force also suffering under capitalist system. He also often casts native Hawaiians as doomed to vanish due to inborn racial degeneracy, which are overall ambivalences that I argue point to an underlying contradiction; namely, his wish to mourn capital's losses without a wholesale criticism of imperialism. He believes he has special access to Old Hawai'i, an idea that underpins his romanticization of native Hawaiians and his later view of Hawai'i as a multiracial utopia. Both of these ideas of Hawai'i are transposed onto his ranching venture in California that began before his first trip to Hawai'i and ended soon after his last. To borrow from Lye, then, I will elaborate on how London's transpacific "wildernesses" in Hawai'i and California mutually inform one another and in his literature about the transpacific spaces London offers exclusionist as well as *exclusivist* critiques of monopoly capitalism.[109]

In an era of closed frontiers, vanishing native populations, and emergent global capitalism, the Londons are like "belated travelers," to borrow from Ali Behdad, they are also driven by an "obsessive urge to discover an "authentic" Other."[110] In his introduction to *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution*, Behdad develops a mode of postcolonial analysis for understanding the ambivalences, slippages, and discontinuities of belated travelers—Europeans traveling to the Orient in the late nineteenth century hoping to discover the same primitivism cited in their

[109] Lye, 93.
[110] Ali Behdad, *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution* (Durham: Duke University Press: 1994), 13.

forbearers accounts. The Londons are belated Americans venturing beyond the putative Western frontier in search of spaces untouched by modernity, only to find them on the lamentable path to extinction. In their touristic imaginary, the "West" was still endless, not fully charted, and primitive, as well as circumscribed, known, and modernizing in step with national and global interests. Their response is to represent spaces like Hawai'i through combined realist and romantic modes: Hawai'i as it is and Hawai'i as it used to be.

"Koolau the Leper" and "Goodbye, Jack!"

In this section, I pair together two stories in particular that capture some of the contradictions underlying London's memorialization of Hawai'i in the context of early twentieth-century tourism in the transpacific borderlands. Both "Koolau the Leper" and "Good-bye, Jack!" are stories of leprosy in Hawai'i, told from the opposing perspectives of native Hawaiians and white elite, respectively.[111] They reveal his sympathy for the Hawaiian population that is disappearing due to disease introduced through colonialism, on the one hand, and his view that their own racial degeneracy has doomed them to extinction. They also show how his nostalgia for a Hawaiian paradise lost is predicated on his criticism of colonialism while at the same time motivated by his interest in preserving Hawaiian cultural essence for his own white, middle class touristic consumption. As I have discussed above, he believed his role as kamaaiana and booster—an outsider who properly understood and could therefore

[111] These two stories are included in Jack London's *House of Pride and Other Tales* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912). In my readings of "Koolau the Leper," "Good-bye, Jack!," and a third story "Aloha Oe," that follow, I use the versions of these stories made available online without pagination through Sonoma State University.

properly memorialize and promote the islands—entitled him to speak on behalf of Hawai'i in ways its native population simply could not do for themselves. Without himself as the devoted chronicler, sports like surfing would be left out of history altogether. "Not only did the Hawai'i-born not talk about it," he wrote "but they forgot about it."[112]

The mementos of Hawai'i that Jack London produced in stories collected in *The House of Pride and Other Stories* (1912) and *On the Makaloa Mat* (1919) heightened mainland familiarity with stereotypical images of surfers, hula dancers, and others. They also contained scenes from off the beaten path. Hawaiian cowboys and ranch lands appear very obliquely in these stories, often as unexplained features of the islands the reader must simply accept. The eponymous hero of "Koolau the Leper" was himself a cowboy, prior to his contraction of leprosy, and the narrative contains references to his days on a cattle ranch as the main drama unfolds.[113] The protagonist in "Good-bye, Jack!" also has ranching experience, though as a manager rather than hired laborer, which the story includes in his profile as a white capitalist with control over many Hawaiian industries. In both stories, Hawaiian ranches emblematize Old Hawai'i that seems to exist outside of time and place as well as outside the typical image of Hawai'i marketed by the growing tourist industry.

"Koolau the Leper"

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[112] Charmian London, *Our Hawai'i*, 7.

[113] "Koolau the Leper" is based on a true story of a Hawaiian cowboy who, upon becoming afflicted with leprosy, went to live with a group of lepers living in Kalalau Valley on Kaui. See *Imagining Our Americas*: *Toward a Transnational Frame*, eds. Sandhya Shukla and Heidi Tinsmand (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 156-157.

In "Koolau the Leper," London tells the story of Koolau, a Hawaiian king afflicted with leprosy who attempts to protect his subjects and fellow lepers from forced deportation to the leper colony on Molokai. Koolau and his followers live in caves in Kalalau Valley, an "earthly paradise" high above the cliffs on the island of Kaui, accessible to the beach only by an extremely narrow and dangerous ledge. All natives of Kauai, Koolau's subjects are angered by the whites who stole their land and by the Chinese immigrant laborers who introduced leprosy to Hawai'i. They agree that they have done no wrong and have every reason to protect themselves and their kingdom from the white soldiers and police who are soon to appear armed and ready to ship them to Molokai. What follows is a bloody shoot-out in which Koolau picks off the police one by one, shoots their sheriff after he tells him there is a price on his head, and succeeds in keeping the attackers at bay for a few days. After his subjects endure deadly shell-fire aimed directly at their caves, however, Koolau realizes he is alone in the fight but still manages to elude death in the "high inaccessible pockets" of the Valley for six weeks. The soldiers and police give up at last, and Koolau survives for two more years in the Valley before dying from bodily decay.[114]

In many respects, the narrative of "Koolau the Leper" is organized around the struggle between the determinisms of environment and heredity common to naturalist literature.[115] The fate of Koolau and his kingdom seems caught between the forces of external colonialism and internal racial degeneracy, leaving little room for human agency, particularly when the sympathetic characters are "savages" several degrees

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[114] "Koolau the Leper," available online through Sonoma State University.
[115] Howard, 40.

removed from the category of human itself. The negative portrayal of Hawai'i's loss of land, people, and resources through colonial conquest at the beginning seems to frame the story as more than a documentation but an outright criticism of colonialism. When Koolau speaks to his subjects about fighting against their forced deportation, he reviews the injustices brought to them by missionaries and capitalists, explaining, "Because we would not work the miles of sugar-cane where once our horses pastured, they brought the Chinese slaves from over seas. And with them came the Chinese sickness -- that which we suffer from and because of which they would imprison us on Molokai." To this, his associate Kiloliana adds with the authority of his former role as judge, "The sickness is not ours. We have not sinned. The men who preached the word of God and the word of Rum brought the sickness with the coolie slaves who work the stolen land." The history of colonialism these leaders present has only been one of destruction, wherein native Hawaiians have unjustly endured dispossessions, diseased, and now imprisonment. As Kiloliana explains it, using the rhetoric of Christian morality, they are suffering from sins they did not commit.

Although the battle that ensues seems to foreground white police officers as the primary antagonist, the effects of leprosy on native Hawaiian bodies as well as the blame for the disease on Chinese, referred to throughout as "slaves" and "coolies," ultimately dominates the narrative. London's yellow peril discourse has the ironic effect of displacing the critique of Euro-American colonials and becomes centered on the nonwhite, unfree, foreign, and diseased laborers who have vanquished the native Hawaiian population through infection. The story also presents Chinese immigrants as a replacement labor force for native Hawaiians in the white-owned sugar industry. The

drama of "Asian invasion" in naturalist literature of the period is often staged in the U.S. West, a region whose industrialization lead to the recruitment of cheap, Asian labor in the very moment that Japan and China were also emerging as modern political powers. The image of "Asia as both heir and rival to the West," as Colleen Lye argues, pervaded political and cultural reflections on the state of capitalism in the region, including Jack London's own literary fictions like *The Iron Heel*.[116] London reproduces a version of this in the context of Hawai'i, but here the Chinese coolie represents a threat not to white workers or owners but to native Hawaiians. He goes so far as to fashion a historical chain of events in which native Hawaiians refuse to work on land stolen from them and, as a result, endure disease and population decline brought about by their Chinese coolie rivals. By focusing on Hawaiians' nobility in resistance and in suffering, and on Chinese as their chief racial threat, the narrative completely bypasses European and American colonialists' introduction of diseases to Hawai'i dating back to Captain James Cook's arrival in 1778. Because of the diminishing native population, sugar planters by the mid-nineteenth century called for the recruitment of Chinese labor to help meet labor demands.[117] By 1890, the native Hawaiian population would decrease from about 800,00 at first contact to 40,000, a loss Jack London's story laments but for which it ultimately exempts Euro-American imperialist accountability.[118]

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[116] Lye, 16.
[117] Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawai'i 1835-1920* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983), 22.
[118] Trask, 9 and Merry, 44.

As primitives existed outside of a "civilized" labor system, Hawaiians in "Koolau the Leper" are romanticized as free from the exploitative economic system that introduced this rival, nonwhite labor force. To follow Colleen Lye's argument, if discourses of yellow peril in literary naturalism revealed the Asiatic figure as "the otherness of Western modernity to itself," the idealization of native Hawaiians revealed to Western modernity not its rival but its loss.[119] A means of restoring the vanishing native by the turn of the century was through commercial reproduction of Old Hawai'i. I wish to suggest that London's story allegorizes this process of memorialization by relieving the presumed white middle class reader of self-reflexivity—their contemplation of tourism as a continuation of imperialism, or even of imperialism itself—and freeing them to take pleasure in the scenes of Hawaiian culture that unfold.

Though London's story restages history to depict leprosy as a "Chinese sickness," this environmental determinism is overshadowed by native Hawaiians' own inescapable racial degeneracy. Following Koolau and Kiloliani's ennobling speeches in which they call their subjects to defend against the white officers, the narrative zooms in on a festive scene. Here, the lepers sing and dance to interrupt the stretches of time otherwise "filled with pain." A woman plays a ukulele while singing out a "barbaric love-call such as might have come from the dark forest-depths of the primeval world," while a man and woman dance with movements full of love. The horror of their performance underscores the tragic loss of the physical beauty that made native Hawaiians attractive to mainland audiences; in the account of the lepers'

[119] Lye, 56.

celebration, it also recalls the threat of their innate lustiness that the disease only seems to amplify through grotesque caricature.[120] This caricature reaches an even higher pitch in London's portrayal of the two "idiots" in the group, who are described as dancing apart from the others, "gibbering and mouthing strange noises…travestying love as they themselves had been travestied by life." Only able to mouth and mimic the festive dances of the larger group, the idiots express love in a kind of pathetic pantomime. They struggle to participate in the kingdom's final show of solidarity through such contorted imitation that their language, movements, and affect are beyond recognition. Idiocy itself points to a mental degeneracy that seems to predate their physical deterioration from leprosy, however the two are less exceptional to the encampment than they are doubles for it—their inborn idiocy equated with the leprosy acquired from the external world. In the end, both conditions comprise an otherness that even if not immediately visible threatens to reveal itself just below the body's surface.

Grotesque but pitiable, the kingdom's nobility seems to emerge precisely in the moment of their disappearance. What salvages Koolau's kingdom from total obsolescence is their proliferation in the broader commercial world beyond the pages of the magazine story. Leprosy may have been new and shocking to the reader, and certainly London exaggerates the shock value in this narrative, but the movements of the hula dance and sounds of the ukulele were a familiar form of Hawaiian entertainment on the mainland. These performances had been featured in world's fairs,

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[120] "Koolau the Leper," available online through Sonoma State University.

postcards, stereoscopes, and other visual media since the 1890s.[121] The "hula girl" in particular was fast becoming the most recognizable image of Hawai'i at the turn of the century. As Adria Imada shows, after decades of prohibition and regulation of hula performance by ruling whites in Hawai'i, hula was seized upon as a means of promoting the islands as a tourist destination. Contrary to their earlier image as antithetical to the very idea of civilization, commercial shows used native Hawaiian performers as representatives of the success of the modern sugar and pineapple industries. These popular displays of "spectacular corporeality" fused ideas of authenticity and naturalness to the bodies on stage.[122]

After Hawai'i's annexation to the US in 1898, the commercialization of hula performance intensified and hula became emblematic of not only native Hawaiian culture but an entire tourist industry as well. [123] "Haole-operated newspapers and journals saw hula and Hawaiian music as potential attractions, and public discourse began to shift in favor of hula," Imada explains. "Once packaged properly, Hawaiian culture marked Hawai'i as unique, and hula dancers provided Hawai'i with its 'destination image.'" [124] The hula scene and general account of the encampment in "Koolau the Leper" invokes conventions of these public shows. Both present

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[121] In *Staging Tourism*, Jane Desmond looks at the historical development of the tourist industry in Waikiki by analyzing how the iconic and commodified "hula girl" came to symbolize Hawaiian-ness, a cultural study that focuses on reading how different shows, performances, or displays of bodies produced ideas of racial authenticity. See Jane Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 1999).
[122] Ibid., xv.
[123] Adria Imada, "Hawaiians on Tour: Hula Circuits through the American Empire," *American Quarterly* 56.1 (2004): 117.
[124] Ibid.

themselves as a private window into an insular, primitive ritual yet unseen by the outside world. Jack London's narrative of detached observation, moreover, draws the reader into a scene that treads a familiar line between shocking and alluring difference. From the vantage of the hovering, omniscient narrator, the reader peers into the "rocky lairs" of the leper colony perched high on the cliff, observing Koolau and his subjects pass calabashes of distilled *ti*-plant and prepare themselves for their festivities. London tantalizes his audience with immediate access to the sounds and sights emerging from "the dark forest-depths of the primeval world." The graphic image of the woman with "open eye-pits" who, although robbed of visual sense and other corporeal capacities, is readily available for the consuming gaze of the reader. They are free to stare without fear of a returned gaze as she "pluck[s] the strings of an *ukulele* and lift[s] her voice in a barbaric love-call." The Hawaiian bodies on display here are not presented as trophies of US industrial expansion in the Pacific, so much as the "living dead," reminders of a lost wilderness who can only be reanimated in commercial reproduction. Overall, the spectatorial gaze overseeing this story further detaches these performing (and deteriorating) bodies from the context of European and American imperialism. As Koolau's subjects either die in the ensuing battle or surrender, moreover, the sense of nostalgia for Old Hawai'i only intensifies.

Koolau himself seems an incongruity in a narrative that generates sympathy for stereotypical images of native Hawaiian beauty and charm. His cultural past as a cowboy would have been far less familiar or even known to the mainland, though as I will show, this obscurity makes him all the more a romantic figure. Koolau's days working on the cattle ranch are presented elliptically. Brief descriptors appear in the

main drama but elaboration is generally withholding. It is not until the end of the story that the reader gets the fullest picture when, incapacitated by leprosy and lying in wait of death, Koolau is struck by a flashback to his younger days as a cowboy:

> As life faded and the drip of the rain grew dim in his ears, it seemed to him that he was once more in the thick of the horse-breaking, with raw colts rearing and bucking under him, his stirrups tied together beneath, or charging madly about the breaking corral and driving the helping cowboys over the rails. The next instant, and with seeming naturalness, he found himself pursuing the wild bulls of the upland pastures, roping them and leading them down to the valleys. Again the sweat and dust of the branding pen stung his eyes and bit his nostrils. [125]

Koolau recalls his life as a cowboy, reliving in vivid detail the intense action of breaking wild horses and herding cattle into the corral. The feel of stirrup, the smell of the branding iron on cow hide, and the physical dangers of this labor come flooding back into his mind. Memories of this prior life clarify earlier references to Koolau's skill as a marksman--as when he was galvanizing his subjects to fight the whites intruder and reminded them, "I, alone, Koolau, who was once a cowboy on Niihau, can hold the trail against a thousand men." His knowledge of the land and experience with the rifle is remarked upon again as he strategizes his defense against the officers from across the precipitous ledge. Rather than risk missing his target, Koolau at first engages them in conversation, though the narrative portends his ability for precise execution by reminding us, "He had learned to shoot as a wild-cattle hunter on Niihau, and on that island his skill as a marksman was unforgotten." Soon enough the sheriff

[125] “Koolau the Leper,” available online through Sonoma State University.

tests his luck and meets a swift demise as Koolau shoot bullet, followed by five more successful shots on five other police officers.[126]

Koolau's nobility derives from his ability to use his training with horses, rifles, and other elements of ranch life to defend against encroaching modern forces. As in Jack and Charmain Londons' travelogues, Hawaiian cattle ranches are romanticized here as the last bastion of Hawaiian authenticity. Though the typical reader would not share Jack London's exclusive access to the ranches on Molokai, Maui, or the Big Island, they could get a glimpse into this untouched, natural world that commercial tourism could not. Moments before shooting the sheriff, Koolau defends himself by announcing, "I am a free man…I have done no wrong. All ask is to be left alone. I have lived free, and I shall die free. I will never give myself up." The idea of Koolau's freedom is restated at the end where we are reminded "Free he had lived, and free he was dying," though his rhetoric is not an appeal to liberalism's promises of freedom and inclusion for Koolau and other native Hawaiians. It signals rather a freedom precisely *from* civilized law and society, a lawlessness that makes his primitivism rare and romantic and its loss tragic. Koolau's final moment of consciousness leads him back to the "wholeness of that wild youth," when his body, his labor, and his land still belonged to him. Through memory Koolau finds a way to preserve the Old Hawai'i here wild cattle and cowboys roamed freely. His past life remains inaccessible to the typical reader or tourist, persisting as it does in the margins of the story and preserved only in delirious flashback.[127]

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[126] Ibid.
[127] "Koolau the Leper," available online through Sonoma State University.

"Good-bye, Jack!"

"Hawai'i is a queer place," begins another of Jack London's stories collected in *The House of Pride*. "Everything socially is what I may call topsyturvy. Not but what things are correct. They are almost too much so. But still things are sort of upside down." Initially published in the June 1909 issue of *Red Book Magazine*, over a year after his first trip to Hawai'i, "Good-bye, Jack!" opens with a befuddled narrator's attempt to make sense of a place that escapes comprehension. "Hawai'i is a queer place," the narrator tells us at the opening of the story. "Everything socially is what I may call topsyturvy. Not but what things are correct. They are almost too much so. But still things are sort of upside down." [128]At the center of this upside down society are the missionaries, who, from one generation to the next, have taken possession of the islands and civilized the native Hawaiians so that "by the second or third generation he was practically extinct." The protagonist, Jack Kersdale is a descendent of missionaries whose heritage has done nothing but bestow upon him incredible wealth and social status. "He was a sugar king, a coffee planter, a rubber pioneer, a cattle rancher, and a promoter of three out of every four new enterprises launched in the islands. He was a society man, a club man, a yachtsman, a bachelor…" Not only is he a prominent player in the island's main economic, social, and cultural practices, Jack is also handsome, adventurous, and strong—an enviable embodiment of white masculinity in its prime. His physical strength enables his ventures and adventures throughout Hawai'i, including his latest interests in the diagnosis and treatment of leprosy. Quite convinced of his imperviousness to injury or disease, Jack has

[128] "Good-bye, Jack!," available online through Sonoma State University.

committed himself to the studying the scientific management of leprosy in the company of Board of Health officials in Honolulu.

The narrator in "Good-bye, Jack!" whom Jack invites to watch the newly diagnosed lepers sail off for the settlement on Molokai, cannot overcome the queer social world he encounters in Hawai'i. In many respects, the short story itself seems an upside down version of "Koolau the Leper." It also tells of leprosy in Hawai'i but from the point of view of white colonialists rather than of native Hawaiians. The review of colonialism's destruction of the native population echoes Koolau and Kiloliana's account of native dispossession and disease, yet the narrator is quick to interrupt himself. "But that is not the Hawaiian queerness I started out to tell. Only one cannot speak of things Hawaiian without mentioning the missionaries. There is Jack Kersdale, the man I wanted to tell about." Jack's "queerness" appears to reside in the strange irony of his descent from "missionary stock" and divergence from the "the Missionary Crowd" in the manner of other white men, who "yield to the climate and the sun, and no matter how busy they may be, are prone to dance and sing and wear flowers behind their ears and in their hair."[129] Jack is presented as a thoroughgoing colonialist who helped overthrow the Hawaiian monarchy and modernize Hawai'i through development of its major industries, yet he, not unlike Jack London himself, has acquired special access to native Hawaiian culture that implies a kind of racial affinity. His implied kamaiiana status spurs him to preserve the population he has otherwise only helped to decimate, a philanthropy he enacts through his study of leprosy. In this way, "Good-bye, Jack!" further inverts "Koolau" in its depiction of

[129] "Good-bye, Jack!," available online through Sonoma State University.

Jack Kersdale as a pitiable character who has continued the colonial enterprises of his forebears with little self-reflection yet finds himself, in the end, atoning for his amnesia. In the story's closing scene, it is the afflicted native Hawaiian body that drifts out to sea and out of view while imperiled white body of Jack Kersdale captivates the reader's attention and sympathy.

Jack Kersdale's mastery over Hawai'i extends from the realm of economic control to his "encyclopedic knowledge" of native Hawaiians themselves. The narrator explains that through his studies in the ivory tower of faraway Yale University, Kersdale soon gained an expertise surpassing even that of any native. "He had finished his education at Yale, and his head was crammed fuller with vital statistics and scholarly information concerning Hawai'i Nei than any other islander I ever encountered. He turned off an immense amount of work, and he sang and danced and put flowers in his hair as immensely as any of the idlers." Hawai'i is a place Kersdale first encountered through elite education in the Northeastern U.S. and is endlessly reproduced through his orientalist engagement with Hawaiian culture.[130] Rather like Jack London claimed a native status as a kamaiiana, Jack Kersdale also becomes immersed in and identified with the native population through the study and tourism his race and class privilege afforded him. In a similar way the detached perspective in

[130] Following Edward Said's analysis of white European accounts of "the Orient" in the nineteenth century, I interpret Jack Kersdale's ideas as always referring back to a larger, preexisting "system of knowledge" whereby Hawai'i "is less a place than a topos, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation from someone's work on the Orient, or some bit of previous imagining, or an amalgam of all these." Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1994), 177.

”Koolau the Leper” turns Hawaiians into objects of entertainment, moreover, Jack Kersdale’s cultural and scientific knowledge turns Hawaiians into objects of study.

Whatever abstract racial affinity he might feel or express in a song or a dance, Hawaiians themselves remain at arm’s length, a population to be studied and managed. This is especially the case with lepers. Kersdale is “an ardent defender of the settlement at Molokai” and characterizes lepers as the “wards of the Territory” who “have nothing to do but have a good time” and enjoy the amenities of food, shelter, and medicine provided by the benevolent state.[131] He even goes so far as to suggest that those lepers, whose livelihood he no doubt imagines himself responsible for, who test negative for the disease refuse to leave the settlement, which has “a much finer climate than Honolulu, and the scenery is magnificent.” Kersdale and the Board of Health Officials view their management of leprosy—their medical knowledge of the disease, their diagnosis procedures, their strategy of compulsory isolation of the afflicted—as a guarantee of their own inoculation. They regard the afflicted as though they were under glass, a perspective the narrator describes when Kersdale invites him to watch “the saddest aspect of the whole situation: the lepers wailing as they depart for Molokai.” As they take in the spectacle, Superintendent McVeigh explains to his companions that signs of infection are often hidden below the body’s surface. "You can't always tell from appearance,” he informs them while then enumerating various signs of the disease.

The group perspective abruptly shifts, however, from pathologizing to admiring when they catch sight of Lucy Monukui, a world famous Hawaiian singer.

[131] “Good-bye, Jack!,” available online through Sonoma State University.

The narrator protests she is "too glorious and gorgeous" to have "anything the matter with her," and he and his companions mourn the inevitable deterioration of her body, whose "lines and proportions were magnificent" and who was "just beginning to show the amplitude of the women of her race." [132]Her loss represents not only another death among the nameless, faceless "leper squad" but of the native Hawaiian culture she emblematizes. As "the epitome of all Polynesian charms, an artist as well, and well beloved of men," Lucy is, to borrow from Adria Imada, an "ambassador of aloha" whose songs "promoted Hawai'i's charms on the U.S. continent."[133] Hawaiian women in particular, as Imada shows, first helped sell an image of the islands' profitable native products, like sugar and pineapples, and "would soon be marketed as commodities themselves."[134] As "the Hawaiian nightingale," Lucy had become so thoroughly identified as a commodity circulating among mainland consumers that the narrator admits to only recognizing her when he recalls her performance with the Boston Symphony two years prior.

The impending loss of Lucy Monukui on the mainland stage prompts the narrator to suddenly imagine the consequences of leprosy for his own well-being. "I recoiled from my own future," he tell us, wondering, "If this awful fate fell to Lucy Mokunui," he wonders "what might not my lot be? or anybody's lot?" Moments earlier he had noticed a young white girl waiting to board the steamer with Lucy and the others, and was shocked to notice a "leprous bloat" on one cheek. He is saddened to realize that someone with "blue eyes and golden hair" could but, at this point, he

[132] Ibid.
[133] Imada, 112.
[134] Ibid., 117.

understands her as an anomaly, an "alien situation among the brown-skinned afflicted ones," rather than sign of general, white susceptibility to the disease with obvious personal consequences. It is only this literal cost of leprosy for the burgeoning Hawaiian tourist industry that turns the narrator's gaze inward. It is both personal and public losses that paralyze Jack Kersdale when Lucy cries out to him from behind the rail of the steamer. "She stopped abruptly and gazed at Kersdale," the narrator tells us. "Then she stretched forth her arms in that adorable, sensuous way that Olga Nethersole has of embracing an audience. And with arms outspread, she cried: "Good-by, Jack! Good-by!"' In response, Jack reels in place, his face whitens, and he gasps for air as he sinks into the seat of the carriage as it rushes him away from the scene. If throughout the narrative Jack relates to native Hawaiians as sources of labor, entertainment, or study, it ends abruptly with his recognition of Lucy and some kind of romantic intimacy. His repeated utterance, "I never knew. I never knew," suggests his shock at seeing her on the steamer bound for Molokai but also at the possibility of his own infection.[135]

If the object of loss and longing in "Koolau the Leper" is not Koolau himself but the idea of Old Hawai'i he represents, so is Lucy Monukui metonymic of primitive Hawaiian culture no longer accessible on the commercial stage. Kersdale's claim that he "never knew" about Lucy's infection and his subsequent panic about his risk of infection reiterates the story's sympathies for white colonialists who must discern a means of reckoning with and memorializing the costs of colonial contact—for native populations and for themselves. As Ronato Rosaldo observes, "agents of

[135] "Good-bye, Jack!," available online through Sonoma State University.

colonialism—officials, constabulatory officers, missionaries, and other figures from whom anthropologists ritually dissociate themselves—often display nostalgia for the colonized culture as it was 'traditionally' (that is, when they first encountered it). The peculiarity of their yearning, of course, is that agents of colonialism long for the very forms of life they intentionally altered or destroyed."[136] Jack Kersdale is just such an agent who finds himself in new era of imperial administration, where direct conquest of a population and territory has been superseded by dynamics of an expanding global capitalist marketplace. "Good-bye, Jack!" ultimately worries over the risk this shift poses to white male access to and consumption of "Hawai'i" as it is in the contemporary moment and as it used to be. Even its title is more a reference to the possibility of Jack Kersdale's disappearance from Hawai'i than of Lucy Monukui's. In this regard, the story reveals how the imperialist imaginary requires a production of the past with a guaranteed stasis and, given the impossibility of this stasis, the guaranteed reproduction of cultural trace in the future.

I conclude my reading of this story by emphasizing it is, on the broadest level, a self-reflexive narrative about the unsettling nature of the memento as an object that contains within it capital's losses and its profits—in other words what it destroys and what it produces. Whereas "Koolau the Leper" closes with Koolau's flood of memories of his cowboy days, "Good-bye, Jack!" closes with Jack Kersdale's sudden realization of memory loss—a loss that refers to Kersdale's own missing recollections of his colonial role and the uncertainties of how Hawaiian culture (as embodied in

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[136] Renato Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia," *Representations* No. 26 (Spring 1989): 107-108.

Lucy Monukui) will be memorialized. Both "Good-bye, Jack!" and "Koolau the Leper" lose sight of the decimation of native Hawaiians and instead offer mementos of an imagined Old Hawai'i. They purvey a fantasy of both private, unmediated, and almost immaterial consumption, as the image of the remote ranch lands suggests, and of popular, highly mediated, commercial consumption, as the image of Hawaiian hula singers and musicians.[137]

"Aloha Oe"

Jack London unites these modes of consumption in "Aloha Oe," originally published in *Lady's Realm* in 1908, wherein cattle ranching appears as neither solely the mysterious exotic backdrop of native Hawaiian life before contact, nor solely an enterprise of white industrialists after annexation.[138] Rather it is a form of entertainment that, like surfing, emerged organically from native Hawaiians' relationship to the natural environment and is thus a bastion of Old Hawai'i in the midst of global modernity. The story opens with the departure of a "Senatorial junketing party" on a steamer bound for California. During the month prior, the group of U.S. Senators on board "had been dined and wined, surfeited with statistics and dragged up volcanic hill and down lava dale to behold the glories and resources of Hawai'i." Jeremy Sambrooke is one the of garlanded Senators who had visiting the

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[137] "Tourism, for Hawai'i if not for Pacific sites more generally," as Rob Wilson observes "depends on the globalization-of-the-local into a marketable image with lasting appeal, with enduring charm and mysterious claims to uniqueness, what Walter Benjamin termed the 'aura' of the commodity form." Rob Wilson, *Reimagining the American Pacific: From South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and Beyond* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), xv.

[138] "Aloha Oe," in *House of Pride and Other Tales of Hawai'i* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), made available online through Sonoma State University.

islands accompanied by his daughter Dorothy. While her father had kept "busy with dreams of material achievement and empire," Dorothy had been entertained by a part-Hawaiian man named Stephen Knight who shows her many of Hawai'i's outdoor attractions. Echoes of Jack London's proprietary relationship with Hawaiian land and culture are discernible throughout the story in Dorothy's relationship with Steve. "She had taken possession of him," the narrator informs us, "while her father had been occupied in taking possession of the statistics of the island territory." In the same way her father the Senator "possesses" Hawai'i through statistical knowledge, Dorothy "possesses" it through her pleasurable excursions in nature and her romantic interest in Steve.

"Aloha Oe" captures Jack and Charmian London's own ambivalent relationship to cattle ranching as a diversion occurring off the typical tourist route, which, in their eyes, made it more authentic—though it remained a kind of commodity spectacle nonetheless. On one level, "Aloha Oe" portrays surfing, horse riding, volcano climbing as diversions from other imperialist enterprises on the islands; they are natural and entertaining, activities that derive from an organic relationship to the land as opposed to the Senators' factory, transportation, and plantation schemes that are based on industrial uses of natural resources. One another level, the story shows how imperialism in Hawai'i is precisely structured by political, economic, *and* cultural systems of control—that is, that tourism is itself an industry that works through and against political administrations of power. Stephen Knight is introduced, after all, as a member of the entertainment committee that had shown the Senators some of Hawai'i's attractions during their time off from official business. "It was he who had

given them their first exhibition of surf riding, out at Waikiki Beach, paddling his narrow board seaward until he became a disappearing speck, and then, suddenly reappearing, rising like a sea-god from out of the welter of spume and churning white."[139] Steve's role was to heighten the allure of Hawai'i to the Senators by showcasing its natural beauty, while the territory's coffee and sugar plantations, cattle ranches, and railroads attracted their investments. Capital needed to be charmed as much as it was a charm in itself.

