

THE FACE OF EMPIRE:  
THE CULTURAL PRODUCTION OF U.S. IMPERIALISM  
IN THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE AND CALIFORNIA, 1904–1916

BY

SANDRA L. HENDERSON

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History  
in the Graduate College of the  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2016

Urbana, Illinois

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Kristin L. Hoganson, Chair  
Professor Dianne S. Harris  
Associate Professor Kathryn J. Oberdeck  
Professor Elizabeth H. Pleck

## Abstract

The U.S. government's construction of the Panama Canal (1904–1914) presented a template for expansive imperialism in Latin America in the twentieth century. After the highly publicized atrocities of the Philippine–American War (1899–1902) and the popular anti-imperialist movement at the turn of the century, imperial boosters required a new strategy. The U.S. government's Isthmian Canal Commission (ICC) thus sold the Panama Canal project to the American public as a peaceful, beneficent development project rather than a coercive occupation. Imperial boosters continuously reinforced this message from the construction era onward through the cultural production of attractive, reassuring images that profoundly influenced media coverage of the canal project and the resulting public perceptions of U.S. imperialism in the American-run Panama Canal Zone (PCZ). Visually appealing images of canal construction highlighted the technological wonders of its engineering and made the canal a metaphor for the proclaimed superiority of American civilization in the jungle. The PCZ emerged as an unprecedented model for imperial occupation, in that boosters packaged the annexed territory as an Edenic civilian enclave rather than a militarized zone. The cultural production of this publicity, particularly visual images of technology and white settler life in the PCZ, worked to neutralize popular resistance to U.S. imperial expansion in the early twentieth century.

The publicity triumph of the PCZ was consolidated by corollary mainland initiatives, the two world's fairs in California in 1915–1916 commemorating the opening of the Panama Canal. Panama, San Diego, and San Francisco became three points on a circuit of imperial power, bound together inextricably with the opening of the canal. San Diego organized the Panama-California Exposition (PCE) in 1915–1916, and San Francisco staged the Panama-Pacific



International Exposition (PPIE) in 1915. These two expositions significantly advanced the publicity efforts of empire boosters, while furthering the imperial aspirations of the two cities. San Diego used its fair to exert control over the U.S. Southwest in an effort to forge an inland empire that would position the city as an imperial hub. The PCE employed scientific racism to justify white supremacy, Indian removal, and imperial expansion, both “at home” in the U.S. West and “abroad” in the PCZ, as imperial boundaries between “the domestic” and “the foreign” blurred. Fair exhibits and publications celebrated hydraulic engineering in both California and Panama as critical to expanding white American settler societies, and justified the dislocation of indigenous peoples in both locations in the name of progress, modernity, and civilization.

San Francisco’s imperial boosterism also served local needs, as the city used the PPIE to stage a renaissance from the cataclysmic 1906 earthquake and fire and position itself as an imperial metropole on a global stage, a vital outpost on the Pacific Rim. San Francisco boosters strove to turn the fair into a wider celebration of imperialism in the tradition of Western Civilization. The PPIE claimed the legacy of Imperial Rome and the Greek Empire of city-states, which San Francisco aspired to imitate. The PPIE created a spectacle for millions of fairgoers who were dazzled and spellbound by the architecture, landscaping, sculpture, color design, and the unprecedented lighting shows. Fairgoers were lulled into a state of political quiescence by the fair’s sublime beauty and thus consented to imperialism without critically analyzing it. Visiting the fair became an aesthetic experience, one that fostered acquiescence and discouraged dissent. From Panama in 1904 to California in 1916, promoters made the expanding U.S. empire appear peaceful, consensual, beneficent, and beautiful, a marketing strategy that was difficult to argue with.

*To my father, and to LP*

## Acknowledgements

I fear that the many debts that I have incurred in pursuit of a doctorate, including the intellectual ones, can never be repaid. It is, however, a pleasure to contemplate with profound gratitude how much I owe to the many teachers, friends, and beloved ones who have enabled this rite of passage.

My undergraduate and MA years at San Francisco State University were a joyous preparation for academic life. SFSU offered an organic combination of the pursuit of knowledge and the expected use of it for social justice. My lifelong gratitude for that experience is tempered, however, by anguish that the city that provided such opportunities and harbored me, and thousands of other like refugees, in fact no longer exists save in name. I still marvel at my great good fortune in having worked with so many brilliant and generous scholars at SFSU, including Robert Cherny, Sarah Curtis, Phillip Dreyfus, Mary Lowenthal Felstiner, Glenn Fieldman, Frank Kidner, Paul Longmore, Barbara Loomis, Julyana Peard, Moses Rischin, and Sally Scully. They were exemplary teachers, researchers, writers, and generous mentors. I am particularly grateful to Bob Cherny. Bob led challenging seminars in California, Progressive, and labor histories, and he tirelessly guided his students in their work. One such seminar led me to ongoing research and graduate studies at SFSU, with Bob as my thesis advisor. The anthology of historical research by former students that Bob Cherny shepherded into existence, *California Women and Politics: From the Gold Rush to the Great Depression*, is a testament to his remarkable generosity as a scholar. Moses Rischin was also an incredibly encouraging mentor. As a beginning undergraduate I didn't initially appreciate the significance of studying with the student of Oscar Handlin who had interviewed Abraham Cahan and written *The Promised City*.

I could not have asked for a more remarkable introduction to U.S. immigration history. My study of Latin American history with Julyana Peard was vital in both senses of the word. She modeled sophisticated understandings of agency, and consistently challenged us to reject the lure of false comfort that Manichean views offer, even—or especially—when confronting histories of moral failure. In the context of Renaissance Florence, Sally Scully raised intriguing issues about the tensions of civic humanism, questions that are woven into this dissertation and continue to influence my thought. Sally Scully possessed a formidable intellect matched by her warmth, grace, humor, and concern for social justice. She seemed to embody the humanities, and in an era when they are besieged, she is a reminder to all who knew her of their enduring value.

The University of Illinois was a very hospitable place to further my study of history. I have benefitted immensely from working with such distinguished scholars in the Department of History. Nils Jacobsen and Cynthia Radding offered early and generous support for my interest in a transnational project in Latin American history, and included me in their seminars and reading groups. I also benefitted from influential seminars with Peter Fritzsche and Elizabeth Esch. I have received an education in teaching from the professors that I've assisted. Among them, I would especially like to thank Bruce Levine, Fred Hoxie, Bob Morrissey, and Peter Fritzsche for their remarkable collegiality and generosity. I am very grateful to the Department of History for its generous funding support, which included a Pre-Dissertation Research Travel Grant, a Dissertation Research Fellowship, and a Dissertation Writing Fellowship.

My dissertation committee members, Kristin Hoganson, Dianne Harris, Kathryn Oberdeck, and Elizabeth Pleck, were inspiring teachers from the beginning, and I want to thank them for their sustained, and sustaining, support.

As a founder in the field of U.S. women's history, Liz Pleck shared her wealth of exhaustive knowledge. She offered invaluable advice in every area and at every stage of the dissertation. Liz suggested sources, critiqued methodologies, recommended historiographical additions (but never subtractions), read numerous drafts, and always replied with extensive and timely suggestions . . . and with humor. Liz also offered practical and strategic advice about surviving graduate school, and made time for many ongoing conversations.

I have been extremely fortunate to work with Dianne Harris. Dianne offered a consummate balance of penetrating critique and humane encouragement. The dissertation could never fully reflect how much I have learned from her, in a seminar on U.S. suburban history, from her published works, and in writing this dissertation. I have benefitted from her expertise in the histories of architecture, the environment, culture, the nexus of race and place, and social theory. Dianne suggested ways of reframing arguments and approaches that strengthened the dissertation immeasurably. She very generously made time for careful readings, substantive comments, and meetings while also directing the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, and during the transition to become Dean of the College of Humanities at the University of Utah. I don't understand how she managed all of this while sharing such generously incisive readings and unfailingly *gratia* as a committee member throughout, but I am deeply grateful. She has left an ineffable void at Illinois, but wherever and whatever we are as scholars and as humans, we are fortunate that we have such a champion for the humanities.

Kathy Oberdeck was an early source of support, and has been very generous in sharing her time and challenging advice. Kathy recommended critical revisions to previous iterations, and I am grateful for her suggestions, particularly regarding social theory and cultural histories of Southern California, race, class, and immigration. She pointed out areas that deserved further

explication. Her expertise about constructions of power in the built environment, and her attention to the complexity and multilateral nature of cultural production, have been invaluable in informing my project. Kathy also enabled the defense through her heroic efforts to meet between intercontinental flights while conducting research in different hemispheres. While heroic it was also typical of her willingness to offer help beyond professional obligations.

My advisor, Kristin Hoganson, has made it difficult to know where to begin in thanking her. Kristin has been a tireless source of critical support. She has a gift for homing in on weaknesses, and challenged me in every area of writing the dissertation, pressing me to defend structure and scope, sources and theory, language and relevance. I hope that this dissertation does some justice to the standards that she sets with her own work. I remember when and where I first read her work, and my response was to immediately apply to Illinois. Kristin offered an invigorating transnational approach to U.S. history, and a vibrant analysis of imperialism. Her distinctive focus on the history of gender in U.S. foreign relations remains revelatory. In addition to providing an example of brilliant scholarship, she guided me throughout the long and at-times harrowing odyssey of the doctorate. Among my scholarly debts, I thank her for a grant subvention in the final semester that enabled completion.

Many people across the campus at Illinois have helped make this dissertation possible. I would like to thank Carol Baxter, Ken Kochan, Brin Schuler, and Kathryn Waldyke. In the Department of History, Tom Bedwell is a compassionate genius at keeping graduate students' bodies and souls together, and he has been a steady source of encouragement. Shannon Croft, Carol Parker, and Tricia Warfield have also been extraordinarily kind and supportive. They have helped with problems large and small over the years, and contributed to my progress here beyond the highly skilled work that they do. Much of the department's warmth and community is owed

to them. I am especially grateful to Shannon Croft for all of her patient and painstaking assistance with the myriad program requirements. The University of Illinois Main Library is the largest public university research library in the United States, holding some fourteen million volumes and twenty-four million items. Rightly famous for its amazing collection, it enabled deep research and made this dissertation possible. I recall fondly a moment from a trip to the U.S. West, where I was doing research in a prestigious library. I inquired about requesting an item that was categorized as “limited circulation,” and was immediately rebuffed. When I asked what caste was allowed the privilege of even submitting a request for consideration, the librarian replied, “only enhanced patrons from a very short list of exclusive universities.” I can’t help smiling now, as I did then, recalling how the smug, gatekeeping visage disappeared when I spoke the magical phrase “University of Illinois.” The “limited circulation” book beat me back to campus, and I am tempted to thank that library for this kindness by name. For the few items that the U of I Library does not possess, Kathy Danner in Interlibrary Borrowing worked miracles for me on critical occasions. She has an uncanny ability to breach the “non-circulating” barrier, and she uses her powers for good. I’m convinced that the Library of Congress has met its match in her, and I advocate naming something on campus in honor of Ms. Danner. Cinda Pippenger also provided much kind help with interlibrary loans.

Many dear friends have sustained me while writing the dissertation. I am glad for the chance to thank a few of them here, especially Ann Collins, David Dunbar, Glenn Fieldman, Michelle Kleehammer, and Ilze Mueller. It is a basic fact that I would not have finished without their support. Glenn Fieldman is a much-beloved professor at SFSU and I was very fortunate to study with her during my undergraduate years. Glenn fostered my study of U.S. foreign policy, encouraged me to pursue a doctorate, and has shared years of encouragement and good advice.

She also very generously offered me the use of her home and car during a summer of research in San Francisco. I am grateful for our ongoing friendship and conversations. Her intellectual range remains inspiring, and her labor and passion for social justice and ecological survival are a source of hope. On the nights that global warming keeps me up, I take some comfort in knowing that Glenn has for decades been doing what is required of us all—confronting this planetary crisis as the existential threat that it already is. Ilze Mueller is the best result ever from a conference. A generous and inspiring friend, she has been an oak (or perhaps a *Klavina*) during the degree, offering her good cheer, sound advice, learned insights, linguistic expertise, kindness, and intellectual curiosity. Ann Collins has to be the best discovery from a research trip ever. She has been compelled to live with “the bloody dissertation” for too long and yet retaliated only with dry wit, warmth, intellect, perspective, the gift of letters, and pictures of Grace. Ann and Ilze have both shared in a deep love of poetry, and poetry is not a luxury. The poems they’ve sent over the dissertation years have been restorative, as have been their delightful gifts of books.

My first lessons in critical thinking came from my father, Robert L. Henderson. He was keenly sensitive to injustices, and detested cruelty and violence. A veteran, he loathed militarism and recognized demagogues, armchair warriors, and authoritarian personalities for what they are: dangerous men. He weighed the evidence for himself, and always asked: “Who benefits?” My father exhorted us to do something constructive with our lives. I dedicate my dissertation to him.

LP deserves more credit than I can properly articulate, for writing advice, empathy for the doctoral experience, suggestions for strengthening the manuscript, interventions with the vicissitudes of technology, sharing gourmet food, poetry, birds, humor, music, language, mindful dialogue, equanimity, unwavering support in every realm, consistently wise counsel in all things, and reminders of what matters. I also dedicate my dissertation to LP.



## Table of Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Chapter 1 : Introduction.....  | 1   |
| Chapter 2 : Civil Engineering in the Panama Canal Zone.....  | 71  |
| Chapter 3 : Social and Domestic Engineering in the Panama Canal Zone.....  | 153 |
| Chapter 4 : San Diego and the Panama-California Exposition:<br>Hydraulic Power, Homesteading, and Geographies of Empire..... | 233 |
| Chapter 5 : San Francisco and the Panama-Pacific International Exposition:<br>Civic Imperialism as a Work of Art .....       | 339 |
| Chapter 6 : Conclusion .....   | 403 |
| Selected Bibliography .....  | 456 |

## Chapter 1 : Introduction

When President Theodore Roosevelt seized the territory that became the Panama Canal Zone (PCZ) in 1903, the moment appeared auspicious to the president and other U.S. imperial advocates for a number of reasons. The French canal company was bankrupt and offering to sell its construction assets to the U.S. government at a fraction of cost. Colombia, politically and militarily weak, was in no position to withstand Roosevelt's formidable demands for a canal treaty on U.S. terms. When Colombia persisted in negotiating for better terms, Americans instigated a coup in a breakaway isthmian province, backed by threats of U.S. military invasion, and Roosevelt orchestrated the creation of the new Republic of Panama in 1903. The Roosevelt Administration immediately recognized Panama and signed a treaty with it that was entirely advantageous for the United States, enabling U.S. canal construction to commence in 1904.

Americans had been explicitly trumpeting their Manifest Destiny since 1845, and the ambitious scale of that destiny was constantly expanding. The territorial acquisitions of the Louisiana Purchase, the unifying and consolidating outcomes of the U.S. Civil War, and victories in the Mexican-American, Spanish-Cuban-American, and Philippine-American Wars positioned the United States for imperial dominance. Alongside this militarism, historian Paul Kennedy has argued that by the late nineteenth century the economic might of American industrial and agricultural production convinced anxious Europeans that the United States was destined for global status that would surpass Europe's imperial strength.<sup>1</sup> Historian Niall Ferguson suggests that by the early 1900s, Great Britain viewed the United States as a rival

---

<sup>1</sup>Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987).

empire “worthy of appeasement,” with the rapidly expanding U.S. Navy second in the world only to the Royal Navy by 1907.<sup>2</sup> Historian Akira Iriye notes that in the closing decade of the nineteenth century, the United States expanded its territorial empire beyond the continental base of North America and emerged as a maritime world power, extending its imperial reach into the Caribbean and the Pacific with U.S. annexations of Hawaii (1893), Guam (1898), Puerto Rico (1898), the Philippines (1899), and occupation of Cuba (1898).<sup>3</sup> The momentous U.S. triumph in the Spanish-American War in 1898 denotes this imperial trajectory, as it “placed the United States among the great powers of the world,” according to historian Robert Rydell.<sup>4</sup>

Yet despite these acquisitions, the course of U.S. empire in the twentieth century was not actually manifest. The path of imperialism looked alluring to its proponents but it was also fateful, bound by murky and perilous contingencies. American imperialists could not simply assume inexorable public support for every new project of invasion and annexation. Although the United States had deftly defeated Spain, the anti-colonial victors found themselves still deployed in “liberated” territories years later, facing nationalist insurgents and the prospect of long-term military occupations in their restive new imperial possessions. Military atrocities committed during the U.S.–Philippines War, including torture and the deliberate targeting of women, children, and civilians, raised troubling and unresolved questions. Among them was a

---

<sup>2</sup>Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America's Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 43.

<sup>3</sup>Akira Iriye, “Beyond Imperialism: The New Internationalism,” *Daedalus* 134, no. 2 (2005): 109–10.

<sup>4</sup>Robert W. Rydell, John E. Findling, and Kimberly D. Pelle, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States* (Washington DC and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 45.

concern that U.S. moral standards, as embodied by American soldiers, had proved fragile and degenerative when exposed to “uncivilized” peoples in foreign zones of imperial occupation.

Public opinion regarding the costs and benefits of empire remained conflicted in the early twentieth century, and Roosevelt’s 1903 annexation of Panama raised more issues. As unfolding details of the Panama intrigue splashed across the nation’s front pages, debates raged in editorials, and politicians calculated their stances. Critics decried the illegality and immorality of staging a specious rebellion through a handful of operatives in order to seize coveted territory from a sovereign, nonbelligerent nation. Proponents declared another victory for liberation from Latin American tyranny, and the march of progress. Meanwhile, the U.S. government quickly drew up a treaty granting itself extensive rights, including sole ownership and complete, perpetual sovereignty within the territory that it desired for its canal project, the PCZ. This sundered the nation of Panama into two noncontiguous pieces at its creation, and made it subject to U.S. occupation at will and rule by decree and martial law.

Secretary of State John Hay signed the enabling treaty with a self-declared representative of Panama, Philippe Bunau-Varilla on 18 November 1903, but Bunau-Varilla was a French investor with no standing to represent Panama, Colombia, France, or any other state. Bunau-Varilla had only once visited the isthmus, in the 1880s, and never returned. He was, however, a major stockholder in the bankrupt French *Compagnie Nouvelle du Canal de Panama*. In 1893 the French government found Bunau-Varilla and others guilty of profiteering from the first company, and compelled them to recapitalize the New Company as “penalty stockholders.” France forced Bunau-Varilla to pay 2.2 million francs for shares in an illiquid company that

could neither operate nor find a buyer, and that he had no voice in.<sup>5</sup> In current U.S. dollars, this amounts to at least \$61.6 million.<sup>6</sup>

Bunau-Varilla thus represented only his own extensive financial interests, and offered his services to the eager Roosevelt Administration because he stood to recover a fortune. Over the course of two weeks, Bunau-Varilla cultivated a band of rebels on the isthmus and sent them money, and hastily wrote Panama's declaration of independence, its constitution, designed its flag, military structure, and declared himself its ambassador to the United States, bestowing himself with the title "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary," all while residing at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City. He was amply rewarded for his role in the drama; as a result of the Hay-Bunau-Varilla treaty, the U.S. government paid \$40 million to the New French Company for its remaining assets and its worthless shares of stock, a form of toxic asset relief for Bunau-Varilla and associates.<sup>7</sup>

Revelations of these dubious events in Panama meant that the ethics of U.S. imperialism remained under public scrutiny at the turn of the century. And at a pragmatic level, critics also questioned whether construction of a canal across the Isthmus of Panama was technologically possible or financially advisable, given the French fate after a quarter-century of quagmire.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>Charles D. Ameringer, "The Panama Canal Lobby of Philippe Bunau-Varilla and William Nelson Cromwell," *American Historical Review* 68, no. 2 (1963): 347–48.

<sup>6</sup>*Measuring Worth*, historical currency converter, with an exchange rate of 1.03 dollars, from 1893 to 2015, accessed 22 Mar. 2016, <https://www.measuringworth.com/ppowerus/>.

<sup>7</sup>Sandra W. Meditz and Dennis M. Hanratty, eds., *Panama: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO/Library of Congress, 1987), 22–23.

<sup>8</sup>The first French company for Panama Canal construction was established in 1876, as *La Société Internationale du Canal Interocéanique*. After a series of construction failures, corruption scandals, trials, and bankruptcy, the French government restructured it as *Compagnie*

Among the many haunting aspects of French failure—including corruption scandals, bribery of politicians, bankruptcies, show trials, incarcerations, and madness—the specters of engineering defeat and deadly tropical diseases loomed the largest. During the Spanish-American War yellow fever killed five times as many U.S. soldiers as combat, with a mortality rate as high as eighty-five percent, grim facts not yet forgotten by an anxious American public.<sup>9</sup>

Thus as the United States embarked upon the PCZ project, public opinion hung in the balance and anxious imperialists worried that the American public might withhold its support, or perhaps even offer resistance. Early-twentieth-century imperialists appear to have grasped a reality that has often eluded historians: popular support for U.S. empire was an unstable, tenuous matter. Past military victories and territorial gains do not by themselves guarantee popular approval for the continued expansion of empire. Public enthusiasm, or at least public consent, must be periodically renewed, and the culture of U.S. imperialism requires constant retooling.

Apprehensive imperialists thus set out to shape public opinion and build adequate support for—or at the least acquiescence to—U.S. empire in Panama. Their initiative utilized emerging advertising strategies of the early twentieth century, including glossy images that offered

---

*Nouvelle du Canal de Panama* in 1893. Even though the French government compelled Bunau-Varilla and others found guilty of profiteering from the first company to recapitalize the New Company, it remained too underfunded to resume work and dissolved in 1902. In addition to Ameringer, “The Panama Canal Lobby,” see Gerstle Mack, *The Land Divided: A History of the Panama Canal and Other Isthmian Canal Projects* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944); David McCullough, *The Path between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870-1914* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977); and Matthew Parker, *Panama Fever: The Epic Story of the Building of the Panama Canal* (New York: Anchor, 2007).

<sup>9</sup>The U.S. War Department estimated 968 combat deaths after the USS *Maine* exploded, and more than 5,000 from yellow fever; see “Yellow Fever in Cuba during the Spanish-American War,” online exhibit, The United States Army Yellow Fever Commission, Moore Health Sciences Library, University of Virginia, accessed 22 Mar. 2016, <http://exhibits.hsl.virginia.edu/yellowfever/cuba/>.

consumers an emotional experience, in an effort to “rebrand” U.S. imperialism. Proponents framed the campaign for imperialism’s desirability in disarming visual styles that combined artistry and empiricism. Images included well-composed scenes of engineering marvels that uplifted humanity, naturalized hierarchies of anthropology, and employed the truth-claims implicit in documentary photojournalism. Panama Canal imperial publicity, because it was often artfully styled and uplifting, avoided public dismissal as mere propaganda manipulation. The visual campaign also subtly flattered its viewers, by appealing to American exceptionalism. Rather than competing in the realm of rhetorical debates—with opponents galvanized by recent U.S. imperial adventures—Panama Canal publicists appealed to citizens *visually* and sought to create positive emotional associations with empire. The use of positive images (rather than debating points) also obviated acknowledgement by boosters that another side on the issue of imperialism even existed. While images promoting imperialism in Panama are abundantly evident, the spin that they employed was designed to work subliminally. Imperial advocates pursued this approach in hopes of reorienting public opinion about U.S. imperial policies, away from the volatile realm of political discourse and toward a noncontroversial and incontrovertible sense of beauty.

I do not mean to suggest that canal proponents did not recognize that beauty is imbricated with power, but rather the opposite: they understood that cultural concepts of beauty were powerful enough to obviate political debates and disable dissent. I focus on how Panama Canal boosters sought to defuse concerns about the violence and coercion of imperial interventions through visual narratives that portrayed U.S. empire-building as aesthetically appealing and therefore politically untroubling. Canal advocates engineered a photogenic and reassuring story of U.S. seizure and exploitation of the PCZ during the construction decade (1904–1914) and

vigorously marketed this visual epic to a target audience of white, middle-class Americans. Organizers of the canal's celebratory expositions perpetuated themes of the inherent attractiveness of U.S. domination, and sought to elevate imperial beauty to a sublime level. This cultural campaign helped imperialists overcome obstacles in U.S. public opinion to expansive foreign occupations.

### **The Problem of the Philippines Precedent**

Atrocities during the Philippine–American War (1899–1902) tainted the cause of U.S. empire in the years leading up to canal building in Panama. Against the backdrop of that war, canal proponents were uncertain about public opinion regarding the new imperial venture in Central America. Despite half a century of empire building, American political philosophy possessed a persistent anti-imperialist tendency, one that the Philippines conflict reanimated.

The continuing activism of the American Anti-Imperialist League, organized in 1898 to oppose U.S. annexation of the Philippines, threatened the Panama project. The League included Republicans, Democrats, and Socialists, ranging from peace and activists to former presidents.<sup>10</sup> This diverse, nonpartisan alliance was cause for concern among Panama Canal boosters because it appealed to a broad swath of Americans through an array of ideological positions.

---

<sup>10</sup>Michael Patrick Cullinane, *Liberty and American Anti-Imperialism, 1898–1909* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). 3. For other historical overviews of the U.S. anti-imperialist movement, see E. Berkeley Tompkins, *Anti-Imperialism in the United States: The Great Debate, 1890–1920* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970), and Daniel B. Schirmer, *Republic or Empire: American Resistance to the Philippine War* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing, 1972).



Opponents of empire argued that territorial annexation perverted American principles. They held that the Philippine-American War violated a number of sacrosanct American tenets, including home rule, democracy, representative government, respect for international law, and the promotion of self-determination and self-government for all nations.<sup>11</sup> Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan articulated a prime moral objection to empire in his 1900 Democratic nomination acceptance speech, citing the long tradition of “prestige and influence which [the United States] has enjoyed among the nations as an exponent of popular government.”<sup>12</sup> Bryan criticized imperialists for taking the United States in a direction that would “imitate European empires in the government of colonies.”<sup>13</sup> In concert with Bryan’s objections, the League cited empire’s corrosive effects on U.S. morals and its denial of self-determination to Filipinos. Bryan made anti-imperialism the centerpiece of his presidential campaign, and he did well in the 1900 election despite the official declarations of glorious victory in the Spanish-American War.<sup>14</sup>

All along the political spectrum, critics suggested publicly that empire was ultimately irreconcilable with American values.<sup>15</sup> Liberals argued that imperialism violated the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. constitution, and threatened Filipinos with a perpetuation of the shameful exclusionary tradition that had denied full citizenship to African Americans and

---

<sup>11</sup>Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876–1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), esp. chap. 6.

<sup>12</sup>Cullinane, *Liberty and Anti-Imperialism*, 3–4.

<sup>13</sup>William Jennings Bryan, nomination acceptance speech, Democratic National Convention, Indianapolis, IN, delivered 8 Aug. 1900; accessed 9 Feb. 2015, <http://www.greatamericandocuments.com/speeches/bryan-imperialism.html>.

<sup>14</sup>Rydell et al., *Fair America*, 49.

<sup>15</sup>Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 224–34.

Native Americans, among others.<sup>16</sup> Conservative opponents publicized issues of “racial purity” and Orientalist fears that incorporating Filipinos, who they deemed inferior and incapable of assimilation, would pollute the allegedly superior Anglo-Saxon racial stock of the nation.<sup>17</sup> The territory of the Philippines included twelve million people, and their potential citizenship dominated the presidential campaign of 1900, and imperial debates for years thereafter.<sup>18</sup> As historian Paul Kramer frames it, conservative anti-imperialists “saw Americans as empire’s only victims and imagined this victimization as the United States’ racial ‘corruption’ by potential colonial subjects.”<sup>19</sup> And from the political center, labor leaders feared Filipino competition for American jobs and predicted that they would drive down wages for white men.

Debates over empire erupted even in California, the epicenter of turn-of-the-century Panama Canal support. California had already positioned itself as an imperial center, and the shortcut between the East and the West promised huge financial benefits, particularly with San Francisco’s substantial shipbuilding industry and militarism.<sup>20</sup> Despite these allures, the *San Francisco Call* ran an editorial in 1899 that eloquently identified a broad range of objections:

---

<sup>16</sup>Cullinane, *Liberty and Anti-Imperialism*, 52.

<sup>17</sup>For discussions of the origins of U.S. Anglo-Saxonism in the nineteenth century, see Eric T. L. Love, *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), and Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

<sup>18</sup>Cullinane, *Liberty and Anti-Imperialism*, 51.

<sup>19</sup>Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 117.

<sup>20</sup>See Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 123–31, 165–67.

The pursuit of imperialism has raised up antagonists to Great Britain in every part of the world; it has imposed upon her people a heavy burden of debt and taxation; it has disturbed her politics by the continual menace of war and thus prevented the accomplishment of many needed reforms at home; and finally it has brought her into a position where without an ally she is confronted by a hostile world and is in danger of having her commerce, and perhaps even her empire, swept away at the first outbreak of war. Rightly considered, the white man's burden is to set and keep his own house in order. It is not required of him to upset the brown man's house under pretense of reform and then whip him into subjugation whenever he revolts at the treatment.<sup>21</sup>

According to the *Call*'s editors, imperialism was a European vice, an Old-World form of decadence, rooted in violence, that the United States must shun.

The *Call* editorial clearly raised the specters of domination and brutality, evoking U.S. atrocities in the Philippines. Publicity of American military savagery against Filipino civilians, including women and children, filled newspapers and raised questions regarding the United States' moral standards at the turn of the century. Historian John Higham has noted that "overseas adventures lost their savor as soon as they engendered difficult moral problems and serious international entanglements. As early as 1901 the bloodshed necessary to impose United States rule on the 'new-caught, sullen peoples' of the Philippines was deflating enthusiasm for expansion."<sup>22</sup> Although the United States ultimately prevailed in the Philippines, it was a bloodstained victory that prompted soul-searching in the nation's discourse.

With anti-imperialist sentiment riding high, would-be canal builders faced a public relations problem, framed in large part as a visual one. Images of the war circulated widely in newspapers, magazines, and popular "souvenir" books on the U.S.–Philippines War, including

---

<sup>21</sup>"The White Man's Burden," *San Francisco Call*, 7 Feb. 1899, 8.

