

**‘Where the Races Meet’:  
Racial Framing through Live Display  
at the American West Coast World’s  
Fairs, 1894-1916**

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# List of West Coast World's Fairs

## **San Francisco (1894)**

California Midwinter International Exposition

27 January - 4 July 1894

Midway known as the 'Midway'

## **Portland (1905)**

Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific and Oriental Fair

1 June - 15 October 1905

Midway known as the 'Trail'

## **Seattle (1909)**

Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition

1 June - 16 October 1909

Midway known as the 'Pay Streak'

## **San Francisco (1915)**

Panama-Pacific International Exposition

20 February - 4 December 1915

Midway known as the 'Zone'

## **San Diego (1915-1916)**

Panama California Exposition (1915), renamed Panama California International Exposition (1 January 1916)

1 January 1915 - 1 January 1917

Midway known as the 'Isthmus'

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# Abstract

## **'Where the Races Meet': Racial Framing through Live Display at the American West Coast World's Fairs, 1894-1916**

**Emily J. Trafford**

This thesis examines the live exhibition of Native American, Chinese, Japanese, Alaskan, Hawaiian, Samoan, and Filipino people on the midways of five West Coast world's fairs (San Francisco, 1894; Portland, 1905; Seattle, 1909; San Francisco, 1915; San Diego, 1915-1916). I situate the world's fairs as significant sites of racialisation at a time of intense westward expansion, and recognise the West Coast as a key location at which various processes of expansion occurred, and at which the human relationships associated with these processes were negotiated. Foregrounding conflicting and interrelated concerns about continental expansion, immigration, trade, empire, and international diplomacy, and featuring the voices and practices of anthropologists, politicians, foreign dignitaries, colonial elites, local non-white residents, fair visitors, and the performers themselves, I examine how various race-making agents framed the populations as inferior, non-white Others.

Adapting various existing images of these disparate foreign and domestic populations, exposition exhibitors and mediators used a number of exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies to visualise America's newly international and Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy. Sharing modes of exhibition and racial narratives between the 'ethnic villages' on the midway, these exposition actors and race-making agents contributed to the emergence of an explicitly comparative form of racial ordering that situated the 'red', 'yellow', and 'brown' races within the imagined household of the American Pacific. This thesis demonstrates how exposition midways helped to solidify notions of racial difference by providing legible and comparative spectacles of non-whiteness, and by inculcating white visitors with skills of racial identification and hierarchisation. I argue that by operating within and contributing towards an overarching framework of white supremacy, the world's fairs scripted a flexible form of superior whiteness that allowed visitors to negotiate the rapid changes in local, national, and international racial dynamics. Analysing the vast and under-utilised exposition archive, alongside photographs, souvenirs, newspapers, and concomitant racialising texts, and synthesising the methods and literatures of race and exhibition, this thesis contributes to the growing literature on the broad significance of racial formation on America's West Coast, by building a critical and comparative examination of this racialisation site.

## Introduction:

### ‘The Color Line Belts the World’

In October 1906, black activist and University professor W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in *Collier's Weekly* magazine that the problem of the twentieth century was the problem of the “Color Line”, and the “Color Line Belts the World”. Referring to the expansion of European nations into the territories of “darker peoples”, Du Bois’ statement also reflected the internationalisation of America’s race relations at the turn of the twentieth century. While the nation had grappled with its Native American and black populations for centuries, this period marked a reorientation of the nation towards its racially diverse West Coast, increasing contact with Asia and a growing concern about the “awakening of the yellow races”, and the development of America’s own overseas imperialist endeavours.<sup>1</sup> The problem of the colour line in turn of the twentieth century America was therefore no longer one that followed the black/white binary, or that was confined to the domestic population. Instead, it incorporated many populations, and was an issue that various race-making agents would seek to negotiate in a place and site “where the races meet”.<sup>2</sup> In an age of relatively limited international travel beyond routes of migration and trade, the physical coalescence of Native American, Chinese, Japanese, Alaskan, Hawaiian, Samoan,

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<sup>1</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘The Color Line Belts the World’, *Collier's Weekly*, 20 October 1906, p.30.

<sup>2</sup> *Official Souvenir of Ground Breaking by President William H. Taft for the Panama Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915, October 14, 1911* (San Francisco: Blair-Murdock Co., 1911), in folder 13, box 12, Expositions and Fairs Collection, 344, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.



Filipino, and white American peoples was more likely to occur on a world's fair midway than any other site on the American mainland.

World's fairs – also known as international expositions – emerged in France and Britain in the mid-nineteenth century, and were designed to showcase the host nation's industrial progress and artistic achievements. Over time, expositions grew in size and scope, functioning as nationalistic celebrations, proponents of mass consumption, developers of new entertainment mediums, and arenas for international competition and comparison. Despite an inauspicious debut, the world's fair in America became a central and regular form of cultural celebration, with fourteen fairs taking place between 1853 and 1916; half of which occurred in the fifteen years following the hugely successful exposition in Chicago (1893). In the American setting, the exposition quickly developed a standard organisational structure. Organised by local entrepreneurs, supported by the federal government, and featuring international participants, world's fair grounds featured a range of official buildings and a discrete area dedicated to amusement concessions. The central palaces and plazas brought together exhibits of the participating nations' manufactures and institutions, and the uniform architecture and landscaping promoted a vision of an ordered, modern, and urban utopia. The amusement area – known as the 'midway' – brought together fairground rides, souvenir and food stands, and live performances from various racial and national groups in 'ethnic villages'. Operated by private concessionaires and overseen by the exposition management, the midway acted as a key social space at the fairs, promising visitors entertainment and novelty within a clearly

defined yet incorporated exposition site.<sup>3</sup> The midway is the central site of this study.

This thesis examines the live exhibition of the above non-white populations at five turn of the twentieth century West Coast world's fairs (San Francisco, 1894; Portland, 1905; Seattle, 1909; San Francisco, 1915; San Diego, 1915-1916). I focus on these groups as significant populations caught up in the era of intense American westward expansion, and centre my study on the turn of the twentieth century West Coast in recognition of the region's position as a launching pad for a number of expansionary processes, and its leading role in defining the human relationships that accompanied those processes. While these populations themselves are central characters in this study, I focus primarily on the individuals and institutions that exhibited and mediated representations of them, as I recognise that the racial identities presented on the world's fair midways were ultimately fabrications. Positioning the West Coast world's fairs as sites of racialisation requires the recognition of a number of interrelated processes, concepts, and actors that allowed these exhibitionary sites to compound and constitute racial knowledge, and to package racial constructions as legible spectacles. This thesis therefore foregrounds interrelated concerns about continental expansion, immigration, trade, empire, and international diplomacy, and draws connections between conceptions of race and space.

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<sup>3</sup> I discuss the organisation and layout of the world's fairs in greater detail in chapter 2. For more on the history of world's fairs and midways, see Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); John E. Findling and Kimberley D. Pelle (eds.), *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions, 1851-1988* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, Gilles Boëtsch, Eric Deroo, Sandrine Lemaire, and Charles Forsdick (eds.), *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008).

Alongside exposition organisers and concession owners, I feature the voices and practices of anthropologists, politicians, foreign dignitaries, colonial elites, local non-white residents, fair visitors, and – where possible – the performers themselves. As simultaneously local, national, and international sites, produced and consumed by white Americans yet with non-white peoples central to their organisation and purpose, world's fairs not only functioned as mirrors of America's increasingly diverse society, but were deeply implicated in shaping the core relationships that structured that diversity.<sup>4</sup> The production of racial knowledge at the fairs was an intensely collaborative and conflicted act, dependent upon a number of needs, desires, and accommodations. At times, exhibitors and mediators diverged in their intentions, and non-white performers, dignitaries, and local residents resisted the racial identities conferred upon them. My intention here is to demonstrate that the West Coast world's fair midways played a significant role in producing, negotiating, and disseminating racial knowledge at a key moment in the nation's expansionary history.

This thesis moves beyond the black/white dichotomy central to American race study to examine the less-studied interstices, and the production of racial identities extended to those designated as 'red', 'yellow', and 'brown'.<sup>5</sup> I build on recent movements in the literature that have shifted the lens of American race study to the West Coast, where such racial patterns emerged and had to be negotiated. Long recognised as the nation's frontier, I position the West Coast as an interstitial location that looked back towards the rest of the

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<sup>4</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, p.237.

<sup>5</sup> Due to this focus, I do not include the live exhibition of African and African American people.

continental U.S., and forwards to its future in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>6</sup> In November 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared the emergence of “America’s Pacific Century”.<sup>7</sup> I argue that this regional reorientation has its origins in the events of the turn of the twentieth century, and had profound consequences beyond the theatre of global economics. The shift to the Pacific radically altered America’s race relations, and engendered a far more relational approach to the construction of racial knowledge and patterns. I contend that it is necessary to examine the emergence of the comparative racial ordering of the ‘Pacific races’ at a key moment in the nation’s expansionary history in order to comprehend the nature of racialisation in America, and to grasp the ongoing formation and negotiation of racial identities in the “racial and ethnic mosaic” that exists today.<sup>8</sup> Using the methods of both race and exhibition research demonstrates the process of racial knowledge making and dissemination in a popular culture arena. Incorporating genealogical and comparative approaches reveals the constant negotiation and relational ordering of racial identities, which were frequently conflicted and never finished, yet were always structured by an overarching framework of white supremacy.

I have structured this thesis according to three sections. The first (chapters 1 and 2) provides the conceptual and contextual grounding of the project. Chapter 1 situates my research as primarily concerned with race and exhibition, and gives an extended discussion of the primary sources, methodologies, and existing literatures that structure my approach. Chapter 2

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<sup>6</sup> Due to this focus, I do not reflect on America’s new possessions beyond the Asia-Pacific region, such as Cuba and Puerto Rico.

<sup>7</sup> Hillary Clinton, ‘America’s Pacific Century’, *Foreign Policy*, 189 (2011), pp.56-63.

<sup>8</sup> Joe. R. Feagin, *Racial and Ethnic Relations*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2011), p.1.

functions to contextualise the live exhibits and demonstrates how these sites were inculcated within an overarching framework of white supremacy. The second section (chapters 3 – 5) consists of case studies of the live exhibitions, with each chapter following a similar format in order to emphasise the relative racial framing of each population. Chapter 3 examines the display of Native Americans, and demonstrates how this group functioned as a familiar and flexible model that would go on to inform the exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies of race-making agents as they sought to frame less familiar non-white groups. Chapter 4 focuses on the exhibition of Chinese and Japanese people, and highlights how the tensions between their dual status as domestic aliens and foreign competitors complicated their racialisation. Chapter 5 turns to the displays of the nation’s new imperial subjects, and points to their relative placement within the nation’s newly imperial racial hierarchy.<sup>9</sup> While I separate these groups in recognition of the differing terms of their relationships with the American nation, I consistently draw connections across the three chapters in order to emphasise that the racialisation of these diverse populations was relative and hierarchical. The third section (chapter 6) turns the focus to the fair visitors, and examines how exposition texts, objects, and spaces framed, reinforced, and commemorated their experiences and racial interpretations. I conclude by pointing to further potential lines of enquiry, and reflecting on the continuing relevance of research into race and exhibition.

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<sup>9</sup> I use the term ‘imperial subjects’ here to group together Alaskan, Hawaiian, Samoan, and Filipino peoples. My use of ‘imperial’ reflects the broad definition of the term offered by scholars of American empire, such as Alyosha Goldstein, who describes ‘imperialism’ as the “deliberate extension of a nation’s power and influence over other peoples or places by military, political, or economic means”. Thus, ‘imperialism’ is the “practice of establishing, maintaining, and extending an empire”. This definition reflects America’s relationship with Alaska, Hawaii, Samoa, and the Philippines in the period of my study. Alyosha Goldstein, ‘Introduction: Toward a Genealogy of the U.S. Colonial Present’, in Alyosha Goldstein, *Formations of United States Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), p.10.

Overall, this thesis demonstrates that the turn of the century American West Coast was deeply implicated in a reorientation and renegotiation of both regional and national racial patterns. The early chapters provide a grounding in the literature and methods, and introduce key conceptual frameworks and actors that were central to the race-making process. In the case study chapters, I argue that a number of race-making agents framed the various racial groups that coalesced figuratively and literally on America's Pacific Coast in comparative and hierarchical terms. Finally, I attempt to get inside the world of the visitor in order to understand how white Americans configured and performed their own position within this newly international and Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy.

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# Chapter 1. Race and Exhibition:

## Literatures and Methods

The purpose of this chapter is to position my research within a number of discrete and intersecting literatures, and to outline the central concepts and methodologies that structure my examination of the West Coast world's fair live exhibitions. I argue that the live concessions primarily exhibited race, and that by forging connections between literatures and methods of race and exhibition, it is possible to examine these historical sites as significant agents in the construction of racial knowledge and the maintenance of an overarching system of white supremacy. In a souvenir of the first world's fair held on the West Coast in San Francisco (1894), the author noted:

San Francisco has always been regarded as the most cosmopolitan of American cities. This characteristic has been accentuated by the presence of representatives from so many nations and countries at the Midwinter Exposition ... Men and women from every quarter of the globe here show their racial traits. There are some odd-looking animals to be seen.<sup>1</sup>

Referring to the racially diverse population of San Francisco, the text pointed to the significance of the world's fair as a site of racial exhibition. Framing the exposition as a location that had gathered many populations in order to display their racial qualities, the souvenir promised an illuminating show of the world's

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<sup>1</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes: Being Views of California Midwinter Fair and Famous Scenes in the Golden State: A Series of Pictures Taken by I. W. Taber* (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker, 1894).



various 'races'. While the turn of the twentieth century world's fairs had various functions and a large number of individuals and institutions involved in their organisation, it is important to recognise that these sites were implicated in a larger process of race-making through the vehicle of exhibition. Outlining the central literatures and methods at this stage allows for a chapter structure that examines each case study in depth, and provides the conceptual groundwork for my comparative approach across chapters.

The chapter begins by situating the live exposition displays as sites to examine the process of race-making, and points to the key concepts and theories of race that structure my analysis. The following section turns to exhibition, and discusses the significance of the world's fair archive, the various ways that scholars have used the world's fair site and its sources, and the peculiarities of sites of exhibition in constructing and mediating knowledge. The final section situates this study within a broader historical literature, and outlines new directions, research questions, and methodologies in the cultural history of the American West and of the nation's turn of the twentieth century expansionary impulses. I conclude by drawing together the three sections, and argue that synthesising the literatures and methods of race and exhibition can give new meaning to the West Coast world's fair live displays as historical sites. The concluding section also looks forward to chapter 2, which seeks to position this study within a broader context by outlining the important organisational frameworks and processes that structured the fairs' exhibits of race.

## **Exhibiting Race**

This section situates the live exposition exhibits as vehicles to study race, and demonstrates the broader applicability of the world's fair site when it is used as a case study for research about the production and dissemination of racial knowledge. I begin by very briefly establishing why I have chosen to position world's fair live concessions as a topic of race study, and point to the ways in which the themes of race and exhibition can be fruitfully examined together. I also highlight one particular text that has influenced my research approach and questions. I then turn to the key racial theories and concepts that are central to this study, and outline how ideas such as 'race formation', 'racialisation', and the 'white racial frame' can allow researchers to examine live exhibits as important and revealing sites of race-making.

### ***Situating the World's Fair Live Concessions in the Study of Race***

This project is grounded in the primary and secondary material of world's fairs and exhibitions, and builds upon three decades of scholarship that has recognised the significance of expositions in shaping and reflecting American culture. By applying race methodologies and concepts in a critical and sustained manner, I argue that it is possible to recognise the broader historical and cultural significance of the live exposition display, and to consider the world's fair as a key site that acted to produce and disseminate racial knowledge. By combining the themes of race and exhibition and their related methods, this project situates the West Coast world's fair midways as significant sites in the

construction and visualisation of newly configured racial categories. In recognising the peculiarities of exhibition sites, yet also their broader significance for key questions of racial and social ordering, I hope to contribute to both world's fair scholarship and to histories of race on America's West Coast.

By forging connections between race and exhibition, and examining a site where the two coalesced, I argue that these two areas of research can be more critically and comprehensively analysed. Methods and literatures of race provide a critical lens for the study of exhibition, and point to the wider importance of exhibition sites in negotiating and defining complex and hierarchical racial patterns that were a product of a number of competing contextual processes. Similarly, exhibitionary archives and methods provide a unique opportunity for scholars of race to unpick the contradictory, collaborative, and systemic process of race-making, as they provide a diverse range of sources and theoretically grounded approaches to analyse exhibitionary processes of meaning making. Examining the West Coast live exhibitions as sites of racial formation represents an intervention into a number of historiographies, and demonstrates the utility of an interdisciplinary approach that combines several methodological strands.

Although grounded in the world's fair archive and literature, I situate my research as a cultural history of race on the American West Coast. In this vein, I use Natalia Molina's 2006 work, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Los Angeles, 1879-1939*, as a model for my approach and research questions. Molina examined the role of science and public health in defining racial categories, and

moved beyond binary configurations of race by using comparative and relative approaches that revealed the interconnections in the racialisation of several non-white groups in Los Angeles. She also pointed to the significance of regional racial categories in shaping national practices and patterns of racial order.<sup>2</sup> Like Molina, I am seeking to examine the relative racialisation of several non-white groups on the turn of the twentieth century West Coast, yet I examine the role of exposition exhibitors and mediators in defining those racial categories. Elevating the world's fair as a site of comparable reach and significance to public health and other official institutions, I argue that the complex construction of the live exhibits by a number of key players and against a backdrop of competing interests reflects the presence and maintenance of an overarching system of white supremacy on the West Coast. As a region at which concerns of conquest, immigration, trade, empire, and international power relations coalesced, the turn of the twentieth century West Coast influenced national understandings of and practices towards those non-white populations caught up in the era of intense westward expansion. As Molina's text made valuable contributions to the histories of race and public health in the American West, I hope that this thesis will add to the literatures of both race and exhibition.

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<sup>2</sup> See Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

### ***Racial Formation***

Drawn from the fields of sociology, legal studies, and cultural studies, critical race theory emerged in response to the limitations of existing theoretical models of race in the United States. Social scientists throughout the twentieth century had overlooked the institutional and ideological nature of race, and had disregarded the specificity and centrality of racial conflict within the nation. In the last forty years, racial theory models have emphasised the socially constructed nature of race and the systemic presence of racism in American society. Sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant provided a number of concepts that attempted to address the theoretical shortfalls in the study of race, and their seminal 1986 monograph on race-making in the second half of the twentieth century has been influential to my approach to the study of world's fair live exhibits. Treating race as a central axis of social relations, their concept of 'racial formation' establishes the process by which social, economic, and political forces "determine the content and importance of racial categories, and by which they are in turn shaped by racial meanings".<sup>3</sup> This reciprocal relationship between race and society emphasises the fluid, unfixed nature of racial categories, their tendency to alter and transform across time and space, and the role of race-making agents in maintaining and reformulating racial boundaries. The twentieth century West Coast context is therefore inseparable from the world's fair live exhibits and their role in shaping regional and national racial patterns.

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1986), pp.10-11; p.61.

In addition, Omi and Winant's recognition of race as a sociohistorical concept allows researchers to move beyond the traditional black/white paradigm of American race relations, and encourages "multi-ethnic" studies that examine the formation of multiple racial categories.<sup>4</sup> By providing an opportunity to assess multiple racial groups comparatively, the world's fair midways visualised and reinforced a relative and hierarchical racial order that reflected racial patterns on the West Coast, and indicated new patterns of racial relations in the recently expanded nation. Omi and Winant have stated that the seemingly obvious and natural qualities of a racial order demonstrate the effectiveness of the racial formation process in constructing racial identities. Various exhibitionary strategies and racialisation techniques naturalised the groups' inferior position within the racial order and in relation to one another. As the midway became progressively divorced from its anthropological connections, this space obscured the unequal and violent relationships that subordinated its performers, and exhibitors based the performers' constructed racial identities on more trivial features. The midway therefore functioned as a site of "racialization". Omi and Winant have used this term to describe the process of extending racial meaning to a previously unclassified relationship, practice, or group. The historically specific and ideological process of racialisation draws upon pre-existing concepts and emerges from competing discourses to structure and define racial categories.<sup>5</sup> World's fair exhibitors and mediators negotiated local, national, and international racial discourses to construct the racial identities of their performers, and to structure the

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<sup>4</sup> Natalia Molina, 'Contested Bodies and Cultures: The Politics of Public Health and Race Within Mexican, Japanese, and Chinese Communities in Los Angeles, 1879-1939' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 2001), p.12.

<sup>5</sup> Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, pp.62-64.

relationship between the various populations on the midway and the white audiences that observed them.

As racial theorists have agreed that race is a social construct that is neither fixed nor biologically determined, it has become necessary to establish models that explain how individuals and societies perceive and understand race in everyday situations, and how racial hierarchies are formed. Omi and Winant have claimed that the absorption of a “racial etiquette” – a set of rules and codes that determine an individual’s conduct – allows race to become “common sense”.<sup>6</sup> While this basic framework is helpful for thinking about how people learn about race and put those lessons into practice, Joe Feagin has taken this model further in his conception of a deeply embedded American worldview he terms the “white racial frame”. This concept suggests that various racialised stereotypes, narratives, images, language accents, emotions, and inclinations towards discriminatory action, become embedded in a nation’s collective consciousness, and consequently function to structure an individual’s interpretations and actions by providing form and meaning to racial encounters.<sup>7</sup> The live displays both reflected and contributed to this overarching framework of white superiority, as they absorbed and visualised its constituent parts. This notion of an overarching white racial frame is central to my examination of the exposition concessions, as I argue that individuals and institutions acting both within and outside of the world’s fairs operated according to this worldview, and with white racial framing agendas structuring their actions and interpretations.

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<sup>6</sup> Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, p.62.

<sup>7</sup> Joe R. Feagin, *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing* (London: Routledge, 2010), p.10-11.

The models and frameworks put forward by Feagin allow for a critical analysis of the world's fair live exhibits, and demonstrate that these sites belonged to a much broader process of racial formation. Feagin has claimed that central to the white racial frame are "big picture" narratives that link sub-frame elements into emotional and "historically oriented" stories of white achievement. These narratives provide structure to events, performances, and moments of racial encounter, which in turn "feed and add to" the frame.<sup>8</sup> The big picture narratives of world's fairs celebrated American progress in a manner that obscured the historical and contemporary violence of expansion and exclusion, and made American advancement appear inevitable due to the supposed inferiority of other races and nations. This overarching story drew together narratives such as 'Manifest Destiny', the 'Noble Savage', the 'Yellow Peril', and the 'White Man's Burden' to demonstrate the supposed inevitability of white supremacy and to justify the means of maintaining it. World's fair exhibitors and mediators scripted these racial narratives and identities on to the bodies of the live performers, which in turn visualised, popularised, and naturalised their content and meaning.

Visitors played a fundamental role in reifying the importance of the exhibition structure, and Feagin's theoretical frameworks can provide a useful window into the visitor experience. Feagin has talked of a "tool kit" that individuals subconsciously draw upon in moments of racial contact. This tool kit is constituted of the elementary parts of the white racial frame – often the key words and ideas that take form in racial epithets and stereotypes – which

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<sup>8</sup> Feagin, *The White Racial Frame*, pp.12-13.



function to activate broader ideas.<sup>9</sup> The live displays provided visitors with opportunities to utilise and build upon this tool kit. The visual format of the exhibit exploited established stereotypes and basic understandings to create an easily consumable and seemingly authentic racial identity. The various representations of this identity – whether in the live performance or in textual descriptions – prompted the visitor to draw upon other elements of the racial frame to substantiate and elaborate their understandings. In this manner, the simple depiction of a ‘savage native’ could embody a range of cultural, political, and anthropological narratives.

The live display both contributed to and reinforced the visitors’ racial tool kit by providing a prolonged opportunity for a comparative assessment of non-white populations. In the British exhibitionary context, Sadiah Qureshi has described the figure of the “urban spectator”, who saw value in observing diversity in the city streets, and contributed to a “culture of visual inspection” that created a consumer market for live human exhibits. Already enacting the racial tool kit before the fair gates opened, the urban spectator attended live displays in order to render the diversity on the city streets legible, and to build upon their racial assessment skills for post-exhibit racial encounters.<sup>10</sup> Although live displays were ephemeral events, their impact upon the behaviour and attitudes of visitors was long lasting. Whether the live display shaped, reinforced, or altered existing understandings of race, it would have consequences for subsequent instances of racial encounter. The racialised ideas and narratives on display spilled out on to the city streets through press

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<sup>9</sup> Feagin, *The White Racial Frame*, p.13.

<sup>10</sup> Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.16, p.34.

accounts, postcards, commemorative publications, and through the interpretative skills of the urban spectator.

## **The World of Fairs**

This project uses the world's fair site as a case study to examine the complex process of racialisation on the turn of the twentieth century West Coast. World's fairs were ephemeral events: years in the making, several months in duration, and consisting of temporary structures and landscapes. Yet researchers should not mistake the transience of the events for inconsequence or obscurity. Fortunately the urge to document, regulate, remember, and share the exposition experience has left the historian with a rich and varied archive. In this section, I discuss the content and scope of the world's fair archive, the problems and possibilities inherent in its sources, and the potential for additional materials to supplement the archival world of the fairs. I argue that the range of world's fair materials facilitates a detailed and multifaceted study of the exposition as a site of racialisation. I then turn to examine the current state of world's fair literature, and point to the varied ways in which researchers have used the world's fair archive and site over time. In using the world's fair as a case study, I make interventions into the literature of expositions, particularly in applying racial theoretical models and comparative approaches, and in focusing on the events on the West Coast. The final subsection focuses on the methods and approaches of museology, and argues that it

is necessary to recognise the peculiarities of an exhibitionary site of racialisation. In 1992, the eminent world's fair historian Robert Rydell contributed to a published bibliography detailing the recently microfilmed, major world's fair collection held by the Smithsonian Institution. This section uses Rydell's introductory essay on the history, historiography, and primary sources of the world's fair as a launching point, drawing upon his ever-relevant ideas, and bringing them in line with recent scholarship and new directions in exposition study.

### ***The World's Fair Archive: Problems and Possibilities***

The world's fair archive is disconnected and disparate, and thus reflective of the varied functions and scope of international expositions, and the contradictory and collaborative aspects of their form. The local organisational impetus of the Progressive Era fairs furnished state historical collections, public libraries, and universities with a range of textual and photographic materials, and institutional involvement secured a place for official documents in national archives. The breadth and diversity of the world's fairs has resulted in a number of themed collections, and efforts to make world's fair collections more accessible and interactive through microfilm and digitisation projects have made it easier for researchers outside of the U.S. to conduct effective primary research. In this project, I have made use of a variety of exposition archives with

full acknowledgement that a comprehensive evaluation of all available sources would be unfeasible.<sup>11</sup>

Holding institutions define and organise the content of world's fair collections. General collections of multiple world's fairs in university libraries and national institutions are often uneven and haphazard, with the majority of materials relating to the larger and better-known events, and little uniformity in the types of materials held for each exposition.<sup>12</sup> Often collated for purposes of posterity and civic pride, local collections are frequently comprehensive yet necessarily limited by local interests, and private and digital collections tend to be determined by the availability or reproducibility of items. The fragmented nature of the world's fair archive complicates attempts to produce a comparative and regionally oriented analysis of five West Coast world's fairs. I have therefore taken an inclusionary approach to the source material, rejecting items on the basis of relevance to my research questions, and accepting that the source base for each fair would not be equal. As a result, I use a varied exposition source base, which I supplement with popular and scientific works that acted as separate yet interconnected agents of racialisation, and West Coast newspapers and magazines that acted as responsive and reflective vehicles of racial narrative. Referencing anthropologist Clifford Geertz, Robert Rydell has noted that the mass and variety of published and unpublished exposition materials enables a "thick description" of the events and their meanings.<sup>13</sup> My

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<sup>11</sup> The collections I have used were largely selected for their applicability to the project, however the availability of fellowships and other practical issues contributed to the selection process.

<sup>12</sup> General collections tend to favour the expositions at Chicago (1893), St Louis (1904), and the large fairs of the mid-twentieth century.

<sup>13</sup> Robert W. Rydell (ed.), *The Books of the Fairs: Materials about World's Fairs, 1834-1916, in the Smithsonian Institution Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1992), p.56.

inclusive approach represents an attempt to understand the world's fair as a site that had a reciprocal relationship with the pervasive racial order from which it emerged.

It is possible to divide my source base into several broad categories, and to define what each type of source can reveal. Exposition guidebooks are particularly useful for analysing the live exhibits, although researchers must use them with caution. As Rydell has noted, these sources can be unreliable as they failed to reflect changes in the content of exhibits, particularly on the midway which was prone to concession closures.<sup>14</sup> In addition, while some guidebooks were official publications controlled by the exposition management, others were produced by large publishing houses with varying levels of involvement with the expositions.<sup>15</sup> If properly contextualised and corroborated with other sources, guidebooks are an excellent starting point for questions of concession content and mediation. Guidebooks provide textual and visual representations of the live exhibits, with descriptions of the performers and the content of their performances, and point to the role of exposition texts in guiding visitor experiences. Catherine Cocks has stated that urban tourism and fairgoing at the turn of the twentieth century still required a didactic purpose if they were to be seen as “respectable entertainments”.<sup>16</sup> The guidebooks in my source set are often prescriptive, advising readers about the most interesting exhibits and the racial lessons that these exhibits could convey. Visitors undoubtedly strayed

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See also Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973). Geertz's term 'thick description' refers to the explanation of human behaviours that not only describes the behaviour, but also the contexts that give that behaviour meaning.

<sup>14</sup> Rydell (ed.), *The Books of the Fairs*, p.50.

<sup>15</sup> It is not always possible to ascertain whether exposition texts have official links, but I will point out these affiliations where possible.

<sup>16</sup> Catherine Cocks, *Doing the Town: The Rise of Urban Tourism in the United States, 1850-1915* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p.167.

from these instructions, yet the texts can offer an insight into their experience, and demonstrate the efforts of exhibitors to structure and mediate the fairgoers' racial encounters.

Other promotional materials can similarly be analysed. A variety of printed matter such as daily programs, leaflets about particular concessions, and promotional booklets published by railroad companies and local businesses, outlined detailed information about the expositions and their host cities. Published regularly throughout an exposition's run, these texts provide more reliable information about changes to concessions than fair guidebooks, and demonstrate the range of mediators that sought to intervene in the staging of the host city. Yet this source set also presents certain difficulties. Katherine Ott has claimed that historians tend to either dismiss ephemera outright, or erroneously perceive it as a pure and unmediated source. While neither approach is helpful, Ott points out that the cultural entrepreneurs that produced ephemera assumed the "voice of the masses" in order to promote the consumption of their wares and ideas.<sup>17</sup> Reading promotional ephemera in this way allows the texts to act as a reflection of broader ideologies, expectations, and actors; in this case pointing to the racial narratives and assumptions that interested parties exploited for commercial value. The deconstruction of texts that draw upon aspirations, anxieties, and notions of identity in their promotion, reveals the dominant cultural values of a particular time and place.<sup>18</sup> Using ephemera in conjunction with other materials can mitigate the source

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<sup>17</sup> Katherine Ott, 'Reading Paper Ephemera: Issues in Interpreting Nineteenth-Century Graphics', *Popular Culture in Libraries*, 4.2 (1997), p.12.

<sup>18</sup> Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), p.2.

type's inherent problems, while also avoiding a top-down narrative that privileges official channels of exposition narrative.

Commemorative exposition texts, published in the months and years after the fair gates closed, provide information on the day-to-day running of the events, and point to the legacy and reach of the fairs beyond their temporal and spatial limits. Taking several forms, including photographic collections and histories, these retrospective accounts detail useful background information, such as the fairs' management structure, visits from foreign commissioners, attendance statistics, and special days celebrating a particular country. Often commissioned by the exposition management, these texts are frequently uncritical, celebratory narratives. As published texts, their prominence in the archives demonstrates that the fair lived on in the public imagination, and James Gilbert has pointed to the significance of such texts in shaping collective memories of the events even to the present day.<sup>19</sup> Visitor accounts in scrapbooks, postcards, letters, diaries, and published memoirs, are rare yet extremely useful sources. Although infrequent and often inconsistent, visitor-authored sources provide an unparalleled window on to individual exposition experiences, and point to the ways in which visitors performed their role as observers and consumers of racial exhibition. In particular, such sources can offer an insight into the exhibits and narratives that visitors considered to be worth remembering or sharing with others, and which exhibits confirmed or

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<sup>19</sup> James L. Gilbert, *Whose Fair? Experience, Memory, and the History of the Great St Louis Exposition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p.9.

contradicted existing understandings about race.<sup>20</sup> Although the archive naturally privileges the reminiscences of a certain class of visitor, they provide a perspective that rarely emerges in the secondary literature. Acknowledging the problems of the reminiscence source set, Rydell has asserted that they nonetheless testify to the “lasting impact of fairs on visitors and opens windows on what at least a few fair-goers carried away with them”.<sup>21</sup> The relative lack of such sources prevents the foregrounding of the visitor experience throughout the thesis, yet chapter 6 examines the key aspects of visitor experience and performance.

Official records of the exposition management offer a surprising route in to the histories of individuals and experiences, as well as of the organisational exposition machine. Internal correspondence between fair officials, and external communication with concessionaires and members of the public, reveal the various competing expectations and mediations involved in producing exhibitions of race. Contracts between the fair management and concessionaires reveal the establishment of certain conditions for the performers, and reports from fair employees point to the occasionally chaotic world of the fairs. James Gilbert has pointed to the inherent problem of relying on management records in isolation, as early world’s fair histories frequently reproduced official narratives uncritically, and thus reiterated their

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<sup>20</sup> For an edited collection of visitor accounts from the St Louis fair, and a useful discussion of the problem of such sources, see Martha R. Clevenger (ed.), *“Indescribably Grand”: Diaries and Letters from the 1904 World’s Fair* (Saint Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1996).

Clevenger has stated that the apparent absence of explicit discussions of the live displays in such accounts indicates that the narratives contained within them were not considered remarkable, and therefore did not challenge the visitors’ worldviews.

<sup>21</sup> Rydell (ed.), *The Books of the Fairs*, p.51.



racialisation agendas.<sup>22</sup> However, reading such sources as constitutive elements of the white racial frame and using them alongside other materials demonstrates the significance of world's fairs in contributing to the process of racial formation.

Although the world's fair archive is large and diverse, it is most useful when used in conjunction with other sources. This project aims to situate the world's fair as a site of racialisation that functioned within and contributed to an overarching worldview. It acknowledges that world's fairs were not unique in form or function and had particularly porous boundaries, allowing racialisation strategies and exhibitionary practices to enter from and seep into the surrounding city. Popular local newspapers and magazines complement the world's fair archive with references to the visitor experience and accurate information on day-to-day events. They also provide an invaluable source of context for the fairs, and as popular local texts functioned as important mediators of the fairs' messages. As Bridget Cooks has noted, newspapers and magazines operated within the same pedagogical project as world's fairs, as they sought to teach the American public to recognise markers of national and racial identification in the public sphere.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, other texts and sites contextualise the complex process of exhibiting race at the fair, and point to various narratives and ideologies that informed both constructions and interpretations of the live exhibits. Anthropological texts, travel narratives, handbooks to the nation's new imperial possessions, literature, artworks, and other sites of racial display provided the "popular-culture scaffolding" for the

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<sup>22</sup> Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, p.10.

<sup>23</sup> Bridget R. Cooks, 'Fixing Race: Visual Representations of African Americans at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 41.5 (2007), p.437.

live concessions at the world's fairs.<sup>24</sup> Rather than analysing the world's fairs in a vacuum, this project recognises the significance of these cultural sites as just one among many loci of racialisation.

Although it is important to acknowledge the form and function of each type of source, and to recognise the differences between official and unofficial materials in particular, it is possible to regard world's fair sources as inherently related and part of a "circulating network of claims" that aimed to create successful exhibitions of race.<sup>25</sup> World's fair officials prepared newspaper articles, and autonomous commercial bodies produced materials to promote the fairs for economic gain. The language used in one type of source frequently appeared in another, and each source operated within and contributed towards a pervasive system of white supremacy. While endeavouring to analyse primary materials critically by consistently highlighting the origin and specific intentions of the sources that I use, I also recognise the interconnections within the network of exposition sources, and use the term 'exposition texts' as shorthand to emphasise these shared features and aims.

The world's fair archive and complementary sources pose certain ethical issues. Just as Gilbert has warned about the reproduction of racialisation strategies, Jane Desmond has pointed to the potential for photographs and other images to reinforce what she refers to as the "physical foundationalism" of live exhibits, in which exhibitors positioned the performing body as a natural and material signifier of difference. Yet Desmond argues that it is only possible

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<sup>24</sup> Camilla Fojas, *Islands of Empire: Pop Culture and U.S. Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), p.17.

<sup>25</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, pp.90-91.

to understand the power of racialised images by engaging with them, and that our own personal responses to visual sources provide clues as to how such images operate.<sup>26</sup> I include images in this project with these ethical issues in mind.<sup>27</sup> Throughout the following chapters, I use images not simply as illustrations but as starting points for analysis, deconstruction, and comment. Photographs reveal important features of the construction and spatial arrangement of the live exhibits, and provide a valuable window into the visitor experience. The varied nature of the world's fair archive ensures that exposition live displays can function as a valuable case study of the process of racialisation. The different types of materials, from official sources to popular ephemera, demonstrate the systemic presence and maintenance of the white racial frame. The collaborative construction of the live concessions – which involved fair organisers, foreign officials, and local investors – also allows for an examination of the competing and connected racialisation agendas of various individuals and institutions that operated within this overarching frame.

### ***The World's Fair Literature: Celebration, Fragmentation, and New Directions***

In the years since Rydell's 1992 call to arms, researchers from numerous disciplines have contributed to the growing body of world's fair scholarship. Yet despite the proliferation of journal articles, monographs, and encyclopaedias, many of the historiographical gaps and methodological problems remain. Rydell

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<sup>26</sup> Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.xiv, p.xxiv.

<sup>27</sup> Although I reproduce images, I have chosen to exclude images that depict nudity in order to avoid any unintentional effects of sensationalism.

has traced the development of world's fair literature from its uncritical and celebratory beginnings, to the influence of American Studies in the mid-twentieth century and its methodological privileging of texts as symbols of society, and the growth of interest sparked by America's bicentennial in the 1970s.<sup>28</sup> Rydell himself provided the seminal text, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (1984), which successfully made the case that world's fairs deserve greater scholarly attention. Rydell's monograph is particularly influential for this project in its focus on race and empire at the turn of the twentieth century. *All the World's a Fair* moved beyond the existing celebratory narratives and those that regarded expositions as simple mirrors of society, and solidified the role of expositions in both reflecting and shaping American culture. Rydell also argued that the midway merited serious attention for its role in legitimising the policies and attitudes of white supremacy.<sup>29</sup> The first to provide such scope in its coverage of multiple fairs and to make extensive use of exposition archival holdings, this study has established the groundwork for all subsequent world's fair research.

The increase in world's fair scholarship in the last thirty years reflects the sheer number of potential avenues of research, from themes of architecture, technology, religion, and anthropology, to comprehensive histories of individual

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<sup>28</sup> Rydell (ed.), *The Books of the Fairs*, pp.10-22.

Rydell refers to R. Reid Badger, *The Great American Fair: The World's Columbian Exposition and American Culture* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1979), as a definitive text that inspired the subsequent treatment of the Chicago fair as a reflection of the age. Other significant early texts that emphasised the hegemonic power of expositions include Burton Benedict, *The Anthropology of World's Fairs: San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Berkeley: Scolar Press, 1983); Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).

<sup>29</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, pp.236-237.

fairs.<sup>30</sup> Research on race and gender at the expositions has been popular, with studies on African Americans and women taking centre stage.<sup>31</sup> Yet the wide range of possible topics has resulted in a fragmented and uneven literature, largely in the form of journal articles that focus on one theme at one particular fair. Drawing together seemingly disparate research has strengthened my thesis, as isolated studies can be collated. In this vein, two articles that have been influential in my research – Barbara Berglund’s 2003 article on the California Midwinter Exposition (1894) in *The Public Historian* and Jennifer Kopf’s 2008 article on race and souvenirs at the Berlin Trade Exposition (1896) in *Historical Geography* – together contribute to the study of race formation at the world’s fair. Berglund argued that new Western American cities used world’s fairs in a process of cultural ordering, forging categories of identity in line with nationally dominant hierarchies.<sup>32</sup> Kopf pointed to the mutually constitutive relationship between bodies and spaces to argue that the world’s fair site made the abstraction of empire comprehensible, with souvenir programs acting as scripts that guided visitors through their new national and

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<sup>30</sup> Thematic studies include John P. Burris, *Exhibiting Religion: Colonialism and Spectacle at International Expositions, 1851-1893* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001); Andrew Garn (ed.), *Exit to Tomorrow: World’s Fair Architecture, Design, Fashion, 1933-2005* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2007).

Histories of individual fairs include Arthur Chandler and Marvin Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair: The Story of the California Midwinter International Exposition, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, 1894* (San Francisco: Pogo Press, 1993); Carl Abbott, *The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 2004).

<sup>31</sup> Neither group is featured heavily in this thesis. For more on these topics, see Karen Sotiropoulos, *Staging Race: Black Performers in Turn of the Century America* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2006); Lynn M. Hudson, ‘“This is Our Fair and Our State”: African Americans and the Panama-Pacific International Exposition’, *California History*, 87.3 (2010), pp.26-45; Mabel O. Wilson, *Negro Building: Black Americans in the World of Fairs and Museums* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); T.J. Boisseau and Abigail Markwyn (eds.), *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World’s Fairs* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

<sup>32</sup> Barbara Berglund, ‘The Days of Old, the Days of Gold, the Days of ’49: Identity, History, and Memory at the California Midwinter International Exposition, 1894’, *The Public Historian*, 25.4 (2003), p.27

imperial roles.<sup>33</sup> Considered together, Kopf can contribute to Berglund's assessment of racial identity formation in California by grounding varied categories of identity – racial, local, national, and imperial – within the spatial organisation of the world's fair site, while also pointing to the reciprocal relationship between regional and national racial patterns. This integrative and interdisciplinary approach gives new meaning and relevance to the fragmented literature.

The disjointed state of the secondary literature continues despite the clear case for cohesion. Rydell's calls for thematic studies that acknowledge the "acute need and golden opportunity for comparative work", and for comprehensive studies of displayed non-white groups, are beginning to emerge.<sup>34</sup> Yet world's fair scholars offer little comparison between the displays of non-white groups or acknowledgement of the connections in their racial construction, and researchers of race have not regarded expositions as significant sites of study. Scholars have yet to exploit the opportunity for regional comparative studies, with a small amount of work on the fairs in the South and the occasional overview of the expositions held in a particular state,

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<sup>33</sup> Jennifer Kopf, 'Picturing Difference: Writing the Races in the 1896 Berlin Trade Exposition's Souvenir Album', *Historical Geography*, 36 (2008), p.112, p.115.

<sup>34</sup> Rydell (ed.), *The Books of the Fairs*, p.26, p.30, p.42.

Recent attempts to trace the displays of a particular non-white group at multiple world's fairs and other entertainment arenas have begun to address this deficit. See Patricia O. Afable, 'Journeys from Bontoc to the Western Fairs, 1904-1915: The "Nikimalika" and their Interpreters', *Philippine Studies*, 52.4 (2004), pp.445-473; Jim Zwick, *Inuit Entertainers in the United States; From the Chicago World's Fair through the Birth of Hollywood* (West Conshohocken: Infinity, 2006); Christina Welch, 'Savagery on Show: The Popular Visual Representation of Native American Peoples and their Lifeways at the World's Fairs (1851-1904) and in Buffalo Bill's Wild West (1884-1904)', *Journal of Early Popular Visual Culture*, 9.4 (2011), pp.337-352; Adria L. Imada, *Aloha America: Hula Circuits Through the US Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

but no existing research on the turn of the twentieth century West Coast fairs.<sup>35</sup> This thesis includes several comparative elements. In analysing the representations of indigenous, immigrant, and imperial peoples, I will emphasise the similarities and differences in the exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies used to display them. This mode of comparison has precedence in studies of race and empire, yet has not been applied by an individual world's fair researcher.<sup>36</sup> Beyond the comparison of different racial groups, I will also provide a comparative lens across time and space. Focusing on five world's fairs on the West Coast between 1894 and 1916, I will reflect on regional differences between the Pacific Northwest and the Southwest, including their racial composition and social context. The two San Francisco fairs – sitting either side of the devastating 1906 earthquake and fire – also provide an excellent opportunity for an assessment of change over time, particularly in relation to the city's Chinese residents. The potential for such case studies demonstrates the relevance and utility of the world's fair site for comparative historical research on the topic of race.

Despite changes in historical focus, world's fair scholars continue to struggle with the methodological problems outlined by Rydell. Lisa Munro's

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<sup>35</sup> See John E. Findling, 'Opening the Door to the World: International Expositions in the South, 1881-1907', *Studies in American Culture*, 19.2 (1996), pp.29-38; Carolyn Peter, 'California Welcomes the World: International Expositions, 1894-1940, and the Selling of the State', in Stephanie Barron, Sheri Bernstein, and Ilene S. Fort (eds.), *Reading California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900-2000* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), pp.69-83.

<sup>36</sup> For a comparison of representations and policies directed towards non-white peoples at home and abroad in this period, see Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000). For a comparison of representations and policies directed towards various imperial subjects, see Lanny Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago: Representation and Rule in the Insular Territories under US Dominion After 1898* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010). A special issue of the *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* examined how racial and imperial notions were shaped and challenged at the 1909 Seattle world's fair across several articles, although did not use a single, consistent analytical framework of race. See 'Special Issue: Race and Empire at the Fair', *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 101.3-4 (2010).

updated historiography in 2010 drew attention to the top-down nature of the existing research, acknowledging the official and organisational bent of the archive. Discussing the chronic shortage of sources that show how performers and visitors experienced the fair, Munro demanded that researchers seek out the personal documentation of fairgoers and locate performers by reading primary sources against the grain.<sup>37</sup> Deconstructing the archive to make such research possible remains a pressing issue, and this work is still largely isolated in studies of individual fairs. The limits of my language capabilities and archival reach have prevented a comprehensive study of the experience of the performers, yet my acknowledgment of the live concessions as necessarily collaborative sites that brought together a range of individuals, institutions, and interests, attempts to disrupt the top-down narrative that emphasises the hegemony of exposition organisers.<sup>38</sup> Chapter 6 addresses the topic of fair visitors directly, and utilises personal documentation alongside other exposition texts to examine the importance of spatial organisation, racial performance, and the world beyond the fair.

In the years since I began this project, several exposition texts have emerged in response to important dates and historiographical demands. In preparation for the one hundredth anniversary of the San Francisco fair (1915), Sarah Moore and Abigail Markwyn have readdressed the significance of the

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<sup>37</sup> Lisa Munro, 'Investigating World's Fairs: An Historiography', *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, 28 (2010), pp.89-90.

<sup>38</sup> For works on fairgoers, see Clevenger (ed.), *"Indescribably Grand"*; Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*. For studies on performers, see Afable, 'Journeys from Bontoc to the Western Fairs'; Jose D. Fermin, *1904 World's Fair: The Filipino Experience* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2005); Nancy J. Parezo and Don D. Fowler, *Anthropology Goes to the Fair: The 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).



West Coast's largest Progressive Era exposition.<sup>39</sup> Bringing new approaches to their scholarship, including spatial and cartographic techniques of display in the case of Moore, and the importance of both Western and Pacific identities in the case of Markwyn, these texts have contributed to the historiographies of expositions and the American West. In preparation for the opening of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture this year, Mabel Wilson's monograph on African American participation in world's fairs and museums examines the exclusionary and inclusionary history of black exhibition, and underscores the collaborative nature of raced exhibitions.<sup>40</sup>

A 2014 open access world's fair reader, named *Meet Me at the Fair*, reflects the ongoing and varied interest of both academics and non-academics in the many themes and movements that expositions have encompassed. Imaginatively arranged according to various thematic 'tours' – such as the 'Exhibition and Curation Tour' and the 'Mascots, Symbols, and Caricatures Tour' – the reader points to the continued relevance of the world's fair site to various avenues of study, and bridges the gap between academic and non-academic approaches to exposition history and culture.<sup>41</sup> This year, an edited collection on "Great Exhibitions in the Margins" has examined expositions that took place in provincial towns and cities throughout the world. Although the text does not feature American expositions, it points to the potential for studying the

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<sup>39</sup> See Sarah J. Moore, *Empire on Display: San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013); Abigail M. Markwyn, *Empress San Francisco: The Pacific Rim, the Great West and California at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014).

<sup>40</sup> See Wilson, *Negro Building*.

<sup>41</sup> Laura Hollengreen, Celia Pearce, Rebecca Rouse, and Bobby Schweizer (eds.), *Meet Me at the Fair: A World's Fair Reader* (ETC Press, 2014).

intersections between regional and national identities in smaller fairs.<sup>42</sup> My comparative study of various non-white populations at the West Coast fairs brings together a range of disparate exposition research, and looks beyond the topic of exhibition to situate the world's fair site as a rare opportunity to examine the construction and maintenance of a systemic white racial frame.

### ***Exhibitionary Studies: Methods, Literatures, Techniques***

Although I seek to use the world's fairs as case studies to analyse the process of racial formation on the American West Coast, it is important to recognise that as a site, expositions embodied particular forms and functions of exhibition. Producing live exhibits of racial difference and hierarchy, world's fairs differed from other contemporary sites of racialisation such as immigration stations, public health institutions, and educational settings, as they took an exhibitionary form. In order to examine the live displays as sites of racial formation, it is necessary to understand the process of exhibition, and how the medium of display contributed to the construction of racial categories. While the thematic approach adopted by exposition researchers emphasises the broader significance of the events, it can overlook the peculiarities of the exhibition site, and its spatial and experiential dimensions.

The most obvious methodological ally to world's fair research is museology. Tony Bennett's seminal text on the emergence of the museum emphasised the various links between the museum institution and the world's

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<sup>42</sup> Marta Filipová (ed.), *Cultures of International Expositions, 1840-1940: Great Exhibitions in the Margins* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2015).

fair site. Alongside the more concrete connections involving staff and particular exhibits, Bennett pointed to the late nineteenth century development of an “exhibitionary complex”, in which various sites disseminated knowledge and ideas to the public in visual form.<sup>43</sup> As a methodology, the ‘new museology’ that emerged in the 1980s is concerned with the power relations inherent in the exhibition form, and has singled out ethnographic exhibits as particularly deserving of this critical knowledge/power analysis.<sup>44</sup> Bringing museological approaches to the study of racial formation at the West Coast world’s fairs facilitates a more critical analysis of how exhibitors and mediators utilised the exposition site to produce and disseminate racial knowledge.

The process of exhibition creates meaning, and exposition exhibitors and mediators imbued performers with markers that signified racial knowledge. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has emphasised that ethnographic objects are made, not found, and are what they are by virtue of the disciplines that claim to know them and the exhibitors that place them on display. The process of exhibition is an “interface that mediates and thereby transforms what is shown”, while simultaneously obscuring the processes of transformation to represent the staged production as indistinguishable from the authentic object. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has outlined two forms of display that are frequently utilised in ethnographic exhibition. The ‘in-situ’ approach is characterised by mimesis, as it recreates the object or person’s surroundings. The realism of this form obscures its constituted nature and representational conventions, yet its theatricality can undermine its seriousness. The ‘in-context’ approach provides

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<sup>43</sup> Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.59.

<sup>44</sup> Mary Bouquet, *Museums: A Visual Anthropology* (London: Berg, 2012), pp.5-6.

frames of reference for the viewer, offering information in accompanying texts and arranging objects according to certain classificatory schemes. This form of exhibit offers explanations, makes comparisons, and poses questions. The world's fair live exhibits drew on both approaches, offering the realism of the in-situ display while providing the interpretative scheme of the in-context form. This ability to combine spectacle with the exertion of "cognitive control" is what made live exhibits of racial difference so effective.<sup>45</sup> Analysing the markers of and meanings behind display forms exposes the obfuscatory practices of exhibition, and makes the deconstruction of these processes possible.

The processes of construction and mediation in exhibition production are similar to those in the process of racial formation. Exhibitions of race therefore incorporate several layers of production and fabrication. Just as scholars of race have recognised that the racial identities extended towards various non-white populations are constructions, researchers of exhibition have recognised that the exhibitionary identities of performers are fabrications primarily directed and shaped by the exhibitors themselves. Although claiming to exhibit the 'real', exhibitors were more concerned with repressing the real in the pursuit of verisimilitude, distorting reality for entertainment.<sup>46</sup> Throughout the following chapters, I refer to those on display as 'performers' in order to recognise that the racial and exhibitionary identities they embodied were performances that were collaboratively scripted by various key actors.<sup>47</sup> I refer

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<sup>45</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp.2-3, p.7, pp.20-21.

<sup>46</sup> Zine Magubane, 'Ethnographic Showcases as Sites of Knowledge Production and Indigenous Resistance', in Susan Sleeper-Smith (ed.), *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), p.50.

<sup>47</sup> Various terms have been used to describe the individuals on display in racially-oriented exhibits, such as 'subject', 'participant', 'exhibit', or 'specimen'.

to the key actors involved in displaying the performers as 'exhibitors' and 'mediators' in order to emphasise their role in constructing and shaping the performers' racial identities.

Those concerned with museological theory and practice have also emphasised the importance of understanding how visitors interact with an exhibitionary site. As James Gardner has noted, it is easy to talk of exhibition structures and display techniques as if they have an abstract importance of their own, yet an exhibition does not truly exist until it is crowded with people, and what matters is how those individuals respond.<sup>48</sup> Museology's natural institutional link has made the study of visitor experience central to the discipline. Bennett's Foucauldian analysis of the museum has emphasised the role of exhibitionary institutions in regulating social behaviour and providing visitors with "new capacities for self-monitoring and self-regulation".<sup>49</sup> While the grand, uniform arrangement of the main fair grounds encouraged visitors to behave respectably, the midway offered a spectacle of difference that policed behaviour under the guise of frivolous amusement, and directed visitors to celebrate and perform their white superiority. Both spaces instilled visitors with a sense of identity, and contributed to their tools of racial assessment and interpretation. Zine Magubane has stated that ethnographic exhibits encouraged white European visitors to revel in their racial superiority, and to situate themselves as the norm from which various non-white populations deviated. This dual racial lesson of white superiority and non-white inferiority ensured that the live exhibitions played an important role not only in producing

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<sup>48</sup> James Gardner, 'Introduction', in James Gardner and Caroline Heller, *Exhibition and Display* (London: Batsford, 1960), p.5.

<sup>49</sup> Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p.20

and disseminating racial knowledge, but also in ordering this knowledge.<sup>50</sup> The spatial ordering of the world's fair site scripted visitors' interactions with the various non-white populations on display, and regulated understandings of the relative and hierarchical ordering of newly significant non-white peoples.

Exposition texts sought to regulate behaviour within the fair grounds, yet these didactic guides did not accompany visitors' racial encounters beyond the exposition site. The fair therefore operated as a space to rehearse the "codes of urban life".<sup>51</sup> Encouraged to perform their superior white identity on the midway, visitors gained skills of racial interpretation and ordering for use in racial encounters beyond the fair. The process of visiting a museum or exhibitionary space has a significant influence on a visitor's identity and experience, yet it is important to recognise that visitors are not simply passive observers. Researcher and former Smithsonian Institution employee John Falk has stated that individuals use the process of learning as a vehicle to build their personal identity. At a museum, visitors seek exhibits that will offer them valuable experiences, and their learning is in the confirmation of existing understandings and attitudes.<sup>52</sup> Visitors come to an exhibitionary site with expectations and preconceptions, and look to the exhibits to confirm their worldview. Visitors therefore play an indirect role in the construction of the exhibits, as the success of the event is dependent on their interest and approval. Recognising the active role of the visitors further underscores the collaborative construction of the midway exhibits, and avoids a top-down approach that

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<sup>50</sup> Magubane, 'Ethnographic Showcases as Sites of Knowledge Production and Indigenous Resistance', pp.45-50.

<sup>51</sup> Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p.227.

<sup>52</sup> John H. Falk, *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2009), pp.59-61.

privileges exposition organisers. It also highlights the significance of exhibitionary spaces in shaping understandings of social categories such as race, and the ways in which visitors transfer exhibitionary lessons to the city streets.

Aside from the museum's role in shaping the individual, museologists have emphasised the institution's ability to shape broader ideas of national identity and community. Mary Bouquet has claimed that nineteenth century museums materialised the nation through their buildings and collections, promoted certain narratives about the nation's history and achievements, and made policies such as imperialism intelligible to the public through the selection and interpretation of exhibits. The same processes occurred at the turn of the twentieth century world's fairs, which were primarily celebrations of national progress. While the official palaces and static exhibits most resembled the physical form of the museum, the midway also visualised the nation through the spectacularisation of what the nation was not. Drawing on Benedict Anderson's idea of nation, Bouquet has claimed that the classification and display of colonial subjects served to reinforce a sense of shared identity, as visitors imagined themselves as members of an imagined community.<sup>53</sup> The creation of an 'us'-and-'them' division in the spatial arrangement of the fair reinforced the boundaries of various national and racial identities, and solidified the terms of inclusion and exclusion within newly reconfigured racial patterns.

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<sup>53</sup> Bouquet, *Museums: A Visual Anthropology*, pp.34-35, p.48.

See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev edn (London: Verso, 2006).

The imagined community of the nation's new empire was particularly important for American citizens on the West Coast, as they were far removed from the nation's political and cultural centres. As Frank Van Nuys has argued, turn of the century Western states sought to position themselves as mature, "postfrontier" societies within a modern nation. These conscious efforts helped to consolidate widely held assumptions about American identity – and its racial elements – throughout the nation.<sup>54</sup> Western world's fairs were explicitly organised with simultaneous and often conflicting urges of local, national, and international importance. While the imagined community broke down the spatial barriers on the continent, it also helped to reconfigure the Pacific region as a sphere of American dominance. Although not all of the non-white populations of this region would gain inclusion into the community, the world's fair operated as a space in which institutions and individuals could renegotiate these relationships.<sup>55</sup> By applying museological methods to the fair site, it is possible to tease out the broader implications for visitors, and to understand how the world's fair impacted upon their understandings of the hierarchical and relative terms of the nation's newly international and Pacifically-oriented racial order.

The link between museum theorists and practitioners has ensured that museological scholarship focuses on the form and function of exhibitions, and researchers have developed methodological frameworks to examine display techniques and processes. Bennett has stated that institutions operating within

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<sup>54</sup> Frank Van Nuys, *Americanizing the West: Race, Immigrants, and Citizenship, 1890-1930* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2002), pp.xi-xii.

<sup>55</sup> For the different forms of representation and rule in the colonies, see Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago*.



the exhibitionary complex were sites for the development of new disciplines including anthropology and biology, and the transmission of their “discursive formations”, including ideas about evolution, history, and progress.<sup>56</sup> World’s fairs replicated this institutional link, which demonstrates how certain scientific ideas came to permeate the midway exhibits. Yet Bennett’s comparison of the museum and the world’s fair excluded the midway, as he claimed that the amusement strip – like the arcade – failed to direct the visitor gaze and represented an “undifferentiated form of backwardness” that presented various performers as the same in their foreignness.<sup>57</sup> While the midway was at times a chaotic space, Bennett undervalues its didactic importance. Although different in form to the main exposition palaces, it operated within the same exhibitionary complex and exploited the same big picture narratives. Bennett’s claim that the various non-white populations on the midway were undifferentiated fails to recognise the complexity of racial relationships on the U.S. West Coast, where the binary black/white dichotomy could not sufficiently serve the racial order. Having a firm grasp of exhibitionary forms and functions illuminates the peculiarity of the world’s fair as a site of racialisation, and contributes to racial theoretical approaches by grounding them in the spaces and experiences of their exhibitionary realities.

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<sup>56</sup> Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p.59.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.186-187.

## **New Directions in American Cultural History:**

### **Literatures and Approaches**

As a cultural history of race formation on the American West Coast, this project draws upon and contributes towards new directions in American cultural history. This section points to the broader applicability of this study beyond the world's fair canon, and outlines important shifts in the study of America's past in the last 30 years. It begins by discussing the emergence of Western American history as a significant area of research at the end of the twentieth century, and situates my thesis within important reconceptualisations of the American West. I then turn to the literatures, approaches, and concepts that have emerged from studies of American imperialism and the category of whiteness. Demonstrating recent trends in comparative studies of American expansion, the utility of genealogical approaches in the study of empire, and the meaning and boundaries of whiteness, I outline the theoretical and methodological approaches underpinning this study.

#### ***The American West***

In the last three decades, scholars of American Studies and American history have increasingly looked to the American West. Recognising the lack of serious scholarship on the region, and its significance to conceptualisations of American identity and mythology, this new wave of researchers have also focused on the development of racial relations in the region, which they argue did not follow national patterns of black/white division and white immigration. Patricia

Nelson Limerick's work on the American West in the 1980s challenged historians to reconsider their approach to the region, and to elevate the history of Western conquest to the level of scholarly respect afforded to slavery. Emphasising the significance of conquest on all aspects of American society, Limerick called for a reconceptualisation of Frederick Jackson Turner's 'frontier thesis' and its impact on Western history, and urged scholars to move beyond Turner's ethnocentric and nationalistic approach, and to reconsider when the frontier 'closed' in order to extend historical research on the region into the twentieth century. Limerick's own preferred moment of 'closing' was the popularisation of tourism in the American West, which she has argued transformed people and places considered threatening and Other into tourist spectacles.<sup>58</sup> In the last few decades, historians of the American West have sought to de-emphasise Turner and instead privilege the role of marginal people and spaces, including non-white populations and women, and deserts and mountainous regions. Pointing to the importance of the West to American national identity, the inherent racial and social 'messiness' of the region, and the significance of tourism in transforming patterns and relations of power, scholars of the American West have elevated the region and its history from the confines of mythology.<sup>59</sup> Applying theoretical approaches of race and exhibition to the study of America's West Coast fairs contributes to this historiographical trend.

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<sup>58</sup> Patricia N. Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1987), pp.17-25.

<sup>59</sup> See, William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin (eds.), *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992); J. Philip Gruen, *Manifest Destinations: Cities and Tourists in the Nineteenth-Century American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014); Van Nuys, *Americanizing the West*.

Historians of California have embraced the socioeconomic conception of race formation in their studies of racial patterns in the state. Tomás Almageur has examined the origins of white supremacy in California, highlighting the need for more complex methodological approaches when studying race relations on the West Coast. Incorporating Omi and Winant's terminologies, Almageur moved beyond a binary conception of black/white race relations, instead pointing to the more nuanced hierarchy that emerged in a state with multiple non-white populations competing for a position in society.<sup>60</sup> Barbara Berglund has similarly pointed to the relational nature of race formation in San Francisco, and the special role of the Chinese population in the configuration of California's racial order.<sup>61</sup> Various scholars have identified particular Californian spaces as important sites of racialisation, such as the Angel Island immigration station and San Francisco's well known Chinatown, and have studied the state's significant non-white populations, such as Asian and Mexican people.<sup>62</sup> These works highlight the unique historical context of the West Coast, with the formation of complex racial relationships on former Native American and Mexican land, and in response to the movement of peoples traversing the continent and the Pacific Ocean.

Moving beyond the Californian- and urban-centric narratives of these studies, other researchers have highlighted the importance of the Pacific

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<sup>60</sup> Tomás Almageur, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp.2-3.

<sup>61</sup> Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846-1906* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007).

<sup>62</sup> See Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

Northwest, the Southwest, and desert and mountainous regions to the study of Western history. Kristofer Allerfeldt has provided a comprehensive overview of race and restriction in the Pacific Northwest that carefully unpicked the variations between the region and California, and within the region itself.<sup>63</sup> Leah Dilworth and Don Fowler have emphasised the significance of the American Southwest in shaping national relationships with Native American and Hispanic populations, and the role of anthropology and archaeology in structuring racial knowledge about indigenous peoples and spatial knowledge about America's deserts.<sup>64</sup> These more focused regional studies highlight the complex racial and geographical structure of the American West, and emphasise the need for comparative studies that bring together Western sub-regions. The five fairs in my study encompass California, the Southwest, and the Pacific Northwest, and I point to the differences and interconnections between these geographic spaces.

Various researchers have also pointed to the need to examine the American West beyond the contiguous United States. Jane Desmond and Adria Imada have examined the role of militarism and tourism in Americanising the nation's most Westerly state of Hawaii, and the significance of turn of the twentieth century movements of people between America's West Coast and the Hawaiian islands in domesticating this colonial space.<sup>65</sup> Diana Ahmad and Rick Baldoz have similarly pointed to American relations with points further West,

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<sup>63</sup> Kristofer Allerfeldt, *Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction: Immigration in the Pacific Northwest, 1890-1924* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), pp.1-2.

<sup>64</sup> Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996); Don Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology: Science and Romanticism in the American Southwest, 1846-1930* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000).

See also, Patricia N. Limerick, *Desert Passages: Encounters with the American Deserts* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985).

<sup>65</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*; Imada, *Aloha America*.

and the importance of travel between the continent and the colonial territories of Samoa and the Philippines.<sup>66</sup> Scholars of Asian-American studies have sought to reorient American history away from Europe and towards Asia, emphasising the significance of the Far East in the development of American racial and national identities.<sup>67</sup> Examining the history of the American West requires certain reconceptualisations and reorientations. This project seeks to move away from Atlantic-focused studies of America's past and towards new movements in the nation's Pacific history.

Researchers concerned with the American West have also sought to bring together the themes of race and exhibition, and have pointed to important exhibitionary sites and structures that emerged in the turn of the twentieth century West. Limerick's emphasis on the role of tourism and spectacle in closing the frontier and incorporating the West into the nation has resulted in an array of studies on the exhibitionary domestication of the nation's Western outposts. David Wrobel and Patrick Long's edited collection pointed to the role of Western tourism in defining an American national identity in the post-Civil War era.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Lester Moses has examined the Wild West show as a site of national myth making, and Raymond Rast has outlined the exhibitionary function of San Francisco's Chinatown and its role in visualising relative racial

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<sup>66</sup> Diana L. Ahmad, 'Different Islands, Different Experiences: American Travel Accounts of Samoa and Hawai'i, 1890-1910', *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, 41 (2007), pp.97-118; Rick Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion: Empire and Migration in Filipino America, 1898-1946* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).

<sup>67</sup> Gail M. Nomura, 'Significant Lives: Asia and Asian Americans in the History of the U.S. West', *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 25.1 (1994), pp.69-88; Gary Y. Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994); Shelley Sang-Hee Lee, *Claiming the Oriental Gateway: Prewar Seattle and Japanese America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010).

<sup>68</sup> David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (eds.), *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001).

patterns.<sup>69</sup> Building upon this scholarship, and combining the critical methodologies and approaches of both race and exhibition, this project contributes to a revision of Western American history that seeks to recognise the distinctiveness of the region, and its contribution to broader national race relations.

### ***American Empire and the Boundaries of Whiteness***

Although the live displays helped visitors to understand and position various non-white peoples within the racial order, the process of identifying and containing the racial Other was just as significant in defining the limits of white American identity, and the position of the white American within the expanding nation. The practice of establishing an oppositional relationship with an unfamiliar population has concerned many postcolonial critics. Edward Said's concept of 'Othering' – as outlined in his seminal 1978 book, *Orientalism* – described the construction and maintenance of a dichotomous relationship between the metropolitan self and the colonial Other.<sup>70</sup> This opposing structure constituted the relationships between white Americans and various non-white groups both at home and abroad. The process of drawing and maintaining dichotomous boundaries similarly constituted the big picture narratives of the world's fairs, and structured the spatial division between the live displays of non-white humans on the midway and the exhibitions of white American

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<sup>69</sup> Lester G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996); Raymond W. Rast, 'The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco's Chinatown, 1882-1917', *Pacific Historical Review*, 76.1 (2007), pp.29-60.