Steve shows them popular amusements one might find in the *Oceanic Steamship* Company brochure on the steamer to Honolulu, like surfing or hiking to see lava flows, as well an excursion to Hawaiian ranch, perhaps less known to the average tourist but certainly familiar to Jack London. "He had not entertained by speechmaking, nor had he shone decoratively at receptions. It was in the breakers at Waikiki, in the wild cattle drive on Mauna Kea, and in the breaking yard of the Haleakala Ranch that he had performed his share of the entertaining."[140] The story almost seems to promote cattle ranching as another of Hawai'i's popular commercial activities. This becomes more apparent when Steve becomes Dorothy's surfing instructor, her guide up to see the Kilauea crater, and her companion on horseback rides by the ocean.

The racialized power dynamic of the white tourist and part-Hawaiian tour guide soon takes on a sexual dimension as Steve shows off more and more of his masculinity to Dorothy. While the business of empire is conducted in dull parties and

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[139] "Aloha Oe," available online through Sonoma State University.
[140] Ibid.

plantation tours, Dorothy pursues her own mastery of the island and of Steve, whom "she had ruled… abjectly, except when in canoe, or on horse or surf-board, at which times he had taken charge and she had rendered obedience." Among their various activities, cattle-ranching holds a special place, as it does in "Koolau the Leper" and "Good-bye, Jack!" Much in the same way that the life and labor of the cowboy underlies Koolau and Jack Kersdale's masculinity, so too does it bolster Stephen Knight's masculine appeal. When Dorothy recalls him just as the steamer is pulling away from the docks at Honolulu, her memory of him is fused with her memory of his horsemanship:

> The picture of him limned itself on her inner vision, and before she was aware she was pleasuring in the memory of the grace of his magnificent body, of his splendid shoulders, of the power in him that tossed her lightly on a horse, bore her safely through the thundering breakers, or towed her at the end of an alpenstock up the stern lava crest of the House of the Sun. There was something subtler and mysterious that she remembered, and that she was even then just beginning to understand: the aura of the male creature that is man, all man, masculine man.[141]

Through watching Steve against the landscape of lava flows at Haleakala (also called the House of the Sun) and gazing on his "magnificent body" as he rode on horseback, Dorothy appreciates something beyond the mundane touristic pleasure. She sees "something subtler and mysterious" in Steve—the allure of his exotic body and of the exotic islands he lives in. His masculine command of horses and wild cattle differs from Koolau's "wild youth" as a cowboy but is not entirely distinct. As Dorothy knows, "a quarter-strain of tropic sunshine streamed in his veins," making Steve exotic yet emblematic of a partial primitivism. His body bears only a trace of native

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[141] Ibid.

Hawaiian blood, which, as she also knows, is "sufficient to put him outside the marriage pale." Racialized as mixed, partial, and other, Steve's body a memento of Old Hawai'i that, similar to Koolau's days breaking cattle, will exist only as a "picture," an "inner vision," and a "memory." Entrepreneurs will plant their coffee, harvest their sugar cane, and build their railroads, and Hawai'i will continue on the path of progress, while the romantic cowboy and cattle ranch live on in vivid recollection.[142]

Pan-Pacific Union and the Londons' Beauty Ranch

"Aloha Oe" allegorizes Jack London's own romantic view of Old Hawai'i, which, like Dorothy Sambrooke, he always eventually leaves behind for California. Of all his destinations in the Pacific, Hawai'i becomes the place he returns to most often and which he vividly recalls in his life back on the mainland. Cattle ranches appear in his writing as important places in as well as placeholders for, to borrow Charmian's title, "our Hawai'i." They are at once real places with their own historical formation in the transpacific borderlands that precede him, while at the same time they reflect back to him his own impression of authentic Hawai'i. In this sense, London could not avoid viewing Hawai'i from the lofty vantage of his race and class vantage point, through which he was able to access ranches that became all the more real and precious through their exclusivity. Ranching is also industry built around constant contact with the wilderness of Hawai'i—whether this occurred through camping on the side of a volcano, driving wild cattle on horseback through lush valleys, or shipping cattle through the breaking waves on a beach. London imagined these encounters as retreats

[142] Ibid.

from, rather than reinforcements of, the forces of modernization in this transpacific world—and his privileged status in it. In these respects, the Old Hawai'i he associates with the Haleakala Ranch and others emerges in his short fictions, and his and Charmian's travelogues, as a kind of heterotopia. It mirrors back to the Londons their fantasies of this space, while at the same time existing in a time and space unto themselves outside tourist epistemology. London's "recalling," to build on Lawlor's term, that is less about interpreting Hawai'i through the frontier myth and more to do with mourning a lost primitive paradise to modernity and a recuperation of it through the structures of emergent global capitalism.

Through the heterotopia of the ranch, we can trace the shifting significance of Old Hawai'i for Jack London not only in his experiences in its actual geographic location but also in its continued reproduction in his enterprises across the transpacific borderlands. As I mentioned at the opening of this section, Jack London's voyage on the *Snark* was conceived as a way to finance his ranching ambitions in Sonoma, California. His short stories and journalistic pieces he published about life in Hawai'i and other territories in the South Seas helped fund the life he anticipated building on Beauty Ranch. Throughout his and Charmian's tourism in Hawai'i, the couple interpret the ranch lands and way of life through the lens of their own ranching aspirations in California. In Maui on July 18 after thirty-five miles on a horseback ride to Hana, Charmian describes their stopover at a small hotel, where they enjoy "extra delicacies to eke out the plain hotel fare — avocados, luscious papaias[*sic*.], and little sugary bananas such as provided by the manager of the Hana Plantation store." After a long day on the tail, they relishing the platter of island fruits perhaps all the more

knowing it was not for the average tourist. "Gee!" murmured Jack from the buttery depths of a big alligator pear, "I wish we could grow these things in the Valley of the Moon!" As Charmian quotes him in her travel diary, Jack's pleasure in consuming the fruit derives from their value as delicacies for the elite tourist and as crops he imagines he can cultivate on his own ranch.

While on a horseback ride along the Kona coast on the Big Island later in August, Jack sees other materials he wishes to transport back to the ranch, this time seizing upon rock fencing that, as Charmian explains, had been "built by the hands of bygone Hawaiian commoners to separate the lands of the alii" but had lost their original significance.[143] Jack removes them further from time and place when he tells her, "'I wish I had miles of these stone walls on my ranch,'" which he muses while "on the broad top of one of which he sat, munching a sandwich in the kukui shade."[144] The rock fences appeal to Jack as recollections of a former era of native Hawaiian rule and their potential use to cordon off his private real estate in Sonoma. The pleasure of this fantasy derives in part from its disavowal of the European and American imperialism that mandated the disuse of these walls, namely, the Great Mahele in 1850 that did away with native Hawaiians' former communal system of land ownership and instituted a fee-simple system of private land ownership.[145] White American domination of Hawaiian land and industries soon followed this Act, paving the way for annexation of the islands in 1898. Jack London's fantasy extracts the walls from

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[143] Charmian London, *Our Hawai'i*, 233-234.
[144] Ibid., 233.
[145] Merry, 94.

their context and reconstitutes them into primitive objects for his modern dream—mementos of Old Hawai'i to collect for his Old California ranch.

Eating a sandwich in the shade of a kukui tree, he imagines himself at once immersed in the native environment yet also a spectator passing through. His touristic mobility grants him many such moments where his recollection of and longing for "bygone" days translates into collection and reconstitution. On a later trip to the big Island, for instance, the Londons enjoy a "sumptuous luau" at the Kapapala Ranch on route to the volcano of Mauna Kea. Afterward they visit the black sands of Ninole beach where they encounter what Charmian refers to as "'breeding stones'… believed by old inhabitants to be reproductive, and which were sought after as small idols." [146] Again Jack's response is a possessive one and, as Charmian recounts, he immediately wishes to gather them. "Jack, immensely taken with the conceit, in no time had several brown urchins earning nickels collecting a supply which, he declared, he was going to turn loose on the Ranch at home to raise stone walls." [147] Thrilled with the idea of using the "breeding stones" in Sonoma, sets about amassing the foundation for his stone walls back home, labor he does not perform himself but recruits young native Hawaiians to do for very little.

This episode on the Ninole beach exemplifies how Jack London's vision of his ranch in Old California, much like his experiences touring ranches in Old Hawai'i, is founded on a return to nature and reliance on nonwhite laborers. In closing this section, I wish to emphasize how London's many returns to California from Hawai'i

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[146] Charmian London*, Our Hawai'i*, 347.
[147] Ibid.

from 1906 to 1916 reflect the way these spaces were continuously linked in his literary and economic pursuits. Towards the end of his life, when Beauty Ranch was more fully realized, Jack London's view of racial difference in a globalizing transpacific world become even more spatially articulated. In his first trip to Hawai'i, London befriended Alexander Hume Ford, founder of the Pan-Pacific Union (originally called the Hands-Across-the-Pacific Club. Ford was an entrepreneur who arrived in Hawai'i in 1907 and developed a belief in Hawai'i as a place of multiracial equality and a territory that would enhance U.S. economic interests in the Pacific. A racially mixed society was not only inevitable but beneficial, in other words, and in Ford's mind Hawai'i's multiracial society provided a model for envisioning a more integrated global economy, with the U.S., China, and Australia as the leading union of nations.[148] Ford expressed these ideas in the social institution of the Club and its literary organ, the *Mid-Pacific Magazine*, and recruited Jack London's support in this "Pan–Pacific movement" during his first trip in 1907. [149]

In an article entitled "My Aloha," Jack London describes the "movement" as having naturally evolved from Hawai'i's Aloha spirit "which has welcomed and loved all way-farers from all other lands," to the Hawaiian tourist industry that brought Hawai'i's native culture to international attention, to Hawai'i as "the Cross-Roads of the Pacific and the logical heart and home and center of the movement."[150] London was sympathetic with Ford's vision of Hawai'i, and, notably, argued for Hawai'i's self-evident economic importance by pointing out the territory's supporting role in

[148] Reesman, 121-122.
[149] Charmian London, *Our Hawai'i,* 26.
[150] Ibid.

California's development. "It must be remembered that Hawai'i is very old . . . comparatively," he writes.[151] He goes on to illustrate how Hawai'i's economy predates California's and even, as he points out, buttressed California's formative moment of capitalist development in the 1840s by supplying the gold rushers with wheat, flour, and potatoes.[152] "When California was a huge cattle ranch for hides and tallow (the meat being left where it was skinned)," he adds "Hawai'i was publishing newspapers and boasting schools of higher learning."[153] To support promotion of Hawai'i as a hub of twentieth-century globalization in the Pacific, he casts the islands in the favorable light of having a relatively more developed economy than California. Here, far from an alluring retreat from modern life, the romance of Hawai'i lies in its pioneering role in transpacific modernity.

London's idealization of Hawai'i extends from its industries to its multiracial population. In a speech he gave at the Outrigger Club in 1915, London casts racial diversity a sign of progress, rather than of degeneracy. "…The best thing that could happen to Hawai'i now is the formation of a Pan-Pacific Club, where all men of all races can come, where they can eat together and smoke together and talk together….this world language has no better chance for a start than right now, here in our Hawai'i where the people of all countries around the edge of the Pacific can meet." In a 1916 article in *Cosmopolitan*, he goes so far as to praise Hawai'i as a model of a peaceful multiracial society that the U.S., in the midst of World War I,

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[151] Ibid.
[152] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. (London: Verso, 1989), 190.
[153] Charmian London, *Our Hawai'i,* 27.

could stand to learn from: "…in this period of world war wherein the United States finds it necessary to prepare against foes that may at any time launch against it out of the heart of civilization, little Hawai'i, with its hotch potch of races, is making a better demonstration than the United States."[154] However it is clear from his speech and other writings that as much as Hawai'i may instruct the world in how to improve tolerance of difference, its universal message was also geographically specific. Its location between the U.S. and its rival modernizing nations of Japan and China made it seem the natural place "where the people of all countries around the edge of the Pacific can meet."

Tolerance of racial difference begins and ends in the Hawaiian islands and does not extend to his ranching economy across the Pacific in California. In the same speech from 1915, London explains: "…not once in California where I live have I entertained a Japanese. I remember many invitations I have sent, by I live way off in the country and usually it is impossible for my invitations to be accepted. But I came down to Hawai'i, and this has been my first chance to meet with men I want to meet and know better." London crafts a borderlands where California is now peripheral and inaccessible, located "way off in the country" where contact between whites and nonwhites (and Asians especially) is impossible. Hawai'i is the hub of the global economy, rather than a satellite of California, and has re-the Old West for resettlement and reclamation. As the "sailor on horseback" now returned to his native soil, London imagined he was just the Anglo-Saxon to pave the way. His scheme for Beauty Ranch was spurred by a recollection of the frontier days when California belonged to its

[154] Ibid., 24.

rightful owners, white homesteaders, in whose hands the soil could be put to the most efficient use. "In the solution of the great economic problems of the present age," he wrote "I see a return to the soil. I go into farming because my philosophy and research have taught me to recognize the fact that a return to the soil is the basis of economics . . . I see my farm in terms of the world, and the world in terms of my farm . . ."[155] London aspired to run a ranch based on the scientific principles of "soil conservationists, entomologists, botanists, chemists, and stock-breeding specialists," his goal being to engineer economic self-sufficiency in the valleys of Sonoma.[156] This private enterprise would allow for a total retreat from urban life without relinquishing modern technologies and a modern faith in the improvements they would bring. He raised pigs, horses, cattle, chickens, and became famous for breeding prize-winning stock. He also planted grains, fruit, vegetables, grapes, and other crops on terraced soil designed to recuperate and conserve soil exhausted from prior decades of use. By going "back-to-the-land" he would salvage more than a few hundred acres but a past way of life vanishing in the industrial present.

In a globalizing U.S. West, the ranch became a refuge for the imperiled Anglo-Saxon to breed superior stock and improve his own racial stock. Eugenics melded with agrarianism where regional progress was determined by geographic remoteness, self-sufficiency, racial exclusion, and detachment from the global economy. While California shifted more off the grid, Hawai'i was reimagined as the grid's center. At the same time, the heterotopia of the ranch in this borderland never sheds its relational

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[155] Charmian London, *Book of Jack London*, 266.
[156] Claire Stasz, *Jack London's Women* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 144.

architecture—its construction through resemblances, reflections, traces, and inversions. In many ways Beauty Ranch, and the novels Jack London wrote about farming in his last years, recalls the way of life he enjoyed on Hawaiian cattle ranches. For one, the geographic remoteness of Beauty Ranch mirrored that of Haleakala, Parker, and other ranches in Hawai'i, making it into a similarly exclusive retreat for his bourgeois guests, who appeared steadily for vacations and parties. [157] As much as he had constructed a model of agricultural efficiency, Beauty Ranch also became a space of leisure and escape from the business of everyday life outside, its alluring promise of both indoor and outdoor pastimes resembling those in Hawai'i.

The pleasure London took in relaxing on the Hawaiian ranches also corresponded to that of Beauty Ranch. Hawaiian ranches were organized around a system of white paternalism, included enjoying the services of nonwhite cooks, cleaners, trail guides, and entertainers. Whether enjoying breakfast prepared by a Japanese cowboy on a horseback ride from Parker Ranch to Kilauea or the Japanese lantern procession, garlanded Hawaiian women, and parade of Chinese school girls (what Jack London refers to in "My Aloha" as the "medley of all the human world") on display at the Mid-Pacific Carnival, the Londons readily partake of Hawai'i's white bourgeois leisure culture. Traces of this appear in Jack London's life in Beauty Ranch, which is supported by a Korean cook and a Japanese houseboy, and the fictional ranch home in his novel, *Little Lady of the Big House*, is run by a staff of Chinese men and

[157] Alex Kershaw, *Jack London: A Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 220.

women.[158] South Seas souvenirs also decorate the walls of the fictional and real ranch home, turning this living space into a memento of the author's Pacific tourism.

And lastly, London's narrative about the multiracial labor force underpinning Hawai'i's advanced agricultural economy parallels his ranching ambitions in California. Referring to Hawai'i's economy as "a combination of twentieth century, machine-civilization methods and of medieval feudal methods," he goes on to praise its agricultural systems in terms that mirror his ambitions for maximal efficiency on Beauty Ranch. Its rich lands, devoted to sugar, are farmed not merely as scientifically as any land is farmed anywhere in the world, but, if anything, more scientifically. The last word in machinery is vocal here, the last word in fertilizing and agronomy, and the last word in scientific expertness."[159] In his article about Hawai'i's economy, London warns the reader against fantasies of homesteading in the islands, in spite of the richness of the land and growing wealth of the economy. His very use of this term in 1916, over a half-century after the Homestead Act and opening of the U.S. West for (Anglo American) settlement and development of its own cattle industry, removes Hawai'i from the narrative of national progress through westward movement, conquest, and development. Instead he envisions it here and in his statements for the Pan-Pacific Union as a hub of the global Pacific as well as primitive paradise—a place outside of modernity and at its cutting edge. From his perspective in his later years, it is California that has become the homesteader's destination, a space salvaged from industrialization but still synchronized with the forward-march of progress. By reading

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[158] Ibid., 222.
[159] Charmian London, *Our Hawai'i*, 28.

across accounts of Jack London's ranching tourism in Hawai'i and ranching enterprise in California, it becomes evident that the ranch was his primary lens for ordering time and space. As a heterotopia of the transpacific borderlands, the ranch emblematizes both the local economy and the global processes in which it was enmeshed. It also becomes both repository of longing for a lost Edenic past and site from which to project ambitions for a new modernity.

CHAPTER TWO: "Gambling, Liquor, Ponies, Girls, High Life 'n Everything": Cultures of Entertainment at the San Diego-Tijuana Border

During the first month of San Diego's Panama-California Exposition, former California Senator Lee C. Gates declared, "This beautiful Exposition is going to be remembered for a long time, and the visitors from the East, as well as the people at home, will understand that the spirit of 1849, which started development in California, was no mightier than the spirit of 1915, by means of which California can accomplish absolutely anything it sets out to accomplish."[160] Gates' boastful invocation of the gold rush of 1849 and the opening of the Panama Canal in 1915 speaks of the boundless possibilities of U.S. expansion in the Americas. As a monument to one of the most celebrated technological marvels of the early twentieth century, the Panama-California Exposition enshrined the Canal as the United States' gateway to faster and more lucrative transpacific and Atlantic trade. This regional Exposition also saw new importance in San Diego's role as the first U.S. port of call for ships sailing and steaming through the Isthmus of Panama.

What Gates imagines as the "spirit" that made both California and the Canal's development possible is striking as much for the imperialist rhetoric it so blatantly deploys as for the administrations of empire it elides. His story of the discovery of

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Note: The title for this chapter derives from the following Tijuana vice tourism guidebook by Thomas, Edward C. "The wanderer in Tijuana: gambling, liquor, ponies, girls, high life 'n everything." Los Angeles, Calif.: Wanderer Pub. Co., 1922.

[160] *San Diego Union* January 24, page 9:1-3

gold in 1849 omits from view that this gold was found on soil only recently relinquished by Mexico and made part of the U.S. under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. Similarly, his narrative of the commerce that had begun to pass through the Panama Canal conceals the United States' much earlier government of the Isthmus through an 1848 treaty with New Granada, which granted the U.S. right of transit in exchange for protection against British monopoly over the Panama route.[161] Moreover, as an abridged history of the "spirit" of U.S. accomplishment that foregrounds California as a central coordinate on this emergent imperial map, Gate's account excludes the other flashpoints of U.S. empire at the turn of the century; namely, the acquisition of territories in Hawai'i, Guam, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines in 1898. Much like the entertaining and educating displays of California history and Pacific travel that filled the fairgrounds of the Panama-California Exposition, Gates offers a teleological chronicle of discovery, profit, and expansion that nevertheless refuses to view each event as an act of conquest within a seamless narrative of U.S. imperialism.[162]

Most world's fairs up until this point paid tribute to imperialism in many forms—notably through scientific displays of human evolution and living exhibits of indigenous peoples—yet a second major understanding of "progress" that lent structure to late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth century fairs was encapsulated in progressive era themes of social hygiene, moral uplift, and physical improvement. In

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[161] John Major. *Prize Possession: The United States and the Panama Canal, 1903-1979*. (Cambridge University Press: 1993),12.
[162] Amy Kaplan. "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*. eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald E Pease (Duke University Press: 1993), 17.

this chapter, I examine how that the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition held in San Diego exemplifies how industries of vice played a constitutive rather than antithetical role in the period's self-proclaimed dedication to social and scientific "progress." Drawing upon newspaper accounts, photographs, guidebooks, San Diego booster propaganda, and postcards, I examine the Exposition's simultaneous orientation around reformist goals of social betterment and corrupting practices of lewdness, immorality, and degeneracy. I argue that the "cheap amusements" located on the so-called *Isthmus*—an area of mechanical thrill rides, vaudeville, and dancing—are no less central to the Exposition's theme than its more well-known and widely studied anthropological and technological exhibits.

First, I turn to the municipal development of San Diego in the 1880s and examine how, with news of the near completion of the Panama Canal, the city began to imagine itself as playing a new role in transpacific commerce. Secondly, I show how the Exposition was organized in honor of the Canal's completion but was also dedicated to laying claim to the state's romantic Spanish past, a fantasy heritage largely inspired by Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*. Thirdly, I situate the Exposition within the context of the U.S.-Mexico border vice industry, which was crucial to the development of both Tijuana and San Diego in the 1910s as well as to the material and ideological success of the fair itself. And lastly, I examine several of the amusements on the *Isthmus* that illustrate how the Exposition distinguished between earlier and later administrations of U.S. empire. I argue here that the management of respectability, morality, and decency in the Underground Chinatown, Hawaiian Village, Sultan's Harem, and Camp of '49 exhibits illuminates the nation's struggle to

mark the outer limit of racial, sexual, and class norms in the context of its expanding and fortifying geopolitical boundaries. Overall, I show how commodification of racial difference on the Exposition's amusement zone, Tijuana's tourist district, and other sites within San Diego was central to the city's plan of progress. I also illuminate how divergent narratives of modernity emerged throughout this border region, sometimes in the service of yet often departing from, the panoramic vision of San Diego's new imperial role in the Pacific.

Cartographies of the Transpacific

To understand the Panama-California Exposition as part of a larger global system emerging out of nineteenth-century U.S. imperialism requires a critical remapping of not only the cultural and political geographies in which the fair participated but the continental and oceanic cartographies it helped produce. Senator Gates' nationalist history understands the discovery of gold and development of the Canal as events pivoting around the state of California. As suggested above, his narrative sees California as the central actor in global events that were otherwise made possible by transnational circulation of labor and goods. Retelling the story of the gold rush, for instance, by decentering California and illuminating instead the new steamship routes through the Isthmus of Panama that enabled transportation from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans reveals 1848 to be a watershed year for emergent transpacific networks. When the Pacific Mail Steamship Company (PMSS) was organized in 1848, headed by William H. Aspinwall, it was contracted to carry mail

from Panama to San Francisco and the Oregon Territory.[163] During the first voyage of the *California* from New York to Panama (via Cape Horn) in October 1848, easterners received word of the discovery of gold in the Sacramento area and crossed the Isthmus from Chagres (on the Atlantic side) in order to board the steamer en route to California.[164] Prospectors would continue to flock to the Pacific line of this steamship company, as it was the shortest and easiest path from the East to the West Coast, leading one report on the arrival of the *California* in San Francisco to predict: "The excitement relative to California instead of abating appears to have increased and the rush was as great as ever."[165] The first steamer built explicitly for the transportation of passengers was the *Golden Gate* in November 1851, and with improved service the PMSS would dominate transpacific travel until the 1860s.[166] It was during this decade that the PMSS began a regular service through Hong Kong, Yokohomo, and San Francisco, and, along with the Occidental and Oriental Steamship Company, it would become the major transporter of Chinese immigrant labor throughout the late nineteenth century.[167]

The story of the coincidental emergence of the PMSS at the time of the California gold rush suggests how the geography of the Pacific was becoming

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[163] Mowbray E. Tate, *Transpacific Steam: The Story of Steam Navigation from the Pacific Coast of North America to the Far East and the Antipodes, 1867-1941* (Cornwall Books: 1986), 21.
[164] F.N. Otis, *Isthmus of Panama: History of the Panama Railroad and of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company* (Harper & Brothers, 1867).
[165] *Alta California*, Vol. 1, No. 10, December 31, 1849.
[166] John Haskell Kemble, "Pacific Mail Service between Panama and San Francisco, 1849-1851," *The Pacific Historical Review* 2.4 (December, 1933): 405-417.
[167] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (University of North Carolina Press: 2003): 51.

"restructured along oceanic pathways of economic flux and cultural liquidity that were linking the space—and racial frontier—of Asia and the Pacific to international and global designs centered in Europe and the mainland United States."[168] Imagining the terrain of the Western United States less so as a frontier awaiting discovery and development and more as a borderlands of divergent modernities causes this space to lose its *natural* link to any nation or nationalist ideology. This becomes relevant, as discussed later in this chapter, when tracing commodified cultural practices such as the hula circuits from Hawai'i to worlds' fairs held on the continental United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century—circuits that became generative sites of knowledge production of Hawaiian subjects during the transition from native Hawaiian to U.S. government of these islands.

This chapter situates the Panama-California Exposition in its most immediate geographic context at the U.S.-Mexico border while also rendering legible its larger position in the Pacific. This oceanic border afforded the possibility for greater U.S. profits from the circulation of goods and labor through Panama and Hawai'i as well as the possibility of goods and workers who were more than merely transported objects, who were part of related but distinct networks, and whose circulation in this borderlands might run counter to such nationalist ambitions and capitalist dreams.

San Diego Municipal Development in the Late Nineteenth Century

I begin my illustration of this transpacific map by turning first to San Diego's emergence as a modern city. The recession of 1887-1888 and depression of 1893 were

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[168] Rob Wilson, "Exporting Christian Transcendentalism, Importing Hawaiian Sugar: The Trans-Americanization of Hawai'i," *American Literature* 72.3 (2000): 521.

difficult for San Diego to overcome. With steam motor railroads going out of business, the population cut to half its size, and public works halted for lack of funds, San Diego found itself struggling to stay on the map.[169] As Oscar W. Cotton, secretary of the San Diego-California Club, wrote in his memoirs:

> When I arrived in San Diego, the consensus...in Los Angeles was that San Diego was a "City of Blighted Hopes." It was just a little dried-up town on the Mexican border, with no capital assets but "Bay and Climate"--a town that took itself seriously but could never amount to anything because it was too far from Los Angeles--five hours by either of the two...half-empty trains per day.[170]

Like many cities in the Southwest at the turn of the century, the basic amenities of a modern community—"well-paved and lighted streets, adequate sewers, electricity and water delivered to households, and street railway systems providing mass transportation"—were far from standardized. [171] It was not until the heavy financial investments of John D. Spreckels, who arrived in San Diego in 1887, that the city was able to revitalize its municipal infrastructure after the recession of 1887-1888 and depression of 1893. With only sixteen thousand populating the city during the 1890s, San Diegans were eager to endorse Spreckels and his powerful companies as the foundations for a "modern metropolis."[172] Spreckels was heir to his father Claus Spreckel's sugar refining business in Hawai'i (a point I will return to later), and while still living in San Francisco, he bought low-cost real estate, established a coal depot in

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[169] Matthew Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 19.
[170] CTD in: Richard Pourade, *History of San Diego*. Web. Available online through the *San Diego History Center.*
[171] Amy Bridge. *Morning Glories: Municipal Reform in the Southwest* (Princeton University Press: 1997), 32.
[172] Bokovoy, 19.

1887, purchased the *San Diego Union* in 1890 and the *Tribune* in 1901, owned the Hotel Del Coronado and the San Diego street railway system by 1892, founded the San Diego and Arizona Railway in 1906 (which by 1919 provided San Diego with a direct transcontinental rail link to the east), and organized the Southern California Mountain Water Company.[173]

With Spreckels funding the city and the news of the U.S. construction of the Panama Canal, a plan was proposed by G. Aubrey Davidson (president of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce) to have a world's fair that might continue to boost the city's economy.[174] Davidson articulated a vision of the city as the first port of entry for transisthmian trade that would translate into the theme of the Exposition. San Diego boosters soon began to promote not only the city's now apparently "natural" position as a Pacific port but its abundance of natural regional resources as well. According to one account from the Secretary Chamber of Commerce of San Diego County:

> There is confidence on all sides that this city will not only continue to grow, but there is abundant evidence that it will become before long one of the principal cities of the Pacific Coast. The building of the new railroad to Yuma, to a direct eastern and southern connection, the operation of the completion of the Panama Canal, the lines of transportation already in use, portend great things. San Diego is now the distributing point for ocean commerce for Southern California, Lower California, and the territory east and south. The tributary country is rich in every horticultural, agricultural and mineral product."[175]

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[173] Pourade, *History of San Dieg*o: "Gold in the Sun." Web. Available online through the *San Diego History Center.*

[174] Richard W. Amero, "The Making of the Panama-California Exposition, 1909-1915" *The Journal of San Diego History* 36.1 (Winter 1990) Web. Available online through the *San Diego History Center.*

[175] John S. Mills, *San Diego, California: a county rich in resources with superior attractions for the people who want*: Issued by the Board of Supervisors and the Chamber of Commerce of San Diego County, California, 1909. Mills, John S. *San*

Such hyperbolic boosterism not only predicted "great things" for the region, but declared the centrality of San Diego for oceanic trade, revealing the city's ongoing competition with the much larger ports in Los Angeles and San Francisco. In fact, San Diego had fiercely competed with San Francisco as well as New Orleans for congressional funding to support its Exposition. During the debate over which municipality would host the celebration of the Canal's completion, each city made its case by attempting to lay claim to a more authentic Spanish past and greater cultural connection to Panama. Whereas New Orleans argued that its physical proximity to Panama and stronger ties to Central and South America made it the better candidate, San Diego claimed it could better capture the spirit of the Southwest as a whole.[176] In 1910, delegates of San Francisco discouraged San Diego from holding an exposition altogether, and despite the influx of donations for the Southern California city (most notably $100,000 from John D. Spreckels, who was vice president of the Panama-California Exposition Company), San Diego ultimately lost the congressional vote. The exposition board of directors would have to rely on a combination of private and public funding to realize its vision.[177]

Diego, California: a county rich in resources with superior attractions for the people who want: Issued by the Board of Supervisors and the Chamber of Commerce of San Diego County, California, 1909. University of California San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections, John B. Goodman Collection.

[176] Kristen Silva Gruesz, "The Gulf of Mexico System and the 'Latinness' of New Orleans," *American Literary History* 18.3 (2006): 468-495.