<sup>22</sup>John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925*, rev. ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 145–46.

lurid images of Filipino corpses. The books typically included several photographs of Filipino bodies scattered on battlefields and dumped in mass graves (Figure 1.1 through Figure 1.3). One photograph, Figure 1.4, describes the dumping of thirty-eight Filipino bodies haphazardly into a trench, with the caption referring to “wonderful execution,” “great slaughters,” and “piles of dead bodies.”<sup>23</sup> The caption describes them as victims of American artillery yet the dead all lay in civilian clothing, raising moral and legal questions regarding U.S. conduct of the war.

Far from making a case for expansion, such photographs strengthened the hand of anti-imperialists and made American imperialism look revolting and ignoble. Historian Bonnie M. Miller argues that the U.S. press was eager to portray Filipino casualties in order to whip up support for the imperial war.<sup>24</sup> I suggest that such representations were a double-edged sword, however, since photographs of the dead ran the risk of provoking American opposition to the war. As the conflict ground on, charges of American atrocities emerged, including slash-and-burn campaigns against entire villages and waterboarding of captured “rebels.”<sup>25</sup> Souvenir-book photographs suggested that imperialism turned U.S. soldiers into cold-blooded killers, and offered visual evidence for the *San Francisco Call*’s warnings. Sordid photographs from the Philippines appeared to fulfill the prophecy of carnage and moral decay for the United States under the reign of empire.

---

<sup>23</sup>F. Tennyson Neely, *Neely’s Photographs: Fighting in the Philippines: Authentic Original Photographs* (London, Chicago, and New York: F. Tennyson Neely, 1899).

<sup>24</sup>Bonnie M. Miller, *From Liberation to Conquest: The Visual and Popular Cultures of the Spanish–American War of 1898* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 234–36.

<sup>25</sup>Miller, *Liberation to Conquest*, 236.

Torture also captured U.S. headlines, further promoting imperial skepticism. The U.S. war against the Philippines quickly turned into a guerilla war. Fueled by racism and a lack of progress against “insurgents,” U.S. soldiers committed rape, torture, and other forms of terrorism. Reports of American atrocities first surfaced in the U.S. press in May 1900, in a story in the *Omaha World-Herald* relating a Nebraska private’s description of the procedure of waterboarding, known as “the water cure.”<sup>26</sup> The national press picked up the water-torture story, most prominently *The Outlook*, a national newsweekly, in March 1901.<sup>27</sup> In a photograph circa 1901, Figure 1.5, soldiers either demonstrate or administer waterboarding. The cover of *Life* magazine in 1902 depicted soldiers committing water torture, Figure 1.6. It was the most widely circulated image of torture during the Philippines War, reaching a broad U.S. audience. In a common motif of such images, a watching soldier leans at ease, his nonchalant pose suggesting that torture had become a common and untroubling practice among U.S. soldiers.

American military responses to the Filipino fight for independence often seemed to the public disproportionate, immoral, and illegal, furthering the negative image of imperialism to a U.S. audience. After a 1901 Filipino attack on U.S. soldiers, U.S. General Jacob H. Smith ordered a retaliatory massacre of civilians, with orders to “kill all persons aged ten years or older.” A political cartoon in *The New York Evening Journal* on 5 May 1902, Figure 1.7, conveyed the event, further rousing anti-imperialist opinion. Smith told his soldiers to “kill and burn—the more you kill and burn the better you will please me,” and he summed up by telling

---

<sup>26</sup>Paul Kramer, “The Water Cure: Debating Torture and Counterinsurgency—A Century Ago,” *The New Yorker*, 25 Feb. 2008, 38–43, citing A. F. Miller of the 32nd Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

<sup>27</sup>George Kennan, “The Philippines: Present Conditions and Possible Courses—III,” *The Outlook*, 9 Mar. 1901, “water torture” on 582, 586.

his men to turn the region into a “howling wilderness.”<sup>28</sup> The targeting of civilians and use of collective punishment had been codified as war crimes by the 1899 Hague Convention to which the United States was a signatory, and such crimes were a grave public relations liability to proponents of U.S. imperial expansion.<sup>29</sup>

Rumors of the Smith massacre and other atrocities led to a 1902 U.S. Senate investigation that also made headlines. It revealed numerous instances of torture in addition to waterboarding. Historian Michael Patrick Cullinane notes that the investigation disclosed how U.S. soldiers had engaged in garroting, forced dehydration, “stringing up by the thumbs, ten-second hangings, stripping flesh and stretching fingers with bamboo. Besides torture, other sorts of atrocities were common including burning villages, beatings, looting, starvation, arbitrary mutilation, and executions,” enslavement, and gang rape, which U.S. soldiers called “gang crewing.”<sup>30</sup> Anti-imperialists seized upon the reports, reiterating that empire was antithetical to American principles. In addition to American war crimes, historian David Brody argues that accounts of Filipino “barbarism” against American soldiers also militated against U.S. imperial interventions.<sup>31</sup> Fear of the “otherness” and savagery of “primitive” populations drove a segment

---

<sup>28</sup>U.S. Senate, “Trials or Courts Martial in the Philippine Islands in Consequence of Certain Instructions,” Document 213, 57th Congress, 2nd session (Washington DC: GPO, 1903), 3. See also David Brody, *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

<sup>29</sup>First Hague Conference, The Hague Convention, Laws of War: Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague II), 29 July 1899, Section II, Articles 23 and 25, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/hague02.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/hague02.asp).

<sup>30</sup>Cullinane, *Liberty and Anti-Imperialism*, 120–22.

<sup>31</sup>Brody, *Visualizing American Empire*, 68.

of the isolationist movement that opposed U.S. imperialism anywhere, including in the jungles of Panama.

American officials increasingly warned the public that the solution to “savage” populations in the growing colonial system could only be reached through genocide. The *Chicago News* reported on 18 April 1899 that General William Shafter had declared: “It may be necessary to kill half the Filipinos in order that the remaining half of the population may be advanced to a higher plane of life than their present semi-barbarous state affords,” a horrifying (and contradictory) prospect.<sup>32</sup> One year later, the *Chicago News* carried an article on President McKinley’s nominee for chief justice of Puerto Rico, Frank Berger, who recommended escalation in the Philippines. In the 26 May 1900 piece, in which Berger enthused that McKinley intended “an extensive colonial system” that “the United States is on the threshold of establishing,” Judge Berger offered: “So far as the Philippines are concerned, in my opinion, the extermination of the natives is America’s only hope of ever being able to establish a stable government.”<sup>33</sup> Although some imperial advocates and administrators had relinquished the notion of “benevolent assimilation” as hopeless by the war’s end, others continued to contemplate further expansion into new territories, even if that entailed wars of “extermination.”

The outcome of the Philippines War thus threatened to erode public support for U.S. imperialism at the very moment of the Panama project’s inception. As Kristin Hoganson has argued, casualties undercut the impetus for imperial war: “When the Philippine war resulted in more stories of atrocities than of chivalric feats, more casualties than supermen, imperialists’

---

<sup>32</sup>Henry Hooker Van Meter, *The Truth About the Philippines* (Chicago: Liberty League, 1900), 368.

<sup>33</sup>Van Meter, *Truth About Philippines*, 368.

claims that empire would build manhood lost credibility.”<sup>34</sup> Historian Eric Love suggests that “three years of war in the Philippines was a shameful and bloody affair, awful in all its details,” leaving the nation in a “cold disillusion with the alleged glories of empire.”<sup>35</sup> Robert Rydell argues that “with a violent insurrection against American rule under way in the Philippines, many Americans were beginning to wonder if overseas colonial possessions were worth the effort.”<sup>36</sup> After three years, 126,000 U.S. troops deployed, some 10,000 American deaths, 50,000 Filipino combatants killed, and war-induced famine and disease killing an additional 200,000–1,000,000 Filipino civilians, the American public had grown wary of imperial expansion.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup>Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 203.

<sup>35</sup>Love, *Race over Empire*, 198.

<sup>36</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), 139–44.

<sup>37</sup>Casualty figures vary, and are drawn from a number of sources. A low current estimate of 4,200 American deaths is declared by the U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, “The Philippine-American War, 1899–1902,” accessed 13 Feb. 2015, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1899-1913/war>. Historians Karl Hack and Tobias Rettig suggest a death toll of 6,200 Americans in *Colonial Armies in Southeast Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 172. I have cited the estimate of 10,000 American deaths, asserted by George Frisbie Hoar in a 1902 speech before the U.S. Senate, because it was widely reprinted at the time and in the realm of public discourse when the PCZ was created the following year; see George Frisbie Hoar, “Subjugation of the Philippines,” in *The World's Famous Orations: Volume VIII, America*, ed. William Jennings Bryan (New York: Funk and Wagnall's, 1906), 220. The Filipino combatant figure is from Love, *Race over Empire*, 198; the Filipino civilian death toll is from Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco*, 162.



## The PCZ Acquisition: Controversy and Anxiety

The means by which the U.S. government acquired the PCZ presented another public relations liability, as controversy swirled over the legality and morality of Roosevelt's seizure of the Colombian province. Critics argued that the president had taken the territory illegally and by force. It was a prime example of "gunboat diplomacy," with the president ordering the USS *Nashville*, ten other battleships, and thousands of U.S. troops to Colón, threatening Colombia with war if it did not accede to Panamanian independence. Colombia capitulated and the United States recognized the new Republic of Panama on 3 November 1903. The Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty granting the United States a perpetual lease was negotiated and signed hastily and in secret just three days later, without a single representative from the new Panamanian government present.

The *New York Times* led the press charge against Panama imperialism. A December 1903 editorial summed up its position with the headline "Stolen Property." The *Times* warned that "the world will get a true measure of the American conscience" if the Panama treaty were ratified. The editors further inveighed:

The treaty which consummates the bargain with the canal promoters . . . makes us all accomplices in the guilt of the Administration. . . . Let us not deceive ourselves. We get the canal title by spoliation, by robbing Colombia of her Isthmian territory, by breaking treaty faith, by wrong and dishonor. . . . In order rightly to understand what we are doing we must acknowledge to ourselves that this territory through which we are to build the canal is stolen property, that our partners in the theft are a group of canal promoters and speculators and lobbyists who come into their money through the rebellion we encouraged, made safe, and effectuated.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup>"Stolen Property," *New York Times*, 29 Dec. 1903, A8.

Roosevelt also acted without consulting the U.S. Senate, angering several members; Senator Arthur Gorman of Maryland denounced Roosevelt's "lawlessness" and declared him a "putative Napoleon."<sup>39</sup> Despite heated debate, imperialists prevailed and the treaty passed in 1904.

Although many critics viewed the president's territorial seizure pragmatically, as illegal yet also a *fait accompli*, controversy persisted. Roosevelt himself stirred up the issue again in 1911, three years after leaving office and three years before the canal's completion. Speaking to students at the University of California, Berkeley, Roosevelt declared: "I took the canal zone, and let Congress debate, and while the debate goes on the canal does also."<sup>40</sup> To many critical observers the United States now behaved as an imperial hegemon, acting whenever it could rather than because it must. Panama reanimated the dispute over what constituted legitimate use of U.S. military force, since imperialists without fail invoked the infinitely vague and capacious "national interest" as justification.<sup>41</sup>

The American public remained unconvinced regarding the canal scheme even as excavation commenced, not only because of the disturbing Philippines precedent and the

---

<sup>39</sup>Cullinane, *Liberty and Anti-Imperialism*, 153. See also Noel Maurer and Carlos Yu, *The Big Ditch: How America Took, Built, Ran, and Ultimately Gave Away the Panama Canal* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 82–86.

<sup>40</sup>"*I Took the Isthmus:*" *Ex-President Roosevelt's Confession, Colombia's Protest and Editorial Comment by American Newspapers on "How the United States Acquired the Right to Build the Panama Canal,"* (New York: M. B. Brown Co., 1911), 7.

<sup>41</sup>Opponents seized upon Roosevelt's boast of taking the canal as a "confession," and editors across the nation once again denounced Roosevelt's unilateral seizure. The *Chattanooga Times*, for example, replied that "the great body of the American people will feel the shame of it until some future Congress shall make amends for the action of the 'police bully,' who with no other right than that of his club deprived a sister of her possessions." See "Roosevelt and Colombia," in *"I Took the Isthmus,"* 79. It is noteworthy that the word "hegemon" entered the popular lexicon ca. 1904, in reference to the United States.

questionable way Roosevelt had fomented a coup and seized the PCZ, but also due to the foundering of the French canal construction effort in Panama between 1880 and 1904. The French attempt brought scandals, bribery, embezzlement, corruption, construction delays, cost overruns, labor shortages, engineering failures, widespread disease, high mortality, bureaucratic gridlock, political turmoil, and bankruptcy. The French experience thus highlighted the many unrelenting perils, as well as the American prospects for repetition of such ruinous outcomes.

Similar problems arose in the early years of U.S. construction, and it appeared to critics that the United States was headed down the same path. According to Matthew Parker's history, "construction was beset by very serious difficulties throughout, but particularly in the first three years, and on several occasions came close to disaster."<sup>42</sup> Upon reporting for work, U.S. Chief Engineer John Wallace reported "only jungle and chaos from one end of the Isthmus to the other," with French equipment nothing but a scrap heap.<sup>43</sup> Within a few weeks of arrival virtually the entire American staff at Ancon Hospital had contracted malaria, including Chief Sanitation Officer William C. Gorgas.<sup>44</sup> Bureaucratic wrangling between ICC headquarters in Washington and administrators in the PCZ produced "chaos and gridlock . . . a nightmare of forms in triplicate," bringing work to a halt.<sup>45</sup> Acute shortages of laborers, housing, food, and tools quickly manifested. An Italian official visiting the PCZ in 1904 reported that American managers were just as corrupt and incompetent as the French had been, with "much wastage and

---

<sup>42</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 254.

<sup>43</sup>McCullough, *Path between Seas*, 439.

<sup>44</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 259.

<sup>45</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 264–65.

pilfering of money,” and said they treated laborers of all nationalities “inhumanely.”<sup>46</sup> Parker notes that between 1904 and 1907 the Americans replicated nearly all of the French mistakes. Historian Alexander Missal suggests that as Americans viewed the signs of French failure everywhere in the Zone, they feared that the ruins foretold a similar fate for themselves.<sup>47</sup>

### **The Nadir of Imperialist Support, 1903–1906**

For Americans, the juncture between the Philippines and Panama was a watershed moment, and by 1903–1904, U.S. imperialism had reached a nadir in public opinion. Historian E. Berkeley Tompkins finds that the Anti-Imperialist League’s persistent activism, combined with “the bitter experience of the war in the islands with its distressing concomitants of disease, destruction, and death, greatly diminished the people’s enthusiasm for imperialism. By 1903 our imperial adventure in the Philippines no longer seemed so romantic. . . . When the soldiers returned home in 1903, all they wanted was to forget about the Philippines, and the general populace concurred; for most Americans the glorious White Man’s Burden had become simply a burden.”<sup>48</sup> Eric Love argues that “popular support for government activism in foreign affairs waned precipitously” after the wars with Spain and the Philippines.<sup>49</sup> By the close of the war, Bonnie Miller finds, “a rising tide of public sentiment against colonial acquisition” laid bare an

---

<sup>46</sup>Diego del Boni, quoted in Parker, *Panama Fever*, 268.

<sup>47</sup>Alexander Missal, *Seaway to the Future: American Social Visions and the Construction of the Panama Canal* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 47, 76.

<sup>48</sup>Tompkins, *Anti-Imperialism Debate*, 255–56.

<sup>49</sup>Love, *Race over Empire*, 197.

“imperialist ambivalence,” even among erstwhile supporters in the media.<sup>50</sup> Historian David Brody has observed that anti-imperialism steadily grew over the course of the war and by 1904, the year that the United States took possession of the Panama Canal Zone, anti-imperialist sentiment reached a high point, with public opinion increasingly “splintered” over U.S. imperialist policies.<sup>51</sup> As historian William Appleman Williams put it, the “crusading, punitive, and imperial war . . . posed intellectual, moral and strategic problems.”<sup>52</sup>

Robert Rydell notes that by 1900 the U.S. government took notice of the rising tide of anti-imperialism, and evidenced concern.<sup>53</sup> Eric Love argues that the president took careful note of the skittish public opinion regarding empire: “Roosevelt, who had always been suspicious of the public’s twitchy will and temerity, was a keen observer. He confided to a close friend in 1904: ‘I appreciate . . . the full . . . difficulty of committing oneself to a course of action in reliance upon the proposed action of any free people which is not accustomed to carrying out with iron will a long-continued course in foreign policy.’”<sup>54</sup> The president’s confidential sentiment did not strike a note of confidence regarding public support. Tompkins argues that the

---

<sup>50</sup>Miller, *Liberation to Conquest*, 17.

<sup>51</sup>Brody, *Visualizing American Empire*, 4, 67, 142.

<sup>52</sup>William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life: An Essay on the Causes and Character of America’s Present Predicament Along with a Few Thoughts About an Alternative*, rev. ed. (New York: Ig Publishing, 2007; Oxford University Press, 1980), 108.

<sup>53</sup>Rydell et al., *Fair America*, 49.

<sup>54</sup>Love, *Race over Empire*, 198–99.

Roosevelt Administration's "aggressive and overbearing tactics in the Panama affair" reawakened public interest in anti-imperialism.<sup>55</sup>

American expansionism needed a coherent ideology that could morally reconcile the contradictory forces of democracy and empire, and justify the latter to an ambivalent public. The U.S. government had never presented its citizens with any such reconciliation, nor with a humane method to pursue constant territorial growth. It attempted to do so in Panama.

### **The Beginnings of the Imperial Public Relations Machine**

Roosevelt's apprehension regarding the public will was well founded. An episode of muckraking further jeopardized public support for the PCZ, and Roosevelt had to step in personally to rescue the canal from the devastating report by Poultney Bigelow, a journalist and lecturer in international law at Boston University. The Yale- and Columbia-educated Bigelow stopped in the Canal Zone after a visit to South America. After two days of touring the Zone he had seen enough for a scathing article about almost every feature of government work there. His January 1906 exposé in *The Independent* triggered a Senate investigation after he indicted the ICC for a range of offenses, including state-sanctioned prostitution, corruption, engineering incompetence, polluted drinking water, unhealthy living conditions, and exorbitant rents for black workers.<sup>56</sup> Five photographs from Bigelow's visit illustrated the article, including three

---

<sup>55</sup>Tompkins, *Anti-Imperialism Debate*, 261.

<sup>56</sup>Poultney Bigelow, "Our Management in Panama," *The Independent* (New York), 4 Jan. 1906, 9-21; United States Senate, *Investigation of Panama Canal Matters: Hearings Before the Committee on Inter-oceanic Canals of the United States Senate in the Matter of the Senate*

photos of mosquito-breeding swamps—one next to a worker's house in Colon (Figure 1.8)—and a dredger “stuck in the swampy street.”<sup>57</sup> Bigelow interviewed black workers and reported that they were endangered on the job, cheated out of their pay, and brutalized by the white police force. As evidence of the workers’ response, his article carried a photograph of black men at the docks pushing a cart piled with home furnishings, captioned “Dissatisfied Negroes Leaving Panama” (Figure 1.9). But the revelation that received the most coverage was his allegation that the U.S. government had imported several hundred black women from Martinique to serve as prostitutes for canal workers. When administration defenders challenged his evidence, Bigelow struck back by showing photographs from his trip. Because of his stature and that of *The Independent*, Bigelow's article was frequently reproduced and his views were widely reported.<sup>58</sup> Bigelow’s assessment of the U.S. occupation of Panama was not a unique or solitary viewpoint; Missal notes that “in 1906 Bigelow’s criticism was more or less representative of the pervading sense of crisis regarding the Canal project” in American public opinion.<sup>59</sup>

Bigelow’s charges of cronyism and corruption placed the entire Roosevelt Administration on the defensive regarding Panama.<sup>60</sup> The government had already anticipated the need for an

---

*Resolution Adopted January 9, 1906, Providing for an Investigation of Matters Relating to the Panama Canal*, vol. 1 (Washington DC: GPO, 1906).

<sup>57</sup>Bigelow, “Our Management in Panama,” 13.

<sup>58</sup>For example, see “Poultney Bigelow’s Panama Roast,” *Sacramento Union*, 12 Jan. 1906. The story’s subtitle noted that Bigelow’s piece was “The Article Which Brought Out Strong Denial from Secretary Taft.” The *Sacramento Union* responded to Taft’s statement of denunciation by quoting Bigelow extensively for countervailing evidence.

<sup>59</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 47.

<sup>60</sup>Walter Leon Pepperman, *Who Built the Panama Canal?* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1915), 250. For other contemporaneous accounts of the impact of Bigelow’s article, see Willis

imperial public relations campaign in Panama, and in 1905 Roosevelt had appointed a publicist, Joseph Bucklin Bishop, just months prior to the *Independent* piece. Bishop probably deserves to be considered the first public relations officer of the U.S. government. He was a former New York journalist, editor, and an old friend of the president's, having met him when Roosevelt was police commissioner.<sup>61</sup> Bishop used his editorial influence shrewdly to shape public opinion, and he vigorously supported Roosevelt's acquisition of the PCZ.<sup>62</sup> Roosevelt hired Bishop as Secretary of the ICC with an office located in Washington DC, where Bishop closely coordinated official publicity with American journalists. Bishop set out to prevent "false and misleading" reports, i.e. any negative press.<sup>63</sup> Ironically, Bishop's salary provoked a storm of Congressional rage in 1907, when legislators realized that his pay was twice theirs. Congress charged Roosevelt with cronyism and threatened to hold up all canal appropriations, generating a new spate of negative press reports.<sup>64</sup> Roosevelt quickly had Bishop relocated to Ancon in the PCZ to ease the publicity crisis, where Bishop and his family moved into comfortable, and free,

---

Fletcher Johnson, *Four Centuries of the Panama Canal* (New York: Henry Holt, 1906), 345–51; "Panama," *The Outlook*, 13 Jan. 1906, 62–63. Both Pepperman and Johnson were ardent canal boosters who defended the Roosevelt Administration and attacked Bigelow's credibility. Pepperman was a former chief administrative officer of the ICC. The *Outlook's* editorial board also defended the U.S. government and voiced enthusiastic support for the canal project, while chiding "the American people" for their "impatience" regarding construction progress (63).

<sup>61</sup>McCullough, *Path between Seas*, 536.

<sup>62</sup>Joseph B. Bishop, "Our Government's Course in Panama," *International Quarterly* 9 (Mar. 1904): 247–60.

<sup>63</sup>Bishop memorandum to ICC Commissioner Theodore Shonts, n.d., quoted in Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 15, 210n54.

<sup>64</sup>Chip [Charles Owen] Bishop, *The Lion and the Journalist—The Remarkable Friendship of Theodore Roosevelt and Joseph Bucklin Bishop* (Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2012), 222. The author is the great-grandnephew of Joseph Bucklin Bishop.



government housing. All of this maneuvering reflects the importance of public relations to the new imperial occupation, and Roosevelt's keen aversion to negative publicity of any kind surrounding the PCZ.<sup>65</sup>

Bishop remained in the PCZ throughout the construction era, orchestrating the news through journalists from his 1905 hiring through the canal's opening in 1914. He served as ghostwriter for Chief Engineer Col. George W. Goethals. He also created and edited the widely influential, official ICC weekly newspaper, *The Canal Record*, published in the PCZ. The paper was distributed freely to white employees in the PCZ, U.S. journalists, and members of Congress thus shaping American coverage and perception.<sup>66</sup> Visiting authors met with Bishop, who showed them cables reporting to President Roosevelt on the progress of the project. Writers and photographers applied to Bishop for access in the PCZ and for reprints of government photographs. Bishop wrote articles illustrated with ICC photographs for national magazines. He even read and corrected the proofs of the most famous illustrator to visit the canal.<sup>67</sup> With his job completed at the opening of the canal, Bishop returned to the United States after seven years overseeing the publicity effort and published his own book, *The Panama Gateway* (1913), illustrated with canal photographs. His son, Farnham Bishop, also wrote books about the canal,

---

<sup>65</sup>Historical currency conversion of Bishop's 1907 salary of \$10,000 to 2016 dollars places it within a range from \$260,000 in terms of the standard of living, i.e. the Consumer Price Index adjusted for inflation, to \$1,420,000 in terms of the relative economic status or "prestige value" in U.S. society; figures from "Measuring Worth," accessed 13 Mar. 2016, <http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/relativevalue.php>.

<sup>66</sup>McCullough, *Path between Seas*, 536.

<sup>67</sup>Elizabeth Robins Pennell, *Joseph Pennell: An Account by His Wife Elizabeth Robins Pennell Issued on the Occasion of a Memorial Exhibition of His Works* (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1927).

and together they published a laudatory biography of its supervising engineer, *Goethals, Genius of the Panama Canal*, in 1930.<sup>68</sup>

Bishop's broadest power, however, derived from his influence over the photographers and authors in the PCZ who relied upon him. They had to apply to Bishop for permission to visit construction sites, and he guided their movements. He also handled requests to reprint government-owned photographs of the canal. Authors from the construction era uniformly thanked Bishop in their acknowledgements for access to the canal without any apparent consciousness of the censoring effects of his logistical "assistance."<sup>69</sup> Bishop effectively manipulated how Americans saw the Panama Canal by managing its cultural producers in the press and the publishing world.

The nascent U.S. publicity effort escalated after Bigelow's January 1906 article, with an expanded emphasis on photography. Bishop wrote in a letter to Goethals in 1907 that official ICC photographs were "a necessary part of the information which I am to supply."<sup>70</sup> The visual offensive began with the president. Theodore Roosevelt made history in November 1906 when he and his wife Edith sailed for Panama—the first time a sitting president had set foot on foreign soil. Roosevelt's tour of the PCZ was intended to address questions Bigelow had raised. Chapter two examines the photographs of Roosevelt's tour in detail, because they were so important in

---

<sup>68</sup>Joseph Bucklin Bishop, *The Panama Gateway* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913); Farnham Bishop, *Panama, Past and Present* (New York: The Century Co., 1913); Joseph Bucklin Bishop and Farnham Bishop, *Goethals, Genius of the Canal: A Biography* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930).

<sup>69</sup>See, for example, Edith Hastings Tracy, *The Panama Canal During Construction: From Photographs* (New York: Redfield Brothers, 1914), acknowledgements.

<sup>70</sup>Bishop to Goethals, 19 Aug. 1907, quoted in Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 97.

reversing negative publicity and public doubts. Roosevelt's advance man for the Panama tour was none other than Joseph Bishop, who saw to it that a photographer on the ICC payroll accompanied Roosevelt as he waded through muddy construction sites. Trailed by a throng of reporters, Roosevelt did not lack for press coverage in Panama, however, and he displayed considerable adroitness in staging photo opportunities that appeared impromptu. A politician famous for ignoring scheduled appearances and evading handlers, the president ensured that the entourage captured his every dramatic move.

As an added dividend of the unprecedented overseas trip, Roosevelt was able to bring back a highly favorable account of conditions in the Canal Zone. Roosevelt's message to Congress on 17 December 1906 was also without precedent. All previous presidential messages had been purely textual, but Roosevelt defied convention: his report followed the style conventions of magazine layout and included some forty of the photographs taken at Roosevelt's personal request during the trip to Panama.<sup>71</sup> ICC Secretary Bishop noted that the Senate was outraged by the breach of tradition, but the less-orthodox House received it enthusiastically.<sup>72</sup> The president's report was reprinted in the *New York Times*, reported on frequently throughout the country, and widely circulated in Europe. It responded implicitly and in detail to Bigelow's allegations regarding engineering incompetence, poor living conditions, prostitution, and official corruption in the Zone. Roosevelt and the ICC not only recast the negative story line about the

---

<sup>71</sup>"Mr. Roosevelt at Panama—A President on Foreign Soil," *New York Times*, 25 Nov. 1906; "President to Send Illustrated Message," *Fort Worth Telegram*, 15 Dec. 1906.

<sup>72</sup>Joseph Bucklin Bishop, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time: Shown in His Own Letters*, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 1:454–55; Chip Bishop, *Lion and Journalist*, 194.

PCZ, they also deftly gained control of the *visual* narrative—what a 1908 article in Joseph Bucklin Bishop’s *Canal Record* called “the picture history of the Canal.”<sup>73</sup>

### **The Public Relations Offensive As Visual Narrative**

In August 1907 the ICC appointed Ernest Hallen the official photographer of the PCZ after he had spent the previous year freelancing for the commission in the Zone, including work covering Roosevelt’s November 1906 visit. Hallen’s job was to generate favorable publicity for the project and maintain control of the message.<sup>74</sup> The ICC instructed Hallen not to declare his personal opinions about the Panama Canal Zone in interviews, only to document the steady progress of the canal, and he retained no rights to the photographs he took.<sup>75</sup> An engineer on the ICC staff wrote to Chief Engineer Goethals in 1907 advocating the hiring of Hallen because the government would then be able to “control the issue of every print” of his photographs.<sup>76</sup> As Missal suggests, “the U.S. government had a much greater influence on the distribution of images than on textual information regarding the Canal.”<sup>77</sup> Controlling photography proved an extremely effective way to shape public opinion.

---

<sup>73</sup>“A Picture History,” *Canal Record* (Ancon, PCZ), 12 Dec. 1908, 115.

<sup>74</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 96.

<sup>75</sup>“Photographs of the Construction of the Panama Canal, 1887–1940,” U.S. National Archives, accessed 19 Sept. 2014, <http://research.archives.gov/description/535444>.

<sup>76</sup>W[illiam] L. Sibert, Supervisory Engineer, Memorandum for the Chief Engineer (Wm. Goethals), 15 June 1907, ICC records, quoted in Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 96, 234n69.

<sup>77</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 83.

Between 1907 and 1937, Ernest Hallen created some 12,000–16,000 photographs of the construction of Panama Canal and life in the PCZ. They were carried by an array of outlets, including national newspapers, such magazines as *National Geographic* and *Scientific American*, numerous books, and *The Canal Record*.<sup>78</sup> These publications almost never credited Hallen since the ICC made his work freely available to the media without copyright to encourage distribution.<sup>79</sup> Hallen's view of the canal became the predominant vision among the American public. His photographs not only provide a record of the progress in building the canal, but of even greater importance for my argument, they served as an iconography of U.S. imperialism during the construction era, as I will detail at length in chapter two.