<sup>70</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, rev edn (London: Penguin, 1985), pp.43-44.

progress elsewhere. As Jane Desmond has stated, live bodily performances stage the 'them' by demonstrating the specificity of difference, and simultaneously stage the 'us' by temporarily uniting strangers within a collective experience as an audience. The live aspect of the display authenticated these packaged differences and offered the possibility of contact, allowing visitors to temporarily cross but ultimately reconfirm racial boundaries.<sup>71</sup> Although the midway framed a hierarchical and relative racial other, this underlying dichotomy of Otherness both reflected and bolstered the white racial frame, and assured white visitors of their ultimately superior status.

While imperial historians acknowledge the importance of Said's work, they are also keen to build upon its foundations, particularly when attempting to apply his ideas to the history of American imperialism. Lanny Thompson has criticised Said for suggesting that colonial discourses suppressed cultural differences and produced homogenous colonial subjects, pointing to the differentiated and hierarchical cultural representations of American imperial gains. The displays of non-white performers on the world's fair midways shared similar exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies, yet there were clear differences in their construction. Thompson has stressed the importance of a comparative methodology when analysing the representations of imperial peoples, and has argued that these discourses were fundamental to the justification, normalisation, and nature of American imperial rule.<sup>72</sup> That some

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<sup>71</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, pp.xv-xvi.

<sup>72</sup> Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago*, p.4, p.x.

See also, Fojas, *Islands of Empire*; Julian Go, "Racism" and Colonialism: Meanings of Difference and Ruling Practices in America's Pacific Empire', *Qualitative Sociology*, 27.1 (2004), pp.35-58.



nineteenth century colonial territories were later incorporated into the United States and others were not, demonstrates the significance of the variations in the cultural representation of these sites and the racialisation of their inhabitants. My comparative approach seeks to explore the interconnections in the racialisation of multiple non-white groups, and to recognise the hierarchical formation of racial identities at home and abroad.

Historians of American empire have also sought to disabuse the notion that the overseas imperial activities of the 1890s constituted an historical aberration, and have highlighted the continuities between nineteenth century continental expansion and turn of the twentieth century overseas intervention.<sup>73</sup> Recognising overseas imperialism as inseparable from the social relationships and cultural discourses of race and ethnicity at home, Amy Kaplan has argued that domestic conflicts “spill over national boundaries to be re-enacted, challenged, or transformed”, and foreign conflicts similarly shape relations at home. Examinations of American racial patterns and formations must therefore recognise the inextricable link between the nation’s histories of immigration, ethnicity, and empire.<sup>74</sup> By examining the live display of Native Americans, Asian immigrants, and imperial subjects, this thesis points to the relative nature of racial formation on the West Coast, and builds upon the post-Said scholarship on American imperial relations.

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<sup>73</sup> See Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980); Frank Ninkovich, *The United States and Imperialism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001); Ann L. Stoler (ed.), *Haunted By Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco A. Scarano (eds.), *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

<sup>74</sup> Amy Kaplan, “‘Left Alone with America’: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture”, in Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (eds.), *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), pp.16-17.

New studies of American imperialism have also pointed to the methodological opportunities inherent in the recognition of race formation as relative and interconnected. In his edited collection, *Formations of United States Colonialism*, Alyosha Goldstein has pointed to the mutually constitutive relationships between moments of American colonialism at home and abroad, and across time. In attempting to elucidate how scholars can understand various colonial pasts in relation to one another, Goldstein highlights the utility of Michel Foucault's theorisation of genealogy. Examining the descent of colonial ideologies reveals their inherent associations and contradictions, historicises their meaning, and disrupts linear conceptions of imperial histories.<sup>75</sup> At the beginning of each of my core chapters (3 - 6), I begin with a brief overview of the existing images and experiences of the group under examination in order to reflect on the genealogies of the racial frameworks on display on the midway, and to point to the interconnections between various exhibits of racial difference.

Other recent texts on America's overseas empire provide useful research questions and organising principles for this project. Servando Halili's study of the significance of the iconography of empire to the racialisation of Filipinos demonstrated that racism is not a unitary mechanism, but an ambiguous ideological discourse that mutates.<sup>76</sup> Extending Halili's remit to provide a comparative lens on several non-white populations, this project highlights the

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<sup>75</sup> Alyosha Goldstein, 'Introduction: Toward a Genealogy of the U.S. Colonial Present', in Alyosha Goldstein, *Formations of United States Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), p.5. See also, Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp.139-164.

<sup>76</sup> Servando D. Halili Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire: Race and Gender Images and the American Colonization of the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2006), p.34.

frequently contradictory patterns of racialisation, as exhibitionary racial frameworks mutated across time and space in response to various local, national, and international anxieties. In addition, I extend Paul Kramer's characterisation of the colonial racialisation of the Philippines as a process of inviting Filipinos into an "imagined household of U.S. Empire".<sup>77</sup> The imperial household metaphor reflects the nationalising and unifying impulse of the world's fair site, and the tendency for exposition exhibitors and mediators to draw upon familial terms when framing non-white performers. The negotiation of a hierarchical racial order necessarily entailed various processes of inclusion and exclusion, which were based upon white American conceptions of acceptable visual and behavioural traits. While Hawaiians were 'big children' that could be uplifted, Chinese and Japanese peoples were 'cousins' that would be permanently excluded for their inescapable 'Asian-ness'. Building upon new directions in the study of American imperialism, this project seeks to examine the relative nature of foreign and domestic racial formation at the turn of the twentieth century, as various non-white populations were caught up in the expansion of America's newly international and imperial household.

In recognising the social construction of race and racism, scholars have also pointed to the social construction of whiteness. Establishing racial differences and hierarchies within the imagined household of U.S. Empire necessitated the construction of the white American self. In the last 30 years, theories of whiteness have emerged to establish why some groups have been identified as legally and culturally white in American society and others have

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<sup>77</sup> Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p.200.

not, and how this has influenced the social and racial order.<sup>78</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, expansion and immigration led various race-making agents to negotiate the terms of whiteness, and to popularise conceptions of white identity at national celebrations such as world's fairs. When using the term 'white', I do so in reference to the theories and ideas of whiteness studies. When using the term 'non-white' it is with the social construction of race in mind. I use 'non-white' as shorthand for the various groups under examination, and in recognition of their shared status of exclusion from the privileges of whiteness.

Historians of immigration and empire have embraced theories of whiteness. Elliot Barkan's work on immigration to the American West has pointed to the frequency of turn of the twentieth century references to Americans as white and immigrants as non-white, which he sees as indicative of the importance of whiteness to inter-group relations and the fate of newcomers. Barkan emphasises that this conception of whiteness was less to do with skin colour than with traits, behaviours, and values that were defined as American, and were linked to the rights and practices of citizenship.<sup>79</sup> The promotional materials relating to the live displays consistently professed to reveal the habits and traits of the performers in an authentic and unmediated setting. This focus on the everyday, and the domestic setting of the native village, emphasised the relative whiteness – or indeed non-whiteness – of the races on display, and influenced visitor interpretations of their standing within the racial order. Paul

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<sup>78</sup> For more on 'whiteness', see David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Verso, 1998); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998); Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Verso, 2012).

<sup>79</sup> Elliott R. Barkan, *From All Points: America's Immigrant West, 1870s-1952* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), p.7, pp.10-11.

Kramer's research on American imperial rule in the Philippines has emphasised the increasing significance of the category of 'Anglo-Saxon' at the turn of the twentieth century, as American imperialists sought to establish a "racial-exceptionalist" tradition of empire-building, and bolster its overseas activities with powerful narratives such as the 'White Man's Burden'.<sup>80</sup> The historical, national, and racial features of whiteness defined the terms of inclusion and exclusion within the household of empire. The literatures and approaches of Western American history, American empire, and whiteness demonstrate the broader significance of the live exhibition. Providing key research questions about the significance of the American West, comparative and genealogical methodologies, and theoretically grounded concepts of whiteness and the American imperial household, these topics and histories both contribute towards and can gain from a critical study of race and exhibition.

### **Conclusions: Forging Connections between Race and Exhibition**

This chapter has outlined the key literatures, methodologies, and concepts that structure my examination of the West Coast world's fair live displays. It has situated my research as a study of race and exhibition, and has pointed to the broad applicability of the world's fair as a site for historical study. I argue that by forging connections between the topics and approaches of race and exhibition, scholars can subject both areas of research to a more critical

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<sup>80</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, p.90, p.121.

examination. Racial theories provide a critical lens for the examination of cultural sites, and demonstrate how exhibitors negotiated, produced, and maintained a system of white supremacy. Exhibitionary sources and methods allow scholars of race to access complicated sites of meaning making, and to recognise the collaboration of various exhibitors, mediators, and performers in constructing and disseminating racial knowledge. The unusual racial patterns on the turn of the twentieth century West Coast, where issues of conquest, immigration, trade, empire, and international power relations coalesced, created a unique “regional racial lexicon” that had broad national significance in the era of intense westward expansion.<sup>81</sup> The world’s fair live displays participated in the construction and popularisation of this lexicon, and thus structured both regional racial encounters and broader patterns of inclusion and exclusion within the newly international and Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy.

In the following case studies, I apply the literatures and methods of race and exhibition to examine the live displays of various non-white races on the West Coast midways. Adapting race theory, museological studies, and comparative and genealogical approaches to the world’s fair archive, I argue that the exhibits of race at the fairs negotiated and maintained an overarching white racial frame that structured America’s relationships with a number of non-white populations. The following chapter extends the introductory remit of this chapter by presenting key concepts and figures that structured the live exhibits of race, including shifting understandings of Western and Pacific space,

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<sup>81</sup> Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?*, p.12.

nationally and regionally significant racial theories and practices, and the key exhibitors and mediators that constructed the live displays on the midways.

## Chapter 2. Constructing Race in the American Pacific: Space, Race, and Key Actors

This chapter introduces some of the key concepts, figures, and social and political forces that structured the West Coast world's fair live exhibits. Providing a broad examination of important frameworks, processes, and actors at this juncture allows me to produce a close and contextualised reading of the live concessions in the following case studies. This chapter therefore functions to contextualise the live exhibits, and to demonstrate how three factors – the production of space, the construction of race, and the key actors involved in manufacturing the fairs – shaped the world's fair live exhibits and inculcated them within the white racial frame. World's fairs did not operate within a vacuum, and in their role as exhibitionary institutions that aimed to define, promulgate, and sustain structures of order, they necessarily had to engage with those structures beyond the fair grounds.<sup>1</sup> In constructing racial knowledge and sustaining white supremacy, the world's fairs exploited and shaped new conceptualisations of space that celebrated the nation's westward expansion, and drew upon existing racial theories and patterns to bolster claims about race and to situate the fairs as legitimate arbiters of racial categorisation. As large international events, world's fairs incorporated the ideas and practices

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<sup>1</sup> Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), p.77.



of a number of individuals and institutions, and this chapter introduces a key cast of characters that shaped the events in various ways.

The first section focuses on space, and begins with an examination of how popular texts on America's new empire contributed to a reconceptualisation of American space at the turn of the twentieth century. John Agnew has provided a useful definition of 'space', which emphasises the meaning making function of spatial articulations:

Space signifies a field of practice or area in which a group or organization (such as a state) operates, held together in popular consciousness by a map-image and a narrative or story that represents it as a meaningful whole.<sup>2</sup>

The articulation and regulation of images and narratives of American space bolstered the white racial framework, defining the centres and peripheries of white America. This section also includes an analysis of the promotion of the American West in exposition texts, and provides a brief overview of the spatial organisation of the five world's fairs in this study. The second section summarises several important racial theories and practices that influenced sites of racialisation at the turn of the twentieth century, outlines the non-binary racial patterns on the West Coast, and examines the promotion of this diversity in exposition texts. The third section provides an overview of the key actors involved in the organisation, financing, and production of the West Coast fairs, in order to ground the more detailed examination of the live exhibits in later chapters within a concrete framework. I conclude by pointing to how these

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<sup>2</sup> John A. Agnew, 'Introduction', in John A. Agnew and Jonathan M. Smith (eds.), *American Space/American Place: Geographies of the Contemporary United States* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), p.5.

concepts and frameworks contribute to my examination of the West Coast live exhibits as important sites of racialisation.

### **Space: Articulations and Regulations**

Popular narratives about national expansion and the growing significance of the American West contributed to the racial framing of the midway performers, and the spatial organisation of the fair grounds impacted upon the visitor experience. This section examines the reconceptualisation of American space at the turn of the twentieth century, and points to the importance of spatial configurations such as 'American Pacific' and 'Far West'. Exhibitors and mediators both within and outside of the exposition machine sought to articulate and regulate new conceptions of American space, which influenced the exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies on the midway. Understanding the significance of the expansion of the American nation at the turn of the twentieth century, and the correlating compression of space in the celebration of expansion at world's fairs, demonstrates how the live exhibits visualised structures of white racial dominance and American superiority.

#### ***Imagining the American Pacific***

At the turn of the twentieth century, Americans were forced to reconceptualise the boundaries of the nation, and to reconsider the qualities that constituted an American space. As Henri Lefebvre has noted, groups cannot "constitute themselves, or recognize one another, as 'subjects' unless they generate (or

produce) a space".<sup>3</sup> The space defined as American had been expanding for centuries, and in the nineteenth century, this process had not only gained significant speed, but it had also entered territories overseas.<sup>4</sup> Although seemingly a question of physical geography, the definition and mapping of regions and boundaries is a necessarily human endeavour, and geographical terms are always political because they naturalise a particular way of mapping the world.<sup>5</sup> The Pacific Ocean had held an important place in the nation's imagination prior to the closing of the frontier, due to the New England whaling industry, the Pacific Northwest fur trade, interests in Alaska and Hawaii, and a long-term desire to secure the large Chinese market.<sup>6</sup> Yet by the end of the nineteenth century, the Pacific represented the next stage in the nation's Westward expansion, both territorially and economically. Americans – particularly those physically located at this new Pacific frontier – were encouraged to imagine themselves as citizens of a newly Pacific America, and as superior participants in a new American Pacific.<sup>7</sup>

Negotiating the national shift in focus from the Atlantic to the Pacific required new spatial conceptions in the popular imagination. The mapping and definition of an American Pacific region at the end of the nineteenth century was a product of what John Eperjesi has termed the "imperialist imaginary", in

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<sup>3</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), p.416.

<sup>4</sup> For more on the production of American spaces, see Agnew and Smith (eds.), *American Space/American Place*; Liam Kennedy, *Race and Urban Space in American Culture* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Arif Dirlik, 'The Asia-Pacific Idea; Reality and Representation in the Invention of a Regional Structure', *Journal of World History*, 3.1 (1992), pp.55-57; Donald E. Pease, 'Foreword', in John R. Eperjesi, *The Imperialist Imaginary: Visions of Asia and the Pacific in American Culture* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005), p.xi.

<sup>6</sup> John R. Eperjesi, *The Imperialist Imaginary: Visions of Asia and the Pacific in American Culture* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005), pp.26-28, p.34.

<sup>7</sup> John Eperjesi uses the term 'American Pacific' to highlight turn of the twentieth century efforts to control and Americanise the Pacific. Ibid, p.14.

which a particular representation or misrepresentation of geographical space in material culture supports the expansion of a nation's borders.<sup>8</sup> Popular texts about the nation's new empire published at the turn of the twentieth century utilised spatial features such as maps and details of the geography and landscape of the new imperial possessions in order to help readers conceptualise the American Pacific. In *Our Island Empire*, Charles Morris clearly expressed the notion of America's possession of the Pacific region in his title, and visualised the shift in the nation's geographical orientation, stating, "This country has lifted the anchors which hitherto held it fast to the American continent, and has drifted far over the seas into that arena of colonial international relations". Such texts frequently detailed distances and locations, and Morris noted that Hawaii was "Intermediate between America and Asia", and thus occupied a "highly important position in the pathway of the rapidly growing commerce of the Pacific".<sup>9</sup> As David Brody has noted, maps make the world available on a human scale, and through their division of land into tracts, they indicate possession and create a "rational grid of knowledge" over the depicted locations.<sup>10</sup> Articulating the geographical position and significance of the nation's new possessions established their role within the newly expanded nation, and extended a framework of knowledge about the possessions' inhabitants.

America's new territorial gains were not just located in the Pacific, yet popular imperial texts included presentations of Cuba and Puerto Rico

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<sup>8</sup> Eperjesi, *The Imperialist Imaginary*, p.2.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Morris, *Our Island Empire: A Hand-Book of Cuba, Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippine Islands* (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott Company, 1899), p.xii, p.237.

<sup>10</sup> David Brody, *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), p.89.

alongside descriptions of Hawaii and the Philippines. The texts noted that the new tropical dominions were “situated on the opposite sides of the earth”, embraced “territory large enough for an Empire”, and had “widened the national outlook”.<sup>11</sup> Despite acknowledging the vast distances between the territories, and their geographical detachment from the continent, the texts functioned to condense and domesticate the islands, and encouraged readers to conceptualise ownership through spatial frames. Describing the purpose of his book, José de Oliveras claimed that through the “use of photography and simple description”, he hoped to “transfer the islands and their people to the printed page, for the information and pleasure of the American people”. By fixing the new populations to the “perfectly printed page”, de Oliveras claimed, “these islands and their people are brought to the fireside of every American home”, as the writer – in “intimate” association with the reader – entered the “humble homes” of the imperial Other.<sup>12</sup> Evoking the domestic lives of both American readers and imperial subjects, de Oliveras compressed the vast distances that separated the two, and established a sense of intimacy and acquaintance. Situating each of the populations within an “imagined household of U.S. empire”, de Oliveras invited American readers to conceptualise their newly global national community.<sup>13</sup> Popular imperial texts presented the Pacific islands as American Pacific territories.

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<sup>11</sup> Morris, *Our Island Empire*, p.ix; José de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, vol. 2 (New York: N.D. Thompson, 1899), p.1; Caspar Whitney, *Hawaiian America: Something of its History, Resources and Prospects* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1899), p.1.

<sup>12</sup> de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, pp.5-6.

<sup>13</sup> Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p.200; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn (London: Verso, 2006), p.6.

Yet the new imperial relationships were not created equally, and the divergent paths towards annexation, independence, or a form of intermediate dependency were also reflected in spatial terms. Allan Isaac has described the Asia-Pacific region as a “repository for American fears and fantasy” that had to be constantly contained and disciplined, with political terms such as ‘unincorporated territory’ functioning to structure the imagination and “fill the temporal and spatial distance assigned to them”.<sup>14</sup> Articulating and regulating spatial distances were acts of (mis)representation that justified certain relationships and ways of conceptualising America’s dominance in the Pacific. In her account of the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom, Queen Lili’uokalani narrated the “lengthy misrepresentation” of Hawaii by American diplomat, John W. Foster. The Queen described a lantern slide presentation in which Hawaii was initially situated near enough to annex to Mexico, then to Japan, before finally “poor little Hawaii regained that position in the Pacific Ocean in which the hand of the creator had left her”.<sup>15</sup> An advertisement by the Oceanic Steamship Company in the *Official Guide to the California Midwinter Exposition* similarly manipulated Hawaii’s location. Stating that although the islands may seem “a far cry” from California, the text claimed:

the people of California do not consider it so. The visitor to San Francisco will no doubt be frequently asked if he is not ‘Going over to the Islands?’ as though ‘the Islands’ were the Faralones, or some other land just off the coast. But the fact is the islands of the South Sea are San Francisco’s trading and pleasure

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<sup>14</sup> Allan P. Isaac, *American Tropics: Articulating Filipino America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), pp.3-5.

<sup>15</sup> Lili’uokalani, *Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1898); Eperjesi, *The Imperialist Imaginary*, p.1.

Queen Lili’uokalani was the last monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom. John W. Foster was a diplomat and acted as Secretary of State, 1892-1893.

grounds, and they are not so far away as they seem. Recent events have brought them even closer...<sup>16</sup>

Imaginative spatial conceptualisations of an American Pacific household allowed Americans to conceive of their ownership of and superiority over geographically distant populations.

### ***The West Coast World's Fairs as Pacific Gateways***

The conceptualisation of the American West as a distinct region has concerned writers, artists, and historians for centuries. The emergence of the New Western History movement in the 1980s was primarily concerned with supplanting Frederick Jackson Turner's 1893 Frontier Thesis, which made 'frontier' synonymous with 'West', and emphasised the importance of white American pioneers in spaces of encounter with Native American 'savagery'.<sup>17</sup> Yet at the turn of the twentieth century, Turner's thesis occupied a central place in the American popular imagination, and the coastal states belonged to a 'Far West' that differed from earlier conceptions of the West defined by the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River.<sup>18</sup> West Coast world's fair organisers identified their host cities as geographically Western, describing the coastal region as a "great

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<sup>16</sup> *Official Guide to the California Midwinter Exposition* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Co., 1894), p.190.

<sup>17</sup> Frederick J. Turner, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1893* (1894), pp.199-227; Stephen Aron, 'The Making of the First American West and the Unmaking of Other Realms', in William Deverell, *A Companion to the American West* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p.6.

See also, Patricia N. Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1987); William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin (eds.), *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992); Clyde A. Milner II, Anne M. Butler, David R. Lewis (eds.), *Major Problems in the History of the American West: Documents and Essays*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

<sup>18</sup> Earl S. Pomeroy, *American Far West in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), p.xviii.

Western wonderland”, the “far west of the U.S.”, and the “Golden West”.<sup>19</sup> Incorporated within this definition of the West were several other spatial conceptions and sub-regions. Texts from the San Francisco fair (1915) described a Wild West show as representative of the “truly West”, and promoters of the San Diego fair (1915-1916) emphasised its distinctiveness as a fair located in the “Great Southwest”.<sup>20</sup> Just as the American ‘West’ continues to have a contested character and shifting borders, so too does the Pacific Northwest.<sup>21</sup> Organisers of the Portland and Seattle fairs identified and emphasised their Pacific Northwest location and identity. Promoters described the Portland fair as evidence of the “great progress which has been made in the Pacific Northwest”, and one magazine identified the transnational features of the region, describing the forthcoming Seattle fair as a “potent factor in the upbuilding of the Pacific Northwest, both for the U.S. and western Canada”.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Panama Pacific International Exposition San Francisco 1915, Panama California Exposition San Diego 1915* (Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain Denver & Rio Grande Western Pacific, n.d.), in folder 1, box 14, Expositions and Fairs Collection, 344, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles [hereafter 344, Young Research Library]; Hamilton Wright, ‘Panama-Pacific Exposition: The Mecca of the Nation’, *Overland Monthly*, 66.3 (1915); *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, 40.2 (February 1915), p.170.

<sup>20</sup> *Daily Official Program, Panama-Pacific International Exposition San Francisco*, 49 (9 April 1915), in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno [hereafter Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library]; *Painted Desert Exhibit, San Diego Exposition*, in Exhibits and Expositions Collection, S.0438, Special Collections, California Academy of Sciences Library, San Francisco [hereafter S.0438, California Academy of Sciences Library].

For more on the conceptualisation of the Wild West and the Southwest, see Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933*; David H. Murdoch, *The American West: The Invention of a Myth* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2001); Don D. Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology: Science and Romanticism in the American Southwest, 1846-1930* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000).

<sup>21</sup> Aron, ‘The Making of the First American West and the Unmaking of Other Realms’, in Deverell, *A Companion to the American West*, p.5.

See also, Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History*, rev. edn (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> ‘Progress: Devoted to the Development, Growth and Progress of the West’, *Pacific Monthly*, 14.1 (1905), p.106; ‘The Alaska-Pacific-Yukon Exposition’, *Wilhelm’s Magazine: The Coast*, 12.6 (1906), p.291.



These spatial conceptualisations framed the production of racial knowledge and experiences at the West Coast world's fairs.

The West Coast fairs' promotional literature consistently emphasised the significance of the host cities' proximity to the Pacific Ocean, and thus their authority on matters of Pacific geography. A guidebook to the San Francisco Midwinter Fair (1894) included the heading "San Francisco: The Imperial City by the Western Sea", and boasted that the city was the "commercial metropolis of the Pacific Coast", and stood in the "front rank of the great cities of the nation as the eighth on the list".<sup>23</sup> As the cities on the West Coast became central to the nation's foreign and commercial policies, they vied for recognition as the nation's premier location on the Pacific shore. Both of the twentieth century Californian fairs commemorated the completion of the Panama Canal in their titles, celebrating the linking of the Atlantic Ocean with the Pacific. Many Westerners hoped that the canal would precipitate an influx of white European immigrants to the American West, which in their eyes would undo the damaging human effects of closer ties with Asia.<sup>24</sup> A guidebook to the San Francisco fair (1915) emphasised the importance of the canal, claiming that the "physical mingling of the waters of the Atlantic with the waters of the Pacific will find its corollary in the mingling in San Francisco".<sup>25</sup> In an effort to promote the sister fair in San Diego (1915-1916), the *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* noted that San Diego was 600 miles closer to the Panama Canal than San

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<sup>23</sup> Taliesin Evans, *All About the Midwinter Fair, San Francisco, and Interesting Facts Concerning California* (San Francisco: W.B. Bancroft and Company, 1894), p.24.

<sup>24</sup> George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.95.

<sup>25</sup> *Information for Visitors to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco 1915* (San Francisco: Panama Pacific International Exposition Company, 1914).

Francisco's event.<sup>26</sup> The fair organisers' sustained promotion of their Pacific location reflected the special place that the region held in the national imagination at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>27</sup> Although all American world's fairs had presented utopian visions of the new century, the names and promotional texts of the Western fairs signified organisers' efforts to position their host cities as central to the nation's Pacific future.

The fairs in the Pacific Northwest similarly made a virtue of their location. Promotional materials for the Seattle fair (1909) stated, "in Seattle this year, Seattle and the whole West, and with them the world, will celebrate the future. Other expositions have been commemorative. The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific will be anticipative ... a symbol of Westward ho".<sup>28</sup> The city's mayor, John F. Miller, declared in a speech welcoming Japanese delegates to the fair that Seattle was the "great gateway" between America and Japan.<sup>29</sup> Such texts not only promoted the host city's role in Pacific developments, but also helped to reconceptualise the region in spatial terms. Ken Tadashi Oshima has argued that the Seattle fair "implied a new geographical entity consisting as a continuous band around the Pacific Ocean", incorporating America's West Coast states, the Yukon, Alaska, and the islands leading to Russia, China, and Japan. Oshima also notes that the term 'Pacific Rim' was first used in a 1925 meeting of the American Historical Association held in Seattle, which as a geographical

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<sup>26</sup> *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, 40.2 (February 1915), p.170.

The Pan American Union arose from a number of conferences held with the aim of creating unity in the Americas at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1948, the collective was named the Organization of American States.

<sup>27</sup> Shelley Sang-Hee Lee, 'The Contradictions of Cosmopolitanism: Consuming the Orient at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition and the International Potlatch Festival, 1909-1934', *Western Historical Quarterly*, 38 (2007), p.281.

<sup>28</sup> William H. Raymond, 'Uncle Sam's Next Big Show', *Sunset*, 22.5 (1909), p.449.

<sup>29</sup> 'Seattle Opens Doors of Country to Japanese Commissioners', *Pacific Northwest Commerce*, 1.4 (1909), p.12.

expression functioned to draw Asia closer to America.<sup>30</sup> A magazine article about the Portland fair (1905) titled 'Our Empire on the Pacific', similarly expressed this spatial compression, optimistically claiming that the "day when the Pacific shall be transformed into an American lake" was near.<sup>31</sup> Locating their cities as the nation's gateway to Pacific opportunities, exposition promoters emphasised the host cities' place within new spatial conceptions of an American Pacific.

While these promotional texts were necessarily outward looking and Pacifically-oriented, they also sought to emphasise the host cities' connection with the rest of the American nation. As Barbara Berglund has noted in relation to the San Francisco fair (1894), exposition organisers not only sought to display their host city as imminently instrumental to the nation's imperialist goals, but also as a "civilized, conquered, and thus fully American place", which was sufficiently modern and urban to be readily incorporated into the fabric of the nation.<sup>32</sup> The West Coast states had only recently been officially incorporated, with California achieving statehood in 1850, Oregon in 1859, and Washington in 1889. As outposts of the Far West and vanguards of the frontier, the states were isolated from the nation's political and cultural centres on the East Coast. The expositions therefore functioned to articulate not only the host cities' proximity to important Pacific locations, but also their status as truly American locales. A text promoting the Seattle fair (1909) emphasised the

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<sup>30</sup> Ken T. Oshima, 'Asia outside Asia: The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition', in Vimalin Rujivacharakul, H. Hazel Hahn, Ken T. Oshima, and Peter Christensen (eds.), *Architecturalized Asia: Mapping a Continent Through History* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), p.166.

<sup>31</sup> 'Our Empire on the Pacific', *Leslie's Weekly*, 100 (1905), p.578.

<sup>32</sup> Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846-1906* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), p.217.

centrality of the host city to the nation's future, claiming, "Seattle is to be the radiating American point for this new chapter of Pacific history".<sup>33</sup> Shifting the nation's centre of significance from East Coast to West, a former president of the Portland fair (1905) stated in a Pacific-based magazine, "Forces are now in motion which it is clear are to make the Pacific Ocean during the present century a sphere of activity similar to what the Atlantic was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries".<sup>34</sup> Conceptualising an American Pacific necessarily entailed reconceptualising the location of the nation's centres and peripheries.

### ***Manufacturing Space at the Fair***

As various individuals sought to articulate and regulate the spatial organisation of the nation, exhibitors and mediators attempted to manufacture world's fair spaces. As Lefebvre has noted, leisure spaces control and manage, imposing their own rituals and models.<sup>35</sup> The production of space at world's fairs changed dramatically from the inception of the genre at London's Great Exhibition (1851), which housed all of its exhibits in a purpose built Crystal Palace in Hyde Park. As the exposition genre developed in nineteenth century America, key actors generated specific features and spatial arrangements that became central aspects of the events. The first American world's fair in New York (1853) replicated its predecessor with another Crystal Palace, yet did not repeat London's success. The Centennial International Exposition in Philadelphia

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<sup>33</sup> *The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition and Seattle, The Beautiful Exposition City* (Seattle: R.A. Reid, 1909).

<sup>34</sup> Harvey W. Scott, 'The Momentous Struggle for the Mastery of the Pacific', *Pacific Monthly*, 14.1 (1905), p.4.

Scott was exposition president 1903-1904.

<sup>35</sup> Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p.384.

(1876) built upon the extension of the exposition layout at the International Exposition in Paris (1867), which was located in a public park, and had a principal structure surrounded by a number of smaller exhibition buildings.<sup>36</sup> American exhibitors also replicated the amusement concession features that had become popular at European expositions. However, fair organisers did not officially incorporate the amusement area, known as 'Centennial City', within the fair grounds at Philadelphia, and a spate of fires and antisocial behaviour led the city authorities to demolish and denounce its exhibits.<sup>37</sup>

The World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago (1893) was on a much larger scale, with numerous buildings, sculptured gardens, plazas, and the impressive structure of the Ferris wheel making up the 'White City'; so-called after the uniform whiteness of its buildings. A detailed classificatory criterion divided the exhibits, which organisers arranged in buildings dedicated to themes such as Manufactures and Liberal Arts, Horticulture, Transportation, and Electricity. Other buildings were dedicated to foreign nations and American states, and foreign dignitaries and concessionaires fought over desirable locations that were preferably far from the entertainment concessions. The exposition's amusement district - named the 'Midway' - was a clearly separated appendage to the main exposition grounds, yet was officially incorporated within the fair's organisational structure [see Appendix 1]. Subsequent fairs held in Buffalo (1901) and St Louis (1904) further integrated their concession

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<sup>36</sup> For an overview of the layout and organisation of the nineteenth and twentieth century world's fairs, see Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); Anna Jackson, *Expo: International Expositions 1851-2010* (London: V&A Publications, 2008).

<sup>37</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, pp.34-35.

strips within the grounds, yet the section remained recognisable as a distinct and bounded entity.

The amusement concession strip's status as a separate yet incorporated space was important, and the midway clearly had a distinct function within the world's fair grounds. Frank Morton Todd, the official historian of the San Francisco fair (1915) noted that the midway fulfilled the "need of the public for relaxation", provided the "exhibition of strange peoples and customs as part of the subject-matter of education", promoted a "diverting night life under proper regulation", and had a "healthful effect on gate receipts".<sup>38</sup> Yet as Robert Rydell has consistently argued, midways were not simply frivolous sites of little consequence, but were an integral component of world's fairs that simultaneously gained and offered legitimacy to a particular worldview.<sup>39</sup> As incorporated entities, the midways drew upon and shaped the big picture narratives of racial progress and comparison that were central to the world's fairs as manifestations of the white racial frame. Situated within this overarching framework of white racial dominance, the midways operated as spaces that constituted knowledge and shaped experiences. This knowledge production function concerned fair organisers, who consistently articulated their desire to "secure attractions that will carry dignity, appearance and merit: that will be interesting, instructive and amusing".<sup>40</sup> Although the exhibitionary techniques and spatial organisation of the midways may have parodied the uniform appearance of the 'official' fair grounds, with their varied architecture

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<sup>38</sup> Frank M. Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, vol.1 (New York: Panama-Pacific International Co., 1921), p.170.

<sup>39</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, pp.235-236.

<sup>40</sup> John A. Wakefield, 'Attractions on the Trail', *Lewis and Clark Journal*, 2.6 (1904), p.9. Wakefield was the Director of Concessions and Admissions at the Portland fair (1905).

and enclosed spaces, they were nevertheless an integrated and anticipated element of world's fair design.<sup>41</sup> At the West Coast world's fairs, the midways occupied a central position in the organisation and promotion of the events.

The California Midwinter International Exposition held in San Francisco (1894) was the first West Coast world's fair, and its organisers hoped to replicate the success of the Chicago exposition one year earlier. Located in Golden Gate Park, which meets the shores of the Pacific Ocean, the fair was far smaller than its predecessor. The amusement concessions – again named the 'Midway' – were loosely clustered around an avenue named South Drive, and were far more integrated than at Chicago [see Appendix 2]. The fair's official history noted that this arrangement was intentional, stating that the attractions were:

not colonized in any particular geographical section of the Exposition grounds, nor were they incongruously mixed up with the main buildings of the Exposition ... The result was that those who visited the Exposition for the purpose of study were unannoyed by conflicting attractions, those who came to be amused had no difficulty in finding a field for unlimited frolic, and those who desired to combine the purposes of education and entertainment found it easy to secure a happy alternation.<sup>42</sup>

The ratio of amusement concessions to official exhibits was high at San Francisco, and the small scale and rushed planning of the event ensured that the exposition was far less ordered than subsequent West Coast fairs. The central feature of the main fair grounds was the Grand Court of Honor, which included

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<sup>41</sup> Burton Benedict, 'The Anthropology of World's Fairs', in Burton Benedict (ed.), *The Anthropology of World's Fairs: San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Berkeley: Lowie Museum of Anthropology, 1983), pp.52-53.

<sup>42</sup> *The Official History of the California Midwinter International Exposition* (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker Co., 1894), p.146.

an electric fountain and light tower, and was surrounded by the Administration, Horticultural and Agricultural, Manufactures and Liberal Arts, and Mechanical Arts buildings. Other buildings represented Californian counties, American states, and foreign nations.<sup>43</sup> Although most of the buildings were built to be temporary, some of the fair's outline, and the Japanese Tea Garden, remain in Golden Gate Park today.

Although located inland, Portland's Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair (1905) was situated on a body of water called Guild's Lake, near the Willamette River. The amusement strip – here called the 'Trail' – was in a strictly bounded section of the exposition, and many of its concessions were condensed into an 800ft-long space [see Appendix 3]. The Trail was located on the banks of the lake, which fed into the Bridge of Nations. This layout forced visitors to walk through the Trail in order to access a peninsula on the lake, which housed the U.S. Government Building. The main fair grounds were more ordered and generously spaced than the Trail exhibits, with landscaped gardens and a terrace that boasted a panoramic view of the lake.<sup>44</sup> The largest buildings were the U.S. Government Building; Manufactures, Liberal Arts, and Varied Industries; Agriculture and Horticulture; and Electricity, Machinery, and Transportation. Although international, the fair also had a local emphasis. The states of Washington and California occupied significantly sized buildings, plazas and avenues were named after the counties and towns of Oregon, and large Forestry and Mining buildings represented the

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<sup>43</sup> For more information on the layout of the 1894 fair, see Arthur Chandler and Marvin Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair: The Story of the California Midwinter International Exposition, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, 1894* (San Francisco: Pogo Press, 1993).

<sup>44</sup> For more on the layout and organisation of the Portland fair, see Carl Abbott, *The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 2004).



region's natural resources and industries. The exposition had a number of statues that were laden with expansionary symbolism, and the main entrance featured a colonnade with an engraving of the words 'Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way'.<sup>45</sup> The first exposition to be held in the Pacific Northwest, the site of the Portland fair is now an industrial district.

The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle (1909) took place on the University of Washington campus, which overlooks Lake Union and Union Bay, close to Lake Washington. The midway – here called the 'Pay Streak' – was located on the fair's Western edge, and took the form of a long strip that began close to the fair's main entrance, and ended at the banks of Lake Union [see Appendix 4]. The main fair grounds radiated outwards from a plaza named Arctic Circle, with buildings dedicated to Agriculture, Manufactures, Alaska, Philippines and Hawaii, and the U.S. Government.<sup>46</sup> Elsewhere, a series of avenues and circular plazas contained other foreign, state, and industrial buildings, and landscaped gardens complemented the views of Mount Rainier. Exposition organisers named avenues and plazas after both local and international locations, including the nation's new imperial possessions, which lent the exposition the feel of an "imperial theme park".<sup>47</sup> Due to the fair's location on the University of Washington campus, some of the structures were built to be permanent additions to the university grounds.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> For more on the statuary and symbolism of the fair, see Lisa Blee, 'Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March: Exhibiting a History of Empire at the 1905 Portland World's Fair', *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 106.2 (2005), pp.232-253.

<sup>46</sup> For more information on the layout and organisation of the Seattle fair, see Alan J. Stein, Paula Becker and the HistoryLink Staff, *Washington's First World's Fair, Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition: A Timeline History* (Seattle: History Link, 2009).

<sup>47</sup> Robert W. Rydell, 'Visions of Empire: International Expositions in Portland and Seattle, 1905-1909', *Pacific Historical Review*, 52.1 (1983), p.39.

<sup>48</sup> Frank L. Merrick, 'The Next World's Fair', *Alaska-Yukon Magazine*, 4.5 (1908), p.405.

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco (1915) was held on the Presidio military base, which overlooked San Francisco bay. The midway – known as the Joy Zone – was located in a corner of the grounds behind the Fort Mason army post and close to the fair’s Fillmore street entrance [see Appendix 5]. The Joy Zone was large, occupying 65 acres of the fair’s 635-acre site, and one commemorative text noted that “Unlike the other part of the Exposition, the Zone is a riot of coloring, brilliant with flags, bunting, signs and scenery”.<sup>49</sup> The rest of the fair grounds were uniformly organised in a manner that resembled the city grid system. The central Court of the Universe was surrounded on each side by the main exposition buildings, including the Agriculture, Transportation, Liberal Arts, and Manufactures palaces. The fair’s centrepiece, the Tower of Jewels – a 435ft tall tower covered in over 100,000 glass jewels – was also located here.<sup>50</sup> Elsewhere, an Avenue of States contained the state buildings, and an Avenue of Nations housed the buildings of foreign nations. As Sarah Moore has noted, the fair’s layout functioned to map and fix the nation’s new empire.<sup>51</sup> The former fair site is now occupied by the Marina District neighbourhood, and only the Palace of Fine Arts remains.

The Panama-California Exposition – later renamed the Panama-California International Exposition – in San Diego (1915-1916), was located in Balboa Park, several blocks from San Diego bay.<sup>52</sup> The relatively large concession strip – named the ‘Isthmus’ – was clustered by the North Entrance,

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<sup>49</sup> *Panama-Pacific International Exposition 1915 Souvenir Guide* (San Francisco: Souvenir Guide Publishers, 1915), p.16; *The Splendors of the Panama Pacific International Exposition in Hand Coloured Illustrations, Limited Edition* (San Francisco: R.A. Reid, 1915), p.130.

<sup>50</sup> For more information on the layout and organisation of the San Francisco fair, see Sarah J. Moore, *Empire on Display: San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, p.6, p.9.

<sup>52</sup> The fair received the title ‘International’ at the close of the San Francisco fair, and many of the international exhibits at San Francisco were transported to San Diego.

opposite a number of model farms, orchards, and citrus groves [see Appendix 6]. The rest of the fair, which was much smaller than the event at San Francisco, was organised around the Plaza De Panama. The largest structures were the Commerce and Industries, Varied Industries, and Foreign Arts buildings, and there was a large parade ground and several green spaces.<sup>53</sup> Attempting to create a “Fairyland Where Old World Blends With New”, fair organisers moved away from the classical and uniform architecture of previous expositions, and drew upon the style of the pueblos and Spanish missions of the Southwest.<sup>54</sup> Several of the buildings and structures were built to be permanent additions to the park, including the Cabrillo bridge and the Botanical Building, and the fair’s exhibits and structures were central to the later building of the San Diego Zoo. The articulation and mapping of various spaces – from the nation’s new Pacific empire to the celebration of this empire on the grounds of the world’s fairs – functioned to define and regulate how Americans conceptualised important shifts in the shape and reach of the nation. Like race, space is an identifiable organisational framework that can demonstrate how knowledge, identities, and relationships emerge at a particular time and place.

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<sup>53</sup> For more information on the layout and organisation of the San Diego fair, see Richard W. Amero, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition* (Charleston: The History Press, 2013).

<sup>54</sup> *San Diego Union*, 7 January 1915; Pheobe S. Kropp, “‘There is a little sermon in that’: Constructing the Native Southwest at the San Diego Panama-California Exposition of 1915’, in Marta Weigle and Barbara A. Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway* (Phoenix: The Heard Museum, 1996), pp.37-38.

## **Racial Theories and Patterns**

Although they were entertaining sites of exhibition, the live concessions were inextricably bound to both professional and popular articulations of racial difference, and were grounded in and reified by the regional racial patterns of the West Coast states. This section outlines the key racial theories and practices that impacted upon the live exhibits, explains the existing racial relations in the West Coast states, and examines how the fairs used these regional racial patterns in their promotional materials. Although I am using the West Coast world's fairs as sites to examine turn of the twentieth century racialisation, it is important to recognise the broader movements in racial thought and demographics that shaped this particular popular manifestation of the white racial frame.

### ***Racial Theory and Practice***

Racial theories and ideas proliferated in the second half of the nineteenth century in response to the dual processes of expansion and immigration. Influenced by European studies and approaches, American anthropologists, sociologists, and other professionals developed ways of thinking about racial difference in America. The development of racial theory has been written about comprehensively elsewhere, and this section aims only to outline some of the key theories and approaches that were influential in the racialisation of the non-white groups at the West Coast fairs.<sup>55</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth

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<sup>55</sup> See Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971); Yehudi O. Webster, *The Racialization of America* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1992); Lee D. Baker, *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Nell I. Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010).

century, older racial hierarchies of slave/master and savage/civilised eroded due to the abolition of slavery and the conquest of Native Americans, and new developments such as Asian immigration, the nation's expansion abroad, and increased urbanism demanded a more complex system for identifying and categorising racial difference.<sup>56</sup> As Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1859) appeared to put an end to the long-running debate over monogenism vs. polygenism, anthropologists and others attempted to formulate rules and theories that would categorise and define the world's varied populations.<sup>57</sup> Contradictory theories abounded about why racial differences existed, which races were superior to others, and how humans had evolved over time.

The increased focus on evolution and genetics in the second half of the nineteenth century allowed discriminatory racial theories to proliferate. Darwin's followers applied evolutionary ideas of natural selection and the survival of the fittest to social questions, and from the 1870s, Social Darwinism was an influential theoretical strain in America.<sup>58</sup> Yet despite the emphasis on genetics, scientists and thinkers still disagreed about how physical and behavioural traits were transmitted and whether they could be altered, leading to debates about the relative importance of heredity and environment. While some American theorists favoured Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's ideas about the inheritance of acquired characteristics, and thus the ability to uplift and

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<sup>56</sup> Brad Evans, *Before Cultures: The Ethnographic Imagination in American Literature, 1865-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p.4.

<sup>57</sup> Gossett, *Race*, pp.66-67.

Monogenism posits a common descent for all human races, whereas polygenism suggests that different races have different origins and belong to separate species. Darwin argued that all human races belonged to a single species.

<sup>58</sup> Both preceding and following *The Origin of Species*, the works of Herbert Spencer posited that society should be understood as an organism. See Herbert Spencer, 'The Social Organism', *Westminster Review*, 27 (1860), pp.90-121. Gossett, *Race*, p.145.

improve certain races through environmental intervention, others favoured Gregor Mendel's less flexible rules of genetic inheritance that emphasised biological fixity.<sup>59</sup> This contested development of racial thought in America had a profound impact on policies towards non-white populations, and allowed seemingly contradictory practices – particularly in terms of colonial policy – to co-exist.<sup>60</sup> The rise of eugenics in the second half of the nineteenth century, which was primarily influenced by the work of Francis Galton on the inheritance of abilities, promoted radical intervention through the increase of the fittest elements of society and the decrease of the unfit.<sup>61</sup> The debate over biological fixity versus environmental uplift concerned leaders of Native American policy, social reformers in immigrant communities, as well as imperialists and their opponents.

America's diverse demographics, and in particular its indigenous population, provided scientists with live 'specimens' for their theories and practices. Native Americans were central to the development of American anthropology and notions of racial progress, and researchers such as Frederic Ward Putnam used indigenous peoples to advance the professionalisation of the discipline and popularise anthropological theories in museums and world's fairs.<sup>62</sup> The theory of unilineal development posited that societies progressed from primitivism to civilisation over time, and American supporters of the

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<sup>59</sup> Alexandra M. Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), p.29.

<sup>60</sup> Julian Go, "Racism" and Colonialism: Meanings of Difference and Ruling Practices in America's Pacific Empire', *Qualitative Sociology*, 27.1 (2004), p.40.

<sup>61</sup> See Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genius: An Enquiry into its Laws and Consequences* (London: Macmillan, 1869).

Gossett, *Race*, p.158; Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>62</sup> Frederic Ward Putnam was the head of the anthropology department at the 1893 Chicago world's fair.

Baker, *From Savage to Negro*, p.51.

theory, such as Lewis Henry Morgan, argued that Native Americans represented the last and best opportunity to study a race still in the early stages of its progress.<sup>63</sup> While this belief made Native Americans important specimens for research, it also justified damaging policies towards indigenous communities by suggesting that those races at the beginning of the evolutionary spectrum were inferior. The “salvage approach” to anthropological research, which sought to document Native American cultures before they disappeared, also sparked the movement of ‘primitivism’, which privileged and celebrated the supposedly more authentic lives of ‘primitive’ races.<sup>64</sup> This spatialisation of time spectacularised history and bolstered evolutionary theories.<sup>65</sup>

Theories about superior and inferior races also influenced immigration policy at the end of the nineteenth century, as Asian immigration on the West Coast, and Southern and Eastern European immigration on the East Coast, contributed to rising nativism. Concerns that the white race could not progress forever, that urbanisation might have degrading effects on the populace, and that immigrant populations were reproducing at higher rates than native-born Americans, led to theories of racial degeneracy and ‘race suicide’, and the very presence of various immigrant communities helped to refine theories of racial

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<sup>63</sup> Morgan claimed that the three stages of society – savagery, barbarism, and civilisation – were divided by technological innovation. See Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society, Or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery Through Barbarism to Civilization* (New York: Henry Holt, 1878).

Robert F. Berkhofer Jr, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p.47, p.54

<sup>64</sup> See Frank H. Cushing, ‘Manual Concepts: A Study of the Influence of Hand-Usage on Culture-Growth’, *American Anthropologist*, 5.4 (1892), pp.289-318.

Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), p.16, pp.151-152.

<sup>65</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983; repr. 2014), p.16.

classification.<sup>66</sup> Scientists and policymakers marked immigrant groups as either desirable or undesirable according to traits that they considered to be determined by race.

Scientists and theorists also developed their understanding of the category of 'Anglo-Saxon' in the second half of the nineteenth century, and used it to underpin arguments about white superiority in the era of American expansion. During the Spanish-American War, pro-imperialists argued that the conflict was racially and historically inevitable because Americans had inherited the empire-building capacities of Anglo-Saxons, and the Anglo-Saxon argument of racial superiority penetrated popular culture.<sup>67</sup> Although anti-imperialists staunchly opposed the war, their arguments nevertheless relied upon theories of racial difference, including ideas about the degradation of the white race in tropical climates.<sup>68</sup> While the majority of nineteenth century racial theories emphasised categorisation and progress, at the beginning of the twentieth century, alternative theories emerged that avoided racial essentialism and hierarchisation. Franz Boas and his followers advocated cultural relativism, arguing that cultures were disparate, not easily comparable, and were not evolving along a single set course.<sup>69</sup> Cultural relativism did not become popular

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<sup>66</sup> See Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race; Or, The Racial Basis of European History* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1916).

Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp.191-196; Kristofer Allfeldt, *Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction: Immigration in the Pacific Northwest, 1890-1924* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), pp.154-155.

<sup>67</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, pp.89-90; Gossett, *Race*, p.311, p.319.

See also, Rudyard Kipling, 'The White Man's Burden', *McClure's Magazine*, 12 (1899), pp.290-291.

<sup>68</sup> See William Z. Ripley, *The Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1899).

Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p.331.

<sup>69</sup> See Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1911).

Baker, *From Savage to Negro*, pp.99-100; Webster, *The Racialization of America*, pp.157-162.



until the decades after this study, and did not immediately overturn the late nineteenth century obsession with racial categories and rankings.<sup>70</sup> The various – and at times competing – racial theories and practices in the second half of the nineteenth century shaped both popular and official debates about race, and influenced the racialisation of non-white groups on the West Coast world's fair midways.

### ***Race and the American West Coast***

On the West Coast, scientists and public officials transformed theories and practices about racial difference developed on the East Coast in order to apply them to the vastly different set of patterns in the West, while simultaneously taking the lead in the development of new policies and popular myths that could more adequately respond to the region's racial diversity. Race was central to the development of a Western regional identity and mythology, and late nineteenth century Western boosters oscillated between promoting the region as a haven of whiteness and exploiting its unusual racial composition. The admission of California and Oregon into the nation as Free States, and the development of a mythology of the West as a product of white pioneering, created a popular belief that the West was the nation's last opportunity to build a white republic.<sup>71</sup> Yet the West was by no means racially homogenous. Race was central to California's development, as its racial diversity ensured that the state did not adhere to the more familiar black/white model elsewhere, and

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<sup>70</sup> Ronald E. Martin, *The Language of Difference: American Writers and Anthropologists Reconfigure the Primitive, 1878-1940* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), p.23.

<sup>71</sup> California achieved statehood in 1850, and Oregon was admitted in 1859.

Robert G. Lee, *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), p.9; Frank Van Nuys, *Americanizing the West: Race, Immigrants, and Citizenship, 1890-1930* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), p.15.

race-making agents instead had to construct various “relational” racial patterns along a number of different “racial fault lines”.<sup>72</sup> The Pacific Northwest did not have comparable numbers of non-white residents, yet it did have a virulent strain of nativism, partly due to the belief that diversity was a problem that could still be avoided, and partly because the threat of Asian immigration in particular was more “real, immediate and instinctive” in the region.<sup>73</sup> Despite differences between them, the West Coast states of California, Oregon, and Washington, developed according to distinctly regional racial patterns.

The settlement of the United States had involved forcing Native American nations progressively westward. Native Americans were central to the national myth of the taming of the frontier, and the popular image of the Wild West bound the nation’s indigenous population to the region West of the Rocky Mountains.<sup>74</sup> By 1890, the ‘American Indian’ population group made up 1.4% of the population in California, 1.6% in Oregon, and 3.1% in Washington, which was higher than the national percentage at 0.4%, and lower only to Southwestern and Plains states such as Arizona, Nevada, Montana, and the Dakotas, and to the Indian Territory in Oklahoma.<sup>75</sup> The region’s relationship with the indigenous population was significant to its perceived identity. There

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<sup>72</sup> Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), p.9. Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p.1, p.7.

<sup>73</sup> Allerfeldt, *Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction*, p.16, pp.155-156.

<sup>74</sup> Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians*, pp.11-12.

See also, Sherry L. Smith, *Reimagining Indians: Native Americans through Anglo Eyes, 1880-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Armando J. Prats, *Invisible Natives: Myth and Identity in the American Western* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

<sup>75</sup> There were 16,624 American Indian peoples recorded in California, 4,971 in Oregon, and 11,181 in Washington.

Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, ‘Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States’, *Working Paper Series No.56* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Division, 2002).

were a number of reservations in the coastal states at the turn of the twentieth century, and several violent 'Indian Wars' occurred in the Pacific Northwest in the 1870s.<sup>76</sup> Native Americans were central to the development of the economies and identities of Southwestern states such as Arizona, New Mexico, and parts of California. Anthropologists travelled from all over the country to study the indigenous people of the region, and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railway exploited the nation's fascination with these 'primitive' populations to build a popular tourism industry that promoted the region's Native American nations while obscuring the less admired Mexican population.<sup>77</sup> As the West Coast states sought to modernise and integrate within the fabric of the nation at the turn of the twentieth century, they had to contend with their recent history of Native American conflict and resettlement.

While the Eastern Seaboard was largely shaped by trade and immigration relationships with Europe, the West Coast looked to Asia for the movement of people and goods. Gail Nomura has criticised Euro-centric views of American history, instead arguing that Asia was central to the development of the American nation. Claiming that the centrality of Asia to the Pacific Coast states metaphorically extended the borders of the American West into the Far East, Nomura states that Asians were a necessary Other in the definition of a distinctly American identity.<sup>78</sup> The desire for dominance in the large Chinese market solidified ties between America's Pacific port cities and Asian nations,

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<sup>76</sup> Blee refers to the Modoc (1872-1873), Nez Perce (1877), and Bannock-Paiute (1878) wars. Blee, 'Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March', p.239.

<sup>77</sup> Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest*, pp.78-80, p.101.

Southwestern boosters did attempt to promote the region's Spanish heritage as a means of transforming the Mexican population into a safe ethnic minority with European roots. See Matthew F. Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

<sup>78</sup> Gail M. Nomura, 'Significant Lives: Asia and Asian Americans in the History of the U.S. West', *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 25.1 (1994), p.72, p.75.

and from the mid-nineteenth century, Chinese immigrants began to arrive in significant numbers in the region. Without large numbers of African Americans, Chinese immigrants were the most visible and “potent” racial Other in the Pacific states, and the large numbers in San Francisco in particular allowed the city to take the lead in articulating a Chinese racial identity.<sup>79</sup> The Pacific states led the way in agitating for Chinese exclusion, and in 1882, the Chinese became the first immigrant group to be excluded from America on the grounds of racial status.<sup>80</sup> However, the Chinese Exclusion Act did not put a stop to Chinese immigration, and by the turn of the twentieth century, Japanese immigrants began to settle on the West Coast in significant numbers. By 1890, the Asian population stood at 6.1% in California, 3% in Oregon, and 1% in Washington: far higher than the 0.2% national population figure, and comparable in percentage terms only to Nevada, Idaho, Montana, and Arizona. Of the 109,527 Asians in the United States in 1890, 73,619 resided in California.<sup>81</sup> As the first region to encounter significant numbers of Asian immigrants, the West Coast led the way in racialising this non-white group.

The Asia-Pacific region was central to America’s turn of the century expansionary impulse. Although debates about imperialism occupied the entire nation, it was the Pacific Coast states, with their existing steamship routes to Asia, which functioned as the launching pad for America’s overseas empire. In attempting to shed their frontier image, West Coast port cities competed with one another to orient themselves as the gateway to the Pacific, exploiting their

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<sup>79</sup> Barbara Berglund, ‘Chinatown’s Tourist Terrain: Representation and Racialization in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco’, *American Studies*, 46.2 (2005), p.6.

<sup>80</sup> Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines*, p.6.

<sup>81</sup> There were 73,619 Asians recorded in California, 9,565 in Oregon, and 3,620 in Washington. Gibson and Jung, ‘Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States’.

longstanding trade relationships with Asia and their proximity to the nation's new Pacific possessions.<sup>82</sup> Casting themselves as imperial citizens, West Coast residents looked to the Far East for opportunities and potential threats. Nomura has described the nation's first Asian-theatre wars as "Far-Western wars", pointing to the crossover in personnel that fought in Western conflicts with Native Americans, and those that were sent to fight in the 1898 Spanish-American War and to quell the 1900 Boxer Rebellion in China.<sup>83</sup> The key racial patterns and concerns on the West Coast significantly differed to the black/white relationship in the South, and the largely white immigration on the Eastern Seaboard.

### ***Race and the West Coast World's Fairs***

The organisers and promoters of the West Coast world's fairs recognised that the region's racial diversity could function as a draw to potential visitors. In a pamphlet for potential exhibitors at the San Francisco Midwinter Fair (1894), a letter from the fair's president told readers of the survival of Spanish customs in the region, and the "remarkable Chinese colony" in the city, which had brought their "oriental habits" with them. The letter went on to state that San Francisco was the most accessible city in the nation to the "vast peoples in the Orient" and South America, and that large numbers of people from these nations "constantly visit San Francisco in the ordinary course of business", and would inevitably come in greater numbers during the exposition.<sup>84</sup> A souvenir for the official groundbreaking of the San Francisco fair (1915) also boasted of the city's

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<sup>82</sup> Sang-Hee Lee, 'The Contradictions of Cosmopolitanism', pp.279-280.

<sup>83</sup> Nomura, 'Significant Lives', p.71.

<sup>84</sup> *California Midwinter International Exposition, Information for Intending Exhibitors* (San Francisco, 1894), in S.0438, California Academy of Sciences Library.

diversity, yet spoke of it in less transitory terms. The text claimed that census takers had found the city to have the most cosmopolitan population in the world, claiming, “Globe-trotters say that in San Francisco restaurants they can get a meal in any 'language'”. It went on to inform visitors that “Foreigners” had settled in various parts of the city, and a visit to these “colonies” would be both interesting and instructive.<sup>85</sup> By acknowledging and promoting the region’s unusual racial diversity, the West Coast fair organisers could distinguish their events from previous fairs in the East and Midwest, and from those in former slave-holding states. Although previous fairs had displayed various racial groups on their midways, the host cities on the West Coast could make the cities themselves destinations for a diverse racial spectacle.

Yet advertising racial diversity in exposition literature could also deter visitors. During the competition with New Orleans to obtain federal sanctioning for the exposition celebrating the completion of the Panama Canal, a heavily illustrated advertisement played down San Francisco’s racial diversity, falsely claiming that its population was “at least 98 percent white”.<sup>86</sup> Framing the argument in terms of finance, as the federal loan that had bailed out the New Orleans exposition (1884) was still unpaid, the advertisement implored readers to bear in mind that:

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<sup>85</sup> *Official Souvenir of Ground Breaking by President William H. Taft for the Panama Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915, October 14, 1911* (San Francisco: Blair-Murdock Co., 1911), in folder 13, box 12, , 344, Young Research Library.

<sup>86</sup> The 1910 census showed that San Francisco’s population was 95.9% White, not “at least 98 percent” as claimed in the text. New Orleans’ population was 73.6% White. Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, ‘Historical Census Statistics On Population Totals By Race, 1790 to 1990, and By Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, For Large Cities And Other Urban Places In The United States’, *Working Paper Series No.76* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Division, 2005).

in this fair competition color counts, not because of a difference in skins, but as an indication of poverty and inability to keep up the local support of an exposition ... San Francisco's population is practically all white.<sup>87</sup>

Equating blackness with poverty, and therefore a lack of public support, the booklet celebrated California's prosperity, obscured the region's diversity, and framed its promotional message through the lens of racial order. Although San Francisco was indeed whiter than New Orleans, the omission of any textual discussion of its racial diversity – which featured so prominently in other promotional texts – is notable. Yet the cartoon accompanying the text did depict recognisable and stereotypical images of Chinese and Mexican figures, which suggests that the promoters sought to strike a balance between acknowledging and containing the city's diverse population [see Figure 2.1]. By obscuring the region's complex racial composition, the text sought to align the city with nationally dominant racial and social hierarchies, and distance it from the well-known racial divisions in the South.<sup>88</sup> This contrast between promotional materials reflects the ability of exposition promoters to manage and manipulate the region's racial narrative to different ends. In the competition with New Orleans, racial diversity was undesirable, yet to potential exhibitors and visitors, it could offer commercial opportunities and authentic spectacle.

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<sup>87</sup> *San Francisco, the Exposition City, 1915* (n.p., n.d.), pp.1, 6, 7, in Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library.

California's representatives obtained federal sanction for the fair in February 1911, so the advertisement predates this. The claim that the "figures for the present census are unavailable" suggests that the booklet was published some time in 1910.

<sup>88</sup> Barbara Berglund, 'The Days of Old, the Days of Gold, the Days of '49: Identity, History, and Memory at the California Midwinter International Exposition, 1894', *The Public Historian*, 25.4 (2003), p.27.

**Figure 2.1. Advertisement to secure the 1915 exposition for San Francisco.**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Centre-fold of *San Francisco, the Exposition City, 1915* (n.p., n.d.), in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno.**

While the West Coast's domestic racial composition at times caused anxiety and resulted in contradictory claims in the fairs' promotional materials, so too did the racial composition of neighbouring nations in the Pacific region. Souvenirs, guidebooks, and advertisements consistently highlighted the proximity of the host cities to the varied populations of the Pacific. Although this narrative often emerged in optimistic statements about future trade opportunities, it also assumed an explicitly racial dimension, and reflected anxieties about growing contact with Eastern nations. In a souvenir of the groundbreaking of the San Francisco fair (1915), Benjamin Ide Wheeler spoke of the significance of celebrating the Panama Canal's completion in the city, stating:



this is the arena in which the two world-halves, the Orient and the Occident, are to stand, no longer back to back, but face to face, and no man can foresee [sic] the issue thereof ... the history of the human races passes to its last and final phase. Such an event must be celebrated at a place where it has significance, where the races meet.<sup>89</sup>

This image of San Francisco as a location where the races coalesced expressed excitement about the city's role within the nation's commercial and imperial expansion, but also a distinct anxiety about the uncertain racial future posed by greater contact with Pacific nations. China's large population and Japan's increasing military prowess threatened America's dominance in the Pacific, and caused concerns about further immigration: both issues that were of more immediate concern to West Coast residents.<sup>90</sup> The souvenir exploited this new and ambiguous regional and racial dynamic, and made it a central organising principle of the fair.

In the Pacific Northwest, fair organisers promoted their ability to acquire certain exhibits and representatives from nations throughout the Pacific region. In the official journal for the Portland fair (1905), the Director of Exhibits – Henry E. Dosch – proclaimed his desire to have the “Oriental side” emphasised as strongly as possible, with “representative groups of all the races peopling the shores of the Pacific Ocean”. He was also keen to point out that this gathering of peoples would be “one of the most fascinating and educational lessons in

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<sup>89</sup> *Official Souvenir of Ground Breaking by President William H. Taft for the Panama Pacific International Exposition.*

Benjamin Ide Wheeler was the president of the University of California, Berkeley.

<sup>90</sup> Jonathan G. Utley, ‘American Views of China, 1900-1915: The Unwelcome But Inevitable Awakening’, in Jonathan Goldstein, Jerry Israel, and Hilary Conroy (eds.), *America Views China: American Images of China Then and Now* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 1991), pp.114-115.

For more on the struggle for dominance in the Pacific, see William F. Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific: The United States, Japan, and Asia/Pacific Region, 1895-1945* (Westport: Praeger, 2001).

ethnology that the world could afford”.<sup>91</sup> Dosch’s statements demonstrate his desire to promote the city and the fair as arbiters of knowledge about the racial groups near its coastline. Exposition organisers and promoters were able to exploit both the excitement and the anxiety about the West Coast’s proximity to the Asia-Pacific region by assuring visitors that they could observe and learn about its various non-white populations at the fairs. The proliferation of racial theories and narratives attached to the various non-white groups within and beyond the American nation at the turn of the twentieth century makes the live exposition exhibits of this period important sites at which to examine the process of racialisation. The unusual racial patterns that coalesced on the West Coast at this time make it possible to examine the development of a relational and hierarchical racial frame that featured those populations that were deemed neither white nor black.

### **Key Actors in the Production of the West Coast World’s Fairs**

The world’s fairs and their live concessions were neither abstract nor isolated constructions, but were products of the desires and investments of various individuals and institutions that played a key role in exhibiting and mediating racial knowledge. In order to focus on the live exhibits in the following case studies, it is necessary to establish the processes involved in the production of the live exhibits, and to determine the individuals that had a role in shaping their form and content. As Sadiah Qureshi has noted, exhibitors are active agents in the construction and dissemination of knowledge, inventing and

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<sup>91</sup> Henry E. Dosch, ‘Foreign and Domestic Exhibits’, *Lewis and Clark Journal*, 2.3 (1904), p.7.

sharing techniques to frame human exhibits and to shape visitor receptions of them.<sup>92</sup> This section briefly outlines the key actors and organisational processes involved in the production of the world's fair midways, and emphasises that the displays were not simply top-down creations, but were subject to negotiation and influence from a range of vested interests. Although these exhibitors and mediators will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters, it is necessary to ground the live exhibits within concrete practices at this juncture in order to avoid making abstract claims about their role as sites of racialisation.

***Organisation and Funding: Local, National, and International Actors***

The turn of the twentieth century world's fairs were simultaneously local, national, and international in impetus and character. Stimulated by the interests of local businessmen eager to promote the host city and inspire investment, fairs were also symbols of nationalism and a means of securing international trade and diplomatic relationships. Attempting to fulfil all of these levels of interest simultaneously could at times cause friction. Each of the West Coast world's fairs arose in a similar manner, with local businessmen inspired by the effects of the fairs that had preceded them, and eager to promote the host city's local resources and international ties. The Portland fair was the only West Coast event to obtain federal funding, and each exposition relied heavily on financial backing from local businesses and members of the public. This grassroots tie created a proprietary relationship between local residents and businesses and the fairs, with one Portland businessman writing a letter of complaint to the exposition secretary that began, "As a small subscriber to the Lewis and Clark

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<sup>92</sup> Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.102.

Fair, I hereby enter a protest...".<sup>93</sup> This primarily local momentum gave the fairs clearly definable differences, and ensured that the exhibits were infused with a "regional racial lexicon" that reflected the host city's history and demographics.<sup>94</sup> Eager to place the host city on the map, and to gain momentum in the Pacific Coast regional rivalry that pitted the four port cities against one another, organisers consistently emphasised the virtues and enthusiasm of the local population.

The individuals and businesses behind the West Coast fairs were invested heavily in the development of the region. Fair organisers and directors included members of the host city's chamber of commerce, bankers, shipping and railroad magnates, newspaper publishers, moving picture producers, and real estate brokers.<sup>95</sup> Exposition directors, architects, and concession managers moved from fair to fair, soliciting letters of recommendation for subsequent endeavours at expositions and amusement parks. The president of the Portland fair (1905) wrote a letter to the manager of the Igorot Village which began, "Responding to your request for an expression as to the manner in which the affairs of the Igorrote Village have been conducted, it gives me great pleasure to state...".<sup>96</sup> The relationship between exposition organisers and the local press reflected this collegial manner in the pursuit of success, as fair managers

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<sup>93</sup> W.H. Grindstaff, letter to Henry E. Reed, September 13, 1905, in folder 4, box 10, Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair Records, 1894-1933, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society].