[177] Amero

The Panama-California Exposition and Other Southern California Attractions

San Diego would become the smallest city to hold a world's fair and, in comparison to the Panama-Pacific Exposition held in San Francisco the same year, its 1915-1916 Exposition would focus on more regional themes of agriculture and the state's Spanish colonial heritage. David Collier, a local real estate developer, chose the fair's location in Balboa Park and its governing architectural style of "mission revival," claiming it would "portray the romance, history, and beauty and the native arts of the Great Southwest and of Latin America."[178]

Figure 3: Spanish colonial architecture on the Exposition grounds at Balboa Park, from an Exposition promotional brochure **"**Official views, Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, California: all the year, 1915**"** (UC San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections)

Countless Exposition promotional materials and tourist guidebooks praised the architectural choice, although many also registered the ambivalence of the mission revival aesthetic. In explaining the selection of the Exposition's design, one such booklet enthusiastically extols the choice while also alluding to some of its underlying contradictions. "When the time came to design buildings for the Exposition Beautiful," this author writes "it was realized, of course, that the Greek or Roman type followed by past fairs could be easily adapted to the great mesa on which the Exposition was to be built; but it was realized also, fortunately, that a new city of Old Spain, not only would be in closer harmony with the beauties of Southern California

[178] D.C. Collier, *Hearings on the Panama-California Exposition*, Committee on Industrial Arts and Exposition. CTD in Bokovoy, 13-15.

but also would be a distinct step forward in American architecture."[179] The pamphlet continues to expound upon the significance of reconstructing "Old Spain," namely, that "a realization of the beauties of the Spanish architecture, which now, recreated will take on new strength to last for many years to come."[180] In appropriating a Spanish architectural style, this booklet suggests, the San Diego Exposition organizers chose to bypass the neoclassical designs popular in other U.S. world's fairs, such as those seen in the San Francisco's exposition held that same year. Rather than situate the U.S. in line with the empires of ancient Rome and Greece, the San Diego Exposition instead lay claim to the regional legacy of Spanish colonial rule.

In the imperialist imaginary of this brochure, the "step forward in American architecture" becomes synonymous with the next steps of San Diego's regional and global progress. The "new city of Old Spain" materialized on the Exposition grounds, in other words, served to legitimate the United States' continuation of this empire in the twentieth century. This fantasy relied on the romantic portrayal of benevolent Spanish padres' conversion of contented *peones* in Alta California celebrated the legacy of Spanish colonialism, while at the same time suggested a condemnation of Spanish rule as uniquely bloodthirsty and cruel. As much as the memorialization of Old Spain bolstered the image of the U.S. as a new empire, it also distinguished the U.S. from this Black Legend and, in doing so, dissociated the United States' its own

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[179] "The Official Guidebook of the Panama-California Exposition: giving in detail, location and description of buildings, exhibits and concessions, with floor plans of the buildings and exterior views." San Diego: National Views Company: 1915, 36. University of California San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections, John B. Goodman Collection.
[180] Ibid., 16-17.

violent history of conquering Mexican land in 1848. One of the strategies for disavowing this history lay in the new consumer culture of the early twentieth century. Here, nostalgia for Old Spain and Old Mexico found expression in commodity forms available for a mass audience, such as the Exposition's design, exhibits, and souvenirs. Through new modes of commercial reproduction, tourism, and public leisure culture, the fantasy Spanish heritage was reconstituted in pleasurable consumption, as I explore below, actively worked to obscure prior and ongoing conditions of racial violence

Ramona Tourism in Southern California

While promoters may have credited the Exposition with launching the state's mission revivalism, the Southern California tourist industry had long been organized around longing for Spanish culture. The origins of this nostalgia can be traced to 1884 with the publication of Helen Hunt Jackson's wildly popular *Ramona*.[181] Her novels tells the story of the Moreno family during a period of decline of Californio rule of the region, which began after secularization in roughly 1822.[182] After her husband's death in the U.S.-Mexico War, Señora Moreno is left to manage the family *rancho* by herself largely because her only son, Felipe, has been too sickly to take complete control. The blue-eyed, light skinned Ramon has been adopted into the Moreno family, and the plot pivots in large part around how her mixed Indian and white heritage will shape her prospects in marriage—particularly to either Felipe, the "white" Californio or Alessandro, the Indian laboring on the Moreno *rancho*.

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[181] Helen Hunt Jackson. *Ramona* (New York: Signet Classic, 1994).
[182] Rosaura Sanchez, *Telling Identities: The Californio Testimonials* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 1995), 61.

Although she eventually marries Alessandro, her new husband is killed by Anglos who accuse him of stealing a horse and Ramona is left alone with their child. Jackson admitted that a guiding motivation for writing *Ramona* was to try "do for the Indian a thousandth part what Uncle Tom's Cabin did for the Negro," and her sympathetic portrayal of Alessandro and his love for Ramona (however ill-fated) would seem to suggest as much. Yet the novel's message of Native American advocacy is far overshadowed by its nostalgia for the Californio way of life that can no longer sustain itself in the face of an increasingly capitalist economy.[183] The reader is left with the final image of Felipe and Ramona's marriage, a union that can, according to the narrative, only be continued in Mexico among "men of [Felipe's] own race and degree, and of congenial beliefs and occupations."[184]

If the novel ends with the Southern California evacuated of Californios, the Southern California tourist industry that took off a decade later reconstituted Jackson's romance as roadside attractions in the landscape itself. Regional boosters began advertising the region as one steeped in Spanish history to draw tourists, farmers, and homebuyers. "Rail and later travel emerged as elite pursuits," writes Dydia DeLyser "and subsequently became accessible to middle-class (white) Americans. Domestic tourism, which began as an upper-class pastime mimicking the European Grand Tour, became a nearly obligatory ritual of American citizenship, through which 'average'

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[183] Helen Hunt Jackson, "Helen Hunt Jackson *to* Thomas Bailey Aldrich, May 4,1883," *The Indian Reform Letters of Helen Hunt Jackson, 1879-1885.* ed. Valerie Sherer Mathes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1998), 258.
[184] Jackson, 359.

white Americans both understood and inscribed American national identity."[185] These Anglo tourists took time out from their lives to participate in this emergent practice of leisure, one made even more possible and popular when rail fares became affordable for a wider range of social classes and, as was the case in the 1920s, automobile travel became more common. In fact, as guidebooks of the 1910s and 20s reveal, regional tourist spots were increasingly emerging as rail- and roadside attractions. One such site was Rancho Camulos, located in rural Ventura County and famously known as the home of Jackson's protagonist, Ramona.[186]

Since the 1880s, Rancho Camulos had been run by the second generation of del Valles, a wealthy Californio family. Leaders in their community and active participants in the region's shift from a semi-feudal to capitalist economy, the del Valles transformed their land from a cattle and sheep ranch to a profitable fruit farm. With the publication of *Ramona*, however, the way of life the del Valle's projected to visitors and the one they actually practiced became blurred. Tourists visiting their *rancho* expected to see a living exhibit of the romantic life of the Moreno family of Jackson's novel, however, not scenes of a California family acclimatized to modern modes of capitalist production.[187] Catering to the expectations of the new tourist economy, the del Valles preserved their ascribed romantic Spanish heritage by "marketing their citrus under the 'Home of Ramona' label, which featured an image of

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[185] Dydia Delyser, *Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 2005), xix
[186] F. Weber Benton, *Semi-tropic California : the garden of the world; including a concise history of Panama and the Panama Canal, with map, and the missions of California, together with verses in accord with the topic*. 2nd Edition. Los Angeles: Benton, 1915. University of California San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections.
[187] Delyser, 895.

their by-now-famous south veranda."[188] They drew upon the emergent practices of commercial tourism—spectatorship, consumption, and memorialization—to translate their presence for visitors. The de Valles played a contradictory role as both agents in modernization and mementos of lost era. [189] Their relegation to the past in commodity form, I argue, restored them as permanent and thus authentic features of Old Spain in a changing California landscape, where the increasing automobile traffic on the highways around them made everyone else seemed mobile. They became a pleasing roadside attraction—heterotopia that were "old" and "new," fixed in time and place and yet seemingly nowhere at all.

The del Valles' veranda appeared in other marketable formats, such as the photograph booklet seen below that was produced by Charles Lummus, a Los Angeles booster who created *Out West Magazine* and was close friends with the del Valle family. Catering to the expectations of the budding tourist imagination, the cover of this booklet depicts a profile of Ramona Ortegna, her eyes locked in a wistful gaze and her hair modestly covered in a shawl. The rosary, Ramona, the "Moreno" veranda, and the glowing sunflowers form a whimsical yet static montage of California's Spanish past, which, much like the vanishing point of the famous veranda, seems to recede in public memory all the while faithfully reproducing itself as quaint keepsakes for future generations.

Figure 4: Cover for photographs of Camulos, "The Home of Ramona" (Santa Clara Valley Historical Society)

[188] Ibid., 896.
[189] Ibid., 69.

Whether glimpsed through the window of a moving train, seen in mass-produced photograph booklets, or witnessed in the del Valles' practices of self-exoticization, the preservation of California's Spanish fantasy heritage demonstrates the tenacity of state-sanctioned white supremacy, which depended on discourses of sexuality that racialized Californios as assimilable and nonwhite populations as irredeemably other and exterior to the nation. The Californio elite depicted in Jackson's *Ramona* were a heterogeneous society living in Alta Californio who included European settlers from Spain, mestizos, and Indians; they were also a racial group whose national belonging was predicated on their legal status as "white," though this was not uniformly the case.[190] It was common practice for wealthy Californio women to continue to be "trafficked" between the old Mexican elite and new Anglo American ruling classes well into the late nineteenth century (where ownership of their family's land was literally possible through ownership of their bodies); the social tolerance of these unions existed only insofar as the "white" partners were members of the social elite. Moreover, Anglos deemed wealthy white Mexicans the only worthy ethnic partners for marriage to the exclusion of blacks, Asians, and Indians. California's 1880 anti-miscegenation statue circumscribed in legal terms the permissible heterosexual unions between racial groups by prohibiting

[190] Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Reconstructing Race: The India, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans* (Austin: University of Texas Press: 2001), 216-220.

marriage between whites and nonwhite subjects categorized as "Negro, mulatto, or Mongolian."[191]

The exclusionary politics of nineteenth century ideas of racialized sexuality underpinned Southern California's reverence for and promotion of its Spanish heritage, especially in the decades leading up to the Panama-California Exposition. One of the most popular "Ramona" attractions attests to this legacy. "Ramona's Marriage Place," an adobe building previously owned by José Maria Estudillo (of a prominent Californio family), was claimed by a *San Diego Union* reporter in 1887 to be the site of the fictive Ramona and Alessandro's wedding. While tourists were drawn to the building in subsequent years, its popularity and commercial success escalated sharply after John D. Spreckels' San Diego Electric Railway Company purchased the property in 1907. As seen in the image below of the workers at the tourist site, Spreckels soon had the building "restored" from a ruinous to romantic state, complete with a souvenir shop of curios inspired by Jackson's novel.

Figure 5: Workers "Restoring" Ramona's Marriage Place, 1909 (Photograph, Online Archive of California)

The lore of Alessandro and Ramona saturated regional boosterism at the turn of the century, whether in reconstructions of sites in the novel or in the rhetorical flourishes of guidebooks extolling the region's attractions. Describing the San Diego countryside for prospective settlers and farmers, one booster writes, "…in the early morn, when the sun tops the hills may come to mind visions of somber-cloaked priests

[191] Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 161.

plodding their weary way along El Camino Real, the old King's Highway. And in the hills around one may yet find the counterparts of Alessandro and Ramona."[192] The landscape, climate, and real estate became legible to visitors partly through the romance of Jackson's novel. The florid writing in such advertisements scripted interested homesteaders into the story of the state's progression from Spanish to Anglo American rule, progress that was increasingly measure by the new strategies and technologies of land development. Left out of the popular imaginary were the decades of violent colonization of Indian territories by the U.S. government, a tragic history of genocide and dispossession that the fable of Alessandro and Ramona's marriage ultimately obscures. In one reading, "Ramona's Marriage Place" is a memorial site to the absent presence of the Indian yet, as a commercial amusement among many others celebrating a carefully curated snapshot of Indian unity, where actual reproduction. By bringing white middle class Americans into such structures of California's past—into wedding sites, verandas, and homes—tourism generated an imagined intimacy of the state's multiracial family, a domesticity most comfortable when the racial other was not home.

Last Chance Saloon: San Diego's Stingaree District and Chinatown

Much like Jackson's novel as well its later iterations in regional pageants and plays, the Panama-California Exposition fashioned itself into a mass cultural monument that at once mourned the "vanishing Indians," whose extermination the U.S. had of course taken over from Spain, while at the same time ennobling the state's Spanish colonial heritage. It is perhaps worth reiterating here that 1848 was the year in

[192] Benton, 69.

which the U.S. not only conquered Mexico but also gained free transit rights through the Panama Canal Zone through the Bidlack Treaty—rights that would eventually culminate in the U.S. completion of the Canal in 1914. Part of what I aim to demonstrate are the ways Exposition exhibits rendered such twentieth century moments of U.S. imperialism as *new* rather than continued administrations of empire begun earlier in the nineteenth century. Moreover, I would like to underscore how in remapping the Bay of San Diego as a "natural" geographic crossroad in the traffic of East-West U.S. empire, San Diego and its Exposition nevertheless disavowed its function as imperialist *per se*.

Although the Exposition honored milestones of U.S. empire that it simultaneously obscured as such, its overarching theme of "progress" made explicit the fact that the social future of the region depended on the economic promises of its Pacific border. Viewing San Diego as a "border town" in relation to Mexico as well as territories in the Pacific reveals how racialized boundaries of decency and degeneracy, morality and immorality, were shaped by varied, intersecting coordinates. Observing the impossibility of maintaining national homogeneity in an expanding empire, Amy Kaplan explains: "One of the major contradictions of imperialist expansion was that while it strove to nationalize and domesticate foreign territories and peoples, annexation threatened to incorporate nonwhite foreign subjects into the republic in a way perceived to undermine the nation as a domestic space."[193] The diverse populations in newly acquired territories in the transpacific borderlands menaced the

[193] Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," in *The Futures of American Studies*, eds. Donald Pease and Robyn Wiegman (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 114-115.

imagined universalism of the nation-state United States, particularly as these groups began to circulate along and across national boundaries.

Political leaders in the nation's border areas were especially self-conscious about monitoring their external and internal borders. Such was the case with Lee C. Gates and his superior in the California state government, Governor Hiram Johnson, and their grand visions of trans-American expansion. Johnson was a progressive Republican whose earliest actions in office involved crackdowns on the state's burgeoning vice industry. The major state laws prohibiting gambling, prostitution, and corruption were all roughly coterminous with Johnson's term in office and were all forerunners of the Volstead Act of 1920, popularly known as "prohibition."[194] Gates and Johnson's projections about the role of California in the Western Hemisphere, on the one hand, and the policing of the state's Southern border, on the other, point to some of the contradictions that arose from reimagining the national geography at this moment in U.S. imperial expansion. In the following turn to industries of vice in the border region, I wish to emphasize how non-normative racialized sexualities in San Diego and Tijuana proliferated in those liminal national spaces where the norms of white middle-class respectability seem most threatened.

As a rapidly urbanizing city in the years leading up to the fair, San Diego extolled its recovery from the market slump of the 1880s and 90s and emergence as a district competitive with other major West Coast port cities. Yet accompanying the civic development and rising population came a story left out of the booster

[194] Vincent Z.C. de Baca, "Moral Renovation of the Californias: Tijuana's Political and Economic Role in American-Mexican Relocations, 1920-1935." Dissertation: University of California San Diego, 1991, 7.

propaganda—that of the San Diego's flourishing vice district called the Stingaree.[195] The Stingaree was located by the waterfront and included saloons, gambling houses, and brothels.

Figure 6: Last Chance Saloon, San Diego, 1890s (Postcard, San Diego History Center)

It was estimated in 1888 that there were at least a hundred twenty "bawdy houses" in the city, a boom attributed in part to its proximity to the business district and wharf, which were areas attracting primarily businessmen and sailors. For instance, the city passed an ordinance that regulated the sale of liquor in saloons by "prohibit[ing] bartenders from selling liquor to patrons in rooms adjoining the bar," forbidding them from "maintain[ing] alcoves with doors," and "eliminat[ing] private entrances to the saloon that were for women only. Women's restrooms were exempted."[196]

Although it is not precisely clear when the anti-vice movement in San Diego began, many public figures began to pressure the government to "clean up" the district in 1912, in part to make the town palatable for tourists anticipated at the 1915 Exposition. In October 1912, the Vice Suppression Committee formed, consisting of Dr. Charlotte Baker and Mrs. R. C. Allen of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the reverends William E. Crabtree, Charles L. Barnes, and R. H. Harbert—all of whom collaborated with the superintendent of police and Police Chief Keno Wilson who, for their part, insisted that measures be taken to care for the dislocated

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[195] Clare V. McKanna, Jr., "Prostitutes, Progressives, and Police: The Viability of Vice in San Diego 1900-1930," *The Journal of San Diego History* 35.1 (Winter 1989). Web. Available online through the *San Diego History Center.*
[196] Ibid.

women as part of their rehabilitation.[197] When the red light district was raided later that October, the women were primarily charged with "vagrancy"—a charge that prostitutes would continue to face well after the 1913 California Red Light Abatement Act, which allowed anyone to sue those individuals renting buildings to prostitutes.[198]

Significantly, during the "clean up" of the Stingaree, San Diego's Chinatown also became a target of reform. Situated adjacent to the Stingaree**,** Chinatown was widely known for its gambling houses and opium dens. I want to assert that the conflation of vice and Chineseness is a continuation of nineteenth-century notions of U.S. Chinatown's places of disease and sexual deviancy. Up until the turn of the century, the majority of Chinese immigrants were male, commonly referred to as a "bachelor society," and the few Chinese women who arrived were relegated into prostitution.[199] For the white middle-class, the opium den in particular signified a homosocial space marked by "nonreproductive and nonconjugal" sexual formations that were external and *other* to the image of the heteropatriarchal American family—and yet crucial to its economic development.[200]

I will return to the trope of the opium den as it circulated within the popular imaginary at the Exposition but would like to draw attention to the reciprocal relation between the regulation of racialized deviancy in San Diego's Chinatown and US

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[197] Ibid
[198] Nayan Shah, "Between 'Oriental Depravity' and 'Natural Degenerates': Spatial Borderlands and the Making of Ordinary Americans," *American Quarterly* 57.3 (2005), 712-713.
[199] Almaguer, 175.
[200] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 2004), 13.

American fears of "illegal" Chinese immigration at the nation's Western and Southwestern borders. While Mexico had maintained an ambivalent view of Chinese immigration (at once encouraging immigration for economic gains during the Porfiriato while at the same time fostering an anti-Chinese movement that culminated in the 1930s), the Mexican government did not legally prohibit their entrance as did the United States through the Chinese Exclusion Act.[201] The established networks of Chinese immigrants on both sides of the border, in addition to Mexico's relatively lenient immigration laws, eased their northward crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border and heightened anxieties about the vulnerable periphery of the nation.[202]

Cross-border Entertainments

As much as the boosters, reformers, and Exposition organizers of San Diego attempted to eradicate or at least contain practices of vice in the city limits, there was a thriving vice industry across the border in Tijuana as well that in fact became a major draw for tourists during the time of the fair. Moreover, many U.S. citizens began to invest heavily in the development of both San Diego and Tijuana—notably John D. Spreckels, whose purchase of the Hotel Del Coronado in 1888 lead to twice weekly bus rides to the border where American tourists could enjoy stepping foot onto the "other side."[203] Much like the city as a whole, Hotel Del Coronado was built with the

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[201] On Chinese immigration through the U.S-Mexico and U.S.-Canadian borders, see Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 2003).
[202] Erika Lee, "Enforcing the Borders: Chinese Exclusion along the U.S. Borders with Canada and Mexico, 1882–1924," *The Journal of American History* 89.1 (2002): 62.
[203] On the collaborative development of the vice district in Tijuana between U.S. and Mexican investors, see Lawrence D. Taylor, "The Wild Frontier Moves South: U.S.

spirit of progressivism, its luxurious leisure spaces showcasing San Diego's developing modern municipality. Constructed in fact through contracted Chinese labor (through the Six Companies in San Francisco), the hotel emerged as an emblem of San Diego's civic development, promising middle and upper class vacationers all modern conveniences and diversions they could desire. The Del offered such white middle- and upper-class amusements as reading rooms, dancing, sailing, steamboat rides, as well trips to Tijuana to visit curio shops, saloons, and casinos. In addition to serving as a conduit to vices south of the border, the Del offered within its grounds a selection of Pacific-inflected entertainments: Mah-Jong tables, rickshaw rides, and "tea services by girls in native costume at Japanese Tea Garden one block from hotel."[204] While perhaps visually marginal on the Del's grounds, the Pacific-themed amusements were integral to shoring up its image as a place of high-class leisure. Gambling and services from Asian women contrasted with reading and formal dancing; a transporting ride in a rickshaw contrasted with a modern Western steamboat—all were entertainments that relied on the opposition and overlap between white middle class norms and Mexican and Asian difference.

Figure 7: Tourists at the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1922 (Photograph, Online Archive of California)

Entrepreneurs and the Growth of Tijuana's Vice Industry, 1908-1935," *The Journal of San Diego History* 48.3 (Summer 2002)

[204] *Hotel del Coronado, Coronado Beach: Its Social Activities and Entertainment Figures***.** San Diego: Frye & Smith. University of California San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections.

Incidentally, the Del also featured "the Casino Bar, a horse track and private but illegal gambling" for its wealthy guests, suggesting that even this iconic marker of San Diego's civic development contained within its walls an attractive economy of iniquity.[205] Spreckels would go on to subsidize the Lower California Jockey Club in Tijuana, which was run by Americans Marvin Allen, Frank Beyer, and Carl Withington (a collective known as ABW whose brothels and casinos in Bakersfield had been pressured to close by reformers). Two other U.S. investors (Baron Long, who owned San Diego's Grand Hotel and restaurants, and Sunny Jim Coffroth, a boxing promoter from San Francisco) joined the ABW in order to run the Tijuana racetrack. A few years earlier American citizen José R. Alvarez had already established himself as a "prominent vice purveyor of Tijuana," owning a popular Cantina and large bull ring.[206]

Figure 8: Tijuana Horse Racing Track, photo featured in a brochure made by the Hotel Del Coronado "Hotel del Coronado, Coronado Beach, California: open all the year round," 1920s (UC San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections)

The vice industry in Tijuana during the 1910s and 20s was, moreover, the result of the collaboration of these U.S. investors and Mexican officials and entrepreneurs. Colonel Esteban Cantú, who became the military chief and governor of Baja California in 1915, found his state's relative isolation from the Mexican central government an opportunity to rule his territory with little intervention. Accordingly he found funding in heavily taxing U.S.-run vice businesses as well as in the American-

[205] de Baca, 38.
[206] Ibid., 39.

owned cotton industry in Mexicali, discussed in Chapter Three. He also issued a permit to Antonio Elosúa, a Mexico City financier, who then opened a regional Tijuana fair called the *feria típica mexicana* featuring "cockfights, boxing, gambling, races, bullfights and bullbaits" and later prizefighting, which was outlawed in California in 1915.[207] Elosúa would eventually sell his permit to three "border barons" from Bakersfield, at which time they began to operate the Monte Carlo casino in Tijuana. California state law at this time prohibited racetrack gambling and slot machines as well, increasing the appeal of these attractions at Elosúa's fair and other Tijuana businesses for Exposition tourists.

Tensions between Panama-California Exposition and the Tijuana vice industry escalated throughout 1915, with the Expo directors often facing bad press revolving around the alleged "lawlessness" south of the border. At times American tourists also protested against dishonest practices of the casinos, which they accused of swindling unknowing visitors.[208] As Vincent de Baca shows in his study, moral reformers throughout California had begun to outspokenly condemn practices of vice in Tijuana, most notably the Southern California district of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, which held its annual convention in San Diego and called for "the closure of liquor, drug, prostitution and gambling establishments below the border." [209]

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[207] Taylor, 6.
[208] de Baca, 44.
[209] de Baca, 53.

Cheap Amusements at the Exposition

I wish to emphasize here that at the same moment fair directors were attempting to regulate the vice industry in Tijuana (not to mention the continued red light district just miles from the Expo on the U.S. side of the border), one of the largest material successes of the Exposition was its own amusement section featuring displays which tested to varying degrees the fair's governing notions of progress, morality, and decency. My analysis of particular diversions in the *Isthmus* follows Kathy Peiss' understanding of early amusement parks as "laboratories of the new mass culture," where middle-class attitudes toward leisure, sexuality, and the social relations of women and men were forged."[210] While her study focuses on how spaces such as Coney Island's thrilling mechanical devices and spectacular exhibits constituted a liberating experience for the middle class (in contrast to the normative demands of conventional bourgeois society), I will focus on how San Diego's *Isthmus* produced ideas of racialized sexualities particular to the formation of the borderlands of Southern California, Northern Mexico, and Hawai'i. I will attend to how white bourgeois norms of respectability were tested, crossed, and articulated in ways that reflect, in other words, the dynamics of transpacific modernity. I approach this popular amusement zone as one that helped consolidate the boundaries of moral American citizenship through commodified racial difference. At the same time the non-national entertainers I examine—such as native Hawaiian hula performers—were not always disruptive for the benefit of the tourists' pleasure. The *Isthmus* was a heterotopic

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[210] Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press: 1986), 116.

space, providing both a diversion from middle class American life in an era of social reform and divergences from this notion of modernity.

Figure 9: Entrance to the Isthmus Amusement Zone, San Diego Exposition, 1915 (San Diego History Center)

The *Isthmus* featured thrill rides and a constellation of sensational exhibits such as the aforementioned Underground Chinatown den and Hawaiian Village among others. It was also part of an emergent form of commercialized leisure for the modern working and middle classes, a mixed class demographic that perhaps inspired one Los Angeles Times reporter to assure her readers of its appropriateness for all. "It is the democratic spirit that prevails both at the café, the official eating place of the exposition, and on the *Isthmus* that charms," she writes. "Evening dress and street clothes are seen at the same table at the Cristobal and the exclusive society belles and the pretty shop girl of the next table one-step and fox trot between courses with equal gaiety and spirit.[211] Later in the article in a subsection entitled "ALL HIGH CLASS," the reporter goes so far as to declare, "But though San Diego's *Isthmus* is the playground of the fair and fun and merriment reign, there is nothing tawdry or cheap about the entire street. The dragons of Chinatown face the locks of the Panama Canal; a rugged Hawaiian volcano is opposite the streets of Japan, which are bed-rocked with cherry blossoms; an Indian village and the mining camp of '49 are grouped together.

[211] *Los Angeles Times* April 11, 1915: VII.

The same harmony that prevails in the exposition proper is a characteristic of the *Isthmus*.[212]

Underground Chinatown

However fairgoers may have been assured that the displays of human progress would remain untainted by "tawdriness" or "cheapness," many of the amusements exhibited scenes of vice that did not simply oppose the Exposition's progressive "harmony." The displays I will turn to here exemplify ways that vice was a strategy of progress in this context; namely that ideas of progress mobilized scenes of degeneracy and immorality for their material and ideological success. "Underground Chinatown" was an underground display beneath a "typical Chinese Street" featuring scenes of an opium den and opium addict's dream.[213]

Figure 10: Entrance to "Underground Chinatown," San Diego Exposition, 1915 (San Diego History Center)

Unlike the other displays, this scene did not employ living Chinese men but lifeless wax figures. After walking down the street of Chinese shops, the tourist would venture downstairs to observe the den below. The amusement was organized to build up a sense of anticipation and fear of the "hop joint" and "hop head." At the same time, its narrow street, darkened stairway, and scene of opium consumption brought the visitor into close proximity to what one *San Diego Union* journalist described as "strange underground Chinese homes, where the queer Chinese customs at all times prevail,

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[212] Ibid.

[213] *San Diego Sun* January 21, 1915, 7:5-6. Quoted in "Balboa Park Notes," Richard Amero Collection, San Diego History Center. All forthcoming citations from *San Diego Union, San Diego Sun*, and *Los Angeles Times* are quoted from the reproduction of these newspaper articles in Richard Amero's "Balboa Park Notes," available online through the *San Diego History Center*.

and where no room is upon the same level as its neighbor."[214] The visitor was encouraged to indulge in their curiosity about this foreign place and people and to imagine as closely as possible what the "rapid decay of the 'hop head'" must feel like. When they at last discovered the dreaded scene, they encountered what the photograph below depicts, a staged arrest of a white opium user by two police officers. The white, clean-cut officer aims his pistol at the user, who threatens to strike back with his empty booze bottle. The spectator peers in on the scene through small barred window behind the officer, aligning their point of view with his disciplining gaze. The dark fabric of the police officer's uniform and the criminal's jacket, moreover, encourages their restricted but roving eye to vacillate between this pair and the two "Chinese" men sitting at the table in bright, white garments. With little else to distract in this unadorned room, the spectator is trained to make visual comparisons between the life-like, healthful, white men and the inhuman, emaciated Chinese men whose faces are more like masks than faces at all. Their rendition in wax has made them almost literally alien.

Figure 11: Wax Figures in the "Underground Chinatown" Opium Den, San Diego Exposition, 1915 (San Diego History Center)

Reading across this photograph and the *Union* article, it appears that the thrilling "transformation" created in this otherwise static scene was that lighting effects were used to depict the decaying face of the Chinese opium addict. "What requires a number of years in real life, is all accomplished in a minute in this

[214] *San Diego Union* January 21, 1915.

extraordinary exhibition," the journalist recount: "You see them just as they were at the first, in the flush of health. Then the transformation occurs before your very eyes and almost before you know it, there appear before you the human wrecks that are found in so many Chinese districts…Each seems to fade and whither as if by magic. The light goes out of the eye, and there appears instead the hopeless stare of the life misspent." Horrified by the rapid extinction of human life, the journalists explains, the visitor will find relief in the fortitude of their own bodies against such perilous addiction. They will walk away feeling edified in part by an identification with the white opium user, whose immoral weakness they will happily avoid. Even the white opium himself seems to have been saved by the law before the onset of the effects of addiction, suggesting that, unlike him, the Chinese men are hopelessly addicted.

The amusement's racialization of Chinese as irredeemably other was rendered quite literal in one particular episode reported in the San Diego Union where, after a night of heavy rainfall, the underground den was flooded and there appeared to be two dead Chinese men amidst debris from the display. According to the *San Diego Union*:

> Manager Phillips had sent one of the Chinese musicians to investigate the "horror," and, after giving the surroundings one glance, the messenger hurried back to the manager's office, fright written all over his face. "Them drown in the flood!" he gasped. Phillips, being somewhat cooler than his Chinese employee, and seeing the advertising value of the situation, dispatched the wild-eyed Chinese over the Isthmus for help. Shouting the startling information that two men had been found dead in the gambling den. The messenger soon assembled a curious crowd at the scene of the supposed drowning. They were passed in, one at a time, and for 10 cents each. The joke was on the morbid seekers for grewsome sights, for the drowned Chinese were made of plaster."[215]

[215] *San Diego* Union January 24, 1915, 9:1-3.