Although it is impossible to say with authority what most Americans thought about canal imperialism, it is instructive to note their actions, and inactions, particularly following the barrage of pro-empire marketing that began in late 1906. As Roosevelt's Secretary of War (1904–1908), William H. Taft officially oversaw construction of the Panama Canal and supervised the ICC, and thus was intimately associated with Panama in public opinion. From the Philippines to Panama, Taft "ascended through the ranks of government by way of his direct experience with American empire," as David Brody notes.<sup>80</sup> In his 1908 presidential bid to replace Roosevelt, Taft defeated anti-imperialist William Jennings Bryan by a comfortable

---

<sup>78</sup>"Building the Panama Canal: Photographs by Ernest Hallen," Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL, accessed 19 Sept. 2014, <http://www.fine-arts.org/collection/building-panama-canal-photographs-ernest-hallen/>.

<sup>79</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 101.

<sup>80</sup>Brody, *Visualizing American Empire*, 164.

margin.<sup>81</sup> Panama Canal tourism grew steadily and more than doubled over just two years, from 16,000 visitors in 1911, then 21,000 in 1912, to approximately 38,000 in 1913.<sup>82</sup> There is no record of any public American protests anywhere associated with the opening of the canal in August 1914. Nor were there any demonstrations against imperialism at either of the celebratory world's fairs in California in 1915–1916. The fairs drew millions of visitors; nearly 19 million attended the San Francisco PPIE and another 4 million visited the San Diego PCE.<sup>83</sup> Millions of postcards from the PCZ and the two expositions circulated throughout the United States. A 1913 souvenir picture book available at both world's fairs, Willis J. Abbott's *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose*, sold 1.5 million copies, evidence of significant consumer demand for imperial imagery.<sup>84</sup>

Under ICC guidance, celebratory books and articles about the Panama Canal proliferated and dominated the discourse about the project. A popular 1913 book by Frederic J. Haskin, *The Panama Canal*, offers a revealing example.<sup>85</sup> The volume opens with a graphic declaring “The 5 Points of Authority in this Book,” asserting official imprimatur by invoking the ICC, chief

---

<sup>81</sup>Taft won 66 percent of the electoral vote to Bryan's 34 percent, and 52 percent versus 43 percent of the popular vote; see “Presidential Elections and Political Parties,” in *The National Atlas of the United States of America*, ed. Arch C. Gerlach (Washington DC: U.S. Geological Survey/GPO, 1970), 145.

<sup>82</sup>“Canal Visitors,” *Canal Record* (Ancon, PCZ), 13 Aug. 1913, 429.

<sup>83</sup>Rydell, *World's a Fair*, 209.

<sup>84</sup>Willis J. Abbott, *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose* (London: Syndicate Publishing, 1913); publication figures are from Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 13.

<sup>85</sup>Frederic J. Haskin, *The Panama Canal* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1913). The “Five Points of Authority” is the frontispiece [n.p.], and Ernest Hallen is credited in error as “Ernest Allen.”

engineer Goethals, ICC official photographer Hallen, the National Geographic Society, the Library of Congress, and the Government Printing Office. The author relinquished editorial control to ICC Chairman Goethals to not only preview but to also “correct” each chapter, ensuring a narrative uncritical of the ICC’s administration. The second point emphasizes that Hallen’s ICC photographs were the sole source of illustration for the book, thus allowing the government agency complete control over what readers would—and would not—be able to see of the PCZ. This is key because Hallen was not an investigative photojournalist, but a visual panegyrist of the Zone. The cooperation of the National Geographic Society in producing a “birds-eye view” of the PCZ in conjunction with ICC cartographers indicates their close working relationship. In fact, the National Geographic Society generally viewed itself as a quasi-official arm of the government. The book’s indexing by Library of Congress staff further shaped public knowledge of the PCZ by delimiting the body of searchable topics, and its formatting in GPO style added a final, subliminal touch of official authority.

Journalistic exposés abated followed Bigelow’s 1906 piece. Instead, Ray Stannard Baker, well known for his muckraking articles in *McClure’s Magazine* alongside Ida Tarbell and Lincoln Steffens, wrote a 1913 article entitled “The Glory of Panama” that characterized the imperial project as a public service.<sup>86</sup> By that time the tide had turned; a near-decade of visual propaganda had lulled the majority of Americans, including journalists, into acquiescence.

---

<sup>86</sup>Ray Stannard Baker, “The Glory of Panama: How the Big Ditch, Dug on Honor, Is a Great Example of the New Idealism in Public Service,” *American Magazine*, Nov. 1913, 33–37.

## The Middle-Class Audience for Imperial Photography

Imperial advocates' success in producing images of the PCZ and the commemorative world's fairs was driven by a confluence of events in the early twentieth century, especially the development of photographic print technologies and the emergence of the modern mass-marketing industry in the United States. These techniques produced innumerable glossy photographs in magazines and books, colorful souvenir ephemera, and a flood of colorized photographic postcards. The Roosevelt Administration (1901–1909), Taft Administration (1909–1913), the ICC (1904–1914), and commercial publishers all exploited these media, shaping the narrative of expansionism.

As early as the Columbian era, paintings, woodcuts, and other graphic illustrations extolled the benefits of empire. But photography revolutionized conquest because it offered greater popular access to the visual culture of empire. Over time it became less difficult and expensive to produce and reproduce, and thus subject to wider circulation.<sup>87</sup>

Photography also offered a *seemingly* documentary and objective quality. As Susan Sontag argued, photography fitted imperialism perfectly: "From its start, photography implied the capture of the largest possible number of subjects. Painting never had so imperial a scope. The subsequent industrialization of camera technology only carried out a promise inherent in photography from its very beginning: to democratize all experiences by translating them into

---

<sup>87</sup> Although photography was not easy to produce or reproduce in the early years of its mid-nineteenth-century appearance in publications, print technologies constantly improved and costs fell steadily during the early twentieth century.



images.”<sup>88</sup> In his responsive essay, visual theorist John Berger agreed with Sontag’s assertion of a democratic aura of photography in the twentieth century. It was “the period when photography was thought of as being most transparent, offering direct access to the real.”<sup>89</sup> Photography combined the powerful immediacy, apparent exactitude, and seemingly empirical representations with a populist style that *appeared* to defy elite control. As a 1913 photogravure book on the canal declared: “Let these pictures, beautiful, truthful, accurate, tell the story.”<sup>90</sup> The statement neatly captures the popular attitude toward photography’s verity. Photographers seemed to inhabit the category of photojournalist rather than court painter. Imperial promoters thus sold the occupation of the Zone as peaceful and non-militaristic through the notion that photographs were realistic, i.e. documentary in content, and innocent, i.e. non-ideological in their construction. It was the perfect medium for an advertising campaign directed at the paradoxical constituency of a democratic empire.

### **Postcard Culture in the Early Twentieth Century**

Photographic postcards provided a potent cultural venue during the same era that Americans were constructing the Panama Canal. The 1893 Chicago world’s fair introduced

---

<sup>88</sup>Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1977), 7.

<sup>89</sup>John Berger, “Uses of Photography: For Susan Sontag,” in *About Looking* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 52.

<sup>90</sup>*Photogravure Reproductions of the Panama Canal* (New York: The Rotary Photogravure Co., 1913).

souvenir picture postcards in the United States, and sales grew quickly.<sup>91</sup> In 1906 alone, more than 770 million postcards were sent through the U.S. mail, which does not count cards never posted. At the height of the canal construction era the industry produced postal cards by the billions.<sup>92</sup> Visual historian Naomi Schor notes “at the turn of the century . . . the postcard developed into the mass means of communication and object of enthusiastic . . . collection [that] it was to become in the period up to and including the First World War, generally considered the postcard’s golden age.”<sup>93</sup> Robert Rydell has called world’s fair postcards “souvenirs of imperialism,” clearly “enmeshed in the struggles for cultural and political control stemming from efforts to build empires around the globe.”<sup>94</sup> I suggest that postcards from the PCZ operated

---

<sup>91</sup>Moirra F. Harris, “Curt Teich Postcards of Minnesota,” *Minnesota History* 54, no. 7 (1995): 307.

<sup>92</sup>Lucille and Walter Fillin, “The Picture Postcard,” in *Wish You Were Here: The History of the Picture Postcard, an Exhibition Organized by the Emily Lowe Gallery* (Hempstead, NY: Hofstra University, 1974), n.p. Circulation figure is from Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 91.

<sup>93</sup>Naomi Schor, “*Cartes Postales*: Representing Paris 1900,” in *Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity*, ed. David Prochaska and Jordana Mendelson (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 12. Postcard historian Richard Morphet locates the apogee of the picture postcard in the decades 1880–1920; Morphet, “The Picture Postcard,” in *Wish You Were Here*, n.p. Photographer Walker Evans cites World War I as the endpoint of the golden era of hand-colored picture postcards that began with the century; see Walker Evans, “Main Street Looking North From Courthouse Square: A Portfolio of American Picture Postcards from the Trolley-Car Period,” *Fortune* May 1948, 106. In other histories of postcard culture, Frank Staff concurs that “the years between 1895 and 1914 saw the heyday of the picture postcard,” and George and Dorothy Miller frame the peak of the postcard era as 1898–1914; see Frank Staff, *The Picture Postcard and Its Origins* (New York: Praeger, 1966); and George and Dorothy Miller, *Picture Postcards in the United States, 1893–1918* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1976).

<sup>94</sup>Robert W. Rydell, “Souvenirs of Imperialism,” in *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards*, ed. Christraud M. Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 60.

similarly. Postcards framed the imperial decade of 1904–1916 as they abetted the construction of the canal and the two California expositions.

Postcards are a relatively new source of evidence for historical analysis, one that I have found to be particularly valuable for understanding how promoters sought to redefine U.S. empire in the Panama endeavor. As David Prochaska and Jordana Mendelson have noted, historians have been hesitant to use them as evidence, and only recently have researchers in the humanities and social sciences taken up their study.<sup>95</sup> Yet they argue, “as a subset of photographs clearly made rather than ‘taken,’ as commodities meant to be sold, postcards are especially amenable to analysis as visual culture.”<sup>96</sup> Historians have largely ignored postcards from the PCZ and the fairs as trivial ephemera, but as one scholar has noted, “trivia of the past . . . often shed more light on social developments than the most pretentious treatise.”<sup>97</sup> Postcards captured unintended evidence from the PCZ and the expositions, and they shed light on the aesthetic marketing of U.S. imperialism.

Like photographs, postcards must be interrogated for their ideologies of power, but they differ in their paths of circulation. The popular press broadcast photographs impersonally to a wide, anonymous, national audience, where they were viewed simultaneously, while individuals chose postcards specifically for the recipient or as personal souvenirs. Postcards also functioned differently because they were a hybrid form of visual culture, with photographic images and textual captions as well as personal correspondence that could interpret or testify to the pictured

---

<sup>95</sup>Prochaska and Mendelson, *Postcards: Ephemeral*, xi.

<sup>96</sup>Prochaska and Mendelson, *Postcards: Ephemeral*, xii.

<sup>97</sup>Staff, *Picture Postcard Origins*, 7.

scenes. Postcards thus resonated differently in the hands of recipients because of their provenance. They were collected and often ended up on display, where they offered a sense of nostalgia and pride at the witnessing of great historical events like the canal's construction or the world's fairs. Postcards afforded both the sender and the recipient opportunities to insert themselves into the culture of empire.

I have also analyzed picture postcards as key evidence because they helped define imperial beauty. The postcard could function as miniaturized art; reduced to a mere frame of 3.5 by 5.5 inches, they often commanded attention through aesthetic qualities and a deliberate attempt at charm. Renowned photographer Walker Evans characterized their emotional warmth and appeal in popular culture in the early century, noting “the best ones achieved a fidelity and a restraint that most color photographer printers have yet to match—notably in flesh tints and in the rendering of patina and the soft tones of buildings and streets.”<sup>98</sup> Postcards combined the documentary quality of photography with the appeal of hand-rendered color lithography, lending attractiveness to imperial subjects.

### **Marketing Canal Imperialism through Middle-Class Magazines**

Consumer marketing experienced exponential growth between 1890 and 1900, on the eve of the Panama Canal's construction.<sup>99</sup> With this timing, boosters were able to access new sales

---

<sup>98</sup>Evans, “Main Street Looking North,” 102.

<sup>99</sup>Lynn Dumenil, *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 57; Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London and New York: Verso, 1996), 21.

techniques for the production of a visual rhetoric of empire in the Canal Zone and at the fairs. As Richard Ohmann has shown, by 1905 the goal of the emerging advertising industry was not to satisfy demand for products that consumers already sought, but rather to create new desire for goods that producers were eager to supply.<sup>100</sup> For imperialist producers, the goal was to promote a desire among citizens to view selected images and buy into the idea of empire as an attractive endeavor. The development of commercial advertising by 1905 set the stage for the imperial marketing that began in earnest in 1907 with the ICC's hiring of Ernest Hallen and the intensive publicity of the California fairs beginning circa 1910.

The preferred method of consumer marketing evolved as display advertising in mass-circulation magazines that targeted white, native-born, relatively well-educated, professional and managerial, middle- and upper-middle class Americans.<sup>101</sup> Magazines transcended regional newspapers in their production of a unifying, homogeneous, middle-class national culture. By 1900 there were twenty mass-circulation national magazines, and the circulation of monthly magazines more than tripled between 1890 and 1905, from 18 million to 64 million.<sup>102</sup>

Magazine culture in the early twentieth century almost entirely excluded working-class families. According to Ohmann, magazines “would not have appeared on working class parlor tables. The studies of working class life after 1900 show little expenditure for reading material of any sort: less than \$5 a year, on average,” including newspapers and books.<sup>103</sup> Given these

---

<sup>100</sup>Frank Presbry, *The History and Development of Advertising* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1929), 526.

<sup>101</sup>Ohmann, *Selling Culture*, 25, 26, 45, 118–19.

<sup>102</sup>Ohmann, *Selling Culture*, 29.

<sup>103</sup>Ohmann, *Selling Culture*, 174.

demographics, the outpouring of Panama Canal and California images in mass-circulation magazines would have reached a predominantly white, middle-class audience. I have employed these periodicals as evidence because they reflect the demographic audience that imperial boosters targeted as ideal constituents. Although this involves methodological limitations, I leave for another project the task of exploring publications aimed at different readerships, including African-Americans, the working-class, and more radical audiences, such as anarchists.

The explosive circulation growth of the premier mass-circulation magazine of the popular geography and anthropology genre, *The National Geographic Magazine*, further empowered the boosterist photography of the PCZ.<sup>104</sup> The magazine flourished with “the awakening of Americans’ interest in foreign lands that came with the end of the Spanish-American War and the acquisition of new territorial possessions.”<sup>105</sup> The success of *National Geographic* provides a useful barometer of the public hunger for photographic evidence of foreign and remote peoples, particularly from colonies and countries perceived as primitive, as well as of the technological triumph of American canal construction in Panama.

Established in 1888, *National Geographic* was at first a dry, scholarly science journal devoid of images. Under the editorship of Gilbert H. Grosvenor, *National Geographic* shifted toward the use of photographs circa 1905, and by 1910 was well known for its visual emphasis. The inclusion of photographs led to exponential growth in readership during the first two decades of the twentieth century. According to National Geographic Society records, “the

---

<sup>104</sup>*The National Geographic Magazine* shortened its name to *National Geographic* in December 1959. In the body of this dissertation, I use the shorter title regardless of publication date, because of its cultural continuity.

<sup>105</sup>Catherine A. Lutz and Jane L. Collins, *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 16.

magazine's circulation—and the Society's membership—jumped from 1,400 in 1899 to 74,000 by 1910, and to more than 713,000 by 1920.”<sup>106</sup> This is an astronomical growth rate of a factor of 500 (or 50,900%) in just two decades, the years of the canal's construction and celebration. *National Geographic* subscribers were not simply consumers of a photogenic empire, but also sponsors of exploration since they were dues-paying members of an organization that funded photo-shoots in “exotic” locales. This dynamic fostered even greater psychological investment in imperial projects.

*National Geographic*'s popularity is significant not only because of its rise at a critical moment of imperial expansion, photographic reproduction, and magazine mass circulation, but also because of its aura of objectivity as a source of documentary photography. This reputation positioned the magazine as a key tool for Panama imperial promoters. Anthropologist Catherine Lutz and sociologist Jane Collins, in *Reading National Geographic*, deconstruct its style of seemingly innocent and neutral photojournalism. They suggest that the photography in *National Geographic* was “commonly seen as a straightforward kind of evidence about the world—a simple and objective mirror of reality.”<sup>107</sup> Yet contrary to this empirical façade, *National Geographic* has always had an optimistic and authoritative agenda, promoting imperialism as a form of progress. The magazine has consistently cultivated close ties “to government officials and corporate interests,” echoing their perspectives.<sup>108</sup> This nexus of faux objectivity and official sanction made the photography in *National Geographic* particularly potent for the

---

<sup>106</sup>“Evolution of *National Geographic* Magazine,” National Geographic Society, accessed 25 July 2014, <http://press.nationalgeographic.com/files/2012/05/NGM-History-10-12.pdf>.

<sup>107</sup>Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, xiii.

<sup>108</sup>Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 5.

promotion of U.S. imperialism, as the magazine's establishment orientation precluded independent investigation, and discouraged popular dissent from official U.S. policies.

## Visual Theory and Empire

Representations of the Panama Canal Zone and its expositions carried an implicit argument that U.S. imperialism was attractively benign, and promoters sought to establish this through the seemingly empirical nature of photographs. The concept of photographic accuracy is problematic and contested, and the question of interference in the production stages, whether deliberate or subconscious, is an important one. Numerous opportunities for manipulation present themselves, from selective framing of the shot through the darkroom process to printing technologies. Another respect in which photographs fail to represent objectivity is their resistance to fixed meanings over time. Shifting interpretations may mean that what looked to American citizens in the 1910s like unmitigated imperial beauty may appear to current viewers as the conflicted roots of under-debated imperial overreach.

Viewer assumptions of truth and innocence, especially when looking at photographs of technological marvels, miss the essential artifice of both science and photography. As John Berger reminds us, "the camera does not lie even when it is used to quote a lie. And so, this makes the lie *appear* more truthful."<sup>109</sup> Or, as Paul Valéry observed, "the camera . . . overcomes our pre-disposition 'not to see some of the things before us, and to see others which are not

---

<sup>109</sup>John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph* (New York: Aperture, 2013), 61.



there.’”<sup>110</sup> Historian Alan Trachtenberg has argued that photographs are always inventions and constructions, ones that shape our political visions.<sup>111</sup> I employ these understandings of the power of photography to both limit what we are able to see and think, and to create imaginary imperial landscapes that do not reflect the reality of non-elites.

As we shall see in chapter two, photographing an expanse of cleared jungle and naming it “the future site of the Miraflores Locks” immediately rendered it a piece of imperial geography, and invited the viewer to take psychological ownership of it. Trachtenberg suggests photography’s combined power of capturing images of landscapes and naming them: “The name lays claim to the view. By the same token, a photographic view attaches a possessable image to a place name. A named view is one that has been seen, known, and thereby already possessed.”<sup>112</sup> In this sense, snapping a photo in the PCZ and giving it a caption was like planting a flag of imperial expansion in the minds of American viewers.

Images of the PCZ thus did not solely *reflect* the construction of empire there; the images themselves also *produced* imperial domination, effecting a double dose of empire through their representational work. While the feats of canal construction exhibited a form of imperial power—shaping the land—the images boosters strategically marketed constituted a second form of imperial power—shaping thought. The act of representing imperial subjects reflects the hegemonic quality of Western culture. Nicholas Mirzoeff asserts that “visuality and its visualizing of history are part of how the ‘West’ historicizes and distinguishes itself from its

---

<sup>110</sup>Paul Valéry quoted in Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), xiv.

<sup>111</sup>Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, xvi, xvii.

<sup>112</sup>Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 125.

others.”<sup>113</sup> As the title of his book suggests, “the right to look” was reserved for the panoptical authorities in Western societies and their privileged allies—in the case of the PCZ, white, middle-class American citizens. The American-staged scenes were in keeping with Susan Sontag’s observation that “to photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed.”<sup>114</sup> PCZ photographs transformed colonized peoples into cultural objects that imperialists encouraged white Americans to consume and collect.

## Sources and Methodology

Representations of imperialism emerged from a variety of sources during the era, and they provide essential evidence. In addition to postcards and ICC photography from the canal’s construction era, at San Francisco’s PPIE and San Diego’s PCE exhibits, architecture, landscaping, lighting, color, photography, photographic postcards, souvenir ephemera, stereopticon views, lantern slides, books, illustrated magazine articles, travel accounts, and dioramas sought to make empire appealing to a white, middle-class American public. Images of these materials are the sources for this dissertation.

Promotional images strove to make imperial ideologies appear normative, and my reading of the sources seeks to denaturalize these constructions and make them visible. Because we have very little evidence of viewer responses to images of the Canal Zone and its expositions,

---

<sup>113</sup>Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), xiv.

<sup>114</sup>Sontag, *On Photography*, 14.

except for San Francisco's exposition, I focus on the production and marketing of pro-empire representations. Nonetheless, my visual analysis shows how publicity photographs served political purposes. I analyze the contents of photographs of the Zone and the fairs, their anticipated audiences, and their historical and geographic contexts.

I have examined thousands of images in contemporaneous popular books about the PCZ and the world's fairs, in articles in middle-class magazines, on color lithographic postcards generated from photographs, and in souvenir publications. Ernest Hallen's work predominates among the PCZ photographs, since the ICC readily distributed them to the press.<sup>115</sup> Postcards by I. L. Maduro Jr. preponderate as evidence from the PCZ because he was the most prolific producer in the Zone. A variety of commercial producers printed postcards for the two world's fairs, although the Cardinell-Vincent Company dominated at the PPIE as the official photographer. Taken together, these images provide critical evidence of an energetic marketing campaign designed to produce an aesthetic brand of imperialism, in the quest for popular assent to the Panama Canal venture and ongoing territorial expansion after its completion.

Because my theme is overcoming public doubts about empire, I have focused on the construction era between the 1906 controversy over conditions in the Zone that Bigelow

---

<sup>115</sup>It has not been my intention to survey every photograph that Hallen produced, since I am concerned primarily with images that circulated in popular publications rather than his archival oeuvre. The free distribution of Hallen's work by the U.S. government also makes it difficult to catalog with authority which published photographs were his. Although photographs in books and magazines often bear characteristics of his style, attribution to any photographer was rare. Hallen's work did appear with credit in a popular 1915 photogravure, *The Official Handbook of the Panama Canal*. It was available through mail order from the Government Printing Office and as a souvenir concession at the San Francisco exposition's diorama of the Panama Canal. See *The Official Handbook of the Panama Canal* (Washington DC: GPO, 1915); Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 96–98; Sarah J. Moore, *Empire on Display: San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 181, 186.

instigated, prompting the public relations counteroffensive, through the canal's opening in 1914, to the closing of the San Diego fair in 1916. I consulted over fifty books about the Panama Canal published between 1906 and 1916. Most were illustrated, some lavishly, and I examined each photograph in them. I have also surveyed thousands of extant picture postcards from the era, gleaned from online archives and museums, digital libraries, physical archives, Zonian websites, numerous online vendors and postcard collectors, and in bookshops.<sup>116</sup> I also examined hundreds of photographs from articles in popular middle-class magazines during the construction era, including *The National Geographic Magazine*, *Scientific American*, *The Outlook*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Scribner's Magazine*, and *Century Magazine*.

The California expositions also generated considerable visual publicity, especially the larger and more famous PPIE. I have consulted dozens of contemporaneous books and surveyed thousands of images from postcards, souvenir booklets, publicity photos, lanternslides, stereographs, and magazines. In addition to national circulation magazines, I also consulted California-based magazines, including *Overland Monthly*, *The Californian Illustrated Magazine*, *Out West*, *California's Magazine*, and *Sunset*, for publicity connected with the two expositions.

My selections reflect a focus on glossy magazines with reputations for generous, high-quality photographic reproductions. I have focused on mainstream media periodicals—commercial, mass-circulation, national in scope and content, moderate in political orientation—because my analysis is concerned with the demographic that imperial boosters targeted due of the high value of their support: a white, middle-class, native-born/assimilated audience with

---

<sup>116</sup>White American residents in the PCZ described themselves as “Zonians,” and the term was understood to apply only to white U.S. citizens employed on the Gold Roll of the ICC and their families.

considerable political agency. As discussed above regarding magazine readership, promoters targeted citizens who were English speaking, literate, economically secure, well informed, politically engaged, and thus composed of likely voters and critical constituents—or potential opponents—regarding the expansion of U.S. empire. The capitalist, nativist, white supremacist politics of the period restricted the influence of Americans outside this privileged sphere.

Newspaper images of the PCZ would be a productive supplement to my analysis but I opted not to concentrate on them, in part because my source base was already so extensive but also because images of routine, daily life in the PCZ were not typically headline news. Newspapers for specific ethnic or racial groups were excluded for an additional, even more important reason—they did not contain any photographs of Panama or the Panama Canal—and often did not contain any photographs of any kind. The Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project includes Jewish newspapers published beginning in the 1840s and extending to the present. The papers contained no photographs of Panama. There were an extensive number of articles about Panama in the hundreds of newspapers archived in the Hispanic American Newspapers database, but the papers published during my period of study did not include photographs. A much larger collection exists in the Historical African Newspapers Database, which contains 300 newspapers written for a black readership from 1817 to the present. During the time period of this study the collected black newspapers contained no photographs of Panama or the Canal. *The Colored American Magazine* was the major African American magazine at the time that included glossy photographs. It, too, did not contain any articles or photographs about Panama during this period.

I sorted the images into groupings by topic—canal engineering and construction, indigenous people, Antilleans, sanitation and public health, housing stock, infrastructure and the

built environment, women, children, domesticity, social life—in accordance with the visual topics and tropes that imperial promoters and producers highlighted during the era. I looked at individual photographs within these categories, as well as photographs that were part of a set (before-and-after photographs, series aimed at showing transformation of the landscape). I then examined the photographs within each topical group for any evidence that could have been perceived by contemporaries as evincing social problems, exploitation, coercion, violence, unattractive or unsafe environments, controversial conditions, the costs and consequences of U.S. imperialism in the PCZ, or any other negative connotations. For the expositions, I categorized images by the technologies and concepts boosters were selling and how: Spanish heritage, small farms, irrigation, railroads, dams, architecture, sculpture, light shows, landscaping. I studied each image for any negative aspects as well as for its aesthetic qualities.

My research was guided by a methodology of very close readings of the images. I scrutinized photos for vestiges of the costs of empire, not simply alleged benefits, and have analyzed them through the method of “thick description” modeled by Clifford Geertz, in an effort to wring out nuances.<sup>117</sup> I examined them for traces of beauty, defined capaciously.

I also sought to read the images contextually, mindful of the historical frames of the era and its contemporaneous visual vocabulary—one of lynching, conquest of indigenous peoples, the “noble savage,” white supremacy, normative gender, class biases, nativism, celebrations of the Western march of progress, the awe of the technological sublime, and such classic tropes of Western thought and art as women as Madonnas, prehistoric peoples as childlike, the tropics as

---

<sup>117</sup>Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3–30.

exotic and Edenic, and the glorification of Greco-Roman/Western civilization, including forms of landscape composition employing symmetry, balance, and perspective.<sup>118</sup>

## Findings

Visual images of the canal and American settlement there told three major stories simultaneously. One was the encounter with an exotic world of docile peoples of color of various national origins living in uncivilized squalor. A second was the transformation of the jungle, with mosquito-infested swamps, raging rivers, and a mountainous rainforest, into a monumental system of interconnected locks and dams. The third was also one of tropical transmutation, with the building of white suburban enclaves of houses, schools, hotels, community centers, and hospitals where white canal employees and their families could enjoy a comfortable American lifestyle. Supplementing the imperial messages from the Zone, the California fairs reiterated themes of empire's beauty and benevolence, as they sought to appropriate imperial benefits for their urban and national constituencies.

---

<sup>118</sup>I have also been influenced by a number of visual theorists, including Leo Marx on the intrusion of technology in the culture of nature, Laura Wexler on domesticity, female innocence, and race, John Tagg on the production of Western hegemony through photography, and Martin Berger and W. J. T. Mitchell's theories about racialism as a lens for perception, power, and agency. See Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, 2000); Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Tagg, *The Burdens of Representation*; Martin A. Berger, *Seeing through Race: A Reinterpretation of Civil Rights Photography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); W. J. T. Mitchell, *Seeing through Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

The representations are, with rare exceptions, positive. Exposition imagery is uniformly scenic and celebratory, if not beautiful. The only ostensibly negative images of the PCZ that I found were deliberate, strategic ones—paired photographs portraying “before-and-after” scenes extolling the virtues of U.S. occupation, usually depicting primitive and/or unsanitary conditions in indigenous villages, black shantytowns, and Panamanian cities. These “before-and-after” photographic pairings focus on issues of public health, sanitation, and infrastructure, and they effectively neutralize the hazards/ugliness of the “before” because the negative images were only presented as problems already solved. In addition, images of squalor among peoples of color naturalized their degraded status and justified U.S. segregation and domination.

I found no other examples of photographs of the PCZ in the mainstream press taken after Bigelow’s exposé that represent any *conscious* suggestions of social problems, controversies, or the social costs of empire. The *unconscious* exceptions to this are racialized images of Panamanian Indians and Antilleans, but these images raise the contextual question of how white Americans at the time would have regarded them. For the most part Indians were portrayed as destitute of civilization, which most white Americans would likely have viewed as empirical, anthropological fact. The coercive displacement of Panama Indians by U.S. settlers is virtually absent from the visual record. I found only two photographs of native villages undergoing destruction because of the rising waters of the canal’s course. In both cases the villages appeared uninhabited, thus offering no visual evidence of conflict between Americans and Indians in Panama. I suggest that these rare images were most likely produced as signifiers of progress. Imperial photographers framed the loss of a few grass huts as a small price to pay for extending civilization, development, and the global benefits of the canal.



I could find no representations of resistance during the construction era. Boosters invited Americans to consume the visual “fact” that peoples of color in the PCZ appeared complacent, thus rendering the U.S. invasion as innocent. Photographers took innumerable images of indigenous peoples, usually families in front of grass huts, as visual testaments of primitivity. For U.S. visual consumers, the Indians of Panama came with the newly acquired territory and were a source of innocent curiosity. Photographs presented Indians as anachronistic people in the inexorable path of development, as obstacles equivalent to natural topographical features.