The letter was written on headed paper, and was sent from the offices of Grindstaff & Schalk, a real estate and insurance business located on 264 Stark Street, Portland.

<sup>94</sup> Molina, *Fit to be Citizens?*, p.12.

<sup>95</sup> For information on the financing and organisation of each of the fairs in this study, see John E. Findling and Kimberley D. Pelle, *Encyclopedia of World's Fairs and Expositions* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2008).

<sup>96</sup> H.W. Goode, letter to Richard Schneidewind, October 30, 1905, in folder 4, box 17, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society.

prepared articles for publication that would “idealize the exposition”.<sup>97</sup> The host cities’ histories and demographics structured the manifestation of local influences. Local immigrant communities objected to offensive exhibits, and took a leading role in organising special days that celebrated their nations.<sup>98</sup> The theme of the San Diego fair (1915-1916) arose from the personal interests of the exposition president, David C. Collier, who invested several hundred thousand dollars of his own money into the fair, and handpicked prominent Southwestern archaeologists and anthropologists to execute his vision for an exposition on the history of man.<sup>99</sup> With their personal investments in the region’s property, transport, and industry, these individuals took great efforts to ensure the long-term financial success of the fair. While few fairs made impressive profits from ticket sales, their role in stimulating investment, trade, and habitation was central to the development of the host cities.<sup>100</sup> At a time when the West Coast cities were seeking to achieve greater integration within the fabric of the nation, the world’s fairs served to exhibit their resources, Pacific links, and modernity on a national stage.

Although Portland was the only fair to receive federal funding, all of the fairs received federal recognition as official international expositions. This federal approval allowed organisers to solicit international participation, and in most cases, the federal government and important national institutions such as the Smithsonian contributed exhibits to promote government departments and policies. An Act of Congress authorised government participation at the Seattle

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<sup>97</sup> Henry E. Reed, *Official History of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition* (n.p., 1908), p.154, in box 9, Henry E. Reed Papers, Mss 383, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.

<sup>98</sup> For example, see *San Diego Union*, 13 February 1915; *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18 May 1915.

<sup>99</sup> Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, pp.214-223.

<sup>100</sup> Vicente G. Loscertales, ‘Foreword’, in Findling and Pelle, *Encyclopedia of World’s Fairs and Expositions*, p.2.

fair (1909), with exhibits from the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, and direction from the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of War on exhibits about Alaska, Hawaii, and the Philippines.<sup>101</sup> This government involvement ensured that expositions in a regional outpost featured official messages about the nation's imperialist policies, and provided an "intellectual scaffolding" for the "cumulative symbolic universe" of the turn of the twentieth century world's fairs.<sup>102</sup> Colonial elites also contributed to the exhibition of the nation's imperial territories, seeking to promote these foreign outposts as tamed and financially profitable American possessions.<sup>103</sup> Other national bodies used world's fairs as convenient meeting grounds for conferences and congresses. The San Francisco fair (1915) hosted the Second National Conference on Race Betterment, which took advantage of fair exhibits on tropical medicine in Panama, and established professional networks between sanitary experts, anthropologists, and the future leaders of the eugenics movement.<sup>104</sup> The varied functions and broad attendance of the West Coast world's fairs contributed to their intellectual legacy.

Planning and financial backing also came from foreign sources. One Japanese official, Jiro Harada, wrote in the *San Francisco Chronicle* that Japan had chosen to participate in the San Francisco fair (1915) upon realising the importance of the Panama Canal in joining the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. He stated that in representing Japan at the fair, "no efforts have been spared to

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<sup>101</sup> Smithsonian Institution, *The Exhibits of the Smithsonian Institution and United States National Museum at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle, Washington, 1909* (Washington D.C.: Press of Judd and Detweiler Inc., 1909), pp.4-5.

<sup>102</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, p.235.

<sup>103</sup> For more on the role of colonial bodies in world's fair organisation, see Paul A. Kramer, 'Making Concessions: Race and Empire Revisited at the Philippine Exposition, St Louis, 1901-1905', *Radical History Review*, 73 (1999), pp.74-114.

<sup>104</sup> See Stern, *Eugenic Nation*, pp.28-56.

make the display as characteristic and comprehensive as possible".<sup>105</sup> Planning and procuring their own exhibits, Japan and other nations were able to have some role in shaping representations of their population in the fair's official palaces, although the extent of their participation and the location of their exhibits was ultimately decided by the fair management. This interplay of local, national, and international actors complicated the execution of the West Coast fairs, yet also contributed to their significance as sites that formed racial and national power relations.

### ***Key Actors on the Midway***

Various key actors were involved in financing, organising, exhibiting, and mediating features on the midways. The amusement strips operated on a concession basis, with private entrepreneurs making a bid to the exposition management to own a particular exhibit. Exposition organisers selected one of the bidders – usually the one that made the highest offer – which gave that individual or company the right to build and operate their display. The profits from the concession's entry fees, and other products such as souvenirs, were then divided between the concessionaire and the exposition.<sup>106</sup> At the San Francisco fair (1915), eight bids were submitted to exposition managers to run the Chinese Village, and they selected the highest bid at \$2,665 made by D.J. Dolan. The lowest bid was from the Pioneer Wrecking Company, which offered \$1,174.<sup>107</sup> Due to this bidding process, a variety of individuals and organisations

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<sup>105</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 February 1915.

<sup>106</sup> George R. Davis, 'Charges at the World's Fair', *The North American Review*, 156 (1893), p.386.

<sup>107</sup> Mr Munson, memorandum to Mr Connick, 4 April 1916, in carton 63, folder 3, Panama Pacific International Exposition Records, BANC MSS C-A 190, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

owned midway concessions. At the San Francisco Midwinter Fair (1894), organisers failed to secure an official Chinese exhibit in the main fair grounds. When a local group of Chinese merchants offered to produce an exhibit, organisers awarded them a concession on the midway rather than an official foreign building. Attempting to provide a positive view of Chinese-American life, the concessionaires emphasised exotic souvenirs and food to detract from existing images of Chinatown depravity. In contrast, the Chinese concession at the San Francisco fair twenty-one years later was awarded to theatre impresario, Sidney Grauman, who would go on to build the Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. Grauman's concession depicted opium smokers, traffickers, and prostitutes.<sup>108</sup> As Sadiyah Qureshi has noted, the specific features of live exhibits were a combination of a variety of individuals' needs, desires, capacities, and expectations.<sup>109</sup>

The concessionaires at the West Coast world's fairs were of diverse backgrounds, yet often had an existing interest in the representation of foreign people and objects. The Japanese concession at the San Francisco fair (1894) was owned by Australian-born businessman, George Turner Marsh, who had opened San Francisco's first shop for the sale of Asian arts and crafts.<sup>110</sup> The Chinese concession at the Seattle fair (1909) was owned by Chinese-born Ah King, who was well known in Seattle's American and Chinese-American business communities. A leading merchant in the city's Chinese district, King

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<sup>108</sup> Raymond W. Rast, 'The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco's Chinatown, 1882-1917', *Pacific Historical Review*, 76.1 (2007), pp.50-56.

<sup>109</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p.121.

<sup>110</sup> Chandler and Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair*, p.42.



owned several successful Chinese restaurants and stores.<sup>111</sup> Concessionaires frequently travelled between world's fairs with their exhibits, and took them to amusement parks at the end of a fair's run. Tokyo-based businessman, Yumeto Kushibiki, secured the Japanese concessions at the Chicago (1893), Buffalo (1901), St Louis (1904), Portland (1905), and San Francisco (1915) fairs.<sup>112</sup> A veteran of the Spanish American War, Richard Schneidewind had attended the St Louis fair and been so impressed by its extensive Philippine exhibit that he established his own touring Philippine display that appeared at the Portland fair. This business venture ended after financial difficulties on the European leg of the tour, and as a result of the 1914 legislation that limited the exploitative display of Filipinos. Not deterred by this failure, Schneidewind went on to manage the Samoan concessions at the San Francisco (1915) and San Diego (1915-1916) fairs.<sup>113</sup> The business of exposition concessions was not always reliable, yet it continued to be a draw for a range of entrepreneurs in the period of this study.

As the incident of the Chinese concession at the San Francisco Midwinter fair (1894) demonstrates, exposition managers retained control over the amusement exhibits. Contracts between the exposition and concession owners demonstrate how fair managers directed the content and overall racial

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<sup>111</sup> Doug Chin, *Seattle's International District: The Making of a Pan-Asian American Community* (Seattle: International Examiner Press, 2001), pp.38-39.

<sup>112</sup> Oshima, 'Asia outside Asia', in Rujivacharakul, et al (eds.), *Architecturalized Asia*, p.165.

<sup>113</sup> Deana L. Weibel, 'A Savage at the Wedding and the Skeletons in My Closet: My Great-Grandfather, "Igorotte Villages", and the Ethnological Expositions of the 1900s', in Roger Sanjek (ed.), *Mutuality: Anthropology's Changing Terms of Engagement* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), pp.100-103.

Financial difficulties and scandals plagued touring exhibits of foreign people. See Claire Prentice, *The Lost Tribe of Coney Island: Headhunters, Luna Park, and the Man Who Pulled Off the Spectacle of the Century* (Boston: New Harvest, 2014).

messages contained within the live exhibits.<sup>114</sup> In the contract for the Chinese Village at the Portland fair (1905), the exposition management set out clear directions for the concessionaires, Tom Young and Lee Mee Toy. The contract stipulated that Young and Toy should bring no less than 150 and no more than 250 “natives of China”, and that if the number fell below 150 and if the concessionaires failed to “represent the life, manner and customs of China in a representative and typical manner”, the contract would be terminated. The performers’ “picturesque costumes” were to be “subject to the approval of the Director of Concessions”, who would also judge whether any of the concession’s features would “cast ridicule” on the religion, architecture, or “manners and customs” of the Chinese. The contract also specified that the concessionaires should “faithfully observe and comply” with U.S. laws and regulations about the entry of the Chinese performers into the country, and their return at the close of the exposition.<sup>115</sup>

The contract demonstrated the exposition management’s efforts to negotiate local, national, and international concerns. Eager to secure a visually impressive exhibit, the managers also recognised the importance of maintaining good trade relations with China, and of avoiding a local and national backlash by importing a large number of Chinese people to Portland. These comprehensive contracts ensured a degree of uniformity in the midway concessions, and allowed exposition managers to determine the overall tone of each display. Recognising the varied and competing actors and processes involved in the

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<sup>114</sup> Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, pp.144-145.

<sup>115</sup> Contract between Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition and Tom Young and Lee Mee Toy, in folder 4, box 36, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society.

production of the midways allows for an analysis of the live exhibits as manifestations of an overarching and institutionalised white racial frame.

### **Conclusions: From Washington D.C. to Seattle**

On 1 June 1909, President William Howard Taft, located in Washington D.C., touched a telegraph key studded in gold nuggets taken from a Klondike mine. This key sent a signal to telegraphers at the grounds of the Seattle exposition, who promptly set in motion the unfurling of an American flag, and declared the exposition officially open.<sup>116</sup> This compression of geography and nationalistic celebration of empire demonstrated the significance of spatial and racial organisational frameworks in the production of the West Coast world's fairs, and of the role of key actors in precipitating exposition events. This chapter has outlined some of the key concepts, frameworks, organisational processes, and individuals that structured the West Coast world's fair live exhibits. As I analyse the form and function of the live concessions in the following four chapters, I will return to these themes and ideas, and emphasise how they contributed to the racialisation of various non-white groups, and to the performance of a superior whiteness. The expansion of American space overseas created an urgent need to define and categorise both foreign and domestic populations, and this turn of the century Pacific-orientation forced America's West Coast to take the lead in negotiating the terms of space and race. In the next chapter, I examine the racialisation of Native Americans on the world's fair midways, and

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<sup>116</sup> Findling and Pelle, *Encyclopedia of World's Fairs and Expositions*, p.202. Taft had also served as Governor-General of the Philippines, 1901-1903, and Secretary of War, 1904-1908. He was President between 1909 and 1913.

point to how spatial configurations such as 'Southwest' and 'Wild West', and the racial theories and practices of anthropologists and others, contributed to a number of images of Native American inferiority.

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## Chapter 3.

# 'Interpretive Possibilities': The Live Exhibition of Native Americans

This chapter examines the live display of Native Americans at the West Coast world's fairs, and emphasises how the concessions built upon already flexible images of 'native-ness' to frame the nation's indigenous population as inferior racial Others. Despite centuries of encounters with and racialisations of Native Americans, their cultural practices and role within the nation remained ambiguous. A contributor to the official journal of the Portland fair (1905) stated that the "problem of the Red Man" was the "most disconcerting mystery" to face the nation, and lamented that "after four centuries' embarrassing acquaintance with him, we look into his stolid, unrevealing face and know that his inner life is still a sealed book to us".<sup>1</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, with the end of the 'Indian Wars' and further expansionary efforts abroad, the need to classify and racially hierarchise the indigenous population acquired greater urgency, and the category of 'Native American' gained broader "interpretive possibilities".<sup>2</sup> The West Coast world's fairs represented a prime

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<sup>1</sup> Gertrude Metcalfe, 'The Indian as Revealed in the Curtis Pictures', *Lewis and Clark Journal*, 1.5 (1904), p.13.

<sup>2</sup> Sherry L. Smith, *Reimagining Indians: Native Americans through Anglo Eyes, 1880-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.6.

I use the term Native American instead of 'Indian' in line with Robert Berkhofer's usage, which recognises 'Indian' as the term designated by white settlers. I use the term 'Indian' only when it is included in a concession's name, or in official or frequently used terms such as 'Bureau of Indian Affairs' or 'Indian Wars'.

Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian, from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p.xvii.

opportunity for various key actors to clarify the indigenous population's role within the overarching exposition narratives of national progress and modernity, and to position the population group within the newly international and Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy.

The chapter begins by briefly outlining existing images of 'native-ness', and points to the dual features of visual homogeneity and narrative flexibility within these popular stereotypes. The following three sections utilise a range of exposition, commercial, and journalistic texts, as well as souvenirs and photographs, to examine the production of racial knowledge about the nation's indigenous population. The first demonstrates how exhibitors constructed spatial and performative markers of tradition and history, and obscured elements of indigenous modernity, in order to exclude the population group from narratives of national progress, and to frame Native Americans as unmodern tokens of the past. I then turn to the various exhibitionary techniques used to depict a safe form of native savagery, such as methods of temporal distancing, spectacularisation, and 'tribal' classification, which I argue functioned to enact and reinforce white racial framing agendas. The final section focuses on the Painted Desert display at the San Diego fair (1915-1916), and argues that the production and consumption of more 'positive' images of indigeneity did not undermine concomitant displays of ceremony and warfare, but instead deepened and extended existing stereotypes. This section also emphasises the role of key actors such as anthropologists and the railroad industry in contributing to the production of racial knowledge at the fairs. The concluding paragraphs look forward to the following two chapters, and argue that the ways in which Native Americans were exhibited – as familiar domestic

Others and flexible racial stereotypes – positioned the population group as a model for the representation of other, less familiar non-white peoples.

### **The ‘Certainty of Difference’: Existing Images of Native Americans**

The live display of non-white peoples at American world’s fairs emerged from a long history of white Euro-American efforts to racialise various Others both at home and abroad. The long-term racialisation of Native Americans represented a complex interplay between government officials, scientists, and cultural producers. In the nineteenth century, various key actors solidified images of Native American culture in the public consciousness, and contributed to a flexible framework of indigenous authenticity that emphasised above all the inferiority of this population group in relation to white Americans. This section provides a brief overview of the existing images of Native Americans in the nation’s collective consciousness, and points to the role of anthropologists and cultural producers in shaping expectations of the ‘authentic’ Native American. Highlighting key markers of ‘native-ness’, such as clothing, behavioural traits, and popular spectacles, this genealogy of racial frameworks points to the availability and flexibility of racial narratives that could not only be applied to Native Americans at the fairs, but could be adapted to provide legible images of new non-white populations caught up in the era of extra-continental expansion.



### ***The 'Authentic' Native American***

As the first racial Other encountered on American soil, Native Americans have occupied the white mind for centuries. Although various images of indigenous life have emerged in American science, art, literature, and government policy, certain themes have persisted in the construction of the 'authentic' Native American. White observers have measured Native Americans in contrast to themselves and found the indigenous population lacking, made generalisations that ignore the distinctions between native nations, envisioned the 'real' Native Americans as those that existed prior to European contact, and subscribed to contradictory conceptions of 'good' and 'bad' Native Americans.<sup>3</sup> As Paige Raibmon has noted, the "precise language of difference ... was less constant than the certainty of difference itself".<sup>4</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, the white image of the authentic Native American was a well-established yet flexible figure that exemplified racial difference within the nation's borders.

Native Americans have been dominant figures in various forms of American cultural expression. In the nineteenth century in particular, Native Americans became popular subject matter as writers and artists sought to define an American cultural identity and style that was distinct from Europe.<sup>5</sup> The long established literary trope of the 'Noble Savage' permitted both self-criticism of American values and the justification of white conquest, and elements of this stock figure emerged at various cultural sites.<sup>6</sup> Concerns that the indigenous population were fast disappearing led artists and writers to seek

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<sup>3</sup> Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, pp.25-29.

I use the term 'nation' instead of 'tribe' due to the pejorative connotations of the latter term.

<sup>4</sup> Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), pp.7-8.

<sup>5</sup> Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, p.86.

<sup>6</sup> Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p.4.

out those Native American nations that had retained visible traits of their 'native-ness', and thus the nomadic Plains nations with their tepees and feathered headdresses became the quintessential Native Americans in the minds of white Americans.<sup>7</sup> George Catlin's paintings depicted indigenous men and women in colourful blankets and headdresses, with red skin adorned with paint [see Figure 3.1].<sup>8</sup> These vivid works of art helped to homogenise the visual image of the authentic Native American in the popular imagination. American authors wrote stories about indigenous cultures, and frequently confused the customs and languages of various nations due to their lack of knowledge of the population group. In the *Last of the Mohicans*, James Fenimore Cooper drew upon both noble and savage elements in his description of a Mohican man, claiming that there was:

no concealment to his dark, glancing, fearless eye, alike terrible and calm; the bold outline of his high, haughty features, pure in their native red; or to the dignified elevation of his receding forehead, together with all the finest proportions of a noble head, bared to the generous scalping tuft.<sup>9</sup>

Nineteenth century cultural expressions of Native American life varied, yet consistently drew upon established tropes that emphasised difference and inferiority.

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<sup>7</sup> Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, p.89.

<sup>8</sup> American artist and author George Catlin travelled to the American West to paint and write about Native Americans. He travelled throughout the U.S. and Europe with his paintings, delivering public lectures about indigenous life.

<sup>9</sup> James F. Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757*, vol.1 (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey and I. Lea, 1826), pp.70-71; Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, pp.93-94.

**Figure 3.1. George Catlin painting (1832).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**George Catlin, *Wán-ee-ton, Chief of the Tribe*, [Oil on canvas]. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C. (1832).**

Scientific works on the racial traits of Native Americans underpinned cultural expressions, and provided them with important narratives about the indigenous population's role in American history. Evolutionary theory contributed to an understanding of human progress as a sequential development from primitivity to civilisation, and American anthropologists regarded Native American cultures as the last opportunity to study this primitive state.<sup>10</sup> Anthropologist, Lewis Henry Morgan, appealed to American scientists to "enter this great field and gather its abundant harvest", as the "ethnic life of the Indian tribes is declining under the influence of American civilization".<sup>11</sup> The notion that America's indigenous population was heading towards inevitable extinction bolstered both 'good' and 'bad' images of Native Americans, evoking either paternalistic sympathy or providing justification for centuries of white violence. The 'dying race' narrative also supported the basic assertion of Native American inferiority, and fixed the indigenous population to the nation's historical and racial past.

Live displays of Native Americans built upon the legacies of both cultural and scientific expressions of authentic indigenous life. Nineteenth century world's fairs and other live displays often represented the first site at which white Americans physically encountered Native Americans, and the primacy of the visual in live concessions blurred the boundaries between education and entertainment, allowing these sites to both produce and reinforce racial

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<sup>10</sup> Ronald E. Martin, *The Language of Difference: American Writers and Anthropologists Reconfigure the Primitive, 1878-1940* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), pp.22-23.

<sup>11</sup> Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society, Or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization* (New York: Henry Holt, 1878), p.viii.

identities.<sup>12</sup> The world's fairs represented the indigenous population in various guises, with exhibits of cultural artefacts, weapons, and photographs in exhibition buildings, as well as live displays on the midway. As Robert Trennert has noted, attempts by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to demonstrate their success in uplifting and assimilating the native population were remarkably unsuccessful, and actually functioned to stimulate interest in the supposedly traditional and authentic elements of Native American life.<sup>13</sup> Nineteenth century cultural, scientific, and exhibitionary expressions of the authentic Native American figure popularised a visually homogenous yet ideologically flexible image in the white mind, which world's fair exhibitors and visitors could draw upon to produce and interpret various racial encounters on the midway.

### ***The Wild West Native American***

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Wild West Native American encapsulated the dominant popular image of the indigenous population. After the Civil War, and as the 'Indian Wars' moved further westward, Native Americans fell out of favour in elite cultural expressions, yet became central to popular culture in the form of the Western.<sup>14</sup> Again emphasising Plains culture and incorporating elements of both nobility and savagery, Westerns functioned to tie the nation's indigenous population to the American West, and to popularise Native American stereotypes in the public consciousness. The emergence of the dime novel in the 1860s precipitated the spread of Wild West

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<sup>12</sup> Christina Welch, 'Savagery on Show: The Popular Visual Representation of Native American Peoples and their Lifeways at the World's Fairs (1851-1904) and in Buffalo Bill's Wild West (1884-1904)', *Journal of Early Popular Visual Culture*, 9.4 (2011), p.338, p.347.

<sup>13</sup> See Robert A. Trennert, Jr., 'Selling Indian Education at World's Fairs and Expositions, 1893-1904', *American Indian Quarterly*, 11.3 (1987), pp.203-220.

<sup>14</sup> Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, pp.96-97.

stories, which accounted for over half of all dime novels produced, and the new publication genre created stock characters of savage Native Americans and the brave white pioneers, and established conventional plot lines of indigenous aggression and white victory.<sup>15</sup> Although dime novels were sensationalist texts, they drew upon existing understandings of racial inferiority, and packaged centuries of Native American imagery into simple and popular narratives. Edward S. Ellis' *Seth Jones*, which sold 600,000 copies, incorporated the imagery of Native American physical strength yet ultimate racial inferiority, stating, "When the Anglo-Saxon's body is pitted against that of the North American Indian, it sometimes yields; but when his mind takes the pace of contestant, it *never* loses".<sup>16</sup> Framing Native American inferiority through competition with white America, Wild West stories shaped popular understandings of the nation's racial history.

The Wild West Native American figure was not confined to the printed page. Lester Moses has stated that in the 1880s, as the frequency of the violent Indian Wars in the West declined, and a new generation came of age that regarded Native Americans as sufficiently novel, scenes of western life and warfare began to be depicted live in the form of the Wild West show.<sup>17</sup> These staged events followed many of the conventions of the dime novel Western, and depicted mock battles between white cowboys and aggressive Native Americans, as well as demonstrations of skills such as horse riding and shooting. Buffalo Bill Cody was a prominent Wild West showman, who began

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<sup>15</sup> David H. Murdoch, *The American West: The Invention of a Myth* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2001), pp.33-36.

<sup>16</sup> Edward S. Ellis, *Seth Jones; Or, The Captives of the Frontier* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1861), p.37; Murdoch, *The American West*, p.35.

<sup>17</sup> Lester G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), p.4, pp.18-19.

touring the nation with his production in the 1870s, travelling to Europe with his troupe of both white and indigenous performers.<sup>18</sup> Promotional posters depicted sensational images of painted, semi-clothed Native Americans on horses attacking innocent white pioneers in their covered wagons [see Figure 3.2]. Eager to exploit changing popular interests, Cody's shows not only depicted the "Winning of the West", but also incorporated scenes from the Spanish-American War and the Boxer Rebellion, therefore extending the narrative of racial competition to incorporate the nation's extra-continental expansion and intervention into foreign affairs.<sup>19</sup> Confining Native Americans to the role of aggressors, and choreographing spectacular images of white strength and superiority, the Wild West show popularised live performances of Native American Otherness.

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<sup>18</sup> William Frederick Cody was a prospector and hunter, and fought in the Civil War and 'Indian Wars'.

For more on Cody, see Louis S. Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America: William Cody and the Wild West Show* (New York: Knopf, 2005).

<sup>19</sup> Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933*, p.5, p.147.

**Figure 3.2. Buffalo Bill advertisement (1899).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World' [Photograph]. New York: Courier Litho. Co., 1899. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.**

***The Primitive Turn***

From its inception, the Native American image has been contested and negotiated, flexible and contradictory. Sherry Smith has argued that at the turn of the twentieth century, the “meaning of Indianness” in American popular culture became particularly splintered, as physical conquest ended and the optimism for assimilation began to fade. While racial determinists argued that the indigenous population was permanently inferior and the federal government eroded Native American rights, a strand of popular culture that



was built upon scientific notions of cultural relativism began to emphasise positive aspects of spirituality and beauty in indigenous life, and argued that these qualities countered the damaging effects of modernity and urbanisation.<sup>20</sup> This emphasis on the ‘good’ qualities of Native American life entered the public consciousness through popular writings, anthropological fieldwork, and the tourism industry, and focused in particular on Native American communities in the Southwest. Defined retrospectively as ‘primitivism’, this popular belief celebrated the seemingly simple and authentic life of both past and present representatives of races deemed ‘primitive’, and criticised the corruption of civilisation.<sup>21</sup> In 1884, author Helen Hunt Jackson published *Ramona: A Story*, which was a sentimental narrative of a mixed-race Scots-Native American girl in Southern California in the period following the 1848 Mexican-American War. Romanticising the region and its indigenous inhabitants, *Ramona* was hugely popular, and precipitated a surge in tourism to the American Southwest. The character of Ramona, who Hunt depicted as beautiful, with “just enough of olive tint in her complexion to underlie and enrich her skin without making it swarthy”, exemplified the turn to the ‘primitive’ that sought to celebrate indigenous cultures.<sup>22</sup> Drawing upon older images of the ‘noble’ native, this turn altered popular perceptions of certain Native American cultures.

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<sup>20</sup> Smith, *Reimagining Indians*, pp.5-8.

<sup>21</sup> The philosopher Arthur Lovejoy retrospectively coined the term ‘primitivism’ in 1935. The movement was a reactionary response that in the face of industrialisation, individualism, and increasingly mechanised and standardised production, valued pre-industrial, communal, creative communities. These pre-industrial traits were associated with the supposedly semi-civilised, self-sufficient Pueblo communities of the Southwest.

Don Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology: Science and Romanticism in the American Southwest, 1846-1930* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), pp.16-17.

<sup>22</sup> Helen H. Jackson, *Ramona: A Story* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1884), p.66.

In 1881 Jackson wrote a non-fiction text, called *A Century of Dishonor*, criticising the government’s policy towards Native Americans.

Such popular texts transformed the American Southwest, and Native Americans in the region became central to anthropological fieldwork and the tourism industry. As scientists transformed the Southwest into a “laboratory for the science of man”, the railroad industry packaged the region as a safe and picturesque place to see representatives of ‘primitive’ life, and used images of Native Americans and indigenous crafts to promote their routes.<sup>23</sup> Although the primitive turn promoted positive images of Native Americans, it remained grounded in notions of racial inferiority and difference. Sherry Smith has noted that these romanticised images of indigenous identity were still constructed by white Anglo-Americans who sought to position themselves as authorities on Native American knowledge. Yet Smith has also argued that this turn of the century movement contributed to the more positive elements of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, known as the Indian New Deal.<sup>24</sup> The varied images of Native Americans at the turn of the twentieth century provided a flexible stock of stereotypes and expectations for fair organisers and visitors to draw upon in their construction and reception of Native American live exhibits. The figure of the ‘red’ Noble Savage also functioned as a model for the racialisation of other non-white Pacific populations.

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For more on Jackson, see Martin Padget, *Indian Country: Travels in the American Southwest, 1840-1935* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology*, p.ix, p.344.

<sup>24</sup> Smith, *Reimagining Indians*, p.5, pp.16-17.

## **Constructing the Unmodern 'Native'**

The exhibition of Native Americans at the West Coast world's fairs functioned to clarify the ambiguous role of the nation's indigenous population within the expositions' big picture narratives of national progress and modernity, and within its newly international racial hierarchy. One effective exhibitionary technique was to anchor the indigenous population to the nation's past, therefore excluding native peoples from narratives of progress, and emphasising their inability to function within modern American society. This section examines how exhibitors framed Native American performers and dignitaries as unmodern relics of the past, therefore obscuring historical white violence, trivialising contemporary native cultural expressions, and creating a narrative of indigenous dependence and eventual extinction. Through spatial organisation, the visualisation of difference, and the spectacularisation of mundane acts of modernity, exhibitors excluded Native Americans from exposition narratives of progress, and established exhibitionary models for the racialisation of other non-white groups that were similarly framed as obstacles to the nation's supposedly inexorable expansion.

### ***The 'Native' in the Wilderness***

The nineteenth century settlement of the American West had transformed landscapes with telegraph and railroad lines, and displaced Native American communities, confining them to reservations. The idea of an untouched and unoccupied American wilderness had justified early colonial settlement, and the incorporation of Native Americans within this wilderness rhetoric structured

racialisations of the indigenous population into the twentieth century.<sup>25</sup> At the San Francisco fair (1894), one of the two live displays of Native Americans featured indigenous performers from Arizona, and attached the performers to the Arizonian landscape by surrounding them with plants and animals. The official guidebook claimed that the “Indians” and the associated paraphernalia of the display had been “transplanted bodily” from the Southwest. Additional props included a large collection of animals, reptiles, grasses, and plants – including a giant cactus – from the Arizonian desert.<sup>26</sup> A caption accompanying an image of the Native American performers fixed them to the Arizonian wilderness, stating “Cacti, in the Arizona Village”, with no reference to the performers or their centrality to the concession [see Figure 3.3]. Embedding Native Americans within a zone of wilderness was a ubiquitous trope in nineteenth century landscapes of westward expansion, and this exhibitionary technique functioned to fix indigenous peoples to the natural world.<sup>27</sup> By linking the Native American performers so inextricably to the western landscape, the Arizona Indian Village obscured the violence of conquest and portrayed the human cost of continental expansion as an unavoidable by-product of white American progress and modernity.

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<sup>25</sup> Melanie Perreault, ‘American Wilderness and First Contact’, in Michael Lewis (ed.), *American Wilderness: A New History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.16.

<sup>26</sup> *Official Guide to the California Midwinter Exposition in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California* (San Francisco: Spaulding & Company, 1894), p.133.

<sup>27</sup> Sarah J. Moore, *Empire on Display: San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), p.163.

**Figure 3.3. The Arizona Indian Village at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**I0015202a.tif, Souvenir of the California Midwinter International Exposition, BANC PIC 1976.029--ffALB, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.**

Twenty-one years later, San Francisco hosted another exposition to celebrate the triumph of man over nature in the completion of the Panama Canal, which was visualised in a 5-acre mechanised reproduction of the canal at the fair. A concession owned by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway similarly utilised technology to visualise the taming of the nation's wilderness. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Santa Fe Railway transformed tourism in the Southwest by improving rail access to the Grand Canyon, and enabling the "civilizing" of the region with the construction of attendant tourist facilities that recast the region's landscape and its inhabitants as picturesque, respectable, and safe.<sup>28</sup> At the fair, the railroad company built a 6-acre replica of the Grand Canyon in order to advertise the route, complete with a miniature train from which visitors could view the reconstructed landscape. On the roof of the main building, the company built a Pueblo Indian Village. A headline in the *San Francisco Chronicle* articulated the exhibit's dual presentation of Arizona's landscape and its Native American residents, stating "Arizona Grand Canyon Is Scenic Wonderland. Indians of Southwest Living as They Do in Own Desert Homes".<sup>29</sup> Fixing Arizona's indigenous population to their desert homes and scenery, the exhibit functioned to spectacularise the railroad's triumphant taming of the western wilderness and its inhabitants.

As the miniaturised landscape and compliant native performers assured visitors of the newly established safety of the Southwest, within the fair grounds, the juxtaposition of a mechanised railroad display and the simple domestic structures of Arizona's indigenous population established a

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<sup>28</sup> Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), p.80; Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology*, p.34.

<sup>29</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 March 1915.

comparative lens through which to view racial progress and modernity. The exhibit depicted the landscape and its inhabitants as equally helpless in the face of progress and technology, and transformed both the Grand Canyon and the local native residents into an “aestheticized tourist spectacle” of a rapidly disappearing way of life, whose demise the railroad guaranteed.<sup>30</sup> In the fair display, the Native American performers occupied a static village comprised of simple, adobe brick structures and cacti [see Figure 3.4]. In contrast, the Grand Canyon display below represented an impressive feat of dynamic engineering that had tamed the wilderness and then rendered it in miniature for the enjoyment of fair visitors. The mechanical features of the Grand Canyon display were not present in the Pueblo Indian Village concession, which suggested that modern technology was the sole preserve of the white man. Framed by the fair’s overarching narratives of American progress, the concession visualised the inevitability of the railroad’s advance and of the displacement of Native Americans if they failed to adapt to these transformations. This simple and comprehensible juxtaposition framed Native Americans as unmodern and inferior, and emphasised the supposed superiority of white America.

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<sup>30</sup> Moore, *Empire on Display*, p.163.

For more on the relationship between nature and technology in the miniature railway, see Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), pp.58-59.

**Figure 3.4. The Pueblo Village at the San Francisco fair (1915).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Pueblo village, Grand Canyon of Arizona concession, The Zone', *Views of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition*, BANC PIC 1958.016--ALB, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.**



The construction of the unmodern Native American figure affixed to the wilderness visualised the fair's big picture narrative of the nation's inexorable and peaceful conquest of the West. Scientific narratives bolstered the exhibit's concealment of the violence of conquest, as the "extinction discourse" that framed Native Americans as a 'dying race' asserted that savagery was naturally self-extinguishing in the face of civilisation.<sup>31</sup> This dying race discourse permeated world's fair texts, and contributed to the framing of the indigenous population as a relic of the past. The official journal of the Portland fair (1905) concealed the inherent brutality of conquest, stating that the "Red Man is vanishing - partly by absorption of the Caucasian, partly by decay through contact with a civilization whose better side he does not easily accept".<sup>32</sup> An advertisement for the Portland fair emphasised the supposed inevitability of Native American decline even further, claiming that the exposition:

celebrates the centennial of the peaceful acquisition of wilderness that has yielded up its riches generously as a reward for the unceasing toil of the pioneer and home-builder. Where the savage dwelt a few decades ago are now the cultivated farms and the flourishing cities of a progressive people.<sup>33</sup>

This passive account of the history of continental settlement attached the Native American population to a wilderness that white pioneers had tamed and cultivated with superior technology, replacing it with modern and progressive white cities. At the West Coast world's fairs, various exhibits and narratives embedded Native Americans within the wilderness, and framed the indigenous

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<sup>31</sup> Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp.1-3.

<sup>32</sup> *Lewis and Clark Journal* 1.5 (1904), p.7.

<sup>33</sup> *The Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition and Oriental Fair* (Portland: General Press Bureau, 1905), p.5.

population as an unmodern and surmountable obstacle to the domestication of the nation's western outposts.

### ***The Ceremonial 'Native'***

The 'dying race' narrative had a profound effect on the interaction between anthropologists and Native Americans. Patrick Brantlinger has described American anthropology as a "science of mourning", as its turn of the twentieth century practitioners sought to assuage their guilt about conquest by salvaging Native American cultural artefacts.<sup>34</sup> The desire of both scientists and artists to record indigenous cultures created a popular fascination with Native American ceremonies and practices. Exposition concession owners exploited this interest by exhibiting Native American performers in supposedly traditional clothing and domiciles, and scheduling the performance of various rituals. Depicting Native Americans solely in headdresses, blankets, and tepees not only homogenised the cultural practices and traditions of America's varied indigenous nations, but also functioned to confine them to the past. By focusing on salvage efforts and symbols of historic tradition, both anthropologists and world's fair exhibitors ignored and obscured evidence of change and modernity in indigenous communities.<sup>35</sup> Frequent portrayals of ceremony also distorted visitor perceptions of Native American cultural practices.

Exposition texts frequently described the midway concessions as accurate depictions of the everyday habits of the displayed group. Paige Raibmon has argued that such assertions derived from the colonialist belief that the authentic state of the 'native' was most visible in everyday life, and that

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<sup>34</sup> Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings*, p.5.

<sup>35</sup> Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest*, p.16.

inner meaning was “inherent within outward form”.<sup>36</sup> A local magazine describing the various people on display at the San Francisco fair (1894) stated, “there they are together, in their habits as they live, as in a geographical kaleidoscope”. Having established the quotidian nature of the midway concessions, the publication described one of the Native American exhibits, and emphasised the clothing and appearance of its performers. Claiming that the natives did not worry over beauty, “being attired, as a rule, in red and yellow canton flannel trousers and blouses”, with fine “toggerly and feathers”, the text went on to describe a Native American performer staging a ceremonial dance, as he “madly chases himself around until he is all tangled up – feathers and fringe and flying locks”.<sup>37</sup> This detailed description of clothing and appearance framed the indigenous performers as unusual and unmodern, and depicted these outward traits as manifestations of inherent racial features. Colourful images of Native Americans in headdresses adorned postcards and souvenirs, which contributed to the homogenisation of indigenous culture in the public mind [see Figure 3.5]. Exhibitors also used props and architecture in Native American concessions to provide a clear visual basis for the codification of difference.<sup>38</sup> Tepees, weapons, and headdresses stood in stark distinction to the modern structures and people that surrounded the display. In a photograph of the Nez Perce concession at the Portland fair (1905), this contrast is evident in the placement of a tepee in close proximity to a modern structure in the main exhibition grounds [see Figure 3.6]. This juxtaposition of Native American

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<sup>36</sup> Paige Raibmon, ‘Living on Display: Colonial Visions of Aboriginal Domestic Spaces’, *BC Studies*, 140 (2003), p.74.

<sup>37</sup> Barbara Ridente, ‘Some Citizens of Sunset City’, *The Californian*, 5.4 (1894), pp.401-402, pp.404-406.

<sup>38</sup> Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.xiii.

tradition and white American modernity fixed the indigenous population to the nation's past.

**Figure 3.5. Postcard from the Portland fair (1905).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**EXP905d.11pc, in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno.**

**Figure 3.6. Nez Perce display at the Portland fair (1905).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Album 261, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.**

Despite claims that the midway concessions depicted the performers' everyday lives, exhibitors frequently staged spectacles of ceremony and ritual, which by their very nature were not commonplace events. The *San Francisco Chronicle* described the arrival of members of the Blackfeet nation to the San Francisco fair (1915), with a headline promising "Tribal Dances and Weird Ceremonies". It claimed that preparations were underway for a "great religious feast", and that the "most important chiefs and medicine men of the reservation conduct the ceremonies and dances".<sup>39</sup> This description pointed to the inherent contradiction in the claim that the midway displays depicted everyday life, as it emphasised the greatness of the feast and the significance of the participants. Ceremonies functioned to exemplify and visualise racial difference, and their frequency and uniformity points to the role of exhibitors and mediators in structuring such events.<sup>40</sup> By depicting Native American ceremonies as everyday occurrences, exhibitors also trivialised certain aspects of native culture by commodifying religious and spiritual practices and transforming them into inconsequential and quotidian spectacles of racial difference. The inherent contradiction of 'everyday ceremonies' was further emphasised in the fact that these performances occurred in the grounds of purpose-built, temporary world's fairs in largely white, urban centres. An image captioned 'Deer Dance of the Arizona Indians' from the San Francisco fair (1894) demonstrated this spatial incongruity [see Figure 3.7]. The dance occurred in a fenced-off space that separated the native performers from the visiting public. A further fence in the background revealed the contained and artificial built

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<sup>39</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 14 June 1915.

<sup>40</sup> Sadiyah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.122.

environment in which the display took place. Choreographing ceremonies spectacularised indigenous culture, and framed Native Americans as strange and unmodern specimens for the enjoyment of white fair visitors.

**Figure 3.7. Dance performance in the Arizona Indian Village at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***Souvenir of the California Midwinter International Exposition (New York: A. Wittemann, 1894).***

An article in a Californian magazine addressed the seeming dissonance in the frequency of dance performances in exhibitions of everyday life at the San Francisco fair (1894). It stated, "If life had not taught us differently, Sunset City



would surely make us believe that we are on this globe just to dance. They all dance out there, and there is nothing else there *but* dancing”. This narrative collectivisation of the readers and visitors as a group distinct from the various populations on the midway drew a clear division. Preoccupied by the frivolous diversion of dance, the non-white peoples on the midway eschewed the responsibilities and realities of modern, urban life. The article described a Native American dance, referring to the performers as “like frolicsome cubs and overgrown boys at play”. It went on to state:

A person in such a fad might have a nice time determining how it is that small Caucasian children have for sport the solemn religious ceremonies of the stately red man. The ‘Snake Dance’ is only a grown up game of ‘Crack the Whip’, Sun Dance like ‘a ring around a rosy’.<sup>41</sup>

Asserting a clear division between visitors and performers according to race, the magazine trivialised Native American cultural practices, and framed the indigenous population as evolutionarily behind the Caucasian. The comparison between Native American adults and Caucasian children represented a cultural expression of unilineal development theory, which posited that societies progressed sequentially from primitivism to civilisation, and recapitulation theory, which argued that the mind of a child recapitulates the sequential development of the human race as they age.<sup>42</sup> This paternalistic framing of Native American performers emphasised their inferior position within the imagined household of the new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy. The staging of “the natural” and every day at world’s fairs obscured the cultural

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<sup>41</sup> Ridente, ‘Some Citizens of Sunset City’, pp.405-407.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p.154.

meaning and significance of Native American ceremonies, and replaced it with spectacle.<sup>43</sup> In constructing the ceremonial native, world's fair concessions framed Native Americans as unmodern tokens of the past.

### ***'Indians in Unexpected Places'***

Midway exhibits that displayed Native Americans as attached to nature and preoccupied by ceremony functioned to frame this non-white group as unmodern, and the frequency of such depictions ensured that they were deemed authentic in the minds of white Americans. When Native American performers embodied opposing traits within the world's fair grounds, such as overt expressions of modernity, exposition texts framed them as inauthentic.<sup>44</sup> In his book *Indians in Unexpected Places*, Philip Deloria has argued that the process of identifying anomalies functions to naturalise categories, as classifying something as outside of a particular category in turn gives that category shape, meaning, and power. Just as cultural expectations about Native Americans shaped white understandings of this population group, so too did moments of disruption, resistance, or refusal to comply with broad stereotypes.<sup>45</sup> A report on the government's exhibits at the Seattle fair (1909) acknowledged, "there is little of romance about the Indian who lives in the white man's way", yet a "painted savage on a painted pony will cause a thrill in any American breast".<sup>46</sup> While exhibitions depicting unmodern traits framed

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<sup>43</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.xvi.

<sup>44</sup> Raibmon, *Authentic Indians*, p.8.

<sup>45</sup> Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), pp.4-5.

<sup>46</sup> *Participation in the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition: Message from the President of the United States, Transmitting the Report of the United States Government Board of Managers of the Government Participation in the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (Washington D.C: Government Printing Office, 1911), p.43.

Native Americans as racially inferior, various mediators either dismissed or spectacularised instances of indigenous modernity as further examples of the population's incongruity within the modern and predominantly white present.

Newspapers and magazines in particular sought to depict instances of Native American modernity as an amusing aberration. A newspaper article published during the Portland fair (1905) described an incident involving the Nez Perce performers.

It was indeed a strange and yet very picturesque sight to see the 12 sturdy members of the tribes, clad in all the colors and beads that only the Indians know how to combine, step into the fastest passenger auto boat on the river ... their pleasure could be easily seen by the glint of their eyes. But when the engineer turned on full power and the launch raced ahead, their expressions of approval and satisfaction were changed to yells and grunts. When they stepped ashore at the end of the run their faces plainly showed that they wished the ride had been longer.<sup>47</sup>

The clear contrast between the picturesque and traditionally clothed Native Americans, and the modernity embodied by the fast boat and its engineer, visualised the dominant racial hierarchy and excluded Native Americans from narratives of national progress. In rendering the native performers speechless and only capable of expressing their emotions through yells and grunts, the article obscured the indigenous voice and transformed a mundane moment at the fair into a parody of the Native Americans' position in the modern world. The article's insistence that the performers' faces clearly displayed their inner thoughts also emphasised the primacy of the visual at the fair, and the belief that inherent racial traits were outwardly visible.

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<sup>47</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 21 August 1905.

The act of placing Native Americans in a modern setting and marking the moment as remarkable was an effective technique of visualising white superiority. An article in a Californian magazine, entitled ‘The Door of Yesterday: An Intimate View of the Vanishing Race at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition’, described a visit by delegates of the Blackfeet nation to the San Francisco fair (1915). The article wrote of Chief Eagle Calf, who had been educated at the “Mission Industrial Training School for Indians”, and had acquired wealth by working for the government. It described Chief Eagle Calf as an “Indian in heart, manner and belief”, who had acquired the “best that the Pale-face has to give”, despite great difficulties. Referring to him as a “remarkable man”, the author went on to depict the Chief as a “blending of the old with the new, a figure who shares the aspirations of the white man, and whose feet are forever placed on the lonely pinnacle of the red”. The article concluded with the lamentation that the “door of the Indian’s yesterdays opens to a new world – a world unpeopled by red men”.<sup>48</sup> Although Chief Eagle Calf represented a modern figure of education and wealth, the article dismissed any notion that he had achieved parity with the ‘white man’ by consistently depicting the opposing circumstances of the ‘white’ and ‘red’ races. The article portrayed the Chief’s progress as a gift endowed by his white superiors, therefore framing him as dependent and ultimately inferior, and evoking turn of the twentieth century assumptions that assimilation had failed and Native Americans were destined for permanent economic dependence.<sup>49</sup> This narrative of dependence was an effective means of reframing non-white progress and

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<sup>48</sup> Anna B. Mezquida, ‘The Door of Yesterday: An Intimate View of the Vanishing Race at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition’, *Overland Monthly*, 66.1 (1915), p.8, p.11.

<sup>49</sup> Smith, *Reimagining Indians*, p.7.

success in terms that emphasised white American superiority, and was frequently used in depictions of Japanese performers and delegates.

Chief Eagle Calf and the Blackfeet men and women that accompanied him were not employed as performers at the fair, but were delegates of their nation in attendance as guests. The presence of non-white delegates at expositions often resulted in photographs and newspaper articles that presented a more positive image of non-white progress and success, and to some extent helped to counter the depiction of the costumed performers on the midways. Yet in the case of the Blackfeet visitors, the press framed their delegate status and behaviour as an aberration. A photograph accompanying the magazine article carried the caption, "Blackfeet chiefs depositing money in a branch depository bank on the Exposition grounds, San Francisco" [see Figure 3.8]. The image depicted four Blackfeet men in moccasins and headdresses, which contrasted with the suits and hats worn by Japanese and Filipino delegates, and closely matched the costumes of the Native American performers on the midway. The inclusion of white men dressed in suits exemplified the indigenous population's racial difference. At expositions, clothing was a key visual marker of ethnic origin and evolutionary status, and the popular and legible iconography of Native American clothing ensured that it was central to the image of the authentic indigenous figure.<sup>50</sup> While the Blackfeet men's clothing fulfilled cultural expectations, their presence in a bank did not. That the photograph was taken, and published in an article about the 'vanishing race' at the fair, again transformed a mundane event into a spectacle, and dismissed an instance of Native American progress as absurd. By affixing Native Americans to

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<sup>50</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p.120.

spatial and performative markers of tradition and history, and deriding instances of indigenous modernity, exhibitors and mediators excluded this population group from overarching exposition narratives of national progress, and anchored them to the lower end of the newly international racial hierarchy as familiar models of racial difference and inferiority.

**Figure 3.8. Blackfeet delegates depositing money in a bank at the San Francisco fair (1915).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Anna B. Mezquida, 'The Door of Yesterday: An Intimate View of the Vanishing Race at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition', *Overland Monthly*, 66.1 (1915), pp.3-11.**

## Containing the Spectacle of Savagery

The first West Coast world's fair at San Francisco (1894) took place only four years after the Wounded Knee Massacre at Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Although violence on a smaller scale continued after the confrontation at Wounded Knee Creek, the early 1890s represented a watershed moment in white-Native American relations, as Frederick Jackson Turner declared the frontier closed and the 'Indian Wars' appeared to cease.<sup>51</sup> With this relatively recent history of warfare, exposition exhibitors and mediators had to deploy various exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies in order to contain popular images of Native American savagery and violence, and render them safe for consumption. This section examines representations of Native American savagery, and the ways in which exhibitors regulated the implicit threat of historically anchored spectacles of violence using temporal, spatial, and classificatory methods. By framing the 'Indian Wars' as temporally distant, choreographing the spatial organisation of warfare exhibits, and associating indigenous violence with 'tribal' classifications, exhibitors confined visualisations of savagery within the safe and respectable medium of spectacle.

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<sup>51</sup> Frederick J. Turner, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1893*, (1894), pp.199-227.

U.S. Cavalry troops shot dead several hundred Lakota at Wounded Knee. Many historians regard this incident as a key moment in American-Native American relations, and as the last significant confrontation in the 'Indian Wars'.

See Robert M. Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984); Roger L. Di Silvestro, *In the Shadow of Wounded Knee: The Untold Final Chapter of the Indian Wars* (New York: Walker & Company, 2005).

### *Living Trophies of the Past*

The history of the ‘Indian Wars’ in the western states shaped the depiction of Native Americans at the turn of the twentieth century West Coast world’s fairs. The Portland fair (1905) occurred fewer than thirty years after a number of violent encounters with Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>52</sup> A local newspaper announced the arrival of a Native American concession at the fair with the headline, ‘Held Trail Against White Men, Now Make Portland Holiday’. Evoking the history of the Oregon Trail, the headline framed Native Americans as antithetical opponents to the white pioneers of the past.<sup>53</sup> The article stated that the performers would be under the command of the “successor of Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce tribe”, and that four of them had been “warriors in Chief Joseph’s campaign against the United States 30 years ago”. It went on to claim that the “present chief is an interesting old veteran”, who would wear a “buckskin coat which he declares in solemn broken English has been worn by the chiefs of his tribe for the past 100 years”.<sup>54</sup> Making a clear link between the performers and historical indigenous ‘warriors’, the article emphasised the temporal distance that separated the fair display from the sustained campaign between the Nez Perce and the U.S. government. Tying the new chief and the performers to past events and people firmly fixed them – and by extension all indigenous peoples – as primitive representatives of the past, and functioned to

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<sup>52</sup> Lisa Blee points to the Modoc (1872-1873), Nez Perce (1877), and Bannock-Puite (1878) wars.

Lisa Blee, ‘Completing Lewis and Clark’s Westward March: Exhibiting a History of Empire at the 1905 Portland World’s Fair’, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 106.2 (2005), p.239.

<sup>53</sup> The ‘Oregon Trail’ is a term used to describe the route from Missouri to Oregon taken by fur traders and pioneers in the first half of the nineteenth century. Travels on this route often involved violent encounters with Native Americans.

<sup>54</sup> *Oregon Sunday Journal*, 6 August 1905.



deny them a role in contemporary society.<sup>55</sup> The new chief's broken English indicated that he was unable to assimilate, and thus to function in the present.

In order to frame Native American violence as temporally distant, indigenous performers had to assume the role of defeated warriors. At the San Francisco fair (1894), Dr White Cloud's American Indian Village featured performers from the Sioux nation, of which the Lakota at Wounded Knee had belonged.<sup>56</sup> The official guidebook noted that the concession represented a "typical Sioux Indian Village", and that the "warrior" male performers were "famous in their nation for their cunning and blood-thirstiness". Yet it went on to state that visitors would see the Sioux under "peaceful conditions".<sup>57</sup> The simultaneous depiction of the performers as cunning yet peaceful framed the Sioux as defeated aggressors, and thus as living representatives of the nation's past triumph over savagery. Evoking the army's encounter with the Sioux also helped to confine the violence at Wounded Knee to the past, and to emphasise the peaceful conditions of the present.

The figure of Dr White Cloud drew upon historical violence to emphasise Native American defeat. According to the fair's official guidebook, Dr Cloud – the owner and proprietor of the concession – had been born to white parents and captured by a group of Native Americans when he was two years old. Spending thirty years in captivity, Cloud's native captors released him at the time of the "Custer Massacre", and he had since graduated from medical college.<sup>58</sup> Dr

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<sup>55</sup> Phoebe S. Kropp, "'There is a little sermon in that': Constructing the Native Southwest at the San Diego Panama-California Exposition of 1915", in Marta Weigle and Barbara A. Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway* (Phoenix: The Heard Museum, 1996), p.41.

<sup>56</sup> See Guy Gibbon, *The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

<sup>57</sup> *Official Guide to the California Midwinter Exposition in Golden Gate Park*, p.123.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p.124.

Cloud's supposed captivity by an indigenous nation alluded to a practice that had alarmed early settlers in colonial America, and had sparked imaginations for centuries in the popular form of the captivity narrative. This practice no longer presented an active threat by the turn of the twentieth century, yet the narrative of a brutal Native American savage capturing a vulnerable, white colonist persisted in popular literature and imagery.<sup>59</sup> Although the captivity narrative centred on the aggression of the indigenous population, its existence in the form of the captive's recollection contained the threat by assuring readers of the captive's eventual escape. In the case of Dr Cloud, the captivity narrative functioned to position Native Americans as defeated former captors and aggressors, and to contain their savagery through temporal distance. In a photograph of the concession, this containment was further emphasised through the clothing of the performers in comparison to their white managers [see Figure 3.9].<sup>60</sup> Adorned in the feathered headdresses that often signified warfare, the native performers were flanked by three white men in hats, trousers, and boots. Dr Cloud's transformation from captive to concession manager visualised the subjugation of the Native American population, and emphasised the temporal distance between the threat of captivity by indigenous aggressors, and the spectacle of defeated Native Americans within a world's fair display.

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The Custer Massacre refers to the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn, which was an armed conflict during the Great Sioux War, and represented a significant victory for the Sioux.

<sup>59</sup> See June Namias, *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

<sup>60</sup> It is difficult to definitively identify the three men, but according to the descriptions of the concession's employees in a newspaper article, it is possible to surmise that the man stood on the left is Jack Bell (a mixed race man who acted as an interlocutor), the man third from the right is Dr Cloud, and the man on the far right is Pawnee Jack (another employee of the concession).

See, *Morning Call*, 18 May 1894.

**Figure 3.9. Dr White Cloud's Sioux Indian concession at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

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***Souvenir of the California Midwinter International Exposition (New York: A. Wittemann, 1894).***

The reconstruction of historical encounters with Native Americans visualised the fairs' overarching narratives of national progress and achievement. At the San Diego fair (1915-1916), a group of Apache performers functioned to spectacularise the American government's well-known encounters with the Apache nation led by Geronimo in the 1880s. A newspaper article described the performers as "survivors of this once warlike tribe". Focusing on the "most interesting" performer, the article wrote of 95 year old Ba-Ga-Kai, who had escaped from the San Carlos reservation with Geronimo's "band of warriors" and had "caused Uncle Sam considerable trouble".

Establishing Ba-Ga-Kai's warrior credentials, the article went on to state that in his "declining years" he had "become very docile, and may be seen daily amusing himself sitting in front of his wickiup beating a drum and singing a slow dirge-like trivial song".<sup>61</sup> Emphasising the passage of time and Ba-Ga-Kai's decline, the display confined Native American violence to the past. The appearance of Ba-Ga-Kai at the San Diego fair echoed the practice of publicly displaying Apache prisoners of war, which clearly emphasised and spectacularised the victory of the American government and the defeat of the Apache nation.<sup>62</sup> The display of historical Native American figures was a powerful draw for visitors, and functioned to visualise the narrative of inexorable white American progress through the exhibition of non-white "living trophies".<sup>63</sup> As Johannes Fabian has argued, the temporalising discourses employed by anthropologists functioned to deny "coevalness" to the object of inquiry.<sup>64</sup> Emphasising the historical qualities of Native American violence allowed exhibitors to incorporate elements of savagery safely by obscuring the contemporary presence of the population, and instead confining them to the past.

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<sup>61</sup> *San Diego Union*, 15 April 1915.

<sup>62</sup> Jo Woodsum notes that Apache prisoners of war could only leave the prison site for purposes of exhibition, and Geronimo himself appeared at the St Louis fair (1904).

Jo A. Woodsum, "'Living Signs of Themselves': A Research Note on the Politics and Practice of Exhibiting Native Americans in the United States at the Turn of the Century", *UCLA Historical Journal*, 13 (1993), pp.115-118.

<sup>63</sup> Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians*, p.12.

<sup>64</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983; repr. 2014), p.31.

### ***Spectacular Warfare***

In addition to confining Native American violence to the past, exhibitors and mediators sought to contain spectacles of Native American warfare through the choreography and control of exposition space. On the midway of the San Francisco fair (1915), not far from the Pueblo Indian Village on top of the Grand Canyon exhibit, a concession known as the 101 Ranch occupied a large site [see Figure 3.10]. The Miller Brothers' 101 Ranch Real Wild West Show had begun on a cattle ranch in Oklahoma, and toured the nation, appearing at several world's fairs including the exposition at Jamestown, Virginia (1907). Similar to Buffalo Bill's extremely popular Wild West show, the 101 Ranch offered fair visitors a supposedly "Realistic Reproduction of Western Life", where the "Indian, the buffalo, the bucking broncho [sic], and his master, the cowboy" lived in "cordial hospitality". An advertisement in the fair's official daily program claimed that the concession mingled, in "admirable proportions", education, sport, science, and "wholesome fun".<sup>65</sup> Framing the show as a scientific and sports-like amusement "carnivalized" the presence of the Native American performers, and visualised the popular narrative of cowboy dominance and Native American defeat found in Wild West dime novels.<sup>66</sup> The large site dedicated to the 101 Ranch emphasised the popularity of such spectacles on world's fair midways.

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<sup>65</sup> *Daily Official Program, Panama-Pacific International Exposition San Francisco*, 49 (9 April 1915), in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno [hereafter Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library].

<sup>66</sup> Philip McGowan, *American Carnival: Seeing and Reading American Culture* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), p.ix.

**Figure 3.10. Map of the Zone at the San Francisco fair (1915).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***Daily Official Program, Panama-Pacific International Exposition San Francisco, 1 (20 February 1915), in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno.***

The 101 Ranch performances took place several times a day, and followed a set format. They began with an introduction of the “principal characters”, including “cowboys, cowgirls, Indians and ex-United States soldiers”, and went on to recreate the pioneers’ method of transport in overland stagecoaches, which were held up by “bandits” – presumably the native performers – and “rescued by the cowboys”. Other performances included a military drill; an “All American Race” between cowboy, cowgirl, “Indian”, and soldier; trick riding; and a reproduction of an “Early Day Indian Buffalo Hunt”, which was followed by Native American war dances and ceremonies. The choreography of these performances contrasted the strength and skill demonstrated by the cowboys and ex-soldiers with the strange habits and

rituals of the Native Americans, who were cast as inferior opponents. The penultimate event, entitled “Pioneer Days”, had three consecutive parts, which ran “A – The pioneers camp for the night. B – Attacked and massacred by the Indians. C – The ex-United States soldiers to the rescue, but too late”. The “Grand Finale” completed the show, which presumably saw the Native American aggressors vanquished.<sup>67</sup> This spectacle of Native American aggression, weakness, and deficiency framed the indigenous population through a parallel lens of white American organisation, proficiency, and strength. The narrative features of white pioneer innocence and Native American aggression obscured the history of conquest and the complicity of the fair’s white visitors in the process of national expansion. As Rosemarie Garland Thomson has written in relation to the freak show, live displays choreographed human variation into a “spectacle of bodily otherness” that united audiences in opposition to the performers’ “aberrance”, and assured observers of their normality.<sup>68</sup> The 101 Ranch show functioned to bond audiences in opposition to the supposedly inherent racial trait of Native American savagery, and assured them of their collective triumph in rendering the West a safe American space.

The spatial organisation of the 101 Ranch further united fair visitors, and emphasised the alterity and inferiority of the Native American performers. The concession’s events were held in a tiered stadium that surrounded an enclosed performance space [see Figure 3.11]. Transforming the history of warfare into a sports-like spectacle, the 101 Ranch obscured the realities of the ‘Indian Wars’, and encouraged visitors to interpret the past through a lens of friendly

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<sup>67</sup> *Daily Official Program, Panama-Pacific International Exposition San Francisco*, 49 (9 April 1915), in Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library.

<sup>68</sup> Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p.17.

competition. Yet unlike a sporting event, the audience were encouraged to identify with and support only one side. Casting the Native American performers as opponents to the white cowboys, soldiers, and pioneers, functioned to fix them as inherently Other and definitively un-American. The 101 Ranch performances visualised the “emotion-laden” and historically-oriented big picture narrative of American progress, and confined Native Americans to the role of obstacle and opponent.<sup>69</sup> The spatial layout of the stadium not only encouraged fair visitors to identify with the white American victors, but also to recognise themselves as a collective group in opposition to the Native American performers. This temporary collectivity was an important element of the pleasure that world’s fairs sold to their visitors. By staging Native Americans as object lessons of the inexorable victory of white civilisation over non-white savagery, the 101 Ranch framed the West as a conquered and American place.<sup>70</sup> The white performers’ victory over the Native American ‘obstacle’ also spectacularised narratives of American supremacy and military capability that framed other non-white groups on the West Coast world’s fair midways.

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<sup>69</sup> Joe R. Feagin, *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp.12-13.

<sup>70</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, pp.xv-xvi, p.xxi; Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians*, p.11; Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846-1906* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2007), p.217.



**Figure 3.11. 101 Ranch at the San Francisco fair (1915).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***Official Miniature View Book of the Panama Pacific International Exposition (San Francisco: Robert A. Reid, 1915).***

***'Tribal' Natives and the Construction of Safe Savagery***

A newspaper article in San Francisco's *Morning Call* newspaper described a series of disagreements on the midway involving the owner of one of the Native American concessions at the San Francisco fair (1894), Dr White Cloud. The sensationalist headline – "White Cloud Off. Threats Against His Life Hastened Him. Indian Village Troubles" – framed the incident as symptomatic of the concession's Native American performers. The article stated that the exposition had given Cloud an "exclusive concession for his Indians" prior to the fair's opening, yet several months later, Frank Dobs had opened the Arizona Indian Village on the midway. Subsequently, "War was waged between the two camps, which were located side by side" on the amusement concession strip.<sup>71</sup> Although the disagreements were clearly between the two concession managers, the article played upon the popular image of Native American warfare and 'tribal' rivalries.

In attempting to establish the expositions as authoritative sites of racial knowledge, key actors at the West Coast world's fairs boasted of the events' varied exhibitions of Native American nations. A guidebook to the Seattle fair (1909) stated that one of the unique features of the exposition would be the "camps of the Indians of the Pacific Northwest", and boasted that "scores of tribes" would be represented.<sup>72</sup> An article in the *San Diego Union* reported on a plan to hold an "Indian Festival" of various nations at the San Diego fair (1915-1916), noting that the Blackfeet who may be persuaded to attend represented something "markedly different from the Southwest Indian display".<sup>73</sup> As Robert

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<sup>71</sup> *Morning Call*, 18 May 1894.

<sup>72</sup> *The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (Minnesota: Northern Pacific Railway, n.d.), p.25.

<sup>73</sup> *San Diego Union*, 24 June 1915.

Trennert has noted, the exhibition of Southwestern Native American nations changed at the turn of the century, and world's fairs exhibitors began to emphasise clear distinctions between the supposedly primitive warriors of Plains nations, and the pastoral and religious nations of the Southwest.<sup>74</sup> Establishing clear behavioural and visual differences between Native American nations at the fairs contributed to understandings of Native American culture as unmodern, and allowed exhibitors to contain images of savagery by suggesting that it was not inherent within all indigenous nations.

Framing Native Americans as 'tribal' also functioned to divert fears about indigenous violence away from the white population. A newspaper report on the Nez Perce at the Portland fair (1905) noted that although the performers on display had a history of warfare with the U.S. military, the "scalplocks [sic]" that adorned them were those of Crow and Blackfeet peoples.<sup>75</sup> This emphasis on 'tribal' divisions eroded the threat of Native American savagery, and internalised this supposed violence as a racial trait contained within and aimed at the indigenous population. The proposed 'Indian Festival' at the San Diego fair (1915-1916) had been suggested by W.R. Mills, a white American advertising agent for the Great Northern Railway, who had promised exposition officials that he could "contribute his tribesmen" and "furnish several tepees and other prerequisites of a big show". The newspaper article stated that Mills was "somewhere between a chief and a high private of the Blackfeet Indians at Glacier National Park".<sup>76</sup> The description of Mills' role suggested that he had

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<sup>74</sup> Robert A. Trennert, 'Fairs, Expositions, and the Changing Image of Southwestern Indians, 1876-1904', *New Mexico Historical Review*, 62.2 (1987), p.144.

<sup>75</sup> *Oregon Sunday Journal*, 6 August 1905.

<sup>76</sup> *San Diego Union*, 24 June 1915.

both spiritual and military control over this group of Blackfeet, and therefore that any threat had been contained through white dominance. The selective homogenisation and division of Native American 'tribes' demonstrates that exhibitors and mediators could draw upon the varied and often contradictory images of 'Indianness' to bolster a number of messages about indigenous difference and inferiority.

The evocation of 'tribal' affiliations at the twentieth century West Coast fairs associated Native Americans with the classifications extended to the Filipino population by colonial officials at the close of the 1898 Spanish-American War. The comparisons drawn between Native Americans and Filipinos in colonial texts and at the fairs created a legible image of Filipino difference by using a familiar domestic model. Similarly, exhibitors utilised the exhibitionary techniques created to frame the Filipino performers in the display of Native Americans. One of the most sensational images associated with the Philippine Igorot 'tribe' was their penchant for eating dog in a ritual feast, and ceremonial dog feasts became a common fixture at successive expositions. However, in 1914 the Philippine Assembly passed legislation that banned the exhibition of Filipino peoples abroad, leaving the organisers of the San Francisco fair (1915) without one of the most successful midway concessions.<sup>77</sup> Several weeks after the fair opened, a newspaper carried the headline "Saturday Looks Like a Bad Day For Little Fido. Indians at 101 Ranch on Joy Zone Planning

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For more on the interconnected histories of Native American displacement and the creation of America's National Parks, see Mark D. Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>77</sup> Patricia O. Afable, 'Journeys from Bontoc to the Western Fairs, 1904-1915: The "Nikimalika" and their Interpreters', *Philippine Studies*, 52.4 (2004), p.467.

Dog Feast Which is to Sound Death Knell for Lot of Canines".<sup>78</sup> The association between Native Americans and the consumption of dog meat was not new, with instances recorded in the journals of Lewis and Clark.<sup>79</sup> Yet prior to the San Francisco fair, it had not been a feature of Native American live displays, and was not a common element of popular images of the indigenous population. In seeking to compensate for the missing Filipino display, exhibitors opportunistically adapted a popular exhibitionary feature of safe savagery to fulfil visitor expectations and to contain the spectacle of Native American violence. Using temporal, spatial, and classificatory frameworks, exhibitors depicted Native Americans as savage aggressors, yet mediated the potentially threatening elements of this image by constructing a spectacular form of safe savagery.