The Manager's quick impulse to turn the "grewsome sight" of the apparently drowned Chinese workers into profit illustrates in morbid detail how the financial success of this amusement depended on the racialized sexuality it simultaneously worked to exclude and, as this episode illustrates, even exterminate altogether. Described by one reporter as "a lesson to humanity," [216] this underground amusement drew its didacticism from popular images of San Francisco and San Diego's Chinatowns as sites of contamination, disease, and immorality. It seems the inhabitants of both the real and replicate Chinatowns could not escape the "public health hierarchy of the normative and the aberrant." [217] The popularity of this display relied, then, on its attraction as a controlled spectacle—its ability to menace fairgoers with the deviancy they feared while reassuring them of the fantasy they desired.

The Hawaiian Village

The popular, moralizing scene of opium addiction in the Underground Chinatown showcased white middle-class anxieties over Chinese immigration in West Coast border zones that seemed to especially require the "policing of degeneracy and anxious fixing of categories" [218] In contract to the lifeless display of the Chinese opium smokers, however, the living performances of Hawaiian women in the "Hawaiian Village" display comprised a scene of the vibrant and alluring prizes of progress rather than its degenerate byproducts. The constitution of this spatial borderlands (of continental and non-contiguous sites of U.S. imperialism), I suggest, was accompanied by the production of an array of racialized subjects who came to

[216] *San Diego Sun* January 21, 7:5-6.
[217] Shah, *Contagious Divides,* 75.
[218] Shah, "Between "Oriental Depravity," 720.

define boundaries of the "norm." Whether these subjects became the vile, unwanted alien or exotic, welcomed dependent was predicated in part on the legacy of imperialism of the geography they occupied. The line between the U.S. and Mexico was one where the national boundary was increasingly naturalized and where Chinese immigration was seen as an infiltration, a threat, and an outer edge of American normalcy. While Hawaiian women may have occupied the outermost geographic frontier of Western expansion, they became admissible as friendly, hospitable, innocuous natives.[219]

I preface my reading of the Hawaiian exhibit with a discussion of its occasion, namely the recent U.S. annexation of Hawai'i as well as the long-standing imperial role of U.S. citizens in this imperial relationship. The conditions for U.S. annexation of the islands were set in motion in the early nineteenth century through the interests of sailors, merchants, and missionaries, many of whom conceived of Hawai'i as a "final frontier" for American settler colonialism.[220] Claus Spreckels, who purchased land in both California and Hawai'i in the 1860s where he cultivated sugar beets and sugarcane, came to dominate the West Coast sugar trade even after annexation.

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[219] Jane. C Desmond, "Picturing Hawai'i: The "Ideal" Native and the Origins of Tourism, 1880-1915," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 7.2 (1999), 489.

[220] In his analysis of American colonialist visions of Hawai'i, Lanny Thompson explains how Hawai'i was imagined a frontier beyond the continental U.S. since the 1820s. "Historically, all U.S. territories had been intended as European American settler colonies, if not at the time of initial acquisition, then at least by the time Congress had organized a territorial government. By the end of the nineteenth century, most of these areas had already been organized as territories, settled by European American immigrants, and admitted as states. Hawai'i was thus one of the final frontiers of European American settlement." See *"*The Imperial Republic: A Comparison of the Insular Territories under U.S. Dominion after 1898," *The Pacific Historical Review* 71.4 (November, 2002), 537.

Working for his father's *Spreckels Sugar Company,* John Spreckels eventually set up the J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company in 1880 in order to further facilitate trade between Hawai'i and California. Seven years later he would visit San Diego and, as discussed earlier, invested his sugar money into industries of the U.S.-Mexico border region. I am mentioning the Spreckels' family's imperial practices (discussed more in Chapter One) as a way of illuminating how the transpacific flows not only of capital but of culture converge at the border of San Diego and Hawai'i. The presence of Hawaiian musicians and hula dancers at the Exposition was part of a Hawaiian tourist industry that emerged after the fall of the Hawaiian monarchy and the beginning of U.S. government of this territory. Hawaiian performers appeared at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, the Seattle Fair in 1903, and the San Francisco and San Diego Fairs in 1915. The iconic and marketable "hula girl" was part of the promotion of the newly annexed islands which would boom shortly after these fairs in the 1920s and 30s. [221]

As the San Diego Union reports, the Hawaiian Village at the Exposition represented both "New" and "Old" Hawai'i. "New Hawai'i" is marked by "green lawns and rustic tables on which Hawaiian delicacies are served the visitor. Poi, pineapples and pig are served in abundance."[222] It also includes "Hawaiian shops, souvenirs, trinkets" sold by "Hawaiian maidens." "Old Hawai'i" is "where mats and spears and what-not are manufactured by the natives. Grass hats are shown and the

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[221] Adria L. Imada, "Hawaiians on Tour: Hula Circuits through the American Empire," *American Quarterly* 56.1 (2004), 116.
[222] *San Diego Sun* February 10, 1915, 6:1-2.

foliage is that of the tropics."[223] At the center of this scene divided by pre- and post-U.S. contact—a temporal divide the Exposition authorized itself to produce—were the hula dancers.

Figure 12: Hawaiian Village Dancers at the Hawaiian Village, San Diego Exposition, 1915 (San Diego History Center)

This troupe performed not the "American hula," the *Union* assures us, but the "Hawaiian Hula dance, just as it is danced on the mystic islands."[224] A later feature in the Union entitled "Introducing our happy step-child the Hula Hula Girl!" contradicts this report, explaining:

> The native Hula Hula dance that America sees is an expurgated edition of that which the brown-skinned girls do on the famous Waikiki beach. In the original it is too revealing and too primitive in its display of passion. But to the Hawaiian it is not, even in its most expressive form, an immoral thing. They see nothing in it but untaimed love of the co-ordination of muscle and melody…[225]

The debates over the authenticity and morality of the dance were not new or unique to the Exposition and in fact included previous attempts to regulate the dance by Hawaiian Evangelical Society who associated it with "debauchery, idleness, and sexuality."[226] As Adria Imada shows in her study, in 1859 the Hawaiian legislature passed a new civil code at the urging of this Society prohibiting public hula performances, although they did continue in rural areas.

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[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid.
[225] *San Diego Sun* September 1, 1916.
[226] Imada, 117.

The Hawaiian dancers at the San Diego Exposition were viewed with an ambivalence that resonated with this earlier reception in Hawai'i. Not simply admired as trophies of U.S. expansion in the Pacific, the performers faced charges that their dances were illicit and inauthentic. While one report indicated that they perform the "Hawaiian Hula dance, just as it is danced on the mystic islands,"[227] another claimed:

> The native Hula Hula dance that America sees is an expurgated edition of that which the brown-skinned girls do on the famous Waikiki beach. In the original it is too revealing and too primitive in its display of passion. But to the Hawaiian it is not, even in its most expressive form, an immoral thing. They see nothing in it but untaimed love of the co-ordination of muscle and melody…[228]

The dancers were even subjected to the Hawaiian Promotion Committee's complaints that the dance "'is not a hula at all, but more of a Chicago hoochi-koochi'"[229] This Committee also suspected that, similar to the San Francisco Exposition's Hawaiian display, the San Diego dancers were not all actually Hawaiian and could even be a majority of white women. Esther P. Shaw, the mother of the two women charged with indecent dancing, wrote an outraged letter to the San Diego Union where she defended her daughters' performances and explained that while they had in fact worked at the San Francisco Fair, they had relocated to San Diego precisely because "American girls" were employed in place of Hawaiian women to "dance vulgar dances."[230] Shaw takes great pains to catalogue the modified steps of the dance and to dignify her daughters' performances by invoking their larger cultural and ethnic ties to the Hawaiian "nation": "It is our nation's dance, we think nothing of it, but here on the

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[227] *San Diego Sun* February 10, 1915, 6:1-2.
[228] *San Diego Sun* 9/1/16 5:4.
[229] *San Diego Union* August 29, 1916, 8:2-4.
[230] *San Diego Union* September 2, 1916, 5:4.

mainland it will be a dance for those who are broad-minded, otherwise they say it is disgusting."[231] She also lists the names of other members of the dance troupe who "gave up their jobs for the love of their country and for their names, though it was never made public."[232]

The anger expressed towards the Hawaiian Promotion Committee in Shaw's letter illuminates larger uncertainties about the political relationship between Hawai'i and the U.S.—or between "our nation" and "the mainland"—fifteen years after its annexation. Her letter also expresses an ambivalence toward cultural practices of U.S. imperialism which Shaw, her daughters, and the Royal Hula Dancers are at once complicit in and critical of. A striking element of her letter is also the contrast of her daughters' performances with that of (in her words) the "indecent" dances featured in another *Isthmus* amusement called the "Sultan's Harem." The practices and policing of vice on the *Isthmus*, in fact, are remarkable for their inseparability from the themes of imperialism featured in the various displays—whether this theme took the form of more recent U.S. territorial expansion (i.e. in Hawai'i) or much older modes of European orientalism. The final displays under consideration in this chapter—the "Sultan's Harem" and "Camp of '49"—are exemplary of the stories of U.S. empire that the Expositions simultaneously invoked and disavowed. That is, they demonstrate how the cheap amusements narrated key moments in U.S. imperial expansion only to occlude histories of violent conquest and continued tactics of social exclusion.

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[231] Ibid.
[232] Ibid.

The Sultan's Harem and The Camp of '49

During April of the second year of the fair, the "Sultan's Harem" was charged by the San Diego district attorney on the grounds that it was "immoral, indecent, and a public nuisance." [233] It appears that "women practically nude [were] being exhibited there," and as a result the exhibit was taken to trial.[234] The following June, a San Diego police officer seized all the costumes of female performers in the show, thereby satisfying a claim of $300 brought against its manager. It seems that dismantling the "Sultan's Harem" in a piecemeal fashion—beginning with its "gorgeous raiment in silk and satin in all colors of the rainbow"—would eventually lead to its closure altogether.[235] However, the swift reincarnation of this bawdy amusement is testament to its persistence and popularity. A month after the seizure of harem costumes, the display had apparently transformed itself into "The Streets of Algiers" and featured May Hayden, a twenty-two-year-old who "discarded everything but Mother Nature's garb and appeared on stage" to showers of coins and shouts of applause from enthusiastic onlookers. [236] Not only was Hayden arrested on vagrancy charges, but the display itself was ordered closed by the District Attorney because it "so closely resembled the characteristics of the preceding show," namely the ill-fated "Sultan's Harem." [237]

The official charges of indecency brought against this show, not to mention the resiliency of the "indecent" acts in the face of legal regulation, point to the mutually

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[233] *San Diego Sun* May 12, 1916, II, 11:2.
[234] *San Diego Sun* April 27, 1916, 2:3.
[235] *San Diego Union* June 17, 1916, 6:4.
[236] Los Angeles Times July, 7, 1916 II 6:8.
[237] Ibid.

constitutive relation between ideas of progress and vice within a colonial context. "Progress" in this sense invokes the self-righteous policies of European colonialism in India, the Middle East, and other nations that fell within the purview of the "white man's burden." The insertion of this famous and longer-standing form of imperialism amongst displays of U.S. conquest—the Hawaiian Village and Camp of '49, discussed below—works to align the United States with much older modes of empire even as they were denied as such. The "Sultan's Harem" reveals how ideas of progress in the early-twentieth century were overdetermined by notions of imperialism, where imperialism at once contains sexual and racial otherness all the while these titillating excesses become complex fascinations for the metropole.

The "Camp of '49" was an amusement intended to be a replica of a mining camp of the gold rush and featured a post office, Chinese laundry, tavern, general store, and a dance hall.[238] As one *Union* reporter anticipates in the year leading up to the fair, "Easterners will be shown how cowboys rope and tied cattle, how cattle may be thrown with a twist on the horns. Exhibition of bucking broncos and fancy riding will be given."[239] Fairgoers had the opportunity to dance with cowgirls, enjoy cabaret shows, and imbibe libations "a little stronger than water."[240] They also could enjoy gambling with "scrip" or a fake currency accepted at the gambling tables, bar, general store, and other *Isthmus* concessions. While no real money was allowed to change hands at the "Camp of '49," it was precisely the dubious status of the "scrip" that came under scrutiny by the District Attorney and sparked a prolonged investigation

[238] *San Diego Union* February 19, 1914, 14:1.
[239] Ibid.
[240] *San Diego Union* April 3, 1915, 3:4.

into the moral stature of this display. Over the course of several months, District Attorney Mahoney charged that, contrary to the claims of "Bronc" Burnside, the camp's manager, the "scrip" indeed was a "thing of value" according to state of California gambling statutes.[241] In response to Mahoney's allegations, Attorney A.J. Morganstern claimed:

> …the '49 Camp was a "show" to which admittance was charged. He declared that its purpose was to portray to strangers as well as natives the historic conditions which prevailed in the mining camps during the days of the gold rush. These were days, he said, of which the state was proud and which were surrounded with the same glamour of romance as the arrival of Cabrillo and of Junipero Serra. [242]

Morganstern defended the camp's gambling practices by situating them securely in the mission revival theme that subtended the fairgrounds and upheld the Exposition's larger ideas of U.S. expansion and progress. His remark implied that the "glamour of romance" that ennobled Cabrillo and Serra's projects in Mexico was one now enjoyed by the U.S. as an emergent (imperial) power whose destiny it was to overtake Spain's colonial government of Northern Mexico in the 1840s. In his oblique invocation of the U.S. conquest of Mexico that gave rise to the prosperous gold rush, Morganstern also claimed that the "scrip" had no real monetary value but instead "was exchanged for amusement and nothing else" and could not be traded back in for money. [243] Largely in response to religious reformers who had voiced complaints about the exhibit, he declared, "the '49 Camp was no more of a gamble than a church raffle." [244]

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[241] *San Diego Union* June 26, 1915,1:4-5.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid.

As the primary point of contention in this legal battle, questions about the authenticity of the "scrip" culminated in the elimination of all games of chance at the camp just a few weeks later. In their place, mere "demonstrations" of gambling were set up, where onlookers could observe showmen perform games without actually being able to participate themselves. Unsurprisingly, the popularity of the "Camp of '49" swiftly dwindled as fairgoers learned they could no longer reenact the days of '49 with the same degree of similitude as before. [245] Many who would have also patronized the nearby "Moose Camp" (located on Front and E Streets) were also disappointed to learn of similar reforms targeted at this off-site amusement. All previous games of chance here were also reduced to "demonstrations" to the point that, according to one account, one of the demonstrators "had a policeman at his side, and a Moose representative hovering in the offing to see that his 'demonstrations' never became so realistic as to separate spectators from their money."[246]

Conclusion

The "Moose Camp" had apparently planned to allow gambling with real currency by importing "gambling devices" from Tijuana that would allow a number of games of chance to be played. [247] Visitors flocking to San Diego for the easy access to Tijuana's vice district would have found this Camp an attractive supplement to their border tourist experience had the district attorney permitted use of this equipment. Moreover, that the downtown facsimile of the Exposition's "Camp of '49" had nearly fashioned itself into a "real" gambling house mimicking those just miles away in

[245] *San Diego Union* July 19, 1915, 1:6.
[246] *San Diego Union* July 20, 1915, 1:4-5, 2:2.
[247] Ibid.

Tijuana illuminates how practices of vice were constantly erupting in sites of civic development. The proliferation and policing of immoral practices at the Exposition, downtown, and Tijuana were essential to San Diego's emergence as a modern city as well as the stories it told about the state's colonial past. As seen in the "Camp of '49," the cheap amusements at the fair reveal how the intersecting ambivalence toward ideas of social progress, on the one hand, and projects of U.S. imperialism, on the other, were constitutive of rather than corrosive to the Exposition's larger purpose. We can see this intersection in the Camp's narrative of California's romanticized gambling operations that flourished after the discovery of gold as well as its story of the U.S. appropriation of Spain's colonial legacy and continuation of its government of the region.

Contrary to the city of San Diego and Exposition's larger self-image as a culmination of social, cultural, and economic evolution, these bawdy amusements point to the economies of vice that not simply opposed but underpinned structures of progress. Whether staged in the picture postcard taken at the U.S.-Mexico border, the brothel in the Stingaree District, the racetrack in Tijuana, or the amusement zone of the Exposition, industries of vice and their commercialization of racial difference were crucial to the development of this spatial borderland. Their allure also lay in their memorialization of times and places gone by, of the Wild West whose quaint scenes of mining camp domesticity or of the sociable world of gambling could at any moment emerge as the real deal. The authentically *Wild West* seemed both innocuous for its distance from the time and place of the modern society and a real threat to the reformed American public. Though a simple game of chance made all the more

playful in the context of a word's fair amusement zone, wagering for instant wealth in the contemporary space of the U.S.-Mexico border suggested a show of patriotism or national identity, a whimsical throwback to a formative moment in American nation building. However, the level of state surveillance over and discipline of these games points to how they of a return to an unrestrained, unrefined past when the national frontier represented the menace of unknown spaces and unknown races..

CHAPTER THREE: "Wish you were here": Mementos from the West and Elsewhere in Frank Norris's *The Octopus* and the Early Twentieth Century U.S.-Mexico Borderlands

American tourists making their way to the U.S.-Mexico border in the early twentieth century were looking for more than an escape from modern life. Crossing the line with a day pass to Mexicali, the city opposite Calexico in California, they could enjoy a fast hand of fan tan, a high-speed horse race, a cold beer at the world's longest bar, a spectacular bull fight. Mexicali was thrillingly close to the U.S. where such pleasures were now prohibited, and yet where they seemed, back there in the romantic past, to have existed in abundance. Venturing here meant stepping back in time to what local newspapers like the *Los Angeles Times* or *San Diego Tribune* referred to as "Old Mexico," the "Old West," or the "Wild West." The predominantly Anglo American business owners here literally sold "past times"—commercial entertainments that invoked a not-so-distant moment of gold rushing prospectors, wrangling cowboys, and menacing Mexicans.

However, tourists in Baja California encountered districts that also reflected the region's emergent orientation to the Pacific. In the early twentieth century, the American-owned Colorado River Land Company and governor of Baja California collaborated in the recruitment of thousands of Chinese immigrants to work in the company's cotton growing fields in the Mexicali Valley. Tourists in Mexicali would see this demographic shift in the city's popular entertainments. Here, they could have

their choice between American and Chinese casinos, and could explore amusements unique to the city's Chinatown. For some, this encounter might recall a "slumming tour" through a Chinatown in New York or San Francisco, a term journalists often used to describe the touring experience in Mexicali and which corresponded to discourses of yellow peril at work in Northern Mexico. Through political and social exclusions on both sides of the line, Chinese immigrants were racialized as outsiders to modernity. Yet to narrate Chinese immigrants in Baja California in solely abject terms overlooks their cross-border political and economic agency. Its also occludes Mexicali's Chinatown as a divergent formation of modernity in the "West," which was itself a varied, multiple, and unevenly developed space.

In this chapter, I illuminate resonances between visions of modernity in Frank Norris's novel, *The Octopus*, and attractions in Mexicali and Tijuana's tourist districts. The juxtaposition of *The Octopus* and border tourism offers compelling ways to understand how dynamisms of capitalism and popular culture shaped ideas of the spatial links between California, Mexico and Asia in the early twentieth-century. For one, both Norris and border tourist attractions produce a racial cartography whereby Asia (its markets and laborers) represents the future of the U.S. West and Mexico the past. Both articulate this new global West through its emergence out of a nostalgic Old Spanish California, Old Mexico, or Old Wild West. Both also articulate this nostalgia for the rolling hills of the Southwest, in Norris's case, or the gold rush pioneer days, as in border tourism, that has little to do with longing for actual *mestizo*, Indian, and Mexican populations who occupied this land before the U.S. conquest of Mexico in 1848. It in fact has everything to do with longing for the virtues of an exclusively

white agrarian society in a period of intensified shifts in U.S. class and race relations—a modern moment when the corporation had become the organizing structure of the national economy, immigration was reaching peak numbers, and the U.S. was expanding its commercial interests beyond the frontier of the West Coast and into the global market.

In what follows, I first show how *The Octopus* (1901) exposes monopoly capitalism's oppression of wheat farmers in California's San Joaquin Valley. I argue that through his protagonist's endeavor to write an "epic of the West," Norris criticizes capitalism's violations of the promises of liberal democracy and articulates a desire to reinstate the principles of an equal, just, and free society. As dramatized in his poet Presley's political activism, the formation of this society has made America exceptional and monopoly agriculture is only working against the nation's foundational narrative. As an author, Norris was self-conscious of his attachment to the romantic West in antebellum literature and his desire for a literary mode that would provide a realistic picture of the West after the closing of the frontier and the fading relevance of its heroic pioneers. I look to how themes in his critical essays, "A Neglected Epic" and "The Frontier Gone at Last," and *The Octopus* reflect those of literary naturalism in the West more broadly. Namely, I read them as engaging with and departing from realism's dedication to positivist depictions of modern life.[248]

What concerns me most, however, is how *The Octopus* thematizes Norris's desire to produce an ennobling epic of the West in an age where heroes of the "great

[248] These essays appear in Frank Norris, *The responsibilities of the novelist, and other literary essays* (New York: Doubleday Press: 1903).

books" variety appear only in denigrated, commercial, popular culture. This is also an age where expanding monopoly capitalism within and across U.S. national boundaries signals a break from the "Leatherstocking" frontier—a shift in national modernity that, as I argue, Norris does not ultimately lament but embraces. In this regard, I explore how, responding to the plight of the wheat farmer, Presley reroutes his nostalgic impulse to write an epic poem of the West grounded in the romance of its bygone Spanish period to serve the current political cause. Moreover, though Presley's poem is ultimately ineffectual in recuperating the exploited wheat farmer of the West, *The Octopus* envisions the continued march of the Anglo Saxon empire precisely through the terms of the emerging capitalist modernity. Politically, this future depends on Asian markets as much as it fears and excludes Asian immigrants from the U.S. The cultural form this future takes is likewise one based on an exhibition of white racial and commercial supremacy in the West and its new Pacific frontier. The novel closes with the news that the San Joaquin Valley will soon have a regional fair to celebrate its prosperous agricultural economy. Similar to larger-scale world's fair popular at the turn of the century, this agricultural exposition in Norris's novel visually represents regional growth and its links to the broader global economy. I conclude by suggesting that in tracing the novel's own shift from snubbing to celebrating this fair, we can see how the fair becomes the representative cultural institution of the modern transpacific West.

Though he does not attend it himself, Presley's visual experience of the changing Northern California landscape in many ways correlates to the fair's mode of exhibition. He encounters increasingly commercial, mass-produced "pictures" of

reality, so that nothing appears "picturesque" anymore, or suspended in time and place for contemplative viewing. At the opening of the novel he encounters a Mexican tourist town where he hopes for an unmediated experience of the romantic Spanish-Mexican past of California. This desire quickly dissipates when he realizes this town bears few traces of cultural or ethnic authenticity, having been obviously constructed as a commercial amusement. In the next section, I explore how tourist attractions in northern Mexico were similarly contradictory spaces. On the one hand, they became popular through claiming to be authentic reproductions of Old Mexico and the Wild West. One the other hand, their saloons, casinos, bull fights, and dance halls were carefully orchestrated, commercial entertainments whose largely American ownership was openly advertised. In my reading of Tijuana and Mexicali as heterotopias, I suggest that they at once offered relief from the constraints of Progressive reform north of the border, which comprised a diverse platform of social and legal prohibition of vices associated with urban centers; at the same time, they offered relief from the depersonalizing effects of the corporate economy precisely through the rejuvenating stimulations, thrills, and sensations of vice entertainments.

Drawing on photographs, postcards, and newspaper accounts, I show how these businesses were also popular because they dramatized a familiar narrative of self-made Anglo American frontiersmen testing their luck in the even playing field of the gold mine or farm in the West. This "west" also used to be part of Mexico and, as historian Susan Lee Johnson shows, its prospecting camps included the racially heterogeneous population of Mexicans, Chinese immigrants, Chileans, French, and

Indians.[249] I argue that in the same way that Norris's nostalgia for "Old Spanish California" reinstates white supremacy in the region, border tourism's governing theme of nostalgia for as West that was both "Old Mexico" under Spanish rule and the "Wild West" already incorporated into the United States restages white displays of dominance over nonwhites who also labored in the mines and wagered at the gambling tables. I focus my analysis on how postcards in particular were, similar to the regional fair in *The Octopus*, a medium that facilitated the mass perpetuation of racially exclusive white bourgeois norms of U.S. citizenship through its of scenes of "Old Mexico."

The determinisms hovering over the landscape Norris's San Joaquin Valley and the world of luck, chance, risk, speculation, and prospecting in tourist cities in Baja California both offer means of reconstituting democratic ideals that are at core racially exclusive. They very "frontiers" these cultural forms nostalgically invoke are already empty of nonwhite Indians, *mestizos*, Mexicans, and Chinese. However, the transpacific orientation of the U.S. West generated not only such white supremacist visions of modernity but, as the Chinese immigrant community in Mexicali reveals, the networks of capital and labor between the U.S. and China also produced divergent modernities. During the era of Asian exclusion from the U.S., Chinese were recruited to work in the cotton fields in the Mexicali Valley under American ownership. The governor of Baja California, Esteban Cantú, shared a need for a greater workforce in his regional economies and collaborated with this cotton corporation in this

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[249] Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), 12.

recruitment. Chinese immigrants leased land, picked cotton, and also ran tourist attractions in Mexicali, such as opium dens and casinos. As I argue, this made them an integral component of regional modernity linked to American and Mexican interests as well as to a broader Chinese cultural and economic network also spanning the U.S.-Mexico border. During a period when Chinese were prohibited from entering the U.S. and also faced a range of exclusions in Mexico, Chinese mutual aid societies facilitated immigration to Mexico and supported businesses in Mexicali's Chinatown. I examine Mexicali's Chinatown as another heterotopic formation in the transpacific borderlands, one that reflected national and capitalist interest on both sides of the national divide as well as diverged from them altogether.

Ramona Tourism in *The Octopus*

Published over fifteen years after Helen Hunt Jackson's famously romantic depiction of declining Californio rule in *Ramona*, Norris's novel views "Old Spanish California" with notable irony. As the novel's protagonist, Presley, begins to wander the San Joaquin Valley in search of inspiration for his poem of the West, he encounters endless horizons of picturesque ranch lands formerly owned by Californio elite. The Spanish names of "forgotten towns," the tiled roofs of the Quien Sabe ranch house, the crumbling adobe wall bordering the Mission San Juan de Guadalajara, and the Mission's cracked bells "sounding there in this new land, unfamiliar and strange at the end-of-the-century time"—all converge in his imagination as elements of the great epic he must write. It seems at first the Presley seeks to memorialize the West as a place where this Spanish pastoral fantasy remains in tact, where the "Old World" of Europe still echoes throughout the landscape in spite of the changes of the modern era

(48). However, Presley is very quickly overcome by the realization that this romantic past is long gone, no longer fully perceptible in the land or even accessible in his own imagination. When passing through the Mexican town of Guadalajara, he sits down at a Mexican restaurant whose tastes, sights, and sounds promise all the sensory pleasures of a transporting, authentic meal. He listens to an "interminably love-song" performed by three Mexicans as he consumes "an omelette in Spanish-Mexican style, frijoles and tortillas, a salad, and a glass of white wine" (20). Staging them in his ongoing melodrama of the Southwest, Presley regards the singing Mexicans as "relics of a former generation, standing for a different order of things, absolutely idle, living God knew how, happy with their cigarette, their guitar, their glass of mescal, and their siesta" (20). Little seems, at first, to disturb the diorama of the Old Spanish California he has wandered into. Yet as he listens to the oldest man in the group recount a history of De La Cuesta, former grant holder of the land, he is dismayed when "the centenarian" breaks the spell. "Ah those were the days," he says "That was a gay life. This…this is stupid" (22).

The days of bull fights, cattle ranching, and lavish weddings in the old mission are over. Presley longs for an epic story but realized he cannot turn to this "former generation" of the "decayed and dying Mexican town" for inspiration (20). The town itself has no business apart from dollars brought by the occasional Eastern tourist who might purchased "Mexican 'curios'" from its shops, drink mescal at its bar, stay overnight at the hotel, or consume a meal on the Plaza. Presley himself is a kind of outsider, experiencing the town only in very mediated forms. The commercial entertainments and the recollections of the old man, who seems the sole repository of a

century's worth of history, are his only points of access to those bygone days. The town and the entire West appear here as though a projection of Presley's imagination, forever slipping in and out of focus. He strives to sustain a romantic perspective but finds "grim, unlovely, unyielding" reality a continual interruption (12). The final straw seems to be when the centenarian himself speaks out from the silent annals of Old California to reflect on his lost time and place. That the tableau vivant is with commentary troubles Presley further by echoing his own unsteady grip on his time and place. "Romance was dead," he tells himself as he leaves the scene, "He had lived too late. To write of the past was not what he desired. Reality was what he longed for, things that he had seen. Yet how to make this compatible with romance" (23). Here as throughout the rest of the novel, Presley is tormented by his self-consciousness of the forces of modernity that make the region so resistant to his attempts at poetic memorialization (12).

In many ways, Presley's obsession over truth in representation is a feature common to literary naturalism more generally. June Howard's critical approach to Norris and other naturalist authors illuminates how their themes (i.e. antagonism between social forces and individual will) and narrative forms (i.e. realism and romanticism) are inextricable from the social and economic questions of their day. That is, she shows how a novel like *The Octopus* "invents a lived relation to two increasingly inescapable aspects of the conditions of existence in late nineteenth-century America: the decisive dominance in economic and social life of market relations in a national and even global economy and the presence of class struggle in a nation with a constantly increasing, largely immigrant urban proletariat that was both

very vulnerable to the recurrent economic depressions and relatively visible to other classes."[250] Presley's attempts to envision the West, in other words, can be read as the novel's attempts to envision a new orientation to this region as it undergoes rapid transformation at the turn of the century.

The primary historical event dramatized in *The Octopus* is the class struggle between wheat farmers of the San Joaquin Valley and the corporate monopoly of the Pacific and Southwestern Railroad displacing them from their land. The Railroad had originally purchased the land from the U.S. government when news spread that "'wheat had been discovered in California'" (63) and a rail line through the state would bring obvious profit. The government technically granted the railroad the odd numbered sections of land on both sides of the proposed line, which the corporation then sold to farmers at a priced fixed by the government. Conflict arose when the farmers, having developed the land and thus increased its value, wished to sell their land to a corporation that refused to recognize the land's higher value. The railroad's economic and sometimes physically violent oppression of the California wheat farmer dramatizes the rise of monopoly capitalism in the West and reverberates with anti-trust organizing of the Populists who emerged in the 1890s. The class struggle in this region was, as *The Octopus* shows, also tied to the expansion of the wheat market beyond the geographic boundary of the state. This was a period, the narrator informs us, when "California suddenly leaped unheralded into the world's market as a competitor in wheat production" (78).

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[250] June Howard, *Form and History in American Literary Naturalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 71-72.