Regarding the injustices committed against West Indian immigrants, I argue that imperial boosters sold racial segregation as attractive to the white Americans who benefitted from it, whether on the U.S. mainland or in the PCZ. Early Zonians originated disproportionately from the U.S. South, and brought with them a strong cultural tradition of overt, codified segregation.<sup>119</sup> The PCZ operated in a Southern-style system of Jim-Crow segregation that was formalized and strictly enforced by the ICC, a system that Northerners quickly embraced. The ICC translated the U.S. color line of white/black into that of Gold and Silver Roll employees. Since the U.S. government did not view racial segregation in the PCZ as an injustice or a liability, it had no motive to visually suppress disclosure of its well-known Gold and Silver Roll system.

Throughout this dissertation I use the terms “white,” “black,” and “people of color,” but I do so advisedly because these identities were unstable. People often challenged categories of racial identification in the PCZ, as they did in the United States. As historian David Roediger has shown in *Working Toward Whiteness*, “white” identity was not (and still is not) clearly

---

<sup>119</sup>Alan McPherson, *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.–Latin American Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 89.

defined or firmly established, and was deeply contested at the turn of the twentieth century in the United States.<sup>120</sup> Historian Matthew Frye Jacobson has also explored how whiteness was variable and disputed during this era.<sup>121</sup> Conflicts constantly arose between self-generated and imposed identities, particularly in the contact zone surrounding the canal. Zonians subjected Afro-Caribbeans to a distinct American culture of Jim Crow that was foreign to them (although racism certainly was not). Whiteness was permeable and coveted, particularly among European immigrants seeking better conditions and higher pay, and to distance themselves from black Silver Roll workers. White status was critically important to the boosters' targeted audience of Anglo-Saxon, native-born or deeply assimilated, middle-class American citizens, in both the formation of an "imagined community" of empire and the cultivation of an attractive vision of imperialism in the PCZ era.<sup>122</sup> As Benedict Anderson observed, nationalism requires the imagination of a community because "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail," the nation is always conceived in terms of "a deep, horizontal comradeship."<sup>123</sup> Images of the Panama Canal fostered a sense of a shared, imperial community that was putatively open to all Americans, although marketed to relatively elite whites.

Racist photographs from the Zone unfortunately would not have appeared offensive or problematic to most white Americans in the early twentieth century given the ubiquitous, explicit

---

<sup>120</sup>David R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

<sup>121</sup>Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 248.

<sup>122</sup>Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983).

<sup>123</sup>Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

racism of the era. Images of West Indian poverty and poor living conditions passed for evidence of black “backwardness” in the dominant American culture of the time. In an era of pervasive racial segregation on the mainland, its parallel existence in the Zone did not prompt a wave of journalistic muckraking; Bigelow stood as the exception. Instead, the preponderance of images positively portrayed engineering marvels and the attractive living conditions of Zonians.

Photographs of white women and children represented their presence as a stabilizing social force in the PCZ, and a key component of its innocuous imperial culture. Such images projected domestic tranquility and sought to assuage concerns about the prudence of the Panama project, especially in the face of reports of widespread male worker unrest, high job turnover, and the vice of brothels and saloons. In *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism*, Laura Wexler uses the term “the innocent eye” to characterize photographs taken by white U.S. women that centered on white mothers, their babies, small family groupings, and home settings.<sup>124</sup> Wexler emphasizes the selectivity of these photographs, in that such photographers rarely emphasized domestic servants or any other low-status laborers (usually people of color) whose work made this kind of white, middle-class domestic life possible. When photographers did include people of color, it was invariably to demonstrate white benevolence, tutelage, and uplift.

Innocence—defined by the denial of racist exploitation, American aggression, or profiteering in contact zones—was thus conveyed through the inclusion of women as imperial partners. White American women’s presence in the colonial outpost of the PCZ offered evidence of U.S. beneficence, and conveyed female complicity. In this dynamic, cultural

---

<sup>124</sup>Wexler, *Tender Violence*, 6–8, 10, 13, and passim.

producers could presume female virtues—nonaggression, altruism, domesticity—and transfer these values to the operations of empire, providing it with a veneer of benevolence. In my research I found that photographic imagery directed at white, middle-class viewers uniformly portrayed the PCZ as devoid of violence, militarism, and exploitation, as defined by that audience’s normative standards. The presence of women signified this benign façade.<sup>125</sup>

Boosters pictured women as contented residents in a peaceful contact zone, and Zonian women appear to have played willing roles as imperial occupiers. Picturing women as empire-builders made the process appear less ominous.

Mary Louise Pratt’s pathbreaking *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* also examines how imperialists represented encounters in contact zones to convey illusions of Western innocence. Pratt suggests the concept of the “anti-conquest,” which she defines as “the strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony.”<sup>126</sup> These strategies often relied on depictions of natural science, a seemingly apolitical subject that thus lends itself to power hierarchies. Although Pratt focuses on eighteenth-century European texts rather than twentieth-century American images, her insights into the manufacture of imperial innocence are valuable for my analysis, with technology taking the place of natural history.

The two celebratory California expositions of 1915–1916 solidified the imperial message through a dual set of narratives. The fairs connected imperial dominance “at home” in the U.S.

---

<sup>125</sup>As discussed above, racist power relations are abundantly apparent in these photographs and postcards but must be situated in the historical context of contemporaneous American acceptance and perpetuation of white supremacy and racial inequality.

<sup>126</sup>Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 7.

West with its expansion “abroad” as both California cities endeavored to refashion themselves as imperial metropolises. Exposition spectacles thoroughly obscured the coercions of empire, and sought to blunt any resistance by associating empire with transcendental visions of progress, order, and beauty.

## Historiography

Historians have often told the story of the canal as an epic tale of heroes who were able to triumph over natural and political barriers to build what Roosevelt called one of “the great highways of civilization.”<sup>127</sup> These celebratory histories have focused on aspects presented as particularly daunting, including engineering, medicine, politics, economics, and diplomacy. A study like mine, which shifts the focus from digging the canal to marketing empire through visual appeal, necessarily depends on this work for its foundation. There are, however, different points of origin—for most of these studies, the failure of the French to build a canal, and for my work, the American public’s imperial unease.

David McCullough’s epic *The Path between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870–1914*, established the fundamental historical narrative of the canal’s construction. McCullough’s classic history focused on the miracles of technology, engineering, and medicine, the international intrigues, financial scandals, diplomatic tensions, and the ultimate American victory. Matthew Parker’s *Panama Fever: The Epic Story of the Building of the Panama Canal*

---

<sup>127</sup>Theodore Roosevelt, “Fourth Annual Message,” Washington DC, 6 Dec. 1904; The American Presidency Project, accessed 10 June 2015, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29545>.

is an updated version in the tradition of McCullough's grand narrative. Parker emphasizes domestic U.S. politics and international diplomacy, engineers and doctors, French tragedies and American triumphs in his retelling of the ambitious and tenacious battle to build the canal. It is a dramatic story of adversity and a top-down history of the heroism of the visionary men who directed the effort. For Parker, the Panama Canal was a great success because of the great men who built it, against all odds.

With the publication of historian Michael Adas's *Dominance by Design*, technological progress became a tool of empire rather than proof of American beneficence and daring. His work is a broad view of the historical origins of current U.S. foreign policy; his special interest is the way that Americans have always used their preeminence in engineering to justify imperialism. Adas finds that such beliefs in progress through technology are long-standing, present among the first European colonial settlers in North America.<sup>128</sup> He argues that Americans have used their technological superiority to bolster and justify a sense of cultural and racial superiority in their interventions overseas. Along with missionary ideologies, the nationalistic impulse to extend democracy, and the drive to expand capitalism and markets, Adas maintains that "in each phase of [imperial] expansion technological imperatives have strongly influenced America's encounters with the peoples and cultures of the non-western world."<sup>129</sup> My work expands on Adas's in that it emphasizes the cultural marketing of American technological dominance as an aesthetic medium of imperialism.

---

<sup>128</sup>Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 2006), 6.

<sup>129</sup>Adas, *Dominance by Design*, 13.

A second wave of canal histories has taken up themes from cultural and social history, particularly gender, labor, and race, in efforts to uncover the identities and experiences of the workingmen who built the canal and the women who settled the Canal Zone. My own work helps explain why these stories had to be recovered, and how their invisibility transpired.

Alexander Missal's *Seaway to the Future: American Social Visions and the Construction of the Panama Canal* is a cultural history mainly concerned with the Progressive Era "search for order" that Robert Wiebe articulated in 1966.<sup>130</sup> Missal argues that Progressives used the PCZ as a laboratory for their social ideals. The canal allowed reformers to work through the tensions of technology, immigration, geographic mobility, and class inequalities.<sup>131</sup> Travellers to the Canal Zone described it as a utopian society, a model worthy of importation back to the mainland United States. Where I part company with Missal is his conclusion that the Canal Zone "celebrated a male society unhampered by the influence of women."<sup>132</sup> The presence of male domination and ideologies of masculinity does not obviate the influence and agency of women. While Missal considers photography he focuses primarily on discourse analysis, while I attend to the visual campaign to sell imperialism. I also analyze the importance of the San Diego exposition in developing an expansionist regional culture, while he devotes very little attention to the PCE. Missal's discussion of the two world's fairs does not convey the significant tensions between Northern and Southern California, which lie at the heart of each region's imperial

---

<sup>130</sup>Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1966).

<sup>131</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 19.

<sup>132</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 198.

agendas. Missal instead portrays California as a homogeneous state, where I see distinct cultures of empire driven by competing urban/regional agendas.

Labor historians have asked crucial questions about who built the canal, and Michael Conniff's path-breaking *Black Labor on a White Canal* offers historical depth and detailed answers. Conniff's work highlights the tremendous contributions of West Indian laborers, their near invisibility in subsequent histories, and the myriad discriminations that they grappled with. Conniff strips away the whitewash that the ICC applied to its reign, revealing that Antilleans performed most of the work and suffered the majority of the casualties. Julie Greene's *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* emphasizes the often-tense labor relations and the ways that workers resisted the managerial control of American officials.<sup>133</sup> She documents the pervasive system of racial segregation, the creation of a large force of police and labor spies, extensive deportation, and anti-unionism. Greene also unearthed rare instances of strikes, riots, and walkouts on the part of migrant Spanish workers. She shows that by the middle to the end of the construction period, in an effort to cut costs, the United States replaced higher-paid white Americans with lower-paid West Indians. These works are central, because they show what is missing in the photographs. One would certainly have no idea from looking at an illustrated book about the canal that the majority of workers who built it were West Indians. The reason so much is missing, of course, is that canal boosters wanted to tell a positive story of harmony, progress, and beneficence constructed by white people for white

---

<sup>133</sup>Michael L. Conniff, *Black Labor on a White Canal, 1904–1981* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985). See also Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).



people.<sup>134</sup> My work focuses on visual representations of laborers and settlers, specifically how images masked such conflicts and made the project look attractive to a consuming audience.

I suggest that previous Panama Canal construction-era histories have largely overlooked the tenuous nature of U.S. imperialism there. Works highlighting engineering have focused on moments of crisis, as construction was often literally bogged down in mudslides, while missing the larger issue that public support for the canal project was never guaranteed. Popular response to U.S. imperialism after the Philippines was conflicted and contingent, and imperial boosters were rightly anxious. The intensity of their visual campaign is a measure of that anxiety. The cultural history that I seek to recover includes important questions of gender, particularly women's participation in imperialism, a topic upon which the existing historiography is exceedingly thin. And my methodology for undertaking this analysis includes the careful reading of contemporaneous photographic images, which have largely been ignored for purposes other than illustrating grand narratives.

In the process of exploring the PCZ, I build on previous work concerning the importance of visual culture to imperialism in other settings. The general conclusion from the new cultural history of empire is that it played a powerful role in forming public attitudes, but it could shift dramatically in a short period of time and contained strong internal divisions as well. Regarding public responses to violence in the Philippine-American War, my analysis demonstrates how images of the PCZ shaped critically different attitudes toward empire over the short term.

In *From Liberation to Conquest*, historian Bonnie M. Miller has explored the production of popular culture surrounding the Spanish-American War, to gauge the effectiveness of that

---

<sup>134</sup>Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 4.

culture in creating political consent for war and imperialism at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>135</sup> Miller finds that despite the sensationalism, drama, and appeals to emotion, audiences were often insufficiently motivated by producers of popular and visual culture to actively support the U.S. imperial agenda. She does find, however, that the mass media succeeded in shaping which events were considered most important, and which were left unexamined.<sup>136</sup> Both of these findings are salient for my work, as I argue that cultural producers of the visual imagery from the PCZ and the two California expositions sought to forge and delimit what kinds of thoughts were readily possible for the public to think regarding imperialism. Panama Canal boosters and their allies had an easier task than during the Spanish-American War era, in that they weren't challenged to motivate their audiences to take direct action, but rather to accede to *inaction*. Imperial promoters needed only to dissuade people from political obstruction. Canal promoters strove to turn skeptical citizens into acquiescent armchair consumers of U.S. imperial culture, not to mobilize them for military service.

To the extent that historians have paid attention to the visual work of empire, the immersive experiences offered by expositions have figured largely. Alongside photography, the staging of world's fairs represented one of the most significant and effective venues for promoting the culture of U.S. imperialism.<sup>137</sup> Historians have interpreted the world's fairs in terms of their mixture of nationalist, racist, imperialist, and cosmopolitan elements.<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>135</sup>Miller, *Liberation to Conquest*, 2.

<sup>136</sup>Miller, *Liberation to Conquest*, 3.

<sup>137</sup>Rydell, *World's a Fair*, 6–8.

<sup>138</sup>Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Wexler,

Robert W. Rydell's germinal work, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916*, argues that they were integral to U.S. imperialism. The racial hierarchies that the fairs asserted in elaborate ethnological and anthropological exhibits worked to justify racial exploitation in U.S. zones of occupation on the mainland and abroad. In Rydell's analysis, fairs like the PPIE and the PCE celebrated white supremacy and aided the management of the expansive U.S. empire.<sup>139</sup> The California expositions were the last of these monumental world's fairs, and they upheld the tradition of scientific racism. Both fairs staged racialized displays that were less grandiose in scale than those at Chicago (1893) and St. Louis (1904), but no less ideological or imperialistic. As Rydell puts it, "inside the 'storied walls' of these fairs, elaborate racial fantasies about California's history were intertwined with predictions of continued national progress."<sup>140</sup> Natural selection was a unifying theme of the expositions. Race and national progress were bound together, and successful nationalism required imperialism. This dissertation seeks to expand on Rydell's pioneering work in two key areas: by recovering PCE appeals to white settlers to turn San Diego into a domestic center of imperialism, and by analyzing the PPIE's sophisticated aesthetic approach to packaging U.S. imperialism as an alluring cultural commodity in ways that negated critical thinking, much less dissent.

---

*Tender Violence*; Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993).

<sup>139</sup>Rydell, *World's a Fair*, 8.

<sup>140</sup>Rydell, *World's a Fair*, 209.

In *Empire on Display: San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915*, Sarah J. Moore examines the world's fair from the perspective of art history and cultural studies. Moore argues that the PPIE demonstrated many of the social forces at work at the turn of the century: modernity, technology, expansionism, Social Darwinism, progress, and above all, vigorous manhood. In Moore's view, the PPIE reflects the U.S. shift from internal colonies to foreign expansion as a solution to the closing of the Turnerian frontier. Moore devotes attention to the fair's art and architecture and its imperial message. Although I share this focus, where she finds that the Panama Canal was the ubiquitous and inescapable vision of the PPIE, I see fading traces of the canal as a specific place in favor of publicity that favored Roman symbolism and artistic spectacle.

Historian Abigail M. Markwyn offers an essential contribution to recovering the narrative of the PPIE and analyzing the fair's enduring significance in *Empress San Francisco: The Pacific Rim, the Great West, and California at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition*. Markwyn contextualizes the fair in the political culture of San Francisco and its histories of labor, political parties, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, neighborhoods, and urban renewal. Markwyn persuasively argues that the PPIE asserted white American dominance over the Pacific Rim and Latin America, imperialists' ultimate goal, while various constituencies vied with each other to shape the fair and San Francisco's future as an imperial city.

This dissertation examines the historical geography of Panama and the California fairs where boosters produced representations of a constructive and attractive empire. Chapter two explores the first site, the PCZ, and looks at how photographers set up the canal construction project as exemplary of a technological aesthetic, one that used images of the marvels of engineering to persuade citizens and solicit their investment in empire. Chapter three delves into

representations of society in PCZ settlements. Here boosterist photographers made the tropical environment appear safe for white settlers, demonstrated how white women had shaped the Zone into a domesticated enclave, projected innocence through the presence of families, and showed how administrators imposed familiar racist norms for the convenience of Zonians.

Chapter four explores connections between “domestic” and “foreign” empires at the second site, the 1915–1916 PCE, which promoted San Diego’s development. The city aspired to metropole status by cultivating the desert Southwest region as a tributary colony through agricultural colonization. Imperial promoters linked the creation of white homes in Southern California and Arizona with the domestic settlement of the PCZ by white Americans within a global culture of U.S. empire. The PCE also staged an elaborate, inhabited diorama of Southwestern Indians to support the Social Darwinist ideology of U.S. imperialism.

Chapter five analyzes the 1915 fair in San Francisco. The PPIE fortified the positive publicity about imperialism, and turned empire into a cultural commodity. It did this by abstracting imperial domination, then packaging it as a beautiful spectacle. Appeals to aesthetic values, primarily through the built environment and ambience of the fairgrounds, shifted public opinion away from critique of empire to appreciation of beauty and a sense of wonder. The fair also rehabilitated the city from its 1906 trauma and elevated it to global status as the strategic U.S. outpost on the Pacific Rim.

Representations of the PCZ and the California fairs were mutually constitutive and reinforced each other’s cultural authority. Critics of empire lost some of their footing when faced with pleasant images of middle-class domesticity in the Panama Canal Zone—with its charming homes, immaculate neighborhoods, orderly schools, inviting clubhouses, modern hospitals, and attractive civic and social structures. Likewise, the tremendous publicity

generated by the PPIE and PCE flooded the nation with imagery of the incomparable California landscape, the fairs' spectacular architecture, sculpture, popular amusements, dioramas, light shows, anthropological exhibits, and mechanized models of the Panama Canal. All of these wonders promised modernity and progress, seemingly without cost or coercion.

American empire in the 1910s conjures the Philippines, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Hawaii, but it was more than an archipelago. Americans occupied and portrayed Panama quite differently than its island possessions; they made the PCZ an extension of the U.S. mainland. The cultural campaign to sell the Panama project sought to deflect associations with the Philippines or other exotic island territories and instead make the Zone seem familiar and domestic. Imperial promoters diligently packaged the PCZ as comparable to sub-tropical Southern California, and linked it culturally to the Jim Crow U.S. South, to a place more like Florida than the Asian Pacific. In this sense, the Panama Canal Zone was “south of the South,” a logical extension of the mainland. One white American resident described life in the Zone as resembling “a small southern town transplanted into the middle of Central America.”<sup>141</sup> To Americans, such regional associations made the Zone seem neither foreign, remote, disorienting, nor uninhabitable. The PCZ shared with the California fairs an iconography of allurements, with their palm trees and tropical fruits, Pacific beaches, Spanish culture, modern homes, hydraulic engineering, and technological wonders. Imperial boosters taught Americans to see the PCZ as an extension of the cherished mainland American geography, as safe and familiar as California, thus normalizing the operation of empire in the early twentieth century.

---

<sup>141</sup>Kate Dailey, “Who On Earth Are the Zonians?” *BBC News*, 11 Aug. 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-28594016>.

## Figures – Chapter 1



Figure 1.1

“War is Hell,” from an 1899 “souvenir” book of the U.S-Philippine War. Despite its nationalistic and triumphant orientation, the caption also maintains the essential humanity of “our enemies” in the war. The caption elicits American empathy for Filipino suffering and loss, and suggests that such empathy is intrinsic—a natural and perhaps inevitable response if the viewer does not deny the fundamental humanness of Filipinos.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>142</sup>*Souvenir of the 8th Army Corps, Philippine Expedition: A Pictorial History of the Philippine Campaign* (Manila: Dow Bros., 1899).

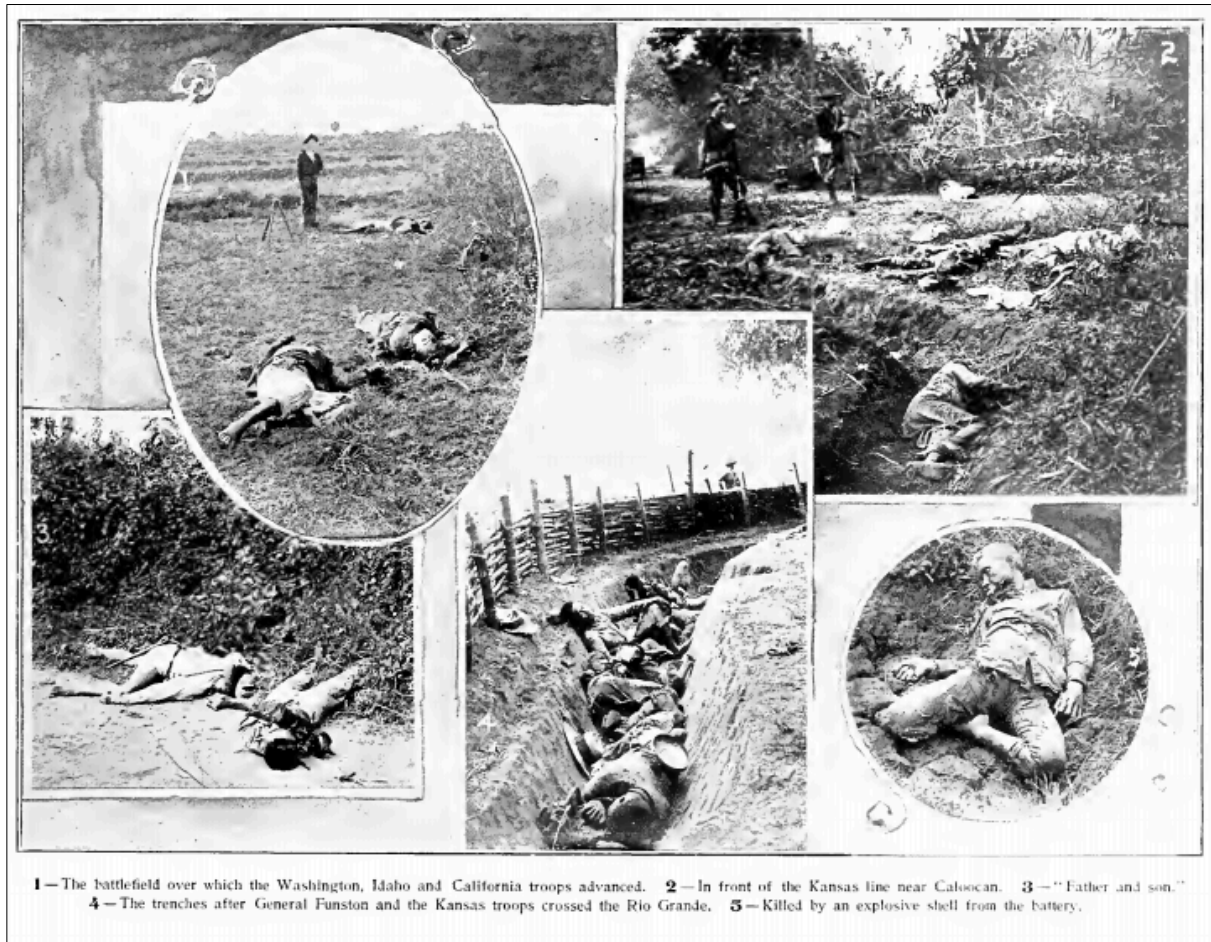


Figure 1.2

Photomontage of Filipino dead from an 1899 pictorial history of the war published by the official photographer of the 20th Kansas Regiment.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>143</sup>Perley Fremont Rockett, *Our Boys in the Philippines: A Pictorial History of the War* (San Francisco: P. F. Rockett, 1899), n.p.





Figure 1.3

“Filipino Trenches,” from an 1899 commemorative book.<sup>144</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup>Karl Irving Faust, *Campaigning in the Philippines* (San Francisco: Hicks-Judd Co., 1899), 132.



The American Artillery did wonderful execution in the battles with the insurgents. In a trench at Santa Ana the Tagal dead lay in piles. The group shown in the picture consisted of thirty-eight bodies.

Figure 1.4

Image entitled “Wonderful Execution,” from *Neely’s Photographs* (1899).<sup>145</sup>

---

<sup>145</sup>Neely, *Neely’s Photographs*, n.p.



Figure 1.5

Soldiers of the 35th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiment practicing the “water cure,” circa 1901.<sup>146</sup>

---

<sup>146</sup>Photograph, U.S. Army Signal Corps, U.S. National Archives, accessed 13 Sept. 2014, <http://waterboarding.org/node/37>.





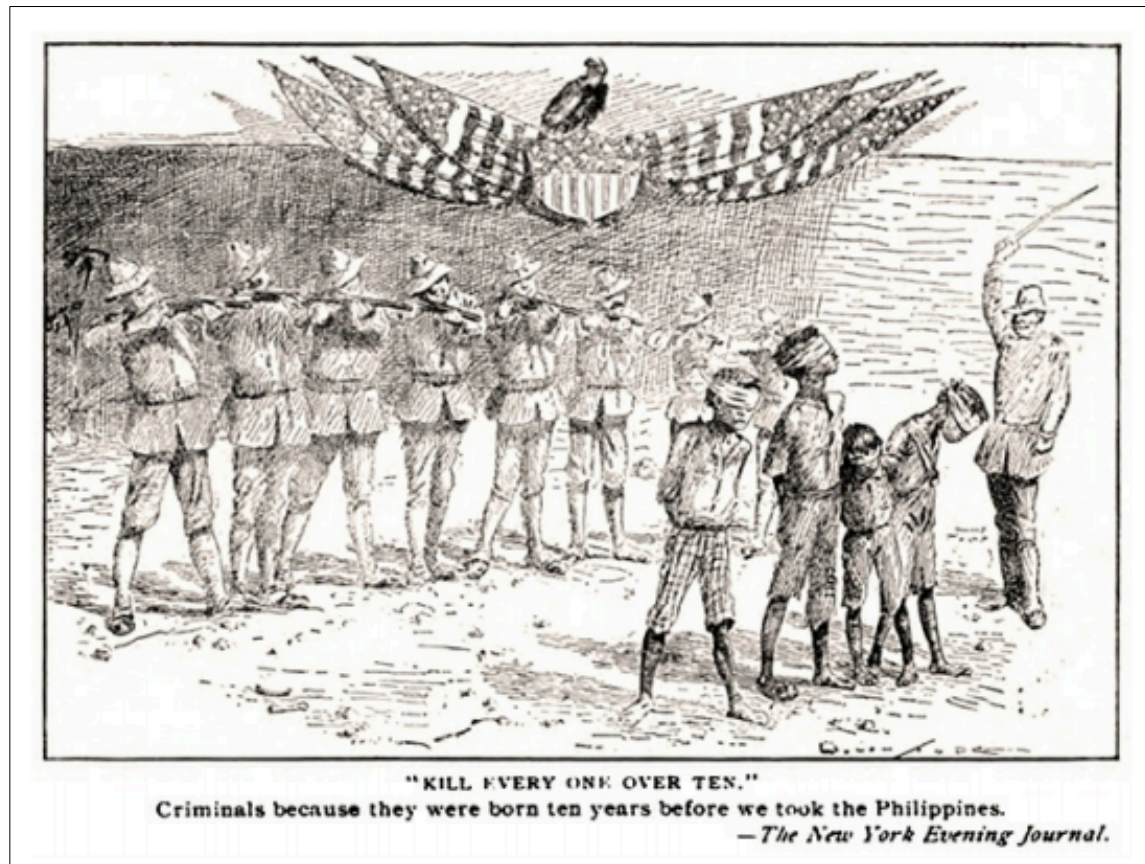


Figure 1.7

Illustration from *The New York Evening Journal* of General Jacob H. Smith's massacre order to "kill every one over ten," 5 May 1902. The editorial caption is significant. The image was also reproduced in *The Literary Digest* in 1902.<sup>148</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup>"Placing the Blame for the Philippine 'Barbarities,'" *Literary Digest*, 17 May 1902, 667.

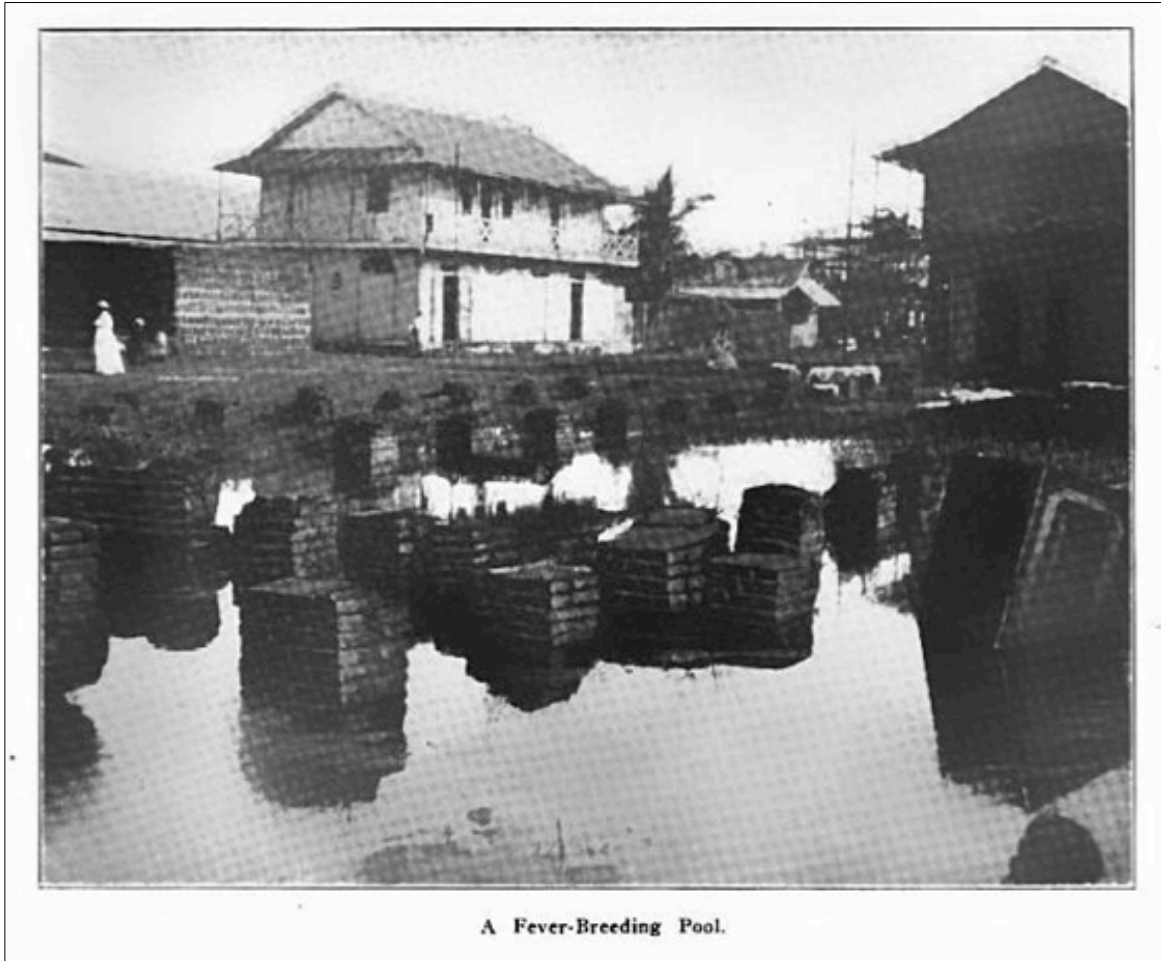


Figure 1.8

“A Fever-Breeding Pool,” photograph from Poultney Bigelow’s 1906 exposé in *The Independent* alleging unsafe public health conditions in the PCZ.<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>149</sup>Bigelow, “Our Mismanagement,” 11.