## **Celebrating the Southwest 'Primitive': The Painted Desert**

### **Display at San Diego**

The framework of 'tribal' differences allowed exhibitors to construct a variety of presentations of Native American culture. The 'primitive' turn at the beginning of the twentieth century emphasised the positive aspects of the indigenous communities of the Southwest, and created an alternative image of Native American romance and beauty. This section examines the framing of the Southwest 'primitive' in the Painted Desert exhibit at the San Diego fair (1915-

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<sup>78</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 8 March 1915.

<sup>79</sup> For more on the relationship between dog-eating, race, and citizenship, see Janet M. Davis, *The Gospel of Kindness: Animal Welfare and the Making of Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

1916), and points to the various actors involved in the production, reproduction, and consumption of this seemingly positive image of indigeneity. Although comparatively positive, this framework nevertheless replicated many of the exhibitionary techniques and underlying racialisation strategies of more well established displays of tradition and safe savagery, and therefore did not undermine the overall racial framing of Native Americans as inferior members of the new American Pacific household.

### ***Producing and Consuming the Southwest 'Primitive'***

At the turn of the twentieth century, a positive image of Native American life emerged in both popular and scientific circles. Concerns about the degrading effects of civilisation and the emergence of cultural relativism resulted in a reimagining of the indigenous population as one that exemplified spirituality, community, and artistry. The native communities of the Southwest embodied this new image of the romantic indigenous 'primitive' because it was allegedly the only region in the nation in which Native Americans had been able to retain a distinctive cultural and physical presence.<sup>80</sup> The San Diego fair (1915-1916) exploited this emerging trend in its popular exhibition of Southwestern Native Americans. The Painted Desert concession, built by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway company, occupied a 10-acre site on the exposition's midway, and featured a replica cliff dwelling, recreations of the scenery of Arizona and New Mexico, and several hundred performers from Native American nations from the Southwest, including Apaches, Navajos, Pueblos, and Hopis.<sup>81</sup> The

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<sup>80</sup> Smith, *Reimagining Indians*, pp.5-11.

<sup>81</sup> *The Exposition Beautiful, Over One Hundred Views: The Panama-California Exposition and San Diego, the Exposition City* (San Diego: Pictorial Publishing Company, 1915).

production of the Painted Desert concession represented a confluence of efforts and interests by anthropologists, the tourism industry, and the organisers of the San Diego fair.

The American anthropological profession was dependent upon the nation's indigenous population as supposed representatives of man's early evolutionary journey. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Southwest became the ideal "laboratory for the science of man" as anthropologists conflated the Native Americans in the region with mankind's first humans, and argued that the study of "living savages" would provide insights into the Anglo-Saxon's evolutionary past.<sup>82</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, the discovery of ancient Pueblo cliff dwellings in Mesa Verde, Colorado, allowed anthropologists to popularise this supposed link between past and present peoples, and cliff dwelling exhibits appeared at expositions in Chicago (1893), St Louis (1904), and in the Painted Desert display at San Diego.<sup>83</sup> An exposition news publication claimed that the "Cliff Men" were a distinct race from the "Indian", and had long ago vanished, yet went on to state:

Careful and detailed study of the remains of this 'vanished' race has revealed, however, that their culture was in all essential points identical with that of the modern Pueblo Indian one sees from the Santa Fe train windows, making due allowance, of course, for changes wrought by Mexican and American influences.

It has been discovered that the ignorant, modern Pueblo Indian can understand

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<sup>82</sup> Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology*, p.ix, p.22.

Johannes Fabian argues that temporalising discourses that place other cultures in the past is central to the discipline of anthropology.

Fabian, *Time and the Other*.

<sup>83</sup> The popular fascination with the cliff dwellings in Mesa Verde resulted in the sanctification of the site as a National Park in 1906.

For more on the cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde, see Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology*.

and EXPLAIN remains from the Cliff Dwellers better than can the most learned scientist from the East or from Europe.<sup>84</sup>

In their efforts to popularise their profession at world's fairs and museums, anthropologists helped to frame the Native Americans of the Southwest as unmodern and unmediated representatives of the past.

The railroad and tourism industry played a similarly significant role in constructing the image of the Southwestern native. Building upon the romanticised image of the Southwest, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway company exploited the indigenous communities on its routes and turned them into tourist destinations. The entrepreneur Fred Harvey built restaurants, hotels, and souvenir shops alongside these communities. Mary Jane Colter, who designed many of the Fred Harvey restaurants, was employed by the railroad company to design the Painted Desert display at San Diego.<sup>85</sup> The railroad's promotional efforts, which the company heightened in their attempts to reach potential West Coast world's fair visitors, positioned the company as a source of authority on the depiction of the region's Native American population.<sup>86</sup> Acknowledging the "deep interest that all take in the 'First Americans'", an advertisement for the Painted Desert display emphasised the railroad's efforts in building the exhibit. Noting that no expense had been spared, the advert claimed that the concession had been "rushed here so that the visitor may see the original materials", as the railroad company had recognised that many people had "neither the time nor the means" to visit the

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<sup>84</sup> *San Diego Exposition News*, 1.6 (1912), pp.18-19.

<sup>85</sup> Thornton Waite, *Fairs and Railroads: Railroads at World's Fairs, Expositions, and Railroad Fairs* (Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing, 2010), p.64.

<sup>86</sup> Kropp, "There is a little sermon in that", in Weigle and Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*, p.40.



indigenous communities in the Southwest.<sup>87</sup> Using the fair as a means of advertising its services, the railroad depicted an image of a romantic, safe, and authentic indigenous Southwest that closely aligned with the tourist machinery on its route.

The fair's organisers recognised the significance of both the scientific and popular image of the Southwestern native. Originally competing with New Orleans and San Francisco to host an exposition celebrating the completion of the Panama Canal, the San Diego exposition's organisers had agreed to support San Francisco by withdrawing from the competition and hosting a regionally focused event. The exposition's president, David C. Collier, played a significant role in shaping the direction of the fair, and his desire to promote the history of man led him to employ several prominent Southwestern anthropologists and archaeologists to manage the exhibits.<sup>88</sup> The Director of Exhibits, Edgar L. Hewett, was also the Director of the School of American Archaeology. He stated in the institution's journal that the display of Native Americans in their "usual occupations" at the fair was "as careful a representation of the fast disappearing culture of the American Indians as it is possible to make".<sup>89</sup> Emphasising the scientific significance of San Diego as the host city, an anthropologist from the University of California, Berkeley, noted that one of the "greatest assets" of the city was "its Indian population, past and present". Noting that more "aborigines still dwell in San Diego county than in any other in California", he claimed that

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<sup>87</sup> *Painted Desert Exhibit, San Diego Exposition*, in Exhibits and Expositions Collection, S.0438, Special Collections, California Academy of Sciences Library, San Francisco.

<sup>88</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, pp.214-223.

<sup>89</sup> Edgar L. Hewett and William M. Templeton Johnson, 'Architecture of the Exposition', *Papers of the School of American Archaeology*, 32 (1916), p.40.

“one soul of every fifty in the county is a truly ‘native American’”.<sup>90</sup> In seeking to promote the region, fair organisers combined elements of fantasy and science in their representation of the nation’s indigenous inhabitants.<sup>91</sup> The production of the Painted Desert concession therefore represented a confluence of race-making agents and frameworks of racialisation.

While the methods of exhibitionary production in the Painted Desert display were clear, the process of production itself was central to the framing of the concession’s native performers. The exhibit frequently included demonstrations of indigenous craft production, trade, and the construction of the performers’ on-site dwellings. An official guidebook stated:

The red men will be seen weaving their rugs and blankets and shaping their pottery, and pounding out their copper and silver ornaments exactly as the southwestern Indians have done for centuries. They will be seen building new adobe houses ... They will be seen at their outdoor bake ovens and by the corrals where the grazing animals are kept. They will be seen bringing their wares into the trading post, and exchanging them for food and white man’s clothing.<sup>92</sup>

This emphasis on the production of crafts and residences functioned to marginalise the Southwestern native performers from the centres of cultural and economic power, and bound them to nature and tradition. In an industrialised, consumer-oriented society, craft production was “museumized” as something that civilised people no longer needed to do, which reinforced a

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<sup>90</sup> Alfred L. Kroeber, ‘The Indians of San Diego’, *California Topics – San Diego Exposition News*, 2.2 (1912), p.8.

<sup>91</sup> Kropp, “‘There is a little sermon in that’”, in Weigle and Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*, p.38.

<sup>92</sup> Esther Hansen (ed.) *The Official Guide and Descriptive Book of the Panama-California International Exposition* (San Diego: National Views Company, 1916), p.14.

binary framework of Native American past and white American present.<sup>93</sup> Commemorative exposition postcards depicted native craft production. Transforming an everyday task into a spectacle, and satisfying the “antimodernist cravings” of white audiences, the postcards and the purchasable craft products allowed fair visitors to participate in the imperial gaze by acquiring and assigning value to elements of indigenous culture [see Figure 3.12].<sup>94</sup> By choreographing a spectacle of craft production, the midway exhibit encouraged visitors to recognise the supposed cultural and economic inferiority of the romanticised and celebrated Southwestern native performers on display.

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<sup>93</sup> Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest*, p.126, p.148.

<sup>94</sup> Matthew F. Bokovy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), p.114; Alexia Kosmider, 'Refracting the Imperial Gaze onto the Colonizers: Geronimo Poses for the Empire', *American Transcendental Quarterly*, 15.4 (2001), pp.327-328.

**Figure 3.12. Postcard of Pueblo pottery production from the San Diego fair (1915-1916).**

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**EXP915e.69pc, in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno.**

The significance of the Painted Desert display in framing the indigenous population of the Southwest moved beyond the exposition site. A newspaper article claimed that “Scores of artists, painters and many interested in the study of Indians, their life, their habits and their surroundings are coming from near and far”, and stated that the exhibit was attracting many authors, which had resulted in at least “a score of short stories” about the exhibit’s performers.<sup>95</sup> One of the writers at the fair was George Wharton James, a photographer, journalist, and popular lecturer, who held a literature class on the grounds of the exposition. In a book about his experience of the fair, James noted his

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<sup>95</sup> *San Diego Union*, 13 January 1915.

encounters with “My Indian friends at The Painted Desert”.<sup>96</sup> The production of artistic works based on the native performers at the fair was significant, as these works reproduced and circulated already highly choreographed representations of the Southwest indigenous population in the world beyond the fair. Sherry Smith and Patricia Limerick have written of James’ prolific output of works and extensive lecturing tours, which helped to transform understandings of Southwest Native Americans and their surrounding landscapes.<sup>97</sup> As both a site of consumption and production, the Painted Desert exhibit reflected and contributed towards the nascent anti-modernist movement of ‘primitivism’.<sup>98</sup> The Painted Desert was a highly choreographed spectacle of Southwest indigeneity that was simultaneously produced and bolstered by anthropologists, the railroad industry, and the exposition management. The consumption and reproduction of this image of Southwest Native Americans occurred at a significant moment in the reconceptualisation of the Southwest and its inhabitants, and in the internationalisation of America’s racial patterns.

### ***Contrasting Native America***

Although the Painted Desert display offered positive depictions of Native American life, it did not undermine existing images of the unmodern native or the safe savage, as it similarly framed Native Americans as inferior to white Americans. The concession staged the framework of indigenous inferiority and

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<sup>96</sup> George W. James, *Exposition Memories, Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, 1916* (Pasadena: The Radiant Life Press, 1917), p.16.

<sup>97</sup> Smith, *Reimagining Indians*, pp.145-162; Patricia N. Limerick, *Desert Passages: Encounters with the American Deserts* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), pp.113-126.

<sup>98</sup> Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), pp.16-17; Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest*, pp.4-6.

difference through clear contrasts, both in the location of the exhibit and through the inclusion of competitions. Hoping to demonstrate the progress of the Southwest and to stimulate investment in its agriculture, the fair's big picture narratives cast the region's development in terms of conquest and "racial succession".<sup>99</sup> The Painted Desert was located directly adjacent to a collection of exhibits known as the Model Farm, which displayed new farm machinery and techniques. This spatial arrangement provided a clear contrast between the subsistence farming of the indigenous population in the region, and the introduction of intensive and mechanised farming by white Americans. The fair's official guidebook described the Model Farm as a "Lesson to the City Man", which demonstrated that "old-time farm life is gone", as machinery and "progressive" farming had removed the "drudgery which existed a few decades ago".<sup>100</sup> Contrasting modern farming practices and technology with a reproduction of the untouched desert landscapes of Arizona and New Mexico framed Native American farming practices as inferior, and justified the displacement of the indigenous population by depicting white American farmers as natural inheritors and cultivators of the land.

The juxtaposition between Native American and white American farmers was spectacularised in a competition that pitted the two against one another. The *San Diego Union* reported on an upcoming sheep-shearing competition at the Painted Desert, which would feature Hopi performers of the "Old School" testing their "old-fashioned method" against a "Stewart Little Wonder sheep-

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<sup>99</sup> Kropp, "'There is a little sermon in that'", in Weigle and Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*, p.36.

<sup>100</sup> Hansen (ed.) *The Official Guide and Descriptive Book of the Panama-California International Exposition*, p.11.

shearing machine".<sup>101</sup> Perhaps unexpectedly, an article following the competition declared that the "old style" had won. Yet the Hopi victory came with a caveat. The article stated that the white competitor, Miles Cooper, had sheared twice as many sheep as the Hopi competitor, named as Ko-Wa-Ta. The Hopis themselves had claimed the victory, as the "Paleface" had drawn blood, which was a "violation of the most important rule, according to Indian laws of the game", leaving the Painted Desert performers unable to "contain their delight".<sup>102</sup> Deriding the native performers' rules, the article dismissed their interpretation of victory, and emphasised the superior performance of the white competitor and his machine. Although exhibitors and mediators celebrated the native performers in the Painted Desert display for their proximity to nature and rejection of the damaging effects of civilisation, the sheep-shearing competition placed this celebration in perspective. The contrast between native America and white America offered a nostalgic image of a "peaceful primitive past", yet simultaneously affirmed the arrival and superiority of a modern, civilised, and white present.<sup>103</sup> Ko-Wa-Ta's sheep-shearing methods may have provided an interesting spectacle, but they were ultimately inferior to Miles Cooper's machine.

The West Coast world's fair midways depended upon the legibility of racial contrasts and comparisons. A description of the Painted Desert display in a newspaper article emphasised the observable differences in the concession, stating that a point of "particular interest" was that the performers were "not in white man's clothes". The popularity of the Southwest indigenous image came

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<sup>101</sup> *San Diego Union*, 17 March 1915.

<sup>102</sup> *San Diego Union*, 25 March 1915.

<sup>103</sup> Kropp, "There is a little sermon in that", in Weigle and Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*, p.43.

from its clear differences to the image of modern white America that world's fairs projected in the main thoroughfares and buildings. The article went on to describe the exhibit's construction, which had been overseen by "white men who spend their lives in the Southwest" and therefore knew the "manners and very thoughts of the Indians", which enabled them to "direct the labours of their Indian workmen". The article also noted that the native performers had been brought to San Diego to reproduce "life so that the white man can understand it".<sup>104</sup> This consistent contrast between the 'Indian' and the 'white man' positioned the concession's indigenous performers as dependent inferiors and legible specimens of racial difference, and elevated the concession's white owners as the true arbiters of indigenous racial knowledge. Although the Painted Desert display celebrated Southwestern indigenous culture, its positive depiction of Native Americans represented a practice that Renato Rosaldo has termed "imperialist nostalgia". Mourning for what they themselves had helped to destroy, the "innocent yearning" of imperialist nostalgia functioned to capture imaginations and conceal white America's complicity in the destruction and transformation of a landscape and a population.<sup>105</sup> The Painted Desert display did not seriously challenge alternative racialisations of Native Americans. As a highly produced and reproduced spectacle of indigenous difference, the concession offered a temporary celebration of the nation's indigenous past within an overarching narrative of the superiority of its white future. This selective celebration of non-white primitivity similarly appeared in displays of Polynesians.

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<sup>104</sup> *San Diego Union*, 1 January 1915.

<sup>105</sup> Renato Rosaldo, 'Imperialist Nostalgia', *Representations*, 26 (1989), pp.107-108.



## **Conclusions: Flexible Inferiority**

This chapter has examined the exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies used to represent Native Americans on the West Coast midways. It has highlighted how existing flexible stereotypes of indigenous inferiority permitted exhibitors to produce a range of live displays that emphasised various aspects of this racial inferiority without contradiction. Scientific notions of racial extinction and the popular medium of spectacle underpinned the concessions, and the big picture exposition narratives of American progress and Manifest Destiny anchored the indigenous performers to a mythologised national history, and structured understandings of the population's marginalised role within these narratives. Exhibitors utilised techniques such as trivialising cultural difference, emphasising temporal distance, staging competition, and internalising and obscuring violence. Condensing centuries of racial framing into popular sites of spectacle, the world's fairs reinforced and transformed indigenous racial identities, and packaged them for the consumption of the visiting public, who – often for the first time – physically encountered this nationally significant population group.<sup>106</sup> The flexible image of indigenous inferiority permitted white visitors to rehearse and negotiate their superior status in relation to Native American performers, and the emergent shift towards a romantic vision of the Southwest 'primitive' did not undermine or significantly alter conceptualisations of the native's role within national – and newly international – racial hierarchies. In 1924, Congress granted citizenship to all Native Americans born in the United States, although many states – particularly those in the West – did not extend rights such as the

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<sup>106</sup> Welch, 'Savagery on Show', p.338.

franchise to Native Americans for several more decades. The 1934 Indian Reorganization Act ended the government's policy of assimilation, and aimed to establish Native American self-determinacy, although historians have disagreed about the immediate and long-term effects of this legislation.<sup>107</sup>

As familiar domestic models of racial Otherness, the Native Americans on display at the West Coast fairs also functioned as archetypes for the racialisation of new and unfamiliar non-white groups. Exhibitors of Asian immigrants and imperial subjects adapted racialisation strategies and exhibitionary techniques used to frame Native Americans in order to extend legible frameworks of difference in the depiction of these Pacific populations. Narratives of American military superiority, and indigenous aggression and weakness were adapted in the display of Filipinos, and the romantic image of the evolutionary 'primitive' emerged in concessions depicting Polynesian peoples. Exhibitionary techniques such as establishing difference, trivialising cultural practices, and reframing progress as dependence, appeared in representations of Chinese and Japanese performers. In the next chapter, I will demonstrate the importance of such narratives and techniques in the complicated negotiation of the local, national, and international factors involved in the representation of Chinese and Japanese people at the fairs.

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<sup>107</sup> See Graham D. Taylor, *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism: The Administration of the Indian Reorganization Act, 1934-1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980); Willard H. Rollings, 'Citizenship and Suffrage: The Native American Struggle for Civil Rights in the American West, 1830-1965', *Nevada Law Journal*, 5.1 (2004), pp.126-140.

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## Chapter 4. 'Two Sides of the Same Coin': The Live Exhibition of Chinese and Japanese People

This chapter examines the live exhibits of Chinese and Japanese people, and demonstrates how a variety of exhibitors staged and mediated representations of the two Asian populations. The complicated status of Chinese and Japanese people in the American consciousness – as both foreign and domestic Others, trading partners and immigrants, diplomatic counterparts and international threats – allowed for a variety of exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies to emerge at the West Coast world's fairs. As Matthew Frye Jacobson has noted, immigration and expansion constitute two sides of the same coin, as industrialisation and nationalism precipitate and problematise both processes. As Chinese and Japanese people entered the American sphere as both immigrant workers and potential consumers in the second half of the nineteenth century, Americans became both scornful of and dependent on the two Asian nations.<sup>1</sup> Unlike in their displays of Native Americans and imperial subjects, exhibitors and mediators of the Chinese and Japanese displays had to negotiate with local residents and autonomous foreign governments that were linked to the displayed group. Both Asian and white American people owned the live concessions, yet the exhibits were consistently mediated by the exposition machine and through the white racial framing agendas of key

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew F. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), pp.4-5, p.14.

exposition actors. More than any other displayed group, the live displays of Chinese and Japanese people represented a collaboration that incorporated multiple needs and expectations, and this chapter foregrounds how exhibitors and mediators constructed new images of 'Asianness' in response to local and international political and economic necessities.<sup>2</sup> The West Coast world's fairs represented important cultural sites at which these varied processes, peoples, and perceptions coalesced.

The chapter begins by briefly outlining the existing images of Chinese and Japanese people in the American imagination, and points to the differences and similarities in the ways in which Americans have perceived the two populations. Although America's relationship with the two Asian nations underwent significant changes at the turn of the twentieth century, exposition exhibitors and mediators consistently drew upon and adapted older images of Asian difference. The following sections utilise many of the same sources as previous chapters, such as exposition guidebooks and newspapers, yet I also integrate commercial and regional magazines in order to emphasise the significance of economic and local factors in the framing of the Asian performers. The section on Chinese exhibits demonstrates how both Chinese and white American exhibitors staged and mediated representations of the Chinese population as foreign and domestic Others. At times dramatising their foreign and distant status, and at others using spatial and temporal techniques to contain the threatening elements of the domestic alien, the exhibits negotiated local and international relationships to construct an image of racial inferiority. The next section points to the Japanese displays, and emphasises the

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<sup>2</sup> Sadiyah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.121.

significance of Japan's status as a powerful Pacific nation. Although acting respectfully in 'frontstage' settings, such as during visits by Japanese dignitaries, mediations of these visits and the concessions on the midway undermined narratives of Japanese progress by framing the performers as subordinate, and by obscuring the more threatening elements of non-white modernity. The final section argues that exhibitors framed the Chinese and Japanese presence at the fairs as an object and comparative lesson on their permanent status as foreign outsiders. The conclusion looks forward to the following two chapters, and points to the role of Asian people at the fairs as models for the exhibition of imperial peoples, and frequently as visitors in their own right.

## **The 'Same Primitive Stock':**

### **Existing Images of Chinese and Japanese People**

Americans did not experience sustained contact with Chinese and Japanese people until the second half of the nineteenth century. Early relations with the two nations differed, yet by the end of the century both China and Japan came to be significant national powers in the Pacific region, important trading partners, and sources of immigration to America. The various strands of America's contact with the two nations affected the racialisation of Chinese and Japanese people, as travellers, diplomats, merchants, social reformers, and American workers encountered the populations at numerous sites and on different terms. This section provides an overview of the development of Chinese and Japanese stereotypes, and points to the inherent tensions in the racialisation of two

populations that existed as both foreign and domestic Others. Emphasising the importance of visual, behavioural, and spatial markers of 'Asian-ness', the tendency towards contradiction, and the coalescence of the two populations in the 'yellow peril' narrative, this overview outlines the various existing images available to the exhibitors at America's West Coast world's fairs.

### ***Chinese People as Foreign and Domestic Others***

China and its inhabitants have occupied the American consciousness for hundreds of years. At the end of the eighteenth century, as America began to engage in direct trade with China, a peculiarly American vision of the nation – and in particular its large potential market – emerged in popular and official narratives.<sup>3</sup> Cynthia Wu has noted that the well-known Chinese stereotypes of the second half of the nineteenth century represented a radical shift from the established image of the first. Prior to its large-scale export of labourers, Americans understood China in terms of its dominance in international trade and its export of luxury goods, and the nation signified opulence and wealth. Freak show entrepreneurs and missionaries were responsible for early live displays of Chinese people, staging either 'Oriental' curiosities such as women with bound feet and the popular 'Siamese' twins Chang and Eng, or spectacular narratives of the civilised heathen.<sup>4</sup> This narrow portrayal of economic value,

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<sup>3</sup> Gary Okihiro has pointed to the legacy of European visions of China in the American mind, and the links between American visions of its indigenous and black population, and its early impressions of China.

See Gary Y. Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), pp.19-24; Matthew F. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), pp.26-27.

<sup>4</sup> Cynthia Wu, 'The Siamese Twins In Late-Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Conflict and Reconciliation', *American Literature*, 80.1 (2008), pp.31-34; James S. Moy, *Marginal Sights: Staging the Chinese in America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993), pp.9-14.

curiosity, and religious status reflected the American public's limited contact with and knowledge of the nation prior to the Californian Gold Rush (1848-1855).

The arrival of large numbers of Chinese immigrants on the West Coast in the mid-nineteenth century precipitated a range of stereotypes that fuelled anti-immigration sentiment nationally and in particular on the Pacific Coast. As Ronald Takaki has noted, the visible non-whiteness of the Chinese immigrants led to early comparisons with domestic non-white populations. Popular narratives compared Chinese immigrant workers to black slaves, and drew links between the conquest of Native Americans in the 'winning' of the West and new encounters with Chinese people in the region.<sup>5</sup> Yet Chinese stereotypes also had distinctive features. Exploiting fears based on race, class, and sexuality, images of the Chinese pollutant, coolie, and sexual deviant threatened the moral and economic structures of the newly settled American West.<sup>6</sup> Cartoons published in the popular satirical magazine *The Wasp*, which was based in San Francisco, played upon white fears of Chinese labour. One cartoon, published around the time of the Chinese Exclusion Act, depicted a volcano disguised as a Chinese man wearing a conical hat, erupting disembodied Chinese heads with braided hair, with the words 'Destruction' and 'Ruin to White Labour' cascading in lava towards fleeing white people [see Figure 4.1]. The erosion of Chinese-American relations, including the 1878 Ah Yup court decision that deemed Asian peoples ineligible for naturalisation, culminated in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which was the first piece of legislation to exclude immigrants on

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<sup>5</sup> Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*, revised ed. (Boston: Back Bay Books, 1998), pp.100-102.

<sup>6</sup> Robert G. Lee, *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), pp.9-10.



the basis of race.<sup>7</sup> Popular stereotypes exploited notions of deviant behaviour, unpleasant working and living conditions, and the population's appearance. Minstrel shows depicted the figure of 'John Chinaman' in 'yellow face', who possessed poor language skills and unusual eating habits, and had a long braided plait of hair – called a 'queue' – that was perceived as both racially and sexually ambiguous.<sup>8</sup> Such visibly foreign and unusual traits contributed to a strong anti-Chinese sentiment in both popular and political culture.

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<sup>7</sup> For more on Chinese exclusion, see Bill O. Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy, 1850-1990* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Ian Haney-López, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Robert Lee notes that from the establishment of the Qing dynasty, Han Chinese men wore this braid – known as a queue – as a sign of fealty to their Manchu conquerors, and failure to do so was a sign of rebellion. White Americans often cut off Chinese men's braids as a form of attack, which Lee links to the colonial practice of taking Native American scalps for bounty. Lee, *Orientalism*, pp.32-41.

**Figure 4.1. Cartoon in *The Wasp*.**

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**'A Fresh Eruption of the Pacific Coast Vesuvius', *The Wasp*, 8 (1882), in *The Chinese in California Collection*, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.**

Chinese immigrants built a number of communities – referred to by white Americans as ‘Chinatowns’ – in bounded enclaves within the new West Coast cities. A broad popular literature surrounding San Francisco’s Chinatown perpetuated images of deviance and vice, playing upon white fears of opium use, prostitution, trafficking, and disease, and consistently advising potential visitors to secure a guide for their safety. Social reform treatises, fiction, and tourist literature reflected and shaped the category of ‘Chinese’ in San Francisco. Guidebooks aimed at tourists created and dispersed a standardised image of the Chinese in Chinatown, stressing unassimilability, labour competition, public health threats, and vice, and constructed stock Chinatown sites such as restaurants, joss houses, opium dens, theatres, and a labyrinth of underground passages.<sup>9</sup> In her short story, ‘The Dramatic in My Destiny’, author Emma Frances Dawson wrote of the damaging effects of opium in Chinatown, and of the “endless line of dark, mysterious forms, with muffling blouse and flaunting queue, the rank, poisonous undergrowth in our forest of men”. Her description of Chinatown emphasised the foreignness and undesirable spatial organisation of the enclave, stating that the area was “where fifty thousand aliens make an alien city, a city as Chinese as Peking, except for buildings and landscape, and not unlike the narrow, dirty, thronged streets, with dingy brick piles, of Shanghai”.<sup>10</sup>

Several early twentieth century events shaped the popular image of San Francisco’s Chinatown. An outbreak of the plague in 1900 cemented

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<sup>9</sup> Barbara Berglund, ‘Chinatown’s Tourist Terrain: Representation and Racialization in Nineteenth Century San Francisco’, *American Studies*, 46.2 (2005), p.6, p.17.

<sup>10</sup> Emma F. Dawson, *An Itinerant House, and Other Stories* (San Francisco: The Murdock Press, 1897), pp.100-101.

‘The Dramatic in My Destiny’ was first published in the *Californian* magazine in 1880.

stereotypes of Chinese disease, and the 1906 earthquake and fire destroyed the enclave in its original form.<sup>11</sup> Photographer Arnold Genthe's portraits of Chinatown before the fire depicted the enclosed spaces and strange clothing that had become synonymous with the enclave, and the 1908 release of his collection, *Pictures of Old Chinatown*, perpetuated such images long after the area had been rebuilt [see Figure 4.2]. James Moy has noted that as a "touristic geography", the features of the imagined Chinatown through time have been remarkably consistent.<sup>12</sup> Texts and images representing San Francisco's Chinatown disseminated racialised understandings of Chinese people beyond the cities and communities they inhabited, and established expectations for spectacles of Chinese culture.

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<sup>11</sup> For more on these events, see Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Walter Ko, '1906 San Francisco Chinatown Burning and Rebuilding', *Chinese American Forum*, 22.3 (2007), pp.34-37.

<sup>12</sup> Moy, *Marginal Sights*, p.67.

**Figure 4.2. Arnold Genthe photograph of San Francisco's Chinatown before the 1906 fire.**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Arnold Genthe, *Old Chinatown: A Book of Pictures* (New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1908).**

Although Chinese immigrants contributed greatly to the building of America's coastal states in the second half of the nineteenth century, many white West Coast residents imagined that this population group would be the chief cause of the region's supposedly imminent downfall. Towards the end of the century, texts and images began to represent Asian immigrants as the "yellow peril", as the acquisition of territory overseas renewed fears of a non-white invasion on America's Pacific Coast.<sup>13</sup> Authors, journalists, and historians contributed to this invasion scare narrative, writing short stories and long treatises about the rise and fall of civilisations. In 1880, author and editor Pierton W. Dooner published a novel in which Chinese immigrants – empowered by contact with Western industry – overran California, forcing it into dependence, complacency, and division, and eventually defeating the American population in a bloody race war.<sup>14</sup> In the 1890s, Australia-based historian Charles Pearson argued that the 'yellow' and 'black' races were ascending as white Western populations had become static, and American historian Brooks Adams claimed that cheap Asian labour threatened the West, and only imperialism in the Pacific region would contain the threat and empower the weakened American nation.<sup>15</sup> Adapting familiar understandings of the 'dying race' narrative to construct fears over the future of the Anglo-Saxon race in America, and linking the Chinese immigrant population to the Asian-Pacific peoples caught up in the era of extra-continental expansion, the 'yellow

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<sup>13</sup> Lee, *Orientalism*, p.10.

<sup>14</sup> Pierton W. Dooner, *Last Days of the Republic* (San Francisco: Alta California Publishing House, 1880).

For more on Dooner, see Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams*, pp.131-133.

<sup>15</sup> Charles H. Pearson, *National Life and Character: A Forecast* (London: Macmillan, 1893); Brooks Adams, *The Law of Civilization and Decay: An Essay on History* (New York: Macmillan, 1895).

See also, Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams*, pp.129-130.

peril' narrative racialised Chinese and other Asian populations as threats.<sup>16</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century West Coast world's fairs, exhibitors could draw upon established narratives of opulence and curiosity, or newer frameworks of deviance and the spatialised threat of Chinatown, to construct live concessions for the enjoyment and disdain of both white and Chinese visitors.

### ***Japanese People as Modern and Traditional Others***

Just years after the Gold Rush influx of Chinese immigrants, Japan ended its isolationist foreign policy and began to establish relations with America and Europe. Prior to this policy change, the West had very little information about Japanese culture. Engaging with America initially via diplomatic rather than commercial channels, Japan underwent a sustained period of reform and Westernisation in the second half of the nineteenth century in an attempt to preserve its autonomy and compete with Western powers.<sup>17</sup> From the 1870s, the image of a rapidly modernising Japan dominated popular American culture. Despite perpetuating a degree of affinity with the Japanese population, these positive images of progress were underpinned by the belief that America had awakened Japan, and was therefore a superior and natural mentor to the emerging Asian nation.<sup>18</sup> In a section of his travelogue entitled "Japan Opened by

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<sup>16</sup> For more on the genealogy of the 'yellow peril' narrative, see Colleen Lye, *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp.12-46.

<sup>17</sup> William F. Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific: The United States, Japan and the Asia/Pacific Region, 1895-1945* (Westport: Praeger, 2001), pp.4-7.

For more on nineteenth century transformations in Japan, see Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Navy Commodore, Matthew C. Perry, arrived in Edo Bay with four armed American warships in July 1853. He carried a letter from President Fillmore, which requested that trade

America”, author Henry Field wrote of Japan’s openness to “foreign influences”, and spatially reconceptualised Japan’s place in the world, stating that this ‘awakening’ had “unmoored Japan from the coast of Asia, and towed it across the Pacific, to place it alongside of the New World”.<sup>19</sup> Entering the American consciousness on different terms, early popular images of Japan and its inhabitants differed greatly from those of Chinese people. Emphasising progress and modernity, although underpinned by notions of dependence, these mid to late nineteenth century images of the Japanese population avoided the negative stereotyping extended towards the Chinese.

The image of Japanese progress however did not exist in isolation. As Neil Harris has noted, America’s late nineteenth century fascination with Japan rested on the nation’s apparent tensions between modernity and tradition, which reflected emergent anxieties about the effects of modernisation on America itself. Harris has pointed to the turn of the twentieth century world’s fairs as important sites at which a dual image of Japanese modernity and tradition emerged, as the reformist Meiji government exhibited Japanese arts and crafts at the expositions, precipitating a widespread American craze over traditional Japanese culture and products.<sup>20</sup> Concerns that rapid modernisation would destroy Japanese tradition reflected similar anthropological arguments about Native American culture, and popular movements towards

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relationships between the two nations begin, and that American sailors be treated well and allowed to refuel in Japanese ports.

John H. Miller, *American Political and Cultural Perspectives of Japan: From Perry to Obama* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), p.11, p.29.

<sup>19</sup> Henry M. Field, *From Egypt to Japan*, 19<sup>th</sup> edn (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905), p.417.

This book was first published in 1877.

<sup>20</sup> Neil Harris, *Cultural Excursions: Marketing Appetites and Cultural Tastes in Modern America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p.29, p.55.



antimodernism.<sup>21</sup> America's fascination with Japanese tradition shaped images of Japanese women. While images of Chinese women emphasised unusual practices such as bound feet and deviant behaviour such as prostitution, images of Japanese women emphasised beauty, docility, and politeness. A popular genre of fiction depicted tragic tales of beautiful Japanese women marrying European and American men, only to be abandoned when the men left Japan.<sup>22</sup> The image of the servile geisha was particularly popular, which as Yoko Kawaguchi has argued, reflected Western anxieties over female sexuality, as well as symbolising notions of Eastern weakness and femininity. Ambivalently regarded as both beautiful yet potentially immoral, the geisha also reflected the dual image of Japanese tradition and modernity, as both a symbol of what needed to be reformed and what could be lost. Several former geishas came to America at the beginning of the twentieth century to perform on stage, and the image of the passive and servile woman in a kimono became synonymous with Japan.<sup>23</sup> The tension between depictions of Japanese modernity and tradition emerged frequently at the West Coast world's fairs.

A significant shift in the popular image of Japan and its people occurred in late 1905, when Japan proved its military capability by defeating Russia in a war over its imperial ambitions in Manchuria and Korea. The victory of a non-white nation over a white power fed into the existing 'yellow peril' narrative, and fears over Japan's increasing dominance in the Pacific and the growing number of Japanese immigrants arriving on America's West Coast contributed

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<sup>21</sup> Sherry L. Smith, *Reimagining Indians: Native Americans through Anglo Eyes, 1880-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp.8-9.

<sup>22</sup> See John L. Long, *Madame Butterfly* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1903); Miller, *American Political and Cultural Perspectives of Japan*, pp.34-35.

<sup>23</sup> Yoko Kawaguchi, *Butterfly's Sisters: The Geisha in Western Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp.5-7, p.11, p.66.

to images of Japanese strength and violence, and towards existing fears of an invasion from Asia.<sup>24</sup> Popular author and journalist Jack London acted as a war correspondent during the Russo-Japanese War, and reported in the West Coast press on Japan's military successes. In an article entitled "The Yellow Peril", London described the Japanese as a "race of mastery and power, a fighting race", which had now been "equipped with the finest machines and systems of destruction the Caucasian man has devised", and was on a "course of conquest".<sup>25</sup> Depicting Japan as a recipient of Western knowledge and advances, London framed the Japanese population as inherently violent. The rise of Japan in the Pacific region also contributed to fears of a race war, and brought images of Chinese deviousness and invasion together with images of Japanese strength and modernity. In an article in *Sunset* magazine, Jack London wrote that while America did not know the Chinese mind, Japan did, as the two nations were of the "same primitive stock". He stated, "what if Japan awakens China – not to our dream if you please, but to her dream, to Japan's dream?"<sup>26</sup> The conflicting images of tradition and modernity, servile friend and threatening foe, complicated exhibitions of Japanese people at the West Coast fairs, yet allowed exhibitors to mediate the more threatening elements of Japanese progress by deploying racialised narratives of dependence and subordination.

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<sup>24</sup> Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams*, pp.132-133.

<sup>25</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*, 24 September 1904.

<sup>26</sup> Jack London, 'If Japan Awakens China', *Sunset* (December, 1910).

*Sunset* magazine began publication in 1898, and was initially a promotional magazine for the Southern Pacific Transportation Company. It largely aimed to promote West Coast destinations, and became a popular national magazine.

## **Distance and Difference:**

### **Chinese People as Foreigners and Residents**

The staging of the Chinese concessions at the West Coast world's fairs represented collaborative efforts to negotiate the inherent tensions between the population's dual status as foreign and domestic Other, and the contradictory terms of Chinese-American relations at international and local levels. This section examines two distinct types of Chinese concession – namely Chinese theatre and reconstructions of Chinatown – and points to the exhibitionary strategies deployed by a range of Chinese and white exhibitors and mediators. Although the Chinese theatre concessions were owned and operated by local Chinese exhibitors, exposition texts and the local press heavily mediated the supposedly incomprehensible displays using legible frameworks of difference. Establishing grounds for national and racial comparison, and spatialising notions of Chinese difference and distance, newspapers and exposition guidebooks framed the Chinese theatre exhibits as spectacular demonstrations of the inherent foreignness of both Chinese performers and, by extension, the local Chinese population. In contrast, the white exhibitors that owned the Chinatown concessions deployed exhibitionary techniques that emphasised temporal distance and spatial containment in order to negotiate the tensions between local expectations of an authentic Chinatown and the requirements of international diplomacy. Drawing on a range of existing images of Chinese Otherness, both types of exhibit racialised the Chinese population as racially inferior and inherently threatening to white Americans.

***Spectacularising the Foreign Other: Mediating Chinese Theatre***

Due to an ongoing protest over the harsh terms of America's immigration legislation, the Chinese government refused to participate officially at the San Francisco fair (1894). When a group of local Chinese merchants offered to produce an exhibit, exposition organisers awarded them a concession on the midway rather than an official foreign building.<sup>27</sup> Although local Chinese groups frequently owned the Chinese concessions on the West Coast midways, exposition managers nevertheless retained control over the exhibits' location and content, and exposition texts and the local press played a significant role in mediating visitor perceptions. The Chinese Building and Bazaar featured a joss house, theatre, teahouse, and a market selling Chinese goods, and was built using a distinct form of architecture and design. A newspaper article stated that the building possessed "a type of architecture in keeping with its exhibits", noting that a "glance at the exterior is conclusive evidence of its nationality, without the aid of a sign". Inside the building, every "nook and corner" was "distinctively oriental".<sup>28</sup> Attempting to construct a positive exhibit of Chinese culture, the concessionaires drew upon older images of opulence, and rejected stereotypes of opium use and prostitution. One commemorative text claimed, "to the American eye everything is strange and unusual", although it conceded that the exhibit was "none the less beautiful".<sup>29</sup> Exposition texts mediated the exhibitors' framework of opulence to emphasise the visible differences between America and China, and thus the inherent foreignness of Chinese features.

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<sup>27</sup> Raymond W. Rast, 'The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco's Chinatown, 1882-1917', *Pacific Historical Review*, 76.1 (2007), pp.50-51.

<sup>28</sup> *Morning Call*, 18 February 1894.

<sup>29</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes: Being Views of California Midwinter Fair and Famous Scenes in the Golden State: A Series of Pictures Taken by I. W. Taber* (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker, 1894).

One of the most popular exhibits in the Chinese concession was its theatre, which held regular performances of Chinese dramatic productions. Esther Kim Lee has noted that the first theatrical performances by Chinese people began in San Francisco just years after the start of the Gold Rush, and functioned to entertain Chinese workers. White audiences disliked Chinese theatrical companies because of the incomprehensibility of their performances, preferring the more established 'yellow face' American productions as a means of enjoying exotic images of China.<sup>30</sup> As a familiar medium of entertainment, theatres on the midway offered a clear form of comparison between white American dramatic styles and those of different nations, and the midway location encouraged visitors to draw racialised conclusions from the performances. One souvenir stated that the "Chinese idea of drama is a dreary one according to Western estimates", with its slow action and "interminable" dialogue.<sup>31</sup> The staging of the theatre's exhibitionary space rendered the incomprehensible Chinese performance legible for white audiences. The raised platform functioned to hold the audience's gaze and foregrounded the bodies on display, exhibiting them in a manner that the physical traits deemed racially inherent dominated the exhibit.<sup>32</sup>

The Chinese theatre was visually impressive, with Chinese children elaborately costumed in silk robes and fake beards [see Figure 4.3]. Chinese lanterns hung from electric lamps, and ornate tapestries covered the walls beneath the theatre's plain curtains, emphasising the supposed transplantation

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<sup>30</sup> Esther K. Lee, *A History of Asian American Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp.9-10.

<sup>31</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes*.

<sup>32</sup> Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp.60-61.

of the exhibit from China to the temporary structure of an American world's fair. The opulence and extravagance of the costumes and props dramatised difference, and the clearly demarcated, bounded space of the theatre allowed audiences to draw clear comparisons on theatrical style and content.<sup>33</sup> Although the theatre offered fictional productions and was built by local Chinese merchants, its presence on the midway – particularly in the absence of an official Chinese exhibit – reconfigured the dramatic elements of the theatre into an authentic show of racial difference, and transformed the performers into representatives of their nation.

**Figure 4.3. Chinese theatre at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Interior of Chinese Theatre', Souvenir of the California Midwinter International Exposition, BANC PIC 1976.029--ffALB, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.**

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<sup>33</sup> Berglund, 'Chinatown's Tourist Terrain', pp.23-24.

The local press dramatised the theatre's foreign features, drawing upon established stereotypes to transform the concession into a site of foreign threat. Throughout the fair's run, the press vilified the concession's owners – the powerful Chinese Six Companies – for defying America's immigration laws.<sup>34</sup> The 1892 Geary Act demanded that Chinese people resident in America obtain certificates of residence and identity to prove their legal status, and the 1893 McCreary Amendment required Chinese residents to register with the federal government or face deportation.<sup>35</sup> Less than a month after the fair opened, a newspaper article carried the headline, "The Midwinter Fair Chinese Turn a Trick", and claimed that performers travelling to the fair from China were manipulating the terms of the McCreary Amendment by falsely registering as labourers and selling their documentation to others. The article was careful not to lay blame with the registration clerks, who could not possibly remember the faces of "thousands of coolies" with the "race resemblance being so strong".<sup>36</sup>

Another article described the "craft and cunning" of the Chinese, who could "scatter and conceal themselves in various parts of the land". Claiming that many of the positions in the concession were filled by "Mongols well known in Chinatown", the article attributed the scheme to the Six Companies, suggesting that the concession had been exploited to import "another batch" of "coolies" to America.<sup>37</sup> As James Moy has noted, theatrical productions of 'Chinese-ness' positioned the population as a hostile barrier to American

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<sup>34</sup> The Chinese Six Companies was an informal name for the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, which was a group of prominent Chinese companies in San Francisco that sought to raise the profile of the community. For more on the Six Companies, see Yucheng Qin, *The Diplomacy of Nationalism: The Chinese Six Companies and China's Policy Towards Exclusion* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009).

<sup>35</sup> Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), pp.41-42.

<sup>36</sup> *Morning Call*, 22 February 1894.

<sup>37</sup> *Morning Call*, 6 June 1894.

progress on the western frontier. The presence of Chinese people in theatre productions demonstrated the Chinese presence in “concrete social terms”, and simultaneously emphasised the perceived need to exclude them.<sup>38</sup> It is unclear whether the press’ allegations were true, yet their exploitation of stereotypes of the Chinese as nameless and faceless threats to the nation further dramatised the foreignness and racial Otherness of the concession performers, and by extension, of the local Chinese population.

At the Seattle fair (1909), local Chinese residents again gained ownership of the midway concession. In the intervening years between the San Francisco (1894) and Seattle fairs, China had undergone a period of modernisation. Yet unlike Japan, this national transformation did not significantly impact upon popular images of China and its inhabitants. Although noting that China had “roused at last”, exposition texts continued to draw upon familiar stereotypes in mediating visitor perceptions of the midway concession.<sup>39</sup> The Chinese Village was owned and operated by a local Chinese businessman named Ah King, and featured a restaurant, market, tea garden, temple, and theatre. An advertisement in the fair’s official guidebook sought to establish a clear sense of difference and distance between China and Seattle, emphasising the concession’s traditional and unusual elements, and framing the village as beautiful, mysterious, and historical [see Figure 4.4]. The distinction between America and China was further expressed through claims that the exhibit’s features and performers had been “imported”, “Brought intact from Shanghai”, and were “Direct from the Court of the Dowager Empress” in “Far

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<sup>38</sup> Moy, *Marginal Sights*, p.39.

<sup>39</sup> *The Exposition Beautiful* (Seattle: Seattle Publishing Company, n.d.), p.3.



Away China".<sup>40</sup> Casting the performers as distinct and distant foreigners, the advertisement obscured Seattle's Chinese population, and dramatised the distance between the fair and China. Claiming that the performers had been 'imported' emphasised the commercial relationship between the two nations, and concealed domestic demographic concerns by avoiding references to the human process of immigration. This emphasis on provenance was a common exhibitionary technique, and elaborate stories of importation functioned to authenticate midway displays and assure visitors that they were observing foreign peoples rather than local immigrant groups.<sup>41</sup> Despite including the owner Ah King's name, his American credentials perhaps did not translate alongside the list of Chinese performers whose distant heritage was frequently affirmed.

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<sup>40</sup> Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, *Official Guide to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (Seattle: A.Y.P.E. Publishing Company, 1909), p.17.

<sup>41</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, pp.109-111.

**Figure 4.4. Advertisement for the Chinese Village at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***Official Guide to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (Seattle: A.Y.P.E. Publishing Company, 1909), p.17.**

Much like the concession at the San Francisco fair, one of the most well documented features of the exhibit was its theatre. The local press described the various entertainers – including magicians, actors, acrobats, dancers, sword men, and strong men – as “living during the period of the exposition the life of old Shanghai”. Informing its readers, “it matters not what you have witnessed in the way of ‘vodville’”, the newspaper marvelled at the performances of the troupe’s “eminent stars”, comparing their fame in China to well known names in American theatre.<sup>42</sup> This contrast affirmed the audience’s comparative judgments of Chinese and American theatre, and established the highly stylised performance space on the midway as an opportunity to observe the racial traits of the Chinese population. The “carnivalized” presentation of ‘old’ Shanghai represented a stark contrast to the exhibitions of industry and technological advance in the main fair grounds, and functioned to create a spectacle not only of difference and distance, but also of “unAmericanness”.<sup>43</sup> Fair organisers, the local press, and exposition text producers mediated the Chinese-owned exhibitions of theatre at the San Francisco and Seattle fairs. Exhibitors and mediators utilised anthropological notions of temporal and spatial distance to frame the Chinese population as inherently different and inferior, and translated the incomprehensible theatrical productions through the lens of familiar stereotypes of visual difference, cunning, and foreignness.<sup>44</sup> Positioning the theatres on the midway spectacularised the Chinese productions and

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<sup>42</sup> *Seattle Star*, 19 June 1909.

<sup>43</sup> Philip McGowan, *American Carnival: Seeing and Reading American Culture* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), p.2.

<sup>44</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983; repr. 2014), p.16.

encouraged visitors to draw comparisons with American and other foreign theatres on the concession strip.

***Containing the Resident Other: Constructing Exposition Chinatowns***

The emphasis on distance in mediations of the theatre concessions was problematic, as immigration had brought large numbers of Chinese people in close proximity to white American residents. In a guidebook to the San Francisco fair (1894), the Chinese “quarters” were described as being in the “very heart of the city”, surrounded by white businesses and residences, ensuring that it was “only a step ... from the most repulsive of Oriental squalor, to the greatest of Caucasian luxuriousness”.<sup>45</sup> San Francisco’s Chinatown was a popular tourist destination in its own right, yet the 1906 earthquake and fire destroyed the enclave in its original form. Although city officials considered relocating Chinese residents to a less valuable and central location, the local Chinese community rebuilt the area with the ‘Oriental’ architecture that had become familiar on successive world’s fair midways, and impressed white residents with its cleanliness and orderliness.<sup>46</sup> Texts promoting the San Francisco fair (1915) enthused about the city’s new Chinatown, describing it as a “world of newness”, and associated the transformation with the emergence of the Chinese Republic that had been declared in 1912.<sup>47</sup> Framing the transformation in terms of American superiority and Chinese dependence, the

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<sup>45</sup> Taliesin Evans, *All About the Midwinter Fair, San Francisco, and Interesting Facts Concerning California* (San Francisco: W.B. Bancroft and Company, 1894), p.41.

<sup>46</sup> Rast, ‘The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco’s Chinatown’, pp.53-54.

<sup>47</sup> The 1911 Xinhai Revolution overthrew the Qing dynasty, and led to the establishment of a Chinese Republic in 1912. America officially recognised the republic’s status in 1913, partly as an attempt to preserve Chinese autonomy in the face of Japan’s increasing imperial ambitions. For more on America’s response to the Chinese Republic, see Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific*, pp.79-80.

text claimed that the Chinese residents had been “rescued from vice and suffering”, as the “American spirit” had “caught the populace”. Although the “pagoda-like roofs” preserved the “striking features of Chinese architecture”, the structures were nevertheless “modern American”.<sup>48</sup> Despite acknowledging modernisation efforts both in San Francisco’s Chinatown and in China itself, popular images of Chinatown before the fire persisted. The expositions at San Francisco (1915) and San Diego (1915-1916) featured reconstructions of San Francisco’s ‘old’ Chinatown on their midways. The concessions’ white owners contained the proximal threat of the resident Other through exhibitionary techniques that emphasised temporal distance and spatial confinement.

The controversial Chinese concession on the San Francisco midway reflected the pressures of competing local and international impulses. Raymond Rast has stated that in 1915, local white tourism entrepreneurs realised that the exposition presented the last opportunity to stage their version of an authentic Chinatown. Displaced as tour guides and struggling to provide tourists with popular, sensational images of Chinese deviance in the newly rebuilt Chinatown, several white entrepreneurs – including theatre man Sidney Grauman – built the Chinese Pagoda and Village at the exposition, which included a feature named Underground Chinatown.<sup>49</sup> Unlike the Chinese-controlled concession at the San Francisco fair (1894), Underground Chinatown drew upon sensational images of opium dens, prostitutes, slave traffickers, and an underground labyrinth of passages. Large-scale Chinese immigration –

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<sup>48</sup> *Standard Guide to San Francisco and the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (San Francisco: North American Press Association, 1913).

<sup>49</sup> Sidney Grauman went on to build the well-known Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles in 1926.  
Rast, ‘The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco’s Chinatown’, pp.55-56.

particularly in California – undermined constructions of Chinese Otherness that depended solely on distance, which precipitated the construction of alternative stereotypes of the resident alien.<sup>50</sup> Advertisements for Underground Chinatown evoked the city’s past, and claimed to be a “Recollection of Old San Francisco Before the Earthquake and Fire” [see Figure 4.5]. Drawing upon exhibitionary techniques used to display Native American savagery, the exhibit established a clear temporal distance between ‘old’ Chinatown and the present. This strategy confined threatening narratives of Chinatown life to the past, and staged the concession as a recollection of the old as opposed to a replication of the new, post-earthquake enclave.

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<sup>50</sup> Lee, *Oriental*, p.28.

**Figure 4.5. Newspaper advertisement for the Chinese concession at the San Francisco fair (1915).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***San Francisco Chronicle, 17 March 1915.***

Chinese people both in San Francisco and China objected to the exhibitors' decision to stage San Francisco's Chinese past. Describing the exhibit as a "chamber of horrors", which gave visitors "awful visual warnings of the fate of the opium smoker and the drug fiend", the fair's official historian – Frank Morton Todd – noted its short-lived tenure, as the Chinese Commissioner-

General “objected to the name”.<sup>51</sup> Abigail Markwyn has described the well-organised letter writing campaign by the Chinese Six Companies, Chinese ministers and student leaders, and white missionaries, which reflected concerns that the concession had the power to racialise the community and incite anti-Chinese sentiment. The exposition President, Charles Moore, responded to the campaign and closed the concession when Chen Chi, the official Chinese commissioner to the fair, stated his government’s displeasure and argued that countries should not be judged by the lowest elements of their evolutionary past.<sup>52</sup> The exposition management’s response to the complaints demonstrates the tension between local and international impulses within the world’s fair site. While Underground Chinatown reflected popular images and expectations at local level, it threatened America’s diplomatic and commercial relations with China.

The story of the Underground Chinatown concession did not end with China’s official complaints. In June, a local newspaper reported that a new exhibit was opening on the midway, named Underground Slumming. Stating that the concession had formerly operated as Underground Chinatown, the article claimed that the promoters had “almost completely changed” the exhibit, which was constructed for the “sole purpose” of demonstrating the “folly of the use of drugs”. The article described “underground passages” and figures showing the “destroying effects of various prohibited drugs, morphine, cocaine

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<sup>51</sup> Frank M. Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, vol.2 (New York: Panama-Pacific International Co., 1921), p.358.

<sup>52</sup> Abigail M. Markwyn, *Empress San Francisco: The Pacific Rim, the Great West and California at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), pp.112-113.



and opium”.<sup>53</sup> This emphasis on Chinese destruction reflected the theatrical trope of the dead or dying Asian. James Moy has argued that this exhibitionary device emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as the ‘yellow peril’ narrative rendered comical portrayals of ‘Asianness’ insufficient.<sup>54</sup> Apart from the change of name, much of the concession remained the same. Underground Slumming recycled the same markers of Chinese deviance that had been used in Underground Chinatown and were well established in Chinatown literature, therefore retaining the association between the concession and the city’s Chinese residents. Despite removing explicit national and racial associations, the evocation of underground passages and opium use perpetuated the racialisation of Chinese deviance, and the term ‘slumming’ referenced the popular term for a well-known pastime in which white Americans visited non-white urban enclaves.<sup>55</sup> As Raymond Rast has noted, the image of underground passages represented white San Franciscans’ spatialised fears of Chinese immigrants.<sup>56</sup> Underground Slumming exploited those fears, yet provided visitors a safe space within which to confront them. Framing the Underground Slumming concession as an educational demonstration of the effects of opium use rendered the racialised opium threat safe and contained within the exhibit.

The Chinese concession at the San Diego fair (1915-1916) followed a similar trajectory. Opening several weeks before the San Francisco fair, and running alongside it in 1915, the Chinese concession at San Diego was also called Underground Chinatown. Promotional exposition texts described the

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<sup>53</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 June 1915.

<sup>54</sup> Moy, *Marginal Sights*, p.83.

<sup>55</sup> Lee, *Oriental: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, p.125; Markwyn, *Empress San Francisco*, p.114.

<sup>56</sup> Rast, ‘The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco’s Chinatown’, pp.35-36.

concession in similar terms to the exhibit at San Francisco. One magazine article promised that the “mysteries of dopy Underground China” would exercise their “shuddery lure”, and a local newspaper emphasised temporal distance, stating that the concession was “not at all the Chinatown of today, but that of yesterday”.<sup>57</sup> The local press stated that the concession’s manager, Art Phillips, was doing “great work in showing the evils of the Chinatown section of some of the larger cities”, as the “lecture he gives with the show is particularly instructive”.<sup>58</sup> Confining the evils of opium use to the past and to the bounded enclave of Chinatown framed the Chinese population as the sole source of vice in the nation’s big cities. As both Californian cities sought to present themselves nationally and internationally as civilised, modern societies at their world’s fairs, it was beneficial to depict drug use as a problem confined to the past and to one racial and spatial element of the city: Chinatown. As Sadiya Qureshi has stated, concession owners played a significant role in mediating the kinds of knowledge produced at exhibitions, and accompanying lectures were an effective way to do this.<sup>59</sup> Phillips’ lectures on the evils of Chinatown assured visitors that white intervention had rendered both the world’s fair concession and the real Chinatowns of big cities safe for white observation.

San Diego’s Underground Chinatown met a similar fate to its San Francisco counterpart. Newspaper articles in March 1916 noted the opening of a new attraction on the same site, named Underground World. Eager to claim that the new exhibit was unrelated to the old, despite referencing the continuity

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<sup>57</sup> Walter V. Woehlke, ‘Staging the Big Show: An Inside Story of What is Going on Behind the Scenes at the Panama-California Exposition at San Diego’, *Sunset*, 33.2 (1914), p.340; *San Diego Union*, 13 June 1915.

<sup>58</sup> *San Diego Union*, 28 February 1915.

<sup>59</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p.11.

in name and location, newspaper articles promised performances of drug use and of police “making a raid on an opium den”, which would show the “life of the ‘submerged tenth,’ so rapidly becoming a past issue through the limelight of public disapproval and reform”.<sup>60</sup> Several weeks later, the superficial assertions of difference ceased, as the press reported that the concession’s new manager had “secured the services of an oriental, Lee Chong, the only Chinese dramatic actor in this country”.<sup>61</sup> Although making it clear that Chong was a professional actor, his American residence linked him to the deviant Chinatown of the popular imagination, which was further cemented in his participation in a live performance about opium use. That San Diego fair organisers decided to obscure the Chinese elements of the midway concession – if only superficially and temporarily – in 1916, is demonstrative of the exposition’s transformation from a regional to an international event, and the need to maintain diplomatic relations with China. The Chinatowns at the two fairs represented a “contained imaginary terra incognita”, that was not China and definitely not America.<sup>62</sup> Exhibitionary techniques including temporal divisions between ‘old’ and ‘new’ China and Chinatown, and the spatial containment of the more threatening popular elements of the enclave, allowed exposition organisers to negotiate local and international tensions, and permitted white exhibitors and mediators to construct popular and profitable spectacles of Chinese difference and inferiority.

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<sup>60</sup> *San Diego Union*, 25 March 1916; *San Diego Union*, 16 March 1916.

<sup>61</sup> *San Diego Union*, 2 April 1916.

<sup>62</sup> Moy, *Marginal Sights*, p.67.

### **'Informal Diplomacy': Negotiating Japanese Progress**

The flexible dual image of Japanese modernity and tradition allowed the West Coast exhibitors to negotiate tensions between local and international Japanese-American relations, and to mediate concerns about Japan's position on the world stage. As a significant international competitor and trading partner, Japan afforded greater diplomatic attention at the fairs than any other non-white population, and superficial images of friendship between exposition officials and Japanese dignitaries provided an alternative vision to the concessions on the midway. Yet exhibitors and mediators underpinned displays of both Japanese modernity and tradition with the same racialisation strategies, which depicted the population as subservient, dependent, and inferior to their benevolent white American neighbours. On the midway, exhibitionary techniques framed the Japanese performers in paternalistic and feminine terms, and trivialised Japanese culture in order to diminish the nation's power and define the limits of its progress. Similar strategies underpinned the exposition's diplomatic relations with Japanese delegates, which functioned to maintain a racialised hierarchy of power, and to obscure threatening narratives of racial warfare.

#### ***Staging Japanese Subordination***

Japan's ascendance on the world stage, and in particular on the Pacific stage, disrupted hierarchical understandings of white American supremacy and non-white inferiority. Although world's fair organisers and exhibitors incorporated images of Japanese progress, they also drew upon stereotypes of Japanese tradition in order to negotiate Japan's disruption of existing racial and

international hierarchies. Fair organisers selected concessions that depicted Japanese subservience and dependence, and exposition texts framed the displays in paternalistic and feminine terms to emphasise the population's supposedly subordinate status. The Japanese concession at the San Francisco fair (1894) was owned by Australian businessman, George Turner Marsh, and featured a theatre, juggling performances, and refreshments served by Japanese women in kimonos.<sup>63</sup> Emphasising the exhibit's beauty, a souvenir guidebook stated:

To the mind of the average American there is an indefinable something in the peculiar style of Japanese architecture that is suggestive of all sorts of mysteries, to say nothing of idols and heathen rites that, according to popular belief, are part and parcel of the home life of the 'little brown men'.<sup>64</sup>

Framing the nation's architecture and beliefs as strange and un-American, the guidebook racialised the Japanese population as 'brown', and framed them as subordinate through the paternalistic assertion that they were 'little' men. Foreshadowing the language of empire that framed Filipinos as 'little brown brothers', this racialisation subordinated the Japanese to a superior white America that was positioned as a civilising force that could uplift the lesser and 'littler' race.<sup>65</sup> Although the relationship between America and Japan differed to the imperial rule in the Philippines, framing Japan and its population as subordinate functioned to hierarchise international relationships in the Pacific

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<sup>63</sup> George Turner Marsh was fascinated with Japanese culture, and opened San Francisco's first shop for the sale of Asian arts and crafts. Arthur Chandler and Marvin Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair: The Story of the California Midwinter International Exposition, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, 1894* (San Francisco: Pogo Press, 1993), p.42.

<sup>64</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes.*

<sup>65</sup> Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p.200.

region, and to obscure the disruptive elements of Japan's progress and modernity.

At the Portland fair (1905), exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies framed the Japanese performers as subservient and dependent in order to contain the emergent 'yellow peril' narrative. Just days before the fair opened, Japan achieved a significant naval victory against Russia in the Tsushima strait.<sup>66</sup> The Japanese concession – named Fair Japan – was owned by Japanese businessman, Yumeto Kushibiki, who was well known for his displays of Japanese culture at world's fairs and other entertainment venues. Kushibiki was notorious for featuring lower class spectacles of Japan such as wrestling displays, and despite his success in distilling Japanese stereotypes in America, his exhibits courted controversy in Japan for depicting unrepresentative images of the nation abroad.<sup>67</sup> The exposition's contract with Kushibiki reflected the role exposition organisers played in negotiating international power relations. A clause in the contract stated:

the concessionaire agrees that he will not employ in connection with the concession herein contemplated any person, or give any entertainment, or produce any feature of Japan that would in any way cast ridicule either upon the inhabitants or institutions of said country; but that on the contrary this concession shall be so constructed and operated as to faithfully represent the Japanese people in a dignified and proper manner.

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<sup>66</sup> Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific*, pp.67-68. See also Francis Gieringer, "'Born into the Purple": American Perceptions of the Japanese at the Lewis and Clark Centennial and the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition' (unpublished undergraduate thesis, Georgetown University, 2011).

<sup>67</sup> Hsuan Tsen, 'Spectacles of Authenticity: The Emergence of Transnational Entertainments in Japan and America, 1880-1905' (unpublished PhD thesis, Stanford University, 2011), pp.125-126; Yukari Yoshihara, 'Kawakami Otojiro's Trip to the West and Taiwan at the Turn of the Twentieth Century', in Steve Clark and Paul Smethurst (eds.), *Asian Crossings: Travel Writing on China, Japan and Southeast Asia* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2008), pp.151-152.

Yet elsewhere in the contract, exposition managers clearly defined their understanding of “a true and representative picture of Japanese life”. The document outlined the features it wished Kushibiki to bring, including a “typical Japanese theatre” with “dancing by Japanese women, Japanese vaudeville, Japanese acrobatic performances”, and noted that all entertainments “shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Concessions”.<sup>68</sup> Despite the placatory contract clause, fair organisers nevertheless employed the controversial Kushibiki, and retained control over the representation of Japanese life.

The collaborative production of Japanese tradition on the Portland midway obscured the more dangerous elements of Japanese modernisation. The Japanese government had refused to participate officially at Portland due to the poor treatment of Asian exhibitors at the St Louis fair (1904), and apart from a small privately-owned exhibit of Japanese products in the Oriental Exhibits Building, the concession on the midway was the only representation of Japan at the fair.<sup>69</sup> The concession featured costumed geishas as attendants. The figure of the beautiful and servile geisha featured strongly in American popular images of Japan, and exposition texts enthused about the attractive, “Golden-skinned geisha girls” who would “flutter about like creatures from out a fairy book”.<sup>70</sup> As thoroughly unmodern figures, geishas functioned as a counterpoint

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<sup>68</sup> Contract between Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition and Yumeto Kushibiki, in folder 6, box 37, Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair Records, 1894-1933, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society].

<sup>69</sup> Robert Rydell, ‘Visions of Empire: International Expositions in Portland and Seattle, 1905-1909’, *Pacific Historical Review*, 52.1 (1983), pp.59-60.

<sup>70</sup> Union Pacific, *Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition* (n.p.,n.d.), p.60, in folder 10, box 100, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society; Olin D. Wheeler, *The Lewis and Clark Exposition* (St Paul: Northern Pacific Railway, 1905), pp.44-45; Robert A. Reid, *Sights and Scenes at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition; Very Completely Illustrating the Fair* (1905), in folder 9, box 101, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society.

to images of Japanese progress.<sup>71</sup> Serving visitors tea and rice cakes, the women worked against the backdrop of a finely manicured Japanese garden, and were adorned in decorated kimonos [see Figure 4.6]. As Naoko Shibusawa has argued in the post-Second World War context, the figure of the geisha functioned to hierarchise Japan's position in relation to America, as portraying Japan as submissive and female naturalised narratives of Japanese subordination.<sup>72</sup> This hierarchical relationship was further visualised in the placement of an American flag at the entrance to Fair Japan [see Figure 4.7].<sup>73</sup> Echoing imperial narratives of American supremacy and possession, the framework of Japanese femininity evoked European colonial images of 'Oriental' penetrability, and the placement of the flag demonstrated the effects of America's imperialist perspective on the framing of Asian populations.<sup>74</sup> Passing under the American flag as they entered Fair Japan to consume its Japanese objects and encounters, visitors enacted the nation's desire for economic imperialism in Asia.

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<sup>71</sup> Lisa K. Langlois, 'Japan – Modern, Ancient, and Gendered at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair', in T.J. Boisseau and Abigail M. Markwyn (eds.), *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010), p.71.

<sup>72</sup> Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Ally* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp.5-6.

<sup>73</sup> For more on the display of the Japanese at the Portland fair, see Emily J. Trafford, "'Hitting the Trail": Live Displays of Native American, Filipino, and Japanese People at the Portland World's Fair', *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 116.2 (2015), pp.158-195.

<sup>74</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, rev edn (London: Penguin, 1985), p.206; Moy, *Marginal Sights*, p.8.