The Romance of Racial Masquerade

Determined to find inspiration for his epic poem off the tourist path, Presley seeks out an even more authentic, untouched vestige of the romantic past he hopes is there still. As he leaves the Mexican town he soon crosses paths with Vanamee, his friend and itinerant shepherd who seems to him a promising emblem of "the vast and vague Southwest" (34). Vanamee appears to Presley after years of wandering throughout this wilderness with a broken heart. While working on the Los Muertos ranch, he had fallen in love with a woman named Angéle who was raped by a stranger, became pregnant, and died a year after giving birth. Vanamee was so grief-stricken that he turned to a nomadic existence for two years and was still, at the time Presley meets him, possessed by sorrow. Similar to the alternately romantic and realistic Southwestern landscape, Vanamee was to Presley, "always a mystery, living a life half-real, half-legendary" (34). He immediately scripts Vanamee into his drama of the West, making him the muse whose primitive, passionate, and tumultuous life offers a more authentic plot than the disappointing roadside attraction of Old Spanish California (40).

Presley's incorporation of Vanamee's story seems at first to reaffirm the salvage mission at the heart of *The Octopus*. Though the signs of *Ramona* tourism, so to speak, are initially discouraging, Presley sees in Vanamee another means of recuperating the nostalgic Spanish California, which as I discuss in Chapter Two was made famous by Helen Hunt Jackson's novel. However, not only does Presley ultimately abandon all pretense of romance in his poetic composition, it is also clear that the ill-fated lovers at its center depart dramatically from what I argue is the

parallel story in *Ramona* that Norris's novel is invoking. Jackson tells of the blue-eyed, mixed-race Ramona and her love for Alessandro, the Indian who works as a sheep-shearer and later wage laborer on the Moreno's land. Sometime after his marriage to Ramona, Alessandro meets a tragic end when he is shot by whites claiming he has stolen a horse. Ramona is alone with their child until the wealthy Californio, Felipe Moreno, marries her and relocates their family to Mexico. The novel is sympathetic towards the plight of mission Indians like Alessandro, condemning the violent circumstances leading to Alessandro's death and, through him, mourning the vanishing Indian population of the state more broadly. Jackson hoped her novel would draw attention to the need for reform of these unjust conditions, however, as I discuss in Chapter Two, *Ramona* is ultimately more invested in shoring up a romance of California's Spanish past and imagining the white future of the state.

In what I read as his citation of this drama, Norris similarly projects a future of white governance in California but in a twentieth-century context that has little to do with memorializing either the vanishing Indians or Californios of Jackson's novel. For one, Vanamee is described as having acquired the phenotype of an Indian through exposure to the Southwestern sun but is, like Presley, college-educated, white, and a leading the poet's life. When Presley encounters him years after their initial meeting, "his face was as brown as an Indian's—a ruddy brown" and he strikes Presley a kind of Old Testament visionary. Angéle, too, is attributed with an exotic but indeterminate ethnicity. Although the novel gives few details abut her background (except that she was raised by an aunt on the Seed Ranch), Presley does recall the "slant" of her eyes

"that gave a strange, oriental cast to her face, perplexing, enchanting" as well as "the Egyptian fullness of the lips" (36).

In the melodrama that follows, Vanamee and Angéle pantomime Alessandro and Ramona's ill-fated romance, albeit in highly abstracted terms. I am suggesting that the novel uses their racial masquerade to garners sympathy for white farmers and ranchers struggling against several conditions of modernity that portend not the decline of Indian and Californio populations, as in Jackson's novel, but the corrosion of Anglo-Saxon supremacy in the new twentieth-century California. Angéle's attacker, for one, is a faceless "Other" who remains anonymous but who leaves "behind him a track of terror and death and rage and undying grief," much like the inhuman force of the railroad that mercilessly cuts through herds of sheep and tracts of ranch land (38). Performing in yellowface, Angéle's character also represents the cheap coolie laborer who is both alluring and threatening to California's economy. Her death is thus an orientalist fantasy of preserving her as an object of racialized sexual desire and fear specific to white labor.[251] Through his expropriation of the tragic story of Indian extermination in Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*, Norris renders the sexual violation of the white female body, and recuperation of the Anglo Saxon race more broadly, a central stake of the novel's fight against monopoly capitalism.[252] The opening image of the Mexican tourist town and the motif of racial masquerade that subtends the

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[251] Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California, 1994), 153.
[252] Eric Lott*, Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1993), 48.

novel, moreover, also makes this a struggle for a free, equal, and just society that is exclusive of nonwhite native and immigrant groups.

"The Lost Frontier"

In a way, *The Octopus* memorializes a past that, at the same time, it actively produces as never there to begin with—that is, the past of Anglo American conquest of Native Americans, mestizos, and Mexicans. Though his vision of the West draws continually on his encounters with Vanamee, Presley foregoes nostalgia as a means and an end. In my reading of this narrative erasure, I concur with Colleen Lye's argument that, "American naturalism represents a failed critique of capitalism, and that the evidence of this lies in its tendency toward racialization, or the reification of social relations into physiological forms, or types."[253] Asian immigrants and these conquered populations are both present absences that define the edges of the novel's vision of an Anglo Saxon future.

In his collection of essays, "The Responsibilities of the Novelist and Other Literary Essays," Frank Norris meditates on what literary representation of the U.S. West is possible in a moment of closed geographic frontiers and open commercial borders. In "The Frontier Gone at Last" and "A Neglected Epic" in particular, he struggles to find the appropriate metaphors, narratives, and heroes for telling of the United States' empire building that at once matches the epics of other Western empires in scale and scope, like Rome and Great Britain, and also makes for a distinctively American story. Writing about America's "New Empire" to which Norris

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[253] Colleen Lye, *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 8.

is referring, Amy Kaplan argues that it "defined itself ideologically against the territorially based colonialism of the old European empires. While the frontier environment may have characterized the exceptional nature of America's past for Turner and his followers, the spatially unbounded quality of the New Empire promised to reconstitute national uniqueness."[254] One of Norris's frustrations is that the geographic stage upon which the nation could enact its destiny of westward movement has reached its limit, and the tangible boundaries of time and space necessary for a coherent narrative have given way to new coordinates of commerce. He is disturbed by his realization that measurements of the globe, down to the hemispheric divide of the equator, are not as natural as the ebb and flow of the tides or changes of the seasons after all; rather, he self-consciously uncovers, they follow national and now commercial interests so that even cardinal directions, that for so long pointed the way for European imperial expansion, do not direct national development for the United States. "Races must follow their destiny blindly," he writes "but is it not possible that we can find in this great destiny of ours something a little better than mere battle and conquest, something a little more generous than mere trading and underbidding?"[255]

Norris finds his desire to articulate American exceptionalism (or, as he calls it, "patriotism") is severely tested in this modern age where the nation was becoming more intensely bound to transnational flows of capital. "With the end of continental expansion," Kaplan writes, "national power was no longer measured by the settlement

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[254] Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Harvard University Press: 2003), 96.
[255] Frank Norris, "The Frontier Gone at Last," from *The responsibilities of the novelist, and other literary essays* (Doubleday Press: 1903), 78.

and incorporation of new territory consolidated into a united state, but rather by the extension of vaster yet less tangible networks of international markets and political influence."[256] Norris is anxious about developing an epic of the U.S. West that must revise the prevailing imperial map, where even "West" is a slippery reference point for the beginning or end of empire and has become an abstraction "the cycle of the world."[257] I will return to his geographic concerns below but first address Norris's lament that the significance of the West for the American people since the closing of the frontier has not been properly captured in American culture. According to Norris, the American West has neglected to create an origin story that endures the centuries like Homer's hexameter—that measures up to the "great books" of Western Civilization. The epic Norris longs for has amounted to no "finer type, no noble hero than Buffalo Bill," and "the youth of the United States learn of their epic by paying a dollar to see the 'Wild West Show'."[258] The new era of what he elsewhere calls "commercial civilization" has produced Western characters and narratives in denigrated commodity form produced by and for "the People." [259] "We may keep alive for many years the idea of a Wild West," he writes "but the hired cowboys and paid rough riders of Mr. William Cody are more like 'the real thing' than can be found to-day in Arizona, New Mexico or Idaho. Only the imitation cowboys, the college-bred

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[256] Kaplan, 96.
[257] "The Frontier Gone at Last," 64.
[258] Frank Norris, "The Neglected Epic, from *The responsibilities of the novelist, and other literary essays*" (Doubleday Press: 1903), 62.
[259] Frank Norris, "Novelists to Order While You Wait," from *The responsibilities of the novelist, and other literary essays* (Doubleday Press: 1903), 131.

fellows who 'go out on a ranch,' carry the or wear the poncho."[260] When nationalism is enacted in popular entertainments it is no longer authentic but excessive, and when conquest becomes interchangeable with commerce only the "imitation cowboy" remains.

Elitist that he is, Norris maintains that there is some good in popular culture (whether the Wild West show or the dime novel) and that the public will refine its tastes over time. [261] He was, it is worth pointing out, a journalist as well as novelist and, perhaps self-conscious of the fact that he wrote about popular topics for a popular audience, he asserts it unrealistic to hope that an artist of pure genius will emerge on the new modern landscape to produce the "'great novel.'" [262] "One does not claim that the artist is above the business man," he writes, suggesting that his desire for works of high American literature (and his desire for an epic story of the West more particularly) does not ultimately outweigh his desire for literary representation that is not just *about* the West but *of* the West too. [263] In spite of his attachment to a romantic idea of the "great book" and unmediated artistic expression, Norris understands that imaginative thought of his day is inevitably mediated through the prevailing cultural mode—which is one thoroughly interlinked with new modes of commerce. This market, for Norris and his contemporaries, is quickly dismantling the spatio-temporal constructs of the frontier myth. New U.S. commercial and military activities in Pacific

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[260] "The Frontier Gone at Last," 73.
[261] Frank Norris, "Salt and Sincerity," from *The responsibilities of the novelist, and other literary essays* (Doubleday Press: 1903), 295.
[262] "Novelists to Order While You Wait," 133.
[263] Ibid., 133.

territories beyond the West are compelling new ways of imagining national culture, where "culture" is not as coincident with "geography" as it once appeared.

Writing at the beginning of U.S. imperialism overseas, Norris grapples with the emergent, shifting, and yet-determined boundaries of the nation as well as the proper literary mode with which to represent it. In her analysis of Norris's contradictory sentiments about the literature of the West, literary scholar Mary Lawlor shows how Norris is drawn to the romantic figures of frontier literature by authors like Daniel Boone but is also weary of reviving these figures in contemporary literature. The risk of such recuperation for turn-of-the-century authors like Norris would only render them, Lawlor explains, "phony imitations of an impossibly lost original."[264] Lawlor reads his essays, "The Frontier Gone at Last" and "The Literature of the West," as capturing Norris's competing nostalgia for romantic literature and weariness about adopting their "metaphors in a regional culture that has come to understand itself as bounded by ineluctable geographical and historical limits."[265] She also argues that Norris and other authors of "Naturalist Western fiction" in general "invoked romantic models of character, plot, and landscape in order to challenge them with determinism's rival methodologies" and that in the embattled terrain of these old and new literary Wests they were ultimately frustrated.[266] This regional genre could only stage but not overcome the antagonisms of romanticism and determinism—that is, their attachment to the romantic figure of the free agent of the Old West roaming an

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[264] Mary Lawlor, *Recalling the Wild: Naturalism and the Closing of the American West* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press: 2000), 15.
[265] Ibid., 15.
[266] Ibid., 3.

endless landscape that promised endless opportunity, on the one hand, and to the individual of the modern West who finds themselves hemmed in by geographic, social, and environmental forces beyond their control.

I agree that Norris longs for a literary representation of the West as epic, in his mind, as frontier-era American literature and the European literary canon more broadly. But I would also argue that, in both his essays and *The Octopus*, Norris is not so stymied by new geographical limits that have made his beloved heroes and metaphors of the Wild West obsolete.[267] As I examine in what follows, vision of modernity (as both literal perception and figurative representation) comprises what Raymond Williams calls a "structure of feeling," which "because it is at the very edge of semantic availability, has many of the characteristics of a pre-formation, until specific articulations—new semantic figures—are discovered in material practices."[268] In "The American Public and "Popular" Fiction" he admits to feeling mystified by the correlations between American geographic and commercial expansion and trends in American literary culture—the most recent one being an explosion in national readership, a phenomenon, he maintains, is notable for the great number of readers but not the great literature actually read. His observation that, "Imperialism, Trade Expansion, the New Prosperity and the Half Million Circulation all came into existence at about the same time," is telling not simply of Norris's cultural elitism but of his awareness that literary production and consumption does not exist in a vacuum.

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[267] Ibid., 76

[268] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford University Press: 1977), 138.

They are indeed enmeshed in the national politics of their day.[269] Frustrated as he may be that Daniel Boone's heroic pioneers are no longer relevant protagonists in the national drama, and with the reading public for its demands for low brow literature, Norris does not dwell, in the end, on literary modes and markets of the past.

Lenses of Perception in the West

As is evident in his account of this predicament in *The Octopus,* Norris not only sustains thematic antagonisms but reconstitutes literary expression itself in the terms of the modern market. Presley's reception of Vanamee's romantic tale at the beginning is already mediated through popular visual technologies at the turn of the century that were challenging and changing public perceptions of reality. Presley listens to Vanamee in a distracted state, as though viewing his friend's story through his mind's own private movie projector. "While his memory was busy reconstructing the details of the drama of the shepherd's life, another part of his brain had been swiftly registering picture after picture that Vanamee's monotonous flow of words struck off, as it were, upon a steadily moving scroll." Replaying this narrative in visual form almost as instantly as he hears it, Presley mediates the romance of the Southwest as though it were a mechanically produced moving picture. The turn of the century was moment of significant changes in popular visual entertainments, where late nineteenth-century devices like the kinetoscope and zoetrope, which "were based on

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[269] Frank Norris, "The American Public and "Popular" Fiction," from *The responsibilities of the novelist, and other literary essays* (Doubleday Press: 1903), 104.

loops, sequences of images featuring complete actions which can be played repeatedly," were being eclipsed by new technologies of producing moving images.[270]

The visual media Norris is likely referencing here are moving large-scale, or panoramic, paintings mounted on moving scrolls were familiar medium to mass audiences in the early 1890s.[271] As film historian Nancy Mowell Matthews observes, such panoramic views were the most popular images in the first projected films. In this scene in the novel, Presley is cast literally as a spectator, remaining stationary to watch a series of moving images pass before his mind's eye. This is a role commonly attributed to narrators in naturalist novels who observe their world and its causalities as spectacle, whether through a window, under glass, or on a screen.[272] Presley is in this sense both participant and observer in the events that unfold. He self-generates a moving picture of Vanamee's story, transposing the sweeping Southwestern landscape onto a mechanically operated scroll. His perspective of his own role in what he sees before him as well as the veracity of the images reflects the shifting lenses of popular visual media, where proto-cinematic forms departed from the more overt contrivances

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[270] Lev Manovich, "What is Digital Cinema?" *The Nineteenth Century Visual Culture Reader* eds. Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (New York: Routledge: 2004), 408.

[271] Nancy Matthews and Charles Musser, "Early Film and Artistic Tradition," *Moving Pictures: American Art and Early Film, 1880-1910* (Manchester, Vt. : Hudson Hills Press in association with the Williams College Museum of Art : Distributed in the US and Canada by National Book Network, 2005).
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[272] June Howard, citing critic of Zola, Philip Walker: "in Zola's imaginer the 'window, the mirror, they eye—all those things which intervene between the observer and the object observed, which obstruct light, frame, filter, bend, transform it or interpret the data it transmits—are, indeed, among the most central recurrent, and characteristic motifs of his art…his universe is first and foremost a spectacular universe, a universe dominated by the eye," (114).

of its predecessors. In a sense, Presley's struggle to pin down what is really happening in his world and distinguish it from distracting artifice is structured by this new media.[273] This form of perception, I wish to suggest, allegorizes the transitional literary mode Norris is writing one, which is poised between romance and realism. As I address in more detail below, the narrative perspective Norris creates through Presley is one ultimately concerned not only with his own, unique reception of Vanamee's and later the wheat ranchers' woeful tales, but, like the panoramic images scrolling through his mind, of its reproduction for a mass consumer.

Presley's mechanized perception of the social drama of the San Joaquin Valley at first glance seems to finds its complement in the visual regime of the upcoming "Million-Dollar Fair." The fair itself takes place off screen, so to speak, as the novel concludes before it opens. The scene of the raffle to fund the fair that takes place among the Valley's elite, however, reveals the embattled public opinion about what the fair actually represents for regional progress. The planning committee, comprised of the wives of the Valley's prominent businessmen imagines the fair will attract visitors and capital from outside the valley, especially the East Coast. At her fund-raising event, Mrs. Cedarquist, wife of the successful Atlas Iron Works owner, invites a crowd of artists and intellectuals representing bohemian Northern California. Norris's narrator suddenly becomes quite chatty, eager to complain bitterly of these

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[273] Film scholar Lev Manovich observes, "…cinema works hard to erase any traces of its own production, process, including any indication that the images which we see could have been constructed rather than recorded. It denies that the reality it shows often does not exist outside of the film image…" Lev Manovich, "What is Digital Cinema?" *The Nineteenth Century Visual Culture Reader* eds. Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (New York: Routledge: 2004), 408.

"impostures" who easily fool the vapid and undiscerning public. Like hawkers at the fair they have come to support, these artists "swindle" their audiences with "the scraping of violins, the tinkling of mandolins, the suave accents of 'art talks' the incoherencies of poets, the declamation of elocutionists, the inarticulate wanderings of the Japanese, the confused mutterings of the Cherokee, the guttural bellowing of the German university professor," (315). Through his long list of their unbearable gimmicks, the narrator portrays these regional artists as the antithesis of bourgeois refinement and taste. He casts them as gaudy, pontifical, and inauthentic, in other words low-brow entertainers with "a veritable mania for declamation and fancy dress." While some appear as over-accessorized caricatures of themselves, the "civilised Cherokee" arrives "in fringed buckskin and blue beads, rented from a costumer," and while in this costume he "intoned folk songs of his people in the vernacular." Depicted in this way as a parade of "low culture," this crowd lacks refinement as much as they bear excessive ethnic diversity, suggesting they are racial and class outsiders to the more serious Anglo literary, business, and political figures trying to elevate Northern California beyond insular, regional recognition.

In a catty aside, the narrator pantomimes Mrs. Cedarquist's enthusiasm for this "endless defile of charlatans" by declaring, "This was Art, this was Literature, this was Culture and Refinement. The Renaissance had appeared in the West." Though ostensibly a poet belonging to this artistic community, Presley remains detached throughout the scene. Though he hovers in the background, he is wise to their "sham." He may not have produced his own poem of the West yet, but, the narrative shows us, he can tell the difference between fake and real art. His vantage point in the social

world of the San Joaquin, moreover, surpasses that of mere voyeur at a gallery as he becomes vigilant observer of the link between this cultural institution and the larger economy. He even points out to Mrs. Cedarquist, who is excited over the railroad's large donation, that only the reason the Pacific and Southwestern Railroad had given money to the fair was because of the profits it foresaw in transporting fairgoers in and out of the city.

The fair's biggest objector is Mrs. Cedarquist's husband, the shipping magnate, broadens Presley's economic map to a more national level. He opposes the fair because would attract Eastern capitalist when the wheat farmers should be focusing on shipping West—to the Asian market (315). He imagines this "new" market would solve the problem of overproduction, eliminate the middleman, and allow California to "march with the course of empire, not against it" (306).[274] According to his map of the twentieth-century global economy, the Western wheat farmers will no longer ship back to the European metropole but instead follow the natural course of demand by supplying wheat "from West to East" (306). Dissociating his own ambitions from the aggressive trusts of sugar, railroad, and oil, he argues that these industrial capital-T "Trusts" have exploited the "People" long enough. When he bemoans his wife's enterprise as a "Gingerbread Fete," he likens it to a recent charity event that was also organized by elite women of San Francisco. His reference to an actual week-long Gingerbread Fete held in May 1897 for the benefit of the "Little Sufferers of the Children's Hospital," which featured a tableaux on opening day as well as, "Punch and Judy … for the children, shooting galleries, merry-go-rounds-all

[274] Lye, 78.

[or the sake of little sufferers."[275] The "amateur theatricals" Mrs. Cedarquist has planned for the "Million-Dollar Fair" resemble those of the earlier fete, and to her husband the event itself is amateur, misguided, and unworldly. The business model of the charity event will only feed a few mouths, whereas Operating from the limited reach of her feminine realm, her anticipated audience can only be a domestic one, both in terms of the artistic community she hosts in her home and the in terms of the U.S. national home. Mr. Cedarquist's economic map of U.S. agricultural capital sees expansion beyond that national border as vital for regional growth, while his wife's map is far too insular. The economies of the domestic and foreign eventually shift away from the antagonisms performed by the bickering wife and husband. As I address below, the cultural institution of the fair becomes a modern, commercial event that promises to solidify California's place in the emergent global economy as the site where raw products are grown and from which they ship off to satisfy demands in the Pacific.

Magnus Derrick, owner of the de los Muertos ranch, transforms Cedarquist's map into an animated cartography on which Western products flow into Asian markets. "He saw his wheat, like the crest of an advancing billow, crossing the Pacific, bursting upon Asia, flooding the Orient in a golden torrent." Panning across space and back in time, his moving image reveals to him the state economy's progressive path from gold rush to the present-day wheat ranches. "He had lived to see the death of the old and the birth of the new; first the mine, now the ranch; first gold, now wheat. Once again he became the pioneer, hardy, brilliant, taking colossal chances, blazing the way,

[275] *Sausalito News*, May 8, 1897 Volume 13, Number 14.

grasping a fortune—a million in a single day" (321). He invokes the romantic forty-niner days less out of nostalgia and more as a means of reinventing of the present moment as a new Wild West calling for innovative perspectives on how to profit from raw material under twentieth-century market conditions.

As a "great gambler," he keeps his eye on "the kaleidoscopic shifting of circumstance that made a Situation" that lead him to fantasy of overcoming the railroad's monopoly through the wheat ranchers' formation of their own trust, which in turn would give them direct access to the China markets. The map he envisions of a "new world of markets discovered" draws on the organism of the wheat to make the march of Anglo Saxon empire across North American and into global commerce seem as natural as the growing wheat itself. The predictable determinism of the wheat, however, seems at odds with the randomness of the gambling table. I would suggest that Norris resolves this antagonism in the metaphor of the kaleidoscope, which, for a turn-of-the-century reader, was almost no metaphor at all. Although it was invented for use as a toy, the perceptual shift it enabled for the modern viewer did far more than entertain. According to film scholar Tom Gunning, its stated purpose was to amuse the viewer with its "simple arrangement of mirrors…that could produce a nearly infinite array of shifting symmetrical visual patterns, quite unrelated to any attempt at representation or any claim of typicality."[276] Its shifting patterns also mirrored, as Gunning points out, mirrored the shifting displays in store windows and other urban sites.

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[276] Tom Gunning "From the Kaleidoscope to the X-Ray: Urban Spectatorship, Poe, Benjamin, and Traffic in Souls (1913)" *Wide Angle* 19.4 (1997): 32.

For Magnus, the "kaleidoscopic shifting of circumstance" he keeps his eye on might reflect those behind the glass window of a San Francisco department store but they also correspond to the shifting arrangements of capital beyond the urban setting and into unfamiliar transpacific markets. In his vision of modernity, Magnus shows the necessity for risk, change, and wagering, on the one hand, and a legitimating narrative that can explain the path of U.S. commerce beyond its urban settings and geographic frontier. In a way, Norris's use of the kaleidoscope to describe Magnus's vision of the global West extends understandings of it as a visual display that, in mirroring the visual displays of the modern city, transformed ocular knowledge of social spaces as *themselves* a commodity open to viewing and consumption. For Magnus, the kaleidoscope is the medium and objective; risk and randomness are inherent processes in the global corporation he desires, and at the same time the world's shifting markets are open for the consuming interests of U.S. capital. This vision of modernity reduces China to a consuming mouth, a nation that lacks vision altogether, and, as a loose object tumbling at the other end of Magnus's kaleidoscope cannot return his gaze. Instead, it can only reflect back to him his own shifting interests.

Heterotopia of the Marketplace

China and Asian markets more broadly operate in the novel as a heteretopia, mirroring the United States' vision of commercial progress and diverting from this path as racialized national outsiders. In this sense I concur with Colleen Lye's argument to understand yellow peril discourse in the period as rending the Asian figure as "the appearance of the otherness of Western modernity to itself." As she

explains, "On the one hand, the Asiatic belonged to a discourse of alien invasion; on the other hand, in embodying the ultimate logic of industrial subjection, the Chinese coolie had paradoxically become a familiar icon of American capitalist modernity."[277] During a period when the romantic Wild West is long gone, and the U.S. corporate economy calls for new pioneers to conquer the frontier of the Pacific markets, this yellow peril fantasy "seized on Asia as both heir and rival to a decaying West."[278] For Norris, the increasingly deterritorialized West (where proximity with the mobile laboring Asian body and mobile Asian capital will only increase), assertions of white supremacy has become more urgent. In world where the variables of "race" and "nation" do not seem to correlate to what Norris calls "the equation of the horizon" any longer, *The Octopus* novel finds recourse in the stability and impermeability of whiteness itself.[279]

At the outset of the novel, Presley declares he is "determined that his poem should be of the West, that world's frontier of Romance, where a new race, a new people—hardy, brave, passionate—were building an empire" (9). By the novel's close, he has come full circle and boards Mr. Cedarquist's steamer bound for India. More than a mere passenger, Presley will join "a new race, a new people" by abandoning ineffectual nineteenth-century metaphors and recuperating his weakened Anglo-Saxon body through the new commercial lines of American empire. The poet as well as his original poetic subjects, Vanamee and Angele, are absorbed into this commercial network. In the end, Vanamee finally reunites with his beloved when,

[277] Lye, 55-56.
[278] Ibid., 16.
[279] "The Frontier Gone at Last," 72.

wandering in a wheat field, he see her as "not a manifestation, not a dream, but her very self," she is "realized in the Wheat" (638). The white heteronormative future of the state they promise, and were denied for so long, is now guaranteed through their endless reproduction and global circulation as wheat commodities.

At the turn of the century, the flesh and blood national romance is superseded by a "cultural fantasy" of an increasingly disembodied American national identity.[280] This is one where bodies and nations can be broken into parts and rearranged for use by the new unit of national economy, the corporation. "While the frontier environment may have characterized the exceptional nature of America's past for Turner and his followers," Amy Kaplan observes "the spatially unbounded quality of the New Empire promised to reconstitute national uniqueness."[281] As their vaguely nonwhite phenotypes vanish and rematerialize as wheat, the vague racial threat Vanamee and Angele posed, too, is also mitigated by the market. The Anglo Saxon future is secured through the memorialization of racial difference in this commodity form—mementos that, I argue, mourn the erasure of Mexicans, *mestizos*, and Indians while also disavowing the role of Anglo violence in producing this loss. The xenophobic fears dramatized in *The Octopus* center on racial contamination within state boundaries as well as through foreign contact overseas. Anti-Chinese sentiment in San Francisco was especially potent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and, as historian Nayan Shah shows, racialized discourse of public health in this city cast Chinese as sexually aberrant and diseased and, as such, a threat to the white bourgeois

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[280] Kaplan, 96.
[281] Ibid.

home.[282] Norris's novel has very few Chinese characters (and these are restricted to a few, non-speaking house workers) and makes no explicit reference to Chinese immigration, though the cooperation of the private and public spheres of his representative white family, the Cedarquists, works defensively against this present absence. In many ways, Norris's vision of modernity in the West hinges on the reproduction of the white bourgeois family who live "at the edge of American empire" and are actively pushing that edge further west. [283] In the end, it is precisely the extension of the domestic into the foreign that both expands the reach of U.S. capital and reconstitutes Anglo American supremacy in the San Joaquin Valley.

Drawing on her well-established philanthropic capacities, Mrs. Cedarquist organizes a philanthropic shipment of wheat to, in her words, "the starving people of India" (605). At the same time her husband has given up his metal business at Atlas Works and used his old business to pursue his "new venture—the organizing of a line of clipper wheat ships for Pacific and Oriental trade" (647). I read Mrs. Cedarquist's philanthropy as the extension of aid to impoverished nations whose dependency on the

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[282] Shah evinces how the figure of the diseased Chinese "coolie" was in many ways a repository for white middle class fears of *unfree* and *alien* labor in turn-of-the-century San Francisco, a figure who came to represent the antithesis of white middle class domesticity. "Since Chinese workers were perceived as bachelor without family obligations, the notion of the 'coolie' standard was invested with fears about a socially disordered world of unemployed men, women prostitutes, and working families ripped apart by vice, poverty, and disease. The vigorous diatribe against 'Chinese coolies' emphasized the irreconcilable differences between putatively unfree, racially inferior, and alien Chinese workers and the free, independent, white producer-citizens. In labor rhetoric and the presence of the Chinese antagonized American workers and contaminated their aspirations for prosperity, democratic citizenship and family life." *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 167.

[283] Ibid., 106.

U.S. is evident in and perpetuated by such acts of white benevolence. Her "feminine" goodwill masks the exploitative conditions of her international aid as well as the pattern of Anglo American dominance in Pacific that her shipment, carried on one of her husband's new steamships, will work to establish. "We'll carry our wheat into Asia yet," Cedarquist tells Presley of the *Swanhilda* and the rest of the fleet bound for India "The Anglo-Saxon started from there at the beginning of everything and it's manifest destiny that he must circle the globe and fetch up where he began his march. You are up with procession, Pres, going to India this way in a wheat ship that flies American colours" (647). Cedarquist's enterprise will flourish not because of the overthrow of oppressive corporate monopolies that Presley called for, but because its infrastructure has adapted to the shifting spatialization of capital in the global West. His business is also legitimated, even ennobled, by its support of his wife's philanthropy.[284] Mrs. Cedarquist's role in organizing the regional fair, too, helps render this exhibition of Anglo Saxon commercial and racial supremacy a celebratory emblem of universal progress. Though clearly on a much smaller scale than a world's fair, the "Million-Dollar-Fair" is repeatedly likened to the "Midway Plaisance," the amusement zone of Chicago's world's fair in 1893. At a moment when, as historian Timothy Mitchell writes, "the machinery of commerce was becoming a means of creating an effect of reality, indistinguishable from that of the exhibition," the fair in the San Joaquin Valley is another heterotopic formation in Norris's vision of modernity.[285] It offers popular entertainments for the sake of spectacle, and it uses spectacular displays of

[284] Kaplan, 25.
[285] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 11.

agricultural technology to instruct views in their self-evident power. The fair models and mechanizes the emergent economy of the modern West as well by linking the raw material of the Valley to the continued march of Anglo Saxon empire beyond the frontier and into the Pacific.