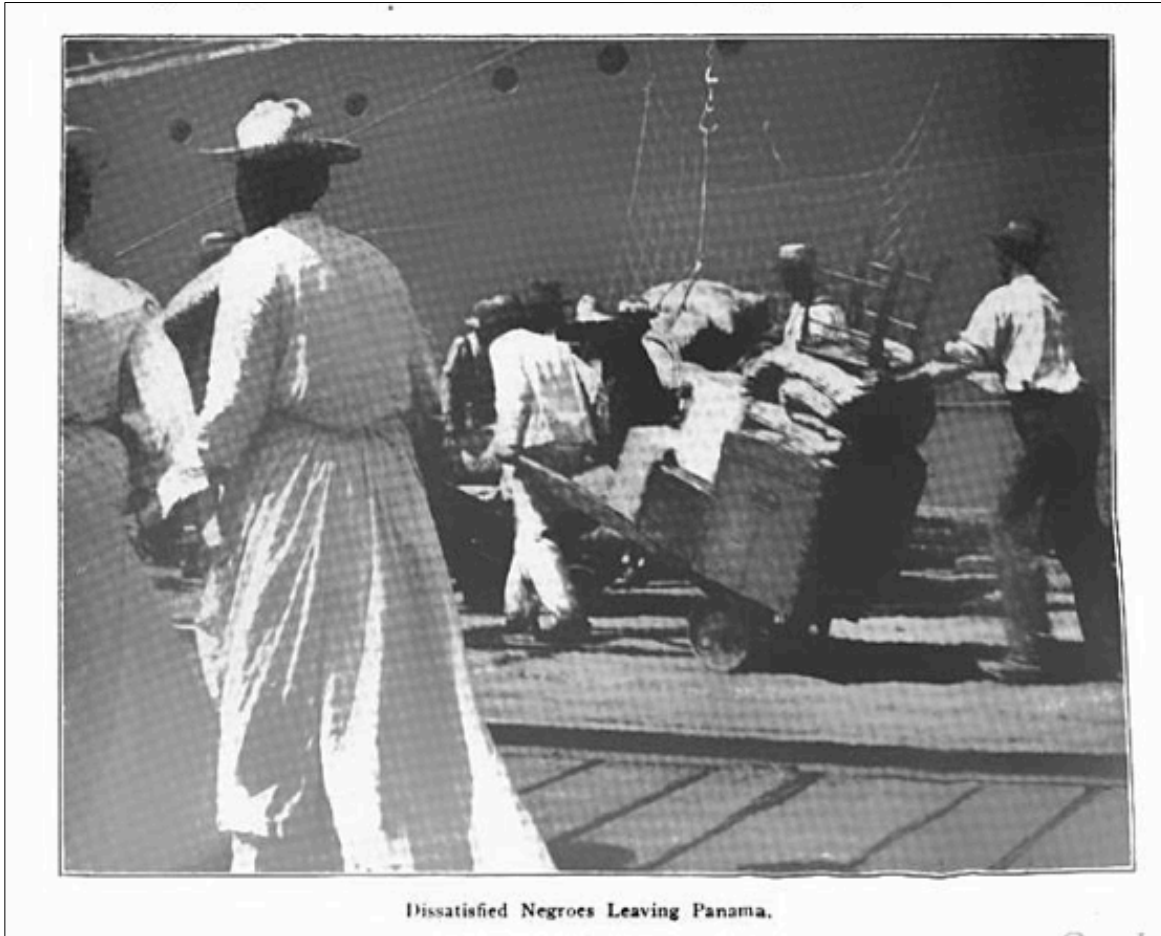


Figure 1.9

“Dissatisfied Negroes Leaving Panama,” photograph from Bigelow’s article regarding Antillean resistance to poor working and living conditions and unfair pay in the PCZ.<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup>Bigelow, “Our Mismanagement,” 15.

## Chapter 2 : Civil Engineering in the Panama Canal Zone

Theodore Roosevelt's tour of the Canal Zone in 1906 effectively countered Poultney Bigelow's charges. An examination of photographs from his unprecedented twelve-day tour shows that Roosevelt symbolized nationalism, imperialism, masculinity, and white supremacy—while at the same time boosting morale among white American canal workers. Still, two major obstacles blocked U.S. progress, the turbulent Chagres River, which periodically flooded the land, and indigenous Panamanian Indians living in communities along the Chagres, the canal's path. Subduing the torrential flooding of the Chagres, which symbolized the difficulty of the entire venture, involved creating Gatun Lake, the largest artificial lake in the world as well as the largest dam in the world, and building mammoth locks that raised ships to reach the level of the lake. Imperial boosters portrayed the relocation of Indian villages as a humanitarian relief effort necessary for the engineers to dam the river, create the lake, and build the monumental locks. The magnificence of civil engineering in the PCZ was an extremely potent force for disarming skeptics of imperialism, and visual depictions were a particularly effective form of persuasion. By 1911, tourists flocked to the Canal to view what they perceived as a successful American conquest of nature.

The first two years of U.S. construction in the PCZ were marked with frustrations and failures. The original chief engineer, John Findley Wallace, brought experience engineering and managing the Illinois Central Railroad. He was, however, an indecisive leader plagued by substandard equipment, a poor administrative system, and a diffusion of power between Panama and Washington DC. Bureaucratic requirements tied up construction. The ICC, wary of the French legacy of corruption, had to approve each requisition order by unanimous consent of a



committee, and critical supplies took months to arrive. The public health situation remained grim, with repeated outbreaks of yellow fever and malaria and high mortality rates. Gorgas's research revealed that seventy percent of Panamanians had malaria. Politicians rejected his hypothesis that mosquitoes were vectors of malaria and yellow fever, not because of scientific knowledge but because they did not want to increase appropriations for public health efforts. Living conditions were extremely crude, making the retention of workers difficult, and job turnover was high.<sup>151</sup> American blue-collar workers and engineers alike deserted their jobs, and recruitment efforts in Jamaica failed. Wallace, unable to consolidate administrative power or make much construction progress, resigned in frustration in June 1905.<sup>152</sup>

John Stevens took over as chief engineer of the canal the following month. Stevens, a railroad engineer who had overseen construction of the Great Northern Railroad across the Pacific Northwest, held a reputation for enduring frontier hardships. He had been on his way to build a railroad in the Philippines when Roosevelt offered him the canal job. Despite Stevens's initial energy and enthusiasm, conditions in the PCZ remained dismal, and construction progress exceedingly slow. The work was dangerous, and housing conditions squalid. The arriving West Indian workers faced coercive labor conditions, police brutality, substandard housing, and food rations that left many of them malnourished.<sup>153</sup> Although conditions were better for white American workers, they were still so poor that retention was a problem. The U.S. government

---

<sup>151</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 283.

<sup>152</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 283, 303.

<sup>153</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 304, 309–23.

responded via the ICC with increased wages, benefits, and other incentives to lure more white labor from the United States to the PCZ.<sup>154</sup>

The crisis in morale demanded dramatic action. Almost three years into its possession of the Panama Canal Zone, the United States had little to show for it. Engineers had finally agreed to change plans for a lock canal (rather than a sea-level one) but construction efforts remained slow and limited to basic channel excavation that was plagued by constant mudslides. To critics, the imperial project in Panama appeared fated to follow the French debacle.<sup>155</sup>

President Roosevelt responded with bold action. First, he announced that he would visit the PCZ to inspect the work there in November 1906. Second, after receiving a long letter of complaints from John Stevens, Roosevelt angrily fired him and replaced him with a third and final chief engineer, Colonel George Washington Goethals of the U.S. Army Engineer Corps, on 1 April 1907. Roosevelt, well aware of the logistical—and equally important—public relations problems related to turnover, reportedly commented: “I’ve tried two civilians in the Canal and they’ve both quit. We can’t build the canal with a new chief engineer every year. Now I’m going to give it to the Army and to somebody who can’t quit.”<sup>156</sup> Roosevelt’s choice of Goethals was a skillful response to the problem, and a savvy public relations move. Rather than suggesting military aggression, the photogenic Goethals, in his immaculate white uniform (Figure 2.1), projected an aura of engineering professionalism, efficiency, and discipline. The ICC and the popular press represented him as a hybrid between civilian and soldier.

---

<sup>154</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 327.

<sup>155</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 47.

<sup>156</sup>McCullough, *Path between Seas*, 503–508; Parker, *Panama Fever*, 392–95; Greene, *Canal Builders*, 52–53; Roosevelt quoted in Abbot, *Panama Canal Picture*, 162.

Commentators praised him for possessing military discipline but as a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Goethals did not command troops, so his administration did not evoke memories of previous military occupations of imperial territories.

### **Rooseveltian PR in the Panama Canal Zone**

In November 1906 Theodore Roosevelt traveled to Panama to personally assess construction progress. It was the first time a sitting U.S. president had left the country so the unprecedented gesture generated extensive and enthusiastic press coverage, as planned.<sup>157</sup> South Dakota's *Aberdeen Daily American* ran a typical story on 9 November 1906, quoting Roosevelt upon departure: "“Goodbye, I am going down to see how the ditch is getting along,” shouted President Roosevelt as he stood on the after starboard deck of the yacht *Mayflower* at Washington navy yard, as the vessel was leaving the dock with the president for his Panama trip.” Newspapers across the nation closely followed Roosevelt's journey to Panama, emphasizing the fact that he seemed confident and “appeared to be in particularly good spirits.”<sup>158</sup> The *Los Angeles Herald* also reported to an attentive nation that “Secretary Loeb will give to the press dispatches from the president” throughout the visit, through the use of wireless technology aboard his battleship.<sup>159</sup> William Loeb was Roosevelt's private secretary and functioned as the first (unofficial) presidential press secretary. Joseph Bucklin Bishop saw that

---

<sup>157</sup>Parker, *Canal Fever*, 375.

<sup>158</sup>“President Sails for the Isthmus,” *Los Angeles Herald*, 6 Nov. 1906, A1.

<sup>159</sup>“President Sails for the Isthmus,” A1.

the ICC provided a photographer to accompany Roosevelt. Thus the president embarked with a public relations apparatus in place, ready to produce images and real-time reports about his imperial project, publicity that was guaranteed to be positive and reassuring. Ostensibly a fact-finding mission, the president's gambit was primarily concerned with public relations.

Roosevelt's visit counterbalanced a wave of negative news from the PCZ about worker unrest, poor accommodations, immoral conditions, high job turnover, and disease, along with persistent mudslides and delays in construction.

Roosevelt's twelve-day visit during torrential rains encouraged U.S. workers in the PCZ and signaled to them, as well as an American audience "back home," that the president was confident about the success of the canal project and undeterred by obstacles and delays. Rose Hardeveld, an American who joined her engineer husband, Jan, in the Zone to set up housekeeping and raise a family, noted in her memoir that Roosevelt's visit during the height of the rainy season impressed Zonians since "most of the officials and all of the tourists who came to see the Canal made the trip in the dry season."<sup>160</sup> The president further delighted the American reading public by conspicuously evading his handlers, allegedly ignoring his itinerary, and skipping scheduled appearances with officials and dignitaries to conduct his own investigation of life in the PCZ. Hardeveld noted that "the Canal was his baby, and he was going to see how it was growing in all its component parts."<sup>161</sup> Instead of making speeches,

He might be climbing with muddy boots into Shovel Number 49 to have a talk with the engineer and craneman; or he might be knocking at the door of Mrs. Sanitary Inspector Smith's house to ask if she would show him her home. Again he might be poking around in the back end of the Cold Storage Plant at Cristobal

---

<sup>160</sup>Hardeveld, *Make Dirt Fly*, 77.

<sup>161</sup>Hardeveld, *Make Dirt Fly*, 77.

to see how our meats were being kept, or he might go into the kitchens at the mess to note how our men were being fed. Mr. Roosevelt was there to see what was going on, and, Jan gloated gleefully, he made it a point to do his own seeing!<sup>162</sup>

Rose Hardeveld reported that the president's personality and enthusiasm suffused the Canal Zone. Jan's mantra had long been 'with Roosevelt, anything is possible' and now the president marketed his canal optimism directly to Americans, through his statements and especially through images. After taking her children down to the rail line to witness passage of the president's touring car, Rose observed that Roosevelt's visit lifted spirits in the Zone. Roosevelt revived "our sense of pride in our canal, in the building of which we were his working partners" and "brought us all a warmer feeling for our work and even for our living conditions."<sup>163</sup> Before his visit, workers had lamented their miserable living conditions, the constant threat of horrific industrial accidents, and the demoralizing, frequent mudslides that could in a single day undo weeks of excavation work. After months of discouragement over such conditions and setbacks, she recorded the effect of the president's visit: "I caught some of Jan's confidence in the man. Maybe this ditch will get dug after all, I thought."<sup>164</sup> Roosevelt personified U.S. imperialism. When American artist Joseph Pennell visited the PCZ six years later, he reported that workers liked to say that their steam shovel "would look just like Teddy if it only had glasses."<sup>165</sup> The force of Roosevelt's personality influenced work culture in the Zone for years to come.

---

<sup>162</sup>Hardeveld, *Make Dirt Fly*, 78.

<sup>163</sup>Hardeveld, *Make Dirt Fly*, 79–80.

<sup>164</sup>Hardeveld, *Make Dirt Fly*, 78.

<sup>165</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures of the Panama Canal: Reproductions of a Series of Lithographs Made by Him on the Isthmus of Panama, January–March, 1912, together with Impressions and Notes by the Artist* (Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott, 1913), "XIV. Steam Shovel at Work in the Culebra Cut," n.p.

The president's visit accomplished the desired effect—it raised the esprit de corps of workers in the Zone and mainland American citizens alike. Upon his return to the United States, Roosevelt addressed Congress in December 1906 and delivered a highly optimistic report of his visit, accompanied by numerous photographs.<sup>166</sup> American newspapers reprinted his message widely. Historians have long agreed that Roosevelt's public relations offensive represented a great success.<sup>167</sup> Roosevelt characterized Zonian workers as pioneering heroes, a message that played well on the U.S. mainland and even better in the Zone.

Roosevelt understood that the medium of photography was an essential tool in selling empire; the lessons of Roosevelt's visit reside not just in his pronouncements but also (perhaps even more so) in his photo opportunities. It was not just what he said while visiting the Zone, it was how he looked—his demeanor and body language, the sites and settings he selected as backdrops, the kinds of people he chose to meet with, the categories of work that he emphasized, and the total portrait of the activist president in the Zone. Roosevelt's spotless white clothing shone forth in every setting, especially when he waded into the ubiquitous mud, as in Figure 2.4. At the center of the steam shovel cab, Figure 2.7, Roosevelt's whiteness is radiant. His immaculate appearance in photographs from the Zone (Figure 2.4 through Figure 2.3) intimates that the United States had devised a new model of imperialism that was unsoiled by brutality and repression. The President's white jodhpurs, gaiters, and signature white Panama hat (Figure 2.5) presented a portrait of a rugged and dynamic president who appeared liable to bolt off in any

---

<sup>166</sup>Theodore Roosevelt, "Message to Congress After Returning from the Canal Zone in Panama," speech, 17 Dec. 1906, Washington DC, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=69673>.

<sup>167</sup>Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 92.

direction. And wherever he went in the PCZ, images designed for appeal rendered him the embodiment of white American masculine supremacy in its mastery over the jungle environment, the massive equipment, and the grand engineering plan.

Despite some visual dissonance in their settings, Roosevelt's images also possessed aesthetic qualities because they conveyed the human ability to control nature and impose engineered order on organic chaos. At first glance, images like Figure 2.4 do not appear attractive in any conventional sense: a cluttered scene of sliding rocks and bare dirt, a purely utilitarian and unlovely piece of machinery, and a group of men gathered randomly around Roosevelt, some of them workers in soiled clothing. But read for its pro-imperial publicity message, the photograph speaks to attractiveness on several levels in a cultural code that valued possession and domination of nature, the nation's technological capabilities, the president's ability to lead groups of men (and by extension the nation at large), and the American prerogative of imposing its will anywhere in the world.

Roosevelt's visit generated numerous positive photographs, and those images ended up on the front pages of newspapers across the nation, where Americans could get the pro-imperialist message without even reading the story; a glance at newsstands and the pictures above the fold sufficed. Roosevelt appeared enthusiastic, energetic, inquisitive, and encouraging. His very image, in person but also in print, galvanized American workers in the Zone and their families as well as mainland Americans who were following the fate of the canal.

One of the most famous images from Roosevelt's visit is Figure 2.5, a photograph by William Arthur Fishbaugh, a professional photographer whose biography offers a glimpse into the dynamics of visual imperial boosterism. Fishbaugh began his career selling his first photographs while serving in the British Mounted Police in South Africa in the Boer War. He

left South Africa and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1898 to serve in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War and the subsequent Philippine War in 1902. Fishbaugh continued selling photographs while serving in the Philippines. After the war wound down, he moved to the Panama Canal Zone, where he again worked as a photographer.

Upon returning to the United States after the canal's completion, Fishbaugh's work promoting a real estate developer's planned community bears remarkable similarity to the publicity work of the ICC in Panama. His role in the Miami advertising campaign echoed his role in Panama. As one archivist has put it, Fishbaugh captured on film the "still largely undeveloped community . . . as both a romantic paradise on the edge of wild lands and as a comfortable and sophisticated emerging city."<sup>168</sup> This description of Miami could just as readily describe the PCZ during the construction-era publicity campaign that sold it to the public as both Edenic and modern.

Roosevelt in the cab of a steam shovel (Figure 2.7) remains the most iconic image of the trip. This very modern president understood the value of a photo opportunity. Roosevelt sits at the controls of the modern machinery of engineering, projecting a pose of mastery. It was a magnificent moment for the intersection of imperial politics, engineering, and popular culture. Roosevelt utilized a visual vocabulary of the splendors of civil engineering, made possible through such innovations in mechanical engineering as the Bucyrus steam shovel. The image speaks of rugged individualism, masculinity, whiteness, and technological prowess. One single white American male could do the work of hundreds of men of color per day, endowed with the

---

<sup>168</sup>“William Fishbaugh Collection,” State Archives and Library of Florida, accessed 12 Apr. 2015, <https://www.floridamemory.com/photographiccollection/collections/?id=12>.



tools of cutting-edge American technology. The president presented a portrait of American triumph over the jungle and the logistical challenges it presented to canal construction. In contrast to the many thousands of Antillean laborers actually performing the manual work of canal construction, Roosevelt symbolized the power of the white, American, male engineer who could transform the landscape single-handedly through the use of technology, much as Roosevelt like to suggest that he had single-handedly brought the Canal Zone into being.<sup>169</sup>

### **Ernest Hallen's Photography**

Ernest "Red" Hallen (1875–1947) served as the official PCZ photographer for thirty years, beginning in 1907. Born in Atlanta, he worked in Puerto Rico and Cuba before coming to the PCZ, thus bringing important imperial experience to the job.<sup>170</sup> The ICC hired Hallen with the explicit intent of shaping public opinion and refuting criticisms like Bigelow's by freely

---

<sup>169</sup>It is difficult to determine the precise population of PCZ immigrant workers from the West Indies during the U.S. construction era. According to U.S. government figures from the Library of Congress, by 1910 the Panama Canal Company had employed more than 50,000 workers, three-quarters of whom (37,500) were black Antilleans; see Sandra W. Meditz and Dennis M. Hanratty, eds., *Panama: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO/The Library of Congress), 1987. In 1913, the U.S. State Department reported the Antillean labor force at 48,000 out of 65,000 total ICC employees, with 12,000 Europeans and 5,000 Americans; see the Library of Congress, accessed 17 Mar. 2015, [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+pa0022](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+pa0022). Velma Newton, in *The Silver Men: West Indian Labor Migration to Panama, 1850–1914* (Noma, Jamaica: University of the West Indies, 1984), estimates some 60,000 immigrants from the countries of Barbados and Jamaica alone during canal construction (92–93). Historian Michael Conniff offers a much higher estimate, by an order of magnitude, of the number of West Indian workers, 150,000 during the decade of U.S. construction; see Conniff, *Black Labor*, 4.

<sup>170</sup>James L. Shaw, *Ships of the Panama Canal* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1985), 1, 8.

distributing Halen's photographs to the press.<sup>171</sup> Hallen produced thousands of photographs of every stage of construction and occupation, placing the project in the best possible light.<sup>172</sup>

Hallen's work for the ICC defined the photographic publicity effort in Panama during the construction era. A museum catalog for a collection of his photographs declares, "until his retirement in 1937, Hallen's views were the primary means by which Americans and the world experienced the great engineering feat."<sup>173</sup> A press release for a 1976 exhibition of Hallen's photographs at New York's Museum of Modern Art contains a salient observation by the exhibit's curator: "Hallen's photographs of the Canal are . . . extremely valuable documents. Seen as such, collectively and unburdened by the concept of masterpiece, they provide a strangely satisfying aesthetic experience."<sup>174</sup> A centennial exhibition of Hallen's work at the United States Military Academy Library at West Point noted that his photographs were widely published "in the newspapers and magazines back home, which, for many Americans, were the only sources to witness the construction of this incredible engineering achievement."<sup>175</sup> The

---

<sup>171</sup>"Photographs of the Construction of the Panama Canal, 1887–1940," U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, accessed 1 Nov. 2014, <http://research.archives.gov/description/535444>.

<sup>172</sup>Dennis Longwell, "Panama Canal Photographs by Ernest 'Red' Hallen," *Art Journal* 36, no. 2 (Winter 1976–77): 123–25.

<sup>173</sup>"Building the Panama Canal: Photographs by Ernest Hallen," Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL, accessed 26 July 2014, <http://www.fine-arts.org/collection/building-panama-canal-photographs-ernest-hallen/>.

<sup>174</sup>"Projects: Panama Canal Photographs by Ernest 'Red' Hallen," press release, The Museum of Modern Art, New York City, 6 Aug. 1976, [https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/5425/releases/MOMA\\_1976\\_0085\\_73.pdf?2010](https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/5425/releases/MOMA_1976_0085_73.pdf?2010).

<sup>175</sup>"Pictures from Panama—Celebrating the Centennial," U.S. Military Academy (USMA) Library, accessed 30 Dec. 2014, <http://blog.usmalibrary.org/2014/10/22/pictures-from-panama-celebrating-the-centennial-anniversary/>.

West Point curator also observed the aesthetic quality of Hallen's photography: "While the photographs primarily served a documentary purpose, they are raw, highly dramatic images, which, intentionally or not, are beautifully artistic in their composition."<sup>176</sup> This artistic beauty was essential to their effectiveness in "documentary" function, since they were deliberately deployed as part of a publicity campaign.

Hallen's photography made the engineering design of canal infrastructure and the construction process in the Zone appear inherently attractive. In the words of naval historian James L. Shaw, Hallen "climbed over, under, and around construction work at Panama to record with his camera every phase and detail of progress on the new waterway."<sup>177</sup> His work emphasized construction progress and engineering feats, and he attempted to guide American viewers in an appreciation of those qualities through artistically informed photographs. Hallen emphasized the photogenic geometry and the grand scale of the project, while also valorizing the white American men who labored on the canal, as in Figure 2.10.

### **Picturing the Conquest of Nature**

As the hiring of Hallen shows, the imperial subjugation of nature in the Zone required more than engineering skill. The success of the project hinged upon ongoing public support, and Hallen's photography for the ICC aesthetically framed the exercise in domination. Skillful engineering without positive visual publicity was inadequate for the task of selling empire.

---

<sup>176</sup>"Pictures from Panama—Celebrating the Centennial."

<sup>177</sup>Shaw, *Ships of Panama Canal*, 4.

Rivers of printed images flowed from the Canal Zone depicting the removal of mountains, the harnessing of rivers, and the creation of lakes and a system of dams and locks to control the Chagres River and the coastal flows of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The French had in the 1880s recognized the Chagres as their most daunting obstacle in constructing the canal, as frequent tropical downpours could raise the river by several feet within hours and thus undo months of excavation work.<sup>178</sup> Chief Engineer Goethals concurred in a 1911 article that the Chagres River still presented the greatest challenge in building the canal. With rainfall as high as six inches per hour, the Chagres had recorded a rise of 25.6 feet in just twenty-four hours.<sup>179</sup>

The ICC invited American citizens to marvel at their nation's ability to reshape the earth and harness such powerful natural forces, and Ernest Hallen told the tale of eventual triumph. Zonian Sue Core recalled the effort in grandiose, patriotic terms: "Climatic conditions in the tropics, moreover, added to the peculiarity of the terrain to be subdued, made the Panama job infinitely harder than if it had been located in any other spot on the map. Only the most impudent brand of Yankee temerity could have envisioned the project as a possibility in the first place and only the toughest-fibered species of Yankee persistence could ever have driven it to final completion."<sup>180</sup> Core illustrates the recurring nationalistic theme of American success where the French had failed, as well as the inherent beauty of the Anglo-Saxon work ethic and the ingenuity of white American men. This formulation also implied its own reversal—that

---

<sup>178</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 132.

<sup>179</sup>George W. Goethals, "The Panama Canal," *National Geographic Magazine* 22, no. 2 (1911): 148.

<sup>180</sup>Core, *Panama Yesterday*, 195.

opponents and critics of the imperial project lacked the tough Anglo-Saxon fiber and audacity of real men.

A 1911 illustrated guide to the PCZ presented the Chagres River (Figure 2.11) as it was before U.S. construction altered its course, including photographic views of a native village of two-dozen traditional steep-roofed thatch huts at the mouth of the river, an Indian poling a *cayuco* (dugout canoe) next to a sketch of ominous alligators, and the river in flood stage well above the tree line. This visual evidence of the “before” scenario is accompanied by a confident caption: “This turbulent and erratic stream traverses a tortuous channel to the Caribbean Sea. It is completely conquered in the completion of the Gatun dam, when it and its 26 tributaries form a vast lake, submerging the country for 164 square miles.”<sup>181</sup> The stark contrasts between untamed nature, “erratic,” torturous,” and “turbulent,” versus the conquest of white modernity invited the viewer to revel in the masterful imposition of control. Images show the wild and untapped river, used by Indians only for the simplest form of transportation in their primitive *cayucos*, undergoing capture by a superior civilization for technologically advanced transportation on a global scale. The notion that the United States was able to make better use of the Chagres River than the Panamanians ostensibly bestowed the imperial right to occupy Central America and sunder the Continental Divide there.

The travelogue also featured the Gatun Lake hydraulic works in thirty-eight photographs over twelve pages, highlighting the dams, spillways, locks, and related excavation and construction machinery in great detail. Before-and-after photographs picture the village of Gatun, locks at every stage of construction, and President William Howard Taft walking a

---

<sup>181</sup> *A Trip: Panama Canal* (Panama City, R.P. and New Orleans: Avery and Garrison Publishers, 1911), 9.

narrow plank over a gorge to inspect the progress.<sup>182</sup> The captions emphasize steel and concrete, the monolithic scale of the structures, and valves “so large that a full-sized train, locomotive and all, could go through.”<sup>183</sup> Never again would the wild, serpentine Chagres River flow freely or escape its imposed channels; such freedom was a waste of valuable power in a U.S. culture increasingly enthralled with engineering wonders and defiance of nature. By 1914 the river’s every movement would support the American project of empire-building and global dominance.

The very publication of such a book as the 1911 photo-essay, *A Trip: Panama Canal*, was in itself a testament to U.S. imperial power. The publisher’s foreword noted a “pardonable pride and self gratification” in producing the volume, as it “necessarily involved costly labor” to document the extensive project.<sup>184</sup> The 700 photographs in the book, covering the canal route step by step from the Atlantic to the Pacific during every phase of construction to that point, represented “manifold obstacles successfully overcome,” a common theme in writings of the era that portrayed all Americans in the Canal Zone as comrades in the workings of empire.

Americans associated in any way with the canal work shared in the aura of pioneers and explorers, including photographers: “Every one who turns over these pages must realize the difficulties and hardships experienced in the collection of the photographs—the long tramps over newly broken ground in the hot, tropical sun, far from comforting shade.”<sup>185</sup> In this formulation PCZ photographers could claim a degree of heroism, and by extension the images captured by

---

<sup>182</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 40.

<sup>183</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 44.

<sup>184</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 4.

<sup>185</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 4.

those photographers offered pleasure and privilege to American witnesses of the canal's progress. Photographs of aesthetically framed imperial structures promised white, middle-class Americans an elevation of status to imperial citizenship as privileged members of the nation.

In addition to photographers, one of the nation's most accomplished artists, Joseph Pennell, traveled to the PCZ in 1912 to draw the construction. In Joseph Pennell's lithographs, engineering in the Panama Canal Zone became an art form. Pennell published twenty-eight lithographs the following year in *Joseph Pennell's Pictures of the Panama Canal*. The book was so popular that it went through six printings in its first year.<sup>186</sup> Pennell's lithography effectively complemented the "objective" photographic documentation of the canal's construction by artistically rendering its dynamism and grandeur and valorizing white American labor.