**Figure 4.6. Fair Japan concession at the Portland fair (1905).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Photo File 652-I.30, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.**

**Figure 4.7. Entrance to the Fair Japan exhibit at the Portland fair (1905).**

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**Photo File 652-I.29, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.**

At the San Francisco fair (1915), exhibitors displayed Japanese women in servile positions in order to assuage concerns about Japan's increasing dominance on the Pacific stage. The *Exhibitors Weekly Bulletin* noted the arrival of a "bevy of Japanese girls", who were the "belles of Tokyo" and had been selected from the 300 most beautiful girls in the Japanese city. Stating that the girls were all high school graduates that spoke English "with considerable fluency", the report noted that they would be on hand to serve visitors tea in the

Japanese tearoom.<sup>75</sup> Framing Japanese progress in terms of Americanisation in education and language, the report made it clear that the girls' role was to serve and entertain fair visitors.<sup>76</sup> Echoing the narratives of hospitality and consent that framed Hawaiian female performers, the display of Japanese women assured American visitors of the nation's inferiority in racialised, gendered, and imperial terms. Representing Japan through the figures of the 'little brown man', the feminine geisha, and the servile 'belle' obscured the nation's growing military power, and bolstered America's racial and national hierarchisation of the Pacific region.

***'Yankees of the Far East': Welcoming Japanese Dignitaries***

The West Coast world's fairs hosted government officials and business representatives from various nations, and dignitaries from Japan were particularly visible in press reports and exposition texts. Japan's emergent international status ensured that representations of Japanese dignitaries were more positive than of Native American and Filipino dignitaries, and differed to the relationship with Hawaiian commissioners who were representatives of the islands' white elite. By inviting non-white foreign dignitaries, exposition organisers and exhibitors engaged in a form of informal diplomacy, and the staging of these visits represented an alternative vision of live, non-white

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<sup>75</sup> 'Japanese Girls Here to Grace Pavilion', *Exhibitors Weekly Bulletin*, 4.3 (1915), p.1.

The *Exhibitors Weekly Bulletin* was a publication distributed between the owners and operators of the fair's various exhibits.

<sup>76</sup> Americans and Europeans were recruited and brought to Japan during its period of reform to advise on Western approaches to education, and Japanese students were sent to America and Europe to observe their education systems.

Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific*, p.6.

presence to the explicitly racialised performances on the midways.<sup>77</sup> Yet racial frameworks and exhibitionary techniques that emphasised subordination and dependence underpinned the friendly relations between exposition organisers and Japanese dignitaries, and mediated narratives of Japanese modernity and progress.

A Japanese delegation visited the San Francisco fair (1894), and attended the Australian-owned Japanese concession on the midway. The concession owner had imported several manpowered passenger carts – known as ‘jinrickshas’ – from Japan, in order to offer visitors a form of transportation around the fair grounds.<sup>78</sup> A souvenir guidebook lamented that although the Japanese performers made use of their “national carriage” at a pageant, “no fellow-countryman of theirs was allowed to walk between the shafts of the vehicles”, as the “feeling of opposition to the introduction of man-power from Japan was so great that none except white men could be induced to do the work”.<sup>79</sup> Midwinter Fair historians claim that the Japanese delegation objected to the exposition’s employment of Japanese performers in this capacity, regarding the menial task as degrading to the nation’s honour. Fair organisers responded to the delegates’ complaint by hiring American and German men, and providing them with costumes and face paint to assume the look of a Japanese performer.<sup>80</sup> The employment of white men at the concession resulted in a temporary inversion of the visitor/performer, white/non-white binary on the midway; a binary that Jane Desmond has identified as imperative in

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<sup>77</sup> Janet M. Davis, *The Circus Age: Culture and Society Under the American Big Top* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), p.194.

<sup>78</sup> There are various spellings of ‘jinricksha’ in exposition texts. The two-wheeled, human-powered cart was synonymous with Asia in the American imagination.

<sup>79</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes*.

<sup>80</sup> Chandler and Nathan, *The Fantastic Fair*, pp.65-66.

establishing difference instead of a “bond of sameness”.<sup>81</sup> In a souvenir photograph album, an image depicted a man who did not appear to be Japanese, pulling a heavily decorated jinricksha containing a Japanese woman [see Figure 4.8]. Despite an apparent role-reversal and victory for the Japanese delegation, this moment of disruption was undermined by the continued insistence that a jinricksha, a costume, and a painted, non-white face could signify a nation and its population. Although the Japanese delegates objected to the exhibitionary technique of framing Japanese performers as subservient, fair organisers retained the overall message that such positions were only appropriate for employees that at least looked Japanese.

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<sup>81</sup> Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.xvi.

**Figure 4.8. Jinricksha attraction at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Jinrikisha, Midwinter Fair, 1894', Souvenir of the California Midwinter International Exposition, BANC PIC 1976.029--ffALB, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.**

Maintaining good relations with Japanese dignitaries at the fairs was especially important to local commercial interests, which sought to establish stronger trading ties between the West Coast cities and Japan. Yet this superficial respect did not engender frameworks of racial equality. The official photographer of the Seattle fair (1909), Frank H. Nowell, captured images of the Japanese trade commission alongside fair officials, with both groups dressed in the same formal attire [see Figure 4.9]. Presenting a stark contrast to the

costumed geishas in kimonos on the midway, the photographs offered a clear demonstration of Japanese modernity. Yet an article in the official publication of Seattle's Chamber of Commerce framed the relationship between fair officials and the Japanese dignitaries in unequal terms, undermining the apparent bond of sameness in the photographs. Although acknowledging Japan's recent progress and noting that the Japanese would "prove missionaries of commerce while here, for there is much that America can learn from these Yankees of the Far East", the article noted that the visit was primarily for the Japanese to observe American industry. Despite conferring the term 'Yankee' to the Japanese delegates, the magazine went on to quote a speech made by an exposition official to the delegation, in which he described America as Japan's "mentor".<sup>82</sup> As Shelley Sang-Hee Lee has noted, America's Pacific trade interests inspired local businessmen and required exposition officials to treat Japan with respect, yet this respect did not translate into parity.<sup>83</sup> Instead, exposition and commercial texts diminished Japanese progress and framed the nation's successes as the product of white American benevolence.

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<sup>82</sup> E.P. Blaine, a member of the exposition's Exhibits and Privileges Committee, made the speech. 'Seattle Opens Doors of Country to Japanese Commissioners', *Pacific Northwest Commerce*, 1.4 (1909), pp.11-12, p.16.

<sup>83</sup> Shelley Sang-Hee Lee, 'Gateway to the Orient: Japan and Seattle's Nikkei Community at the AYP', *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 101.3-4 (2010), p.156, pp.159-60

**Figure 4.9. Japanese dignitaries and exposition officials at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Japanese Trade Commission on tour', Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Photograph Collection, PH Coll 792, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collection Division.**

Although the staging of official visits offered an alternative vision of non-white progress, they were superficial and transient moments that primarily reflected the role of fair organisers in negotiating tensions between local and international Japanese-American relations. The Seattle fair occurred during a period of intense anti-Japanese hysteria on the Pacific Coast, and opened just one year after the first International Convention of the Asiatic Exclusion League



of North America, which Seattle itself had hosted.<sup>84</sup> Despite strong anti-Japanese sentiment in the local area, the Chamber of Commerce's report on the commissioners' visit claimed that it was noteworthy that the "distinguished guests" had been received with "marked consideration by high and low, tending to indicate the absence of harsh feelings against the people from across the Pacific".<sup>85</sup> This concealment of local sentiment reflects Joe Feagin's acknowledgement that operating within the white racial frame includes knowledge of how and where it is appropriate to deploy it. With important diplomatic and commercial relations in the balance, the Seattle world's fair grounds became a "frontstage" setting where explicitly racialised views had to be deployed selectively.<sup>86</sup> Welcoming Japanese delegates allowed fair organisers to present a temporary image of Japanese progress and modernity that assuaged diplomatic and commercial concerns. Yet mediating the friendly relationship in racially hierarchical terms and through the lens of Japanese dependence, ensured that the visit did not undermine or contradict the image of Japanese subservience and inferiority elsewhere.

### ***Trivialising Japanese Culture***

While the presence of Japanese dignitaries impacted upon official proceedings, exhibitors on the midway continued to stage displays that framed Japanese people as racially inferior. At the twin Californian fairs (San Francisco, 1915, and San Diego, 1915-1916), exhibitors sought to negotiate the rising 'yellow peril' narrative in the context of the First World War, as Japan extended its

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<sup>84</sup> Rydell, 'Visions of Empire', p.63.

<sup>85</sup> 'Seattle Opens Doors of Country to Japanese Commissioners', p.12.

<sup>86</sup> Joe R. Feagin, *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp.126-127.

territory in the Pacific and expanded its role on the world stage.<sup>87</sup> The war in Europe influenced promotional exposition texts, and provided a big picture narrative of national competition and racial evolution. One magazine article described the European war and the peaceful aims of the exposition as representative of the contrast between the “chief present interests of the Old and of the New World”.<sup>88</sup> Echoing this sentiment, an advertisement for both fairs stated, “there is no more New World, no more west for further migrations, but only the old east which we are up against, it is clear that the all-time march of civilization from east to west is at an end”. It went on to claim that the latest conquest of the Pacific was the “true and final conquest”, intellectual in form as opposed to industrial, which featured the “awakening” of a “slumbering humanity” instead of the “obliteration of indigenous civilizations”, in order to usher in the “final evolution of the race”.<sup>89</sup> Framing America’s interventions in the Pacific in racial terms, and extending narratives of Manifest Destiny and Native American conquest into the Pacific, the advertisement drew upon and adapted the images of racial competition that infused popular ‘yellow peril’ narratives.

The Japanese concession at the San Francisco fair (1915) was managed by Japanese businessmen and frequent concession owner, Yumeto Kushibiki. Marking a significant departure from the docile image of the geisha at Portland (1905), the concession at San Francisco emphasised spectacle and entertainment. A large Buddha statue oversaw the Japan Beautiful exhibit,

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<sup>87</sup> Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific*, pp.81-86.

<sup>88</sup> ‘The San Francisco Fair’, *The Literary Digest*, 50.11 (1915), p.533

<sup>89</sup> ‘The Panama Canal, San Francisco Exposition, San Diego Exposition’, in folder 1, box 14, Expositions and Fairs Collection, 344, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

which featured a complex of structures including a cafe and bazaar [see Figure 4.10]. Exposition guidebooks described the concession's "Japanese games and entertainments", with its "famous wrestlers" and demonstrations of the "Japanese art of Ji-jitsu [sic]", which the local press described as an authentic and "exact" reproduction of the martial art.<sup>90</sup> Describing the exhibit's features as authentically Japanese transformed the benign entertainments into spectacles of racial and national difference, and presented aspects of Japanese culture as racialised, bodily features.<sup>91</sup> While exposition and state officials welcomed Japanese dignitaries elsewhere, the midway concession drew large numbers of visitors, and Kushibiki claimed to have entertained 30,000 visitors each day.<sup>92</sup> The popularity of this trivialised depiction of Japan may have been the result of press reports on the erosion of U.S.-Japanese relations. An article in *Sunset* magazine on Japan's role in the First World War noted that relations between America and Japan had become "strained", and that there was a "popular feeling that a Japanese attack is possible". Another article in the same issue, entitled 'Can the Pacific Coast Be Made Secure Against Invasion?', discussed the "defenceless condition" of America's West Coast, that was giving its "thoughtful citizens serious concern".<sup>93</sup> The trivialisation of Japanese culture in the San Francisco concession functioned to depoliticise the Japanese presence at the

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<sup>90</sup> *Panama-Pacific International Exposition 1915 Souvenir Guide* (San Francisco: The Souvenir Guide Publishers, 1915), p.16; *Guide to the Joy Zone* (San Francisco, 1915); *San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 January 1915.

<sup>91</sup> Abigail Markwyn, 'Economic Partner and Exotic Other: China and Japan at San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition', *Western Historical Quarterly*, 39.4 (2008), p.464; Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.xv.

<sup>92</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 March 1915.

<sup>93</sup> 'Luring Japan into Europe', *Sunset*, 34.2 (1915), p.240; Holden A. Evans, 'Can the Pacific Coast Be Made Secure Against Invasion?', *Sunset*, 34.2 (1915), p.245.

fair, and diminish the nation's emergent role on the international stage.<sup>94</sup> In particular, the trivialisation of Japanese martial arts countered 'yellow peril' narratives of mechanised military capability and possible invasion.

**Figure 4.10. Japan Beautiful concession at the San Francisco fair (1915).**

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<sup>94</sup> Sigrid Deutschlander and Leslie J. Miller, 'Politicizing Aboriginal Cultural Tourism: The Discourse of Primitivism in the Tourist Encounter', *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 40.1 (2003), p.39.

At the San Diego fair (1915-1916), exhibitors drew upon similar exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies that had framed the Chinese population in successive reconstructions of San Francisco's 'old' Chinatown. Writing of a Japanese fete, the local press promised visitors that they would see the "combination of old and new", with "memories of old Japan" in concert with the "new regime" that was "Americanizing more and more everyday".<sup>95</sup> Framing Japanese progress as a result of American intervention, and emphasising the tradition of 'old' Japan, the newspaper article contained the image of Japan as a powerful and modern international competitor, and instead framed the nation as a quaint beneficiary of increased diplomacy. The concession, named Streets of Joy, was owned by the Kyosan Kai Company of Japan, and was constructed to resemble a provincial Japanese town in the period prior to the Meiji Restoration and the nation's period of modernisation. The exhibit featured a restaurant, acrobatic performances, gambling games, and Japanese musical performances.<sup>96</sup> The emphasis on 'old' Japan in the press obscured narratives of progress and national competition, and trivialised understandings of Japanese tradition by presenting games and performances as representative displays of inherent racial and national traits.

Although the Japanese exhibitors sought to promote popular images of Japanese tradition, the local press mediated the display to frame the nation as a benign international Other. One newspaper wrote of an upcoming "tug of war between American and Japanese teams", and a series of national competitions

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<sup>95</sup> *San Diego Union*, 29 July 1915.

<sup>96</sup> Richard W. Amero, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition* (Charleston: The History Press, 2013), p.70-71.

including a “spoon and chopstick race”.<sup>97</sup> While the tug of war competition represented a direct demonstration of comparative strength, the spoon and chopstick race pitted the two nations’ cultural customs in contest. It is unclear whether this competition materialised, yet the newspaper report contributed to the staging of a distinction between America and Japan, and functioned to racialise cultural customs, framing chopsticks as synonymous with Japanese culture, non-whiteness, and thus inferiority.<sup>98</sup> This cultural and racial division emphasised the limits of Japanese progress and Americanisation, positioning the nation as an unthreatening and inferior foreign competitor rather than an equal partner. Framing Japanese performers, dignitaries, and culture as subordinate and trivial, allowed exhibitors and mediators to perpetuate popular white understandings of racial and national hierarchies in the Pacific region.

### **‘The Chinese and Their Cousins, the Japanese’:**

#### **Exhibiting the ‘Orient’**

Although displayed separately, and with different local and international relations underpinning the concessions, exhibitors deployed similar racialisation strategies and exhibitionary techniques in the display of Chinese and Japanese people, and exposition texts drew connections between the two Asian nations. Pointing to the sustained contradiction within images of Asian tradition and progress, and their dual status as foreign and domestic Others, this section examines the displays of Chinese and Japanese craft production, and

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<sup>97</sup> *San Diego Union*, 31 July 1915.

<sup>98</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, pp.xv-xvi.

the spectacle of Chinese and Japanese parades. I argue that the fascination with the potential market in Asia led exposition organisers to frame displays of Chinese and Japanese craft production as object lessons on 'Asian' consumption habits. The parades and pageants functioned as instructive spectacles about the permanent foreignness of the two populations. These lessons helped to clarify the position of Chinese and Japanese peoples as alien intruders on American soil, yet valued trading partners abroad. This exhibitionary framework positioned the two populations as permanently excluded from the new imagined community of the American Pacific.

***'Oriental' Objects: Asian Populations as Producers and Consumers***

The long held fascination with the Chinese market peaked in the closing decade of the nineteenth century. With the frontier closed, several industrial depressions causing fears of overproduction and greater antagonism towards foreign workers, and intense international competition for influence in the Pacific region, China and other Asian nations became central to America's commercial policies.<sup>99</sup> In the first decades of the twentieth century, trade relationships with Japan were vital to the economies of America's Pacific port cities, and world's fair organisers – particularly in the Pacific Northwest – sought to use the expositions as vehicles for promoting further trade with Asia, and to position their host cities as the premier gateways to the imagined 'Orient'.<sup>100</sup> The exhibit buildings at world's fairs housed displays of America's industrial products and processes, and frequently included foreign products as

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<sup>99</sup> Financial 'panics' in 1873 and 1893 caused particular alarm. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, p.13, pp.26-29.

<sup>100</sup> Sang-Hee Lee, 'Gateway to the Orient', p.155.

objects of comparison and curiosity. On the midways, live demonstrations of craft production were central to the programs of various concessions, and exhibitors portrayed these displays as authentic spectacles of national and racial abilities and traits. While exhibitors framed such demonstrations as proof of the Native American population's unsuitability for modern citizenship, and of the economic hierarchies inherent in imperial relationships, there was an obvious tension between the framing of Chinese and Japanese performers as producers of 'Oriental' curiosities and the desire for the two nations to be consumers of modern American goods. Exhibitors, fair organisers, and politicians mediated the display of Chinese and Japanese craft production, framing both the performers and the world's fair sites as lessons that would help to secure further trade with Asia.

Exhibitions of Chinese and Japanese traditional crafts were a popular feature on the world's fair midways. A souvenir from the San Francisco fair (1894) noted the elaborate design of the Chinese exhibit, stating that the concession's decorative features were of a quality "surpassing anything done by Caucasian artists", and were representative of a "rare skill which is so common with the Chinese and their cousins, the Japanese".<sup>101</sup> This racialisation of craft production framed the Chinese and Japanese producers as unmodern, and reflected unilineal understandings of evolution that regarded hand-produced crafts as evidence of an earlier stage of human development.<sup>102</sup> Such displays functioned as spectacles of Chinese and Japanese inferiority, and assuaged fears

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<sup>101</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes.*

<sup>102</sup> See Frank H. Cushing, 'Manual Concepts: A Study of the Influence of Hand-Usage on Culture-Growth', *American Anthropologist*, 5.4 (1892), pp.289-318.

Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), p.16, pp.151-152.



that the two immigrant groups were a threat to American workers by obscuring the realities of Asian labour in America, and the role of Asian immigrants in the modern industrial machine.<sup>103</sup> In addition, the aesthetic features of the crafts helped to domesticate Asia and promote possession of the region, which bolstered America's economically imperialist endeavours in the Pacific.<sup>104</sup> The identification of the Chinese and Japanese as racial cousins reflected the comparative and relative framing of the midway displays, and the tendency to racialise regional populations using familial terms. Exhibitors also framed Chinese and Japanese displays of craft production as an opportunity to learn about the populations' racial traits and habits. The *Exhibitors Weekly Bulletin* at the San Francisco fair (1915) stated that the various displays of Chinese products represented an "excellent opportunity" for the "thousands of persons whose days have been too full to permit a study of the lives, habits and peculiarities of the people of the Orient". Paraphrasing the Bible, the bulletin noted, "By the fruits of his labours shall a man be known".<sup>105</sup> Demonstrations of Chinese and Japanese craft production therefore functioned on several levels, and were framed as object lessons of national and racial traits.

Depicting the Chinese and Japanese performers as unmodern producers of traditional crafts simultaneously framed them as unlikely consumers of American goods. Such depictions – particularly in the case of the Chinese, who were behind Japan in their modernisation reforms – framed the foreign population as unreceptive to Western products and therefore a barrier to

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<sup>103</sup> Chinese immigrants in particular contributed to the construction of America's Western railroads.

For more on the contradictory representations of Asian labour, see Lye, *America's Asia*.

<sup>104</sup> David Brody, *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), p.7, p.37.

<sup>105</sup> 'Chinese Exhibits Are Attractive', *Exhibitors Weekly Bulletin*, 5.1 (1915), p.4.

American progress and profit.<sup>106</sup> Against the backdrop of tension between Chinese and American merchants over immigration restriction, which resulted in a Chinese boycott of American goods in 1905, Oregonian Representative Binger Hermann gave a speech to Congress about funding for the Portland fair (1905). Pointing to the importance of the Pacific region to America's future, Hermann claimed that the more America introduced its "modern improvements" and "western ideas" to the East, the greater the demand would be for American products in Asia. Citing Japan as a model for this reinvention of the East, Hermann pointed to the nation's "progress", which he claimed had begun as a consequence of its "commingling with the western nations", and stated that the world's fair at Portland would function as an "object lesson" that would stimulate trade in Asia.<sup>107</sup> A Seattle-based magazine echoed this sentiment in relation to the Seattle fair (1909), stating that the Pacific region contained a population of 100 million people, most of which were untouched by American commerce. The article warned, "Today these people are wrapped in the superstitions and customs of ancient centuries", only knowing "what has been handed down to them". Although Japan had "awakened", China was just awakening, and "looking for the good things of the present day".<sup>108</sup> Framing Japan as a model for China and other nations in the Pacific region, politicians and journalists emphasised the significance of the world's fair site in creating Asian consumers.

Eager to stimulate Pacific trade, various key actors at the West Coast fairs framed the Chinese and Japanese displays as opportunities for commercial

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<sup>106</sup> Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, pp.36-37.

<sup>107</sup> Speech of Hon. Binger Hermann, of Oregon, in the House of Representatives of the United States, Friday, March 4, 1904 (Washington, 1904), PAM 815 H42c, Oregon Historical Society,.

<sup>108</sup> 'The Alaska-Pacific-Yukon Exposition', *Wilhelm's Magazine: The Coast*, 12.6 (1906), p.290.

interests to learn about the consumption habits of the nations' populations. Two years before the Seattle fair (1909) began, Henry E. Reed – employed temporarily as the exposition director – wrote in a magazine:

The American people, principally through lack of knowledge of the customs and manner of living in the Orient, have tried to sell to the people across the Pacific the goods which would be excellently adapted to the needs of the inhabitants of Connecticut or Washington. How can we most easily study the habits and customs of a people? At a great international exposition, such as that to be held at Seattle in 1909 will be. The Orient will send its wares, its products, its people, and Americans may study them at first hand.<sup>109</sup>

An exposition guidebook broadened Reed's message and presented it to the public, claiming that the fair was predicated on the fact that "it is impossible to learn Asia by touring Europe, or know the wonders of Alaska by a trip to Palm Beach". Only Seattle could take on the task of "introducing the half of the world which is developed almost to the ultimate, to that other half which to all intents and purposes of trade, is developed not at all". For visitors to the fair, China's "languages, her natives, and their methods; their very process of thought may be studied at first hand".<sup>110</sup> The Portland and Seattle fairs featured various exhibits of craft production, including a Japanese bazaar with "native rug-making girls" and "typically Japanese" wares, and demonstrations of carving and embroidery by Chinese children.<sup>111</sup> Constructing a connection between spectacle, education, commerce, and race, exposition organisers transformed

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<sup>109</sup> Reed was the former Director of Exploitation at the Portland fair (1905), and resigned as Director of the Seattle fair in 1909.

Henry E. Reed, 'Exposition to Increase Pacific Trade', *The Coast*, 13.5 (1907), p.344.

<sup>110</sup> *The Exposition Beautiful* (Seattle: Seattle Publishing Company, n.d.), pp.1-5.

<sup>111</sup> Daniel C. Freeman to Frederick J. Mason, 15 August 1905, in folder 8, box 11, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society; Union Pacific, *Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition* (n.p.,n.d.), p.60, in folder 10, box 100, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society; *Seattle Star*, 19 June 1909.

the Pacific Northwest midways into object lessons about racial and national consumption habits.

By emphasising the importance of Asia to American trade in exhibitions of China and Japan, exhibitors and mediators helped to negotiate the tensions and contradictions between Asian production and consumption, tradition and modernity, spectacle and commerce. In a fictional work about two children's visit to the San Francisco fair (1915), the young characters noted of their "Chinese Visit" on the midway that the "Dear little almond-eyed Chinese girls" had surprised them by speaking excellent English. Expressing disappointment that the Chinese girls wore "American-made shoes with their pretty native costumes", their father informed them that the Chinese performers were "going to be American girls now", and that this was why the completion of the Panama Canal had been so important.<sup>112</sup> Competing desires for exhibitions of traditional spectacle and evidence of modern commercial partnerships complicated the portrayal of Chinese and Japanese peoples on the West Coast midways. As Shelley Sang-Hee Lee has argued, the West Coast host cities had to balance the inclusionary impulses of Pacific Rim internationalism and domestic pluralism in port cities, with the exclusionary impulses of racism towards immigrant workers.<sup>113</sup> Exhibitors therefore framed displays of Chinese and Japanese craft production as opportunities to see curious objects, and to observe and learn object lessons about the consumption habits of the producers.

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<sup>112</sup> Elizabeth Gordon, *What We Saw at Madame's World Fair, Being a Series of Letters from the Twins at the Panama Pacific International Exposition to their Cousins at Home* (San Francisco: Samuel Levinson, 1915), p.72.

<sup>113</sup> Sang-Hee Lee, 'Gateway to the Orient', pp.150-151.

***Parading 'Asian-ness'***

World's fairs regularly featured special days dedicated to American states, local counties, or foreign nations, and various pageants and parades celebrated important events abroad and at home. Although parades represented an important opportunity for immigrant populations to demonstrate civic, national, and ethnic pride, their presence on the world's fair grounds transformed the events into popular spectacles for the enjoyment of white visitors.<sup>114</sup> The scheduling of specific Chinese and Japanese days functioned to exclude local Asian residents from big picture narratives of American national celebration, and to limit portrayals of their identity on the world's fair grounds to spectacles of 'Asian-ness'. Newspapers in particular framed the local Asian participants as foreign in origin and nature. An article on the Japan day parade at the Seattle fair (1909) drew distinctions between the "people from the Land of the Scarlet Sun", and the "people from the Occident".<sup>115</sup> Despite including local Asian residents, such parades conversely functioned to solidify their status as "permanent outsiders".<sup>116</sup> Asian peoples may have been residents in America, but they were definitively not American.

At the San Francisco fair (1894), the Chinese day celebrations included the Chinese performers from the midway, yet the vast majority of the participants were local Chinese residents. Almost 38,000 people passed through the turnstiles to either witness or participate in the day's proceedings, and the

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<sup>114</sup> Markwyn, *Empress San Francisco*, p.97.

See also, Jürgen Heideking, Geneviève Fabre, and Kai Dreisbach (eds.), *Celebrating Ethnicity and Nation: American Festive Culture from the Revolution to the Early 20th Century* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2001).

<sup>115</sup> *Seattle Star*, 4 September 1909.

<sup>116</sup> Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), p.16.

*Morning Call* newspaper claimed, “at least a half of the Mongolian population was out for the holiday”, and the “work-a-day, ordinary Celestial” had gone out “in droves” and “arrived in batches”, to the “utter exclusion of ‘white folks’”. Emphasising the racial and national origins of the local Chinese population, the article drew clear divisions between San Francisco’s Chinese and white residents, and depicted the Chinese participants as alien pollutants that threatened the city’s white population in their presence and numbers.<sup>117</sup> The article went on to state that the celebrations were “thoroughly Chinese, and that alone was a sufficient guarantee for its being unique in all its phases”, with speeches “in Chinese” by a “prominent member of the Chinese colony”. The musical performances were by a “Chinese band”, and the article stated that while it “may have been harmony from a Chinese standpoint ... it was ear-splitting discord to one who might be accustomed to harmonious melody”.<sup>118</sup> The article’s clear racial and national divisions positioned the celebrations as an opportunity to observe the foreignness of the city’s Chinese residents. Emphasising, fetishising, and collocating Chinese difference reconstituted the population as “forever foreign”, despite their presence in America.<sup>119</sup>

Just days earlier, the newspaper had reported on a Japanese pageant, and had similarly emphasised its foreign features. The article described the event as “Like the Orient”, and “A Day and Night in Flowery Japan”. Stating that all of the “ingenuity of the Japanese had been called into requisition”, the article claimed that the pageant’s floats “bore the indefinable charm of the Flowery

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<sup>117</sup> Lee, *Orientalism*, pp.2-3.

Lee draws upon Mary Douglas’ concept of pollution. See Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Ark Paperbacks, 1966), p.54.

<sup>118</sup> *Morning Call*, 18 June 1894.

<sup>119</sup> Moy, *Marginal Sights*, p.63, p.71, p.81.

Kingdom” with designs that represented “Oriental allegories” and the “various phases of Oriental life”.<sup>120</sup> Emphasising the pageant’s ‘Oriental’ credentials, the newspaper article established a binary relationship between the Asian participants and their white American hosts. In demonstrating the life and phases of the ‘Orient’, the pageant equally assured visitors of what America was not.<sup>121</sup> By including the local immigrant population as participants, and leaving the confines of the midway to permeate the main fair grounds, parades and pageants foregrounded the inherent foreignness of Asian peoples resident in America. In participating in a parade, local Asian residents engaged in a spectacle of difference, and were thus caught up in what Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has described as the “special way that spectacle works”, with its clear separation of observer and performer, the primacy of the visual, and its aggrandising ethos. Human participation within a spectacle also functioned to encourage audiences not only to objectify the culture on display, but also to objectify the performers directly and to implicate them in this process.<sup>122</sup> As the Asian participants paraded their nation, race, and culture in spectacular form, white visitors observed pageants of ‘Mongolians’, ‘Celestials’, and ‘Orientals’, and absorbed a parade of ‘Asian-ness’ that obscured the participants’ resident American status. The Chinese and Japanese parades at the West Coast world’s fairs functioned as object lessons of the two populations’ ‘Oriental’ heritage, and their permanent exclusion from the new Pacifically-oriented American household.

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<sup>120</sup> *Morning Call*, 10 June 1894.

<sup>121</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, p.2.

<sup>122</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp.62-64, p.72.

### **Conclusions: 'Permanent Outsiders'**

This chapter has examined the negotiation of competing tensions in the display of Chinese and Japanese people at the West Coast world's fairs. It has pointed to the various exhibitors and mediators that sought to frame the two Asian populations as both foreign and domestic Others, and the need for fair organisers to act as agents of an informal diplomacy with Asian people at home and abroad. Utilising a range of exhibitionary techniques, such as emphasising temporal distance and spatial confinement, obscuring proximal threats, and mediating examples of non-white modernity through a lens of dependence and subordination, exhibitors maintained and perpetuated existing racial and national Pacific hierarchies in the face of rapid international change. Competing images of the foreign and domestic Other, and alternative images of progress, did not undermine one another, but instead addressed the various desires and arenas of racial encounter that white Americans associated with Chinese and Japanese people. The exhibits on the midway separately and comparatively framed the Chinese and Japanese performers – and by extension the local Asian population – as permanent outsiders. Alternatively exploiting or obscuring fears of immigration and invasion, the key actors at the West Coast fairs contributed to an image of the Asian figure as inherently alien to white America, and thus above all an international competitor, trading partner, and temporary domestic spectacle. In 1924, the Johnson-Reed Act initiated a strict set of quotas for immigration to the U.S., and provided for the permanent exclusion of those ineligible for American citizenship, and thus the exclusion of Asian peoples.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy*, pp.32-33.



This exclusionary policy remained in place until the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act.

This chapter is purposefully situated between those on the exhibition of Native Americans and on the display of imperial subjects in order to emphasise the unusual dual position of Chinese and Japanese people as both domestic and foreign Others, and how this status contributed to the comparative and relative racial framing on the midways. The exhibitors and mediators involved in the display of Chinese and Japanese people shared and shaped exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies used elsewhere. The Chinese concessions drew upon techniques of temporal distancing and spatial containment as used in Native American displays. The subordination of the Japanese performers shaped exhibitions of Filipinos, and the figure of the servile and polite Japanese belle was comparable to the framing of Hawaiian women as hospitable subjects. Variously raced as 'yellow' or 'brown', Chinese and Japanese people occupied an interstitial position between the racial categories of 'black' and 'white'. As the final section demonstrated, local Asian residents became embroiled in the white racial framing agendas of exposition actors, and racial spectacles moved beyond the confines of the midway. In the next chapter, I will examine the ways in which exhibitors framed the nation's new imperial subjects as inferior occupants within the household of empire, and I will continue to explore the unusual position of Asian visitors in chapter 6.

## Chapter 5. 'Our Islands and Their People': Exhibiting Empire

This chapter examines the live exhibits of imperial subjects at the West Coast world's fairs; in particular indigenous Alaskans, the Polynesian populations of Hawaii and Samoa, and Filipinos. I emphasise how the period of intense westward expansion at the turn of the twentieth century brought these geographically disparate populations together in America's new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy, and how the world's fair midway concessions utilised comparative racialisation strategies to position the populations within that racial order. Extending Paul Kramer's characterisation of the racialisation of Filipinos as a process of inviting this population into an "imagined household of U.S. Empire", I recognise the framing of America's imperial subjects as a multi-layered act of race-making and hierarchisation.<sup>1</sup> As well positioning the imperial subjects in relation to one another, various race-making agents also plotted their status within the broader international and Pacifically-oriented American racial order. Depending upon familiar racial framings and exhibitionary techniques used to racialise Native Americans and Asian immigrants, these concessions forged relative and hierarchical relationships between various non-white populations. The acquisition of a number of disparate territories in the second half of the nineteenth century engendered complex questions about what to do with the non-white populations that inhabited them. Popular imperial texts boasted of "our possessions" and "our islands", but were rather

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<sup>1</sup> Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p.200.

more ambivalent about “their people”, which represented a complicated “bifurcation between possession and rejection”.<sup>2</sup> The West Coast world’s fair midways, which functioned as physical sites for the comparative observation of *their* people, helped to script these new relationships and to make the nation’s new imperial subjects legible to the visiting public.

Beginning with an overview of the existing images of the imperial populations within travel and imperial texts, I then focus on each group in turn. In the section on Alaskans, I examine the live exhibits at two fairs either side of two significant events that elevated the territory’s importance. I argue that as Alaska’s economic value became clear, various key actors sought to integrate the territory by remapping the region and positioning Alaska’s native population within a number of imperial hierarchies. I then turn to the exhibits of Hawaiian and Samoan peoples, and argue that the positive racial frameworks of Aryan descent and hospitality required significant regulatory efforts by fair organisers, concession owners, and colonial elites. In this section and the following one, I point to the ways in which exhibitors and mediators used exhibitionary markers such as clothing and tribal organisation to extend both positive and negative racial frames. The final section examines the live exhibition of Filipino peoples, and I argue that a number of spectacles fixed the population’s position at the lower end of the new Pacific racial hierarchy. Fair organisers, concession managers, and colonial officials collaborated to negotiate

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<sup>2</sup> Charles Morris, *Our Island Empire: A Hand-Book of Cuba, Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippine Islands* (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott Company, 1899); José de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, vol. 2 (New York: N.D. Thompson, 1899); Matthew F. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), p.257.

See also, Oscar Campomanes, ‘Filipino-American Post-Coloniality and the U.S.-Philippines War of 1898 to 1910s’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Brown University, 1999).

the dual image of Philippine savagery and capacity for uplift. Throughout, I use a range of exposition texts including guidebooks, official exposition correspondence and plans, and include newspapers, photographs, and magazines. Unlike previous chapters, I examine the unique role of colonial officials and elites in framing the performers on the midway, and how their aims within each territory complemented or conflicted with the impulses of other exposition actors and race-making agents.

### **A Handbook to Empire: Existing Images of the Nation's New Subjects**

Prior to their appearance at the American West Coast world's fairs, Alaskan, Hawaiian, Samoan, and Filipino populations entered the popular imagination through a variety of texts. Fiction, travel narratives, and missionary works among others introduced the nation to these unfamiliar populations. In the 1890s, a revolution in the popular press aroused public interest in foreign policy developments, leading to a slew of texts that described those peoples caught up in the nation's expansionary orbit.<sup>3</sup> Whether focusing on one population alone, or seeking to provide a comprehensive overview of the nation's new empire, these texts – which I term 'imperial texts' in recognition of their relation in forming a "circulating network of claims" – frequently deployed comparative and hierarchical racial frameworks in order to create legible

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<sup>3</sup> Frank Ninkovich, *The United States and Imperialism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), pp.14-15.

images of the new imperial household.<sup>4</sup> As one handbook to Empire noted, these new regions were inhabited by “peoples strikingly distinct from those of the great republic of the West”, which raised the inevitable question: “What shall we do with them?” Reflecting the new public interest in foreign issues, the handbook acknowledged that this question did not just concern the government, but demanded an “enlightened public opinion”, with a good degree of “acquaintance” with the territories and their inhabitants.<sup>5</sup> This section analyses the American public’s acquaintance with the nation’s new subjects at the turn of the century as a means of understanding the genealogies of the racial frameworks on display at the world’s fairs. Applying a post-Said understanding of colonial representation as a relative, hierarchical, and constitutive process, I examine the comparative elements of these texts, and analyse them as a form of “popular-culture scaffolding” that would be further developed on the world’s fair midways.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Sadiah Qureshi has described how various texts relating to expositions overlap and work together to create a textual network.

Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp.90-91.

<sup>5</sup> Morris, *Our Island Empire*, pp.ix-x.

<sup>6</sup> Camilla Fojas, *Islands of Empire: Pop Culture and U.S. Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), p.17.

For more on the post-Edward Said analysis of empire, which emphasises the heterogeneity of imperial formations, see Julian Go, “‘Racism’ and Colonialism: Meanings of Difference and Ruling Practices in America’s Pacific Empire”, *Qualitative Sociology*, 27.1 (2004), pp.35-58; Lanny Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago: Representation and Rule in the Insular Territories Under US Dominion After 1898* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2010); Fojas, *Islands of Empire*.

### ***Alaskans***

America purchased Alaska from the Russian Empire in 1867, gaining nearly 600,000 square miles of territory and its native population.<sup>7</sup> Texts concerning Alaska consistently alluded to the supposedly confusing racial origins and composition of the new territory's population. In one 1886 book, the author noted that commentators had variously suggested that the peoples indigenous to the region had a common origin with the Aztecs, or with the Chinese, pointing to the "strong facial resemblance" with the "Chinese coolies now living on the coast".<sup>8</sup> However, the most consistent racial comparison in such texts was with the Native Americans of the contiguous United States. Often referring to the people of Alaska as 'Indians', and suggesting that shared customs and traits established a bond between them, these comparisons tended to favour those in the new Northern frontier. Claiming that Alaskans had "lighter complexions than any other North American Indians", author Charles Hallock stated that the old maxim that "only good Indians are dead Indians" did not apply here.<sup>9</sup> Naturalist and explorer William Dall claimed that the Alaskans were "much more intelligent, and superior in every essential respect to the Indians". Dall identified a large number of 'tribes' in the region, some of which he classed as Indian and others as Eskimo, which he claimed had variously light

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<sup>7</sup> The Russian Empire sought to sell Alaska to avoid losing the territory to Britain. The American architects of the Alaska Purchase, Senator Charles Sumner and Secretary of State William H. Seward, recognised Alaska's potential in terms of its resources and its strategic location for commercial development in the Pacific. For the first few decades, Alaska was variously under the jurisdiction of the army, navy, or treasury. In 1884, the First Organic Act established Alaska as a judicial and civil district, with a civilian government.

For more on the Alaska Purchase, see Stephen W. Haycox, *Alaska: An American Colony* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

<sup>8</sup> Charles Hallock, *Our New Alaska; or, the Seward Purchase Vindicated* (New York: Forest and Stream Publishing Co., 1886), pp.91-92.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.91, 93.

or “Mongolian” complexions and countenances.<sup>10</sup> The identification of skin colour concerned most writers, yet their claims were inconsistent, with assertions that Alaskans were “olive rather than red”, or “copper colored”.<sup>11</sup> This “racial indeterminacy” contributed to an ambivalent framing of Alaska’s indigenous population, with images of the landscape’s whiteness occasionally influencing racial designations and associating the people with qualities of purity and cleanliness.<sup>12</sup> The absence of a clear, singular racial classification facilitated a range of both positive and negative framings of native Alaskans.

The frequently contradictory customs and traits attached to the people of Alaska both echoed and foreshadowed frameworks that racialised other non-white populations caught up in the process of American expansion. Describing them as a ‘dying race’, and emphasising their supposed lawlessness and damaging proclivity for alcohol, authors linked Alaskans with the more familiar Native American populations at home.<sup>13</sup> Despairing of the “poor, miserable people” who had to be taught to keep themselves clean, travellers and prospectors also repeated sentiments used in public debates on immigration, and claims that Alaskans were particularly “unscrupulous” in trading encounters paralleled the stereotype of deviousness that framed Chinese immigrants in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> William H. Dall, *Alaska and its Resources* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1870), p.373, p.376.

<sup>11</sup> Hallock, *Our New Alaska*, p.91; W.H. Pierce, *Thirteen Years of Travel and Exploration in Alaska* (Lawrence: Journal Publishing Co, 1890), p.77.

<sup>12</sup> Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp.100-101.

Huhndorf refers to German anthropologist, Johann Blumenbach, who in the late eighteenth century suggested that Alaskans looked similar to white people, postulating that they had Finnish origins.

<sup>13</sup> Pierce, *Thirteen Years of Travel and Exploration in Alaska*, p.51; Dall, *Alaska and its Resources*, pp.381-382.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.47, pp.49-50; Hallock, *Our New Alaska*, p.84.

Although such negative frameworks of incapability and vice helped to justify the American presence in Alaska, it was not the only lens through which popular imperial texts presented the population. Echoing the literature on Hawaii, texts also celebrated Alaskans for being “peaceable, tractable, intelligent, clever, eager to learn, useful and industrious”.<sup>15</sup> This eagerness, usefulness, and friendliness justified the colonial relationship, and functioned to encourage investment in the region. Emerging just decades after the Alaska Purchase, the narrative of Alaskan happiness was utilised to obscure the terms of colonisation, and to position the purchase in the “safety of the triumphal past”.<sup>16</sup> Hallock claimed that the Alaskans “spontaneously abandoned the traditions of the past”, and were “willing and ready” to accept American rule.<sup>17</sup> However, these traditions of the past were exactly the curious habits that Americans sought in their consumption of travel narratives and in their attendance at world’s fairs.

From 1892, Eskimo Villages appeared at successive world’s fairs, museums, and entertainment venues in America and Europe. Largely dismissed as a useful classification today, the term ‘Eskimo’ has referred to members of two language groups – the Inuit and the Yupik – that have inhabited parts of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Siberia. Alaska itself has been home to a diverse range of indigenous peoples, of various language and cultural groups, and is not exclusively ‘Eskimo’ in composition.<sup>18</sup> Displayed alongside various performers

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<sup>15</sup> Hallock, *Our New Alaska*, p.91.

<sup>16</sup> Josh Reid, ‘Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens: Indigenous Representations and the Geography of Empire at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition’, *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 101.3-4 (2010), p.113.

<sup>17</sup> Hallock, *Our New Alaska*, pp.94-95.

<sup>18</sup> Maria Sháa Tláa Williams, ‘Alaska and Its People: An Introduction’, in Maria Sháa Tláa Williams (ed.), *The Alaska Native Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), pp.4-9.



from the Arctic region, the indigenous population of Alaska represented both a general fascination with the Arctic and explorations to the North Pole, as well as being representatives of a non-contiguous territory of the United States. Although America's most direct relationship with the 'Eskimo' was through its purchase of Alaska and subsequent rule of the region, the most well known and successful Eskimo performers on the midway circuit came from Labrador, Canada.<sup>19</sup> It is often difficult to discern the geographical origin of the Eskimo performers on the midway, but as far as possible, I will favour sources that refer to Alaskans.

### ***Hawaiians and Samoans***

American fascination with the 'South Sea Islands' began in the late eighteenth century, and throughout the nineteenth century, a large volume of texts by missionaries, explorers, and literary authors promoted an image of the 'Noble Savage' abroad. Various depicted as depraved black heathens in need of civilisation, or romantic figures that represented an alternative to the pressures of urban life and thus in need of protection from Euro-American incursions, the inhabitants of the Polynesian islands loomed large in the American public imagination.<sup>20</sup> In the nineteenth century, American missionaries and planters settled in Hawaii and established visible American institutions, and in Samoa, the German, British, and American empires built up their competing commercial interests. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the two island

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<sup>19</sup> See Jim Zwick, *Inuit Entertainers in the United States: From the Chicago World's Fair through the Birth of Hollywood* (West Conshohocken: Infinity, 2006).

<sup>20</sup> See Sean Brawley and Chris Dixon, *The South Seas: A Reception History from Daniel Defoe to Dorothy Lamour* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015); Gary Y. Okihiro, *Island World: A History of Hawai'i and the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

nations became central to American commercial and imperial expansion in the Pacific as important strategic locations, and travel and imperial texts brought the two Polynesian islands into the new imperial racial hierarchy.<sup>21</sup> Moving away from comparisons with the African American population, these texts embedded Hawaiians and Samoans within a comparative framework of Pacific races.

Travel and imperial texts regarding Hawaii frequently emphasised racial comparisons. Author Caspar Whitney compared Hawaii favourably with China and Japan in terms of the possibilities for white settlement and investment, and depicted the islands as less problematic than the Philippines and the “Indian” at home. Hawaii’s history of and potential for white settlement led writers to postulate about the improvements that may appear in the process of “mixture with other and stronger races”, although some were concerned that this “amalgamation” had the potential to bring out less desirable traits, and warned about the dangers of contact with the Chinese.<sup>22</sup> In the context of America’s new Pacific empire, these texts presented the possibility of racial mixing on the islands as an imperative to secure and modernise Hawaii, rather than suggesting any danger to the Anglo-Saxon race; a level of assurance made possible by Hawaii’s distance from the mainland and the population’s presumed

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<sup>21</sup> American interests overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. In 1898, Hawaii was annexed to the U.S., and was ruled as an American territory. The 1899 Tripartite Convention partitioned the Samoan Islands, and the eastern islands became an American territory.

See William F. Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific: The United States, Japan and the Asia/Pacific Region, 1895-1945* (Westport: Praeger, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> Caspar Whitney, *Hawaiian America: Something of its History, Resources and Prospects* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1899), p.1, pp.7-8, p.67; John L. Stevens and W.B. Oleson, *Riches and Marvels of Hawaii* (Philadelphia: Edgewood Publishing Company, 1900), pp.81-82, p.85.

Aryan racial origins.<sup>23</sup> Late nineteenth century imperial texts also lightened the Hawaiian native population, explicitly stating that their skin was “never so dark as the negro’s”. However, authors could not agree on the exact shade, and depictions ranged from “tawny” inclining towards “olive”, and the “reddish-brown” of “tarnished copper”.<sup>24</sup>

Moving away from racialisations that linked Hawaiians to the African American population at home, imperial and travel texts drew upon the writings of early nineteenth century European explorers, which had divided the Pacific Islands into the regions of Melanesia and Polynesia. While travellers and authors regarded Melanesia, which included Fiji and the Solomon islands, as savage and its populations as black, they celebrated Polynesia, which included Hawaii and Samoa, for the populations’ lighter skin tone and supposedly semi-civilised state.<sup>25</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, scientists and travellers alike hypothesised on the possible origins of the curiously light-skinned Polynesians – a process Maile Arvin refers to as the “Polynesian problem” – postulating that the race was Aryan in origin and had descended from Romans and Greeks. Religious discourses of degeneration were applied to explain the “almost whiteness” of the Polynesian, which had supposedly been degraded through migration, and scientists argued that the race could again become

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<sup>23</sup> Heather Waldroup, ‘Ethnographic Pictorialism: Caroline Gurrey’s Hawaiian Types at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition’, *History of Photography*, 36.2 (2012), p.182; Maile R. Arvin, ‘Pacificaly Possessed: Scientific Production and Native Hawaiian Critique of the “Almost White” Polynesian Race’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, San Diego, 2013), p.2.

<sup>24</sup> Whitney, *Hawaiian America*, p.68; de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, p.471; Morris, *Our Island Empire*, p.287

<sup>25</sup> Nicholas Thomas, ‘The Force of Ethnology: Origins and Significance of the Melanesia/Polynesia Division’, *Current Anthropology*, 30.1 (1989), p.30.

See also, Virginia R. Dominguez, ‘Exporting U.S. Concepts of Race: Are There Limits to the U.S. Model?’, *Social Research*, 65.2 (1998), pp.369-399.

Aryan through intermarriage.<sup>26</sup> Imperial texts frequently regarded Samoans as “closely allied” to Hawaiians in their Polynesian status, and travel texts described the skin colour of the Samoan population as “warm brown”.<sup>27</sup> The racial designation of ‘Polynesian’ placed Hawaiian and Samoan people within a regional, Pacific hierarchy that emphasised skin colour and positive racial characteristics.

Texts about Hawaii emphasised the prolonged Euro-American presence on the islands, and the attendant uplift of the native population. No longer “licentious”, the texts argued that Hawaiians had become Americanised, Christianised, and well educated.<sup>28</sup> However, some negative traits remained on the islands, and imperial texts frequently noted that they were “not naturally an industrious race”; a trait they shared with “all aborigines of mild southern climates”, as Samoans were similarly criticised for their “indolence”.<sup>29</sup> This narrative of partial improvement and uplift in the case of Hawaiians would become a familiar tool for officials in the Philippines, and functioned to justify American intervention and bolster support for further civilising efforts.

Caspar Whitney argued that the islands’ inhabitants did not give the issue of annexation any “serious or intelligent thought”, and author Charles Morris claimed that while Hawaiians were “unfit to conduct business”, they could make a “faithful and trusty employee”.<sup>30</sup> Arguments about the Hawaiian population’s incapacity for self-rule relied upon notions of inability, and

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<sup>26</sup> Arvin, ‘Pacificaly Possessed’, p.xv, pp.45-75.

<sup>27</sup> de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, p.543; Charles S. Greene, *Talofa, Samoa: A Summer Sail to an Enchanted Isle* (San Francisco: San Francisco News Company, 1896), p.17.

<sup>28</sup> Morris, *Our Island Empire*, p.288; Whitney, *Hawaiian America*, pp.8-9.

<sup>29</sup> de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, p.471

<sup>30</sup> Whitney, *Hawaiian America*, p.22; Charles Morris, *Our Island Empire*, p.288.

imperial texts frequently claimed that the population were “simple-minded” and “childlike”; traits that were echoed in descriptions of Samoans.<sup>31</sup> While being childlike denoted incompetence, it naturalised the hierarchy of the imperial household, and transformed negative traits into romantic evolutionary deficiencies that were admirable in their freedom from urban degeneracy.<sup>32</sup> Competing visions of romantic and savage primitivity complicated the racialisation of the Polynesian throughout the twentieth century.

Despite their supposed laziness and limited mental capacity, imperial and travel texts overwhelmingly emphasised the Polynesians’ hospitality. Texts depicted both Hawaiians and Samoans as “friendly and forgiving”, “free from malice”, “honest, affectionate”, “tractable”, and even prone to “freely surrendering everything they possessed to the enjoyment of the visitor”.<sup>33</sup> Portraying the populations as welcoming to American tourists, investors, and settlers, these texts bolstered public support for American intervention on the islands. By rooting this hospitality within the pseudo-anthropological classification of ‘Polynesian’ – thus making it a racial characteristic – these texts obscured the realities of American intervention, and in particular the strong Hawaiian objection to the monarchical overthrow and subsequent annexation. The image of the hospitable Polynesian also facilitated numerous encounters between the American public and Hawaiian and Samoan populations. The two islands had a well-established tourism industry by the turn of the century, and in 1892, a Hawaiian hula troupe toured North America and Europe for the first

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<sup>31</sup> Morris, *Our Island Empire*, p.287; de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, p.453; John R. Musick, *Hawaii, Our New Possessions* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1898), p.65; Greene, *Talofa, Samoa*, p.16, p.22.

<sup>32</sup> Go, “‘Racism’ and Colonialism”, pp.45-46; Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, pp.199-200.

<sup>33</sup> Morris, *Our Island Empire*, pp.287-288; Greene, *Talofa, Samoa*, p.16; de Oliveras, *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil*, p.453, p.474.

time.<sup>34</sup> The racial classification of 'Polynesian' permitted positive depictions of the two populations at the West Coast world's fairs, however exhibitors and mediators consistently emphasised their inevitable inferiority to white Americans.

### ***Filipinos***

Prior to 1898, the American public had little awareness of the Spanish colony of the Philippines. Support for Cuban independence ensured relatively widespread approval for the 1898 Spanish-American War, at which point the Philippines entered the public consciousness as one of Spain's supposedly neglected colonies, and as a physical site of battle for American troops.<sup>35</sup> Newspapers and other popular texts depicted the Philippine population as children abandoned by their colonial fathers, and racialised Spain's various colonial subjects as black dependents. Servando Halili's in depth analysis of the iconography of the American colonisation of the Philippines points to the production of a powerful narrative of Philippine incapability.<sup>36</sup> In a cartoon in the *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, a basket with three crying, naked, black babies, named 'Philippines', 'Porto Rico', and 'Cuba', lay abandoned on the door step of the 'United States'. The adult, white figure of Uncle Sam answered the door, his hand on the head of a smiling black child named 'Hawaii' [see Figure 5.1]. This image of vulnerable,

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<sup>34</sup> See Diana L. Ahmad, 'Different Islands, Different Experiences: American Travel Accounts of Samoa and Hawai'i, 1890-1910', *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, 41 (2007), pp.97-118; Adria L. Imada, *Aloha America: Hula Circuits Through the U.S. Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific*; p.29.

<sup>36</sup> For a discussion of how the Philippine Islands were represented in the press, see Servando D. Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire: Race and Gender Images and the American Colonization of the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2006); David Brody, *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

uncivilised children, begging the mature Uncle Sam for the same brand of uplift that had benefitted the Hawaiian population, served to justify America's armed conflict with Spain, and would continue to bolster support for its ongoing presence in Spain's former colonies.

**Figure 5.1. Newspaper cartoon depicting Uncle Sam, Hawaii, Cuba, the Philippines and Puerto Rico (1898).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***Los Angeles Sunday Times, 7 August 1898. Reproduced in Servando D. Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire: Race and Gender Images and the American Colonization of the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2006), p.44.***



As pro-imperialists emphasised the Philippine population's desperate need for tutelage and uplift, a strong anti-imperialist movement similarly evoked narratives of racial difference and lack of civilisation to argue that annexation would lead to racial degeneration on the American mainland.<sup>37</sup> Celebratory texts on the nation's 'new possessions' in 1898 and early 1899 described the native population as simple and lazy. One text stated, "The natives simply live – indolently, sleepily, contentedly; their principal occupations are smoking cigarettes and attending cockfights", and another claimed that the Filipinos embodied the "faults of the half-civilized", being both "innately polite", yet indolent and improvident.<sup>38</sup> Racialised as black, uncivilised, childlike, and incapable of self-rule, this early image of the Filipino population established strong yet mutable foundations for the colonial period.

Despite the narrative of Philippine vulnerability and Spanish neglect, the Philippines represented an important stepping-stone in the quest for dominance in China, and hopeful Filipino nationalists soon realised that America did not intend to liberate the islands.<sup>39</sup> Paul Kramer has argued that the outbreak of the Philippine-American War in February 1899 dramatically altered the racialisation of the native population, and popular and official texts began to cast the island inhabitants as violent savages. This racialisation, however, was two-sided, and depended upon the reimagining of America's racial and historical heritage as Anglo-Saxon, therefore linking the nation to the imperial rights and duties of the British Empire. Kramer points to the publication of

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<sup>37</sup> Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, pp.43-45, p.64.

<sup>38</sup> *Picturesque Cuba, Porto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippines: A Photographic Panorama of Our New Possessions* (Springfield: Mast, Crowell, and Kirkpatrick, 1898), p.114; Morris, *Our Island Empire*, p.417.

<sup>39</sup> Nimmo, *Stars and Stripes Across the Pacific*, p.35.

Rudyard Kipling's 'The White Man's Burden' in *McClure's Magazine* in February 1899 as a key moment in this reimagining, as Kipling's analysis of the white man's obligation towards the "new-caught, sullen peoples, / Half devil and half child", cast imperialism as a thankless but necessary duty of the Anglo-Saxon race.<sup>40</sup> As Lanny Thompson and others have argued, the production of tribal diversity was a central racialising framework, as social evolutionary theory suggested that tribal populations were at the beginning of their racial development. This tribal diversity allowed imperialists to disregard Filipino calls for independence, as they argued that the population was incapable of unity and self-rule.<sup>41</sup> Popular texts drew upon familiar domestic examples to explain this racial framing to the public. In *Harper's History of the War in the Philippines*, the author stated that the "wild tribes of the Luzon highlands correspond to our various tribes of Sioux, Apaches, Crows, Chippewas, etc., differing in language and minor customs". Claiming that the tribes were "constantly at war with one another, and are skilful with the spear and bow", he warned readers, "as a rule they are as wild as mountain Indians are bound to be".<sup>42</sup>

However, at the official close of the Philippine-American War in 1902, the racialisation of the Filipino as a resistant savage was of limited applicability to colonial officials. Instead, these officials racialised the population on a more inclusionary basis in order to prove their ability to progress under colonial rule, and popular texts used race to measure the Filipinos' capacities and

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<sup>40</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, pp.11-12, pp.28-29; see also, Rudyard Kipling, 'The White Man's Burden', *McClure's Magazine*, 12 (1899), pp.290-291.

<sup>41</sup> Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago*, p.133; Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, pp.121-122.

<sup>42</sup> Marrion Wilcox, *Harper's History of the War in the Philippines* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1900), p.353.

deficiencies.<sup>43</sup> A 1909 text entitled *America Across the Seas* again described the Philippine population as “children”, yet the author claimed that they were nevertheless “peculiarly susceptible to the noblest ideas of the white race”, and there was “nothing to prevent them from advancing as rapidly as the Japanese have done”.<sup>44</sup> This hopeful racial framing moved away from the negative associations with Native American populations, and instead linked the Filipinos to the newly industrialised and rapidly progressing Japanese. Although the Philippine-American War officially ended in 1902, fighting continued in remote locations until 1913, and partly for this reason, the image of Filipino savagery remained popular at twentieth century American world’s fairs. In the midway concessions at the West Coast expositions, exhibitors and mediators transformed and obscured the colonial message of Philippine progress in their efforts to construct a popular and sensational exhibit.

### **‘A Willing Subject’: Alaskans and the Northern Frontier**

The exhibition of Alaska’s indigenous inhabitants at the West Coast world’s fairs functioned to make this newly incorporated population legible to the American public. Exposition exhibitors and mediators deployed racialisation strategies and exhibitionary techniques in order to stage a comprehensible image of the Alaskan population. Focusing on two fairs that took place either side of the acquisition of America’s island empire and a significant gold rush, this section examines how fair organisers, concession managers, colonial elites, and the

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<sup>43</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>44</sup> Hamilton Wright, ‘The Philippines’, in Hamilton Wright, C.H. Forbes-Lindsay, John F. Wallace, Willard French, Wallace W. Attwood, and Elizabeth Fairbanks, *America Across the Seas: Our Colonial Empire* (New York: C.S. Hammond & Company, 1909), pp.16-17, p.20.

performers themselves worked to transform this unfamiliar non-white group into knowable and willing subjects of the nation's new imperial household and Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy.<sup>45</sup> As the nation's imperial activities expanded significantly at the turn of the twentieth century, the world's fair Eskimo Villages became key sites for the racialisation and hierarchisation of this newly incorporated population.

### ***The 'Eskimo' from the Frozen North***

By the time the San Francisco Midwinter Fair (1894) opened, 'Eskimo' exhibits had been present in the United States for less than two years. These early performances both supported and contradicted the existing image of the racially indefinable, miserable, yet tractable Alaskan. At the Midwinter Fair, Alaskans appeared alongside performers from Labrador in an exhibit called the Eskimo Village.<sup>46</sup> The fair's promotional texts emphasised the unfamiliarity and illegibility of its performers, therefore establishing the fair as an opportunity to acquire racial knowledge. One souvenir claimed that there was "no race of people on the face of the earth whose ways of living are so peculiar and whose race characteristics are so little known to the civilized nations of the world as the Esquimaux", thus making them "interesting objects for study".<sup>47</sup> Despite promising to illuminate the racial complexities of the 'Eskimo', the Eskimo

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<sup>45</sup> By 'island empire', I am referring to America's expansion into and consolidation of the islands of Hawaii, Samoa, and the Philippines, 1898-1899.

<sup>46</sup> These two distinct groups can be identified by collating various exposition texts. See *Official Guide to the California Midwinter Exposition* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Co., 1894), p.124; *Morning Call*, 7 February 1894.

<sup>47</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes: Being Views of California Midwinter Fair and Famous Scenes in the Golden State: A Series of Pictures Taken by I. W. Taber* (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker, 1894).

Village at San Francisco elided a number of racial, cultural, and geographical specificities in its representation of the peoples of the North.

Although the United States' most direct relationship with the 'Eskimo' was through the colonial rule of Alaska, the Eskimo Villages at world's fairs featured performers from throughout the Arctic region, and the most successful and well-known Eskimos on the midway circuit came from Labrador.<sup>48</sup> In 1894, exposition texts did not always identify the origins of the midway Eskimos, or remark upon the greater significance of the Alaskan group. While occasionally acknowledging that not all Eskimos were Alaskan, all Alaskans were considered to be Eskimo. The production of a homogenous image of the Eskimo in popular culture was primarily a tool to manage the alterity of the North, and to make it legible for public audiences.<sup>49</sup> Early exhibits signified the comprehensible Eskimo through various markers, such as fur and sealskin clothing, residences made of ice, and a small skill set including the management of sled dogs and reindeer, the production of craft goods, and competency with canoes. In a fictional story about two American children at the fair, they encountered a "funny, fat little Eskimo boy", who "belonged in one of those white, round-topped huts that looked like immense eggs cut into halves and set on the ground". Their encounter with the performer, who was "so plump and friendly a little trader in his queer Eskimo clothes", allowed the children to feel as if they were "quite acquainted immediately".<sup>50</sup> Much like the use of Plains culture to represent all Native Americans, the consistency and repetition of the Eskimo

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<sup>48</sup> See Zwick, *Inuit Entertainers in the United States*.

<sup>49</sup> Cyndi Banks, 'Ordering the Other: Reading Alaskan Native Culture Past and Present', in Mary Bosworth and Jeanne Flavin (eds.), *Race, Gender, and Punishment: From Colonialism to the War on Terror* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007), p.38.

<sup>50</sup> Mary E. Bamford, *The Denby Children at the Fair* (Chicago: David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1904), pp.15-16.

image in travel narratives and on world's fair midways helped visitors to feel familiar with the peoples of the distant North, including the nation's subjects in Alaska.

Expectations about the authentic Eskimo dictated the terms of the live concession at San Francisco (1894). Although these terms restricted the performers' choices and cultural expressions, they were also dependent upon the performers' compliance, and resisting these terms offered a means of disrupting the unequal power relations inherent in live displays. In April, the Eskimo Village participants went on strike for better wages. An article in the *Morning Call* noted that unless the participants received a \$10 pay rise, they had declared, "no sealskins would be donned and no villagers would be on exhibition". Reporting on the concession manager's refusal to comply, the article stated, "Unless they were prepared to play Esquimaux as usual the fur-wearers were told that they must leave their snow huts by 1 o'clock".<sup>51</sup> Although the strikers were ultimately unsuccessful in their actions, this incident demonstrates the importance of expectations about costume and behaviours in exhibits of race, and a broad awareness – amongst the concession manager, the performers, and the local press – that the exhibit depended upon the participants' willingness to 'play Eskimo'.

Despite claiming that the fair would be an opportunity to study the unknown racial characteristics of this population, it was more important to fair officials that the performers fulfilled the limited, existing image of the authentic Eskimo. Such acts of resistance were frequent in Eskimo Villages in the twentieth century, yet success and relative autonomy only came to performers

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<sup>51</sup> *Morning Call*, 29 April 1894.

from Labrador.<sup>52</sup> The newspaper article's scornful assessment that events had become "too much for the little brown people" reflected the colonial relationships that underpinned the Eskimo Villages, and the paternalistic and belittling language foreshadowed the racialisation of the nation's island subjects.<sup>53</sup> The American colonial machine increasingly integrated Alaskans at the turn of the twentieth century, yet performers from Labrador were long established subjects of the British Empire. These structures of power would become more important and visible at later fairs, and the process of 'colouring' the Eskimo brown gained significance as America's empire grew.

A narrative of distance further underlined the geographical inexactness of the Eskimo classification at the San Francisco fair (1894). Emphasising the difference between the performers and the "civilized nations of the world", one promotional text highlighted the distance between America and the "frozen zone of the far north". It went on to state that this "entirely different environment" would be represented at the fair through the replication of scenes from "their native land".<sup>54</sup> Exhibitors and mediators adopted the exhibitionary technique of producing difference through evoking distance to mitigate concerns about Asian immigrants, but here it was utilised to obscure the terms under which indigenous Alaskans entered the sphere of American expansion. References to the Eskimos' frozen Northern environment functioned to embed the indigenous population within a distant "wilderness zone"; a common nineteenth century trope used to portray the removal of Native American

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<sup>52</sup> Jim Zwick traces the successful career of Labrador performer Esther Eneutseak, which he contrasts with the fate of two Alaskan children adopted by an American captain. Zwick, *Inuit Entertainers in the United States*, pp.41-52.

<sup>53</sup> *Morning Call*, 29 April 1894.

<sup>54</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes*.

populations as a natural component of westward territorial expansion.<sup>55</sup> That this environment was perpetually frozen and was still ‘their’ native land points to the ambivalent popular perception of the Northern territory prior to the gold rush that proved the region’s economic worth. Creating difference through distance also contributed to the spectacle of the Eskimo Village. Exposition texts frequently boasted of the mild Californian climate, and the designation of ‘Midwinter’ for a fair that ran from January until early July was a clear effort to promote the exposition’s locational benefits in contrast to its Chicagoan predecessor.<sup>56</sup> The incongruity of fur clad, ice hut-residing Alaskans from the far North within San Francisco’s sunny Golden Gate Park created a comical display of difference for visitors.

The architecture of the Eskimo concession similarly emphasised distance and nature in spatial terms. Occupying a large section of land on the midway, the Eskimo Village featured white, spherical huts, built to suggest that they were made of snow and ice [see Figure 5.2]. The huts were situated around a body of water, which in turn was surrounded by a fence, and performers demonstrated their canoeing skills in this clearly demarcated space. Incongruously located within and in proximity to the exhibit, the fair’s overhead power lines reminded visitors of the clear differences between the frozen North and civilised, modern America. Spatially framing the indigenous people of the North as isolated suggested that they were less civilised, and functioned to associate distance from the centre of civilisation with ignorance and deficiency,

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<sup>55</sup> Sarah J. Moore, *Empire on Display: San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), p.163.

<sup>56</sup> *The Official History of the California Midwinter International Exposition* (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker Co., 1894), p.5.



while spatially locating white America at the centre of a modern empire.<sup>57</sup> The distance and frigidity of the North was further emphasised and exhibited via the performers' supposed emotions and habits. Newspaper articles throughout the fair's run reported on potential midway romances that included Eskimo performers, and described the coldness of their relations. The announcement of a betrothal in the Eskimo Village reportedly "Thawed Them Out", as the "blubber-eaters" who ordinarily "repress all feelings" became "as nearly excited as is possible in a race whose blood is cooled by constant association with icebergs and snowbanks".<sup>58</sup> Completely embedded within their environment, the performers had supposedly become inseparable from their surroundings, as reflected in their racial traits. The performers were therefore not only an unavoidable by-product of the Alaska Purchase, but were comfortingly wedded to their distant locale. Although separated from the contiguous United States by land, the body of water in the Eskimo Village represented both the physical and cultural distance between the nation and its Alaskan territory.

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<sup>57</sup> Reid, 'Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens', p.110, p.118; Jennifer Kopf, 'Picturing Difference: Writing the Races in the 1896 Berlin Trade Exposition's Souvenir Album', *Historical Geography*, 36 (2008), pp.115-116.

<sup>58</sup> *Morning Call*, 7 February 1894.