The Multiple Empires of the West

Though written in 1901, over a decade before the 1915 Exposition in San Diego discussed in Chapter Two, *The Octopus* anticipates the role of twentieth-century fairs in advertising the new imperial role of the U.S. West in the Pacific. In this sense, the arc of the novel traces the emergence of this new Anglo Saxon empire from the pastoral ruins of the Mexican tourist town to the commercial fair bridging the San Joaquin Valley with the global market. In doing so it effectively represents the U.S. as successor to the Spanish empire—as a modern, industrial nation realizing the full potential of agricultural development in the state. Norris's vision of "empire" was one of many proliferating in the post-frontier era. The turn of the century saw much variation in the use of this term. It was a mobile, flexible category that, similar to "frontier," was not as static or bound as Turner and followers of his thesis maintain. It was not only used to describe outward market expansion as in Norris's novel but also interior developments. For example, in her study of the "Inland empire" of Riverside, California, Karen Tongson shows: "Though Riverside, like so much of Alta California, was first wrenched from indigenous peoples during the Spanish missionary era in the eighteenth century and converted into Mexican ranchos in the early to mid nineteenth century, it materialized at the *fin de siecle* as a western American outpost of

a British empire on the cusp of waning."[286] The nearby Imperial Valley, too, got its name from investors imagining the U.S. West as a frontier land still up for grabs and a destined acquisition of Anglo-Saxon imperialists. Whereas Riverside became "the capital of the Orange Empire in Southern California" through British capital, the cotton capital of the Imperial Valley just to the south was produced through cross-border collaborations between the U.S. and Mexico. It also relied on nonwhite immigrant labor, and the period of peak Chinese immigration to Baja California's cotton fields, moreover, suggests that modernity here was spatially linked to the transpacific market more broadly.

The "Imperial" Valley

In what follows, I trace the reproduction of the "decaying Mexican town" that Norris's protagonist encounters in the opening of *The Octopus* to the U.S.-Mexico border. I show how gambling tables, saloons, brothels, Chinatown opium dens, and curio stores comprised entire industries centered on marketing Northern Mexico as "Old Mexico" and the "Wild West." As a point of contrast to the outward orientation of Norris's imperialist man, I first examine a range of imperialist schemes within the state, some of which used the language of "colonization" and "empire" to characterize their schemes of intensifying internal control of markets and labor. I show how Mexicali may have served the interests of American entrepreneurs, white middle-class American tourists, and the state of Baja California and its government, but was also developed by Chinese immigrants and their particular interests in and interpretations

[286] Karen Tongson, *Relocations: Queer Suburban Imaginaries* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 124.

of this transnational space. In what follows, I maintain that industries of modernization and memorialization produced the Tijuana and Mexicali as America and not America, as Mexico and not Mexico—as heterotopia that mirrored U.S. and Mexican interests in inverted, distorted, and contradictory ways.

To industrialists at the turn-of-the-century, the fertility of the Imperial Valley was not so immanent as the rolling wheat fields in Norris's *The Octopus*. Channeling water from the Colorado River to the 300,000 acres of irrigable land just north of the U.S. Mexico border posed a monumental challenge to engineers, though success promised great abundance from "the most fertile and productive land in the world."[287] Beginning in the 1890s, engineers went to work on constructing a system that would direct the waters of the Colorado River, which has flowed in both westerly and easterly directions over its existence and primarily emptied into the Gulf of California, through Mexico into the Colorado Desert. This idea was first proposed by Charles Rockwood, a surveyor and engineer who had worked on a similar effort in Arizona as an employee of the Arizona and Sonora Land and Irrigation Company.[288] Because periodic flooding directed water from the Colorado into the Alamo River, which them drained into the Salton Sink, it became apparent that creating a canal to facilitate this naturally occurring drainage would lead to continual irrigation of the Salton Sink.

To pursue this vision, Rockwood created the California Development Company and enlisted the help of fellow engineer George Chaffey who had recently

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[287] Charles Rockwood, *Born of the Desert* (Calexico: Calexico Chronicle, 1930), 3.
[288] Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California Through the 1920s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 21.

established irrigation systems for the colonial government in Australia.[289] Understanding that the region's unappealing names of "Colorado Desert" and "Salton Sink" were not going to attract settlers anytime soon, Chaffey soon changed the name to "Imperial Valley," perhaps drawing inspiration from his experiences using modern irrigation system to set up colonies, by invitation of the government, in South Australia. In order to realize his vision of a route through Mexico, Rockwood negotiated with land owner, Guillermo Andrade, who owned most of the irrigable land in the Mexican delta and sold him 100,000 acres below the border.[290] However, to do so in accordance with Mexican law, which forbid foreigners from owning land within 100 kilometers of the border, Rockwood formed the *Sociedad de Terrenos y Irrigación de la Baja California* so that it appeared as though a Mexican company owned the land.[291] Although Andrade asked for money as well as water to irrigate land still in his interest (600,000 acres), Chaffey, Rockwood, and their associates figured that the benefits in land reclamation on the U.S. side of the border would more than compensate for Andrade's fees.[292]

Due to flooding in 1905, the California Development Company failed and transferred management to the Southern Pacific Railroad.[293] In 1900, Harrison Gray Otis, the owner and publisher of the LA Times, and his son-in-law Harry Chandler

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[289] Norris Hudley, *Water and the West: The Colorado River Compact and the Politics of Water in the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2009), 21.
[290] Evan Ray Ward, *Border Oasis: Water and the Political Ecology of the Colorado River Delta* (University of Arizona Press: 2003), 5.
[291] Robert Sperry, *San Diego Historical Quarterly* 21.1 (Winter 1975). Web. Available through the *San Diego History Center*.
[292] Hudley, 22.
[293] Ibid., 27.

toured the Imperial Valley region and, foreseeing the possibilities for growth, soon succeeded the CDC in control over these lands. By 1904 Chandler and Otis had purchased over 800,000 belonging to Andrade, who was at that point the intermediary for the CDC in Mexico.[294] Chandler, Otis, and their partners formed the C-M Company (or California-Mexico Land and Cattle Company) along with other Southern California investors, but the ambitious boosters quickly confronted a political barrier to their designs. The C-M formed a Mexican Corporation called the Colorado River Land Company (CLRC) which was technically subject to Mexican law and, as such, able to acquire additional land without formal authorization. Although Mexican in name, all the stockholders of the CLRC were foreigners and in practice the U.S.-owned and -run C-M actually became the sole proprietor of CLRC stock.[295]

The CLRC held considerable power in the region yet, rather than viewing the company as an encroaching imperialist threat, Governor Cantú permitted its mode of transnational capitalism it as it directly benefited his state as well. Prior to Governor Cantú's campaign to recruit of foreign capital to Baja California, Porfirio Díaz had encouraged foreigners to invest in oil, mining, and railroad industries. Díaz's vision of Mexico's "progress" was synonymous with capitalist development dependent on foreign capital, which his regime encouraged by offering tax exemptions and

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[294] Ward, 6.
[295] Dorothy Kerig, "Yankee Enclave: The Colorado River Land Company and Mexican Agrarian Reform in Baja California, 1902-1944." Dissertation. University of California, Irvine (1988), 59.

eliminated barriers to trade on the national market.[296] By the end of the Porfiriato, as Ana María Alonso observes, imports from the United States represented over half of the total and exports to the U.S. were up to 75 percent.[297] Moreover, by 1902 "more than 22 percent of all U.S. investment in Mexico was concentrated in the northern provinces of Sonora, Coahuila, and Chihuahua, mainly in mining, farming and transportation…By the turn of the century, large foreign and domestic capitalists controlled the frontier economy."[298] Moreover, Díaz, Cantú, and Obregón presidencies all responded to the threat of foreign takeover of the northern Mexicans states with various projects of Mexicanization.[299] These generally entailed recruiting Mexican nationals from the nation's center to work on the vulnerable land at its periphery. Mexican labor thus served as a buffer to U.S. capital though, as I suggest in my analysis of tourism in Tijuana and Mexicali, this was not the only deterrent to U.S. territorial expansion. The CLRC's cotton growing and U.S.-owned tourist businesses themselves profited from the maintenance of this geopolitical line.

On the northern side of the border, the *Los Angeles Times* magnates and their partners running the CLRC viewed this as one of many enterprises securing their economic power in the transpacific borderlands. They owned land in San Fernando Valley and Hollywood, operated the Tejon Ranch, and formed the Los Angeles Steamship Company to position the city as a hub in transpacific commerce and

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[296] Ana María Alonso, *Thread of Blood: Colonialism, Revolution, and Gender on Mexico's Northern Frontier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), 128.
[297] Ibid., 140.
[298] Ibid.
[299] Oscar Jáquez Martínez, *Troublesome Border* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006), 45.

shipping.[300] During the 1915 Expositions in San Francisco and San Diego, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce published a booklet that, as these expositions did for their respective host cities, advertised Los Angeles's twentieth-century regional and global image. "Already," writes *Los Angeles Times* staff writer Harry Ellington Brook "several steamship lines have been established to run between Los Angeles harbor and Mexico and Central America on the south, and Hawai'i on the west. Most of the leading steamship lines of the world have arranged to make Los Angeles harbor a port of call."[301] With the completion of the Panama Canal, agricultural products from Southern California can ship out into both Pacific and Atlantic. Harry Chandler, who became the *Los Angeles Times* publisher after the death of Harrison Gray Otis in 1917, was especially involved in the Southern California tourist industry and its valorization of the state's Spanish colonial past. Using the weight of his newspaper, for example, he campaigned successfully to have Los Angeles Plaza become the permanent site for the *Mission Play*, which was *LA Times* journalist John McGroarty's adaptation of Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*.[302] Though it lies beyond the present scope of this study to elaborate further on Chandler's involvement in this tourist industry, I wish to argue that his simultaneous investments in "old" and "new" California were not as contradictory as they may appear. Though the myth of Old California memorializes the state as a quaint, agrarian, Spanish past and the New California is oriented towards

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[300] Kerig, 68.
[301] Brook, Henry Ellington. "Los Angeles, California, the city and county: exposition number," 27th ed. rev April 1915 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, 1915). University of California San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections.
[302] Minna Yang, *California Polyphony: Ethnic Voices, Musical Crossroads* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 101.

its industrial future, both celebrate Anglo American modernization of Mexican land perceived as underdeveloped. Both also rely on the commodification of Mexican, *mestizos*, and Indians as mementos of the recent past available for tourist consumption, whether at the *Ramona* pageant in Los Angeles or the border vice districts of Mexicali or Tijuana. Moreover, as explored below, both also purveyed forms of regional modernity that depended on the commodification of nonwhite labor.

Chinese in Baja California

One of the most important ways in which the CLRC was able to grow as a modern agribusiness was through its recruitment of Chinese immigrant laborers. Before its ascendance in the Valley, however, the CLRC was preceded by many political and economic factors that made the Northern District of Baja California an attractive place for Chinese immigrants to work and establish communities. In the wake of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, Chinese who did not belong to the exempt student or merchant class were prohibited from entering the United States, and as a result many Chinese laborers viewed Mexico as both a viable option for work and possible conduit for clandestine crossing into the U.S. In this regard, the formative role the 1882 Exclusion Act played in shifting the flow of Chinese diaspora in the Americas intersected in important ways with Mexico's own changing political and economic relations with China. As mentioned above, Porfirio Díaz had opened up Mexico to foreign investment to spur economic growth at the turn of the century, drawing not only Americans and European for the better-paying jobs in mining,

commerce, and ranching but also Chinese for small business owners, merchants, and service workers.[303]

For example, the 1899 Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Mexico and China provided the necessary legal conditions for the uninhibited flow of Chinese labor into and throughout Mexico. The Treaty contained a number of articles stipulating the legal terms of labor, travel, mercantilism, and criminal prosecution for Chinese and Mexicans within their respective "favored nation." Article VI, for instance, decreed that Chinese subjects were "at liberty to travel and engage in commerce in all places of the Mexican Republic, under the same conditions as the subjects of all other nations" while Article XII made explicit the larger economic objective of the Treaty, namely the free flow labor between nations. "The engagement by contract of citizens or subjects of one country," it states "as laborers, servants or the like in plantations, mills, shops, business establishments or private families in the other country, shall be subject to rules to be established by mutual agreement between both High Contracting Parties." Significantly, this Treaty also specified that Chinese subjects in Mexico were to have "free access to the judicial tribunals of the country for the defense of their legitimate rights. They shall enjoy, in this respect, the same rights and concessions enjoyed by Mexicans or by subjects of the most favored nation."[304] The guarantee of the "rights and concessions" for Chinese under this Treaty were, as will be discussed in a later section, subject to the changing demands of capital and enforcement of national norms of race, class, gender, and sexuality.

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[303] Evelyn Hu-Dehart, "Immigrants to a Developing Society. The Chinese in Northern Mexico, 1975-1932," *Journal of Arizona History* 21.3 (Autumn 1980): 277-278.
[304] Ibid.

Chinese Laborers in the Mexicali Valley: Internal Colonization of the West

Anti-Chinese sentiment appeared in many states in Baja California. Chinese in Mexicali, however, were relatively free of the more violent forms of state-sanctioned racism. As was true of the other Chinese communities in northern Mexico, the Chinese who migrated to Mexicali entered into small businesses and agriculture, rather than simply taking the jobs of lower or middle-class Mexican citizens.[305] The formation of the Chinese community in this border town was notably formed through the needs of capital on both sides of the lines. The needs of capital in the space of Mexicali combined with key legislation on both sides of the border powerfully combined to contour the Chinese communities in this transnational space. The Colorado-River Land and River Company began to recruit Chinese as either lessees or contract laborers to help clear and cultivate their cotton fields in the Mexicali Valley. At the same time, Governor Cantú announced the need for a larger workforce in this regional industry and opened up recruitment to non-Mexicans. The generally wealthier lessees, who often received funding from Chinese in Northern or Southern California, would then recruit more Chinese to work on or sublease the land from them. As historian Evelyn Hu-Dehart demonstrates, the economic success of Chinese in Mexicali depended heavily on support from Chinese mutual aid societies in San Francisco, who acted as clearing houses for Mexican stories, extended credit, and provided merchandise. [306] These cooperative economic networks spanning the national border actively produced a economic, social, and cultural role for Chinese in the Imperial-

[305] Ibid., 276.
[306] Ibid., 300.

Mexicali Valley.[307] In a later section, I will turn to Chinese involvement in border tourism as a material culture central to their experience of modernity in this borderland.

American speculators, investors, and boosters of the Imperial Valley in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century viewed these lands as open to them for a variety of reasons. Many involved in cotton growing claimed that because American engineers had developed the technology to control Colorado River and make the cross-border delta lands irrigable and productive, they were entitled to the land itself. As in the case of the CLRC, this claim to the land was not necessarily backed by nationalist sentiment to extend the U.S. border into Mexico so much as a claim for the free crossing of U.S. capital into commercial enterprises that became Mexican in name only. This corporation's activities, however, certainly drew upon precedents set by American interest in Baja California continued immediately after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.[308] In a more blatant move to seize the Mexican state itself, for example, William Walker proclaimed Baja California a sovereign, free republic during his filibustering attempt in the early 1850s[309]; part of his ultimately failed scheme to liberate the region from the Mexican government was motivated, too, by his frustration with the gold rush and attraction to Baja California's promising mining and ranching lands, an interest he rationalized as an imperative to develop the region's

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[307] Kerig, 17.
[308] Joseph A. Stout, Jr. *Schemers & Dreamers: Filibustering in Mexico, 1848-1921*. Texas Christian University Press: 2002, xiii
[309] Limerick, 242

untapped natural resources.[310] Acting in the interest of the federal government, U.S. Secretary of State William Seward formulated many expansionist visions in the Americas and Pacific based on his belief "that political supremacy would follow commercial ascendancy; and commercial ascendancy depended in the end, upon access to and control of foreign markets."[311]

Figure 13: United States Geological Survey, Relief Map of the Lower Colorado River, 1905 (San Diego History Center)

At the turn of the century, movements towards building an internal "colony" in the Imperial Valley, expanding corporate interests into Mexico, or pursuing outright annexation of Baja California shared a core ideology of these earlier statements. In the imperialist imaginaries at the U.S.-Mexico border, the script of modernity was written into the borderlands topography. Cultivating natural resources, in other words, was cast as natural as the land itself. This tautology in echoes Southern California boosterism as well as Frank Norris's faith in organic growth to create, as well as justify, new networks of trade in the Pacific. One of the first corporate pursuits of colonization of the Imperial Valley in the twentieth century was carried out through the Imperial Land Company, a separate company contracted to the California Development Company. While the CDC provided the water, the Imperial Land Company acquired townsites and pursued "colonization of the lands" on the California

[310] Ward, 4
[311] Matthew Frye Jacobsen, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 21.

side of the border.[312] In this role, it conducted all land surveys, advertised for land settlement, gained ownership of Valley towns, and covered all costs of colonization. [313] Journalist Edgar Howe, who became editor and manager of the year-old *Imperial Valley Press* 1902, publicized the Valley's lands to a West and East Coast readership, writing illustrated articles for the *New York Times*, *Scientific American*, and *Los Angeles Herald*, among others. [314] One of the historical ironies of this company's marketing scheme that I wish to draw attention to is that it relied in part on the legal script of the Homestead Act of 1862 to attract settlers. The Imperial Land Company's use of this Act to advertise the land as free, government land available for settlement would have been at odds with the Act's original purpose. Once a settler purchased water shares from the company, they were then responsible for irrigating their land within three years, all the while the company received "a certain percentage of the gross sales to be derived from the sale of all water stock in the United States or lands in Mexico." [315]

In this way, the Imperial Land Company/California Development Company used the Homestead Act to open up land declared "public" by the government for private investment. Moreover, it continued the institutionalization of racially exclusive property ownership in the U.S. West formalized by this Act, thus ensuring the continued dispossession of native Americans, Mexicans, and *mestizos*, and foreclosure

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[312] Farr, F.C. *History of Imperial County*, *California* (Berkeley: Elms and Frank, 1918),118.
[313] Ibid., 119.
[314] Ibid.
[315] Ibid.

of Asian and other nonwhite immigrants' stake in the land.[316] At the same time, it perpetuated capital's recruitment of nonwhite labor on both sides of the border, suggesting that the "new frontier" this twentieth century agricultural corporation was forging diverged from the agrarian republicanism under which "the 'pioneers' of the Homestead era" labored in its corporate self-interest and cross-border scheme.[317]

Monopoly ownership of irrigable lands and, moreover, irrigable lands that crossed into the Mexican border, was at odds with the National Reclamation Act of 1902, which was intended to use federally subsidized irrigation to make lands available to farming families. As historian Eric Boime observes, the Act coincided with Progressive Era reform movement calling for dissolution of monopoly agriculture, population of the land with a new generation of settler "pioneers," and pursuit of social progress through economic growth. [318] However, the Act was not fully implemented until the 1920s, allowing for a period of time for corporations like the CDC among other land developers, "who had little interest in (or stomach for) Edenic visions of family-farm communities," to flourish.[319] This phenomena did not go unnoticed by reformers who witnessed not only the centralization of regional

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[316] Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Reconstructing Race: The India, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans* (Austin: University of Texas Press: 2001), 265.
[317] Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*, (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 31.
[318] Eric Boime, "'Beating Plowshares into Swords': The Colorado River Delta, the Yellow Peril, and the Movement for Federal Reclamation, 1901–1928," *Pacific Historical Review* 78.1: 33.
[319] Ibid., 3.

agribusiness into the hands of a few but also the growing population of "alien" Mexican, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and South Asian workers in the Imperial Valley.

Visions of Utopia at the U.S.-Mexico Border

One outspoken critic of the private corporate from lands in the public domain was William Smythe, agricultural reformer and journalist who advocated a vision of agrarian democracy based on a return to the small farm protected by federal law.[320] His vision for democracy in the West also included the annexation of Baja California to the U.S. In a speech on the fourth of July in 1906, Smythe asked his audience, "Has the expansion of the Republic toward the Southwest permanently ended with the establishment of the city and county of San Diego? In considering this question, we instinctively look across the mountains to the great desert where rolls the Colorado. While we are celebrating the past, the inexorable river is making history in the present."[321] Smythe chides the Mexican government for cooperating with a "private monopoly" (i.e. the California-Mexico Land and Cattle Company originally owned by Harrison Gray Otis and Harry Chandler of the *Los Angeles Times*) and blames them for the diversion of the Colorado River from San Diego residents whose livelihood depends on it for irrigation. He goes on to suggest that the best solution is a peaceful negotiation for the U.S. annexation of Lower California, even if this requires the Mexican government to change its constitution prohibiting such changes in the national boundary line. "I hope that the day may come, and come soon," he concludes,

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[320] Matthew Bokovoy, "Inventing Agriculture in Southern California," *The Journal of San Diego History* 45.2 (Spring 1999). Web. Available through the *San Diego History Center*.

[321] *Imperial Valley Press* July 14, 1906.

"when the Stars and Stripes, shall float over every mile of the Colorado river and over every mile of Lower California from Tia Juana to Cape St. Lucas." [322]

Just the "Stars and Stripes" is metonymic of the United States, so too does "the Colorado" become a feature of a united California under U.S. control in Smythe's vision. An article in the *Imperial Valley Press* later in December of 1907 reiterates the argument for annexation, though it presents the California-Mexico Land and Cattle Company favorably, pointing out the fertility this company brought to Mexican land and the population of (American) farmers it could support. This later article goes so far as to outline how the completion of the Panama Canal and creation of the transpacific port of San Diego would obviate the annexation of Lower California to the U.S., as natural products from the valleys interior could be more easily shipped to Pacific destinations. By connecting the interior of the valley to the Pacific through rail and canal transportation, "…Imperial county will be in fact as well as in name an agricultural empire, having a deep waterport of her own and independent of all other Pacific coast shipping points."[323] Many Southern California newspapers editorialized on such annexationist fantasies at this time.[324] I contend that, driven by an emergent commercial cartography of the borderlands between the North American West and the Pacific, they helped naturalize a belief in U.S. control of this space. These ideas also drew on the force of precedents set by earlier patterns of U.S. acquisition of land as well as the momentum of recent cultivation of Southern California agricultural fields

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[322] Ibid.
[323] *Imperial Valley Press*, December 21 1907.
[324] Martínez, 43.

to figure U.S. expansion beyond its national borders as immanent, as if the natural topography itself were steering the course of empire.

If William Smythe imagined Baja California as space to put his utopian (but still capitalist) plan for "cooperative irrigation farming and shared community life" in action, other Americans saw it as a space to establish a socialist utopia.[325] As historian Paul Vanderwood shows, some American leftists joined Francisco Madero's reform movement during the Mexican Revolution. Others launched their own effort to establish a separate "Republic of Baja California." Their vision not only included a claim to Mexican land but seizure of property in Baja California from other Americans.[326] Though ultimately unsuccessful, this radical plan illuminates how the land in northern Mexico was imagined as space distant from national centers on both sides of the border and thus open for the cultivation of divergent American modernities—whether in the form of exploitative transnational capitalism (i.e. the CLRC) or a socialist utopia promising social equality and individual freedom. In a later section, I will return to how these visions appeared in the popular medium of the picture postcard which were, I argue, mementos of many lost frontiers, modernity's message to itself about its lost fantasies, realities, and ruins.

Border Tourism

In this section, I turn to how modernity in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands was spurred by expansion of monopoly capital in more than one way. On the one hand,

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[325] Bokovoy, "Inventing Agriculture in Southern California"
[326] Paul Vanderwood, "Writing History with Picture Postcards: Revolution in Tijuana," *The Journal of San Diego History* 33.4 (Fall 1987). Web. Available through the *San Diego History Center*.

cross-border agricultural corporations such as the CLRC reinvigorated visions of the U.S. imperative to "tame the West" in the twentieth century. On the other, U.S. tourist monopolies in the northern Mexico cities of Tijuana and Mexicali built an entire industry on the reenactment of the Wild West, where profits came precisely from suspending this space in the moment prior to the U.S. conquest of Mexico. Though annexationist fantasies and attempts certainly prized conquest of new land, the goal of these cross-border monopolies was not territorial expansion *per se*. They did not need conquest of more land to the south to turn a huge profit. Limited territorial expansion and intensified capitalist development on the border, in this case, promised limitless generation of capital. This had the effect of perpetuating the fantasy of northern Mexico, in the American popular and corporate imaginary, as an endlessly prospective object of U.S. expansionism. For some populations residing below the border, however, it was a site of actual exploitation experienced through the various administrations of U.S. capital. In my turn to border tourist attractions, I am interested in discerning how these businesses continuously made the "old frontier" into the "new frontier," and the new back into the old, and what appealing about this to the modern white America consumer at the turn of the century.

Tourism monopolists at the border developed an economy of vices prohibited in the U.S. at the time (liquor, gambling, and prostitution) that memorialized the region as "Old Mexico"—while at the same time produced it as the "new West." Northern Mexican cities of Tijuana and Mexicali became the places to go to indulge in all the pleasures currently under attack by the widespread (if heterogeneous) reform movement in the Progressive Era U.S. Urban moral reformers from the 1890s to the

1920s in particular advocated temperance, opposed prostitution, and scorned gambling. Border tourism created an arena of indulgence just this side, so to speak, for everything reformers deemed legal, moral, and respectable behavior for the urbanizing American public. As much as they made Tijuana and Mexicali into an extension of *American* amusement and vice cultures—where American dollars were tendered in businesses owned by and marketed to other, mostly white middle-class Americans—the businesses also capitalized on the well-established association of Mexican degeneracy, deviancy, and backwardness with the Wild West made popular in dime novels and Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Shows.

Actual Mexicans, *mestizos*, and Indians were, ironically, the minority in these productions of Old Mexico, though not all tourist establishments were American-owned. This is not to suggest that the perceived threat of racial difference was absent from Tijuana and Mexicali. It was, in fact, a constitutive element of border tourism through its reconstitution in commodity form—the Mexican sombrero you wore, the Mexican beer you drank, the postcard of a Tijuana street scene featuring only a curio store where you purchased the postcard. If curio stores reflected back the values, norms, and demands of the Anglo American middle class, other establishments, too, reproduced a strange and familiar version of those on the other side. Saloons here were not those of Chicago, San Francisco or New York; these were the saloons of the gold mining era. Gambling tables were likewise advertised as hangovers of the lawless frontier days where anyone willing to risk a dollar could win big. U.S. tourist businesses at the border risked offending modern middle-class sensibilities at the same moment they strove to appeal to them. To do so, they produced a space where a less

gentile, less law-abiding, and less civilized America still seemed to exist, though this Wild West only appeared through domesticating commercial spaces.

The most prominent tourism monopoly comprised of three investors: Marvin Allen, Frank Beyer, and Carl Withington, a collective known as ABW. They had run casinos and brothels in Bakersfield, CA, but, in the wake of California's 1913 Red-Light Abatement Act, had relocated their businesses just south of the border. This group opened the Owl Nightclub in Mexicali in 1913, a business that included a saloon, a brothel, and a gambling hall. The ABW were also the major boosters of Tijuana's vice-tourism economy, subsidizing establishments like the Tivoli Bar, Foreign Club, Monte Carlo casino, and Lower California Jockey Club. Their ventures often resulted from their partnership with other U.S. businessmen such as Baron Long, who owned San Diego's Grand Hotel and restaurants, and Sunny Jim Coffroth, a boxing promoter from San Francisco.[327] This relatively small group of businessmen soon controlled the American idea of northern Mexico as a space of pleasures forbidden on U.S. soil. Horse racing at the Lower California Jockey Club was so well publicized, journalist Roberta Ridgely explains, that it captured more national attention than San Diego's world's fair in 1915. Within six months it had "garnered more space in Eastern newspapers than had the Exposition" and attracted celebrities, statesmen, and industrial magnates.[328]

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[327] Lawrence D. Taylor, "The Wild Frontier Moves South: U.S. Entrepreneurs and the Growth of Tijuana's Vice Industry, 1908-1935," *The Journal of San Diego History* 48.3 (Summer 2002).
[328] Roberta Ridgley, "The Man Who Built Tijuana," *San Diego Magazine:* Vol. 18 No. 5 (January 1966): 130.

With the advent of prohibition and the new demand for liquor in the 1920s, the returns of these deviant enterprises rose dramatically. The Owl offered its bar as one of the many avenues of immersion into Old Mexico, while at the same time its interior design permitting groups to enjoy the scene from a distance. As reported in the L.A. Times, "A gallery, used exclusively for 'slumming parties' was rarely empty as tourists from the American side of the line were always present."[329] The gallery booth within the Owl allowed tourists the privilege of consuming the pleasures of the club while at the same time maintaining a detached mode of observation. This internal partition replicated the many divisions between the licit and illicit, the normal and the deviant, the real and the unreal permeating this cross-border space. The gallery booth was a site that cordoned off a space of aberrancy while also structurally demarcating the limit of the moral and the modern. According to Foucault's idea of heterotopia, we can read this as a kind of counter-site wherein the "real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society" are "simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted."[330]

Figure 14: ABW Club, Mexicali (Postcard, Online Archive of California)

The New/Old Mexico

The first page of F.C. Spayde's article for the *Los Angeles Times* about tourism in Mexicali and Tijuana features a "Panorama of Mexicali," an ink illustration of the

[329] "Mexican Monte Carlo Shut Up*," Los Angeles Times*: 27 September 1919. Cited in Michael Eric Schantz. *From the "Mexicali Rose" to the Tijuana Brass: Vice Tours of the United-States-Mexico Border, 1910-1965*. Dissertation University of California Los Angeles, 2001, 191.
[330] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16.1 (Spring, 1986), 24.

city's main drag from the perspective of an American border crosser.[331] Looking down from the northern side of the dotted international line, the image depicts a projected distillery and bottling works appear near the Owl club, while a projected brewery lies further down the road. As none of the other buildings are labeled, for the unacquainted, the streets of Mexicali appear to be assemblage of liquor manufacturing. Beneath this image, whose rectangular frame lends it photographic realism, are several illustrations of other civic and government developments in the works. The portraits of Governor Esteban Cantú and Lieutenant Governor L.J Barrera appear in oval frames on opposite sides of the page, representing the official pillars of Baja California. Cantú's portrait overlays an illustration of the "New $55,000 School in Mexicali" he helped build, while Barrera's overlaps with an image of the "Present 'capitol' of Lower California" (the Lower California Jockey Club, or racetrack). The image bridging these two state officials is of the "projected capitol building," and beneath these are images of a "Gaming table at the Owl" and a scene of "The Owl a night." This montage gives scenes of government buildings and crowded nightclub an equal amount of space on the page and place in the developmental narrative of these northern Mexico cities.

Scattered in the interstices of these orderly, static photographic-style illustrations are more deliberately cartoonish action scenes of two boxers, men orchestrating a cock fight, matadors teasing a bull with a flag, and jockeys riding horses. The bull is drawn to appear like it may run towards the flag and off the page,

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[331] F C Spayde, *Los Angeles Times* April 20, 1919. Originally cited in: Paul Vanderwood, *Satan's Playground: Mobsters and Movie Stars at America's Favorite Gaming Resort* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 83

and the jockeys seem to steer their horses outwards, animating a three-dimensional underworld beneath the flat, formal pictures of civic orderliness. Lest his readers' vivid imaginations lead them to think otherwise, Spayde opens his article by reassuring them that this "new West" is law-abiding and tame. "It is emphatically not the intention of the local men to attempt to revive any old-time border or woolly western stuff in Mexico, but to put brains and unlimited money into the creation of an amusement center second to none in the world and one which will attract sportsmen from everywhere."