In Pennell's work, the steel crane represented a work of beauty, an American equivalent to the Eiffel Tower (Figure 2.17). The canal was in the tradition of imposing majesty of the Brooklyn Bridge, completed in 1883, another of Pennell's favorite subjects.<sup>187</sup> The Brooklyn Bridge represented, in historian Alan Trachtenberg's words, "a 'trophy' won against the odds of nature," the very image of American virtues of science, courage, enterprise, skill, and endurance.<sup>188</sup> The Panama Canal was also all of these things, yet to Pennell's mind the canal far surpassed the bridge as an engineering accomplishment, and he declared it "the greatest work of

---

<sup>186</sup>Publication figures are from Missal, *Seaway to Future*, 109.

<sup>187</sup>Alan Trachtenberg, *Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 132.

<sup>188</sup>Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 118.

modern times, the work of the greatest engineers of all time.”<sup>189</sup> Pennell’s awe at the engineering marvel is expressed in his drawings, with their bold lines and dynamic geometry.

Joseph Pennell (1860–1926) was born in Pennsylvania but spent most of his professional life in London when he wasn’t traveling the world. He worked in a variety of media, but described himself foremost as an illustrator, working on commission for such magazines as *Scribner’s*, *The Century*, and *Harper’s*. He was thus oriented toward popular illustration. Pennell was fascinated by the engineering monuments of the industrial age, what his wife, Elizabeth Robins Pennell, called “modern machine-made wonders.”<sup>190</sup> Pennell traveled to industrial districts across Europe, particularly in England, Germany, France, and Belgium, and to Pittsburgh, Gary, Chicago, and New York, drawing and etching his favorite subjects: skyscrapers, bridges, steel foundries, munitions factories, shipyards, battleships, steam liners, piers, cranes, railway stations, zeppelins, grain elevators, and harbors.<sup>191</sup> Elizabeth Pennell recalled that these subjects “were to him the revelation . . . and the ‘Wonder of Work’ became his absorbing interest. It had appealed to him as far back as his childhood when he drew the old mills in Germantown, and his youth when he etched the scaffolding on Philadelphia’s public buildings.”<sup>192</sup> For Joseph Pennell, these industrial wonders were the modern equivalent of cathedrals and castles in their cultural significance and monumentality.

---

<sup>189</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, “XXVIII. The Mouth of the Canal from the Sea,” n.p.

<sup>190</sup>Elizabeth Pennell, *Joseph Pennell*, 36.

<sup>191</sup>Elizabeth Pennell, *Joseph Pennell*, 28–31, 36.

<sup>192</sup>Elizabeth Pennell, *Joseph Pennell*, 31.



Joseph Pennell was thus perfectly suited to render the construction of the Panama Canal in laudatory, promotional fashion. In her biography of him for a posthumous Library of Congress exhibition, Elizabeth Pennell explained his emotional and artistic investment:

It would have been strange if, preoccupied as he was with the wonder of work, his thoughts had not turned to Panama, at the beginning of the century the biggest wonder of all. The more he thought of it, the more sure he was that he must see it in the making, for as an admirably working canal its most wonderful wonder in his eyes would have gone. He started from London early in 1912 and got there in time. The Locks of Gatun, Pedro Miguel, and Miraflores, the vast Culebra Cut, the artificial lake were still at the most interesting stage in their construction. The great cranes, the mammoth buckets, the huge steam shovels, the swarming humanity were at the highest tide of their labor. And this “apotheosis of the wonder of work,” as he called it, was the more beautiful, as well as the more stupendous, because it presented him with “such a magnificent arrangement of line, light and mass” as he could never have imagined.<sup>193</sup>

Joseph Pennell believed that celebrations of architectural wonders served as tributes to the dignity of white male labor, and the Panama Canal was for him the epitome of the subject. In addition, the canal provided a subject of sublime aesthetic qualities.

As if aware of the sorts of criticisms journalist Poultney Bigelow had written, Pennell vouched for the efficiency of the engineers and the hard-working, sober nature of every white American that he met. Pennell wrote that although the PCZ was surrounded by saloons, he never saw a single intoxicated American during his time in the Zone. He praised the austere work ethic of the white American men, adding “I did not see any golf links at Gatun.”<sup>194</sup> Pennell enthused “we have won the admiration of the world,” and declared that the canal “is American—the work

---

<sup>193</sup>Elizabeth Pennell, *Joseph Pennell*, 32–35.

<sup>194</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, 9, 10. In a touch of irony, a 1920 newspaper story described a golf course, built on the earthen dam at the Gatun Locks, to entertain the forty-five Zonian men who lived there, a group of “lock tenders, electricians, blacksmiths, and mechanics.” See David M. Church, “Golf Links at Gatun Has Cost Eight Millions,” *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City), 16 Dec. 1920, 4.

of my countrymen.”<sup>195</sup> The artist was not immune to nationalism or identification with imperialist pride, sentiments that shone through in his lithographs.

In his introduction, Pennell claimed that social problems were neither his concern nor his area of expertise, stating “I did not go to Panama to study . . . social problems—which I had not time to master,” yet at every turn he praised the U.S. government for successfully resolving all of them.<sup>196</sup> Pennell acknowledged the dangerousness of the construction work, yet hedged “but most people do not get hurt, and I never met anyone who wanted to leave.”<sup>197</sup> Regarding labor unrest, he declared “I believe the threat to send the men home broke the only strike on the Canal,” a comment that reveals a social problem through its denial.<sup>198</sup> His remark also reflects an absence of loyalty to labor from someone who expressed amazement at “the wonder of work.” In the comment accompanying his lithograph “The American Village” (Figure 2.14), Pennell admitted that there were class hierarchies in the Zone but then dismissed them, saying “but these matters didn’t interest me, nor did sanitary conditions or social evils or advantages. There are also clubs, I believe social centres, mothers’ meetings, churches, art galleries and museums on the Isthmus, but I never saw them. I was after picturesqueness. Still, it is no wonder, under present conditions, that I never found a man who wanted to ‘go home’—and some hadn’t been home for seven years, and dreaded going—and rightly. The Canal Zone is the best governed

---

<sup>195</sup> Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 9, 11, 14.

<sup>196</sup> Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 13.

<sup>197</sup> Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 13.

<sup>198</sup> Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 13.

section of the United States.”<sup>199</sup> Pennell’s commentary carefully avoided context or explanation of the causes of various social issues, such as strikes and poor sanitation, while simultaneously assuring the reader that the government had resolved any and all problems that might exist.

Pennell nominally addressed issues of public health and safety, proclaiming “the sanitary problem is solved.”<sup>200</sup> He assured the reader that if illness or accident should occur, “there were plenty of hospitals, lots of nurses and sufficient doctors.”<sup>201</sup> He described his impression of the environment in the Zone, noting “there was not a smell, or a mosquito, or a fly on Ancon Hill, but over it all was the odor of petroleum, with which the streams and marshes of the whole zone are sprayed almost daily; and this has made the Canal and saved the workers.”<sup>202</sup> He offered no acknowledgement of the fact that Antillean workers did this life-saving daily spraying, and indeed his earlier comment that the canal was “the work of my countrymen” obscured their identity. Pennell testified to the safety of white Americans in the Zone through his own experience: “I did not get malaria or fever, or bitten or run over. I was very well all the time—and I walked in the sun and worked in the sun, and sat in the swamps and the bottoms of locks and at the edge of the dam, and nothing but drawings happened.”<sup>203</sup> His lithograph “At the Bottom of Gatun Lock,” Figure 2.15, offers exactly this perspective of having spent time in “the bottoms of locks” without illness or injury. Although he presented a façade of neutrality, Pennell

---

<sup>199</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, “X. The American Village,” n.p.

<sup>200</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 9.

<sup>201</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 12.

<sup>202</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 10.

<sup>203</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures*, 13.

clearly came to identify with the imperial project, the white male American workers, and the U.S. government's mission in Panama. His testimony as an independent artist added credibility to his positive portrayal of the Zone.<sup>204</sup>

Pennell's introduction offers evidence that he was both a consumer and a producer of the mythology of the Panama Canal, and he offers an intriguing example of how Americans could be won over to imperialism despite their personal principles. Pennell was a pacifist, and his wife described him as coming from a long line of Philadelphia's "good old Quaker stock."<sup>205</sup> In his book, Pennell declared, "personally I am not a believer in wars or navies. If my theories were practiced there would be no need for fortifications."<sup>206</sup> Yet Pennell seems to have severed his personal, pacifist beliefs from his artistic support for an imperial project so closely linked to the U.S. Navy. The navy stoked momentum for the Panama Canal through the advocacy of Alfred T. Mahan and Theodore Roosevelt, the 1898 odyssey of the USS *Oregon* from San Francisco around Cape Horn to reinforce the Atlantic Squadron in Havana during the Spanish-American War, and Roosevelt's use of the USS *Nashville* to wrest Panama from Colombia in 1903.<sup>207</sup> The

---

<sup>204</sup>Pennell's introduction exhibits overt racism toward West Indian workers, and he routinely uses racial epithets. He refers to the "jim-crow" trains of the PRR without objection, and interrupts the narrative of his travels across the Zone to repeat second-hand stories of black workers' alleged stupidity. Pennell invariably describes the Antilleans he meets as ignorant, clumsy, yet always affable, and recounts their comments in a rendering of sub-standard dialect. See Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, 9–12.

<sup>205</sup>Elizabeth Pennell, *Joseph Pennell*, 2.

<sup>206</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, "I. Colon: The American Quarter," n.p.

<sup>207</sup>As a U.S. Navy history puts it, the voyage of the USS *Oregon* during the Spanish-American War "swept away all opposition for the construction of the Panama Canal, for it was then made clear that the country could not afford to take two months to send warships from one coast to the other each time an emergency arose"; *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, U.S. Navy, Naval History and Heritage Command, accessed 5 May 2015,

Panama Canal Zone was a perfect nexus of naval militarism and imperialism, yet Pennell did not see this confluence.

Instead Pennell was swept up in his awe for the engineering triumphs of the canal's design and the heroic labor of its builders, and in his artistic appreciation of the beauty of the work: "The scale, the immensity of the whole may be judged by the size of the engines and figures. I have never seen such a magnificent arrangement of line, light and mass, and yet those were the last things the engineers thought of. But great work is great art, and always was and will be. This is the Wonder of Work."<sup>208</sup> Of the Gatun Locks, Figure 2.16, he exulted "these huge arches . . . are mightier than any Roman aqueduct, and more pictorial."<sup>209</sup> In his Miraflores Locks, Figure 2.17, the lines of the railroad tracks extend to the horizon, suggesting the scale of the project, as do the towering cranes, which can be read as an homage to the heights reachable through Pittsburgh steel. Pennell's lithographs celebrated imperialism through his adulation of engineering. The fact that Pennell saw the beauty as unintentional on the part of the engineers made it an even more remarkable discovery for him, authentic rather than artificial.

In the process of celebrating the structural beauty of the canal's component parts, Pennell also reaffirmed publicists' proclamations of classlessness in the PCZ. His work valorizes both the canal's white workingmen and its engineers by portraying a construction achievement so immense and nationalistic that it required deployment of skills without class divisions.

---

<http://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/o/oregon-ii.html>. Although the claim "swept away all opposition" is overstated, the navy did use the extensive press coverage of the *Oregon*'s journey to lobby for U.S. creation and control of the Panama Canal, making clear the interdependence of the canal, imperialism, and militarism.

<sup>208</sup> Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, "V. The Guard Gate, Gatun," n.p.

<sup>209</sup> Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, "VI. Approaches to Gatun Lock," n.p.

Pennell also conveyed the visual appeal of American life in the Zone by juxtaposing the modern American settlements in the PCZ (Figure 2.14) with native villages (Figure 2.18). Seen through a screen of graceful palm trees across a broad, paved and curbed street, the “American Quarters” look inviting with their airy, screened verandas. And their jungle counterpoint, “The Native Village,” served as a reminder of the timeless jungle that the United States now possessed, representing a foil for the modern U.S. engineering technology in the Zone.

### **Preempting an Outbreak of Empathy**

The displacement of indigenous peoples by the U.S. government ran the risk of evoking empathy on the part of American citizens, a response that might have interfered with or even halted canal construction. The effect of these devastations to native ways of life in Panama was an unknown quantity in terms of U.S. public opinion. Imperial boosters strove to invoke justifications of the greatest good for the greatest number, to make progress appear inevitable, and to set up Indians as unworthy of American sympathy because of their abject primitivity.

Through the ICC, the U.S. government displaced Emberá, Kuna, Guaymí, and other indigenous peoples in the Zone. Through Articles VI and XV of the 1903 Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, native villages and towns in the Canal Zone were required to move outside the PCZ because of the flooding and filling of Gatun Lake. Although the ICC provided some financial compensation to residents who could prove legal title to the condemned land they resided on, canal construction disrupted many traditional native areas of settlement with long histories.

A typical postcard of an Indian village, Figure 2.19, portrayed Indians living in thatched huts and transporting themselves by dugout canoe, as obstacles to construction of the canal.

Panama's indigenous peoples had long used the Chagres River as their main transportation route through the isthmus.<sup>210</sup> ICC officials condemned and liquidated several villages along the Chagres and surrounding areas, as engineers altered the Chagres watershed with Gatun Dam and Madden Dam to create lakes supplying water for the canal's locks. Because many Indian villages were located on the banks of waterways, they were particularly vulnerable to canal construction flooding. The "greater good" of the canal easily justified their displacement. Indians could be readily transferred elsewhere given their fragile structural ties to the landscape.

The ICC, through the PCZ Police Force, sent officers to evict Indians from their homes. One officer, Harry A. Franck, wrote about the process with some sympathy in his memoir about working for the Zone police during construction, and his popular 1913 book also provides rare photographs of destruction. Franck took no pleasure in his orders, and noted that "villages older than the days of Pizarro will be forever wiped out by the rising waters."<sup>211</sup> Franck's book included a photograph of an Indian village burned by the police to drive away its residents as flooding advanced (Figure 2.20). Franck related the villages' spare construction, often no more than four poles made of tree branches and a grass-thatched roof over bare ground. The Franck photograph of a residential hut suggests a structure less permanent or sophisticated than an American picnic ramada. Franck wrote that he typically encountered huts that consisted of no more than a roof that barely served to keep the rain off a crate and chair as furnishings.<sup>212</sup>

---

<sup>210</sup>"American Canal Construction," Canal de Panamá, accessed 5 Apr. 2015, <http://www.pancanal.com/eng/history/history/american.html>.

<sup>211</sup>Harry A. Franck, *Zone Policeman 88: A Close Range Study of the Panama Canal and Its Workers* (New York: Century Co., 1913), 305.

<sup>212</sup>Franck, *Zone Policeman 88*, 41, 301, photograph on 304.

Franck's photograph "The Edge of the Drowning Forest" in Figure 2.20 demonstrates that traditional Indian settlements along waterways feeding the canal were entirely doomed to destruction. Because both of his photographs are devoid of Indian residents, the full impact of their trauma is muted. Photographs by boosters never showed the actual process of forcibly driving Indians from their homes; they also did not show how the Indians managed to escape the flooding, where they went, or how they rebuilt their lives. Pro-canal representations deliberately omitted such details in their positive spin of the canal as progress and beneficent improvement.

A photograph from a 1915 issue of *National Geographic*, Figure 2.21, presents an additional, rare depiction of Indian village displacement, yet does so without empathy. The author claimed that the Indians had disbelieved the U.S. authorities who condemned their village and had ignored American the warnings about the impending flooding, thus losing everything when the waters rose. The description implies the Indians' ignorance of the world outside theirs, the one the U.S. occupied. Depicting indigenous peoples in this condescending way equated their civilizational status to a state of childlike naiveté. Rather than registering the tragedy that the U.S. government inflicted upon them, the visual representation instead cast them as simple, unwary peoples. The *National Geographic* photograph suggests that such unworldly people required close American management because they failed to comprehend how the modern world works. Visual imposition of a childlike status upon the Indians by imperial promoters sought to preclude outrage or empathy for them on the part of American viewers, since parents rightfully dominated children for their own good.

In the *National Geographic* photographs there are no Indians present to express outrage or protest the destruction of their homes, no faces of the victims. The rising water subsumes tumbledown structures, not human lives or traditional culture. Photographs did not depict



ancestral burial grounds that Indians could never again visit. By American standards, flimsy Indian huts did not qualify as real homes or legitimate villages. The photograph suggests that such crude structures were not much of a loss in the grand scheme.

Photographers often captured Panamanian Indians barefoot and fully or partially naked, a powerful signal of their “savage” status (Figure 2.25 through Figure 2.28). They lived in the jungle or on its waterway littoral and seemed to be a part of the natural landscape itself. The jungle carried popular connotations of mosquito-infested swamps, poisonous snakes, tarantulas, scorpions and other venomous insects, and alligators-filled waterways, inspiring fear and repulsion. As these postcards depict, barefoot and half-naked Indians in this jungle setting, especially women and children, appeared especially vulnerable. Their homes were roughly constructed, of scavenged materials, as in Figure 2.20, offering little protection from predators, pests, and the elements. Even when Indian homes were constructed with walls, doors, and windows, American interpretations emphasized that the building materials were primitive (i.e. preindustrial), mismatched, and structurally substandard. Pictures of thatched-roof huts and leaning shacks suggested a slum-like quality. The images also implied that Indian ties to the land were tenuous, since they did not produce imposing, permanent structures or seem to significantly alter the landscape. American photographers portrayed them as people lost to time, living in an antediluvian state that could not withstand—or be allowed to stand in the way of—the forces of twentieth-century progress.

In pictures of technological dominance, orderly expanses of concrete replaced ramshackle huts. Photographs and postcards contrasted the pleasant geometric symmetry of canal structures, with their parallel lock gates and channel walls, with the random, chaotic appearance of native villages and the shadowy, ominous jungle. Steel supplanted thatch, and

fully clothed men in complex work sites superseded semi-nude, vulnerable looking indigenous women and children in the rainforest. Modern machinery contrasted favorably with native technology; the railroad and steamship won out visually over dugout canoes. In the face of such progress, imperial image-makers cast the displacement of a few Indians as not so tragic after all. They appeared to be living lightly off the land before the canal, so their relocation did not approach the level of crime or atrocity.

### **Engineering the Aesthetics of Empire: The Miraflores Locks**

Publicists used illustrations of the Miraflores Locks to cast the site as a point of special pride for Americans because of the extreme engineering and construction challenges the locks presented. The lower chamber gates of the Miraflores Locks are the highest on the canal because of the high variation in Pacific tides. The work at Miraflores was thus depicted as a barometer of canal progress, and of American achievement. The series of photographs and postcards that follow can be viewed as a time-lapse portrait of the Miraflores Locks, presented during the construction era as an attractive argument for empire.

By taking the viewer through the construction process stage by stage, the photographs aimed to encourage the building of audience anticipation of (and investment in) the project's successful completion. For the most part this was because ICC publicists needed the sustained support of the American public over a decade-long construction project. The ICC could not afford to wait until the opening ceremonies for approval; the work required ongoing consent.

Ernest Hallen likely took most of the photographs (except for the first one, which dates from the year before the ICC hired him); the photographs appear consistent with his style, and

his primary charge was to document construction progress. The photographs are uncredited, which was typical for Hallen's work and for postcard photographers as well. Since Hallen established the dominant tropes it becomes less important who actually took each photograph, as Hallen set the standards for how viewers could see and think about empire in the PCZ.

Of all the postcard producers in the PCZ, Isaac L. Maduro Jr. was the predominant source. Maduro was a Jewish Panamanian of Sephardic origins who owned and operated an eponymous souvenir shop at 34–36 Cathedral Square in downtown Panama City, just outside the PCZ in the Republic of Panama, on the Pacific Coast. He produced postcards of the Panama Canal Zone from 1904 until the 1920s. Maduro specialized in souvenir booklets of photographs and large boxed sets of postcards depicting canal construction, which he sold from his store. His cards were first printed in Germany (the leader in postcard printing technology at the turn of the century), then later in the United States.<sup>213</sup>

Maduro's was a combination general store, package store, and souvenir shop that sold Kodak cameras and supplies and Panama hats, but Maduro was best known for his souvenir postcards.<sup>214</sup> Maduro's are the most numerous of the surviving postcards from the construction era, and a 1910 article about his shop in the local English-language Zonian newspaper claimed

---

<sup>213</sup>Rory Costello, "Bobby Maduro," Society for American Baseball Research, accessed 8 May 2015, <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/c34ce106>; "Publishers–Maduro," accessed 15 Apr. 2015, <http://www.metropostcard.com/publishersm1.html>.

<sup>214</sup>ICC meeting minutes indicate that it issued Maduro a liquor license in June 1908; see *Minutes of Meetings of the Isthmian Canal Commission*, vol. 3 (Washington DC: GPO, 1906), 3:1671; U.S. Department of Commerce, *Trade Directory of Central America and the West Indies*, Issue 22 (Washington DC: GPO, 1915), 88, 92; display advertisement for Maduro's in *Our Navy: Panama* 10, no. 4 (1916): 8.

that his selection of “Panama Postal Cards” was unequaled.<sup>215</sup> Maduro regularly advertised during the construction era in the PCZ newspaper, the *Panama Star and Herald*. Maduro appears to have been the proprietor of the shop, rather than a photographer; the 1910 *Panama Star and Herald* piece referred to his constant presence in his store. It is thus unlikely that Maduro’s postcards bore his own photographs. The images were probably taken by anonymous photographers for a wholesale postcard publisher that printed Maduro’s name on the cards sold in his shop. Maduro’s postcards exemplify the observation by Robert Littman that “rarely do we know who the photographer for a card is, for they are free-lance men and women who travel their particular districts, soliciting business, taking a picture which is then ordered, printed in the thousands (hopefully) and distributed by large firms.”<sup>216</sup> Based upon volume and popularity, however, Maduro’s postcards set the standard for this genre of representation of the PCZ to Americans in the early twentieth century.

The first photograph in the Miraflores Locks series, Figure 2.29, is an artifact of the publicity argument that the land seized from Colombia was worthless in its natural, primitive state. Historian Matthew Frye Jacobson has noted President Theodore Roosevelt’s philosophy that there was no real injury done to “primitive” peoples when superior, “civilized races” took away their “waste spaces.”<sup>217</sup> The photograph offered Americans justification for the seizure of the PCZ, and the imperial order relied upon the logic of such images.

---

<sup>215</sup>“I. L. Maduro’s Souvenir Store,” *Panama Star and Herald* (Balboa Heights, PCZ), 23 Nov. 1910, 4.

<sup>216</sup>Littman, “Commentary and Acknowledgements,” in *Wish You Were Here*, n.p.

<sup>217</sup>Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 3–4, 51.

“At home” in the empire of the American West, expansionists had long sold the ideology that taking “unoccupied”/undeveloped land was justified. In both the U.S. West and the PCZ, that land was, of course, home to indigenous peoples. Within the reigning racial hierarchy of Social Darwinism in the early twentieth century, however, the presence of Indians did not count as a legitimate claim to the land, largely because of their categorization as primitive peoples lacking a codified system of private property. Imperialism offered American citizens the comfort of innocence and the opportunity to start fresh in life with the acquisition of new territories. The United States viewed the isthmus as a new and empty space, a *tabula rasa* ready for engineered dominance.

Although the second scene, Figure 2.30, is hardly beautiful in any artistic sense, it displays industriousness and rapid development on a massive scale that offered great popular appeal to worshippers of technology. Taken only one year after the previous photograph, this image showed the advances in excavation and the laying of rail lines for canal construction. The lone worker in the right foreground suggests the awe-inspiring scale of the project. The image suggests that Americans made mechanized progress with minimal manual labor, achieved through massive equipment and engineering ability.

Taken from roughly the same vantage point, the third photograph, Figure 2.31, indicates the skeletal beginnings of the locks and the depth of excavation achieved by 1910. The contours of the canal’s path are now more visible. Large cranes appear on both sides of the canal route with their booms extended into the area of the cut, and the canal bed is filled with heavy equipment. The numerous lines of track indicate the extensive work yet to be done, but the scene conveys a sense of mastery over the landscape taking shape after two years of work. The image presents a scene of seeming chaos in the quest for orderly control.

The changes wrought just eight months later in the fourth photograph, Figure 2.32, show channels partially dug out, with considerable progress in the pouring of concrete inner and outer walls. The caption indicates the completion of “gate reaction castings and cylindrical valves,” revealing hydraulic mechanisms that would soon be submerged. The presence in the left foreground of railroad tracks that end abruptly indicates the dynamic process of constantly relocating rail lines as construction proceeded. The massive crane on the right represents a multi-storied technological marvel in its own right. When compared to the size of the workmen, the crane expresses the scale of this section of the locks, as well as some idea of the engineering complexity involved in constructing the entire canal. The number of workers in crowded chaos of the work site is actually quite small given the magnitude of the construction, a telling feature of the photograph. The absence of legions of men with picks and shovels indicates the power of mechanization, achieved by the Americans on a scale that other nations could only envy.

While the photographs consistently portray workers on the ground down in the canal cut, for scale and effect, the viewer gazes down upon the work, taking it all in a wide angle. This perspective of looking down upon the work, and the ability to see the big picture of its context, was designed to cultivate a sense of ownership over the imperial venture. Art historian Albert Boime has called this point of view the “magisterial gaze,” a common device in nineteenth-century landscape painting, and he argues that the panoramic perspective becomes a metonymic image that embodies, as in a microcosm, the social and political character of the land depicted.<sup>218</sup>

American studies scholar David Nye analyzes the panorama as producing a “shared emotion” and a collective experience, rather than an individual response, and he suggests that the

---

<sup>218</sup>Albert Boime, *The Magisterial Gaze: American Landscape Painting, 1830–1865* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).

“technological sublime” of the altered landscape is a robust category of aesthetics within American industrial society.<sup>219</sup> This shared, aesthetic function of the landscape served to reinforce the imagined community of imperial Americans. As art historian Sarah J. Moore characterizes this perspective, “the viewer was privileged with the power to see, quite literally, and as such possess the object of his or her desire and the space and time in which that desire would be fulfilled” through visual images that provided “soothing reassurance that the horizon of national progress and expansion was virtually limitless.”<sup>220</sup> This point of view helped cultivate an imperial mentality among its viewers. Visual theorists Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen also argue that “a high angle depicts a relationship in which the producer of the image and the viewer have symbolic power over the person or thing represented.”<sup>221</sup> The viewer, perched on high, conquered, occupied, and owned all that could be surveyed.

According to Mary Louise Pratt, the first step in conquest involves aestheticized portrayal of the landscape as rich, extreme, exceptional, and exotic. Imperialists subsequently impose a “relation of *mastery* predicated between the seer and the seen,” as the explorer/colonizer “is both the viewer there to judge and appreciate” the landscape and the “painter who produces it for others.”<sup>222</sup> The perspective afforded the viewer complete access to and perfect knowledge of the seized territory. Although initially wild and untamed, the land is presented as ultimately

---

<sup>219</sup>David E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), xiv.

<sup>220</sup>Moore, *Empire on Display*, 7.

<sup>221</sup>Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 146.

<sup>222</sup>Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 204–205, emphasis in original.

knowable and malleable by its imperial masters, a significant source of aesthetic pleasure for remote viewers. As Pratt puts it, “the monarch-of-all-I-survey scene, then, would seem to involve particularly explicit interaction between esthetics and ideology, in what one might call a rhetoric of presence. . . . The esthetic qualities of the landscape constitute the social and material value of the discovery to the explorers’ home culture, at the same time as its esthetic deficiencies suggest a need for social and material intervention by the home culture.”<sup>223</sup> The images of the PCZ that photographers proffered possessed aesthetic value as evidence of both the raw and the developed: the land in its natural state was already a “marvelous possession,” yet it also invited (and justified) intervention and the glories of technological improvement.<sup>224</sup>

The fifth view, Figure 2.33, from inside the locks, surveys the dam that would harness the water of Miraflores Lake to operate the locks. The worker sitting on a ledge in the left mid-ground again serves to indicate the scale of the structure, and the utility pole in the right foreground also signals the use of electricity in the construction and operation of the canal. The incline of the channel wall evokes a subliminal sense of ascendancy, of rising above the natural lay of the land. The massive concrete work of the spillway dam echoes the wave of dam construction in the U.S. West that was enabled by the 1902 Newlands Reclamation Act. The canal project paralleled the domestic drive to capture hydraulic power, but with the added cachet of engineering feats performed in a primitive, tropical, foreign zone of occupation. For the American audience these photographs offered a coherent visual narrative of progress over nature “at home” and “abroad.”

---

<sup>223</sup>Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 205.

<sup>224</sup>The phrase comes from Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).



The sixth image, Figure 2.34, a colorized photographic postcard, undated, was probably taken a little later than the one from July 1913 above. The two workers in the right foreground provide scale, with their ladders juxtaposed against the massive cranes overhead. The postcard makes the mechanisms of the lock system more apparent here, with the steps in the channel showing where the lock gates will be installed. With the right side of the channel now encased in concrete, workers have repositioned the giant cranes in the center to finish work on the left side. Oriented toward the rising elevation beyond the lock gate, there is a sense of ascendant and forward movement, a promise of passage. The viewer might have recalled that the French had rejected the plan of a multi-storied lock canal as too complicated to build, and yet had failed in their efforts to follow the simpler plan of a sea-level canal. The image again emphasizes the dwarfing scale of the construction site and the successful American adaptation of the apparatus required for that scale. The verdant Panamanian jungle provides a contrasting natural backdrop to the concrete labyrinth of the canal.

An alternate postcard view of the Miraflores Locks from the same era of construction but looking in the opposite direction, Figure 2.35, shows the grandeur of scale, the imposing geometry of the cranes that captured Joseph Pennell's attention. There is continuity in the themes of shifting rail lines that end abruptly because of the dynamic nature of the work, the gigantic scaffolding for the cranes, and the lone worker in the left foreground to mark the impressive scale of the structure. In this image the construction site has something of an interior quality, as the project was approaching containment of the natural forces of earth and water. The landscape was on the verge of transformation into a controlled site, like a building turned inside out with its workings on display. The Americans were on the threshold of overcoming natural laws, defying gravity and sea level, allowing ships to sail uphill over the continental divide

between parted mountains. The interior viewpoint effectively conveys an overall sense to the viewer of being an insider to the project, privileged to share the perspective of its imperial builders.