**Figure 5.2. Eskimo Village at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Esquimaux Village, miniature lake with Canoes in foreground', Souvenir of the California Midwinter International Exposition, BANC PIC 1976.029--ffALB, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.**

***Imperial Hierarchies***

In the intervening years between the California Midwinter Fair (1894) and the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (1909) at Seattle, America's empire expanded significantly, with the acquisition of the Philippines, the annexation of Hawaii, and the partitioning of Samoa. In addition, the discovery of gold in Nome, Alaska in 1899 cemented the Northern territory's place within the nation's economy. The organisational impetus of the Seattle fair reflected both of these developments. Eager to situate Seattle within broader Pacific developments,

such as the strengthening of ties with Asia and the nation's new island possessions, fair organisers added the word 'Pacific' to the fair's original 'Alaska-Yukon Exposition' title in 1906.<sup>59</sup> This title positioned Alaska and the Pacific Northwest region as integral components of the nation's new Pacific empire. An article in the *World's Work* noted that the fair was primarily about the "linking of Oriental commerce, Alaskan development, and American industry"; an important series of connections that not only rationalised imperialism, but also raised Alaska to a level of significance that it had not achieved prior to the acquisition of the island territories and the discovery of gold.<sup>60</sup> Various exposition texts noted that "careless ignorance and misrepresentation" had damaged Alaska's reputation, making the territory a "synonym for a cold, bleak, dreary land, an inhospitable and uninhabitable country". It was thus the aim of the exposition to prove that the region was more than a "land of cold and gold".<sup>61</sup> In order to do this, exhibitors and mediators would have to insert Alaska and its population into a number of imperial hierarchies.

Despite the explicit emphasis on Alaska and America's new empire, the Seattle midway again featured an Eskimo Village that displayed various populations from the arctic region. As Lisa Blee has noted, racial diversity was part of the draw of the Eskimo Village, yet despite claims that the exhibit had educational value, it was primarily a commercial venture that functioned to reaffirm visitors' understandings of white superiority in comparison to "exotic

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<sup>59</sup> Josh Reid, 'Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens', pp.113-114.

<sup>60</sup> 'The Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition', *World's Work*, 18.4 (1909), p.11894.

The *World's Work* was a major magazine dedicated to business and the ways that people worked across the world.

<sup>61</sup> C.D. Garfield, 'Alaska', in *Seattle: The Exposition City* (Seattle, 1908), p.51; *Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition* (Seattle: Department of Publicity, 1907), p.9.

native savagery".<sup>62</sup> This underlying binary relationship to some extent obscured the diversity within Eskimo Villages, and functioned to homogenise the various people of the arctic region as non-white Others. At Seattle however, exhibitors and mediators took greater care to attain and disseminate knowledge about the peoples of the North than at the Midwinter Fair fifteen years earlier. The urge to name, classify, and order, reflected America's increasing competence and confidence as an imperial power, and the growing significance of Alaska to the nation's imperial economy.<sup>63</sup> An official publication of the government exhibit declared that the "natives of Alaska are not all of the same race, but are divided into three well-marked groups" that supposedly differed in terms of physical characteristics, language, and dress.<sup>64</sup> This recognition of diversity within the Eskimo Village positioned the Alaskans within a comparative and relative framework of race and empire.

Rather than displaying the discrete groups of Alaskans identified in the government exhibit, fair organisers opted to exhibit Alaskans as a singular group alongside performers from Labrador and Siberia. Frank Merrick, the Chief of the Publicity Department, stated in a regional commercial magazine that there would be "three kinds of Eskimo in the village, those who have not been touched by white civilization, those who only recently came into association with modern civilization, and the common or garden variety, the

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<sup>62</sup> Lisa Blee, "I came voluntarily to work, sing and dance": Stories from the Eskimo Village at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition', *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 101.3-4 (2010), p.126.

<sup>63</sup> As various scholars have argued, naming and classification are essential processes in establishing dominance in imperial relationships.

See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992); Geoffrey C. Bowker and Susan L. Star, *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999).

<sup>64</sup> *Participation in the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition: Message from the President of the United States, Transmitting the Report of the United States Government Board of Managers of the Government Participation in the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), p.82.

natives who were long ago brought into contact with white men".<sup>65</sup> This hierarchical judgment of civilisation was a critique not just of the inferior non-white 'Eskimo' in relation to the white American, but of the capabilities of various contemporary empires to uplift and control their subjects. The exhibit situated the indigenous Siberians at the bottom of the hierarchy as those that had not been touched by white civilisation, which functioned as a criticism of Russia for its failure to improve the native peoples of the territory. The placement of Alaskans in the middle category as those who had recently encountered modern civilisation extended this disparagement of Russia by dismissing Alaska's history as a Russian territory, and emphasising the positive effects of American contact.<sup>66</sup> The performers from Labrador therefore represented the top category, which acknowledged this territory's long history as a British colony.

Placing the Alaskans within this simultaneously regional and international imperial hierarchy was indicative of what Josh Reid has identified as a significant shift in the imperial rhetoric of American world's fairs. Reid has claimed that by 1909, white American elites believed that that the nation had made significant progress in its imperial endeavours, and it was now time for the nation to teach other colonial powers about America's supposedly benevolent and uplifting brand of imperialism.<sup>67</sup> Just as the constructed tribal hierarchy of the Philippine population would help to justify claims that racial uplift was both necessary and achievable in the islands, this regional arctic

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<sup>65</sup> Frank L. Merrick, 'Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Being Pushed', *Alaska Yukon Magazine*, 5.1 (1908), p.42.

<sup>66</sup> Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p.199; Reid, 'Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens', p.114.

<sup>67</sup> Reid, 'Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens', p.110.

hierarchy rationalised the American presence in Alaska. The Eskimo Village at Seattle therefore functioned to visualise and frame multiple hierarchies of race, empire, and national competition.

In addition to the international comparison of imperial prowess, exposition texts situated the Alaskans within a hierarchical framework of America's numerous possessions. The decision to place the Alaskan performers on the midway alongside the other live displays, and not in the Alaskan Building or within the official government exhibits, encouraged comparison of the various non-white groups that entered the public consciousness in the age of overseas expansion. The *Seattle Star* reported on a visit by the "United Commercial Travelers", a society for travelling salesmen, who enjoyed their day amongst the "freaks and fairies" of the midway, choosing to end the visit with a "session among the Eskimos and Igorrotes".<sup>68</sup> Fair ephemera similarly brought these two populations together, with one postcard for sale that featured an "Igorotte Baby from the Philippines and Eskimo Baby from Alaska" [see Figure 5.3]. The anxious expression on the Filipino child's face, which he partially covered with his hands, and his minimal costume, contrasted with the open and smiling expression of the Alaskan child in his furs and boots. The Eskimo Village and its attendant souvenirs emphasised that the midway's non-white performers were to be judged by their racial attributes and their economic contribution to America's commercial empire.<sup>69</sup> Linking these markers of race and economic value was the notion of civilisation; to what extent could each population be uplifted to American standards and become useful to the nation's onward march of progress? The image of the two child subjects embodied these

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<sup>68</sup> *Seattle Star*, 12 June 1909.

<sup>69</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, p.199.

concerns, with the relative state of dress and facial expressions conveying to Americans their progress along the spectrum of civilisation. The Filipino child's scant costume and closed posture indicated that his population were still at an early stage and remained hostile, whereas the almost comically overdressed and smiling Alaskan child represented his territory's challenging climate, yet supposedly welcoming stance towards American exploitation.

**Figure 5.3. Filipino and Alaskan children at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Igorotte child and Eskimo child, Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle, Washington, 1909', 78.185, Robert and Nancy Becker AYPE Postcard Collection, PH Coll 78, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Division.**

In order to place the Alaskan natives within these dual imperial hierarchies, exposition exhibitors and mediators had to make them legible to the visiting public. As fair organisers sought to dismiss previous representations of the territory as misleading, promotional texts created a narrative of urgency and obligation on the part of fair visitors to learn of their Northern neighbours. Magazines promised that the Eskimo Village would be a revelation to those who “know little or positively nothing of the world’s greatest treasure box”, and newspaper advertisements quoted one local college trustee who stated that it was the “duty of teachers and parents to accompany their children to visit this show as they may never have the opportunity again”.<sup>70</sup> Craft demonstrations were an effective exhibitionary tool to promote this sense of learning, and were a familiar model of display, evoking more established colonial relationships with continental Native Americans. A working exhibit of “carvers, basket workers and weavers from all of the Alaska Indian tribes” promised to show visitors the “entire process” of Alaskan craft production “as it is done in the native villages in the North”. The magazine article describing the exhibit informed readers that one collection had been valued at \$15,000.<sup>71</sup> As Cyndi Banks has noted, the emphasis on the processes of production invited visitors to assume the role of critical, knowledge-gaining observers. The reference to the products’ value allowed them to become distinguishing assessors of worth, and emphasised the importance of economic contribution to imperial rankings. Elevated above the indigenous Alaskan craft producers as

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<sup>70</sup> William H. Raymond, ‘Uncle Sam’s Next Big Show’, *Sunset*, 22.5 (1909), p.451; *Seattle Star*, 26 June 1909.

The newspaper advert quoted N.G. Blalock, President of the Board of Trustees at Whitman College, Washington.

<sup>71</sup> Raymond, ‘Uncle Sam’s Next Big Show’, pp.458-460.



knowledgeable evaluators of their skills and value, visitors were assured of their cultural, racial, and imperial superiority, and of their ability to know and judge the territory's population.<sup>72</sup> To know the Alaskan was to learn of his/her standing within the racial and imperial hierarchies of both America and the world.

### ***The 'Willing Subject' in Seattle's Backyard***

While the Eskimo Village at San Francisco (1894) had established a spectacle of difference through constructions of distance, at Seattle (1909), fair organisers sought to remap the nation's relationship with the North in order to promote Alaskan investment and reflect the territory's greater integration within America's imperial economy. Commercial texts and magazines no longer conceptualised Alaska as part of a distant, frozen, and vague North, but remapped the territory as an extension of America's Pacific Northwest, and a central component of the nation's new empire. A guidebook published by the Northern Pacific Railway described the host city as "practically touching elbows with Alaska and the Yukon territory", and emphasised that Alaska "belonged to the whole country".<sup>73</sup> Ignoring the hundreds of miles of Canadian territory in between, the guidebook reconceptualised Alaska as a close neighbour and national possession. The president of the Century publishing company similarly worked to shrink and condense the region, claiming of Seattle: "Her customers are the rich miners and ranchers of the interior; Alaska is her back yard; her hinterland the whole United States; her foreign field the vast borders of the

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<sup>72</sup> Banks, 'Ordering the Other', in Bosworth and Flavin (eds.), *Race, Gender, and Punishment*, p.35.

<sup>73</sup> *The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (St Paul: Northern Pacific Railway, 1909), p.4.

Pacific; her destiny the metropolis of the Pacific Coast".<sup>74</sup> Plotting a map that linked Seattle to Alaska, Asia, the Pacific territories, and the American nation, firmly placed the Alaskan population within the rubric of America's Pacific empire. As local businessmen proclaimed that Seattle was the only city in the world to own an entire territory, the host city's special proprietary interest in Alaska dictated the spatial organisation of the fair.<sup>75</sup>

The Eskimo exhibit at San Francisco fifteen years earlier had been located on the edge of the fair grounds, on a plot of land much larger than the majority of the midway concessions [see Appendix 2]. At Seattle, the exhibit was far more centrally located on the northern end of the midway, close to the main entrance and to the central 'Arctic Circle' courtyard. The government's official Alaska Building was located opposite the large U.S. Government Building, and the fair's pathways and courtyards bore names such as 'Alaska Avenue', 'Seward Avenue', and 'Nome Circle' [see Appendix 4].<sup>76</sup> This cartographical design effectively integrated Alaska within the same framework of empire that conceptualised the new island territories, as the fair also included a 'Philippine Avenue', and contributed to the "imperial-theme park" atmosphere of the exposition as a whole.<sup>77</sup> As Sarah Moore has noted, world's fairs functioned as ideological maps that organised notions of civilisation, and fixed nations and people along visual and spatial coordinates. This spatial organisation functioned

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<sup>74</sup> Frank H. Scott, 'Personal Impressions of Seattle and the Fair: A Letter from the President of the Century Company', *Century Magazine*, 79.1 (1909), p.155.

<sup>75</sup> Terrence M. Cole, 'Promoting the Pacific Rim: The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909', *Alaska History*, 6.1 (1991), p.21.

<sup>76</sup> Gold was discovered in Nome, Alaska in 1899, sparking the Alaskan gold rush. William H. Seward was the Secretary of State between 1861 and 1869, and orchestrated the 1867 Alaska Purchase.

<sup>77</sup> Robert W. Rydell, 'Visions of Empire: International Expositions in Portland and Seattle, 1905-1909', *Pacific Historical Review*, 52.1 (1983), p.39.

to render the world visible, and thus coherent and meaningful.<sup>78</sup> In addition, these spaces taught visitors to police the borders of inclusion and exclusion within the new household of empire by inscribing their bodies with new imperial and racial relationships.<sup>79</sup> The spatial arrangements at Seattle functioned to fix Alaska's place within the nation's new collection of territorial possessions, and to bring the territory closer to the contiguous United States.

The remapping of Alaska at the Seattle fair demonstrates the ability of individuals and institutions outside of the official governmental or exposition machine to shape the representations and racialisations of the nation's new territories and peoples. The initial impetus for the Seattle exposition came from the Alaska Club, a locally based organisation formed to promote Alaska's resources and industry, which was an adjunct of the Chamber of Commerce.<sup>80</sup> In addition, American colonial elites travelled from Alaska to Seattle in order to project their vision of the territory's future under American control. While colonial elites sought to redefine Alaska's regional identity by emphasising educational progress in the government's Alaska Building, they similarly attempted to present a progressive and distinctly white vision of the North in the midway concession.<sup>81</sup> The Gold Camps of Alaska exhibit depicted the territory's opportunities for white settlers, investors, and prospectors. Framed by the press as the "Biggest and Truest Picture of Alaska Life" at the fair, the Gold Camps exhibit directly challenged and supplemented the Eskimo Village. Presenting visitors with the opportunity to "Stake your claim, prospect your

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<sup>78</sup> Moore, *Empire on Display*, p.99.

<sup>79</sup> Kopf, 'Picturing Difference', p.115.

<sup>80</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, pp.188-189.

<sup>81</sup> Josh Reid points to the efforts of Mary E. Hart to promote safe visions of education, farming, and family life in the territory within the Alaska Building. Reid, 'Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens', pp.115-116.

ground, pan your nuggets”, the exhibit depicted Alaska through an imperial lens, and assured visitors of their rightful ownership of the region’s natural resources.<sup>82</sup>

The concession not only emphasised the personal economic benefits of America’s purchase, but also transformed the icy territory into a safe and attractive space for white Americans with its Alaska Theatre of Sensations [see Figure 5.4]. Featuring white entertainers who participated in dancing and singing recitals, the theatre erased the indigenous body, and allowed Alaska’s colonial elites to redefine the territory’s identity as geographically American and racially white.<sup>83</sup> Excluding native Alaskan performers from this celebratory concession of wealth and opportunity reconceptualised Alaska as an extension of America. Rather than establishing difference through distance, the exhibit staged the collapse of distances to promote sameness through closeness.<sup>84</sup> The two midway exhibits – one that demonstrated Alaskans within two imperial hierarchies, and one that promoted Alaska without the Alaskans – brought the territory within the same framework of empire as the island possessions, and visualised the textual narrative of ‘our land’ and ‘their people’.

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<sup>82</sup> *Seattle Star*, 5 June 1909.

<sup>83</sup> Reid, ‘Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens’, p.116.

<sup>84</sup> Patrick Young, ‘From the Eiffel Tower to the Javanese Dancer: Envisioning Cultural Globalization at the 1889 Paris Exhibition’, *The History Teacher*, 41, 3 (2008), p.349.

**Figure 5.4. Alaska Theatre of Sensations at the Seattle fair (1909).**

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**'Alaska Theatre of Sensations, Pay Streak, Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition, Seattle, Washington, 1909', x1854, Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition Collection, PH Coll 727.651, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Division.**

The linked exhibitionary techniques of remapping and Americanising Alaska were fundamentally part of a process to portray the Alaskan native population as willing subjects in America's empire. Depicting Alaskan performers in the Eskimo Village as the intermediate group in a simultaneously regional and international imperial hierarchy established both their need for American intervention, and their potential for uplift. Craft demonstrations emphasised Alaskans' limited skills and inability to exploit sufficiently the

numerous resources in the territory, and allowed white visitors to position themselves as superior assessors of the region's economic contribution. The vaudeville atmosphere of the Gold Camps of Alaska exhibit highlighted the established white settlements in the region, and the presence of white female performers emphasised the safety of the Northern territory. While the Alaskan natives were certainly not as romantic as Hawaiians and Samoans, they did share elements of the Polynesians' hospitality, and crucially they were not regarded as savage or resistant to colonialism as the Filipino population were.

There was a role for Alaskans within the imagined household of empire, and it was one of willing subject. In a scrapbook of photographs made by a visitor to the Seattle fair, a small image of an Eskimo performer in fur clothing was accompanied by the handwritten text, 'A willing subject' [see Figure 5.5]. While perhaps a willing subject for the photograph, this interaction with an Alaskan performer demonstrates the visitor's acknowledgement of the power relations that made the exhibit possible, and his interpretation of the relationship as consensual and non-violent. As Ann Stoler has noted in regard to the photographs of Javanese servants in Dutch colonial family albums, servants were often featured in these collections as unremarked and unnamed entities, yet were nevertheless placed within the intimacy of family bonds, and this tension of intimacy displayed a clear domestic order.<sup>85</sup> The scrapbook included various images of the Seattle exposition, and contained the dedication, "A slight token of appreciation. Your grandson, Valentine Chase Shimons".<sup>86</sup> Shimons

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<sup>85</sup> Ann L. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p.188.

<sup>86</sup> Valentine Chase Shimons, *Photographs Taken at the Exposition*, in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno.

situated the unnamed Alaskan performer not only within the exhibitionary order of the exposition and his scrapbook, but also within the intimate setting of the new imperial household. The depiction of Alaska and its population at the Seattle fair contributed to the construction of a benign, willing subject, and positioned the population within the newly imperial and Pacifically-oriented racial order. In 1912, the Second Organic Act established Alaska as an organised incorporated territory with an elected legislature. In 1959, Alaska finally achieved American statehood.

**Figure 5.5. Photograph of Alaskan performer in a visitor-produced scrapbook about the Seattle fair (1909).**

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## **Regulating the Ideal 'Native':**

### **Hawaiians and Samoans on Display**

The existing image of Polynesians as the 'Noble Savage' abroad complicated the racial framing of Hawaiians and Samoans at the West Coast world's fairs. As supposedly romantic and semi-civilised 'primitives' descended from the Aryan race, Polynesians raised questions about the suitability and necessity of colonial uplift in the tropics. Despite being linked by their Polynesian status, there were clear differences in the racialisation of Hawaiians and Samoans at the fairs, reflecting the differing terms of America's relationship with the island nations. Midway exhibits frequently positioned the two groups near the top of the new imperial racial hierarchy and Pacifically-oriented racial order, and espoused their positive traits. Yet despite this – and because of it – the racial framing of the Polynesian populations required significant regulatory efforts from a number of key actors concerned with the depiction of the islands. On the midway, Hawaiians became the ideal 'natives' through the controlled merging of romantic Polynesian traits and American modernity, and hula performers became a popular though highly contested and regulated symbol of Hawaii. Less integrated within the colonial machine, Samoans became representatives of an admirable and safe form of savagery, yet this too had to be controlled.

### ***Lightening the Tropics***

The 1898 Spanish-American War fundamentally altered America's relationship with the Pacific region, and solidified the terms of its colonial power in Hawaii. Until the outbreak of war with the Spanish Empire, the American government

had considered reversing the 1893 monarchical overthrow and restoring the islands' sovereignty. The war overrode moral concerns and situated Hawaii within a larger military and strategic structure, thus putting an end to debates about annexation, which passed through Congress in 1898.<sup>87</sup> After the war, public discourse began to situate Hawaii in relation to the new territories America had gained from Spain, as well as in relation to populations on the mainland, and thus Hawaii became part of a "renegotiated imaginary" of the imperial household.<sup>88</sup> At the fairs in Portland (1905) and Seattle (1909), various race-making agents worked to merge the positive racial traits of the Polynesian with features of American modernity in order to embed the Hawaiian performers in a privileged position within the American Pacific racial order.

At Portland (1905), Hawaiian performers appeared as part of the Royal Hawaiian Band, which consolidated their status as subservient entertainers and representatives of the islands' past. As Polynesians, the Hawaiian participants represented the evolutionary past of humankind; as performers in the royal band, they embodied the islands' semi-civilised, monarchical past. A newspaper report described the group as "picturesque", with its "dusky-skinned musicians" who were like "big children", and claimed, "nearly everybody is musical in their far off island home, the pearl of the Pacific".<sup>89</sup> The racialisation of the Hawaiians as dusky and almost childlike represented their inferior yet admirable position in the imperial racial hierarchy. Although they were not white, the performers were certainly not black, and though childlike, they were placed in an interstitial position between childhood and adulthood, and were therefore

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<sup>87</sup> Fojas, *Islands of Empire*, pp.96-97.

<sup>88</sup> Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.35.

<sup>89</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 25 August 1905.

closer to white civilisation than their islander counterparts from the Philippines. The suggestion that nearly all of the population had musical skills functioned to universalise the islands' picturesque status, and established the need for white intervention in serious matters such as government and economic exploitation. The romantic depiction of the 'pearl' of the Pacific represented an "aestheticization of imperial expansion", which obscured Hawaiian resistance and transformed the island landscape from an area of increased militarisation and colonial conflict to one of pleasure for both tourists and settlers.<sup>90</sup> The musical exhibit at Portland offered a contained image of native charm yet childlike vulnerability, and transformed the recent monarchical overthrow and annexation into an entertaining spectacle of the past.

At the Seattle exposition four years later, exhibitors and mediators sought to move on from representations of the past, and instead depict the present progress under formal American rule. Unlike the Philippines, Hawaii had well established American institutions, and this existing colonial structure and white population meant Hawaiian annexation echoed the settlement of the continent.<sup>91</sup> At Seattle, fair organisers collaborated with Hawaii's white colonial elite to marry the image of Polynesian hospitality with that of American modernity, thus constructing an ideal image of the non-white 'native'. Hawaiian performers appeared in the Pineapple Growers' Association exhibit, and were primarily a tool for the promotion of the Hawaiian economy. The exhibit featured Hawaiian women "of good families", who served pineapple and spoke English, and were chaperoned by a Mrs William J. Cooper. The official

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<sup>90</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.37.

<sup>91</sup> Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago*, pp.215-217.

government report on the fair noted that the “girls were in themselves an excellent exhibit for Hawaii, for their beauty, amiability, and lady-like demeanor made a deep impression and gave to visitors a favorable idea of the cultivation of the better class of native”.<sup>92</sup> The presence of Hawaiian performers in a service position established the islands’ subservient and primarily economic relationship with the mainland, and echoed existing narratives of Polynesian hospitality. The effects of American progress were emphasised through the metaphor of ‘cultivation’, and were embodied in the display through the performers’ American chaperone. Mrs Cooper represented the colonial argument that ongoing regulation would be necessary to control and economise the islands. As Meg Armstrong has noted, descriptions of beauty on the midway suggested an extension of positive cultural traits and indicated a level of civilisation.<sup>93</sup>

The notion of a better class of native referred to the tendency of Hawaii’s colonial elite to recruit ‘hapa haole’ (part-white, part-native Hawaiian) women to represent the islands. The privileging of the hapa haole represented the white colonial elite’s efforts to establish an image of the islands as a modern, fully colonised territory that was a more integrated and American possession than the nation’s other dependencies.<sup>94</sup> This image depended upon the merging of positive Polynesian racial traits with a belief in the uplifting effects of American contact. The hapa haole symbolised a literal merging of the Polynesian and Euro-American races. Emerging from racial theoretical ideas

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<sup>92</sup> *Participation in the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition*, pp.86-87.

<sup>93</sup> Meg Armstrong, “A Jumble of Foreignness”: The Sublime Musayums of Nineteenth-Century Fairs and Expositions’, *Cultural Critique*, 23 (1992), p.221.

<sup>94</sup> Imada, *Aloha America*, p.157; Reid, ‘Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens’, p.115.

about the significance of blood quantum and the Aryan heritage of the Polynesian race, the hapa haole were the human product of the colonial effort to lighten the tropics. Popular literature on the islands espoused the potential for racial mixing in Hawaii, with Caspar Whitney arguing that a “fusion of interests and people” would make Hawaii the “happiest, most truly prosperous land on the face of the globe”.<sup>95</sup> The exhibition of hapa haole women at the fair visualised this sentiment. Abigail Markwyn has pointed to the inherent tension within the display of the hapa haole. While white colonial elites sought to use the hapa haole as a sanitised and romanticised vision of the islands’ history, and a progressive vision of Hawaii’s future, their presence as modern, racially mixed young women disrupted racial and gender hierarchies on the American mainland.<sup>96</sup> In seeking to promote and domesticate Hawaii, white colonial elites temporarily disrupted the racial order on the West Coast.

In the Hawaiian Building, images of racially mixed Hawaiians by Californian photographer Caroline H. Gurrey similarly promoted the beauty and potential of the hapa haole. Anne Maxwell has argued that this whitening and aestheticisation of the Hawaiian race functioned to camouflage the population’s resentment of American occupation by denying them a position of racial difference.<sup>97</sup> The racialisation of the hapa haole as superior, beautiful, and almost white, promoted an ideal future for the native Hawaiian, and a form of colonial uplift – racial mixing – that fair and colonial officials did not promote

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<sup>95</sup> Whitney, *Hawaiian America*, p.61.

<sup>96</sup> Abigail M. Markwyn, *Empress San Francisco: The Pacific Rim, the Great West, and California at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), pp.59-60.

<sup>97</sup> Anne Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions: Representations of the ‘Native’ and the Making of European Identities* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999), pp.218-220. See also, Waldroup, ‘Ethnographic Pictorialism’, pp.172-183.

elsewhere. Hawaii's long history of racial mixing and the established control of white colonial elites on the islands made this positive vision of racial mixing possible, although the transplantation of the hapa haole on to American soil temporarily disrupted the regional racial lexicon of the West Coast.<sup>98</sup> The positive image of the native Hawaiians at the West Coast fairs demonstrated the privileged position of the population within the new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy. Yet the sustained efforts of regulation by various exposition actors and race-making agents demonstrated the complexity of such a positive racialisation.

### ***Scripting the Hula***

At the twin Californian fairs (San Francisco 1915, San Diego 1915-1916) the image of the Hawaiian as the ideal 'native' was embodied within the figure of the female hula dancer. However, the sexual undertones of this performance required even greater regulation from fair organisers, concession owners, and colonial elites. A newspaper report on the Hawaiian Village at San Francisco (1915) described the dancing girls as "artists in their respective line and headed by the world-famous hula star, Princess Kalia". Stating that "natives are feasting, dancing and playing their favourite, eerie strains", the article claimed that the village was under the direction of Kimo O. Evans, who had twenty years' experience in the theatrical business, and was owned by well-known San Franciscan businessman, L.V. Roberts.<sup>99</sup> The show business credentials of the Hawaiian exhibit, with its star performers and experienced directors,

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<sup>98</sup> F. James Davis, 'The Hawaiian Alternative to the One-Drop Rule', in Naomi Zack (ed.), *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1995), p.115, p.125.

<sup>99</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 January 1915.

demonstrates the dominance of hula as a form of entertainment and symbol for Hawaii by 1915; a significant development since the first hula tour in North America in 1892. Native Hawaiians regarded the hula as an embodied practice of animating the genealogies of gods and chiefs, and in the 1880s, it was resurrected by the Hawaiian monarchy as a form of anti-imperialist resistance. As Adria Imada has noted however, to Americans, the hula created an “imagined intimacy” between the U.S. and Hawaii, allowing the public to cast colonial relations as benevolent and consensual, and to interpret the Hawaiian body as passive and available.<sup>100</sup> Yet the obvious sexual aspects of the hula in American performances, with its fetishisation of the female body, required strict regulation.

Despite being a privately owned concession, the Hawaiian Village remained under the remit of the fair organisers. A typed piece of paper in the official exposition records, entitled ‘Hawaiian Theatre’, contained a detailed vision of a Hawaiian performance. Featuring “Natives in primitive costumes”, a performer playing the part of the islands’ former queen, and a large volcano, the document focused on the form of the hula dancer. The document stated:

Enter – Hula girls two from right and two from left decked with flowers and carrying garlands which they sway gleefully as they dance toward the queen salaam and continue on with that dance. The sentinels join in this dance with a lot of clapping of hands. The Hula girls finish the dance by throwing a daisy chain over the shoulders of the ancient chanting poet just as he enters, and teasingly drags him before the queen. He commences his chant to the Queen.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Imada, *Aloha America*, pp.11-12, p.54.

For more on the politics of colonial intimacy, see Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*.

<sup>101</sup> ‘Hawaiian Theatre’, in folder 3, carton 64, Panama Pacific International Exposition Records, 1893-1929, BANC MSS C-A 190, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

The fair official's detailed scripting of the hula dancers' bodies framed the performers as picturesque yet sexual. As Jane Desmond has argued, the performing body is central to presentations of difference, as in its non-narrative, nonverbal form it binds notions of presence, naturalism, and authenticity together under the sign of "spectacular corporeality".<sup>102</sup> Yet as this document shows, the performing bodies on the midway were never natural or authentic, but highly scripted and regulated by a number of interested exhibitors and mediators.

Several key actors resisted the portrayal of the hula dancer at San Francisco (1915). The official history of the fair claimed that the Hawaiian Village was "hardly representative", and executed a "rather meagre program", going on to note that the Hawaiian Commissioner had objected to the exhibit's name on the basis that it "did not reflect the life of such a community", and thus the concession was renamed "Hula Dancers".<sup>103</sup> For white colonial elites, the hula dancer figure strayed from the respectable and submissive hapa haole that had served visitors pineapple in Seattle (1909). While this sexualised image damaged colonial narratives of uplift, it also disrupted San Francisco's efforts to displace the city's reputation as a capital of vice and racial diversity. Detailing a report on the fair and the city by the American Social Hygiene Association, one magazine stated that the Hawaiian exhibit was morally objectionable in its content. With its "scantly clad women" who gave "exhibitions of muscle dancing skilfully calculated to appeal to the sex impulse and morbid sex curiosity", the association condemned the Hawaiian exhibit for contributing to

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<sup>102</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.xv.

<sup>103</sup> Frank M. Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, vol.2 (New York: Panama-Pacific International Co., 1921), p.352.



the fair's "dangerous and demoralizing" conditions.<sup>104</sup> Although the body of the hula dancer functioned to configure imperial relations, it was also a physical presence upon which visitors could project the sexual desires and anxieties of empire.

The hula dancer was an extension of what Anne McClintock has referred to in the European context as a "porno-tropics" for the imagination, in which indigenous women were depicted as the epitome of sexual excess.<sup>105</sup> The erasure of native Hawaiian men at the twentieth century West Coast world's fairs feminised the islands and cast them as hospitable, yet simultaneously raised the spectre of sex across the colour line. While the hospitable hapa haole symbolised the acceptable and regulated product of white-Hawaiian relations, and aligned with colonial narratives about economic productivity and native subservience, the hula dancer represented a transgressive subject of lust that undermined the ordered colonial vision of the islands.<sup>106</sup>

At the San Diego fair (1915-1916), another protest over the hula dance highlighted the tensions between various key actors who wished to represent Hawaiians at the fair. A newspaper article stated, "Hawaii has protested against the hula hula dance given at the Exposition". This resistance towards the performance did not come from the native Hawaiian population, but from the white colonial elite that resided on the islands, and had claimed the 'Hawaiian' designation as their own. The complaint to the secretary of the exposition came from A.P. Taylor, the Secretary of the Hawaii Promotion Committee, and asserted that the exhibit was a "disgrace and a blot upon the fair name of our

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<sup>104</sup> 'Facts About Vice at San Francisco', *The Survey*, 34.23 (1915), p.498.

<sup>105</sup> Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p.22; Imada, *Aloha America*, p.68.

<sup>106</sup> Imada, *Aloha America*, p.122.

territory” due to its “hoochi-koochi” style that was “not a hula at all”. The newspaper article disputed this opinion, arguing that the display had charmed “thousands” and left the “most cultured American citizens applauding”, referring to Presidential candidate, Charles Evans Hughes, who had visited the exhibit and was “highly pleased and saw no vulgarity”. The article also quoted the concession’s manager, J.B. Pendleton, who stated, “no single complaint has been made about a single dance”.<sup>107</sup> Hula performances were popular with the American public, and were profitable for concession owners and the fair management. Yet for colonial elites in Hawaii, who worked to promote economic investment in the region, hula performers threatened capitalist investment by depicting the islands as primitive and underdeveloped.<sup>108</sup> Declaring concerns about ‘our’ territory, and echoing the efforts of Alaska’s colonial inhabitants, Hawaii’s white elites attempted to obscure native Hawaiian culture and mitigate evidence of non-whiteness on the islands.

For the American public, it was exactly this non-whiteness and racial difference that made live exhibits so appealing. Fair organisers had to negotiate the popularity and profitability of hula performances on the one hand, with concerns about respectability, authenticity, and the cooperation of colonial elites as exhibitors on the other. The issue of authenticity was particularly important to fair officials at San Diego (1915-1916). With their professed interest in the “phases” of life, the fair management had promised visitors a “comprehensive exhibition of human development”, and the Director of Exhibits, Edgar L. Hewett, was a prominent anthropologist and archaeologist.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> *San Diego Union*, 29 August 1916.

<sup>108</sup> Imada, *Aloha America*, p.122.

<sup>109</sup> *San Diego Exposition News*, 1.6 (1912), pp.10-11.

As colonial elites worked to Americanise and lighten the islands, fair officials – in their quest for authenticity – sought to display the ‘real’ Hawaii as it was before white contact. Echoing the twentieth century fascination with Southwestern Native Americans and primitivism, this turn to ‘old’ Hawaii at San Diego reflected the American public’s “imperialist nostalgia”, and their yearning for the cultures that they had helped to destroy.<sup>110</sup> Guidebooks and newspapers keenly emphasised the authenticity and credibility of the hula performers, claiming that they had “never before left the islands”, and were “not gathered in Honolulu, but up in the back country, where manners of ancient Hawaii still persist”.<sup>111</sup>

The interest in ‘old’ Hawaii reflected racial concerns about the degradation of primitive cultures in the face of modern, industrialised white races, and an ambivalent attitude towards America’s possession of Polynesian territories. Less concerned about the economics of empire as its Pacific Northwest counterparts, and less beholden to civic concerns about respectability as its San Franciscan sister event, the San Diego fair’s quest for authenticity brought the exhibition of the Hawaiian population back to its pre-annexation beginnings, and located the race’s admirable traits in its Polynesian heritage. These ambivalences, discontinuities, and slippages in the representation of Hawaiians as both admirable ‘primitives’ and on the road to extinction were a product of what Ali Behdad has described as the “predicaments of belatedness”, as latecomers to the “exoticist project” sought to

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<sup>110</sup> Renato Rosaldo, ‘Imperialist Nostalgia’, *Representations*, 26 (1989), pp.107-108.

<sup>111</sup> *San Diego, Panama California Exposition* (n.p.,1914); *San Diego Union*, 1 January 1915.

discover the exotic Other within an established colonial machine.<sup>112</sup> An image of the hula dancers at San Diego suggested that the performers' racial heritage varied, which perhaps embodied the fair officials' intentions to exhibit the phases of life on the islands [see Figure 5.6]. The picturesque scene, with four costumed, smiling women, represented another highly regulated vision of the hula dancer as the ideal 'native'.

**Figure 5.6. Hula dancers at the San Diego fair (1915-1916).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***San Diego, Panama California Exposition (n.p., 1914).***

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<sup>112</sup> Ali Behdad, *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), p.1, p.13.

For a detailed discussion of 'Old Hawaii' in the writings of Jack London, see Lauren C. Smith, 'Diversions of Progress: Popular Culture and Visions of Modernity in the Transpacific Borderlands' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, San Diego, 2012), pp.42-109.

The Hawaiian performers at the twentieth century West Coast world's fairs became the ideal non-white 'natives', and achieved the highest position – beneath the white American – in America's newly international and Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy. This ideal native was "raced" as a light brown and "gendered" as female, and was cast as a romantic and picturesque 'primitive'.<sup>113</sup> Yet various key actors – including fair officials, concession owners, colonial elites, visitors, and the performers themselves – debated the specific features of this ideal native state. In particular, these actors sought to regulate and script the relative emphasis on the population's Polynesian heritage and the effects of American uplift. As the twentieth century progressed, the ideal native was regularly embodied within the figure of the hula dancer. As legible, desirable, and assimilable exhibits of race, hula displays assured visitors that the Hawaiian population could be civilised without degrading their Polynesian charm, and thus disseminated a pro-annexation message.<sup>114</sup> Yet the Hawaiians' privileged position in the imperial racial hierarchy had its limits. In her published memoir on the San Francisco exposition (1915), visitor Elizabeth Platt Deitrick reminded herself at the Hawaiian exhibit that "While ours, we of course class it as foreign".<sup>115</sup> As Jane Desmond has noted, beneath the admiration for the Hawaiians was the "almost-but-not-quiteness", and indeed not quite whiteness, of the "ever-subordinate".<sup>116</sup> Hawaiian petitions for statehood were rejected in

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<sup>113</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.5.

<sup>114</sup> Imada, *Aloha America*, p.5; Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago*, p.80.

<sup>115</sup> Elizabeth Platt Deitrick, *Best Bits of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and San Francisco* (San Francisco: Galen Publishing Co., 1915), p.51.

<sup>116</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.56.

1903, 1911, 1913, and 1915. The U.S. had taken Hawaii, but it would not take Hawaiians until the territory finally achieved statehood in 1959.<sup>117</sup>

### ***Clothing the Samoan***

Although the terms of imperialism in Samoa were vastly different from those in Hawaii, the two islands were linked in their Polynesian status. The admirable racial classification of 'Polynesian' helped to underpin narratives of uplift in the case of the Hawaiian population, yet it also brought into question the desirability of white contact. The romanticist scheme of primitivity valued the simple lifestyle of the Polynesian, and cautioned against the degradation of foreign influences, thus bringing the suitability of colonial uplift in Polynesia into question. Hawaii's economic value overrode such concerns in that instance, but America had annexed Samoa in 1900 for naval purposes, and its lack of economic value prevented a policy of settlement, and thus of colonial uplift.<sup>118</sup> The imperialist nostalgia and quest for authenticity that characterised the Hawaiian exhibit at San Diego (1915-1916) found an outlet in the form of the Samoan.

A commemorative text for the San Francisco Midwinter Fair (1894) quoted the manager of the Samoan Village on his difficulties in choreographing the authentic South Sea scene.

'My hardest task is to make these people wear their clothes,' said the gentleman who has charge of the Samoan Village ... He added that one of the camp rules was for each man to wear two shirts, and for each woman to be clothed in at

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<sup>117</sup> Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, p.236.

<sup>118</sup> Go, "'Racism" and Colonialism', p.51, p.54; Diana L. Ahmad, 'Embracing Manifest Destiny: The Samoan Experience', *Journal of the West*, 45.2 (2006), p.66, p.73.

least two garments, but that it kept his inspectors busy to enforce the regulation. In the scene portrayed by the engraving, these warm-blooded visitors from the South Seas were permitted to follow the bent of their inclinations to a certain extent.<sup>119</sup>

The issue of clothing was fundamentally one of respectability, yet concerns about appropriate dress on the midway frequently clashed with attempts by fair organisers to choreograph authenticity. As Sadiah Qureshi has argued in the nineteenth century British context, clothing was an essential marker of ethnic origin and human development, and became an important factor in the construction of the authentic live exhibit. Yet authenticity itself was a constructed concept on the midway that required constant regulation, and the authentic live display was largely a combination of the manager's desires, the willingness of the performer, and the audience's expectations.<sup>120</sup> The existing image of the Polynesian 'South Sea Islander' situated the racial group close to nature, and thus a level of nudity was expected, yet the concession's manager had concerns about the format of his exhibit.

The accompanying image of the Samoans in the commemorative text demonstrated that in the case of the male performers at least, the concession manager's rules were breached. The male performers posed without shirts, with wooden oars in their hands, although the female performers wore a more substantial costume [see Figure 5.7]. At the turn of the twentieth century, American travellers visited both Hawaii and Samoa, and although tourists celebrated both archipelagos for their beautiful nature and populations, in written accounts, visitors favoured Samoa for its more exotic and seemingly

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<sup>119</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes.*

<sup>120</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, pp.119-121.

more authentic experience. The longstanding Euro-American presence in Hawaii had established very visible military and tourist machines on the islands, whereas Samoa appeared comparatively untouched by Western influences. Yet Samoa was nevertheless a landscape of contestation for several Western empires, and thus a visit to the archipelago represented an encounter with a form of “safe savagery”.<sup>121</sup> At the world’s fair, exhibitors and mediators controlled and regulated the savagery of the Samoan population even further, and thus visitors could overlook concerns about respectability due to the temporary, stylised, and commercial nature of their encounter with the ‘primitive’.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Ahmad, ‘Different Islands, Different Experiences’, p.98.

<sup>122</sup> Catherine Cocks, *Doing the Town: The Rise of Urban Tourism in the United States, 1850-1915* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp.190-191.



**Figure 5.7. Samoan group at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Group of South Sea Islanders', I0015208a.tif, Souvenir of the California Midwinter International Exposition, BANC PIC 1976.029--ffALB, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.**

Elsewhere in the commemorative text, there were several photographs of Samoan women, nude from the waist up. With captions such as 'Samoan Belles', the images depicted the women variously sitting or lying down in groups, draped in flower garlands and necklaces, with simple musical instruments for props. In contrast, the only other group to be photographed in a semi-nude state were the women of the Dahomeyan Village, and in that image, each woman held a spear or stick.<sup>123</sup> It is unclear whether these images were choreographed specifically for the commemorative text, or whether they depict

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<sup>123</sup> I have chosen not to reproduce images that depict nudity. See *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes*.

female performers as they appeared on the midway, although the absence of protest suggests that the former is more likely. Reproduced in a commemorative text, the photographs were rendered safe through the physical separation of the viewer and the performers. The varied props also marked the Samoans as safe, and placed them in a relative and superior relationship with the infamously violent choreography of the Dahomeyan exhibit.<sup>124</sup> As Janet Davis has noted, the depiction of nudity functioned as a marker of racial authenticity in the exhibition of non-white peoples, and was thus just as much of a construction as an elaborate costume.<sup>125</sup> Exhibitionary techniques of clothing and props, and the romanticist scheme of primitivism, rendered the Samoan exhibit and its expressions of primitivity safe and respectable for white visitors.

The safety of the 'native' figure under the romanticist scheme of primitivism occasionally transformed admiration into jealousy. In a collection of poems on San Francisco and its fair (1894), the poet struggled to reconcile his superiority over the Samoan performers with his admiration for them.

I saw the wild Samoan band,  
 Strange people from a distant land;  
 For summer time, I must confess,  
 I rather like the way they dress.  
 Dressed up in such outlandish suit,  
 Say wouldn't our young folks look cute?  
 'Twould quickly stop the woollen mills,

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<sup>124</sup> For more on the Dahomeyan exhibit, which was transported from the 1893 Chicago exposition, see Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, pp.65-66.

<sup>125</sup> Janet M. Davis, *The Circus Age: Culture and Society Under the American Big Top* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), p.85.

And make a wreck of laundry bills.

Now if my skin were only black,

I might wear nothing on my back.

Not even socks upon my feet,

And yet be welcome on the street.<sup>126</sup>

The poet's tongue-in-cheek concern for the future of the clothing industry reflected popular concerns about over-civilisation, and an ambivalence towards modernity and industrialisation. The yearning to mimic supposedly 'primitive' populations and "go native" demonstrated a desire for racial regeneration, and the ability of white Americans to subscribe to various contradictory racial theories that both subordinated and revered non-white populations.<sup>127</sup> Again, it was the regulation of a form of safe savagery on the midway that made such admiration possible.

The 1898 Spanish-American War solidified the strategic importance of Samoa. In an 1899 convention, America and Germany partitioned the archipelago, and in 1900, America formally occupied the eastern part of the territory. As Diana Ahmad and Julian Go have noted, the Samoan population largely welcomed the occupation, and due to the territory's low economic value, colonial officials did not seek to alter Samoan culture unless it directly contradicted American laws, and thus colonial officials disregarded the policies of tutelage and uplift in favour of a paternalistic form of preservation.<sup>128</sup> Unlike other live exhibits on the midway – including Native Americans, Asian

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<sup>126</sup> Daniel O. Loy, *Poems of the Golden State and Midwinter Exposition, Profusely Illustrated* (Chicago: Daniel Oscar Loy Publisher, 1894).

Loy does not appear to be an author by profession. His other two publications are about the Chicago world's fair (1893), and all of his texts are independently published.

<sup>127</sup> Huhndorf, *Going Native*, p.2, p.8.

<sup>128</sup> See Ahmad, 'Embracing Manifest Destiny', pp.51-53.

immigrants, and other colonial subjects – the Samoan exhibit did not feature narratives of progress and uplift. Instead, at the twentieth century West Coast expositions, exhibitors and mediators emphasised a constructed version of Samoan authenticity. At the San Francisco fair (1915), guidebooks claimed that the Samoan Village had “faithfully reproduced a bit of the romantic South Sea Islands”, and noted that the exhibit featured “natives in their native costumes living just as they do in their island home”.<sup>129</sup> Another text declared that the display had been “lifted bodily from the sunny south seas”, and housed performers that were “splendid specimens” who “live their life on the Zone as freely and as entertainingly as they lived it before they were transplanted”.<sup>130</sup> The spatial compression of island territory and metropole in this reproduction and transplantation did not cause fears of invasion or demographic overthrow as in the case of other exhibits, but represented a vision of America’s romantic and safe South Sea possession.

The racialisation of the Samoan performers at San Francisco (1915) also highlighted the contradictions inherent within the comparative imperial racial hierarchy. A local newspaper emphasised the popularity of the Samoan village, claiming that it “never failed to draw a crowd”, and referred to the concession’s performers as “copper-colored giants and handsome women”.<sup>131</sup> Lightened from black – as in the poem twenty-one years earlier – to copper, the newspaper celebrated the performers’ physical beauty. Another article highlighted the performers’ respectable origins, boasting that the village featured the “family of the chief of one of the principal island tribes”, including a princess who

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<sup>129</sup> *Panama-Pacific International Exposition 1915 Souvenir Guide* (San Francisco: The Souvenir Guide Publishers, 1915), p.16.

<sup>130</sup> *Guide to the Joy Zone* (San Francisco: Panama-Pacific International Exposition, 1915), p.6.

<sup>131</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 February 1915.

represented an “important tribal royalty”. This positive assessment of tribal affiliations differed greatly from the construction of tribal identities in the racialisation of Native American and Filipino peoples, and instead became a component of the admirable primitivism of the Polynesian race. Emphasising the performers’ authenticity by stating that they had “never before exhibited nor performed before the public except at Honolulu en route here”, the article confirmed the safe savagery of the Samoan population by claiming that the exhibit featured “Princess Tappi, or Princess Nellie, as she has Americanized her name”.<sup>132</sup> This suggestion of voluntary assimilation, alongside the performer’s royal credentials, ensured her respectability and functioned to aggrandise the display, drawing attention to the overarching spectacle of racial ‘not-quitiness’.<sup>133</sup> At the West Coast world’s fairs, it was not necessary to clothe the Samoans. The population’s Polynesian status, and its attendant position in America’s new imperial racial hierarchy and Pacific racial order, ensured that the Samoan performers could become admirable figures of a safe form of primitivism. Attempts to incorporate American Samoa failed in the 1940s due to resistance from Samoan chiefs. Today the territory is self-governed, although it officially remains an ‘unincorporated territory’ of the U.S.

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<sup>132</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 February 1915.

<sup>133</sup> Robert Bogdan discusses the process of ‘aggrandisement’ in freak show displays, in which the performer is endowed with status-enhancing characteristics in order to emphasise their ‘flaw’; in this case the performer’s non-whiteness. Robert Bogdan, *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p.97, pp.108-111.

### **Staging Savagery: Filipinos at the Pacific Northwest Fairs**

Historians and anthropologists have rightly regarded the Philippine exhibition at the St Louis fair (1904) as integral to the racial framing of the Filipino population.<sup>134</sup> The Filipino displays at the expositions in Portland (1905) and Seattle (1909) both built upon and distorted the popular images from St Louis, and spectacularised tropes of childishness and savagery that had entered the public consciousness during the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars. Colonial efforts to recast the Filipino from wartime aggressor to imperial beneficiary often clashed with the desires of fair organisers and concession managers to exploit the popular image of savagery. Using racialisation strategies and exhibitionary techniques that both spectacularised the Filipino performers and integrated them within the new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy, exhibitors and mediators staged the Filipinos as contained savages and happy subjects.

#### ***Ma(r)king the Igorot***

The hugely popular Philippine exhibit at St Louis (1904) – which occupied 47-acres of land and featured almost 1200 Filipino performers – was organised around the principle of island ‘tribal’ divisions. As early as 1899, colonial officials began to survey the islands, and a census produced in 1903 divided the population into three distinct races and 84 tribes. These constructed divisions represented colonial efforts to organise the islands along racial lines, and to justify imperial actions by simultaneously demonstrating incapacity for self-rule

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<sup>134</sup> See Jose D. Fermin, *1904 World's Fair: The Filipino Experience* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2004); Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, pp.167-178; Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, pp.229-284.

through disunity, and limited potential for uplift through American tutelage. Although these colonial divisions did not accurately reflect the Philippine population, the St Louis fair popularised an enduring stereotype of tribal relations.<sup>135</sup> Like the regional hierarchy within which the Eskimo Village placed the Alaskan, this tribal hierarchy represented the multiple and interconnected ways in which the Filipino population were ranked and assessed. Without full financial and organisational backing from the government, the Filipino displays at the Pacific Northwest fairs were on a much smaller scale. Privately owned, the exhibits only featured the Igorot 'tribe', who had been clearly placed on the lower end of the tribal hierarchy, and were popular with the public for their unusual performances.<sup>136</sup> Exhibited alone, the Igorot performers became significant representatives of the new island possession. The ways in which exhibitors physically and spatially marked the Igorots demonstrates the importance of attributing markers of appearance and behaviour in the process of racialisation.

Much like the other live concessions, clothing was an important marker of the Igorots' character. Although the Samoan group's lack of clothing indicated closeness to nature and an admirable simplicity, in the Igorots' case, it symbolised their savage traits and need for uplift. The official journal of the Portland fair (1905) described the Igorots as the "most conspicuous and easily the most interesting" of all of the tribes, because of their "strange customs and

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<sup>135</sup> Rick Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion: Empire and Migration in Filipino America, 1898-1946* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), pp.23-24, p.35; Fermin, *1904 World's Fair*, pp.45-47.

<sup>136</sup> Reid, 'Professor Igloo Jimmie and Dr. Boombang Meet the Heathens', pp.111-112. The term 'Igorot' is spelled in various ways throughout the secondary literature. I use the generally accepted spelling, except when differences occur in the primary sources. The term can be considered to have pejorative connotations today, and my use of it is intended only to reflect the historical designation.

method life”, which would be “as great a curiosity in the City of Manila as in Portland”. The article described the group’s clothing in great detail, noting that the “men wear only a breech-clout, called ‘G-string’, and a picturesque little hat ... In their native condition the women wear only an apron of leaves, but when in America they wear a short skirt and queer jacket made of native woven cloth”.<sup>137</sup> Asserting the need for additional clothing in the exposition context reflected concerns about respectability on the midway, and the colonial impulse to uplift the Filipino from their undesirable naked state. Casting the group’s limited costume as a “negative lack” contrasted with the admiration expressed for the Samoan performers, and represented the potential for various and competing interpretations of race within one overarching frame.<sup>138</sup> Despite similar physical markers, the Filipino and Samoan performers occupied opposite ends of the new imperial racial hierarchy.

At the Seattle fair (1909), the local press mentioned several efforts to clothe the Filipinos. In June, the *Seattle Star* reported that Bill Raymond, agent for the Concessionaires’ Association at the fair, had decided to take a group of Filipino performers to the Orpheum Theatre for a Press Club benefit event. Acknowledging that the stunt was clearly intended to promote the Philippine concession at the fair, and was “in itself worth the price of admission”, the newspaper noted, “Bill promises that his protégés will each and every one appear in fresh creased gee strings. Of course, Bill’s bunch will be dressed so as not to offend”.<sup>139</sup> Simultaneously a guaranteed draw and a breach of respectable behaviour, the Filipinos’ clothing – or lack thereof – became a clear and

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<sup>137</sup> *Lewis and Clark Journal*, 4.4 (1905), p.4.

<sup>138</sup> Go, “‘Racism’ and Colonialism”, pp.36-37, p.44.

<sup>139</sup> *Seattle Star*, 16 June 1909.



significant marker of the Igorots' low position in the islands' tribal hierarchy, and by extension, America's new Pacific racial hierarchy. Another newspaper article headlined "Al-Lo-Lo Has a Fine Pair of Trousers. Little Harold Somebody Takes Pity on Igorotte Boy Who Wears Only 'Gee-String'", stated:

Five-year-old Al-Lo-Lo, son of Mr and Mrs Al-Lo-Lo, bold, bad head hunters, dog eaters, etc, in the Igorotte village at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, received through the mail this morning a small package, childishly but neatly done up ... As Al-Lo-Lo is the nearest to a real boy in the Igorotte village, the package was turned over to him. It contained one pair of knickerbockers and a note, which read: 'Dear boy rooty town your legs are cold aint they heres pants wear them my pants nice pants good by harold' [sic]. Which tells the story of how, why, when and, wherefore 5-year-old Al-lo-Lo, son of Mr and Mrs Al-Lo-Lo, is wearing pants today.<sup>140</sup>

This story invited readers to compare the benevolent, white Harold, with the semi-nude Al-Lo-Lo in an anecdote of colonial uplift in miniature, which featured clothing as a marker of civilisation. The claim that Al-Lo-Lo was not quite a 'real boy' – in contrast to Harold who clearly was – demonstrated how central such physical markers were to frameworks of racial inferiority and evolutionary failure.

Mediators also marked the performers in the Igorot Village as inherently savage. In a guidebook to the Seattle fair (1909) a caption accompanying a photograph of the Filipino performers stated "Group of tatoed warriors, the flower of the fighting men of Igorrotland, in the Igorrote Village, of the

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<sup>140</sup> *Seattle Star*, 30 September 1909.

Philippines".<sup>141</sup> Marking the group physically with their tattoos and symbolically as the most violent tribe, the construction of 'Igorrotland' mapped a fictional space on the islands that was particularly savage. This specificity reflected colonial efforts to limit suggestions of violence after the official close of the Philippine-American War in 1902, and to instead focus on examples of progress and uplift. Yet for private concessionaires, the image of the violent Igorot was popular and profitable. In most cases, exposition texts internalised this threat of violence, framing it as a trait of the non-Christian tribes, and suggesting that it only occurred between Philippine tribes on the islands.<sup>142</sup> With fighting continuing between Filipinos and Americans as late as 1913, Philippine violence was a real threat. Unlike representations of Native American violence, which could be safely contained in the past, fair managers and concession owners had to make greater efforts to simultaneously spectacularise and regulate the image of the savage Igorot.

At the Portland fair (1905), these efforts of containment were particularly important as the event occurred so soon after the war's official end. One newspaper article assured visitors that the performers presented no threat on American soil by narrating the recent war in terms of relative civilisation.

While the Igorrotes are very warlike among themselves, the different tribes often having terrible fights, they are very friendly with the Americans. When the Americans first invaded Luzon, the Igorrotes were aroused, and attempted to drive the soldiers from the island. Several thousand of them attacked a Utah volunteer regiment, and were nearly annihilated. They charged the soldiers with bolos and knives, but were swept down before the bullets. That taught

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<sup>141</sup> *The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition and Seattle, The Beautiful Exposition City* (Seattle: Robert A. Reid, 1909).

<sup>142</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, p.30.

them a lesson, and not once since have they given the Americans any trouble. At the Igorrote village at the Exposition they obey the white men implicitly, as a rule, but sometimes, when they have grievances, they will pout and act like unruly children.<sup>143</sup>

Obscuring the Filipinos' organised resistance and long-standing efforts to gain independence, the article cast the Igorots as inferior children with pre-modern weapons, who were willing and able to learn from their white superiors. Clearly identifying the exposition as a safe space in which to encounter the Igorots, the article framed resistance at the fair as immature and childlike, and thus unthreatening.<sup>144</sup> Another article pointed to the inherent safety of the transplanted foreign site, noting, "Of course there will be no fighting for the Igorottes to do at the fair, unless they wish to get mixed up in a scance [sic] with the Police Department".<sup>145</sup> Establishing the safety and superiority of American space, these articles functioned to contain and obscure the ongoing warfare in the Philippines.

The architecture of the Philippine concession also functioned to mark the Filipino as a contained savage. The entrance to the Igorot Village at the Seattle fair (1909) consisted of a large, thatched-roof hut, upon which two American flags symbolically staked their claim to the islands, and white America's dominance over the Philippine population [see Figure 5.8]. As with many midway concessions, a small, raised stage at the entrance of the village gave visitors a preview of the exhibit inside. The raised stage, which was a common feature of freak show performances, held the visitors' gaze,

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<sup>143</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 5 September 1905.

<sup>144</sup> For more on the image of the Filipino as child, see Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, pp.43-59.

<sup>145</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 25 March 1905.

foregrounded the displayed body, and exposed it in a way that the traits presented as extraordinary – in this case the Igorots' skin colour, lack of clothing, and uncivilised traits – dominated the performance.<sup>146</sup> A sloped grass embankment and large fence separated the village from the midway. Inside the concession, wide-open spaces were punctuated with foliage, thatched residence huts, and fenced enclosures within which performers exhibited dances and other skills [see Figure 5.9]. This separation of visitor and performer formalised the performances, and assured visitors of their safety.

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<sup>146</sup> Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp.60-61.

**Figure 5.8. Igorot Village entrance at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Entrance to the Igorrote Village, Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition, Seattle, 1909', Frank H. Nowell Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Photographs, PH Coll 727, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collection Division.**

**Figure 5.9. Igorot Village at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Igorotte man holding a spear, Igorotte Village exhibit, Alaska-Yukon-Pacific-Exposition, Seattle, Washington, 1909', Eugene M. Weaver Photographs (PH Coll 772), University of Washington Libraries, Special Collection Division.**

Yet, many photographs also depicted visitors and performers in close contact, without clear boundaries between them. While mediating texts had arguably successfully contained and internalised the threat of the Igorot performer, this evidence of closeness also demonstrated one of the key draws of a live display: the possibility of contact with the racial Other. The co-existence of visitor and performer allowed boundaries to be temporarily crossed, but ultimately reconfirmed, as visitors encountered the staged 'them' in the safety of the collective 'us'.<sup>147</sup> Despite there being no physical boundaries between the performers and visitors in one particular image at the Portland fair (1905), physical markers reinforced the difference and distance between the two

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<sup>147</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.xv-xvi.

groups [see Figure 5.10]. All of the Igorot performers were similarly dressed in scant costumes and small caps, whereas the visitors – including men, women, and children – were clothed in formal dress and hats. The gramophone to the right of the image functioned as a marker of modernity, and appeared as a contrast to the Filipinos' pre-modern weapons and variously amused or confused facial expressions. Utilising physical and spatial markers, exhibitors and mediators constructed and spectacularised the 'Igorots'.

**Figure 5.10. Igorot performers at the Portland fair (1905).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition photograph album, Album 261, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.**

### ***The Spectacular Feast***

The ceremonial dog feast was the most popular and well-known marker of the Igorot performers. Originally intended as a one-off feature at the 1904 St Louis fair, the overwhelming press coverage and visitor attention ensured that the spectacle became an expected element of the Igorot performance, and an enduring racial stereotype.<sup>148</sup> At the Portland fair (1905), the dog feast was central to anticipations of the Igorot display long before the concession opened. Referring to a group of Filipinos that ultimately were not destined for the Portland exposition, a newspaper article quipped, “Natives En Route. Filipinos Are Ready to Sail for Portland Fair. Sad Times Ahead for Dogs”.<sup>149</sup> In an unfulfilled contract for the exhibit, dated November 1904, fair organisers stipulated that the concessionaire should “furnish its employees, natives of the Philippine Islands, with such sleeping accommodation and supply them with such food as they may have been accustomed to in their own country”.<sup>150</sup> In no other concession contract did the fair management make specific guidelines about food. Exposition managers linked dog meat so inextricably to the Igorot performers that they presented the feast as an inherent racial trait. In the fair’s official journal, visitors were informed, “All Igorrotes eat dog. It is a tribal dish ... Before agreeing to come to Portland, the Igorrote exacted a promise that their customs would not be interfered with, and they are permitted to have their favourite dish at the village”.<sup>151</sup> The assertion that dog meat was a ‘tribal dish’

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<sup>148</sup> Nancy J. Parezo and Don D. Fowler, *Anthropology Goes to the Fair: The 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p.181.

<sup>149</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 25 March 1905.

<sup>150</sup> Contract between Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition and International Anthropological Exhibit Company, in folder 1, box 39, Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair Records, 1894-1933, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society].

<sup>151</sup> *Lewis and Clark Journal*, 4.4 (1905), p.4



functioned to mark the Igorot performers as uncivilised, and at the lowest end not only of the Philippine tribal hierarchy, but also of the hierarchies of America's new imperial possessions and its newly Pacifically-oriented racial order.

The ceremony itself was a powerful spectacle of racial difference. In a photograph of the dog feast at the Portland fair (1905), two young Filipino boys in scant costume bent down to prepare the dog, surrounded by a large crowd of fully clothed, white men and boys [see Figure 5.11]. This type of exhibit, described by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett as an "in-situ" display, privileged the immersive experience of the encounter in order to construct a virtual world. This mimesis of 'native life' suggested authenticity, yet was no less constructed than exhibits that actively contextualised objects with narratives and labels.<sup>152</sup> Philippine researchers Patricia Afable and Jose Fermin point out that dog meat was not a staple of the Igorot diet; a fact acknowledged by American anthropologist, Dr Albert Jenks, who served in the colonial government in the Philippines and helped to choreograph the display at St Louis. In her study of the oral histories left by Filipino performers, Afable has stated that participants grew so tired of eating dog meat that they buried it at the edge of the fair grounds.<sup>153</sup> This oral history evidence directly contradicts claims in the *Morning Oregonian* that the Igorot performers that had been to previous world's fairs had "brought back tales about the almost numberless dogs in the land across the sea, and this was an added incentive for their making the trip. Dogs are very

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<sup>152</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp.3-4, pp.19-21.

<sup>153</sup> Patricia O. Afable, 'Journeys from Bontoc to the Western Fairs, 1904-1915: The "Nikimalika" and their Interpreters', *Philippine Studies*, 52.4 (2004), p.462; Fermin, *1904 World's Fair*, p.4.

rare indeed in Luzon, and are considered their great delicacy".<sup>154</sup> Exhibitors and mediators choreographed a spectacle of racial behaviours in order to amuse visitors and to visualise narratives of savagery.

**Figure 5.11. Igorot dog feast at the Portland fair (1905).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition photograph album, Album 261, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.**

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<sup>154</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 5 September 1905.

Despite being a wholly fabricated and choreographed feature, visitors and local residents accepted the dog feast as a racial trait peculiar to the Igorot population. One incensed visitor wrote to the fair's Secretary and Director of Exploitation, Henry Reed, to complain about the treatment of dogs by the "barbarious Iggorotes now holding high carnage" at the exposition. He stated:

Supposing some of our Oregon-bred Indians were to come to Portland and make a raid on dogs; how long would your chief of police permit them to live out of jail? Why, our Indians are not permitted to drink North End booze. Yet the officials of the Fair, hire these savages to come here and drag dogs around their sty by the neck.<sup>155</sup>

Circumscribed by the notion of racialised behaviours, the visitor's comparison demonstrates a relative and multilayered view of two populations – one domestic, one foreign – bound together in their non-whiteness. Structuring his encounter with the Philippine dog feast through prior racial encounters with local Native Americans, the visitor rehearsed a racial framework that encouraged comparative observations and interpretations, and defined behavioural traits in racial terms.<sup>156</sup> In a letter from the Oregon Humane Society to the *Morning Oregonian*, the society's secretary, W.T. Shanahan, stated that he felt moved by "numerous complaints coming from reputable citizens at home and other cities" to object to the feasts of the "benighted Igorrotes". Interpreting the feast as a product of inherent Philippine ignorance, Shanahan also attributed blame to the visitors who enjoyed such an exhibit, claiming that he would do what he could to remove the "disgusting and sickening spectacle from

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<sup>155</sup> The letter was originally addressed to the Mayor of Portland and forwarded to Reed. W.H. Grindstaff, letter to Henry E. Reed, September 13, 1905, in folder 4, box 10, , Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society.

<sup>156</sup> Jon Olivera, 'Colonial Ethnology and the Igorrote Village at the AYP', *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 101.3-4 (2010), p143.

the view of the morbid and curious seeker after nasty things”.<sup>157</sup> The spectacular dog feast, though popular and consistently profitable, could be a spectacle too far for some Americans.

The dog feast marked the Filipinos as savage and uncivilised by constructing unusual behavioural traits, and positioning the population at the beginning of their evolutionary development. Underpinning the public’s objection to the spectacle was a high level of sympathy for the dogs, which outweighed any concern for the conditions of the Philippine performers. By elevating the dogs above the Filipino performers, and declaring the feast inhumane, various key actors and race-making agents dehumanised the Filipinos and lowered them to the status of animals. Indeed, an article in the *Morning Oregonian* noted that the Igorots were “said to resemble animals more than any other race of people known”.<sup>158</sup> This racial animalising reflected evolutionary theories about the relationship between humans and apes, and the belief that certain races were further behind in their evolutionary development.<sup>159</sup> Preparing and eating a domesticated animal situated the Igorot performers in close proximity to the animal kingdom and to nature, yet this created vastly different meanings to the exhibitionary technique of embedding Native Americans, Alaskans, and Polynesians within a natural wilderness or paradise. The attribution of the appellation “dog-eater” to the Igorot performers was a constitutive and constructive act, which fixed the Filipinos at an early

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<sup>157</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 13 September 1905.

<sup>158</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 9 June 1905.

<sup>159</sup> Joe R. Feagin, *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp.104-105; Margo DeMello, *Body Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2014), pp.112-115.

stage in their evolutionary journey.<sup>160</sup> In doing so, it also positioned the population in a low position within America's new racial order.

### ***The 'Little Brown Brother'***

One effective technique to rank and hierarchise Filipinos was to racialise the population as childlike, in both familial and evolutionary terms. The term 'little brown brother', which has been attributed to William Howard Taft, symbolised the Filipinos' capacity for progress, and recast the Philippine-American War as an action of patriarchal discipline. As Kramer has argued, this familial discourse was essential to the inclusionary racism of the post-war, colonial state-building period, as it provided both metaphors of belonging and of hierarchy, and cast the Filipinos as the Americans' less developed relatives.<sup>161</sup> Exposition texts expressed this familial rhetoric of improvement, with one West Coast magazine promising visitors to the Seattle fair (1909) that "Uncle Sam is giving a quarter of a million to give the American people a correct knowledge of the much-misunderstood Filipino and his tremendous capacity for production and industrial excellence".<sup>162</sup> Whether the Filipinos' uncle or his elder brother, white Americans could be assured of their superior position in the new imperial racial hierarchy. The midway site encouraged comparative racial framing, and exposition texts and encounters reflected efforts of fair and colonial officials,

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<sup>160</sup> *Western World's Fair, Official Daily Program*, 135 (13 October 1905), in folder 7, box 10, Expositions and Fairs Collection, 344, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

<sup>161</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, pp.199-200.