Spayde is emphatic about presenting these northern Mexican border towns as the "old" but notably not "Wild West." Even his depiction of the "old West" above portrays this as a widespread but centrally organized community, with commercial spaces of the saloon and the bank as the hub of pioneer life. Tourists might venture to Mexicali for illicit entertainment, but they would be doing so within familiar structures of civilized society. "Mexicali is now a frontier of development," he elaborates "the gateway to a new empire—the Imperial Valley on the American side, with Gov. Cantu's rich territory over the line." Here he presents the new frontier not as a territorial battlegrounds between two nations, but as a crossroads of cooperative, transnational commerce. What becomes evident over the course of his article, too, is that organized business (and *American*-run businesses in particular) not only brings development but also morality, civility, and modernity to industries in Tijuana and Mexico—spaces otherwise imagined as still locked in an uncivilized past prior to Anglo American conquest.

On a typical Sunday in these border cities, you could see the images previewed in his article in real life, including a "bull fight in the Plaza del Toros, cockfights by the score, boxing music by the Twenty-fifth Regiment Band, every kind of game of chance at the Owl—roulette, faro, keno, twenty-one." Similar to other Southern California boosterism literature, Spayde enumerates the myriad attractions that await alongside data on the economic infrastructures that have made them possible. He promotes these cities by listing all the games of chance or brands of beer the tourist can expect, as well as the number of barrels of whiskey and cases of wine are exported from Calexico into Mexicali; the projected cost of building the new brewery, Cerveceíia del Norte, under American management; the dollar amount that American owners of the current Climax saloon will spend on their own Mexican distillery just three miles east of the city; and the Los Angeles brewing and liquor companies interested in relocating to Mexicali when Prohibition laws go into effect. What stands out in his business index in that all aspects of production, distribution, and consumption are American. Even if tourists consumed Mexican beer, heard Mexican music, and bought souvenirs of "Old Mexico" on Mexican soil—they did so with American dollars and under American management. "All shopping from eggs and butter and bread, a spool of thread on up to thousands of dollars worth of agricultural implements," he adds "is done in Calexico or El Centro or Brawle, or Los Angeles," reassuring the traveler that the staples of any American home are also readily available. "So far as outward signs go," he tells his reader "Mexicali might be any border town on the American side."

To know "Mexico" was to consume it through American products and establishments on Mexican territory. Border tourism encouraged, therefore, interactive, immersive experiences with this space. The itinerary for a trip across the border itself eroded any sort of detached viewership, as it allowed little room for mere passengers. If his reader believes they could only see the old West "in the movies," Spayde explains, they are quite wrong. It does exist in the real world, and if they only follow his instructions they could find it for themselves. He tells them to take a Southern Pacific train from Los Angeles at eleven o'clock to Calexico, bring two small photographs (though no passport is necessary), present them to the immigration officer and request a one-day pass to enter Mexicali. Once on the other side, you can "see what you see not with the eye of the camera but with the mind of an American." Where these statistics fail to impress, then surely the irresistible allure of Mexicali's Owl nightclub will succeed in drawing in the tourist with its "huge electric sign, the only one in town, sends its signal far into American territory." The sign in the postcard above (which refers to the establishment's new name, the ABW Club) beckoned visitors from across the border. Its size and intense glow made this border city into a visible, material place within reach.

Figure 15: "Rueda de la Frontera, Wheel of Fortune, Tijuana," 1920 (San Diego History Center)

How could visitors imagine they were actually in Mexico, when the city they encountered was so thoroughly Americanized? What convinced them that these cities were "Mexican" at all? Or were they to encounter them they might an exhibit of the

Wild West at a world's fair? Most Americans visiting Tijuana and Mexico in the early twentieth century were not seeking the same voyeuristic pleasure of gazing upon exhibits of foreign, exotic, or primitive cultures they could find at a world's fair. Border tourism offered access to a different past. According to Spayde, Mexicali is "the old West, when the saloonkeeper was the banker and his saloon the center of the pioneer community for hundreds of miles." The saloons, gambling tables, and brothels the tourist encounters here were meant to invoke the long lost social world of the Anglo American West—but at the same time, this world is, quite unmistakably, based on exactly those cultural institutions prohibited in the Progressive Era U.S. [332] Tourism in Mexicali and Tijuana, I would argue, reconstituted contemporary vice cultures as memorabilia of the frontier days, a time and place where civilization was in process and where contact with undeveloped land and primitive populations was popularly imagined as formative, invigorating, and rejuvenating for Anglo Saxon pioneers (turner). At the turn of the century when reformers were organizing against cultural practices they cast as antithetical to their vision of the modern urban space, American tourism entrepreneurs revived them across the border as lost pleasures—both of the

[332] In his study of moral reform movements in U.S. cities, historian Paul Boyer observes why the brothel and saloon became targets of reformers invested in purifying the urban setting. "The brothel and the saloon were widely perceived as the great bastions of urban vice. So long as they stood, the dream of an urban moral awakening would be no more than that: if they could be subdued, the purified, morally homogeneous city might at last become a reality." Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge and London, 1978), 191.

contemporary moment and the distant past of the national frontier, before it was even part of the U.S.

Figure16: "Enraging the Bull, Plaza de Toros, Tijuana, Mexico" (Postcard, UC San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections)

The "New Old Mexico" thus refracted racial and class dynamics of the frontier myth through contemporary projects of modernization in U.S. urban settings and border cities. Tourists encountered Mexicali and Tijuana as spaces both American and Mexican, tame and wild, high brow and low brow, present and past, white and nonwhite. If you saw a bull fight in Tijuana, you encountered recreation of Spanish barbarism, where matadors made a sport out of animal torture, but you did so in the civilized format of modern spectator sports. Sitting in the grandstand among the crowd depicted in this postcard, you would be horrified by the sight of a bull pierced multiple times with a sword, or of the matador himself grazed by the bull's horns. However, at the moment the bull is "weakened by internal bleeding" and killed by a "thrust of the dagger into his brains," you would cheer along with the crowd, which was probably mostly men but might also include "well-dressed American women."[333] With the violence of "Old Mexico" was contained in the Plaza del Toros, you could expect to spend your cash like a gold rushing prospector with the tame indoor setting of the casino. So the manager of the "days of '49" amusement at the San Francisco's world's fair informs Spayde. This passing citation suggests that while the "days of '49" exhibit might be just another amusement at the fair, Tijuana and Mexicali were a permanent

[333] *San Diego Union*: April 13, 1908.

part of the landscape. These were not traveling exhibits or fleeting attractions. As the montage at the beginning of the article illustrations, they were recognizable civic spaces on the path to further modernization. In the touristic imaginary, they would always be there, as if they had always been there.

Visitors entering Mexicali were also made aware that this city was real and *really* there because they were not the only patrons of its establishments. When walking into the Owl nightclub or Black Cat Cabaret they would encounter the diverse crowd of border residents. Similar to consumerism in urban U.S. settings, then, border tourism taught its customers to forge new associations between commodities, labor, and race in these emergent economies.[334] The middle class tourists encountering the "rough entertainments" of Mexicali at once experienced a heightened awareness of the laborers behind these and other industries of modernity at the border. The cluster of entertainments on the main drag and social mixing encouraged through dancing, drinking, and gambling brought together Anglo American tourists and "workmen and peons securing rough entertainment." Spayde takes pains to alleviate his readers' fears of racial diversity in Old Mexico, however, by presenting tourist attractions as commercial spaces that brought order and discipline to these Mexican cities and transformed its heterogeneous residents into "new frontiersmen of the new West."

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[334] In *The Incorporation of America*, Alan Trachtenberg argues the department store was the "pedagogy of modernity" in U.S. cities, whereby the middle class learned to form affective connections with goods through advertising while simultaneously denying the labor behind their production. Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 131.

U.S.-owned tourist businesses thus worked to both overcome and cater to popular ideas of northern Mexico as racially deviant.

The Baja California Government and American Vice Tourism

The American middle class tenor of Mexicali's vice district responded to cultural and economic demands on both sides of the border. For his part, Governor Cantú also implemented measures of quality control over the saloons and gambling houses. Earlier in 1916, under pressure from his community who feared their children's exposure to the Owl and other vices, he had called for the relocation of the Owl to Guerrero Street in Chinatown as a way of cordoning off the more scandalous businesses, even going so far as to contain them "within a high-fenced enclosure" to further remove them from view.[335] Those intending to stay in business had to pay a higher licensing fee, an ordinance invested in the notion that through "the elimination of the cheap places the moral tone of Mexicali will be improved."[336] The elevated moral tenor he strove for also catered to the middle class sensibilities of most tourists coming to town. Moreover, Cantú mandated periodic "clean ups," to appease public officials of Calexico concerned about the transient workers passing into their cities from Calexico.

Ironically enough, the deportation of "undesirables" from Mexicali occasionally benefited the economy of Calexico itself, as did the larger vice tourism industry. According to a report announcing, "Mexicali Scum Dumped Onto Calexico," the deportation of a group of "human derelicts" form across the border actually

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[335] Cited in Schantz, 196.
[336] Ibid., 165.

"occurred at a time when free labor was in great demand by the Calexico authorities, men being needed for construction work on water works extension in various parts of the city."[337] The article describes the group as Negroes, Mexicans, Hindus, and Chinese who have all been forced to give up the "Mexicali joy palaces" in which they had been languishing and instead take up productive labor in the more reputable town of Calexico. At other times Calexico was not so welcoming to those driven out of Mexicali, and the droves of "drug users, 'hop heads' and other undesirable classes" were viewed as an overwhelming invasion. This phenomenon apparently compelled Calexico's Mayor Abbott to pontificate on the issue in the fall of 1919. "It is a well known fact," he declared "that there are [*sic*] no resort of refuge, or abode of this class of persons in Calexico. They get across the line and stay over there for obvious reasons. But they invade this city in the hours of the night, and in such numbers and under such conditions that to handle them properly is impossible—would be impossible with a police force ten times the size of Calexico's."[338] Through its alternating recruitment and intolerance of what many of these news reports describe as racial others prone to forms of idleness, addiction, and crime, Calexico mirrored to a degree Mexicali's own shifting strategies of harnessing the labor of those otherwise marked as deviant.

In many ways, Mexicali tourism demonstrates how the expansion of capital is often at odds with the aims of the nation-state. Similar to the U.S. federal government's euphemistically labeled "reclamation" of the arid lands of the Imperial

[337] Ibid., 180.
[338] "Calexico Asks Mexicali to Send Undesirables Over Line Has a Warm Welcome Waiting," *Calexico Chronicle* November 2 1919.

Valley, American businessmen behind the cross-border tourism considered their saloons, gambling houses, dance halls, and other commercial entertainments as making good use of underdeveloped land. The crossing of U.S. capital into Mexico, and its agreeable reception by the Baja California government, made even the most illicit, socially deviant, and forbidden businesses legitimate and, paradoxically, coincident with regional progress. Although scorned by reformers who viewed their businesses as antithetical to their view of the modern, moral city and citizen, local officials on both sides praised the tourist attractions as a boon to regional as well as national progress. The president of the International Bank at Calexico, cited in Spayde's article, explains the self-evidence of the situation: "Naturally, with the United States going dry in July or in January it will mean business over the line…With the opening of the line and the stabilizing of import duties by the Mexican Federal government, we may look for big development here on both sides of the line and as the new empires to which we are the gateway develops, we shall grow. So all say down here—Open the line!" Eager to perpetuate the profitable economic arrangement afforded by Calexico's proximity to Mexicali, this city official calls for an open border for American tourists and commodities. He prizes profit over nationalism, while at the same invoking the rhetoric of empire, and specifically of a "new empire," to rationalize the enterprise. As in Norris's *The Octopus*, this term reflects both a reach back to the vague past of European empire and looks forward to the future American empire in borderlands like that of Calexico and Mexicali. It is a grasping, emergent term reflecting a certainty in the "naturally" occurring opportunity

for the extension of U.S. capital into Mexico and an ambivalence about a nationalism in process.

"Wish You Were Here": The Postcard as Heterotopia

The naturalizing rhetoric of capitalist development aims to resolve the contradiction of U.S. control of Mexican land. However, I would argue that industries of memorialization at the border disrupts this vision of a spatially and temporally unified space. Americans venturing to the edge of the nation encountered there a reflection of themselves with some distortion, reality tinged with some romance, distraction achieved through tactile, tangible, and material sensations. U.S. entrepreneurs salvaged a lost era by breaking it down into a visible, tangible, consumable object—a deck of cards you fanned out on the poker table, the knob of a roulette wheel you gripped in your had, a photograph you had taken of yourself in a sombrero at the Mexican border, the restorative bath you took at Agua Caliente hot springs. This new tourist came to expect an experience akin to a postcard where you are there and not there—or you, "wish you were here."

Figure 17: The Big Curio Store, Tijuana (Postcard, UC San Diego, Mandeville Special Collections)

The curio shop might draw you in with rows of trinkets to memorialize your trip, objects that contain some essence of Mexico and its strange culture, cities, and social life. But, when your American dollars were tendered for a postcard in the American store, you would likely walk away with a familiar image in your hand. Many postcards that a tourist might buy to remember their time in Tijuana were

available in shops on both sides of the border. Among its many souvenirs, for example the 1915 San Diego Exposition published postcards like those below of Jorge Lbs.'s "The Big Curio Store" and Mitchell and Mouren's "La Sorpresa Curio Store." Like many available in Tijuana as well, the memory these postcards offer is of the curio store itself. These popular stores typically sold "sombreros, silver jewelry, Mexican flags, postcards and other articles," which you could purchase almost without stepping foot on Mexican soil. [339] As the postcard of Miguel Gonzalez's "Big Curio Store" illustrates touring automobiles are parked in a solid line along *la Avenida Revolución*, depositing visitors directly onto the sidewalk and at the threshold of the city's businesses. Though taken from different angles, these picture postcards present Tijuana as a storefront. If your eye pans the wide road or open sky, or is drawn into the vanishing point of the photograph, the rectangular frame of the buildings trains your line vision along the edge of their reassuring geometry. The horse-drawn carriages and automobiles meandering down the street also offer relief from the vast, featureless horizon in their familiar cluster of social activity.

Faithful to their intended purpose, these postcards visually recall the typical tourist experience in Tijuana—that is, of consumption. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century was, as Vanderwood observes, "the heyday of the picture postcard."[340] New technologies allowed for the easier production of photographs as well as for their inexpensive mass production. When the Eastman Kodak no. 1 emerged on the market in 1888 it informed the consumer, "You press the button, we

[339] Taylor, "The Wild Frontier Moves South: U.S. Entrepreneurs and the Growth of Tijuana's Vice Industry, 1908-1935"
[340] Vanderwood "Writing History with Picture Postcards: Revolution in Tijuana"

do the rest." Now, anyone could take a picture.[341] As American middle class tourism was on the rise, the demand for souvenirs of the newly discovered vacation destinations intensified. Recurring themes in those for sale at the San Diego-Tijuana border include San Diego's resort hotels, parks, and beaches as well as Tijuana's saloons, casinos, and other vice district attractions. In the early decades of the twentieth century, tourists could also take home scenes of the Mexican Revolution they had witnessed through telescopes from the customs house at the border. [342] Photographers arriving in Tijuana, Vanderwood shows, produced images of dead insurgents, as opposed to live-action scenes of battle, amassing a photo archive of the heterogeneous group of radicals siding with Madero or galvanizing around separate leftist causes discussed above.

At least for brief period, then, the violence between radicals and Mexican federals was less something to be avoided as it was a spectacle among other regional attractions not to be missed. As I have argued about Mexicali and Tijuana vice districts, this was a scene to view from the periphery and to enter into. During the battle of May 8-9, for example, San Diegans watched the fighting from afar and later, when the coast was clear, they paid an admission fee to enter the rebel-controlled Tijuana, where they could gamble in faro and poker games. Even at its most turbulent, the border was an alluring object to be gazed upon through the window of a touring automobile or experienced through mercantile, gaming, and drinking spaces. The high demand for postcards of the Mexican Revolution, mementos of the corpses of

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[341] Robert Bogdan and Todd Weseloh, *Real Photo Postcard Guide: The People's Photography* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 23.
[342] Vanderwood, "Writing History with Picture Postcards"

Mexican as well as American nationals, suggests that the border presented American tourists with a scene of national disorder, incoherence, and contradiction they did not necessarily wish to see resolved. In fact, they desired a lasting photographic reproduction of it.

Postcards sold at curio shops at the U.S.-Mexico border were at once mass produced and generic, yet sold on the idea that they possessed some authenticity. They offer copies of an original referent that is lost or on the verge of disappearance and that has been repacked as something different. As heterotopia, then, these postcards represent an ideal place somewhere in the past that is also no place in the present. But this is the puzzling thing about these *things*: the curio is curious, the charm is charming, and the novelty is novel precisely because they are at once ephemera that evoke a fleeting impression of a fleeting period of time and real material objects. It is as if in their materiality they reveal to their owner—who stores them away in a photo album, forgets about them, rediscovers them in a small drawer later on—that their memory of the curio store or saloon in Tijuana was in fact their experience of that place. The postcard seems, at the same time, to cease its purpose of mediating the tourist's memories and materialize into the original experience, that is, the moment of purchase at the curio store. An author of a 1922 Tijuana guidebook explains the self-evident purpose of the curio store with the following matter-of-fact statement: "The curio store has become the center of Tijuana's tourist activity, with its rare collection of attractive offerings, and as a curio store it seems destined to remain."[343] The

[343] Thomas, Edward C. "The wanderer in Tijuana: gambling, liquor, ponies, girls, high life 'n everything." Los Angeles, Calif.: Wanderer Pub. Co., 1922, 24.

guidebook also features a photograph of Miguel Gonzalez's abovementioned Big Curio Store, accompanied by the caption, "I'll bet you know this place!"[344] You, the tourist, will always already desire to possess the rare and the unusual, the guidebook suggests, and although your initial impressions may fade, the cultural institution of the borderlands curio store will endure.

I would suggest that as heterotopia, the postcard also depicts scenes of times and places that cannot ever really be recalled. The lost frontier, the Wild West, the vanishing Old Mexico, the loss of life in the Mexican Revolution—all are nostalgic images that the tourist industry recuperates through mass reproduction. Border tourism mourns the lost ideal places, the lost no places, and their lost inhabitants. Like other industries in this transnational space, in other words, tourism comprises a formation of modernity through the commodification of racial difference. When the white middle class American sends a postcard from the "Old New Mexico," they might write a similar message as this sender. "We are on our first trip south. We have been in Calif. All having a good time." Although postmarked from Tijuana, the inscription makes no reference to this city and instead describes trip to California. Their visit to the Mexican tourist town is not a novel experience shared in the message but implied through the postmark and photograph on the front. The postcard sends a message of longing in several directions: longing for the absent friend or family, longing for the unreal place, and longing for the racial other missing from the picture of modernity who is, at the same time, the very outsider who shapes its frame.

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[344] Ibid., 3.

***La Chinesca*: Mexicali's Chinatown**

In the "foreign" place of Mexicali, the white American could feel secure not because of a panoptic display of the world's races but because of their purchasing power and mobility that allowed them the thrill of stepping across the line. Consumerism established a reliable boundary between the moral, modern, white American and the deviant, degenerate Mexico, so that, like the ABW, their ventures south of the border did not replay a desire for a frontier open to further territorial expansion so much as open to business. In doing so, their cross-border enterprises effectively occluded the violence of territorial conquest and, exacerbating spatial hierarchies between the U.S. and Mexico, continued violence of capitalist exploitation and state exclusion in its borderlands.

Though Spayde's article only mentions the Chinese population in Mexicali by number (4,000), he neglects to mention Chinatown as another of the city's tourist attractions. Many of Chinese-run establishments also purveyed gambling, alcohol, and sex. The Casino Chino, located in Chinatown, was one of Mexicali's first gambling houses and became a draw in the 1910s and 1920s. The Owl also contained within its grounds a saloon, theater, brothel, and Hop Lee's Chinese restaurant.[345] For the Chinese migrating to and working in the cotton fields, Mexicali's Chinatown became a social center—providing groceries, laundries, restaurants, labor recruitment services, mutual aid societies, a church, and a hospital. The commercial services supplied migrant Chinese with daily necessities to support their laboring lives as well as

[345] Michael Eric Schantz, "All night at the Owl: the social and political relations of Mexicali's red-light district, 1913-1925." *Journal of the Southwest.* 43. 4 (Winter 2001), 575.

sources of entertainment for their leisure time. These included casinos, opium dens, and two Chinese theaters.[346] Many Chinese-owned businesses combined the labor and leisure services within a common building or else ran a range of commercial enterprises in adjacent real estate. For example, J.M. Uon owned a general store, a ranch, the Peninsula Hotel, the Casa Colorado, and an opium business.[347] The Casa Colorado, moreover, offered both licit and illicit trade by selling supplies to agricultural workers and serving as a site for opium trade. Uon also owned the Grand Hotel Peninsular that included the Black Cat Cabaret, a restaurant, and a billiards table on the lower floor as well as a brothel on the upper floor. [348]

Chinese-run commerce was integral to the development of tourism in Mexicali, while Chinese labor also benefited its cotton industry. As Robert Duncan observes, commercial capital in Chinatown was often organized by joint investments between many Chinese businessmen, an economic arrangement that mirrored the land subleasing system underpinning the Colorado River-Land Company. Pablo Chee's Hotel Imperial, for instance, was cooperatively owned by Chinese shareholders living in both Mexicali and San Francisco, and the profits circulated between Chinese diasporic communities in the Americas as well as to China.[349] According to an article in the *Los Angeles Times* in October 1919, a Chinese businessman even collaborated with Governor Cantú to establish a new casino. Millionaire Luen Yuek, dubbed

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[346] Eduardo Auyon Gerardo, *El Dragon En El Desierto: los primeros chinos en mexicali, 1903-1991* (Mexicali: Instituto de Cultura de Baja California, 1991), 63.
[347] Robert H. Duncan, "The Chinese and the Economic Development of Northern Baja California, 1889-1929," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 74.2 (1994): 629; Schantz, "From the 'Mexicali Rose,'" 392.
[348] Schantz, "All night at the Owl," 574-575.
[349] Duncan, 639.

"Mexicali's Chinese king," planned to open this casino in place of the Owl's Theater, which was temporarily closed. The journalist reports that this addition to Mexicali's attractions was a success and that "tourist parties are already becoming popular once more as well as slumming parties.

The Business of Surveillance

Luen Yuek's casino, however, was not open to any tourist. "Catering exclusively to white trade with Mexican police stationed at its doors to prevent the entrance of Mexicans," suggesting that Cantú likely endorsed the new attraction because Yuek had the available capital and because he wanted to play a role in preventing Mexicans from "gambling in the Chinese concession." [350] While Chinese immigrants generated capital for their own cross-border enterprises as well as those of American and Mexican investors, modernization in the region also depended on regulation of Chinese economic and geographic mobility—what I will refer to as the business of surveillance. As historian Eric Schantz shows in his dissertation on vice tourism in Mexicali, Governor Cantú profited from the vice businesses in Mexicali through a system of "prohibitive taxation" through which "he mitigated the social fallout of vicious leisure by calculating the costs of social opportunities to maximize the intangible of "order" and revenue. The Cantú government made this clear in the case of regulated opium. A tax raise for the opium den (*salon de recreo chino*) emphasized the need to discourage national working classes from following the same 'hopeless path to addiction' that mired the *yellow and black races.*" [351] As Eric

[350] *Los Angeles Times* October 25, 1919.
[351] Schantz, "From the 'Mexicali Rose,'" 164.

Schantz shows in his dissertation, Cantú's mode of taxation profited from the U.S.-owned saloons, dance halls, and gambling halls as well as entertainment services owned by Chinese, which included opium joints. His regulation of the drug market that allowed Cantú to at once racialize Chinese as deviant and degenerate for their alleged predisposition to debilitating opium smoking while also exploiting the opium trade at the border.

Cantú's proposal to control the cross-racial transmission of degenerative opium addiction essentially drew parallels between the threat of opium smoking and the threat of sexually transmitted diseases.[352] In this context, the maintenance of "health" was equivalent to the maintenance of decency and morality, and the visibly deteriorating body of the addict represented not only the inherent degeneracy of the Chinese race but also the threat of infection—specifically to Mexican nationals. As a space frequented primarily by Chinese bachelors, foreign tourists, and foreign prostitutes, moreover, the border opium den was patronized by consumers who embodied racial transgressions of the sexual norms of the Mexican community, family, and nation.[353]

Figure 18: "Captured Chinese, Tijuana, May 9, 1911" (Photograph, Online Archive of California)

Racialized discourse of public health that cast Chinese as contaminants to Mexican national fitness were potent in U.S. government surveillance of the border as

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[352] Shah, 97-102.
[353] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 17.

well. Whereas notions of Chinese deviance in Mexicali took the form of government taxation of Chinese immigrants and the largely Chinese-run opium industry, Chinese were subjected to other forms of surveillance and exclusion on the U.S. side of the line. Public awareness of this mounted surveillance was heightened in San Diego, where newspapers like the *San Diego Union* perpetuated fears of even a single "diseased Chinese" introducing infection to the city.[354] "The public often wonders why three or four highly paid government officers will give several days time to capturing one man, but the immigration officers feel that the money is well spent. In the party of marooned Chinese recently found on the Coronado islands were several cases of trachoma, so far advanced that a physician's report would have been superfluous. Trachoma is a highly infectious disease." The business of capturing and deporting Chinese at the U.S.-Mexico border arose from the creation of the Chinese Inspectors division of the U.S. Customs Service in 1908. While U.S. patrollers profited from capturing Chinese, Mexican guides profited from escorting them across.[355] As historian Erika Lee shows, the sensational newspaper accounts of "smuggling" rendered Chinese immigrants equivalent to "contraband commodities" like liquor and opium, and in doing so validated the efforts of border patrol to prohibit their entrance into the U.S.[356]

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[354] *San Diego Union*, July 12, 1911.
[355] Erika Lee. "Enforcing the Borders: Chinese Exclusion along the U.S. Borders with Canada and Mexico, 1882–1924," 8 http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/89.1/lee.html
[356] Ibid., 26.

In contrast to these sensational accounts in the press, the photograph above, taken in Tijuana, represents what was probably a typical scene of failed border crossing. Dressed in everyday suits and hats, these men stand in a row as they appear to await enclosure within large barn-like building. The very smug-looking and apparently Anglo official occupying the left side of the photo relaxes his weight into his cane, enjoying the satisfaction of a successful roundup. All are accounted for, all are in line, and all are to be safely contained in the darkened storehouse. Quite noticeably, one of the men in line also faces the camera. Hands in his pockets, he too leans easily to one side, cocking his head to see around the person blocking his view of the camera. Tilting his neck inquisitively, the man quite straightforwardly stares back at the surveying lens. Unlike his companions, whose faces blur in the background, his expression is well-lit and even clearer than that of the official, whose grinning mouth is nearly all that is escapes the shadow cast by his wide-brimmed hat. The official's large overcoat, moreover, covers over most of his body, yielding very little that is distinguishing or eye-catching. By contrast, although he stands in a row of prisoners that grows smaller in scale as it extends towards the photo's vanishing point, the Chinese man is squarely in the frame's center. He draws the viewer's eye to his face and comportment even before it pans out to make sense of the looming, somewhat hunched, and more inscrutable figure of the official.

The unintended result of this boastful photographic evidence of the tracker's successful hunt is that it literally "captures" the Chinese and their experience awaiting imprisonment while visually detaching the tracker from the scene for which he demands credit. The parallel stance of this white official and the Chinese captive is

ultimately upset by their asymmetrical placement, posture, and illumination. The group of men claim the attention that the official presumes he commands. While the central Chinese man and the others will likely face deportation irrespective of their engagement with the camera in this instant, this photo nevertheless reflects back to the viewer the un-averted gaze of the disciplined subject. This strikingly casual yet direct look refuses total objectification just in the moment of utter vulnerability to state law. His face demands, and achieves, recognition, not as one of the masses in Norris's yellow peril fantasy of hungry Chinese or scandalizing magazine accounts of cramped opium dens, but as one of a group of individuals. There is something very commonplace about his suit, his hat, his comportment. This ordinariness, at the same time, does not automatically yield familiarity. Framed by modernity, he is not unknowable to the viewer, just not known.

EPILOGUE

Steering the West: Hawaiian Cowboy Contests and Transpacific Modernity

At the turn of the century, boosters in Southern California had begun to market the region as "Old Spain," a place where tourists visiting a restored mission or viewing a theatrical reproduction of *Ramona* could imagine themselves immersed in the state's noble, Spanish past. Vice entrepreneurs below the border were, at the same time, promoting Tijuana as "Old Mexico" where gambling tables, horse races, and bull fights offered visitors a glimpse into an alternative version of the past, one of Mexican degeneracy and Spanish violence. Across the Pacific, the Hawaiian tourist industry, too, was taking off, pursuing increasingly elaborate ways to produce the islands as a foreign place where tourists could feel they were stepping back in time somewhere before their modern moment, while still enjoying the comforts of white middle class mobility. The link between the sugar and pineapple industries and the Hawaiian tourist industry has been extensively explored by cultural historians.[357] Much less attention has been given to correspondences between Hawai'i's cattle ranching industry and its cowboy entertainers who appeared in shows both in the islands and on the mainland.

To close my present study of the transpacific borderlands, I wish to trace the beginning of a cultural history of Wild West Shows in Hawai'i. They were a form of popular entertainment that borrowed some elements from Buffalo Bill Cody's show,

[357] *See* Desmond (1999); Diamond (2008); Dirlik (1992); Eperjesi (2005); Imada (2004); Wilson (2000).

which traveled across the mainland U.S. and Europe at peak popularity between 1885 and 1905, and was as historian Richard Slotkin observes: "The most important commercial vehicle for the fabrication and transmission of the Myth of the Frontier."[358] Cody's show performed U.S. expansionism on the continental frontier and, by 1898, U.S. frontiers imagined in overseas territories; more than retelling what he claimed was an authentic American history, Cody dramatized white racial dominance over native Americans and adapted his mythology to legitimate the nation's ongoing expansion into new "Wild Wests" beyond the continental frontier.

The first Wild West Show in Honolulu in 1907 included a stagecoach holdup, which, outlined in my introduction, featured what were apparently native Hawaiian cowboys dressed as native Americans attacking a pioneer family's coach. However, this holdup was one of many events on the day's program and in fact is notably overshadowed by the roping, bucking bronco, and horse racing competitions. The prominence of these contests among cowboys—rather than reproductions of violent confrontation between civilized cowboys and savage Indians—reveals, on one level, that dramatizations of Cody's frontier myth were simply of less interest to the audience and performers in Hawai'i. This is not to suggest that these shows were unconnected from the extension of U.S. imperialism in Hawai'i and the versions of the frontier myth underpinning them. Rather, they mirror aspects of this show's mythology and its very material impact on Hawai'i, while also reflecting Hawai'i's other encounters with other "wests." I approach them as heterotopic cultural forms that

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[358] Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*, (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 85.

at once profess a reenactment, rehearsal, or reproduction of the Wild West, loosely tied in the spectator imaginary as the west of Turner's thesis and Cody's shows. In the same moment, like every Wild West fantasy, they generate nostalgia for a time and place that was there and not there, past and present.