In contrast to the scaffolding effect in the postcard above, Figure 2.36 conveys a sense of movement. The lock doors suggest their pivoting action. Even the foreground worker is in blurred motion, and the ubiquitous wooden ladder on the channel wall to the right serves to emphasize the massive, super-human scale of the undertaking. The photograph conveys a dramatic feeling of standing on ground that would soon be flooded, witnessing the construction era that would soon pass into history. The ground-level perspective offers an appealing symmetry in the open doors of the lock, suggesting the opening portal to the world that the United States was creating. The firm American grip on the construction project signaled that the United States had positioned itself as an international gatekeeper.

After a decade of watching the construction, usually from an elevated perspective, the ninth photograph, Figure 2.37, invites the viewer to partake in the triumphant moment of testing the canal from a vantage point deep in the bottom on the channel as engineers flooded the chamber. This imagery of engineering prowess epitomized the allure of productive empire, and sought to justify imperial encroachment with technological success. The scene can be read as a rising tide lifting all boats—the rising affluence of the United States and the transportation benefits the canal would allegedly provide to all nations. Vicariously present from the beginning of construction, the American viewer was now included in the moment of watching the engineering promises fulfilled as the waters rose dramatically in the deep chasm. The cropped shot excludes the sky, heightening the sense of total containment within and complete identification with the canal. The water gushing into the channel gives visual evidence of the

successful functioning of the previously viewed valves that are now submerged. The image itself suggests impressionism, capturing the surging water and the massive lock gates as light and shadow through an unusual angle. Although the underlying structures were no longer visible, viewers who had followed the construction process over the years possessed an understanding of what that had led to this moment.

The familiar chaos of the construction era was now reaching its end. In a final image, “Opening Lower Guard Gates” (Figure 2.38), Zonians pose atop the opening lock gates, along the mule tracks, and on the crane platform suspended in the right background. They project pride in occupying every inch of the canal. The seeming precariousness of the men—on the moving gates, on the tracks, on the very edge of the canal wall, on the hoisted crane platform—suggests the dangers these manly men had surmounted, and the tropical elements they had endured. Although black workers had borne a vastly disproportionate burden of blasting and digging the canal, at the moment of triumph the lock gates and walls appear occupied by white men. The canal appeared to be a white man's trophy, proof of Anglo-Saxon superiority.

On opening day, 15 August 1914, viewers no longer gazed down from the aerial position of a mapmaker or up from the ground at the towering infrastructure as if a carpenter, but rather from a position on a ship's bow. This viewpoint commanded in a new way, from ships passing through the canal. The awe-inspiring upward shots and lofty overhead view had given way to a placid and privileged perspective, as if gliding through the canal at deck level, surrounded by the canal's finished symmetry.

To American eyes, the Canal was now every bit as American as the Brooklyn Bridge. A white male American visitor to the PCZ wrote in the August 1915 issue of *National Geographic* that the Canal Zone was a place “in which each citizen having a feeling of proprietorship should

favor its permanent improvement and beautification . . . of our only continental possession in the Southern Hemisphere.”<sup>225</sup> The point of the imperial campaign was by now explicit: the inculcation of personal pride and investment in possessing the colony in Panama.

### **Imperial Tourism in the Zone**

American tourists came to the isthmus to marvel at the work. During the last four years of construction, 1911–1914, more than 100,000 tourists from the United States and Europe visited the Panama Canal Zone to watch the engineering progress, and the flow of visitors continued after the canal’s opening, and indeed up to the present.<sup>226</sup> Brochures produced by the travel departments of U.S. railroads and steamship lines (Figure 2.41 and Figure 2.42) indicate the popularity of the canal as a tourist destination during the construction era, and the marketing of canal tourism. A map of the Illinois Central Railroad (Figure 2.43) shows the rail connections across the central United States in an area bounded by Chicago, Omaha, Louisville, and New Orleans, points for passage to the Panama Canal.

Popular rail tours within the Panama Canal Zone emerged in the 1910s. The ICC’s official organ, *The Canal Record*, noted by 1912 that rising tourist demand had prompted the introduction of the touring cars, and explained “the train moves slowly . . . while the guide

---

<sup>225</sup>George Shiras, “Nature’s Transformation at Panama: Remarkable Changes in Faunal and Physical Conditions in the Gatun Lake Region,” *National Geographic Magazine* 28, no. 2 (1915): 193–94.

<sup>226</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 455.

explains in clear and authoritative manner all phases of the work.”<sup>227</sup> The sightseeing cars were converted Panama Railroad flatcars formerly used for construction purposes.<sup>228</sup> The staggered bench seating shown in the postcard in Figure 2.40 reflects the presence of tour guides on each car, lecturing visitors on how to see and think about the canal. The touring trains are evidence of how mechanical and civil engineering were used both to construct the canal and to mediate the experience of it, and the meanings attached to it, in the popular imagination.

In the early construction years, President Roosevelt responded to criticisms of his imperial project in Panama by waging a personal campaign of observation and promotion, driven by the stature of his office and his charismatic character. Roosevelt’s efforts also included the creation of a sophisticated public relations apparatus within the ICC, one that effectively shaped public opinion. Journalists and authors covering the PCZ became beholden to the ICC for access to the canal itself, and to photographs of the canal that were high in quality and free for reproduction. Control of the canal’s iconography facilitated control of the public discourse, limiting the potential for dissent. The images that the ICC guided into print showcased a constructive vision of U.S. empire. This vision offered relief from earlier images of wartime imperialist atrocities, focusing instead on positive and pleasant scenes of technological progress in the PCZ. The focus on technology represented an adept strategy, since very few Americans were inclined to criticize it. Engineering functioned as a kind of “anti-conquest” by making U.S. occupation appear apolitical. Representations of the PCZ showed a war of modern civilization versus the forces of nature rather than a people or a nation. The U.S. government in Panama

---

<sup>227</sup>“Seeing the Canal,” *Canal Record* (Ancon, PCZ), 18 Dec. 1912, 133.

<sup>228</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 455.

deployed science, technology, engineering, and medicine against a state of primitivism. This framing of empire virtually ensured which side the viewing citizenry would take. Progressive-era Americans often disagreed on precisely what form progress should take, but very few voiced opposition to the fundamental idea of progress. After 1907, pro-empire public opinion regarding the PCZ no longer required presidential lobbying; handsome images of canal progress took up the task of that cultural work. By 1914 the completed canal, rendered in heroic and attractive images, offered the best defense against anti-imperial critiques.

## Figures – Chapter 2

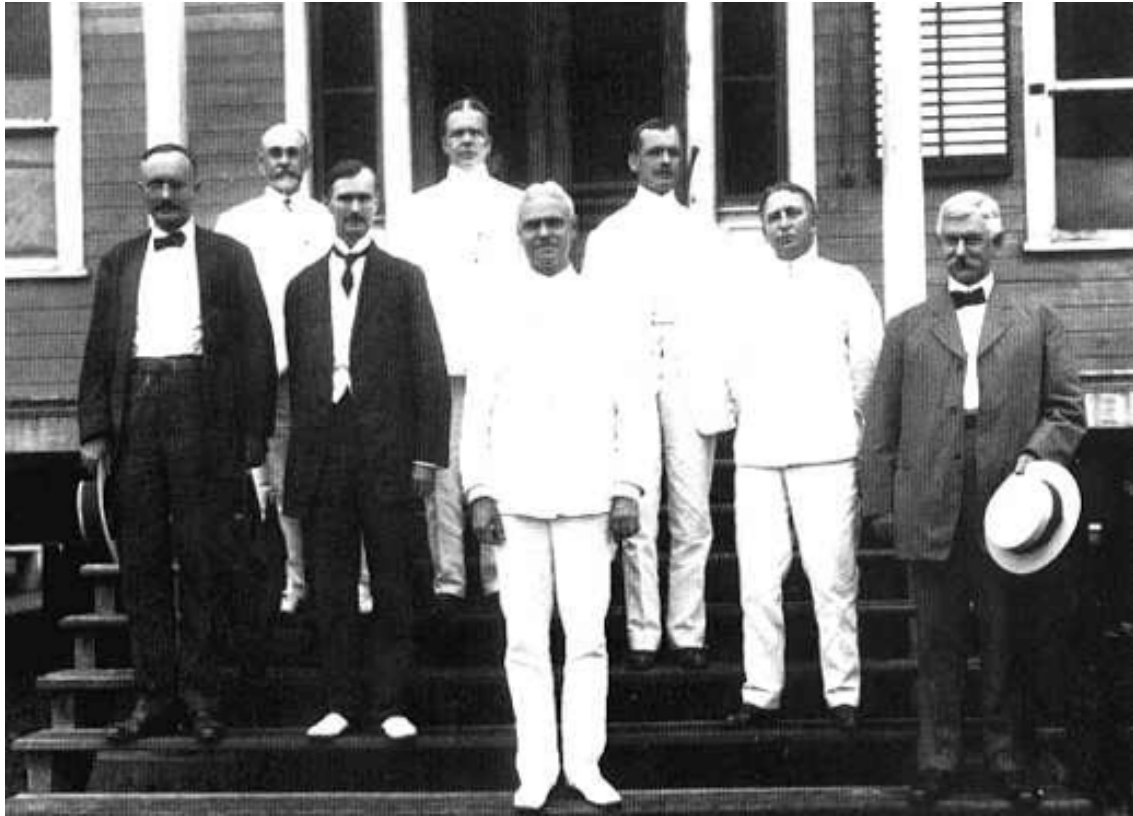


Figure 2.1

Officers of the ICC at their headquarters in the Panama Canal Zone. Chief Engineer Col. George Washington Goethals stands at the center front, Chief Sanitary Officer William C. Gorgas is on the right (hat in hand), and ICC Secretary Joseph Bucklin Bishop, the architect of PCZ public relations, stands second from the left. Bishop's position on the ICC and his proximity to Goethals indicates the importance of publicity to the U.S. government, and Bishop is aptly captured here as a force behind the chief engineer.<sup>229</sup>

---

<sup>229</sup>Photograph, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 17 Mar. 2015, [http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/goethals\\_staff.jpg](http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/goethals_staff.jpg).







Figure 2.3

Photograph of Theodore and Edith Roosevelt on a special viewing car decked with bunting on the Panama Railroad during the president's November 1906 tour of the PCZ. The surrounding mud indicates the much-publicized rainy season timing of the president's visit.<sup>231</sup>

---

<sup>231</sup>Photograph, *The Panama Railroad*, accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.panamarailroad.org/old/teddy2.jpg>.



Figure 2.4

1906 Stereograph entitled “President Roosevelt discussing America’s task with workmen at Bas Obispo, Panama Canal.” The photographs emphasize Roosevelt’s common touch and accessibility to workers, willingness to venture into the mud, and avoidance of official minders during his tour, all photogenic assets in his public relations offensive.<sup>232</sup>

---

<sup>232</sup>“President Roosevelt Discussing America’s Task with Workmen at Bas Obispo, Panama Canal,” stereograph, Underwood and Underwood Co., 1906, University of Florida Digital Collections, accessed 12 Jan. 2015, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00023841>.



Figure 2.5

President Roosevelt during his 1906 visit to the Canal Zone, photograph by [William Arthur] Fishbaugh.<sup>233</sup>

---

<sup>233</sup>[William Arthur] Fishbaugh, "President Roosevelt Passing through the Canal Zone, Empire, CZ," postcard, 1906, Library of Congress, accessed 20 Mar. 2015, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.36228>.



Figure 2.6

The same photograph as in Figure 2.5, now edited as a photographic postcard. The photographer's credit is now erased, as is the location of the stop, Empire. The postcard is indicative of how commercial photographs were frequently converted to postcards, without photographer attribution, and circulated widely. Roosevelt's spotless whiteness is thrown in even sharper contrast in this colorized version, which also emphasizes the trappings of red, white, and blue bunting and flags. Chief Sanitary Officer William Gorgas is on the far left.<sup>234</sup>

---

<sup>234</sup>“President Roosevelt Passing through the Canal Zone,” postcard, private photo album, accessed 11 Apr. 2015, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/80645701@N00/134785332>.





Figure 2.7

Theodore Roosevelt posed at the controls of a Bucyrus steam shovel in the Culebra Cut. Culebra was often in the news because of massive, recurrent mudslides that severely impeded excavation progress, so his choice to stage the famous photograph there struck a strategic counterbalance.<sup>235</sup>

---

<sup>235</sup>Photograph, American History Archive, University of Nebraska Omaha, accessed 28 July 2014, <http://americanhistory.unomaha.edu/>.



Figure 2.8

Ernest Hallen photograph of U.S. surveyors in the PCZ.<sup>236</sup>

---

<sup>236</sup>Ernest Hallen, "Surveyers [*sic*] Out in the Jungle; Locating Party," photograph, University of Florida Digital Collections, accessed 12 Jan. 2015, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00013965>.

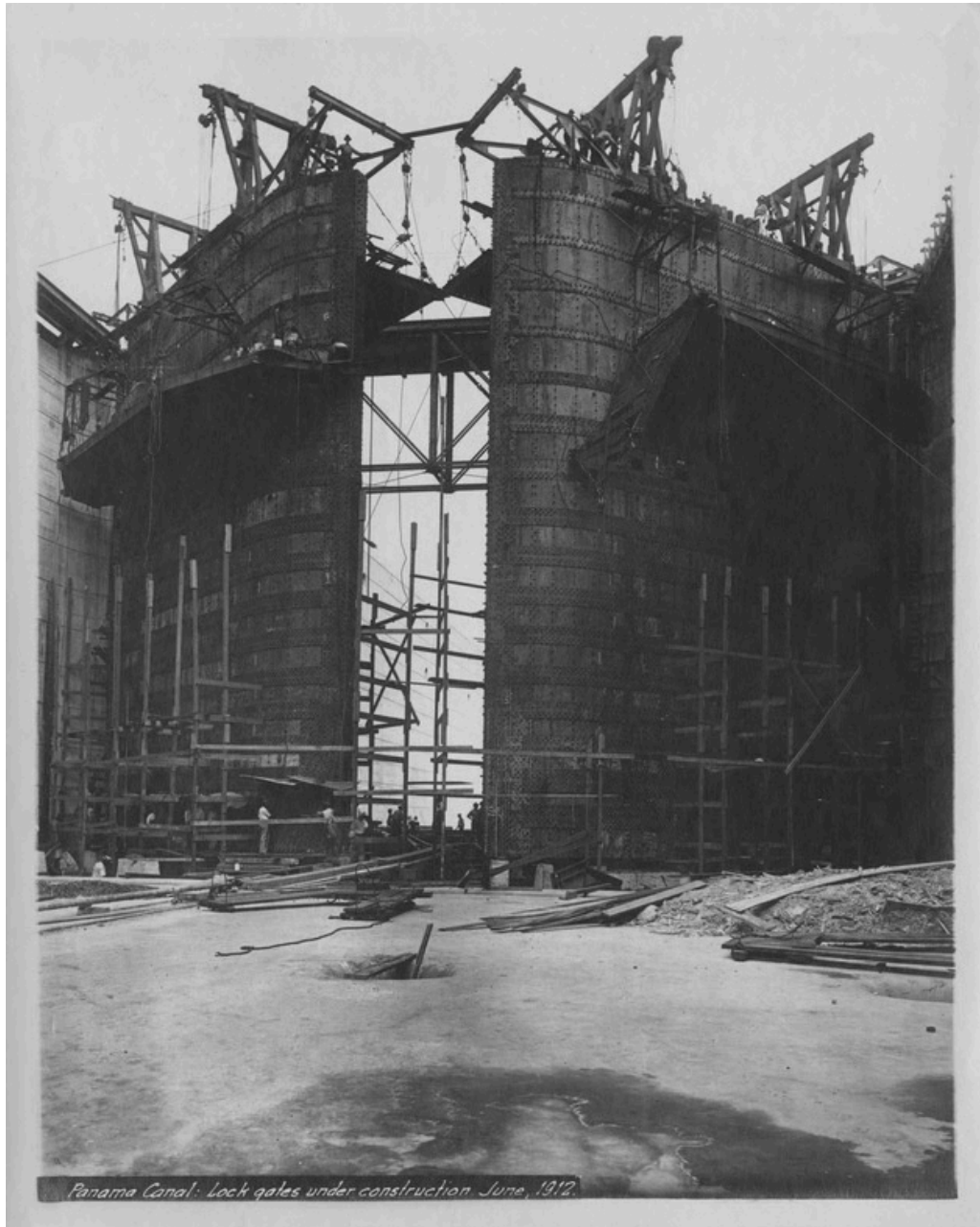


Figure 2.9

Iconic photograph by Ernest Hallen of lock gates under construction, June 1912.<sup>237</sup>

---

<sup>237</sup>Ernest Hallen, "Panama Canal Lock Gates Under Construction June 1912," photograph, University of Florida Digital Collections, accessed 12 Jan. 2014, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/PCMI006830>.



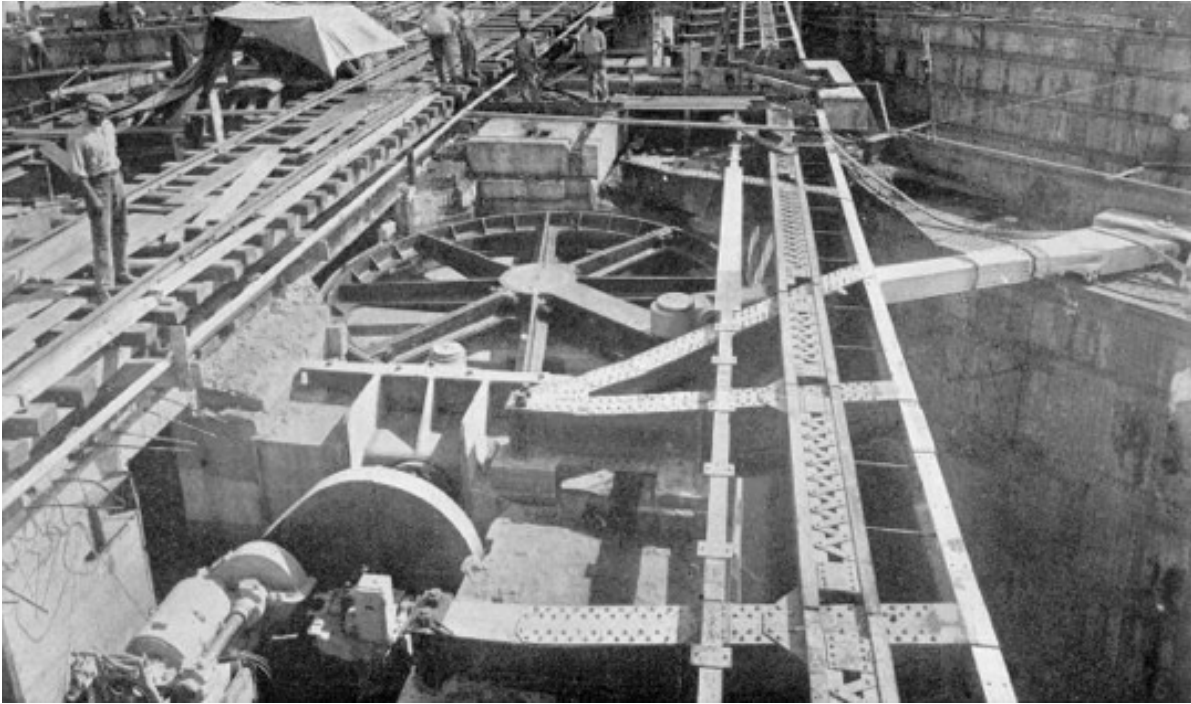


Figure 2.10

“The Machinery for Moving a Lock Gate,” photograph by Ernest Hallen.<sup>238</sup>

---

<sup>238</sup>Haskin, *Panama Canal*, photograph facing 51.



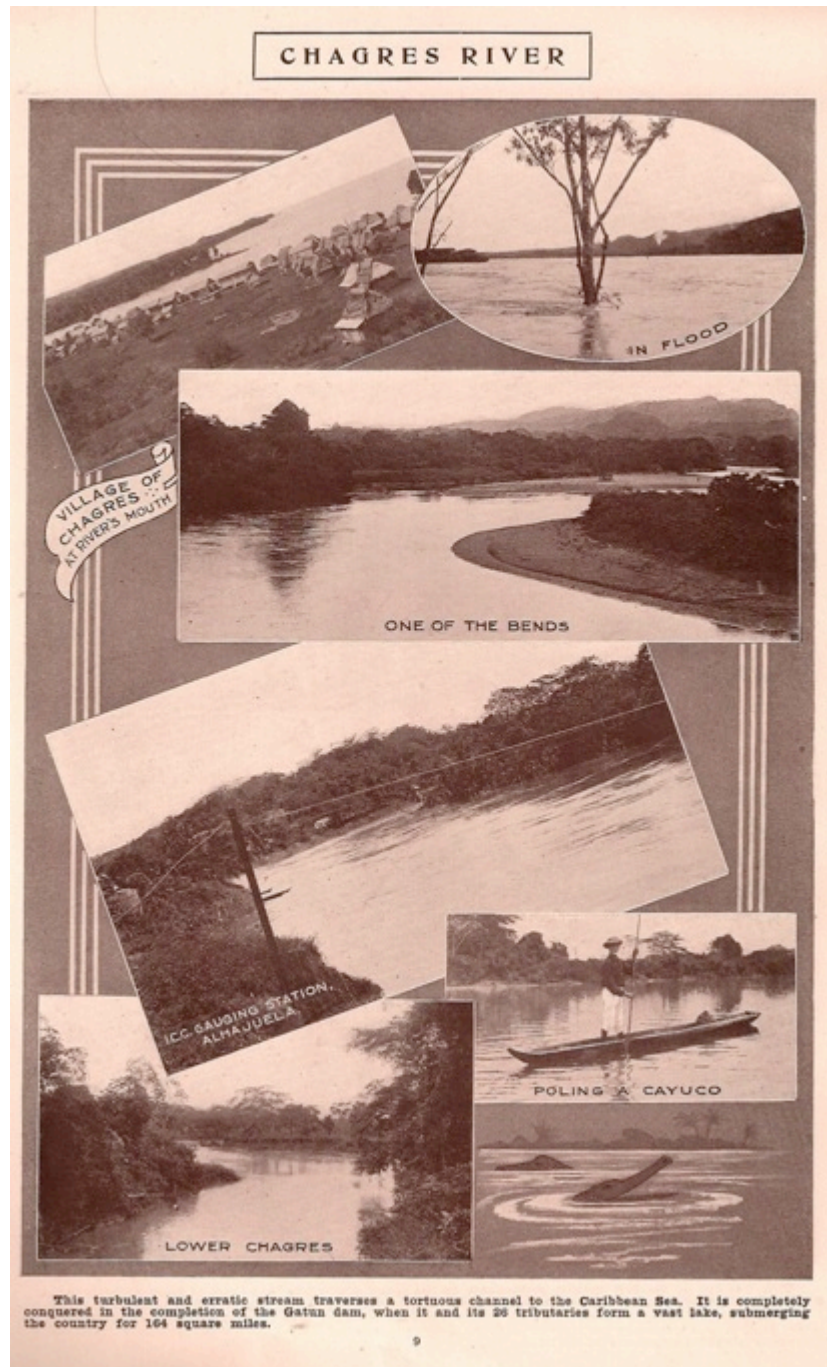


Figure 2.11

“Chagres River,” photomontage from a 1911 souvenir book of the PCZ.<sup>239</sup>

<sup>239</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 9.



Figure 2.12

“Gatun Part A,” photomontage showing President Taft visiting the locks.<sup>240</sup>

<sup>240</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 40.



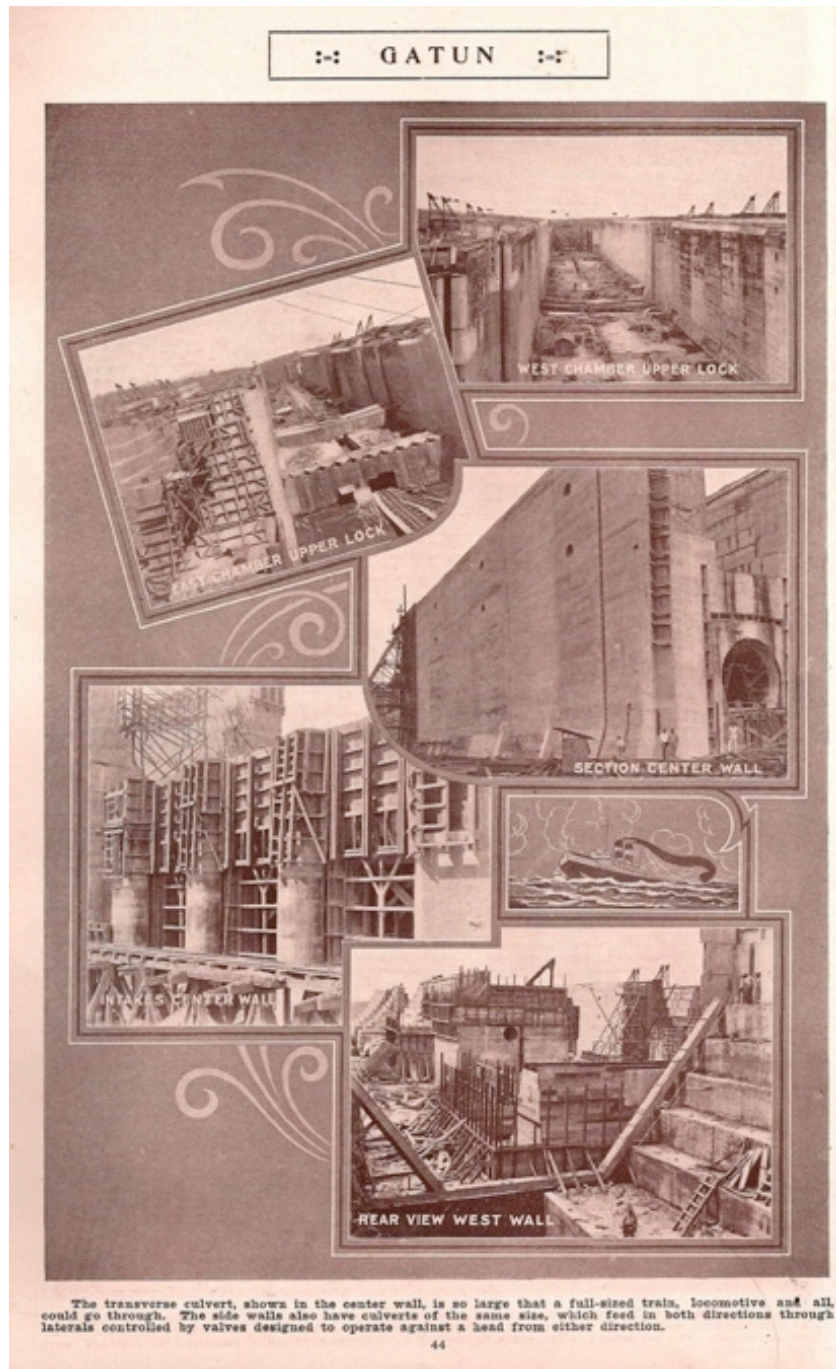


Figure 2.13

“Gatun Part B,” photomontage showing the internal structure of the Gatun Locks.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>241</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 44.



Figure 2.14

“I. Colon: The American Quarters,” 1912 lithograph by Joseph Pennell.<sup>242</sup>

---

<sup>242</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, “I. Colon: The American Quarters,” n.p.

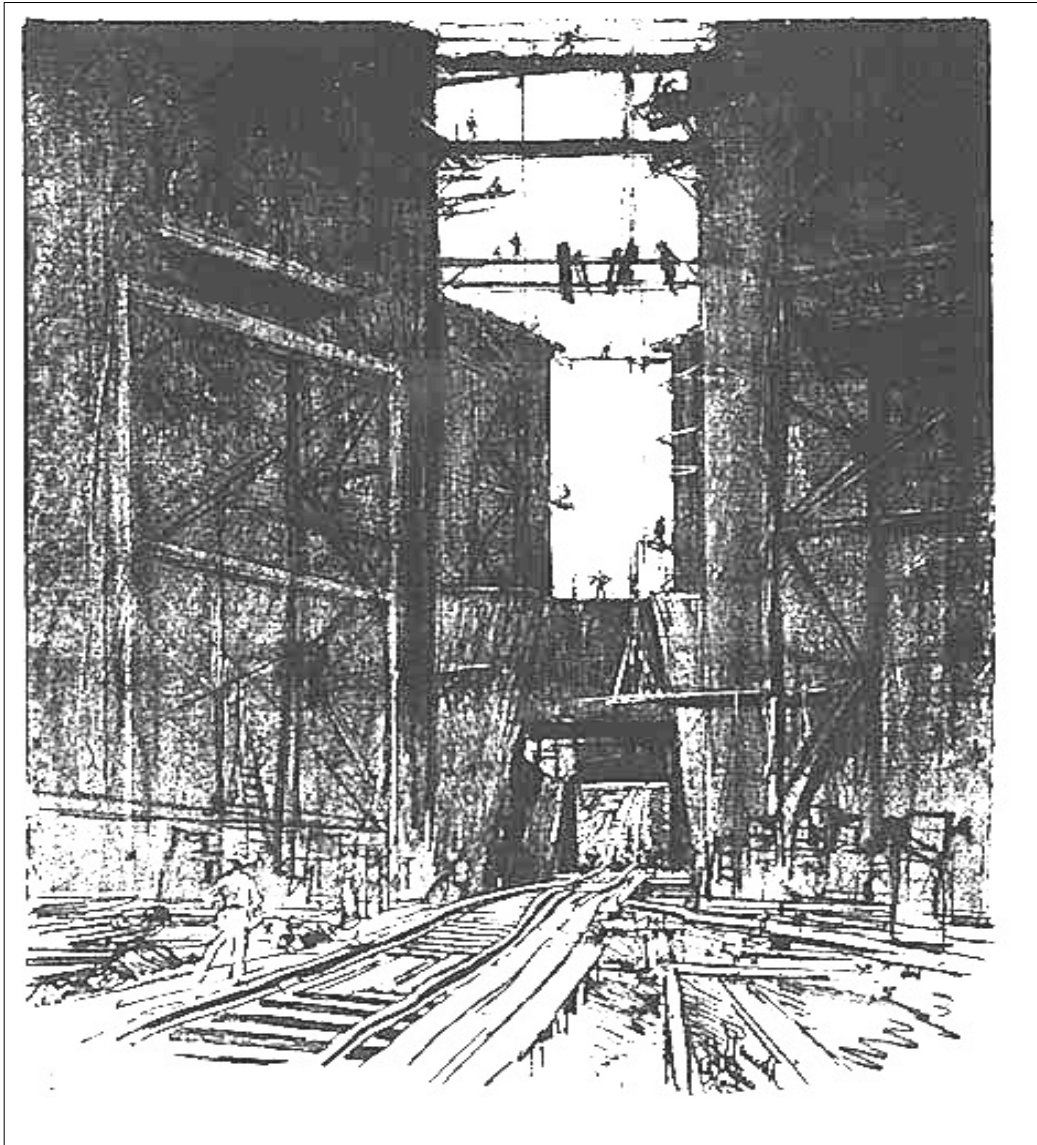


Figure 2.15

“IV. At the Bottom of Gatun Lock,” 1912 lithograph by Joseph Pennell. His caption conveys his awe at the engineering: “These gates were covered, when I made the drawing, with their armor plates. The lower parts, I was told, are to be filled with air, and the gates, worked by electricity, will virtually float. The scaffolding is only temporary, and so is the opening at the bottom and the railroad tracks, which were filled up and discarded while I was there. So huge are the locks—the three, I think, a mile long, each one thousand feet between the gates, and about ninety feet deep—that, until the men knock off, there scarce seems anyone around.”<sup>243</sup>

---

<sup>243</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, “IV. At the Bottom of Gatun Lock,” n.p.