William Howard Taft acted as Governor General of the Philippines (1901-1903), and Secretary of War (1904-1908).

<sup>162</sup> Raymond, 'Uncle Sam's Next Big Show', p.450.

concession managers, and visitors, to stage Filipinos within this relative framework.

During the Philippine-American War, various popular and official texts drew comparisons between Filipinos and Native Americans to cast the Filipinos as savage.<sup>163</sup> At the post-war West Coast fairs, texts and encounters reconfigured this comparison to assess the Philippine capacity for progress. A newspaper article heralding the arrival of the Filipino group at the Portland fair (1905) admired the group's physical traits, and claimed that they "look as intelligent as the average Indian. Their skin is of a rich, bronze color, a little darker than that of the Indian".<sup>164</sup> Placing the Filipinos in direct comparison with a familiar, domestic racial group, and assessing their intelligence and skin colour, the article situated the Filipinos in a relative position within the Pacific racial order. A newspaper article noting a visit by a troupe of Native American Wild West show performers to the Seattle fair (1909), reported an encounter between the Native American visitors and the Filipinos on the midway. It claimed that the "Bontoc head hunters gave them wild greetings and then pulled off a big war dance and sham battle which the redskins watched with close interest". Afterwards, the "Igorrotes gave the arena over to the Indians", who proceeded to "put over a war dance that kept the little brown brothers from Bontoc staring agape".<sup>165</sup> This encounter comparatively recreated the exhibitionary technique of spectacularising warfare. Such efforts had framed Native Americans as defeated relics of the past, and in its comparative

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<sup>163</sup> See Halili, Jr., *Iconography of the New Empire*, pp.59-80.

<sup>164</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 5 September 1905.

<sup>165</sup> *Seattle Star*, 16 July 1909.

'Bontoc' is a Philippine province, and is also used to describe certain Philippine peoples. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Igorot population were frequently identified with the province.

reproduction functioned to consign the more recent Philippine threat as another example of American military might and completed conquest, thus obscuring the ongoing violence in the Philippines.

However, comparisons between Filipinos and Native Americans could only function to a limited extent. The framework that situated Native Americans as trophies of the nation's conquered racial past could not be applied to a population that had only recently been drawn into America's expansionary orbit, and represented the globalised future of America's turn to the Pacific. This newly globalised vision of white supremacy had to draw upon and extend domestic racial hierarchies.<sup>166</sup> In order to frame the Filipinos as capable of future progress, exposition texts linked them to other Pacific races. The official journal of the Portland fair (1905) discussed the possibility of securing an exhibit of the Philippine Scouts – a military troupe under American command – noting that the Filipinos in the battalion were “trim, orderly, and soldier-like in appearance, though noticeably small in stature, like the Japanese”, and could therefore demonstrate the islands' progress.<sup>167</sup> This description emphasised the Filipinos' dependence on their elder American brothers, and drew comparisons with the Japanese to show their inherent potential for progress. The Scouts' small bodies mitigated the potentially alarming consequences of a militarised Philippine unit, instead evoking the supposed inertia of the partially civilised, yet still inferior, Japanese body. In a description of the concession strip at the Seattle fair (1909), the author noted that the village of the “Philippine head

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<sup>166</sup> Olivera, 'Colonial Ethnology and the Igorrote Village at the AYP', p.148; Amy Kaplan, "Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture', in Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (eds.), *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), pp.15-16.

<sup>167</sup> *Lewis and Clark Journal*, 3.2 (1905), p.11.

hunters, who thrive best on choice bits of dog meat” would be located on the southern end of the midway, where “close by the Samoan belles will cast tender eyes at their darker brethren from the Far East”.<sup>168</sup> Emphasising the importance of physical proximity in the comparative racialising of imperial subjects, this text established the familial and hierarchical relationship between the Filipino performers and the Samoans. The text framed the lighter-skinned Samoan belles as superior to their dog-eating brothers.

These comparative racialisations were also important in the evolution of the ‘colouring’ of the Filipinos. The press varied in their attribution of skin colour, and the Filipinos were variously described as “a rich, bronze color, a little darker” than the Native American, “sun-browned”, and “copper-colored”.<sup>169</sup> These skin tones had all been assigned to the nation’s other imperial subjects, as well as its indigenous and immigrant populations. ‘Colouring’ the Filipino brown established the population’s place within the new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy. Significantly, it also lifted the population out of the ‘black’ category and the binary black/white relationship that the press and official colonial texts had assigned during the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars, and thus softened the terms of racial difference.<sup>170</sup> This lightening of the Filipino performers represented the inclusionary form of post-war colonialism, and the reconceptualisation of the Philippines as integral to the nation’s expansion into the Pacific.

Scientific ideas underpinned the familial narratives of relative progress.

Local newspapers assured visitors that while the Igorot performers were

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<sup>168</sup> Robert W. Boyce, ‘The Pay Streak’, *The Argus*, 16.3 (1909), p.48.

<sup>169</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 5 September 1905; *Sunday Oregonian*, 23 April 1905; *Oregon Daily Journal*, 3 July 1905.

<sup>170</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, p.200.



“barbarians, scientists say they are susceptible of a high state of development”<sup>171</sup> At the Seattle fair (1909), the midway – and in particular the Igorot Village – was transformed into the site of a University of Washington summer school course. The university invited Alfred Cort Haddon, one of the fathers of British anthropology based at the University of Cambridge, to teach a course entitled ‘The Growth of Cultural Evolution Around the Pacific’. Advertisements for the Philippine display boasted of this educational affiliation, quoting Haddon’s claims that “These amiable savages are fascinating” and offered “a vital issue in living bronze”. As the private concessionaires had provided Haddon and the University with live specimens for their educational endeavour, the anthropologist and the institution returned the favour by providing the display with the scientific seal of approval and authenticity.<sup>172</sup> Grounding the familial narratives of progress within scientific theory bolstered the vague colonial claims about eventual independence in the Philippines, and Haddon’s course placed the Philippine population within a framework of evolution and progress within the Pacific region. Colonial notions of familial reproduction and generational improvement were underpinned by neo-Lamarckian ideas that acquired characteristics could be inherited, and thus the benefits of American tutelage could be passed on.<sup>173</sup> Scientific and evolutionary practitioners and theories lent the live exhibits of race sporadic yet important validation.

The violent colonisation of the Philippines fuelled a strong anti-imperialist movement in the turn of the twentieth century U.S., and colonial and

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<sup>171</sup> *Oregon Daily Journal*, 3 July 1905.

<sup>172</sup> *Seattle Star*, 31 July 1909; Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, p.199.

<sup>173</sup> Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, p.199.

fair officials had to work hard to frame these actions as consensual and the Philippine population as willing subjects.<sup>174</sup> Keen to position their respective cities as the gateways to the nation's empire, exhibitors and mediators at the Portland (1905) and Seattle (1909) fairs attempted to stage Philippine consent through spectacles of civic pride. A newspaper article published the day after the fair's official Portland Day stated that early the prior morning, "the Igorrotes left their village in a body, marching to the Administration entrance, where each native handed up a paid ticket, their contribution to the attendance on Portland day". Describing the Philippine participation as "imposing", the article noted:

Headed by a stalwart native bearing aloft a handsome American flag, and with two banners bearing the device 'Igorrotes. We paid our way to swell Portland day,' the men attired in their gaudiest 'gee-strings' and ornaments, the women wearing anito striped shawls, their hair resplendent with barbaric beads in strings and ropes, fully armed warriors following the three chiefs, and two small boys leading two pet dogs, the pageant was an imposing one and altogether unique.<sup>175</sup>

Marking the Igorot performers as inferior, with their gaudy clothing, tribal organisation, and penchant for dog, the pageant also framed the performers as willing participants in a show of civic pride and a broader celebration of American empire.

Four years later, a newspaper described a similar display of pageantry at the Seattle fair. It stated that to the exposition president's surprise, the entire

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<sup>174</sup> Mark Twain lampooned this notion of duty in a critique of imperialism, stating "shall we go on conferring our Civilization upon the peoples that sit in darkness, or shall we give those poor things a rest?"

Mark Twain, 'To the Person Sitting in Darkness', *North American Review*, 531 (1901), p.164. See Robert Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists, 1898-1900* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968).

<sup>175</sup> *Oregon Sunday Journal*, 1 October 1905.

Filipino village had “invaded” his office, claiming “Igorrote have Seattle spirit”. Overcoming his initial fear, the president “remembered that he had once been made a blood-brother of the little brown men of Bontoc”. The article claimed that the Filipinos wished to participate in Seattle Day to “show their appreciation of the success and happiness” that they had attained at the fair, and quoted Chief Antero as he left the president’s office, saying “He our brother; we talk with him”.<sup>176</sup> Again wearing their concession costumes, carrying an American flag and banners proclaiming their civic duty, the pageant at Seattle was remarkably similar to the event at Portland, which suggests that this participation was not as spontaneous as the newspaper articles claimed [see Figure 5.12]. As fighting continued in the Philippines, images of happy and contented subjects comforted the American public.<sup>177</sup> Unlike the parades of Chinese and Japanese peoples, these pageants did not represent the autonomy of the Philippine nation, but instead displayed the junior position of the Philippine population within the new household of American empire. Choreographing a spectacle of consent functioned to justify American imperialism and framed the Filipinos as willing and improvable racial inferiors.

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<sup>176</sup> *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 28 August 1909.

<sup>177</sup> Huhndorf, *Going Native*, p.102.

**Figure 5.12. Seattle Day parade at the Seattle fair (1909).**

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***Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 6 September 1909.***

Various key players deployed multiple exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies in order to situate the Filipino subject within the new imperial racial hierarchy, and the newly Pacific racial order. Many of these techniques depended upon a form of comparative racial framing that depicted the Filipino population in relative terms with other racial groups in the Pacific region. Exposition exhibitors and mediators marked the Igorots – and through their ‘tribal’ singularity at the Pacific Northwest fairs, the entire Philippine population – as savage, childlike, animal-like, evolutionarily behind, but willing subjects of the imperial household. In 1908, the Philippine Legislature passed a law banning the exhibition of Filipinos unless they were fully clothed, and in 1914, it passed another law penalising anyone who attempted to exhibit or

exploit the population. Seeking to take control of the spectacular Philippine image that had come to dominate private concessions, and prevent further high profile cases of exploitation, the Philippine Legislature – which was composed of a lower house of elected Filipinos and an upper house appointed by the American government – reduced and muted but did not entirely stop the display of Filipinos.<sup>178</sup> Richard Schneidewind, who managed the Igorot villages at Portland and Seattle, went on to manage the Samoan Village at San Francisco (1915), which demonstrates the role of concession managers in contributing to the comparative environment of display.<sup>179</sup> By 1914, popular and official texts and spaces had successfully established an image of the Philippine population in the public consciousness. The exhibitionary techniques deployed at the West Coast world's fairs contributed to this racial framing, as they marked, spectacularised, hierarchised, and staged the Igorots on the midway. Despite various acts and explorations into the issue of Philippine independence in the early twentieth century, the islands did not achieve this status until 1946.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Fermin, *1904 World's Fair*, p.192.

For more on privately-owned Filipino displays and instances of exploitation, see the popular history, Claire Prentice, *The Lost Tribe of Coney Island: Headhunters, Luna Park, and the Man Who Pulled Off the Spectacle of the Century* (Boston: New Harvest, 2014).

<sup>179</sup> Afable, 'Journeys from Bontoc to the Western Fairs, 1904-1915', p.467.

<sup>180</sup> The most significance of these acts were the 1916 Jones Law that promised eventual independence, and the 1934 Tydings-McDuffie Act which established a transitional Philippine Commonwealth for ten years. With the achievement of independence in 1946, the 1924 Immigration Act was extended to the Philippine population, therefore severely limiting the movement of Filipino peoples to American territory.

### **Conclusions: The Imperial Household in Miniature**

This chapter has emphasised the various exhibitionary techniques that key actors deployed in their comparative racialisation of the new imperial subjects on the midway. It has highlighted how existing travel and imperial texts provided a popular culture scaffolding for exposition officials, concession managers, colonial officials and elites, performers, and visitors to negotiate and develop in the live display concessions. These existing images were often contradictory and ambiguous, reflecting various racial theories and differing imperial relations, which both aided and complicated the contested exhibitions on the midway. Key exposition actors utilised numerous exhibitionary techniques, such as attributing physical and spatial markers of difference, remapping and obscuring spaces and relationships, regulating and demarcating spaces and peoples, fabricating racial traits, and staging familial, regional, and evolutionary relationships. By their very presence on the midway, the imperial live concessions were contextualised and constituted through comparative relationships. Yet the exhibits also explicitly emphasised and solidified these hierarchical and dependent frameworks, forging an image of the imperial household in miniature.

As each of the imperial populations were further incorporated within the new household of empire at the beginning of the twentieth century, they were 'coloured' as brown and configured within a broad hierarchy of foreign and domestic Pacific races. Drawing upon the conflicting traits of Native American romance and savagery, of Chinese deviousness, or Japanese progress, the new imperial racial hierarchy was complex and contradictory, and ultimately mutable and endlessly renegotiable. Yet these techniques of comparison and

visualisation, of hierarchy and spectacularisation, provided legible images of racial difference in a space that permitted visitors to physically encounter the racial Other and to rehearse their relationship with them. While indigenous Alaskan and Hawaiian peoples would become officially incorporated when the two territories achieved statehood in 1959, Samoa's status has remained ambiguous, and the Philippines eventually gained independence. The production of safe savagery on the world's fair midway permitted the visitor to engage in a respectable, educative, and active observation, which occurred in various physical and commemorative encounters. The admiration towards the Samoan performers felt by the poet at the San Francisco Midwinter Fair (1894) reflected the complex relationship between visitors and midway performers, and in the next chapter, I will turn to the ways in which visitors could perform both whiteness and non-whiteness at the fair.

# Chapter 6. 'The Morbid and Curious Seeker after Nasty Things': Visitors at the Fairs

In the previous three chapters, I have analysed the exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies that structured representations of the non-white groups on the midway. In this chapter, I turn my focus to the exposition visitors, and examine how world's fair texts, objects, and spaces framed, reinforced, and commemorated their experiences and racial interpretations. British exhibition designer James Gardner stated in his 1960 text that it easy to talk about exhibition structures and arrangements as if they have an abstract importance of their own, but an exhibition does not exist until it is crowded with people, and what matters is how those people respond.<sup>1</sup> Combining the methods and approaches of both race and exhibition study, I argue that the world's fair midways inculcated visitors with skills of racial comparison and judgment, and provided spaces and structures for visitors to negotiate and perform their racial identities. Although I examine the ways in which exhibitors and mediators framed the visitor experience, the key actors in this chapter are the "morbid and curious seeker[s] after nasty things".<sup>2</sup> I focus primarily on white visitors as the largest cohort, and outline the ways in which they used the fairs to learn and perform their allegedly superior whiteness. I recognise 'whiteness' itself as a

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<sup>1</sup> James Gardner, 'Introduction', in James Gardner and Caroline Heller, *Exhibition and Display* (London: Batsford, 1960), p.5.

Gardner worked on the Brussels exposition (1958) and the Montreal exposition (1967).

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 13 September 1905.



cultural and political construction, and argue that the fairs contributed to the historically specific boundaries of this category on the turn of the twentieth century West Coast.<sup>3</sup> In addition, I examine the specificities of the non-white visitor experience, and point to the different ways that non-white visitors used the fair site. This subsection not only offers an insight into the under-studied question of the non-white visitor experience, but also functions to emphasise the privileges of whiteness at the fairs.

The chapter utilises many of the same primary materials as previous ones, although I attempt to read sources such as official guidebooks and commemorative texts against the grain in order to examine how visitors interacted with exposition texts and spaces in their encounters with non-white people. I also incorporate sources such as letters, diaries, and published visitor accounts in order to gain an insight into the ways in which visitors responded to the fair grounds and their messages. This collection of individual accounts is by no means exhaustive, and I do not seek to suggest that these singular recollections are representative. I use them instead as an accessible window into the shaping and sharing of the visitor experience, and with the calls of several historians and archivists to seek out and privilege such sources in mind.<sup>4</sup> Building upon this historiography deepens our understanding of interpersonal interactions with the white racial frame.

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the construction and fluidity of whiteness, see Matthew F. Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> See Martha R. Clevenger, *"Indescribably Grand": Diaries and Letters from the 1904 World's Fair* (St Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1996); James Gilbert, *Whose Fair? Experience, Memory, and the History of the Great St. Louis Exposition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Lisa Munro, 'Investigating World's Fairs: An Historiography', *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, 28 (2010), pp.80-94.

The chapter begins by outlining previous encounters fair visitors may have had with the Other, and how the structures of tourism and racial exhibition prepared visitors for their journey on the world's fair midways. It then turns to examine how visitors were encouraged to perform and participate in their allegedly superior whiteness at the fair, and I argue that exhibitors and mediators curated the category of whiteness on the midway. I then examine the performances of non-whiteness at the fair, both in terms of the experience of non-white visitors, as well as the playful transgressions of white visitors appropriating elements of the choreographed midway exhibits. The final section focuses on how visitors commemorated their exposition experiences after they had left the fair grounds, and how midway encounters validated and consolidated previous cross-racial meetings and prepared visitors for subsequent ones. I argue that the racial exhibits and their attendant structures reinforced the white identities of visitors.

### **Encountering the Other Abroad and at Home**

The late nineteenth century American citizen had various opportunities to encounter the non-white Other. While negotiating racial and ethnic diversity may have been an everyday experience for some – particularly those in urban areas – the burgeoning industry of tourism and related exhibitionary sites also provided structured encounters with foreign and domestic Others. Disseminating lessons of spatial and racial organisation in an increasingly urbanised and globalised nation, these packaged engagements negotiated strange cultures, rendering them interesting and remarkable, yet safe and

legible. The machinery of tourism – from methods of travel to forms of accounting of those travels – was an influential force in the organisation of the West Coast world’s fairs. Previous encounters with the Other, whether actual or experienced vicariously, primed world’s fair visitors to identify and interpret racial difference, and to perform their whiteness within the fair site and beyond.

### ***Tourism Abroad***

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a small number of Americans travelled to the Pacific region, and frequently wrote of their experiences. Merchants, missionaries, diplomats, sailors, authors, journalists, and scientists made the journey from the American West Coast to China, Japan, Alaska, and the Pacific island territories. Others not drawn by their occupation were inspired by popular fiction and a desire to escape the pressures of urban life, and these “amateur travellers” similarly made their way across the Pacific, taking advantage of the new tourist machinery of railroad lines, steamship companies, hotels, and guidebooks.<sup>5</sup> Although the high cost of foreign travel limited this experience to the wealthy few, an extensive literary output in the form of travel accounts, magazines, and guidebooks informed the American public what it was like to be an American abroad, and the ways in which these lands provided “contact zones” where travellers could interact with disparate cultures.<sup>6</sup> These encounters with the Other on foreign soil were vastly different to those on the American continent, yet these experiences and writings provided world’s fair

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<sup>5</sup> Harold F. Smith, *American Travellers Abroad: A Bibliography of Accounts Published Before 1900*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1999), p.272.

See also, Diana L. Ahmad, ‘Different Islands, Different Experiences: American Travel Accounts of Samoa and Hawai’i, 1890-1910’, *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, 41 (2007), pp.97-118

<sup>6</sup> Ahmad, ‘Different Islands, Different Experiences’, p.99, p.101; Mary L. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.4.

visitors with prior knowledge and expectations to take with them on their stroll along the midway.

Travel guidebooks were often organised chronologically, detailing travel rates and geographical information, before describing what the traveller would find “on landing at the wharf”, and offering various itineraries for their stay. Encounters with the Other were encouraged as a means of obtaining an authentic experience. One guidebook on Hawaii noted that a visit with one of the “more intelligent of the native Hawaiians of riper years can but be interesting to one unacquainted with Hawaiian life”. Describing one such man, Kahale, who lived on the outskirts of Wailuku, the guidebook promised that the man could “tell you” of the manners and customs “of his ancestors”. Acknowledging that it was interesting to read of such things, the text argued that it was “much more interesting to talk with one who during his lifetime has stepped across the line that separated these barbarisms from the present civilization”.<sup>7</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, the tourist industry packaged and sold “embodied notions of identity”, promoting live exhibits and choreographed encounters as a means of learning about foreign populations.<sup>8</sup> Travels abroad offered Americans a unique opportunity to encounter racial Others in their supposedly natural surroundings. However, guidebooks written by American authors functioned to structure these foreign experiences within a peculiarly American framework, and the tourist machinery – particularly in American possessions such as Hawaii – scripted the authentic foreign experience.

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<sup>7</sup> Henry M. Whitney, *The Tourists' Guide through the Hawaiian Islands, Descriptive of their Scenes and Scenery* (Honolulu: The Hawaiian Gazette Co., 1890), p.4, p.125, p.78.

<sup>8</sup> Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.xviii.

Travel accounts written by individuals similarly detailed every aspect of the American travellers' experiences abroad. Although recounting individual journeys, authors often universalised their experiences by writing in the third person, for example, "The traveller is at once impressed with the unusually fine appearance of the natives", and advised other potential travellers that they "may travel alone ... in perfect safety".<sup>9</sup> Although advising and including the reader, authors also emphasised the unique experience of encountering the Other in their native land. Writing of his round the world trip, one author stated, "pictures and authorities of Japanese life which one has accepted as authentic have not quite prepared the traveler for the facts and experiences which crowd upon him", and thus nothing but "personal observation quite reconciles one with the manners and customs of a race".<sup>10</sup> Travel writers made judgments about populations based on these encounters, and interpreted the habits and appearances of foreign Others according to Western ideals of civilisation. Alongside human interactions, travellers actively participated in the rituals of tourism, seeking out unusual food and landscapes, taking photographs and sending postcards to share their experiences with those at home, and purchasing souvenirs as tokens of their journeys. As Diana Ahmad has noted in her study of travel accounts of Samoa and Hawaii, American tourists were frustrated when foreign places and people were inaccessible, yet disappointed when they appeared too civilised.<sup>11</sup> Travellers sought the unfamiliar, yet this unfamiliarity had to be legible and safe.

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<sup>9</sup> Michael M. Shoemaker, *Islands of the Southern Seas: Hawaii, Samoa, New Zealand, Tasmania, Australia, and Java* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1898), p.42.

<sup>10</sup> Maturin M. Ballou, *Due West, or Round the World in Ten Months*, 3rd ed. (New York: Boston, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1885), p.35.

<sup>11</sup> Ahmad, 'Different Islands, Different Experiences', pp.110-114.

Established in 1888, the National Geographic Society published its popular magazine as a means of introducing the American public to the rest of the world. After the 1898 Spanish-American War, the magazine dedicated more of its space to photographs, and depicted the foreign Other from the American point of view. These images and reports from abroad were inflected with expansionist rhetoric, and functioned to spectacularise those populations caught up in America's expansionary orbit.<sup>12</sup> As America sought to promote its place on the world stage at turn of the twentieth century expositions, magazines such as *National Geographic* framed the nation's relationship with other nations. The travel-writing genre in all of its forms has been consistently popular with readers for centuries. Constantly swept forwards in the journey, readers enter a strange territory, and their encounters with the Other are central to the texts' popularity over time.<sup>13</sup> Those unable to travel to foreign lands learnt of the Other through the eyes of the traveller. Nicholas Clifford has claimed that travel accounts carry a direct authority for readers, as they are able to identify their own curiosity with the traveller's.<sup>14</sup> Whether they had encountered foreign Others abroad, or had done so vicariously through various forms of travel writing, world's fair visitors had some preparation for the foreign world of the midway.

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<sup>12</sup> Tamar Y. Rothenberg, *Presenting America's World: Strategies of Innocence in National Geographic Magazine, 1888-1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), pp.1-3; Carlos P. Tatel, Jr., 'Non-Western Peoples as Filipinos: Mediating Notions of "Otherness" in Photographs from the *National Geographic Magazine* in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century', *Asian Anthropology*, 10 (2011), pp.61-62.

<sup>13</sup> Casey Blanton, *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* (London: Routledge, 2002), p.2.

<sup>14</sup> Nicholas J. Clifford, *"A Truthful Impression of the Country": British and American Travel Writing in China, 1880-1949* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), pp.9-10.

### ***Tourism at Home***

The turn of the twentieth century world's fairs both informed and were shaped by trends in the burgeoning industry of domestic tourism. In the second half of the nineteenth century, domestic travel became more accessible and more people had the time and income to pursue leisure activities, leading to a growing trend of excursions to the nation's big cities and attractions.<sup>15</sup> In 1905, Fisher Sanford Harris, the secretary of the Salt Lake City Commercial Club, coined the phrase "See Europe If You Will, But See America First". Although his initial promotional scheme failed due to lack of resources, 'See America First' remained a popular slogan throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, re-emerging as the First World War prevented American tourists from visiting Europe. American domestic tourism became a ritual of citizenship, transforming diverse destinations into stable American spaces, and creating modern American citizens that could comprehend and control the national landscape.<sup>16</sup> Guidebooks were central to the constitutive effects of domestic tourism, as they imparted observational and spatial skills of interpretation and navigation of tourist spaces, and provided a patina of respectability to leisure pursuits through their didactic form.<sup>17</sup> The machinery of domestic tourism – including the railroads, automobiles, hotels, and guidebook publishers – was vital to the promotion and population of the West Coast world's fairs.

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<sup>15</sup> Catherine Cocks, *Doing the Town: The Rise of Urban Tourism in the United States, 1850-1915* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p.107.

<sup>16</sup> Marguerite S. Schaffer, 'Seeing America First: The Search for Identity in the Tourist Landscape', in David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (eds.), *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001), pp.165-166, pp.169-172; Angela M. Blake, *How New York Became American: Business, Tourism, and the Urban Landscape, 1890-1924* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), pp.1-2.

<sup>17</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.156, p.167.

By the end of the nineteenth century, with the period of conquest at its end, the American West became a particularly popular region for domestic tourists. Tourism promoters and city boosters had to negotiate the packaging of the West, and sought to assert that although the region was safe for visitors, it retained its interesting and distinctive elements of diversity and wildness.<sup>18</sup> This fascination with the West stimulated the patronage of the West Coast world's fairs, and visitors came from all over the country to see the region and its expositions. Emily Post, popular author of fiction and etiquette manuals, drove from New York to the San Diego (1915-1916) and San Francisco (1915) world's fairs, stopping along the way at various western destinations, including the Fred Harvey hotels in Santa Fe and the Grand Canyon, as well as San Francisco's infamous Chinatown. Meticulously documenting 'A Glimpse of the West that Was', Post compared her experience to the pioneers that crossed the plains "when roads were trails".<sup>19</sup> Despite seeking out encounters with the West of the past, Post's experience was thoroughly modern. Jennifer Raab has argued that by the turn of the twentieth century, a "telegraphic language" of instantaneity replaced the panoramic vision of endless western land and the narrative of Manifest Destiny. This language reflected the compression of time and space made possible by the telegraph, the railroad, and the automobile, which had transformed the West into a modern region of commerce and

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<sup>18</sup> Patricia N. Limerick, 'Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West', in David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (eds.), *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001), pp.46-47.

<sup>19</sup> Emily Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1916), p.135. Emily Post was a journalist and author who became well known in the 1920s for books on etiquette. Fred Harvey was an entrepreneur who established hotels, restaurants, and other tourist services along the routes of several western railroads.



culture.<sup>20</sup> This transformation and negotiation of the West, as the diverse, mythic frontier of the past, and safe, modern commercial space of the future, bled into the promotion and experience of the West Coast world's fairs.

Domestic tourists were not only concerned with visiting places, but also with touring and observing the diverse population within the nation's borders. At the end of the nineteenth century, 'slumming' became a popular activity for affluent white Americans, who sought to engage in an 'authentic' encounter with various marginalised urban groups. Again an activity concerned with definitions of nationhood, slumming grounded the abstractions of race and sexuality in rapidly urbanising areas within concrete spaces, reifying racial and social differences and assuring white citizens that these areas of difference – from Chinatown to Little Italy – were stable and contained.<sup>21</sup> Tourists to the West were particularly interested in seeing the diverse population for which the region was famed, and guidebooks frequently advertised the various racial encounters available in the deserts and cities. Emily Post wrote extensively of the "Mexicans in high-crowned wide-brimmed sombreros", the "vividly costumed Navajos and Hopis" at the pueblos in New Mexico, and the "Chinaman of San Francisco".<sup>22</sup>

Exposition texts also informed their visitors of the opportunities to encounter domestic Others in the exposition cities. Journalist Elizabeth Platt Deitrick urged her readers not to forget San Francisco's Chinatown, and assured

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<sup>20</sup> Jennifer Raab, 'Panoramic Vision, Telegraphic Language: Selling the American West, 1869-1884', *Journal of American Studies*, 47.2 (2013), p.520.

<sup>21</sup> Chad Heap, *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp.7-9, p.118.

<sup>22</sup> Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, p.153, 162, p.217.

them that a trip to the enclave was “perfectly safe”.<sup>23</sup> Both white and Chinese entrepreneurs exploited tourists’ fascination with Chinatown. One Chinese resident of Portland, Seid Back Jr., produced a detailed souvenir for visitors to the Portland fair (1905), encouraging them to fill in the booklet’s opening page with personalised information: “We Visited Chinatown \_\_\_\_\_ 1905. In our Party Were: \_\_\_\_\_ Our Guide Was: \_\_\_\_\_”.<sup>24</sup> Touristic encounters with the western Other transformed the multicultural region of the West Coast into a safe and modern American space by converting non-white peoples into exoticised objects for “touristic consumption”.<sup>25</sup> The impulses and expectations of domestic tourism prepared world’s fair visitors for their encounters on the midway.

### ***Stages, Tents, and Amusement Strips***

Railroads, automobiles, and the promotion of leisure activities also gave rise to encounters with the Other closer to home. Freak shows, travelling circuses, dime museums, Wild West shows, county fairs, and amusement parks proliferated in the second half of the nineteenth century. The live exhibits at world’s fairs were both new and not new, and were part of a burgeoning culture of display and a network of entrepreneurs and exhibitionary techniques.<sup>26</sup> As Lauren Rabinovitz has argued, these new amusement sites helped to adjust

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<sup>23</sup> Elizabeth P. Deitrick, *Best Bits of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and San Francisco* (San Francisco, 1915), pp.76-77.

Deitrick was a frequent contributor to the *San Francisco Call* newspaper, where she wrote an article called ‘Betty, the Shopper’.

<sup>24</sup> Seid Back Jr., *A Trip Through Chinatown, Souvenir of the Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland, Oregon, 1905* (Portland: R.W. Steele, 1905).

See also Raymond W. Rast, ‘The Cultural Politics of Tourism in San Francisco’s Chinatown, 1882-1917’, *Pacific Historical Review*, 76.1 (2007), pp.29-60.

<sup>25</sup> Susan R. Neel, ‘Tourism and the American West: New Departures’, *Pacific Historical Review*, 65.4 (1996), pp.517-518.

<sup>26</sup> Gilbert, *Whose Fair*, p.19.

American citizens to the rapid transformations of urbanisation, modernisation, and consumerism, and contributed to the development of strategies for the maintenance of social divisions. Therefore, individual spectacles can only be understood with the knowledge that they were one spectacle among many.<sup>27</sup> For world's fair visitors, the live concessions at the exposition site may not have been the first or indeed the last racial spectacle that they would see, and thus they were able to draw comparisons and contextualise their observations. One visitor to the Portland fair (1905) noted in her diary that the fair midway "does not begin to compare to Luna Park, of course, but it is really very good for its size".<sup>28</sup> Drawing a direct comparison between a world's fair midway in Portland and an amusement park in Coney Island, New York, the visitor inserted herself into a varied and geographically disparate culture of popular amusements.

World's fairs and other amusement sites shared and shaped one another's attractions, personnel, performers, and visitors. World's fairs took the name 'midway' for their amusement concession strips from the term for the path located between the freak show tent and the main 'big top' circus arena, and world's fair strips helped to popularise and legitimise freak show and circus attractions.<sup>29</sup> Concession owners travelled from fair to fair, and exposition to amusement park, repeating their shows or establishing new ones. More affluent citizens were able to travel all over the country to experience the numerous world's fairs that took place at the turn of the twentieth century. In her diary, Portland native Maria Louise Wygant, compared aspects of the world's fairs at

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<sup>27</sup> Lauren Rabinovitz, *Electric Dreamland: Amusement Parks, Movies, and American Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p.13, p.19, p.42.

<sup>28</sup> Helen V. Oliver travel diary, Mss 1509, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter Mss 1509, Oregon Historical Society].

<sup>29</sup> Robert Bogdan, *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p.46, p.50.

Chicago (1893), Portland (1905), San Francisco (1915), and San Diego (1915-1916), and noted that although the Chicago fair had occurred twenty-two years ago, it “compares most favourably” with the event in San Francisco.<sup>30</sup> Although rare, the “imperial pilgrims” who attended world’s fairs represent how deeply immersed individuals could be within the culture of display.<sup>31</sup> Repeatedly absorbing overarching racial narratives and lessons about spatial and social organisation, these visitors also learned of the local inflections of race and exclusion.

These various forms of encounter with the Other through tourism abroad, at home, and at popular amusement sites prepared world’s fair visitors to negotiate new Pacifically-oriented racial patterns. As sites implicated in the development of modernity and national identity, these touristic and commercial amusement spaces were fundamentally about the identification and performance of whiteness. In documenting the American past and scripting American culture, domestic tourism required the definition of which people were truly American.<sup>32</sup> Although such categorisations were exclusionary, as they functioned to spectacularise non-white Others for the amusement of white tourists, they were also necessarily inclusionary. As Sylvia Rodriguez has argued, the tourist gaze constructs its object according to the social positionality of the gazer, and thus the tourist gaze is linked inherently to whiteness. As the unmarked racial category, whiteness is invisible in tourist

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<sup>30</sup> Maria Louise Wygant diary, in folder 1, box 13, Winch Family Papers, 52, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter Wygant diary, Oregon Historical Society]. Wygant was the sister-in-law of Martin Winch, a prominent Portland citizen who worked for railroad and steamship companies.

<sup>31</sup> Sadiyah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p.156.

<sup>32</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, pp.174-175.

encounters, and white tourists have the power to mark who is non-white.<sup>33</sup> In doing so, they also mark themselves as collectively white. Participating in the tourist gaze meant participating in whiteness, and performing the attendant superiority of this racial category. On the West Coast, this participation was particularly important, as it reduced non-white people and cultures to objects for the tourist gaze and transformed them into a hidden labour force, while simultaneously constructing an “ethnicity of whiteness” that transformed the diverse region into a Euro-American space.<sup>34</sup> Constructing the inferior non-white Other necessarily entailed the construction of the superior white Self. Prior cross-racial encounters and immersions in the exhibitionary complex – whether by travel, text, or amusement site – prepared world’s fair visitors for their journey on the midway. Providing context and comparison, impulses and expectations, and the very machinery of racial exhibition, these encounters gave meaning to visitor experiences on the exposition site, and structured the processes of consumption and observation.

### **Performing Whiteness at the Fair**

The machinery of tourism structured white Americans’ encounters with the Other in various venues, and leant exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies to the world of the fair. This section examines the ways in which exposition texts, actors, and spaces mediated the visitor experience, rendering their racial encounters and racial identities legible, accessible, and performable.

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<sup>33</sup> Sylvia Rodriguez, ‘Tourism, Whiteness, and the Vanishing Anglo’, in Wrobel and Long (eds.), *Seeing and Being Seen*, pp.194-196.

<sup>34</sup> Susan R. Neel, ‘Tourism and the American West: New Departures’, *Pacific Historical Review*, 65.4 (1996), p.517.

While promotional texts prepared fairgoers and gave meaning to their strolls along the midway, the organisation and spatial arrangement of the midway itself provided coherence, and encouraged visitors to observe and interpret racial difference using comparative tools. As visitors paid their entrance fees to enter the fair grounds, they became consumers of non-whiteness and participants in their collective whiteness. The enclosed space of the world's fair allowed visitors to observe, rehearse, and at times transgress the terms of their superior whiteness.

### ***Curating Superiority***

Guidebooks and other promotional texts were central to the burgeoning industry of tourism in the late nineteenth century, advising tourists how to see cities and attractions, and how to interpret them. The majority of this chapter seeks to emphasise that world's fair visitors were active agents in their encounters with non-white Others, yet it is important to recognise that this agency was mediated by the large number of publications related to the expositions. Guidebooks, programs, promotional pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers framed visitor experiences by generating interest, providing frames of reference, and advising on exposition routes that would maximise the didactic value of the fair.<sup>35</sup> Guidebooks in particular promised to describe, portray, summarise, and interpret the exhibits and "symbols" on display [see Figure 6.1]. Museologists have argued that even those exhibits that are primarily visual still depend upon and are contextualised by words. These words shape thought, direct perception, control responses, summon

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<sup>35</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p.48, p.76, p.79.

associations, indicate value, create power relations, and make the unknown known through comparison.<sup>36</sup> In order to understand how visitors performed whiteness at the fairs, it is necessary to analyse how the promotional and didactic texts that sought to mediate the visitor experience scripted and gave meaning to these performances.

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<sup>36</sup> Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and Their Visitors* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.115, p.118, p.144.

**Figure 6.1. Front cover of a guidebook to the San Francisco fair (1915).**

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***Panama-Pacific International Exposition, 1915, Souvenir Guide (San Francisco: Souvenir Guide Publishers, 1915).***



Guidebooks and programs prepared visitors for what they would see once they entered the exposition grounds. A guidebook to the Seattle fair (1909) featured a list of the amusement concessions on the midway – here named the Pay Streak – titled “Prospecting in the Pay Streak. What you will find”.<sup>37</sup> Despite the unpredictable nature of world’s fair midways and the high turnover of concessions, the guidebook used the language of the gold rush to present the contents of the concession strip as a prize for the individual visitor to discover. Although visitors were active and “mobile” observers tasked with interpreting the vast number of exhibits on display, promotional texts and the “hype” contained within them functioned to condition expectations, and compelled visitors to undertake the exposition as an experience.<sup>38</sup> A copy of the daily official program for the San Francisco fair (1915) on its opening day featured a section on its midway titled “Amusements You Can’t Afford to Miss”. The program promised readers, “Native weaving, beautiful dancing girls, singers and others will entertain the visitor, and many an hour will be pleasantly spent here”.<sup>39</sup> Promotional texts contained highly descriptive language, informing visitors what they could see, what they should see, and how they should feel about it.<sup>40</sup> In their ability to intervene in the visitors’ choices and interpretations, researchers can read these texts as indicators of the experiences available to fairgoers.

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<sup>37</sup> *The Exposition Beautiful* (Seattle: Seattle Publishing Company, n.d.), p.33.

<sup>38</sup> Patrick Young, ‘From the Eiffel Tower to the Javanese Dancer: Envisioning Cultural Globalization at the 1889 Paris Exhibition’, *The History Teacher*, 41.3 (2008), p.342.

<sup>39</sup> *Daily Official Program, Panama-Pacific International Exposition*, 1 (20 February 1915), in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno [hereafter Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library].

<sup>40</sup> Stephen M. Fjellman, *Vinyl Leaves: Walt Disney World and America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), p.13.

Promotional texts also advised visitors on their role as observers. Whether or not visitors had attended a world's fair before, they were nevertheless immersed in a highly visual culture that emphasised observation, inspection, and consumption.<sup>41</sup> Journalists described the world's fair experience as a "Shop Window of Civilization", akin to a "department store in costume", or more frequently, as a "great big popular university".<sup>42</sup> Various emphasising aspects of education, entertainment, or commercial consumption, promotional texts consistently assured visitors that they would gain something from their attendance. In relation to the live performers at the fair, journalists offered a more insidious interpretation of the visitors' role. Announcing the arrival of Native American performers at the Portland fair (1905), a local newspaper stated that the village would be "open for public inspection".<sup>43</sup> This formal assessment of the visitors' role imbued them with observational skills and responsibilities, and echoed the language of Progressive Era social reformers. Another newspaper referred to the Filipinos on display at the Seattle fair (1909) as "inmates", which reflected the publication's opinion of the role of the performers, but also the role of the visitors, and evoked the nineteenth century practice of opening prisons to public inspection.<sup>44</sup> Whether advising visitors to consume as if in a department store, learn as if in a university, inspect as if a reformer, or surveil as if in a prison, these texts assured readers of their superiority over the displayed performer. Marvin Nathan has argued that the

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<sup>41</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p.16.

<sup>42</sup> Geddes Smith, 'A Shop Window of Civilization', *The Independent*, 82 (1915), p.534; 'The A.Y.P. Exposition', *World's Work*, 18.4 (1909), p.11894.

<sup>43</sup> *Oregon Sunday Journal*, 6 August 1905.

<sup>44</sup> *Seattle Star*, 16 June 1909; Jo A. Woodsum, "'Living Signs of Themselves": A Research Note on the Politics and Practice of Exhibiting Native Americans in the United States at the Turn of the Century', *UCLA Historical Journal*, 13 (1993), p.114.

impressive buildings and technology on display in the main fair grounds bestowed upon visitors a sense of “presumed moral elevation”.<sup>45</sup> Promotional texts functioned in a similar way, explicitly instructing visitors to elevate themselves above the non-white populations on the midway.

Authors of promotional texts were conscious of their role in shaping visitors’ experiences. Taliesin Evans, author of the book *All About the Midwinter Fair*, stated that the mission of his text was to provide visitors with a “convenient and reliable guide to all places of interest” at the fair and in California. He claimed that the information had been “carefully prepared” and arranged “in a way handy for reference”, and the book itself was of a size and shape that could “fit the pocket without encumbering it”. Overall, he argued, the text was in a “friendly medium for the removal of the most troublesome annoyances and perplexities which are liable to be encountered in his ramblings without assistance”.<sup>46</sup> Warning his readers that they would face difficulties without the text, Evans positioned himself as an authority on the fair’s content, and as an informed guide for their directed ramblings. Although promotional texts encouraged visitors to elevate themselves above the displayed performers, they also exploited visitors’ insecurities about seeing the fair correctly. As Catherine Cocks has noted, fairgoing and urban tourism required a “didactic purpose” in order for them to be respectable entertainments, and guidebooks provided this educational crutch in their

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<sup>45</sup> Marvin Nathan, ‘Visiting the World’s Columbian Exposition at Chicago in July 1893: A Personal View’, *Journal of American Culture*, 19.2 (1996), p.100.

<sup>46</sup> Taliesin Evans, *All About the Midwinter Fair, San Francisco, and Interesting Facts Concerning California* (San Francisco: W.B. Bancroft and Company, 1894). Evans was a journalist and guidebook publisher.

presentation as aids in the efficient use of leisure time.<sup>47</sup> A promotional text for the San Francisco fair (1915) advised visitors “Bring Your Children to San Francisco in 1915 for an Education”. Using directive and performative language, the text instructed visitors to move through the fair “not hurriedly and spasmodically, as the average couple do, but deliberately and with careful planning”.<sup>48</sup> Exploiting the insecurities of the newly modern domestic tourist, exposition guidebooks became authorities on the correct fair experience.

Texts not only informed visitors of what they would and should see, but also advised on how to see the fair. Although world’s fair sites were condensed and contained spaces, they featured a large number of buildings, courtyards, landscapes, and discrete spaces such as the midway. Like city guidebooks, fair texts made these sites visually and practically available, rendering each location coherent, and providing spatial explanations for the fragmented site of the fairgrounds.<sup>49</sup> Guidebooks sought to aid the visitor in their navigation, and provided detailed instructions of how to move through the plazas and alleyways, often using inclusive language and taking visitors on a virtual journey of the grounds. In a section titled “How Best to See the Fair”, one guidebook ordered the visitors’ route, stating “On entering the exposition grounds from the paved plaza without, we turn immediately to our left and inspect the Administration building ... Having gone the rounds and inspected these, we are ready to spend the evening on the Pay Streak, the amusement

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<sup>47</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.154, p.167.

<sup>48</sup> *On the Shores of the Pacific: Opening of the Panama Canal – 1915* (San Francisco: Hicks-Judd Co., Printers, 1914); Fjellman, *Vinyl Leaves*, p.13.

<sup>49</sup> Blake, *How New York Became American*, p.3, p.16.

street”.<sup>50</sup> These ordered instructions also encouraged visitors to observe and interpret the live concessions comparatively. Descriptions of the midway often dealt with each concession in turn, informing readers, “Next door in the cactus garden are representatives of another race”, and noting that on the amusement concession strip, “the kaleidoscope keeps turning, and every step you take carries you among a fresh nation and a fresh tribe”.<sup>51</sup> One visitor to the San Francisco fair (1915) felt compelled to write her own guide, and claimed, “I am going to take my readers through the Exposition with me”.<sup>52</sup> Whether written by exposition officials, city boosters, commercial organisations, or enthusiastic visitors, these guidebooks functioned as a tutorial for the visiting public, and helped to script their roles as exposition visitors, modern citizens, and masters of empire.<sup>53</sup> In directing the visiting public how to observe and experience the live concessions, promotional texts curated and informed the white visitors’ superior white status.

### ***Choreographing the Midway***

Although the midway was visibly less uniform than the main fair grounds – partly due to the fact that exhibits were individually owned by private companies and individuals – it was nevertheless a highly choreographed space. Fair organisers privileged exhibits that they felt would be most effective and novel, concession managers utilised a range of exhibitionary techniques that captivated the visitor, and the space of the midway itself condensed the peoples

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<sup>50</sup> *Souvenir Information, Guide and Directory: A.Y.P. Exposition Memorandum and Daily Calendar* (Seattle: Information Guide Publishing, 1909), p.14.

<sup>51</sup> Barbara Ridente, ‘Some Citizens of Sunset City’, *The Californian*, 5.4 (1894), p.406, p.408.

<sup>52</sup> Deitrick, *Best Bits of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and San Francisco*, p.1.

<sup>53</sup> Jennifer Kopf, ‘Picturing Difference: Writing the Races in the 1896 Berlin Trade Exposition’s Souvenir Album’, *Historical Geography*, 36 (2008), p.113, p.134.

of the world into one accessible and clearly demarcated site. Contemporaries regarded world's fairs as a "huge and complicated machine", each part of which was "planned for a purpose", with the total effect being a "panorama of present day civilization".<sup>54</sup> As visual forms of representation became increasingly popular at the end of the nineteenth century with the emergence of the exhibitionary complex, strategic forms of display authoritatively transmitted knowledge, and helped to structure and order human relationships.<sup>55</sup> The midway experience could be chaotic, and visitors retained their agency, yet it is important to recognise how this space was structured. Emily Post noted that on entering the gates of the San Francisco fair (1915), she "wandered like an ant through bewildering chaos". Yet she continued, "Not that it lacked plan ... the Zone [midway] was a straight street also by itself".<sup>56</sup> In the previous three chapters, I have focused on individual concession layouts, with architectural features such as lakes and stages. To avoid repetition, I take a more holistic view of the midway in this section, and analyse how its choreographed spaces and encounters mediated visitors' performances of their whiteness.

World's fair organisers consistently emphasised the importance of displaying processes, and favoured 'working' human exhibits as a means of making displays legible. *Pacific Monthly* magazine declared that the Portland fair (1905) would be more novel than its predecessors because "the exhibits will be live exhibits, intended to show the process of manufacture rather than mere collections of finished products"; an exhibitionary trend described at the

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<sup>54</sup> Alvin E. Pope, *Educational and Social Economic Contributions of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition to Pan-American Interests* (Washington D.C.: n.p, 1916), p.2.

<sup>55</sup> Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.59; Munro, 'Investigating World's Fairs', pp.80-81.

<sup>56</sup> Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, p.230.

San Francisco fair (1915) as a “vast working laboratory”.<sup>57</sup> Organisers of the San Diego fair (1915-1916) promised to:

reveal the progress of man, not in picture, but in life; not in an array of things produced, but in the production of things; not in a display of products, but in a revelation of processes. It will present human life, not in repose, but in action – gripping, throbbing human activities.<sup>58</sup>

Privileging live exhibits of processes placed an emphasis on the human performers. While it is possible to detach objects from their producers, it is not possible to detach performers from their performance.<sup>59</sup> Live exhibits of industrial processes and educational achievements took place in the main fair buildings, but this emphasis on the performer was most evident on the midway. The persistent belief in the body as a natural repository of truth ensured that both exposition players and visitors understood human displays as a legible form of exhibition.<sup>60</sup>

Concessionaires understood that spectacle was an effective exhibitionary device and means of rendering displays legible and popular. A leaflet promoting the importance of the midway at the Seattle fair (1909) argued that the amusement features were the greatest source of publicity for an exposition, and noted that a “great spectacle is discussed more widely by the press and the public than an exhibit building with all its wealth of

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<sup>57</sup> W.E. Brindley, ‘Originality of the Lewis and Clark Exposition’, *Pacific Monthly*, 13.5 (1905), p.288; Hamilton A. Wright, ‘The World’s Exposition: Ready For Opening – February 20th’, *Overland Monthly*, 65.1 (1915), p.58.

<sup>58</sup> *The San Diego Exposition* (San Diego: Panama-California Exposition, 1912), in Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library.

<sup>59</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp.62-64.

<sup>60</sup> Desmond, *Staging Tourism*, p.xiv.

information”.<sup>61</sup> Drawing a clear distinction between the midway and the main exposition buildings, the text recognised the power of spectacle in generating interest. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Susan Stewart have argued that spectacle works in a special way by clearly separating the audience and the performer, and normalising the audience as it marks the performer as an aberration.<sup>62</sup> Guy Debord has claimed that spectacles are not just a collection of images, but function as social relationships between people, in which images act as mediators. In addition, he has stated that spectacles have a reifying capacity as they justify society as it is.<sup>63</sup> An article in the *Sunday Oregonian* demonstrated the effect of spectacle on the midway in capturing attention and visualising difference, with the author claiming that there were “more sensations to the square foot ... than can be discovered this side the limits of an opium dream”.<sup>64</sup> A crowded cartoon of the various “types” and amusements on offer at the Portland fair (1905) accompanied the article, and emphasised spectacles of racial difference, distorted bodies, and the infamous ‘spielers’ with their megaphones, persuading visitors to enter an exhibit [see Figure 6.2]. Spectacular exhibits reified the division between visitors and performers, and thus by extension, between white and non-white peoples.

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<sup>61</sup> *The Alaska Yukon Pacific Attractions Company* (Seattle: Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition, 1909), p.3.

<sup>62</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture*, p.72; Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), p.109.

<sup>63</sup> Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 2008), pp.12-13.

<sup>64</sup> *Sunday Oregonian*, 27 August 1905.



**Figure 6.2. Newspaper article on the midway at the Portland fair (1905).**

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***Sunday Oregonian, 27 August 1905.***

Spielers – also known as barkers, fakirs, shouters, and bally-hoo men – not only provided a spectacle of promotion, but also functioned as important intermediaries on the midway. An official history of the San Francisco fair (1915) referred to these men as “a race by themselves”, knowledgeable of how they could “play upon the feelings of an audience in such a manner as to lead many to believe that they are missing the opportunity of a lifetime if they do not see the show he is describing”.<sup>65</sup> In her letters home from the San Francisco fair, Laura Ingalls Wilder described her stroll down the midway, noting that at “the door of every show people were ‘bally-hooing’ – doing little stunts to attract the

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<sup>65</sup> James A. Buchanan and Gail Stuart (eds.), *History of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (San Francisco: Pan-Pacific Press Association, 1916), p.464.

crowd”.<sup>66</sup> While primarily functioning to promote the midway exhibitions, these men also mediated the ways in which visitors interpreted the displays.<sup>67</sup> Providing information about the people on display – whether truthful or exaggerated for promotional purposes – contextualised the visitor experience, and helped visitors to interpret populations and scenes that were unfamiliar. An exposition news publication from the San Diego fair (1915-1916) noted that although organisers sought to provide a “comprehensive exhibition of human development” that was both scientific and educational, no effort would be spared to “render it entertaining and intelligible to the layman and even to the child”.<sup>68</sup> Although the midway experience could appear disordered at times, exposition actors worked to choreograph this space in order to make its displays of racial difference legible, emphasising visual processes and spectacles, and providing mediators to help decode their meaning.

Historians have marginalised the West Coast world’s fairs partly because they were smaller than their better known Eastern and Midwestern counterparts. World’s fair organisers framed this downsizing as an intentional decision, deriding the progressive enlargement of American world’s fair spaces, which had reached its peak when St Louis had “embarrassed herself with an unwieldy domain”, with an almost 1200-acre site in 1904.<sup>69</sup> While the shrinking

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<sup>66</sup> Roger L. MacBride (ed.), *West From Home: Letters of Laura Ingalls Wilder to Almanzo Wilder, San Francisco 1915* (New York: Harper Collins, 1974), p.37.

Laura Ingalls Wilder was an American author who became famous for her *Little House on the Prairie* books in the 1930s.

The historical experience of sound is a growing area of research. Amanda Cannata of Stanford University is currently writing a doctoral thesis on music and gender at America’s world’s fairs. See also, Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002).

<sup>67</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p.48.

<sup>68</sup> *San Diego Exposition News*, 1.6 (1912), pp.10-11.

<sup>69</sup> *Information for Visitors to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco 1915* (n.p.,1914), in Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library; Robert W. Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair:*

of the exposition site on the West Coast was partly due to financial restrictions, and exposition texts undoubtedly sought to frame apparent shortcomings as premeditated improvements, this spatial organisation was part of the choreography of the visitor experience. A promotional text from the Portland fair (1905) claimed that the event “combines with its broad scope the idea of compactness without crowding ... no miles of aisles to weary the limbs”.<sup>70</sup> Just as city guidebooks made unwieldy urban spaces manageable and legible, world’s fairs modelled themselves upon utopian cities of the future.<sup>71</sup> The fair grounds, and the midway in particular, represented a navigable space in which to see the entire world.

This compression and miniaturisation continued beyond the acreage of the overall exposition site into the organisation of spaces within it. A history of the San Francisco fair (1915) noted that exposition officials named the midway the ‘Joy Zone’ in homage to the “region of the great canal and the immense work that the US army has done”.<sup>72</sup> Remarking on the immensity of the actual Panama Canal site, the text framed the midway as a synecdoche for the real location. The Zone at San Francisco even featured a working model of the Panama Canal, which Sarah Moore has recognised as a pedagogical exercise to prove that the nation had fulfilled its promise of Manifest Destiny by allowing the visitor – who was privileged by this miniaturising technology – to cast an imperial and

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*Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p.157.

<sup>70</sup> *The Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition and Oriental Fair* (Portland: General Press Bureau, 1905), pp.3-4.

<sup>71</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.189.

<sup>72</sup> Ralph E. Avery, *The Panama Canal and Golden Gate Exposition* (Chicago: L.W. Walter Company, 1915), p.375.

magisterial gaze over a distant landscape.<sup>73</sup> Other West Coast midway titles rendered important sites in miniature, including the ‘Trail’ in homage to Lewis and Clark’s cross-continental journey at Portland (1905), the ‘Pay Streak’ at Seattle (1909) that referenced the region’s gold rushes, and the ‘Isthmus’ at San Diego (1915-1916) that again evoked the Panama Canal. The Seattle fair site miniaturised America’s burgeoning empire, with thoroughfares and plazas named after imperial possessions and important areas of the Pacific Northwest [see Appendix 4]. This deliberate choreographing of space inscribed visitors’ bodies with their relationship to the expanding nation, allowing them to function as both local citizens and imperial masters as they strolled through a miniaturised representation of a city street within the new American Pacific empire.<sup>74</sup> The process of miniaturisation invoked nostalgia, and transformed America’s new empire into a domesticated space.<sup>75</sup> The compression and miniaturisation of and within the world’s fair site made new relationships and racial patterns comprehensible and performable for the exposition’s white visitors.

### ***Scripting Racial Difference***

Expositions presented the world to a captive audience. Anna Jackson has argued that world’s fairs were the first events to envisage the whole world as a single community.<sup>76</sup> With its concessions and performers from various nations and territories, the midway embodied this sense of an international community on

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<sup>73</sup> Sarah J. Moore, *Empire on Display: San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), p.9, p.189.

<sup>74</sup> Kopf, ‘Picturing Difference’, p.115.

<sup>75</sup> Stewart, *On Longing*, p.69.

<sup>76</sup> Anna Jackson, *Expo: International Expositions 1851-2010* (London: V&A Publishing, 2008), p.7.

an even smaller scale. Celebratory newspaper articles about the midway at the Portland fair (1905) claimed that the “denizens of the whole world, human and animal, are gathered into a small compass”, and that visiting the midway was like a “journey in many lands, jumping from a Japanese tea garden to the Foolish House of Coney Island fame”. As everything would be available on the midway, the visitor could “take his choice”.<sup>77</sup> This choreography of space made the world appear proximal and accessible, and readily available for the active observation and interpretation of the superior white visitor. In a fictional story set at the San Francisco world’s fair (1915), the child characters wrote to their cousins, “It is hard to remember that these countries are really so far away from our own country, it is so easy to get to them in the Fair”.<sup>78</sup> Locating distant, diverse, and unrelated populations in a single site represented a “radical compression of space and time”, which collapsed distance and brought the new empire home.<sup>79</sup> Midways allowed visitors to tour the nation’s new empire in a day, and rehearse their superior status within the new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy.

The difference between the collection of non-white populations on the midway and the white visitors that observed them was clear. Yet the non-white performers were not a homogenous group, and the choreography of the midway helped visitors to differentiate, compare, and position those populations within the new racial order. Exhibitors staged numerous events that brought the midway performers together in relative and comparable circumstances. The Sperry Flour Company hosted one such exhibit in the Varied

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<sup>77</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 2 June 1905; *Morning Oregonian*, 11 January 1905.

<sup>78</sup> Elizabeth Gordon, *What We Saw at Madame's World Fair, Being a Series of Letters from the Twins at the Panama Pacific International Exposition to their Cousins at Home* (San Francisco: Samuel Levinson Publisher, 1915), p.74.

<sup>79</sup> Young, ‘From the Eiffel Tower to the Javanese Dancer’, p.349.

Industries and Food Products Building at the San Francisco fair (1915), in which representatives from various nations used the company's flour to make bread and national dishes in the Booth of All Nations. The exposition's *Exhibitor's Weekly Bulletin* stated that a Chinese baker would make noodles and other "curious Chinese breads and cakes", alongside a Japanese girl, a "dark-eyed senorita" from Mexico, and "finally, of course, there will be talented women of prosperous America".<sup>80</sup> Pitting various nations and their unfamiliar foods against American representatives sent a clear hierarchical message, and functioned to make the foreign participants comprehensible by extending the known into the unknown.<sup>81</sup>

Two visitors to the fair wrote of this exhibit, and drew comparative and hierarchical conclusions. Emily Post described the various populations making their "national wafers and cakes", noting that "In the center at a bigger oven was baked home-made American bread and cake and pies", which attracted much attention.<sup>82</sup> Laura Ingalls Wilder recalled how she went from booth to booth receiving "samples of the breads they had made with our American flour", including the "little, bland Chinese girl in her bright blue pajama [sic] costume", with each presenter "eager to have me like their national food".<sup>83</sup> Both Post and Wilder privileged the American products and the Americanness of the flour, and both recognised the national origins of server and food. Going from booth to

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<sup>80</sup> *Exhibitors Weekly Bulletin*, 3.4 (1915), pp.1-2.

<sup>81</sup> Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and Their Visitors*, p.144; Patrick T. Houlihan, 'The Poetic Image and Native American Art', in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (eds), *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), p.207.

<sup>82</sup> Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, p.233.

<sup>83</sup> MacBride (ed.), *West From Home*, p.122.

booth, the visitors repetitively rehearsed their role as citizens and consumers of empire.<sup>84</sup>

Other events comparatively staged the non-white performers of the midway. The San Diego fair (1915-1916) featured a “Dance of Nations”, which involved “a contest into which couples representing any nation” were eligible to participate.<sup>85</sup> At San Francisco (1915), there was a “Grand Beauty Parade of the Zone’s most charming maidens from all corners of the globe”, a “Cake Walk of World Nations”, a “Ball of All Nations”, and a “Pageant of All Nations”.<sup>86</sup> Dressed in elaborate costumes, placed on stages and in ballrooms, and transported by carriages and floats, these events staged large-scale spectacles of racial difference, and exploited the ritualised and patriotic nature of comparable civic events.<sup>87</sup> Even more condensed than when situated in individual concessions on the midway, these spectacles frequently spilled over from the midway into the main fair grounds, allowing visitors to observe a rapid parade of racial Otherness without paying extra concession fees. This condensed and active display of contextualised diversity further emphasised the comparative interpretative opportunities on the midway, which fed back into the visitors’ experience, encouraging them to make observational judgments.<sup>88</sup> One commemorative photographic text of the San Francisco fair described how visitors arrived at the midway, stating, “After noon, after the various parades and ceremonials are dispensed with, the crowd from all directions makes for

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<sup>84</sup> Kopf, ‘Picturing Difference’, p.115.

<sup>85</sup> *San Diego Union*, 17 September 1916.

<sup>86</sup> *Daily Official Program, Panama-Pacific International Exposition*, 98 (28 May 1915), in Larson Collection, Henry Madden Library; Frank M. Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, vol.2 (New York: Panama-Pacific International Co., 1921), p.122; Frank M. Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, vol.3 (New York: Panama-Pacific International Co., 1921), p.63

<sup>87</sup> Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, pp.21-22.

<sup>88</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p.169, p.253.

this popular place in such numbers that it is nothing but a seething mass of humanity.<sup>89</sup> In performing their own whiteness, visitors were tasked with determining the relative distance and placement “between peoples, physically and ideologically”.<sup>90</sup> Explicitly comparative spectacles made this process comprehensible.

Yet visitors were not content solely to observe racial difference. Concession managers and spieler frequently advertised the concessions as opportunities to encounter and interact with the displayed performers, and worked to stage these encounters in ways that privileged white visitors.<sup>91</sup> A magazine article about the midway at the San Francisco fair (1894) noted an instance of “distress”, when visitors had come to see the Native American display but the performers were “hiding”. It stated that a “wheedling word from the stalwart chief of a meek remonstrance from Mr Dobs the manager of the village, and out they come, all smiling and pleasant”.<sup>92</sup> Choreographing availability and access was important in establishing the visitors’ superiority on the midway. The local press reminded visitors of their superior status in these encounters, with the *Morning Oregonian* noting that in encounters with the Igorot chief at the Portland fair (1905), “He meets you face to face and acts as though he considers himself your equal – both you and he are men – and he meets his fellows the same way”. Yet the chief was a “proud man. Arrogating to himself the name Ip-u-kao, meaning literally ‘the people’”.<sup>93</sup> Mocking the Igorot

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<sup>89</sup> *The Splendors of the Panama Pacific International Exposition in Hand Coloured Illustrations, Limited Edition* (San Francisco: Robert A. Reid, 1915), p.130.

<sup>90</sup> Curtis M. Hinsley, ‘The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893’, in Karp and Lavine (eds), *Exhibiting Cultures*, pp.357-358.

<sup>91</sup> Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, pp.160-162.

<sup>92</sup> Ridente, ‘Some Citizens of Sunset City’, p.408.

<sup>93</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 28 September 1905.



performers' sense of self, the article dismissed the notion that he could be on equal terms in encounters with white visitors. Regardless of his status within his own community, the underlying juxtapositions of performer/visitor, costumed/formally dressed, not white/white, emphasised the overarching dichotomies of barbarity and civilisation, primitivity and progress, Other and Self.<sup>94</sup> In choreographing these juxtapositions, exposition actors and race-making agents controlled and staged midway encounters.

One of the most significant barriers to cross-racial midway encounters was language. Although concession managers frequently emphasised the authenticity of their performers and advertised their extensive efforts at recruiting untouched 'specimens', there were instances of troupes reappearing at successive fairs and amusement venues. A detailed newspaper report on the midway at Portland (1905) stated that many of the performers had attended expositions before, and noted, "the foreigners have a good time together. Nearly all of them can talk English, and they gather in groups during their leisure hours, discussing different topics".<sup>95</sup> Both Laura Ingalls Wilder and Emily Post recalled encounters at the Samoan Village at San Francisco (1915), yet differed in their recollection of the performers' language skills. Wilder recalled the Samoans singing 'It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary', and remarked that it seemed "strange to see those strange, island people singing the English battle song", but noted that they were "very pleasant to talk to".<sup>96</sup> Post described her fascination with the "queen" of the Samoan Village, who "came straight to us and shook hands as a child might, who, amidst a crowd of strangers, had singled

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<sup>94</sup> Munro, 'Investigating World's Fairs', p.81.

<sup>95</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 24 September 1905.

<sup>96</sup> MacBride (ed.), *West From Home*, pp.39-40.

out a friend". Yet she noted, "That is all there is to tell as we couldn't speak Samoan, nor she English".<sup>97</sup> Despite disagreeing about the language barrier, both visitors had enjoyable encounters.

Popular lecturer and journalist, George Wharton James, recalled his visit to the San Diego fair (1915-1916), claiming to have made "many friendships" at the exposition, including "My Indian friends at The Painted Desert".<sup>98</sup> These positive recollections of midway encounters reflect how choreographed they were. The "temporary, stylized quality" of the encounter erased the potential dangers of racial mixing in an urban environment, and their performative nature – in which both the performers and the visitors were clearly observable as participants in an atypical zone of contact – rendered the meeting respectable and safe.<sup>99</sup> Choreographing the midway as a legible, contained, and risk-free environment allowed visitors to perform their superior whiteness in a secure and enjoyable manner.

### ***Participating in Whiteness***

Key exposition actors deliberately constructed texts and spaces in order to shape the visitor experience, and to disseminate mediated knowledge about race. Yet it is important to remember that the visitors themselves were necessary participants in this process.<sup>100</sup> Moving from the host cities' streets to the fair grounds, visitors had to pay an admission fee, which instantly

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<sup>97</sup> Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, p.234.

<sup>98</sup> George W. James, *Exposition Memories, Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, 1916* (Pasadena: The Radiant Life Press, 1917), p.16.

<sup>99</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.190.

<sup>100</sup> Clevenger, "Indescribably Grand", p.5.

demarcated the exposition as a separate and commodifiable space.<sup>101</sup> On the midway, every visitor was a consumer, and every performer was a saleable commodity, which established an unequal relationship that reinforced the superiority of the visitor.<sup>102</sup> In paying their admission fees, visitors actively participated in their privileged whiteness. The host cities' journalists and residents were prone to complaining about the cost of attending the exposition, yet visitors continued to pay the admission fees in their pursuit of racial knowledge.<sup>103</sup> Modern tourism, although built on pre-modern ideas of pilgrimage and ritual, was fundamentally shaped by new flows of economic power, which increased the number of people who aspired to spend their money in acts of conspicuous consumption.<sup>104</sup> Attending an exposition was a means of participating in a respectable form of leisure, and thus participating in whiteness. Once they had entered the exposition gates, visitors were active consumers, primed to assign value and worth to commodified objects and

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<sup>101</sup> The entrance fee – usually 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children – permitted visitors to roam the grounds, enter the main exhibition buildings, and stroll along the midway. The midway concessions each carried an additional fee, which varied between 10 and 50 cents, with some additional costs for concession theatres and cafes.

See, Evans, *All About the Midwinter Fair*, pp.79-81.

<sup>102</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.190; Alan J. Stein, Paula Becker and the HistoryLink Staff, *Washington's First World's Fair, Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition: A Timeline History* (Seattle: History Link, 2009), p.78.

<sup>103</sup> A newspaper at the time of the San Francisco fair (1894) declared the numerous admission costs “exorbitant and prohibitory”, and quoted a letter from a local resident who stated, “I think it is a very good idea to give the poor man a chance to see it”.