The first cattle were introduced to Hawai'i by the British explorer, George Vancouver, in 1793 in the course of his Pacific voyage between 1791 to 1795 and the first horses by John Cleveland in 1803, when he stopped over in Hawai'i to replenish his ship's supplies for its business in the Canton trade.[359] Both kinds of livestock were acquired from Mexico and descended from those first introduced by Spanish conquistadors. King Kamehameha I welcomed these gifts, but by the reign of King Kamehameha III, the longhorn cattle were destroying the natural environment of the Big Island, prompting the King to hire Indian and *mestizo vaqueros* from California to train Native Hawaiians in how to manage these wild animals. Few records exist on the original three *vaqueros*—identified through oral history as Kossuth, Louzeida, and Ramon—but their knowledge of breaking cattle on mission and ranch lands in Spanish California left a lasting impact on Hawaiian cattle ranching.[360] They trained Native Hawaiians in herding, breaking, and roping; introduced Spanish-Mexican design of spurs, *sombreros*, saddles, and stirrups as well as the slack key guitar and falsetto style

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[359] John Ryan Fischer, "Cattle in Hawai'i: Biological and Cultural Exchange," *Pacific Historical Review*, 76.3 (2007): 354.
[360] Joseph Brennan, *The Parker Ranch of Hawai'i: The Saga of a Ranch and a Dynasty* (New York: Mutual Publishing, 2004), 45 and Fischer, 363.

of singing.[361] The origin of the term for Hawaiian cowboys, *paniolo*, is debated but usually attributed to a linguistic derivation of "*Hispañol*," the Spanish word for handkerchief, "*panuelo,*" or a combination of the Hawaiian word "pa" to mean "hold firmly" and "iolo" to mean "to sway gracefully."[362]

The ranching techniques, cowboy accouterments, and cultural customs introduced by these first *vaqueros* were interpreted by Hawaiians in a variety of ways since the 1830s, resulting in a hybrid *paniolo* culture that exists to the present day. Anglo American travelers to Hawai'i remarked on seeing *paniolos* either at work on the ranch lands or performing in rodeo shows, although Hawaiian cowboys gained the most popular recognition on the mainland U.S. itself in 1907 when Ikua Purdy won the world championship title at the Frontier Days competition in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Purdy continues to be a heroic figure in native Hawaiian history to this day.

Many cultural histories of *paniolos* follow the narrative above, conveying a history of productive collaboration between native Hawaiian monarchy and British colonial voyagers, and later between the monarchy and *vaqueros* from across the Pacific in Mexico.[363] They often culminate in Ikua Purdy's celebrated win in Cheyenne and recall the richness of the Spanish-Hawaiian aesthetic of *paniolo* dress,

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[361] W.D. Alexander, "The Relations Between the Hawaiian Islands and Spanish America in Early Times," Read Before the Hawaiian Historical Society, January 28, 1892: 11 (University of Hawai'i Manoa Hawaiian Collection)
[362] Edgy Lee, *Paniolo O Hawai'i*, 1997 (Film).
[363] *See* Billy Bergen, *Loyal to the Land: The Legendary Parker Ranch, 750-1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004); *The Parker Ranch of Hawai'i*; Virginia Cowan-Smith, *Aloha Cowboy* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988); Illima Loomis, *Rough Riders: Hawai'i's Paniolos and Their Stories* (Waipahu: Island Heritage Publishing, 2006); Richard W. Slatta, "Cradle of Hawai'i's Paniolo," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, 54.2 (Summer, 2004): 2-19.

song, and rope steering. While many do not further historicize the Wild West shows that took place in Hawai'i on an annual basis afterwards (becoming the present-day rodeo show featured at Fourth-of-July and other events), another noticeable absence from these histories is the progressive wresting of ranch lands, and hence the ranching economy, from native Hawaiians to Anglo American colonialists. This dispossession of native cattle ranching land, similar to the land seized by Anglo sugar planters, was formalized by the land division, or Great Mahele, of 1848. The conditions for this dispossession of land were set, in fact, during the first three decades of the nineteenth century that such narratives depict as one of straightforward, productive, transpacific exchange.

The ali'i had begun to adopt and interpret norms, customs, and laws introduced by Christian missionaries in the islands; these included religious values of self-discipline and self-control and disciplinary systems like prisons, judge, and police officers.[364] Through her deft readings of these legal and cultural shifts, Sally Engle Merry observes a central irony to the re-ordering of Hawai'i in the first half of the nineteenth century, namely that at the very moment Hawaiians were adopting liberal mode of governance they were also interpreted by these legal and cultural practices as unfit for self-governance. Moreover, she observes, the ali'i understood that the adoption of liberalism (i.e. a constitutional monarchy and legal system) as necessary for securing sovereignty in the larger global context of the mid nineteenth century.[365] However, the opening up of Hawaiian lands to foreign purchase, in addition to

[364] Sally Engle Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i: The Cultural Power of Law* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), 44-45 and 82.
[365] Ibid., 83-84.

decades of incorporation of Western liberalism into Hawaiian government and social life, would eventually lead to native Hawaiian dispossession. Under the new mode of property ownership, control over the land moved from the hands of ruling chiefs to the population at large, whereby a fee simple system made it possible for individuals (both native Hawaiians and foreigners) to own land. The new land laws ere an extension of the agrarian values introduced by Western missionaries and capitalists in that it was based on the belief that "private landownership by commoners would give them a sense of their rights separate from the rights of chiefs, and that it would designate something that they owned as a way of enhancing their independence, self-respect, and desire to work the land."[366]

For a variety of reasons that Merry reviews (such as unfamiliarity with the new land ownership practices, the short period for filing land claims, etc.) this shift culminated not in equal access to land ownership across Hawaiian social strata but rather the very swift dispossession of the common people, who owned less than 1 percent of land by 1855.[367] The division of all Hawaiian lands in 1850s, called the Great Mahele, mostly benefited alien residents like American missionaries and businessmen and paved the way for their ownership of the highly lucrative sugar plantation system by the 1860s. As Haunani-Kay Trask observes in *From a Native Daughter*, the Hawaiian monarchy was not passive in the face of these changes but ceded to white colonial pressures in an effort to preserve Hawaiian independence.[368]

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[366] Ibid., 93-94
[367] Ibid., 94.
[368] Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 7.

That was the case, as she explains, when King Kamehameha III agreed to the *Mahele* when he feared outright British takeover and when King Liholiho agreed to a reciprocity treaty in 1854 to appease the demands of sugar planters. The ali'i who desired to profit from cattle ranching lands were likewise strategic in accepting land reform as necessary to secure property rights. Court cases concerning ownership of feral cattle in following the *Mahele* set legal precedents for further securing the supremacy of Euro-American property laws, and, as in the well-known case of John Palmer Parker, white Americans owned most of the ranch lands and native Hawaiians engaged in the industry mostly as laborers.[369]

In her memoirs, cowgirl Inez Ashdown recounts how her father, Angus MacPhee, was manager of the Ulupalakua Ranch on Maui and, along with other cattlemen, played an influential role in the development of Wild West shows in Hawai'i. MacPhee had been a member of Buffalo Bill Cody's outfit on the mainland and was a champion rope steering, breaking all existing records at the 1907 Frontier Days celebration in Cheyenne, Wyoming. MacPhee's performance in Cheyenne impressed a visiting ranch manager from Hawai'i, Eben Low, who convinced MacPhee to help him hold Hawai'i's first Wild West show. The show in Honolulu in December 1907 featured many events of Buffalo Bill Cody show: roping and tying contests, bucking broncos, and even a representation of a stagecoach holdup in which Comanche Indians attack a pioneer's coach as it makes its way across the prairie.

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[369] As Fischer illuminates in the legal archive and official records, native Hawaiians still profited from cattle ranching and "in contrast to the agrarian values espoused by the proponents of the *Maʔhele,* most cattle remained in the hands of the former chiefly landlords of the *ahuʻpuaʻa,* while cattle continued to threaten commoners' crops," 369.

"After that first Wild West Show at Mo-ili-ili Park in Honolulu during December of 1907," Inez recalls in her memoirs, "Papa and Uncle Ben were pardners to promote 'the show game,' and one of their most prominent 'fans' was our beloved Queen Lili-u-o-ka-lani."[370] Through their collaboration, MacPhee also introduced rope steering techniques he had learned as part of Buffalo Bill Cody's show to Hawaiian cowboys, several of whom would actually return to Cheyenne in 1908 to participate in the Frontier Days competition. Although one cowboy, Ikua Purdy, became reigning champion in Cheyenne that year, Hawaiian cowboys remained generally unknown to mainland audiences and mostly participated in shows in Hawai'i, which continued annually in various forms (Wild West shows, county fairs, rodeos, etc.) from 1907 onward, although there were antecedents explored below.

In February 1899, The *Hawaiian Star* reported that a representative of Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West show, Ernest Cooke, arrived in Honolulu to recruit about a dozen native Hawaiian cowboys and half as many hula girls to perform in the show then playing in the U.S. East.[371] He hoped his Hawaiian troupe would leave for New York in March, when they would better tolerate the Northeastern weather, and stay through the summer and fall. He imagined, it seems, that the addition of native Hawaiian performers to Buffalo Bill's Show would complement the existing cast of Native American performers and also bring new interest to the show. "Several of the men who have promised to go come form the Dowsett and Damon ranches and are typical Hawiian cobwoys," the paper reports: "They can ride like Indians, and can

[370] "Cowboys of Hawai'i," Inez Ashdown Column, April 13, 1967, Maui Historical Society, Folder: AR 11 15-20 Ranching 1938, 1967-1976.
[371] *The Hawaiian Star*, February 20, 1899.

look as ferocious as anybody else, even though they are not."[372] Drawn from their usual working lives on Hawaiian cattle ranches, these riders would "create a sensation and be a big card for Buffalo Bill" because of their impressive horsemanship acquired through the unique labors of herding, roping, and branding steer in this Pacific territory. Their appearance would also, in Mr. Cooke's vision, draw "millions of curious people" precisely because of their uncanny resemblance to the Native American riders—or at least the resemblance his show would produce.

Historian Richard Slotkin observes that by 1898 Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show began to present itself as authentic history of this violent encounter while also now serving "almost like a diplomatic branch of the U.S. government, exemplifying the new imperialism that reflected U.S. overseas expansion."[373] Native Hawaiians in the show described above shared with Native Americans the status of subdued primitive subjects of the U.S. empire. At the same time, Native Hawaiians perform as masterful horsemen whose masculine control of wild steer is noble, admirable, and innocuous—a contrast the show's staging encouraged to the Native American performers, who continued to act their usual part of the savages in the mythological frontier wilderness, where "violence and savagery were the necessary instruments of American progress."[374] In this regard, displays of Native Hawaiian masculinity in these shows ran parallel to that of the more widely known image of the Native Hawaiian hula girl. Both were exotic trophies of U.S. overseas imperialism marketed as friendly, romantic, peaceful, embodiments of an aloha spirit that masked the

[372] Ibid.
[373] Slotkin, 82.
[374] Ibid., 77.

violence of U.S. conquest of their native land.[375]

These Hawaiians were in the show for less than a year. Although their performances proved "entirely satisfactory to the management," they chose to return to Hawai'i instead of continuing with the show in Paris, which they considered "too far from home."[376] While in the U.S., however, they worked for the show as well as spent time taking in the sights of New York, Boston, and Chicago. As one performer, Killiona, recounts, they saw "The Brooklyn bridge and the tunnels under the Chicago river" and also visited Queen Lili'uokalani in Washington D.C., over all reporting to have had "an immense time and made money" before returning to the former jobs in Hawai'i. At once spectacles of primitivism that helped consolidate imperialist ideologies of the United States' global civilizing mission, the native Hawaiians on tour here were also exactly that: tourists with perhaps limited but meaningful mobility to see the world beyond their home and enjoy it with an income.[377]

The first "Cowboy Contest" in Hawai'i was organized in 1905 by Eben Low. "It was Cowboys' Day yesterday, with a vengeance," *The Hawaiian star* reported:

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[375] As Adria Imada observes: "Hawaiian women produced a feminized version of Hawai'i on stage, offering their aloha—the promise of intimacy, affection, and veneration—to the United States through live hula performances. The dreams spun out of steel guitars, ukuleles, and grass skirts made the distant territory familiar to those who had never visited the islands and made American military and tourist expansion seem benign." "Hawaiians on Tour: Hula Circuits through the American Empire," *American Quarterly* 56.1 (2004): 111-149.

[376] "Hawaiians return to Hawai'i," *The Hawaiian Star*, November 09, 1899.

[377] This report concurs with L.G. Moses's argument in his study of show Indians in Buffalo Bill Cody's shows, namely, "It would be wrong to see Show Indians as simply dupes, or pawns, or even victims. It would be better to approach them as persons who earned a fairly good living between the era of the Dawes Act and the Indian New Deal playing themselves, re-creating a very small portion of their histories, and enjoying it." (279) *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians: 1883-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 279.

"Wherever you went you met cowboys of various nationalities and of all ages and the solo topic of conversation was cowboys and their feats."[378] The event represented the ethnic diversity of Hawaiian cowboys, who competed in bucking bronco, roping and tying, and wild steer riding contests. While there is no trace of mainland pioneering days in this show, this feature was introduced, as explained above, after Low's trip to Cheyenne. At the 1907 Wild West Show in Honolulu, he would introduce Angus Mac Phee of Buffalo Bill Cody's show to a Hawaiian audience and, as his daughter Inez recounts, also teach *paniolos* "the tricks of the trade" he had learned from his old friend Buffalo Bill Cody."[379] According to the narrative told in the local Hawaiian papers, the 1907 Wild West Show was less a restaging of American history as told through Buffalo Bill Cody and more a competition between the well-matched cowboys of Wyoming and Hawai'i. MacPhee is presented as the "world champion" who had proved himself in the U.S. West and will now be tested in Honolulu, the stage of the latest "world championship" cowboy competition. By the same token, Hawaiian cowboys from across the islands' ranches were expected to prove themselves to both MacPhee and their home audience.[380] The newspapers hyped the event as a showdown between native Hawaiian cowboys and Anglo-American

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[378] *The Hawaiian Star*, October 23, 1905, Second Edition: Page Seven.
[379] "Cowboys of Hawai'i," Inez Ashdown Column, April 13, 1967, Maui Historical Society, Folder: AR 11 15-20 Ranching 1938, 1967-1976.
[380] For the narrative provided in this epilogue, I refer to native Hawaiian cowboys, but as my preliminary research in collections such as the "Carter Collection Photos" at the Paniolo Preservation Society and photo collection in the Kona Historical Society on the Big Island have shown me, the ethnicity of Hawaiian cowboys reflects the history of nineteenth-century Asian immigration to Hawai'i. A future direction of my study of Wild West shows in Hawai'i will include analysis of the many photographs of Asian-Hawaiian cowboys I encountered in these collections.

competitors, however, the Wyoming visitors, accounts show, were either late to, injured by, or simply the losers of events on the island. Given their training in roping, steering and riding—set in motion through their earlier contact with *vaqueros* from Mexico (a divergent modernity of the west)—what did Hawai'i's *paniolos* have to prove? Why wouldn't they win?

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Figures

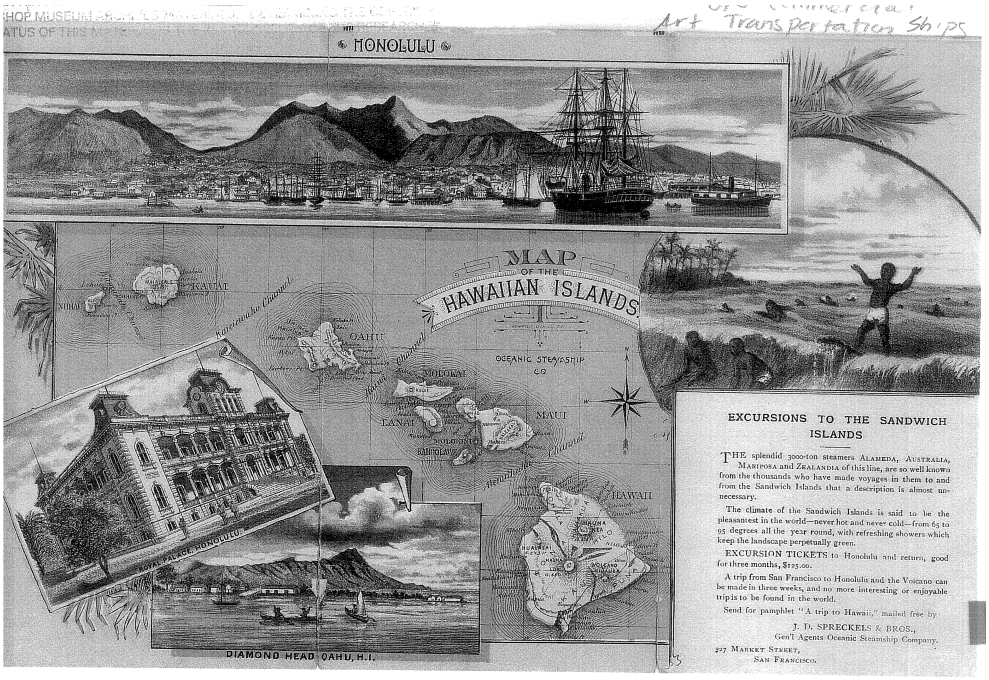

Figure 1: Claus Spreckels's Oceanic Steamship Company Brochure (Bishop Museum)

TOASTING CARDS AT KILAUEA.

Figure 2: Toasting Postcards at Haleakala, from "The aloha guide: the standard handbook of Honolulu and the Hawaiian Islands for travelers and residents with a historical resume," by Ferdinand J.H. Schnack, 1915 (University of Hawaii Manoa, Hawaiian Collection)

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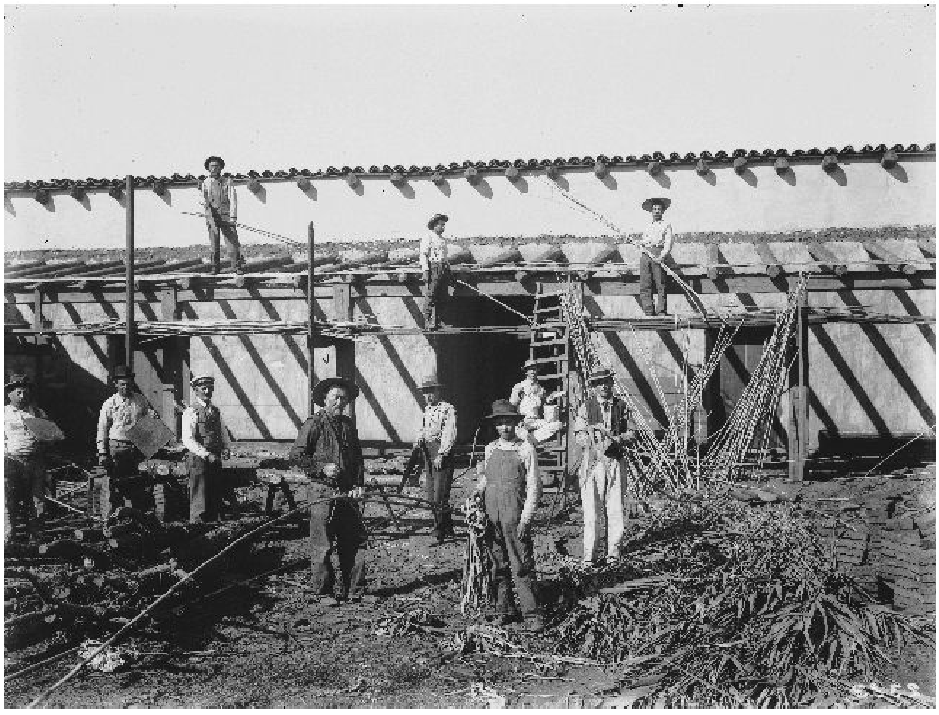

Figure 5: Workers “Restoring” Ramona's Marriage Place, 1909 (Photograph, Online Archive of California)

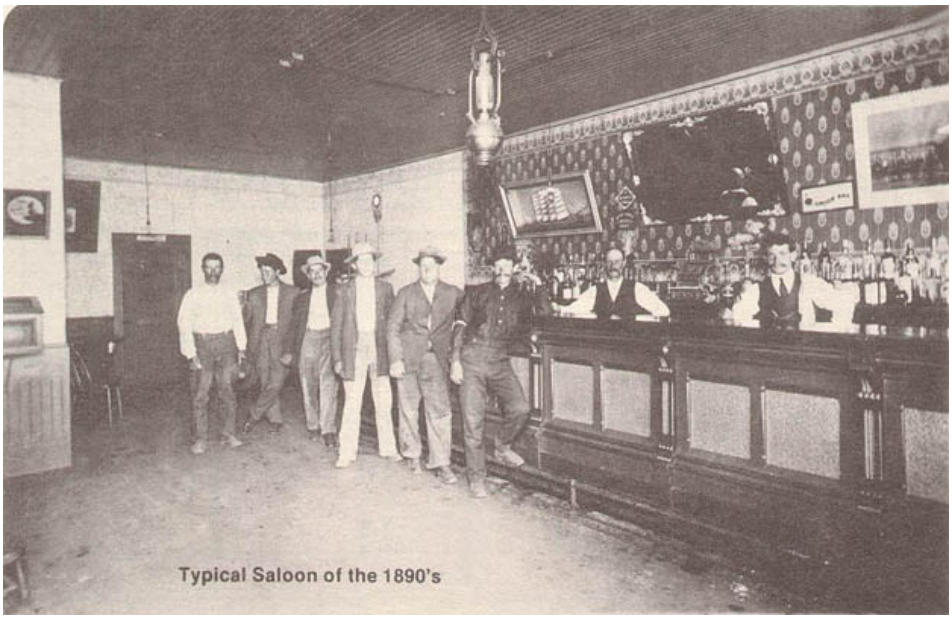

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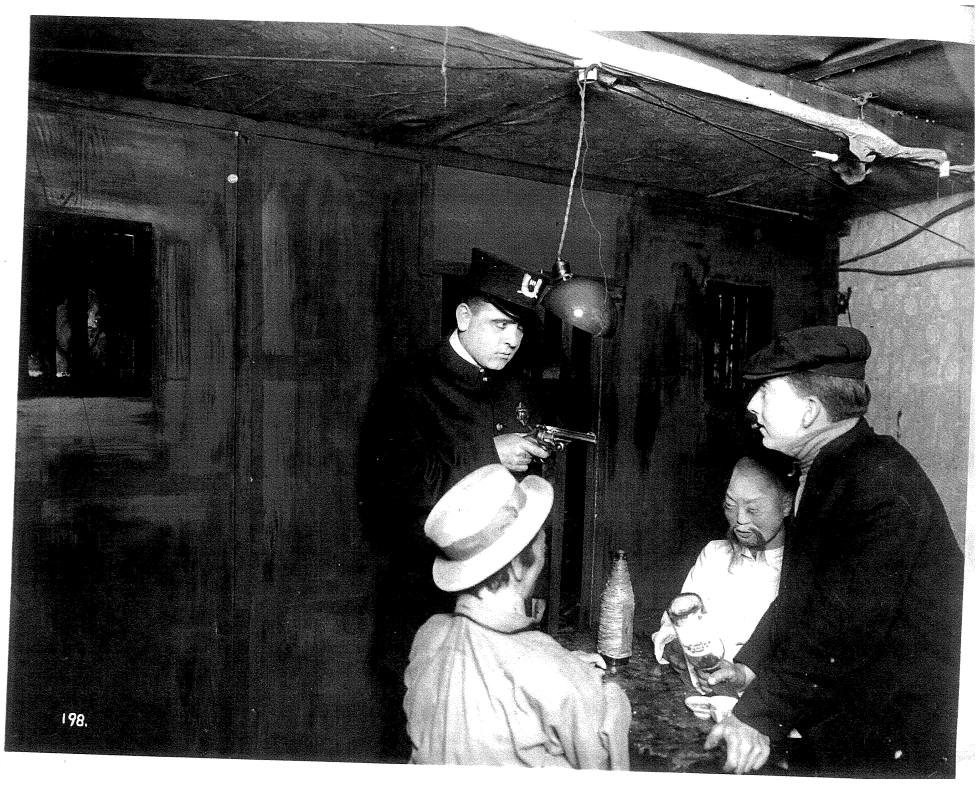
Figure 9: Entrance to the Isthmus Amusement Zone, San Diego Exposition, 1915 (San Diego History Center)

Figure 10: Entrance to "Underground Chinatown," San Diego Exposition, 1915 (San Diego History Center)



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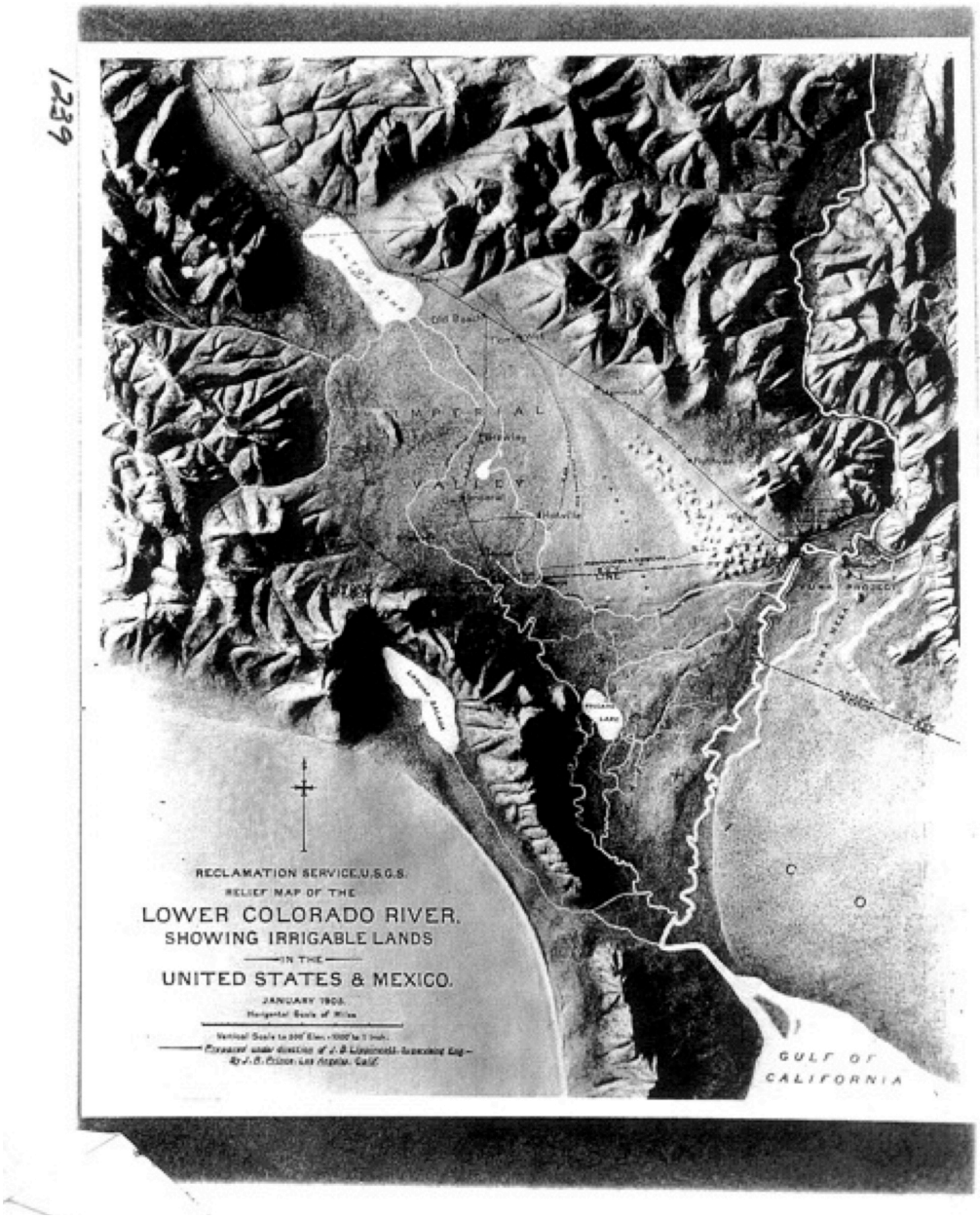

Figure 13: United States Geological Survey, Relief Map of the Lower Colorado River, 1905 (San Diego History Center)

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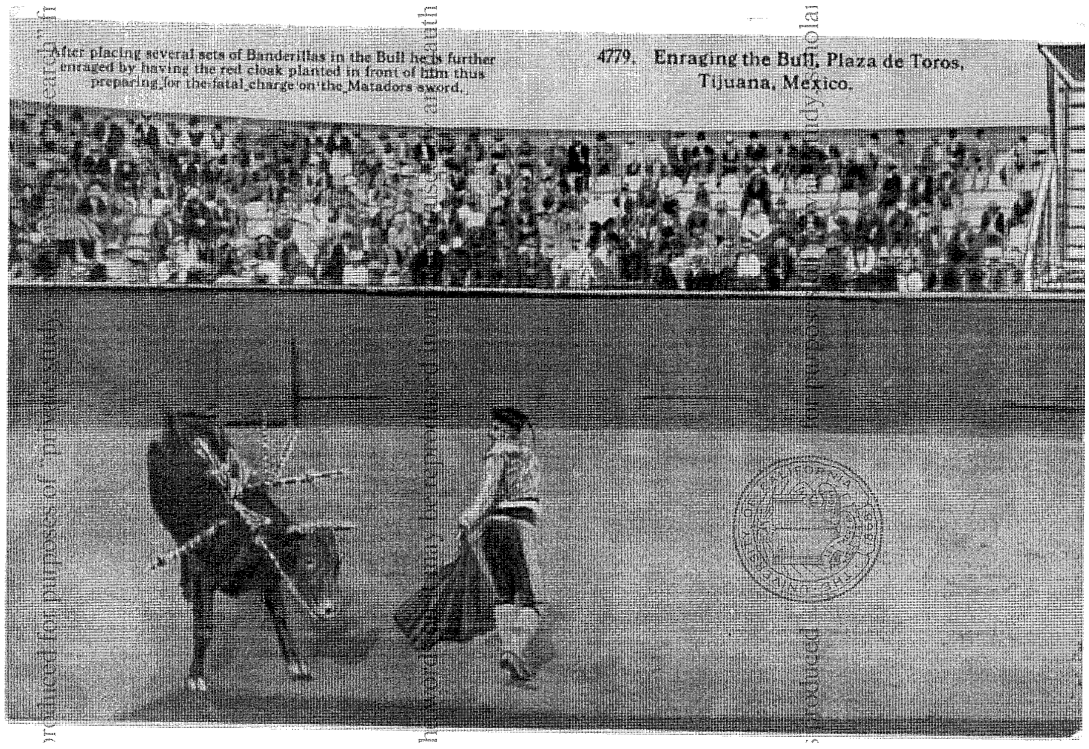

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