*Morning Call*, 1 February 1894. The letter came from Leo Bearwald, a butcher, who resided at 811 Octavia Street, San Francisco.

One local resident during the Portland fair (1905) wrote to the exposition president, claiming that although he felt it the “duty of every loyal Portlander” to praise the fair, he and others believed that the exposition management were not giving “the people of this city, what we had a reason to expect in the way of reduced prices”.

J.W. Singletary to Henry W. Goode, 17 July 1905, in folder 3, box 17, Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair Records, 1894-1933, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society].

<sup>104</sup> Karl Spracklen, *Whiteness and Leisure* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.160.

people, and aware of their role as consumers and evaluators.<sup>105</sup> The price of admission not only permitted entry to the fair, but also allowed visitors to participate in a demonstration of their own social status and worth.

Yet the admission price was not necessarily a social leveller. Those that could afford it could purchase a book of tickets for repeated entry during the exposition season [see Figure 6.3]. Fair managers organised special days that offered reduced admission for certain groups, such as Workingmen's Day or Children's Day, and thousands of free admissions were granted every day for members of the press and unidentifiable others.<sup>106</sup> Expositions also hosted special days for the more established immigrant groups in the region, and for particular states. For out-of-state visitors, these days and the state buildings in the main fair grounds provided a focus for their visit, compelling them to play up to certain aspects of their white identity, while simultaneously affirming their place within it.<sup>107</sup> Portland-native Maria Louise Wygant wrote in her diary that during her visit to the San Francisco fair (1915), she first headed to the Oregon state building to register, and noted that she saw "about twenty Portland people".<sup>108</sup> Although more localised identities were important to visitors, the sheer size of the crowd ensured that broader characteristics unified fairgoers. Daily attendance figures at the West Coast world's fairs varied. The official history of the Portland fair (1905) claimed that the average daily

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<sup>105</sup> Burton Benedict, 'The Anthropology of World's Fairs', in Burton Benedict (ed.), *The Anthropology of World's Fairs: San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Berkeley: Lowie Museum of Anthropology, 1983), pp.10-11; Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Staring: How We Look* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.29.

<sup>106</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 4 August 1905; *Secretary's Report of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (Seattle: Gateway Print Co., 1909), p.22.

<sup>107</sup> Adrienne L Stroik, 'The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893: The Production of Fair Performers and Fairgoers' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Riverside, 2007), p.228; Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, p.155.

<sup>108</sup> Wygant diary, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.

attendance was 18,648, the secretary of the Seattle fair (1909) recorded the highest day of attendance at 79,976 on Opening Day, and the history of the San Francisco fair (1915) noted that on Zone Day, 104,486 were in attendance.<sup>109</sup> Although it is difficult to obtain exact figures – and the aggrandising tone of early world’s fair histories casts doubt over the numbers in these texts – the high volume of visitors ensured that the crowd’s “ephemeral unity” came from their exposition attendance and their collective celebration of whiteness.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Henry E. Reed, *Official History of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition* (n.p., 1908), p.203, in box 9, Henry E. Reed Papers, Mss 383, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland; *Secretary's Report of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition* (Seattle: Gateway Print Co., 1909), p.22; Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, vol.3, p.62.

<sup>110</sup> David Nasaw, *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), p.78.

**Figure 6.3. Fifty Coupon Commutation Ticket, belonging to Herbert Kadderby at the Portland fair (1905).**

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**86-76, artifact collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland.**

On the midway, this collective whiteness was particularly important. A newspaper article during the Portland fair (1905) described the midway as a “common meeting ground” where visitors could “find mutual interest”. It went on to state:

The regular exhibit buildings are more or less dignified; even the boulevards impose something of restraint upon the multitude, and the man who lives by brain-sweat does not feel quite brother to the man whose hand sweat fetches his daily bread. But on the joyous Trail one person is as good as another ... Just for relaxation people go there and they don't care much about the outward manifestations of caste. You will find the globetrotter who has seen all fairs, the man from the big woods who has seen none before, the millionaire in costly raiment and the Valley farmer in \$4.89 marked down from \$5, all hobnobbing gracefully. The Trail is a great leveller.<sup>111</sup>

Clearly distinguishing between the experience of the main fair grounds and that of the midway, the article emphasised the unique experience of participating in the midway crowd. Philip McGowan has argued that “carnival moments” such as those on the midway depended upon the suspension of hierarchies within whiteness for the duration of the spectacle, establishing a “standardization of whiteness” in the position of the spectator.<sup>112</sup> Regardless of divisions of class, gender, and national descent, white visitors could all participate in their superior whiteness on the midway.

Although the live concessions exhibited non-whiteness, whiteness too was on display. Members of the public wrote to the exposition management, requesting that they display their family members as examples of an ideal ‘Americanness’. Mrs Jennie Almy Worthman of Chicago wrote to the committee of the Portland fair (1905) to offer her son, Glen W.E. Rapalye Worthman, as an exhibit at the fair’s Children’s Day. Mrs Worthman claimed that Glen was the “first white child of New Amsterdam, New York”, and described him as:

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<sup>111</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 26 August 1905.

<sup>112</sup> Philip McGowan, *American Carnival: Seeing and Reading American Culture* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), p.9.

A blonde of square proportions and good height. A strong, fearless, clean, pure, thoughtful, unspoilable, moral boy. Fourteen years of age. The BEST, practical type, of an truly American Boy, in the world ... May I suggest that on your Children's day in August it might be a compliment to our brave, free, country ... if you entertained a really, true, 'died in the wool' one from the beginning – American Boy. This country is so crowded with the motleys of mixed creation, of the whole world, that a genuine creation is even better than the uncertain Indian as a real symbol of 'the land of the free and home of the brave'.<sup>113</sup>

Mrs Worthman's comparison between Glen and the 'uncertain Indian' demonstrates the emphasis placed on the displayed body as an effective conduit in the representation of racial and national identity, and her emphasis on Glen's white credentials – in comparison to the 'motleys of mixed creation' – drew a clear racial boundary for her category of 'American boy'. The world's fair was an opportunity to see foreign populations, but it was also a time to celebrate the nation's achievements in public.<sup>114</sup> Although the exposition managers did not pursue Mrs Worthman's offer, her desire to publicly exhibit her son as an exemplar of Americanness and whiteness demonstrates the importance visitors placed on participating in and performing their superior position at the world's fair.

Another grassroots campaign at the Portland fair (1905) sought to show the world – and in particular, the American president – that Oregon's population was racially desirable. A newspaper article noted that although President Roosevelt had so far resisted a visit to the fair, "crowing, living examples of the fact that race suicide does not exist in Oregon may win the day".

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<sup>113</sup> J.A. Worthman to Committee of Lewis and Clark Fair, 12 August 1905, in folder 10, box 24, Mss1609, Oregon Historical Society.

<sup>114</sup> Nasaw, *Going Out*, p.74.



Describing a petition and “plot” formed by the mothers of Nob Hill, Portland, to display their babies, the newspaper asked, “why should not the President see the swarms of Pacific Coast babies”?<sup>115</sup> An undated newspaper clipping announced a Baby Day event for September, where the “Infants of the Northwest Will Be On View”. It promised “Oregon babies, Portland, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Alaskan and babies of all nationalities ... arranged in countries, districts of the city and in races”.<sup>116</sup> A Seattle newspaper also reported on a baby display at the fair (1909), which would feature “every kind of kid – the pretty kid, the ugly kid, the white kid, the red kid, the brown kid, the yellow kid”.<sup>117</sup>

Baby contests became popular in the mid-nineteenth century, and became regular features in agricultural fairs, theatres, and at fundraising events. Susan Pearson has argued that baby shows emerged at a time when restrictions on the exhibition of bodies loosened, and human displays were no longer solely a means of marking difference, but a vehicle for normal bodies to be objectified and ranked as “exemplars of normalcy”. The hierarchical premise of the shows also made them opportunities to examine various racial and bodily differences, and Better Baby Contests became a popular means of educating the public about eugenic ideas of breeding.<sup>118</sup> The voluntary display of white children at the world’s fairs demonstrated the desire of local white residents to participate

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<sup>115</sup> *Morning Oregonian*, 1 May 1905.

<sup>116</sup> ‘Babies to Have a Day’, in folder 11, box 26, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society.

<sup>117</sup> *Seattle Star*, 2 October 1909.

<sup>118</sup> Susan J. Pearson, “‘Infantile Specimens’: Showing Babies in Nineteenth-Century America’, *Journal of Social History*, 42.2 (2008), pp.341-343, p.350, p.362.

See also, Annette K. Vance Dorey, *Better Baby Contests: The Scientific Quest for Perfect Childhood Health in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: McFarland, 1999); Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). For more on the significance of eugenics in the West and the San Francisco fair (1915), see Alexandra M. Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

in their whiteness, and to exhibit themselves and their children as the ideal, homogenous counterparts to the racial diversity on the midway.

Yet not all of the participation by local white residents represented an idealised view of white citizenship. Various incidents occurred on the fair grounds, and in particular on the midway. At Portland (1905), the fair guards made 185 arrests, 37 of which were for drunkenness, one for “attempted murder and suicide”, and many more for “violations of exposition regulations”. Ambulances were called for “fainting women”, and there were two “drownings” in Guild’s Lake.<sup>119</sup> At San Francisco (1915), the Daily Reports of the Guards recorded a number of incidents and accidents. Several children were reported missing each day, the electric chair concession crashed into the crowded midway, visitors and performers were shot and killed, and African American fairgoers complained about being refused service in restaurants.<sup>120</sup> The midway was a space for escape, both from everyday life and from the ordered unity of the main fair grounds, and as an ephemeral world without consequences, the exposition was a site where rules of behaviour – and racial identification – could be learned, practiced, and occasionally broken.<sup>121</sup> Several weeks after the opening of the San Francisco fair, a magazine reported that because of the war in Europe, American travellers were choosing to stay at home. The magazine noted, “not only the Exposition itself, but the whole Pacific Coast is on

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<sup>119</sup> Reed, *Official History of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition*, p.220.

<sup>120</sup> Extracts from Daily Reports of the Guards, 25 February, 19 March, 23 March, 5 August, 19 August 1915, in folders 7, 8, 12 and 13, carton 70, Panama Pacific International Exposition Records, BANC MSS C-A 190, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

<sup>121</sup> Reid R. Badger, *The Great American Fair: The World’s Columbian Exposition and American Culture* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1979), p.109; Janet M. Davis, *The Circus Age: Culture and Society Under the American Big Top* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), p.141; Bridget R. Cooks, ‘Fixing Race: Visual Representations of African Americans at the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 41.5 (2007), p.437.

display".<sup>122</sup> With visitors from other American regions, and from all over the world, the host cities themselves were on display at the West Coast world's fairs. In participating in their whiteness, visitors became showcases for the West's new image of a racially ordered and integrated region.

Despite Robert Rydell's calls to examine the midway as a historically important site, historians and other scholars remain dismissive of this space and its perceived disorganisation and chaos. The midway was certainly less uniform than the main exposition grounds, yet it was still a manufactured and choreographed site that framed visitors' experiences and understandings of new racial patterns. In his influential work on museums, Tony Bennett claimed that while museums transformed the visitors' gaze into a highly directed practice of looking, midways did not direct the gaze, and instead presented an undifferentiated vision of racial Otherness against which visitors could perform their progress. I argue, however, that the midway was a highly curated and choreographed space that encouraged visitors to participate in and perform their whiteness, as textual information and spatial organisation directed visitors to use the midway exhibits as props in their performances of white/non-white relations.<sup>123</sup> Rather than presenting a vision of homogenous racial Otherness, midways inculcated visitors with skills in racial comparison and judgement, allowing them to utilise and build upon their racial "tool kit".<sup>124</sup> Visitors on the midway were encouraged to identify as superior observers in a miniaturised representation of America's new place in the world.

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<sup>122</sup> 'The San Francisco Fair', *The Literary Digest*, 50.11 (1915), pp.533-535.

<sup>123</sup> Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, pp.186-187.

<sup>124</sup> Joe R. Feagin, *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing* (London: Routledge, 2010), p.13.

## **Performing Non-Whiteness at the Fair**

This section focuses on the ways in which visitors – both non-white and white – performed non-whiteness at the fair. Although the fair crowds were predominantly white, the relatively diverse population of the West Coast region ensured that they were not homogenous. Non-white visitors attended world’s fairs for various reasons. At times, they were invited by fair organisers intent on disseminating further lessons about white supremacy, and at others the non-white visitors themselves were the agents in their attendance. Elsewhere, white visitors used the ephemeral exposition site to transgress racial boundaries and temporarily perform non-whiteness for their own amusement. In both cases, racial boundaries were crossed yet ultimately solidified.

### ***Non-White Visitors***

The West Coast exposition cities were not homogenous in their racial composition, and visitors to the fairs were not always white. The local press took note of days when significant numbers of non-white visitors attended the expositions, which suggests that the crowds were usually predominantly white [see Figure 6.4]. Newspapers recorded high numbers of non-white visitors on special days, including 15,000 Japanese visitors at the Japan Day celebrations in San Francisco (1915).<sup>125</sup> Texts also noted the proportion of non-white visitors to white visitors, with Chinese-oriented events at both San Francisco fairs (1894 and 1915) welcoming “quite as many Chinese in the audience as white people”,

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<sup>125</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1 September 1915.

and “as many Orientals as Caucasians”.<sup>126</sup> With occasionally significant numbers of non-white visitors, the fairs’ plazas and shared spaces became another site at which to observe racial difference. This opportunity for extended observation was sometimes comparative, and one California-based magazine offered a detailed comparison of the Chinese and Japanese visitors at the San Francisco fair (1915). Noting the attendance of “members of the local Oriental quarters”, the magazine compared the Japanese – who were “westernized in dress”, keen to “examine with critical eyes”, and appreciated the “liberal education” and amusement for the whole family – and the Chinese, who “cling” to their “native garb”.<sup>127</sup> As on the midway, non-white people were judged on their behaviours, although here they were judged on their behaviour as visitors. While the Japanese visitors supposedly demonstrated some ability to perform as engaged and modern citizens, the Chinese visitors’ refusal to dress appropriately gave white observers another lesson in the identification of non-white behaviours.<sup>128</sup> Their observable difference did not allow the Asian visitors – and the Chinese fairgoers in particular – to blend in with the crowd.

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<sup>126</sup> *Morning Call*, 18 February 1894; ‘What “They” Are Doing at the Expositions: Photographs at San Francisco and San Diego’, *Sunset*, 35.3 (1915), p.934.

<sup>127</sup> Edith K. Stellmann, ‘With the Crowd at the Panama-Pacific Exposition’, *Overland Monthly*, 65.6 (1915).

<sup>128</sup> Cooks, ‘Fixing Race’, p.437.

**Figure 6.4. Newspaper article on Chinese Day at the San Francisco fair (1894).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***Morning Call, 18 June 1894.***

On some occasions, the exposition arranged for non-white visitors to attend the fair. A letter from the assistant to the exposition president at the Portland fair (1905) arranged for students from the government-run boarding school, the Chemawa Indian School in Oregon, to attend the exposition. Requesting that the students come in “bunches of twenty-five or more at various times”, the assistant sought to organise their entry at a “special gate”.<sup>129</sup> This concerted effort to attract non-white visitors suggests that fair organisers hoped to extend the nationalising and didactic impulse of expositions to a broad range of local inhabitants, and to use the fair to instruct certain non-white populations on how to assimilate and behave appropriately.<sup>130</sup> This intent also reflects the desire of fair organisers to provide white visitors with varied and

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<sup>129</sup> Theodore Hardee to Mr Davison, 6 October 1905, in folder 4, box 22, Mss 1609, Oregon Historical Society.

<sup>130</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.180.

repeated opportunities for observation and interpretation, on and off the midway.

In keeping with their aims of international diplomacy and trade, exposition managers often invited official delegates or representatives from foreign countries to attend the fair as guests. An article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted the attendance of several non-white, foreign delegates at the San Francisco fair (1915), including “distinguished” Japanese attendees such as the Imperial Japanese Commissioner to the exposition, a Congressional Delegate from the Philippines, and members of the local Chinese Chamber of Commerce.<sup>131</sup> Commercial texts claimed that fair organisers had primarily invited these delegates to the expositions “for purposes of observation”, with America acting as “mentor” to the less civilised nations.<sup>132</sup> Yet these staged events undoubtedly functioned as spectacles for white visitors. Official fair photographers recorded the events, and the images of non-white visitors in smart clothing contrasted with photographs taken on the midway [see Figure 6.5].

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<sup>131</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 February 1915.

<sup>132</sup> ‘Seattle Opens Doors of Country to Japanese Commissioners’, *Pacific Northwest Commerce*, 1.4 (1909), p.11, p.16.

**Figure 6.5. Japanese commissioners at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Japanese Trade Commission entertained at a luncheon', Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Photograph Collection, PH Coll 792, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collection Division.**

The treatment of foreign delegations varied depending on the nation's standing. In the case of the Native American Blackfeet delegation at the San Francisco fair (1915), the lack of respect for indigenous autonomy meant that the visitors became indistinguishable from a midway exhibit. Although the six Blackfeet chiefs were invited as "Fully accredited delegates to the Exposition", a locally based magazine reported on the group as if they were midway performers, noting that the "magnificently painted, feathered and beaded chiefs have erected their tepees, and entertain visitors", sharing stories of their history.<sup>133</sup> Although the participation of some dignitaries – in particular Japanese representatives – resulted in respectful press accounts, the Native American delegates in their position of limited power and in their recognisably unusual clothing, appeared commercially available, and thus valid objects for

<sup>133</sup> Anna B. Mezquida, 'The Door of Yesterday: An Intimate View of the Vanishing Race at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition', *Overland Monthly*, 66.1 (1915), pp.3-4, p.6.



observation.<sup>134</sup> In their inability to look or behave as dignitaries were expected to, these non-white visitors reinforced white understandings of racial difference, and became exhibits in themselves.<sup>135</sup>

Yet at times, expositions could also act as focal points and meeting places for activities that resisted the power imbalances that exhibitors and mediators brought to life on the midway. A San Francisco newspaper stated that 100 Native Americans from throughout the western region had gathered at the exposition's Court of Abundance to "participate in the Indian conference", and write a petition to "the 'White Father' in Washington DC" for better conditions. However this gathering also appears to have been tainted by the exhibitionary complex, as the newspaper stated that "Edward Hyatt, State Superintendent of Public Instruction will preside", and a number of "young braves will compete in a fire-making contest".<sup>136</sup> Regardless of their intentions or the circumstances of their attendance, non-white visitors were inevitably subjected to the white visitors' gaze, and subordinated within white structures of power.

However, local non-white inhabitants also worked to engineer large non-white crowds, which suggests that they found value in attending expositions as visitors. Plans for Japan Day at the San Diego fair (1915-1916) were placed "entirely in the hands of the Japanese themselves", and "sixteen Japanese associations of Southern California" liaised with exposition officials for the event that the local press believed would attract "thousands of Japanese".<sup>137</sup> In his work on Swedish exposition visitors, James Kaplan has argued that interest

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<sup>134</sup> Sue B. Edwards, 'Imperial East Meets Democratic West: The St Louis Press and the Fair's Chinese Delegation', *Gateway Heritage*, 17.2 (1996), p.32; Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.5.

<sup>135</sup> Cocks, 'Fixing Race', p.450.

<sup>136</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7 August 1915.

<sup>137</sup> *San Diego Union*, 11 February 1915.

in the expositions among various ethnic groups was representative of an “ethnic competitiveness” in American cities. Although referring to white immigrant communities, this idea similarly applies to Asian immigrants in California, who hoped that participation in the civic event would help to improve their status and position within the racial order.<sup>138</sup> While they may not have had extensive control of the way that exhibitors represented their home nations in the main fair buildings or on the midway, immigrant populations had some control over their participation as visitors, and could work to organise a well-behaved show of civic participation. Non-white visitors could also use the midway exhibits that represented their home nations for their own ends. The local press at the Seattle fair (1909) reported on the Chinese temple that had been shipped from China to the exposition, requiring a \$10,000 bond for its return. The article stated that while visitors were “shown through the temple regularly, it is used by the new arrivals from the Orient as a place of worship”.<sup>139</sup> The foreign exhibits at the fair could simultaneously function as rare sites of national celebration for non-white immigrants on American soil. Expressions of foreign national pride that local white residents may not have tolerated in the world outside of the fair were welcomed within the exposition grounds as part of visualisation of racial difference.

The local press were particularly interested in non-white fairgoers when they visited the concessions on the midway. At the San Francisco fair (1915), the Japanese exposition commissioner-general, H. Yamawaki, visited the Native

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<sup>138</sup> James M. Kaplan, ‘For the Future: The Swedish Pavilion at the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915’, *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*, 57.2 (2006), p.100; Abigail Markwyn, ‘Economic Partner and Exotic Other: China and Japan at San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific International Exposition’, *Western Historical Quarterly*, 39.4 (2008), pp.446-447.

<sup>139</sup> *Seattle Star*, 19 June 1909.

American performers at the 101 Ranch, where “his applause indicated that he will be a frequent visitor”.<sup>140</sup> This visit by the Japanese commissioner again spectacularised comparative observations on the midway, and clearly positioned the commissioner as superior to the Native Americans. Touring troupes of Wild West show performers also attended expositions, and were encouraged to visit the Native American concessions, breaking down divisions between visitors and performers. The *Seattle Star* noted on such an occasion that the two groups “fraternized as if they had come from the same reservation”, while the *San Diego Union* noted of such an encounter, “the ‘pale face’ was not invited”.<sup>141</sup> In their incongruous presence as visitors, the Native Americans were absorbed into the midway concession, and mediators transformed them into exposition performers.<sup>142</sup> Regardless of their intentions or the circumstances of their visit, non-white visitors at the West Coast world’s fairs frequently became an extension of the midway concessions, as exhibitors and mediators incorporated them into the same observational and interpretative exhibitionary framework.

### ***Playing the Other***

As ephemeral events, world’s fairs provided white visitors with a safe opportunity to perform non-whiteness. The midway in particular – with its reputation for spectacle and amusement – made the temporary crossing of racial boundaries ultimately inconsequential.<sup>143</sup> The popular fantasy of “going native” had a long history, and white Americans expressed this desire by

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<sup>140</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18 April 1915.

<sup>141</sup> *Seattle Star*, 16 July 1909; *San Diego Union*, 18 April 1915.

<sup>142</sup> Cooks, ‘Fixing Race’, p.437.

<sup>143</sup> Davis, *The Circus Age*, p.141.

fetishising Native American culture. A form of escapism, going native allowed white Americans to distance themselves from the violence of conquest, while simultaneously defining and regenerating their whiteness and national identity by making a distorted perception of native life inferior and subservient to their own needs.<sup>144</sup> At the San Francisco fair (1915), the local press reported on two instances of white visitors 'going native'. Noting a visit by the Southern California Editorial Association to the midway, the newspaper stated that several members of the party had been "initiated into the Sioux tribe by the chiefs at the 101 Ranch". Describing it as an "interesting ceremony not included in the set program", the article reported that E.C. Jones of the *Lancaster Ledger-Gazette* had been given the "tribal name 'Chief Burns Quick'".<sup>145</sup>

Yet this tongue-in-cheek reporting of white visitors going native had not been deployed two weeks earlier in an article about the adoption of a "little white child by Princess Wenona, an Indian squaw who gives some crack rifle shooting demonstrations at the '101 Ranch'". With a "storm of protest" that threatened to "bring the Indian life of the little youngster to a speedy termination", the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children had become involved, and ordered that the child be returned to her mother, Mrs Lillina Clayton, of San Francisco.<sup>146</sup> The differing tone of the reports reflects the importance of transience in going native, and the ability of individuals to return to their whiteness at any time. The threat posed to the child's national, racial,

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<sup>144</sup> Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp.3-5; Robert Baird, 'Going Indian: Discovery, Adoption, and Renaming Toward a "True American", from *Deerslayer* to *Dances with Wolves*', in S. Elizabeth Bird, *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture* (Oxford: Westview, 1996), p.196.

<sup>145</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 April 1915.

<sup>146</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 14 April 1915.

and familial identity through adoption caused alarm, whereas the editors' temporary play did not threaten to transgress any boundaries on a permanent basis.

Performances of non-whiteness at the fairs most frequently took the form of dressing in costume, and visitors often chose to mimic their perceptions of Native American culture. The fascination with mimicking the nation's indigenous population lay in the flexibility of the 'Noble Savage' stereotype, and the group's relationship with the nation's origins. By defining themselves by what they were not, white individuals could choose to adopt the perceived positive elements of indigenous life, such as freedom, proximity to nature, and authenticity, in order to counter the supposedly effeminate and alienated urban, modern life. Yet the quest for the authentic Other was a fundamentally modern impulse, and mimetic actions required the recognition of difference, ensuring that by experiencing that which was not modern, white individuals reaffirmed their modern identity.<sup>147</sup> A collection of photographs by the official photographer for the Seattle fair (1909), Frank H. Nowell, included an image of prominent socialite Caroline Burke and her friends, dressed in Native American costume on the porch of her home [see Figure 6.6]. The inversion of visitor/performer, white/Native American, victor/conquered in these costumed moments served to emphasise the permanence of the indigenous population's conquered and non-white status.

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<sup>147</sup> Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p.4, p.7, pp.101-105, p.120.

**Figure 6.6. 'Going native' for the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'Caroline Burke and friends dressed in Native American costume on the porch of her home', Frank H. Nowell Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Photographs, PH Coll 727, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collection Division.**

Several events at the San Diego fair (1915-1916) placed costumed white visitors alongside Native American performers. An article in the *San Diego Union* declared "Cash Prizes Offered For Indian Costumes. Palefaces to Parade with Red Men at Exposition Tomorrow". Another noted that in "place of light, airy summer costumes, Indian garb will predominate on the Isthmus [midway] tonight for the white people taking part in the Indian costume prize contest", and that while the costumes were being judged, the "Indians will present their

dances and ceremonials".<sup>148</sup> This coexistence of Native American performers and white visitors in Native American dress created an unusual opportunity for performance and observation. Those in costume were validated in their efforts of mimicry by being placed on the same stage as 'real' Native Americans. For observers, the comparative framework caused by proximity emphasised the importance of skin colour and other physical features. No longer identifiable by dress, the contest's participants gained superiority through their whiteness. A postcard produced by a photography concession at the fair depicted two white women in front of a 'Meet me in San Diego Exposition Calif. 1915' screen background [see Figure 6.7]. With one dressed as a cowboy, and one as an 'Indian', the dichotomy of white/Native American, victor/conquered was temporarily transgressed, yet ultimately reconfirmed by the consensual and playful circumstances of the souvenir's production. Costumes allowed white individuals to participate in a visibly transformative experience that reconfirmed the "real" self, and the combination of native costume and white skin ultimately cancelled each other out.<sup>149</sup> The element of competition also allowed visitors to perform their superior whiteness. As only the visitors were eligible to win, the costume competition privileged white individuals as more authentic judges of Native American culture than the Native American performers nearby.

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<sup>148</sup> *San Diego Union*, 27 August 1915; *San Diego Union*, 28 August 1915.

<sup>149</sup> Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p.7, pp.114-115.

**Figure 6.7. 'Playing Indian' at the San Diego fair (1915-1916).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**'2 women dressed as cowboy & Indian', Collins - "Meet Me in San Diego" individual photos, GM135, Exposition Postcards, San Diego History Center.**



White exposition visitors did not just dress as Native Americans, but took inspiration from a number of the concessions that they viewed on the midway. Two weeks after the close of the San Francisco fair (1915), the press reported that local residents had revived the midway – here named the Joy Zone – for one night. The San Mateo Country Club – or the “Smart Set” – had hosted an event “to Which Society Flocks. The attendees dressed “in the garb of the Zone ‘family’ – the spielers, the inhabitants of the Chinese Village and of Japanese beautiful ... There was a troop that represented the 101 Camp”. The article gave detailed descriptions of the participants and their costumes, such as “Mrs Ward Barron was charming in a Chinese costume of brown and gold ... her Chinese slippers, embroidered in Oriental colors”.<sup>150</sup> A photograph of the event depicted the attendees in various costumes, including Hawaiian grass skirts and leis, and the accompanying caption noted that they were “portraying characters of the exposition Joy Zone” [see Figure 6.8]. While ‘playing Indian’ expressed and assuaged anxieties about national origins and identity, this act of mimicking Pacific Others functioned to ground and reinforce bodily and racial differences. Appropriating and imitating through the medium of the body, these costumed events reified racial boundaries and confirmed the performers’ uncostumed whiteness.<sup>151</sup> For the country club members, playing the non-white Other was a temporary performance marked by costume and spectacle, and one that was secure in its transience and the respectability of its context. Performing non-whiteness was ultimately a means of performing and reconfirming the privileges and superiority of whiteness.

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<sup>150</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 December 1915.

<sup>151</sup> Deloria, *Playing Indian*, p.120.

**Figure 6.8. Newspaper report on the San Mateo Country Club event (1915).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***San Francisco Chronicle, 20 December 1915.***

### **The World Beyond the Fair**

As the country club event shows, visitors were not content to keep the exposition confined to its temporal and spatial limits. Exposition officials and visitors themselves sought to share, shape, and mediate memories of the fair, ensuring that experiences within the fair gates were neither fixed nor confined to the exposition site. Although visitors did not always make explicit records of midway encounters and their interpretations of them, the volume of commemorative documents and objects such as souvenirs, postcards, letters, and diaries, suggests that fairgoers understood these events as significant moments in their lives, and wished to extend and reify their memories beyond the fair gates. As Susan Stewart has noted, we do not need or desire souvenirs of

repeatable events, only of reportable events.<sup>152</sup> The exposition gates were also porous, and visitors extended their interpretative and comparative racial gaze into the city streets, which similarly existed within the white racial frame and the turn of the twentieth century culture of display. Visitors did not stop making meaning from their midway encounters once the gates closed, but instead validated, solidified, distorted, or rejected the performances of non-whiteness within their own performances of whiteness.

### ***Commemorating the Other***

A brief article in the *Fresno Morning Republican* on 7 December 1915 carried the headline “Father Stabs Son Who Talked of Fair End”. 24 year old Francis Chambers and his brother Tom had returned home from the San Francisco fair (1915) at an early hour, and their father Thomas had been asleep. Despite Thomas’ warnings, the boys’ “chatter about the close of the Panama-Pacific Exposition” had kept him awake, and when Francis had gone to his father to explain, a “quarrel” ensued that left Francis “stabbed and probably fatally wounded”.<sup>153</sup> Although this incident was most likely unique, it demonstrates the desire of fairgoers to share their experiences beyond the fair gates. Memories and experiences are important sources when trying to construe the meaning of the West Coast world’s fairs to those that visited them.<sup>154</sup> In seeking to remember, share, and shape their experiences, visitors transferred moments of racial encounter beyond the temporal and spatial limits of the fair, reliving and rehearsing them as part of their daily lives.

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<sup>152</sup> Stewart, *On Longing*, p.135.

<sup>153</sup> *Fresno Morning Republican*, 7 December 1915.

<sup>154</sup> Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, p.12.

The exposition management sought to shape visitors' recollections of the fair by producing a variety of publications and objects that were intended for consumption at home. Official fair histories, commemorative photographic collections, and souvenirs framed visitors' memories of the fair, transforming failures into successes, placing emphases on certain features, lending coherence or attaching meaning to exhibits and events, and establishing what should have been seen.<sup>155</sup> The souvenir history of the San Francisco fair (1894) reminded visitors that the demonstrations by Japanese, Chinese, and Hawaiian representatives had been "thoroughly enjoyed by all its visitors". Yet the "interest in foreign humanity at the Exposition did not reach its height until the arrival of the Samoans and of the Dahomeyans", as the physical perfection of the Samoans had been the "talk of the time during their sojourn".<sup>156</sup> Shaping recollections of enjoyment and exhibit popularity attached emotion to the concessions and their performers, and shaped post-fair interpretations of the live exhibits. This particular souvenir collection, which featured photographs by I.W. Taber, who had the exclusive rights to take official fair images, allowed the "souvenir book types" to live on, with visitors commemorating the "acts of fantasy and classification" that took place on the midway.<sup>157</sup> As a sample of an event, souvenirs are incomplete and their owners must supplement them with a narrative discourse that attaches the souvenir to its origins, creates a myth of those origins, and expresses a desire for the past event.<sup>158</sup> In constructing these

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<sup>155</sup> Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, pp.46-47, p.102.

<sup>156</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes: Being Views of California Midwinter Fair and Famous Scenes in the Golden State: A Series of Pictures Taken by I. W. Taber* (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker, 1894), p.151.

<sup>157</sup> Meg Armstrong, "'A Jumble of Foreignness': The Sublime Musayums of Nineteenth-Century Fairs and Expositions", *Cultural Critique*, 23 (1992), p.224.

<sup>158</sup> Stewart, *On Longing*, p.136.

supplementary narratives, visitors idealised the exposition and repeatedly relived their midway experiences.

The official history of the 1915 San Francisco fair, published in 1921, accounted for the midway's relative lack of custom by reminding visitors that it had been the first exposition since the development of the automobile, aeroplane, and moving pictures. The fair had therefore occurred in an "age of sophisticated children", in which exhibits had become "commonplace that once were wonderful", and the "public imagination had been 'speeded up'".<sup>159</sup> Attempting to transform a memory of disappointment into one of unparalleled technological advance, the historian reached out to former visitors in their homes and requested that they affirm this collective memory of a supposedly unique event.

Fair managers purposefully sought to publicise the praise their events received, ensuring that contemporaries would regard their efforts as successful. In 1916, the San Francisco fair management published a 180-page text that featured testimonials from "thinking men and women of national and international importance" who had written to them about the fair's legacy. Former President and Governor-General of the Philippines, William H. Taft, stated that the exposition had "done much to improve the friendly relations between the United States and countries with whom this was needed", and sitting President, Woodrow Wilson, praised the exposition's contribution to the "new spirit which is to unite East and West". The president of Clark College in Massachusetts claimed that the "chief psychological cause of war among nations is race prejudice, and the cause of race prejudice is reciprocal ignorance – an

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<sup>159</sup> Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, vol.2, p.373.

ignorance which International Expositions have done much to remove".<sup>160</sup> These celebratory claims about the fostering of foreign relationships at the fair obscured the live display exhibits on the midway, and exploited the early events of the First World War to depict America as a superior and unprejudiced nation. Texts on the success and legacy of the fairs shaped the histories of expositions for decades, lending them a celebratory tone and ensuring that they were heavily reliant on officially published material.<sup>161</sup> The perpetuation of positive collective memories shaped interpretations of expositions amongst those who had attended and those who had not.

Visitors themselves sought to record their experiences, writing diaries and making scrapbooks that were intended for personal consumption. Archivist Martha Clevenger has noted that students of world's fair historian Robert Rydell are likely to be disappointed by the content of such sources, as the authors rarely articulated their experiences in the same terms as fair organisers, and did not attempt to decipher what the live concessions of non-white people represented. Yet Clevenger has argued that these silences are meaningful, as individuals tend to comment on "that which they find remarkable", which suggests that the live exhibits did not challenge the visitors' worldview, but instead validated existing prejudices.<sup>162</sup> Two diaries written about the Portland fair (1905) reflect this tendency towards silence. Pauline Oelo McClay only briefly mentioned the midway, calling it a "great place", and noting just a few

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<sup>160</sup> *The Legacy of the Exposition: Interpretation of the Intellectual and Moral Heritage left to Mankind by the World Celebration in San Francisco in 1915* (San Francisco: Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company, 1916), p.163, p.182, p.146.

<sup>161</sup> Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, pp.9-10.

<sup>162</sup> Clevenger, *"Indescribably Grand"*, p.4, p.10, pp.21-22.

concessions by name, including the Indian Village.<sup>163</sup> Jennie Belle Cook noted that she had stayed out on the midway – a “street of amusement” – one evening, and it was the “noisiest place I ever saw”, with “Little shows, moving picture scenes, etc, on both sides of the street”.<sup>164</sup> These two visitors did not offer particular insights into their encounters on the midway, but nor did they question the propriety of the live concessions, or their own capacity to consume such amusements freely. A scrapbook made by a visitor to the Seattle fair (1909) featured a hand drawn reproduction of the fair’s official logo and its prominent architectural feature of totem poles on the front cover [see Figure 6.9]. The creator dedicated seven out of twenty pages to photographs that he had taken of the concessions and performers on the midway, with the rest documenting buildings, plazas, and the friends that had accompanied him [see Figure 6.10]. The man’s choice of illustration and photographs suggests that he was interested in foreign features and people at the fair, and felt that they were worth documenting for his own reference and enjoyment in the future.

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<sup>163</sup> Pauline O. McClay diary, Mss 1509, Oregon Historical Society.

McClay was an Oregon native. See also, Pauline Oelo McClay, ‘My Trip to the Fair’, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 80.1 (1979), pp.50-65.

<sup>164</sup> Jennie Belle Cook diary, Acc 24636, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.

**Figure 6.9. Front cover of a visitor-produced scrapbook about the Seattle fair (1909).**

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**Figure 6.10. Page from the scrapbook of the Seattle fair (1909).**

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**Valentine Chase Shimons, *Photographs Taken at the Exposition*, in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, Special Collections Research Center, Henry Madden Library, California State University, Fresno.**

Visitors also sought to share their experiences with others in letters and postcards. As Lauren Rabinovitz and others have noted, postcards became novel mediators of modernity at the end of the nineteenth century, and functioned to miniaturise scenes, spread second hand experiences, and offer senders and receivers a sense of inclusion, mastery, and pleasure over fragmented sites such as cities and expositions. Postcards became popular collectibles, and at half the cost of sending a letter, they were a cheap means of sharing images. From 1907, senders frequently included written notes, and by 1909, Americans sent 968 million postcards annually.<sup>165</sup> Collections of exposition postcards show that authors most frequently talked about the fairs' beauty and their enjoyment of them, the weather, their travel plans, the health and wellbeing of the families of either sender or recipient, and their wish that the recipient could share their experiences. Senders often chose postcards that depicted the fair's main buildings, plazas, and gardens, or the exposition's official logo.<sup>166</sup> The postcards frequently contained no reference to the fair at all, and some were postmarked long after the event. One postcard depicting a white woman holding an American flag with the grounds of the San Francisco fair (1915) behind her, and the fair's name and date beneath, was used by the sender to request a job interview, and was sent from Pasadena, California in 1937.<sup>167</sup> Purchased, kept, and sent for a variety of reasons, exposition postcards continued to spread images and memories of the events long after their gates had closed.

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<sup>165</sup> Rabinovitz, *Electric Dreamland*, pp.99-106.

See also, Steven Dotterrer and Galen Cranz, 'The Picture Postcard: Its Role and Development in American Urbanization', *Journal of American Culture*, 5.1 (1982), pp.44-50.

<sup>166</sup> See boxes 76, 78, and 87, Larry Zim World's Fair Collection, 1841-1988, 519, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. [hereafter Larry Zim World's Fair Collection].

<sup>167</sup> Postcard in box 87, Larry Zim World's Fair Collection.

Expositions also sold postcards that depicted the performers on the midway. In a postcard depicting the Filipino performers at the Seattle fair (1909), the author enthused about the exposition and expressed their wish that the recipient was there, but did not write specifically of the image that they had chosen to represent their visit [see Figure 6.11]. Another postcard sent from the Seattle fair depicted a photograph of the Filipino performers, and the message stated “Philippine Igorottes at the fair. Wild people. Picture taken by myself” [see Figure 6.12]. Disseminating a self-taken photograph allowed the visitor to share his personal perspective with others, and this particular visitor supplemented the image with his interpretation of the performers’ wildness. The very act of taking a photograph allowed visitors to establish their superiority and distance from the subject, and transforming the image into a postcard shared this superior status with someone beyond the fair grounds.<sup>168</sup> Although it was rare for visitors to engage so directly with the images on postcards, the impulse to share their experiences is evident in the selection of postcards depicting exposition scenes. The desire to miniaturise, collect, and disseminate the world’s fair demonstrates the visitors’ agency in consuming and making meaning from their time in the fair grounds.<sup>169</sup> The postcard represented a cheap and accessible form of participation, consumption, and commemoration.

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<sup>168</sup> Hinsley, ‘The World as Marketplace’, in Karp and Lavine (eds), *Exhibiting Cultures*, p.358.

<sup>169</sup> Armstrong, “A Jumble of Foreignness”, p.203, p.241.

**Figure 6.11. Postcard depicting the Igorots at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Nickie to Mrs Lillian Santoune, 20 August 1909, in envelope 2, box 22, Expositions and Fairs Collection, 344, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.**

**Figure 6.12. Postcard depicting a visitor's image of the Philippine performers at the Seattle fair (1909).**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Unknown sender to unknown recipient in Sweden, undated, in envelope 2, box 22, Expositions and Fairs Collection, 344, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.**

Fairgoers also wrote more extended letters about their exposition visits. In the letters to her husband, Laura Ingalls Wilder gave detailed descriptions of the non-white performers she had encountered on the midway at the San Francisco fair (1915). Inspecting the dwellings at the Indian Village, Wilder noted that they all “smell like wild beast dens and I did not like to be there”, although she added that the “Indians are very friendly and good-natured”. Wilder described a Japanese lantern parade as “simply a mob of Japanese carrying lanterns”, and admitted that she felt “terrified for the crowd was a mob and I did not know my way out”. In an extended description of the Samoan village, Wilder wrote to her husband, “Samoa, you know, are South Sea islands belonging to the U.S.”, and claimed that the performers on the midway “live in an imitation Samoan village of grass huts”. She wrote of the performers’ scant costumes and expressed concern that they “seemed cold, poor things”, stating that their “skin was a beautiful golden color where it was not tattooed”, and describing their “native dances” and “island songs”. At the end of this particular letter, Wilder wrote, “I am disgusted with this letter. I have not done halfway justice to anything I have described. I cannot with words give you an idea of the wonderful beauty, the scope and grandeur of the Exposition”.<sup>170</sup> Wilder’s letter was by no means typical, and her career as an author undoubtedly influenced her writing impulses. Yet her multisensory descriptions of the midway performers and her anxiety that she had failed to adequately convey her experiences to her husband demonstrates that Wilder regarded the fair as an important moment in her life.<sup>171</sup> Recognising the performers’ relationships with the nation, and describing their skin, clothes, and performances, Wilder appears

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<sup>170</sup> MacBride (ed.), *West From Home*, pp.38-40.

<sup>171</sup> Clevenger, “*Indescribably Grand*”, p.4, p.31.

to have internalised the fair's overarching message of the observability of racial difference.

In the years and decades following the fairs, visitors retained and restructured their memories, attaching meaning and significance to their experiences. Although no popular culture equivalent of 'Meet Me in St Louis' helped to solidify and shape a nostalgic collective memory for the West Coast world's fairs, they did live on through celebratory and commemorative texts, fiction, and the physical markers they left on their host cities.<sup>172</sup> A year after the close of the San Diego fair (1915-1916), George Wharton James noted in his book *Exposition Memories* that "Of the Isthmus [midway] some of the memories are very pleasing and worthwhile, and others I would as soon forget".<sup>173</sup> James Gilbert has pointed to the various factors that distort and mediate memory, and the need to recognise visitors' recollections as singular and unreliable.<sup>174</sup> Yet these sources indicate how individuals internalised their fair experiences, and how they used exposition memories to understand broader changes and events.

An oral history project conducted by the Oregon Historical Society sixty-eight years after the Portland fair (1905) attests to the selectivity of such reminiscences. While failing to recall one specific midway exhibit, the participants recognised the event as a "landmark change" for the city with an increase in population, noting that there was "a difference between Portland before the exposition and Portland after". Remembering where they lived at the time, and having visited the fair, one participant noted that they still had

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<sup>172</sup> 'Meet Me in St Louis' was a popular 1944 musical film starring Judy Garland. The film takes place at the time of the St Louis world's fair (1904).

Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, p.5.

<sup>173</sup> James, *Exposition Memories*, p.16.

<sup>174</sup> Gilbert, *Whose Fair?*, pp.69-101.

pictures of the buildings, and that the grounds were a “pretty picture”.<sup>175</sup> A 1959 article by a visitor to the Portland fair recalled how visitors tended to visit the main grounds first, and once “saturated with information and culture”, they would head to the midway and the “gaudy, rowdy and smelly” shows that reached their “apogee” in Disneyland.<sup>176</sup> Recollections of the San Francisco fair (1915) in a local history project in 1973 included the notion that the midway had not been successful, with the participant suggesting that it was perhaps too large or expensive, or that the rest of the fair was so “beautiful and full of instructive things to do and see”. Another participant stated, “’Twas somethin’ peopl’ll never forget”.<sup>177</sup> While the physical site of the world’s fair was ephemeral, its material and experiential by-products were not.

### ***Interpreting Race***

Although the world’s fairs were contained sites with clear boundaries, they nevertheless bled into the host cities and into the visitors’ broader lives, and the experiences gained on the midway framed and extended meaning to previous and future encounters with non-white people. Attempting to grasp how the world’s fair experience structured visitors’ racial interpretations beyond the events is a necessarily speculative task, but thinking about how fairs directly shaped non-fair encounters, and using established models from research on tourism and exhibition, can indicate how the discourses and tools absorbed on

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<sup>175</sup> Oral history transcript of Virginia Merges Kletzer and Roy Feldenheimer, 30 March 1976, SR9393, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland.

<sup>176</sup> *Oregonian*, 11 February 1959.

The article was written by E.B. McNaughton, a banker from Portland, Oregon.

<sup>177</sup> Doris O Vidakovits, ‘The 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition’, *Marina Memories, Local History Studies*, 16 (1973), p.52; Walter de Vecchi, ‘Reminiscence’, *Marina Memories, Local History Studies*, 16 (1973), pp.45-46.

the midway lived on. At times, concession performers left the fair grounds, taking exposition structures of display with them. A newspaper article noted that the manager of the Hawaiian Village at the San Diego fair (1915-1916) was “making a feature of furnishing Hawaiian entertainers at private homes, dinner parties, or at cafes”, and that the performers had “been coached to give almost any sort of an Hawaiian entertainment”.<sup>178</sup> Bringing the midway to the homes of San Diegans personalised the racial encounter, and allowed the machinery of the exposition to extend beyond its gates and into the home. Whether in the movement of performers or the transferral of observational techniques, the world of the midway seeped into the host cities’ streets and homes.

Exposition texts frequently advised visitors of the racial encounters they could experience in the host cities and surrounding areas, therefore constructing a concrete link between the fair experience and encounters outside of its gates. Due to the fairs’ West Coast location, these texts frequently recommended visits to nearby Chinatowns, depicting these enclaves as worthwhile excursions to be experienced alongside the fairs. A guidebook to the 1894 fair acknowledged:

The opium dens of San Francisco’s Chinatown have become known from one end of the country to the other, and the Eastern visitor, bent on seeing the sights, thinks he has not thoroughly ‘done’ the town until he has visited one of these dens of vice under the protection of a competent guide.<sup>179</sup>

Recognising the importance of racial diversity in attracting visitors to the West Coast, the guidebook exploited San Francisco’s population to promote the fair. A published document of the Swedish-American California Club of Chicago's trip

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<sup>178</sup> *San Diego Union*, 24 January 1915.

<sup>179</sup> *The "Monarch" Souvenir of Sunset City and Sunset Scenes*.



to the San Francisco fair (1915) included a detailed description of their visit to the city's Chinatown. The author noted the thirty-strong group's surprise at "how different the town is today", as "you can stroll alone in Chinatown with fully as much safety as in any other part of San Francisco".<sup>180</sup> Packaging a trip to Chinatown as an essential component of visiting a West Coast world's fair extended the culture of exhibition fostered on the midway into the city proper. As city boosters sought to promote pride and interest in the diversity of West Coast cities, they portrayed racial Others as touristic sights rather than social problems.<sup>181</sup> As visitors moved from the explicit site of amusement and racial observation on the world's fair midway to a similarly boundaried urban ethnic enclave, it is likely that they transferred their methods of racialised viewing and interpretation into the cities.

Emily Post's published recollection of her journey west demonstrates the apparent seamlessness of her gaze from tourist destinations, to the world's fairs, to the city and desert. On her way to the San Diego fair (1915-1916), Post encountered "two Indians on ponies" who directed them to Las Vegas, and noted that their "faces were as expressionless as wood-carvings and neither uttered a sound nor smiled". At a Fred Harvey tourist site, Post described the display as "frankly a vaudeville performance of Indian dancing and singing", claiming that their singing "sounds not unlike grunts", and to "our Anglo-Saxon ears and eyes it seemed very monotonous". At the Grand Canyon, Post recorded another encounter with Native Americans at a tourist site, and expressed that

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<sup>180</sup> Swedish-American California Club of Chicago, *Pleasant Recollections in Pen and Picture of the Happy Hundred Members of the Swedish American California Club, Making up the "Lutfisk" Special, Recalling Friends, Places and Incidents During their Never-to-be-Forgotten Trip to the Panama Pacific Exposition, June 12th to July 4th, Nineteen Fifteen* (Chicago: Swedish-American California Club, 1915), p.26.

<sup>181</sup> Cocks, *Doing the Town*, p.189.

she felt “rather embarrassed on being told to look in upon a group of swarthy figures who contemplate the intrusion of their privacy in solemn silence”, although she nevertheless paid her “regulation quarter”. After these varied encounters with Native Americans, Post wrote of the Native American display at the San Diego fair, “The Indian exhibits were very complete”.<sup>182</sup> Assessing the display in relation to her previous encounters, Post felt able to judge the fair exhibit as accurate, and the structured exposition encounter validated her pre-existing understandings of Native Americans as inferior in a venue that was more educational than the vaudevillian performance at the tourist site, and provided a more legitimate transactional encounter than the Grand Canyon.<sup>183</sup>

In San Francisco, Post encountered several Chinese people in Chinatown, and the Chinese “slave” of a local white family. She mocked one Chinese man’s speech, writing ““Him likee leg pliece!””, and admitted that “Frankly, the people out here who fascinate me most of all are the Chinese”. At the San Francisco fair (1915), Post dismissed the Chinese restaurant, claiming that it had “nothing Chinese about it except its Chinese ornamentation”. Again regarding language as a measure of civilisation, and considering herself a qualified judge of racial authenticity, Post measured the fair’s Chinese concession against her experience in the city and found it lacking. As a popular tourist destination, San Francisco’s Chinatown represented a form of competition to the exposition display, and could similarly function as a structured site for racial encounters. In contrast, Post did not judge the Samoan concession to be lacking, and gave an unmitigated and enthusiastic appraisal of the performers, about whom she was

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<sup>182</sup> Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, p.142, pp.162-163, p.185, p.194.

<sup>183</sup> Clevenger, “*Indescribably Grand*”, p.10.

“crazy”.<sup>184</sup> Without any previous physical encounter with Samoan peoples, Post did not question the legitimacy of the exposition’s display, despite her acknowledgement of its poor rendering of a Chinese restaurant. Post’s seamless gaze reflects what Timothy Mitchell has regarded as an age in which the world was “conceived and grasped as though it were an exhibition”. Even beyond popular nineteenth century exhibitionary sites such as museums, theatres, and expositions, the public regarded people and objects as models and signifiers of something else.<sup>185</sup> Exhibitionary sites functioned as models for experiencing life beyond them, and visitors turned their structured gaze from museums and expositions to the streets, adapting carnivalised modes of seeing racial difference to everyday encounters.<sup>186</sup> The boundaries between fair and city, midway and street, performer and inhabitant, were porous.

Despite their inherently ephemeral nature, world’s fairs lived on beyond their closing days. Millions attended the fairs and millions more heard about them through the sharing of experiences. Exhibits moved on to amusement parks or were bequeathed to museums, and the discourses and ideas generated and perpetuated on the grounds remained in the public consciousness.<sup>187</sup> The racial encounters experienced on the midway did not stop being meaningful once visitors left the grounds, and this meaning was not fixed within the exposition site. Subsequent experiences – whether reinforcing or not – contributed to overall lessons, making them relevant and useful, and providing the individual with an opportunity to rehearse, select, and transform elements

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<sup>184</sup> Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, pp.217-219, pp.233-234.

<sup>185</sup> Timothy Mitchell, ‘The World as Exhibition’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 31.2 (1989), pp.221-222.

<sup>186</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture*, p.51; McGowan, *American Carnival*, p.xi.

<sup>187</sup> Munro, ‘Investigating World’s Fairs’, p.81.

of the encounter in their everyday lives.<sup>188</sup> On the way home from her trip to the Portland fair (1905), Pauline Oelo McClay noted a number of racial encounters in her diary. She wrote of her lodging house, “I would not want to lodge here long there are too many foreigners”. She continued, “I ate yesterday at a Japanese Coffee house tho [sic] the people eating were all Americans. I saw a fine looking Mexican on the street. He was selling trinkets [,] a small occupation for so strong a fellow”.<sup>189</sup> Scanning the streets for foreign encounters, McClay maintained the boundaries of her whiteness, refusing to lodge with foreign people, eating with other Americans in a Japanese coffee house, and casting her carnivalised gaze towards a Mexican man.<sup>190</sup> Structured by the fair, yet continuing to shape her own understandings of it, McClay performed her superior whiteness on the streets of Portland.

### **Conclusions: Visitors, Race, and the World’s Fair**

This chapter approached the live midway exhibits from the perspective of the visitors. It began by demonstrating how the tourism industry and the burgeoning culture of display prepared visitors for non-white encounters on the midway by encouraging the American public to observe, assess, and judge non-white populations. The world’s fair grounds, and the midway in particular, were not neutral sites. Various exhibitors and mediators curated and choreographed the visitors’ experiences, directing them on what to see, how to

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<sup>188</sup> John H. Falk and Lynn D. Dierkling, *Learning from Museums: Visitor Experiences and the Making of Meaning* (Walnut Creek: Altamira, 2000), p.133; Feagin, *The White Racial Frame*, pp.14-15.

<sup>189</sup> Pauline O. McClay diary, Mss 1509, Oregon Historical Society.

<sup>190</sup> Matt Wray, *Not Quite White: White Trash and the Boundaries of Whiteness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), p.6, p.14.

see it, and how to feel about it. While texts encouraged visitors to assume a position of superiority on the midway, spaces compressed the world and made it readily available and easily comparable. Although highly planned and organised, midway appeared to be disordered spaces, and visitors retained some degree of agency in their negotiation of these amusement concession strips. In paying the various admission fees, visitors instantly became both consumers and active participants in the world of the fair. Once inside the gates, fairgoers performed their superior and collective whiteness, learning, rehearsing, and at times temporarily breaking the boundaries of their racial identity. Mediators such as the local press manipulated the presence of non-white visitors, transforming their attendance into another opportunity for white observation, although at times allowing them to use the fair for their own ends. White visitors also performed non-whiteness, playfully transgressing racial boundaries in a spectacle that ultimately reconfirmed their superior whiteness, yet also highlighted the mutability of this racial category.

Beyond the fair, official and unofficial documents and objects shared and shaped visitor experiences, distorting and mediating the racial encounters that took place on the midway. The machinery of the exposition crept into the streets and homes of visitors and non-visitors, contributing to a visual culture that encouraged individuals to see the world as an exhibitionary site. As the nation's borders expanded to include various non-white populations in the Pacific, the American public had to work harder to imagine themselves as members of a national community, and heads of an imperial household. By identifying the position of those non-white populations within the new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy, white Americans also had to identify and

conceptualise the category of whiteness within this framework. Visitors rehearsed and performed the racial identities and relationships inscribed on the midway beyond the world's fair, ensuring that the meaning of those initial encounters was never final.<sup>191</sup> As the midway framed a variegated and hierarchical pattern of non-whiteness, it simultaneously fostered a collective and flexible form of whiteness.

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<sup>191</sup> Siegrid Deutschlander and Leslie J. Miller, 'Politicizing Aboriginal Cultural Tourism: The Discourse of Primitivism in the Tourist Encounter', *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 40.1 (2003), p.42.

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# Conclusion: 'To Know Something That They Didn't Before'

While scholars of race have overlooked the accessibility and validity of the world's fair live exhibitions as sites of a collaborative and relative form of race-making, exhibitionary researchers have not fully incorporated the critical lens of race into their examinations of these unusual sites of racial spectacle. Yet the turn of the twentieth century West Coast world's fairs functioned as intensely political and cultural sites at which a number of race-making agents sought to construct, disseminate, and exhibit knowledge about race. As the nation turned westward to confront the interconnected processes of conquest, immigration, trade, empire, and international power relations, the American population had to reconceptualise the nation's centres and peripheries, and restructure its relations with the non-white people caught up in the era of expansion into the Pacific region. In this thesis, I have demonstrated how the live exhibitions – as sites at which various newly significant processes, concepts, and racial groups coalesced – helped to solidify notions of racial difference by providing legible and comparative spectacles of 'non-whiteness'. As sites fundamentally shaped by local, national, and international impulses and players, the world's fair live exhibitions scripted the relative terms of racial difference within the newly imperial and Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy, and inculcated white visitors with the skills of racial identification and interpretation.



By combining the methods and literatures of race and exhibition, and elevating the world's fair as a significant site of racialisation, I have demonstrated how exposition exhibitors and mediators adapted existing narratives and images to package the terms of racial difference in a manner that addressed the complicated racial patterns of the West Coast and the newly imperial nation. By establishing the key racial frameworks, spatial reconceptualisations, and actors involved in producing these racial exhibitionary sites at the outset, I have demonstrated how the West Coast world's fairs were positioned to compound and constitute racial knowledge through the deployment of a number of exhibitionary techniques and racialisation strategies. The chapter structure, which examined the live exhibits of a number of non-white groups in turn, allowed for a recognition of the specific contexts and differing impulses at play in the exhibition of domestic and foreign populations that were tied to the nation in various ways. Yet my chosen ordering, with an initial examination of Native Americans as flexible models, then of Asian populations as ambiguous figures of both domestic and foreign significance, followed by the imperial subjects that were significant as individual groups and as linked symbols of the new empire, has emphasised interconnections and comparisons that reflected the exhibitionary ordering of the midways. The closing chapter on visitors functioned to emphasise that in framing a hierarchical pattern of non-whiteness, the midways also instructed visitors to perform a new flexible form of superior whiteness that allowed them to negotiate the rapid changes in local, national, and international racial dynamics.

'Raced' as 'red' and framed as inherently unmodern, Native Americans functioned as visually homogenous yet ideologically flexible models of domestic racial difference. Providing repeatable exhibitionary techniques such as temporal distancing, and popular racialisation strategies such as 'tribal' ordering and romanticised 'primitivism', the constructed image of the indigenous population combined touristic fantasy and science in its legible package of Otherness. As both resident aliens and autonomous international competitors, Chinese and Japanese figures at the fair were raced variously as 'yellow' and 'brown'. Framed as unthreateningly yet obstinately traditional, and simultaneously as modernising yet dependent upon white example, the Asian performers were contested figures of local and international significance. As the newest members of America's Pacific household, the imperial subjects from Alaska, Hawaii, Samoa, and the Philippines were categorised and ranked by various race-making agents and according to a number of racial and international hierarchies. As each group achieved the dubious status of 'brown', and was assigned a familial role in the imagined American Pacific, their relative economic and strategic importance helped to determine their image and future. Not content to be passive observers of the racial "kaleidoscope", both white and non-white visitors used the exposition site to conspicuously perform their racial identities.<sup>1</sup> As white visitors strolled along the midway, they became inculcated within a flexible and pervasive white racial frame, and empowered by a tool kit of racial identification that permitted interpersonal adaptation yet cemented a collective sense of superiority within the new Pacifically-oriented racial hierarchy. The various paths to inclusion and exclusion for the non-white

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Ridente, 'Some Citizens of Sunset City', *The Californian*, 5.4 (1894), p.408.

groups were determined in part by the legible spectacles that appeared on the West Coast midways. Locally inflected, nationally significant, and international in reach, these constructed racial identities were constantly renegotiated and never finished, yet at this unprecedented moment of westward expansion, they solidified a comparative form of race-making and a collective and flexible whiteness.

This thesis contributes to the literature on American world's fairs, to new directions in research on the American West, and to understandings of racial formation in the United States, by synthesising a number of methods and approaches and shifting existing emphases. My focus on the West Coast fairs demonstrates that far from being marginal and solely regional affairs, they played a central role in reconceptualising and solidifying racial relationships to reflect the nation's turn to the American West and to the Pacific territories and nations beyond. This thesis also contributes to new histories of the American West by foregrounding the region's unique and non-binary racial patterns, highlighting the significance of sub-regional contexts such as business interests in the Pacific Northwest and the mythology of the Southwest, and reorienting the study of this period to reflect Pacific rather than Atlantic processes. My comparative and genealogical methodologies contribute to the histories of racial formation in the United States, and build in particular on the works of Tomás Almaguer and Lanny Thompson to demonstrate that racial categories and relationships do not emerge in a vacuum, but are always relative, shifting, and unfinished.<sup>2</sup> By using racial theories in concert with exhibitionary models, I

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<sup>2</sup> Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Lanny Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago:*

also modify and extend the existing research on the category of whiteness and exposition visitor experiences, grounding somewhat abstract research questions within the concrete site of the world's fair. My use of the world's fair archive to examine questions of race has allowed for an evaluation of the various actors and dynamics that contribute towards and operate within the white racial frame. Utilising visual sources, ephemera, and unique documents such as exposition correspondence, visitor diaries, and postcards, I have been able to examine the interactions between the systemic and the interpersonal, and therefore to demonstrate how deeply implicated the West Coast world's fair site was in the framing of Pacific racial patterns.

This study has offered an insight into the turn of the twentieth century West Coast world's fairs as sites of racialisation. My research naturally has its limitations, both in terms of the inevitable incompleteness of the world's fair archive, and the scope of the research questions and methodologies that I have chosen to apply. An extended study of the later twentieth century West Coast fairs – particularly San Diego (1935-1936), San Francisco (1939-1940), and Seattle (1962) – would provide fascinating insights into the changes in Western racial patterns after the fairs in my study.<sup>3</sup> I also regret that I have not been able to incorporate fully the significance of Hispanic populations and America's relationship with Latin America to racial patterns on the West Coast.<sup>4</sup> My

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*Representation and Rule in the Insular Territories under U.S. Dominion After 1898* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> In particular the 1924 Immigration Act, which applied a quota system to those seeking to enter the nation, and the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act, which began to extend rights to Native Americans. The 1934 Philippine Independence Act also significantly shifted America's relationship with the Philippines, and the internment of Japanese-Americans during the Second World War marked a watershed moment in Asian-American relations.

<sup>4</sup> This topic has been taken up by scholars particularly in the last twenty years.

treatment of the fairs as sites of racialisation has also arguably foregrounded race to the exclusion of other equally significant conceptual and methodological categories. Yet as Robert Lee has convincingly argued, race is a “principal signifier” of social differences in America, and as such is implicated in popular discourses relating to class, gender, sexuality, family, and nation.<sup>5</sup> Although categories such as class and gender in particular are significant to the framing of racial categories and the performance of whiteness, I have only been able to highlight their importance at certain points throughout this thesis as additional factors to my central lens of race. Future researchers of race and exhibition on the American West Coast, including myself, will have to acknowledge the vast methodological and conceptual possibilities for such topics, and seek to address thematic imbalances and archival disparities in order to elevate sites such as world’s fairs to their rightful place within historical research.

The live exhibitions of non-white people at American world’s fairs lost popularity in the second half of the twentieth century, and the financial failure of the 1984 New Orleans exposition largely ended the nation’s fascination with the world of fairs. Yet the spectacle of non-white live exhibits, and the attendant questions and ethical concerns that this exhibitionary form raises, remains in Euro-American societies. Academics have drawn comparisons between the annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival and the world’s fair midways of the past, arguing that such events privilege racial and cultural descent over consent, and

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See, George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); José A. Cobas, Jorge Duany, and Joe R. Feagin, *How the United States Racializes Latinos: White Hegemony and its Consequences* (Boulder: Paradigm, 2009); Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Robert G. Lee, *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), pp.6-7.

work to locate authenticity in tradition.<sup>6</sup> Held annually on the National Mall in Washington D.C. in the weeks surrounding the 4<sup>th</sup> July, the festival features performances of song, dance, and craft production by people from all over the world. The nationalistic setting of the event, its carnival-like atmosphere, and programs such as 'China: Tradition and the Art of Living' (2014), certainly echo the turn of the twentieth century world's fair midways. While proponents of the event argue that the "dialogic exchange" between both performers and audiences, and performers and festival organisers, prevents a carnival-like atmosphere, critical observers have sought to situate the event within the long history of human display, and to question its role in objectifying certain cultures and populations.<sup>7</sup>

The continuing fascination with bodily difference does not seem to have diminished with greater travel opportunities or the advent of the 'information age', yet its form has changed. Jane Desmond has emphasised the ongoing ubiquity of live performances in the tourist industry, highlighting the continued willingness of many individuals to pay to see bodies that are different from their own in the belief that they "will come to know something that they didn't

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<sup>6</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp.72-75.

The Smithsonian Folklife Festival began in 1967. According to the official festival website, the event is an "an international exposition of living cultural heritage.

'Smithsonian Folklife Festival Mission and History', <<http://www.festival.si.edu/about-us/mission-and-history/smithsonian>> [accessed 16/09/15].

<sup>7</sup> Krista A. Thompson, 'Beyond Tarzan and National Geographic: The Politics and Poetics of Presenting African Diasporic Cultures on the Mall', *Journal of American Folklore* 121 (Winter 2008), p.109.

See also, Richard Price and Sally Price, *On the Mall: Presenting Maroon Tradition-Bearers at the 1992 Festival of American Folklife* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); Richard Kurin, *Smithsonian Folklife Festival: Culture Of, By, and For the People* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1998).

before”.<sup>8</sup> Documentaries on extraordinary bodies, the commercial display of the anatomical wonder inherent in preserved body parts, and the trend for young Westerners to engage in voluntary work in developing countries and share images online of their ‘slumming’ experience, have replaced the world’s fair midways of the past.<sup>9</sup> In 2014, white South African artist, Brett Bailey, presented ‘Exhibit B’ at the Edinburgh Festival. Featuring black performers in cages, Bailey displayed his fascination with the role of live exhibits in legitimising colonial practices, although his chosen exhibitionary form caused some to question whether Bailey was, albeit inadvertently, reproducing the racialising structures of the past.<sup>10</sup> Despite the change in form, there are consistencies in the function of the live exhibit. The desire to be educated, entertained, and to locate the Self through the visual consumption of the Other, remains, and thus research on the interconnections between race and exhibition must continue.

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<sup>8</sup> Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.xiii.

<sup>9</sup> See Nadja Durbach, “Skinless Wonders”: Body Worlds and the Victorian Freak Show’, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 69.1 (2014), 38-67.

<sup>10</sup> John O’Mahoney, ‘Edinburgh’s Most Controversial Show: Exhibit B, a Human Zoo’, *Guardian*, 11 August 2014; Sadiyah Qureshi, ‘Exhibit B Puts People on Display for Edinburgh International Festival’, <<http://theconversation.com/exhibit-b-puts-people-on-display-for-edinburgh-international-festival-30344>> [accessed 16/09/15].

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# Appendix

## **Appendix 1**

### **Map of the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

**Rand McNally and Company, 'Indexed Standard Guide Map of the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago', 1893, in Rand McNally Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago.**

**Appendix 2****Map of the California Midwinter International Exposition, San Francisco, 1894.**

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**Appendix 3****Map of the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair, Portland, 1905.**

This text box is where the unedited thesis included the following third party copyright material:

***Western World's Fair, Official Daily Program, 135 (13 October 1905), in folder 7, box 10, Exposition and Fairs Collection, 344, Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.***

**Appendix 4**

**Map of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle, 1909.**

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**Appendix 5****Map of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915.**

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**Appendix 6****Map of the Panama California Exposition, San Diego, 1915-1916.**

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