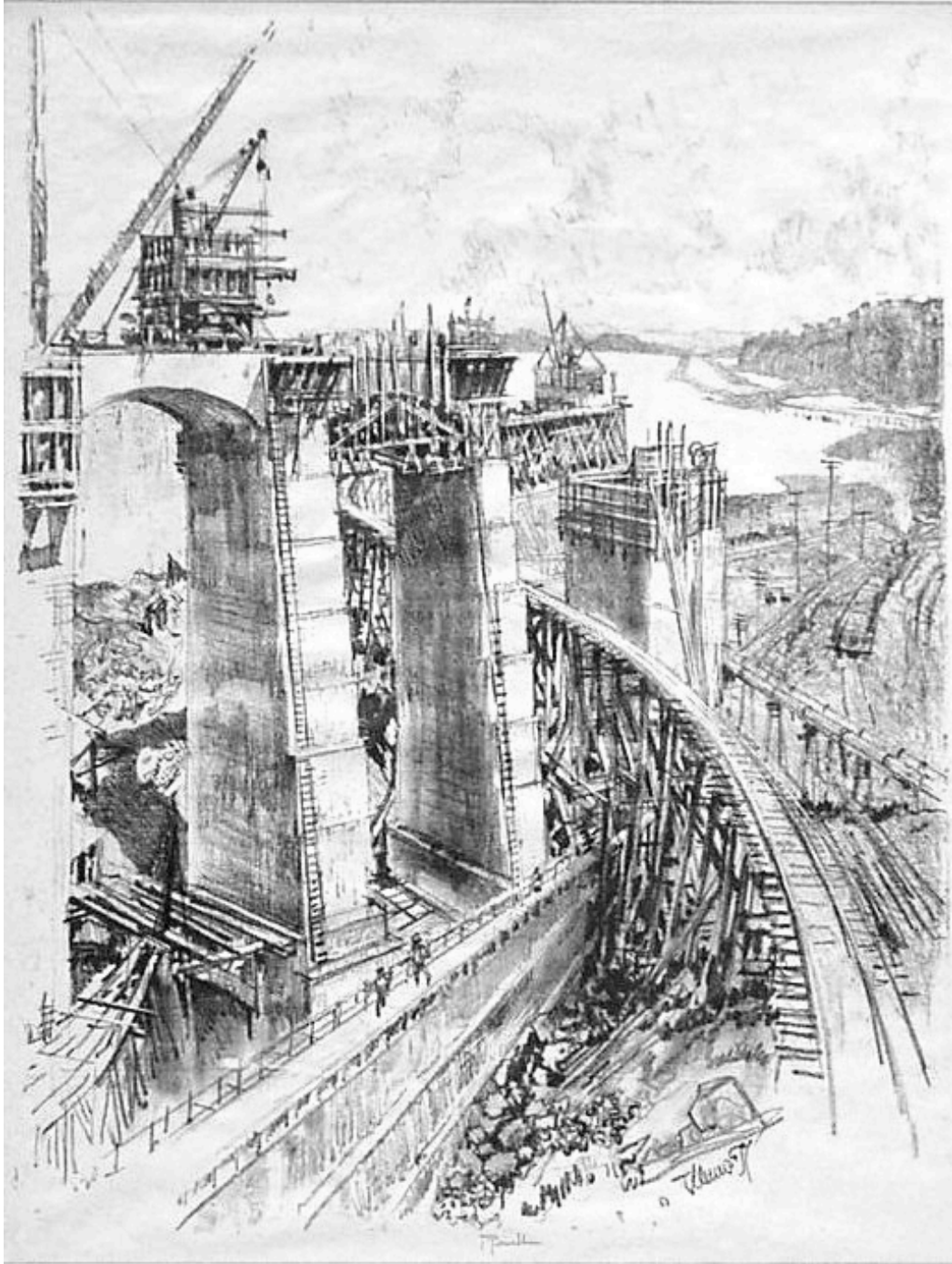


Figure 2.16

“VI. Approaches to Gatun Lock,” 1912 lithograph by Joseph Pennell.<sup>244</sup>

---

<sup>244</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, “VI. Approaches to Gatun Lock,” n.p.

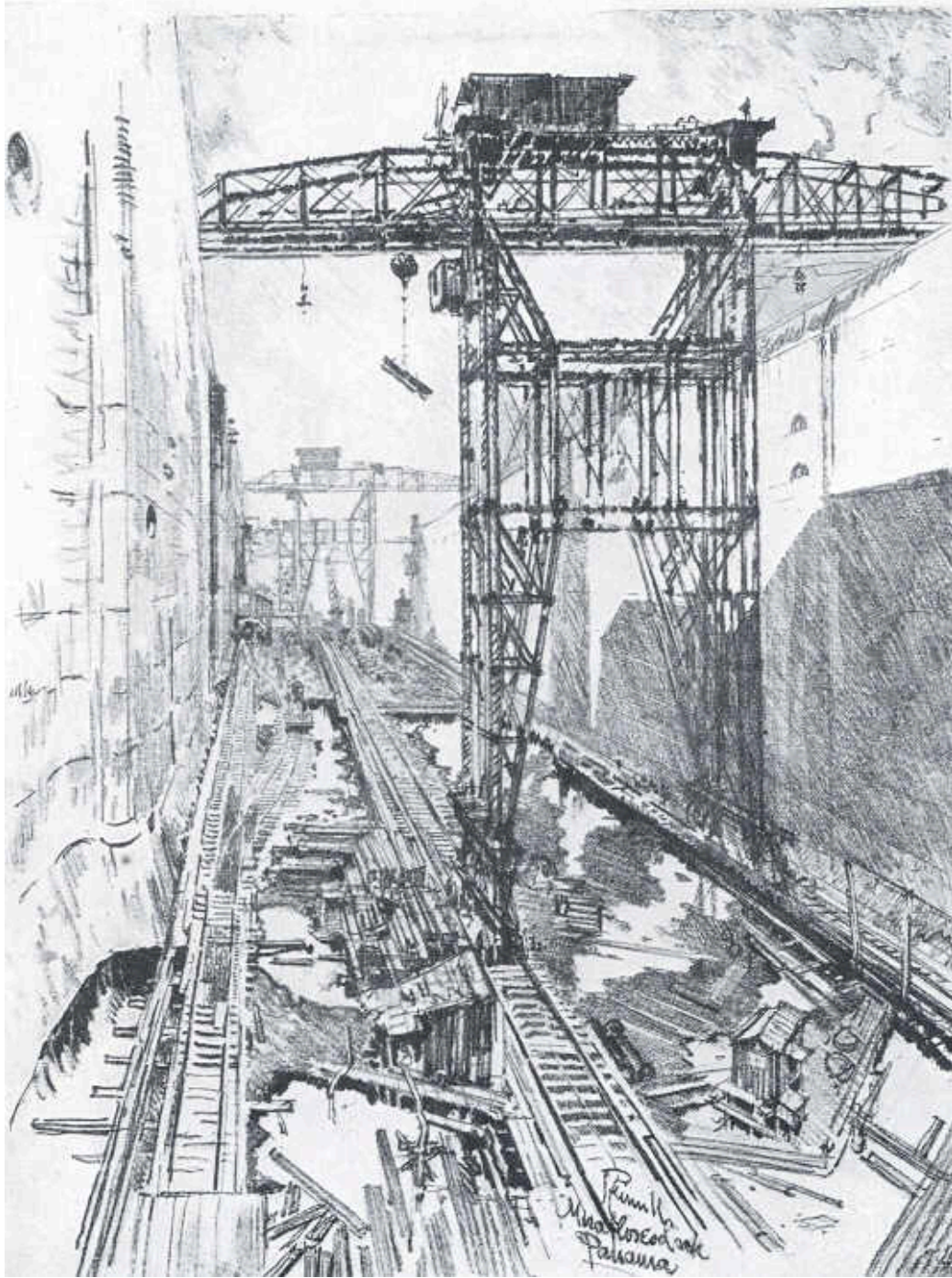


Figure 2.17

Joseph Pennell sketch of the Miraflores Locks, Panama Canal Zone, 1912.<sup>245</sup>

---

<sup>245</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, "XXII. Cranes—Miraflores Lock," n.p.

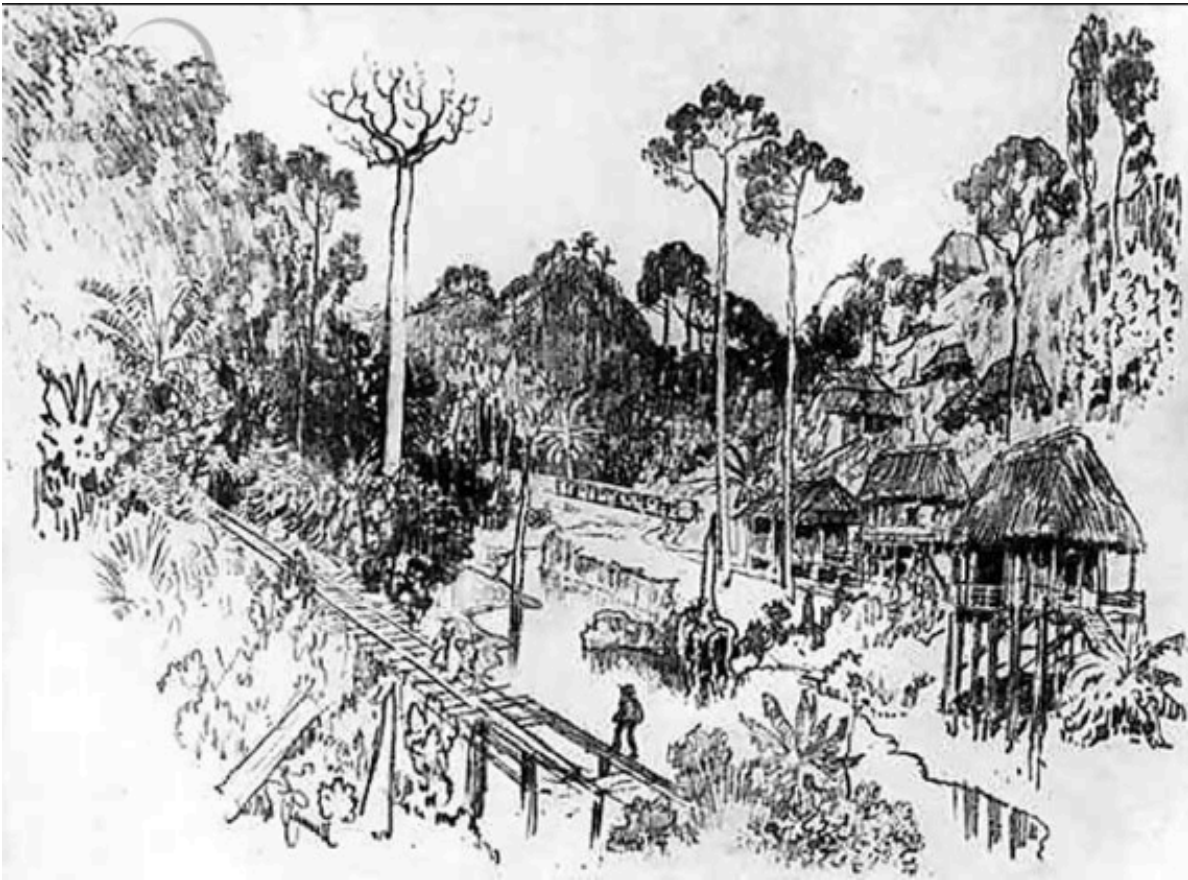


Figure 2.18

“IX. The Native Village,” 1912 lithograph by Joseph Pennell.<sup>246</sup>

---

<sup>246</sup>Joseph Pennell, *Joseph Pennell's Pictures*, “IX. The Native Village,” n.p.



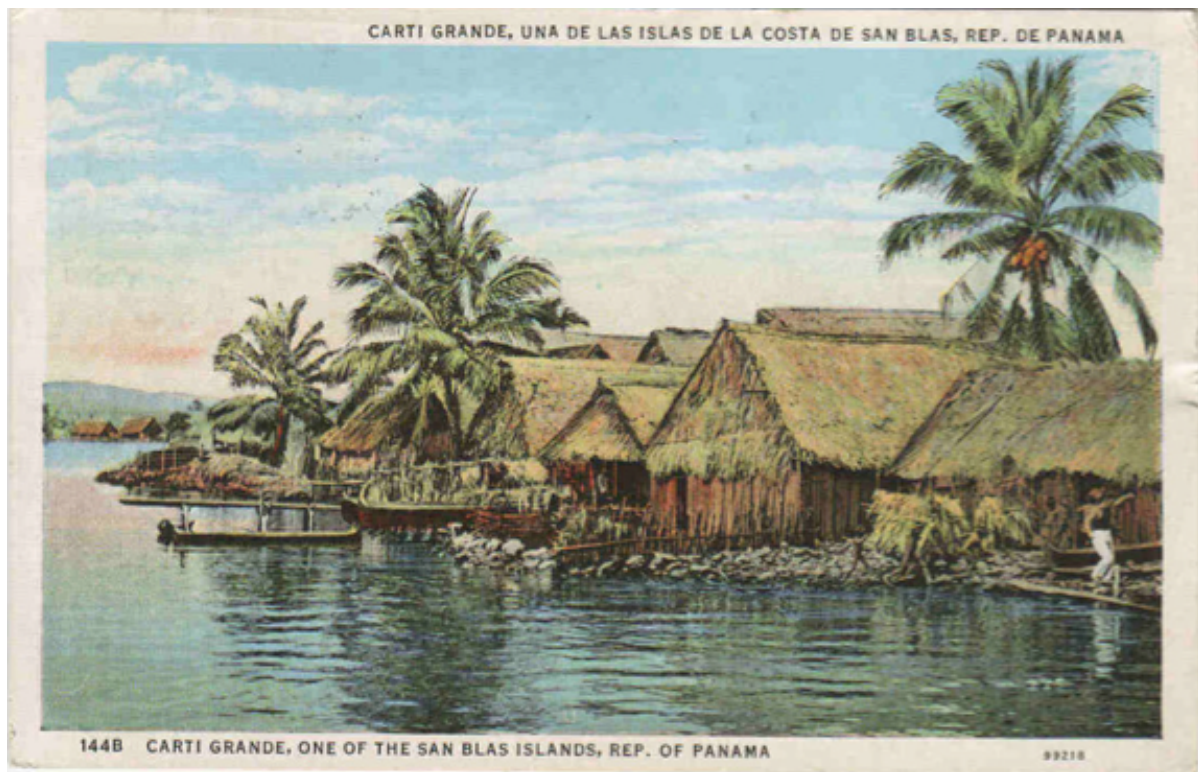


Figure 2.19

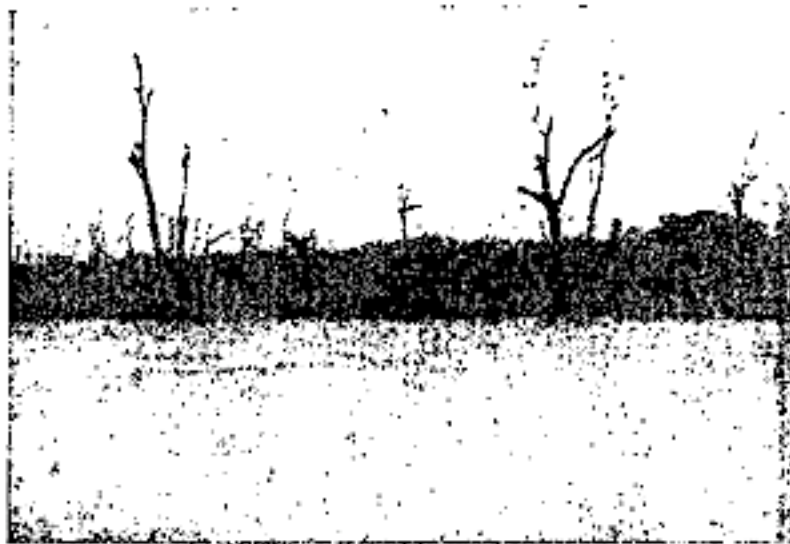
Postcard of a Kuna Indian village.<sup>247</sup>

---

<sup>247</sup>“Carti Grande, One of the San Blas Islands, Rep. of Panama,” postcard, private auction website, accessed 5 May 2015, <http://thepostcarddepot.smugmug.com/photos/i-7K9zwG7/0/L/i-7K9zwG7-L.jpg>.



B. touched a match to the thatch roof



The edge of the drowning forest

Figure 2.20

Two photographs of Indian village destruction, from the 1913 book by a Zone policeman.<sup>248</sup>

---

<sup>248</sup>Franck, *Zone Policeman* 88, image facing 305.



Figure 2.21

A rare photograph depicting the destruction of a native village from a 1915 issue of *National Geographic Magazine*. The original caption reads, “The Rising Lake [Gatun] Covered Many Native Villages.”<sup>249</sup>

---

<sup>249</sup>Shiras, “Nature’s Transformation,” 193.





Figure 2.22

February 1907 photograph by Ernest Hallen showing an Indian village being flooded out of existence by the Chagres River because of Gatun Dam construction.<sup>250</sup>

---

<sup>250</sup>Ernest Hallen, "Old Village Gatun and Chagres River, February, 1907," University of Florida Digital Collections, accessed 30 July 2014, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00017070/00001>.



Figure 2.23

“Native Village of Chagres, Panama.”<sup>251</sup>

---

<sup>251</sup>“Native Village of Chagres, Panama,” postcard, in author’s possession.



Figure 2.24

“Main Street, Native Village, Culebra, Canal Zone, Panama.”<sup>252</sup>

---

<sup>252</sup>“Main Street, Native Village, Culebra, Canal Zone, Panama,” postcard, in author’s possession.



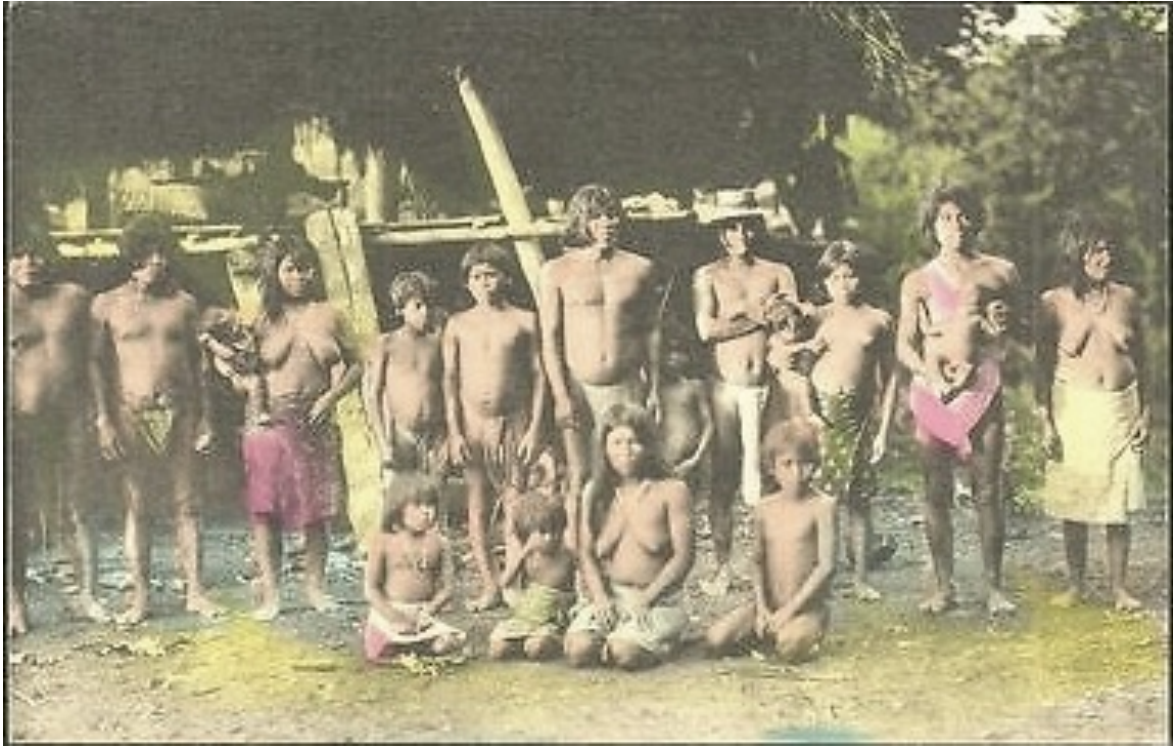


Figure 2.25

Panama Indians, colorized postcard circa 1910.<sup>253</sup>

---

<sup>253</sup>Postcard, Lewis Service Inc., eBay, accessed 7 Apr. 2015, [http://thumbs1.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/300948458500\\_/Panama-native-Indians-Lewis-Service-Inc-ca-1910.jpg](http://thumbs1.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/300948458500_/Panama-native-Indians-Lewis-Service-Inc-ca-1910.jpg).



Figure 2.26

“Family Group, Darien Indians, Rep. of Panama.”<sup>254</sup>

---

<sup>254</sup>“Family Group, Darien Indians, Rep. of Panama,” postcard, in author’s possession.





Figure 2.27

“An Indian Family, Interior of Panama,” suggests a Western bias with its themes of uncivilized nudity, “primitive” living conditions, hunter-gatherer status (conveyed by the shoulder basket), the fragility and squalor of indigenous housing, poverty, and the vulnerability of women and children living in the jungle.<sup>255</sup>

---

<sup>255</sup>“An Indian Family, Interior of Panama,” postcard, private photo album, accessed 1 May 2015, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/80645701@N00/136557434>.

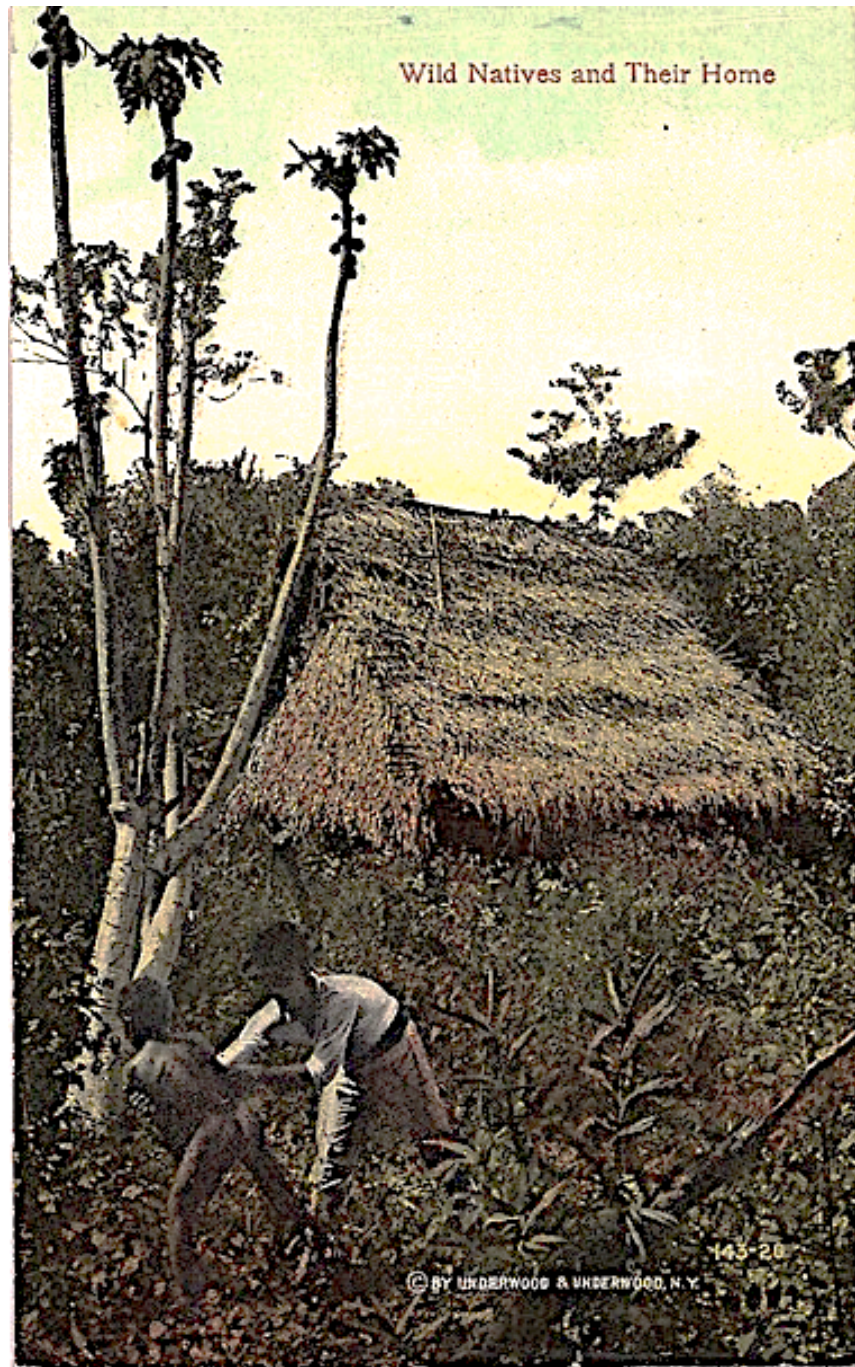


Figure 2.28

“Wild Natives and Their Home,” colorized postcard.<sup>256</sup>

---

<sup>256</sup>“Wild Natives and Their Home,” postcard, Underwood and Underwood Co., New York, in author’s possession.



Figure 2.29

Site of the Miraflores Locks in 1907, before canal construction began.<sup>257</sup>

---

<sup>257</sup>Photograph, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto011.htm>.





Figure 2.30

Site of the Miraflores Locks under construction, 1908.<sup>258</sup>

---

<sup>258</sup>Photograph, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto012.htm>.



Figure 2.31

Miraflores Upper Locks under construction, November 1910.<sup>259</sup>

---

<sup>259</sup>“Miraflores Upper Locks, General View Looking North,” photograph, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto020.htm>.

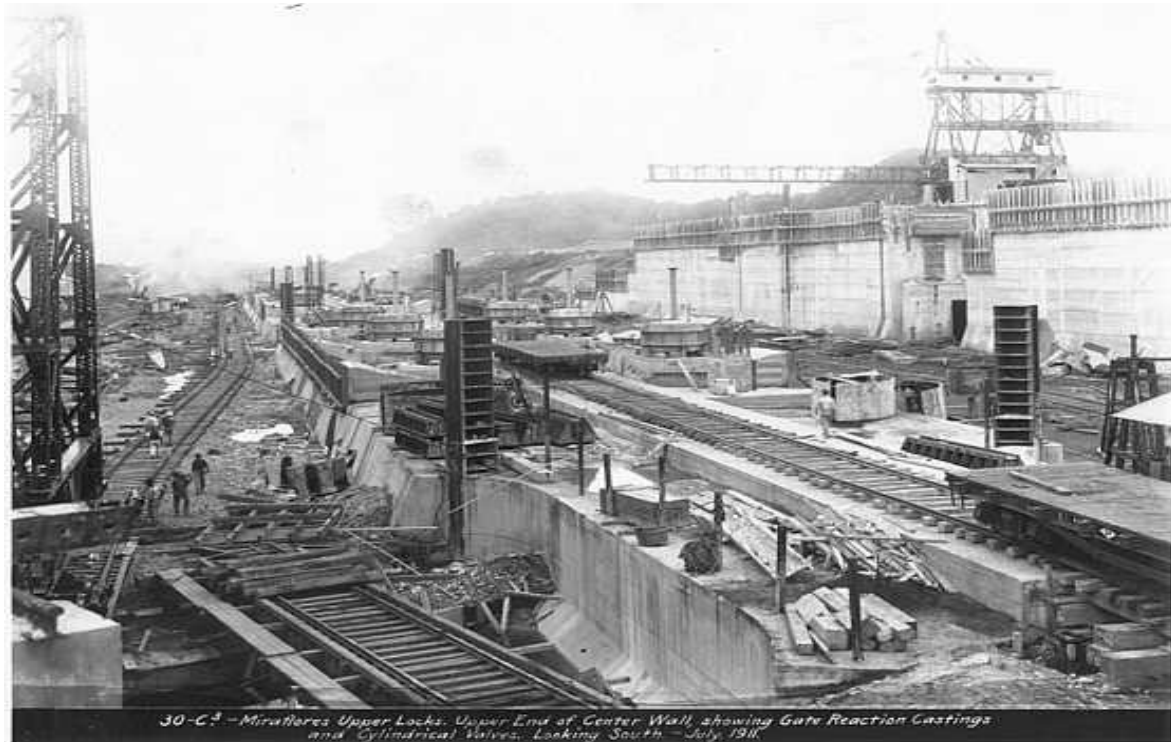


Figure 2.32

The Miraflores Upper Locks under construction, July 1911.<sup>260</sup>

---

<sup>260</sup>“Miraflores Upper Locks, Upper End of Center Wall,” photograph, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto021.htm>.



Figure 2.33

Miraflores Spillway Dam under construction, July 1913.<sup>261</sup>

---

<sup>261</sup>“Miraflores Spillway Dam; View Looking West From Locks, July 8, 1913,” photograph (likely by Ernest Hallen), Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto034.htm>.

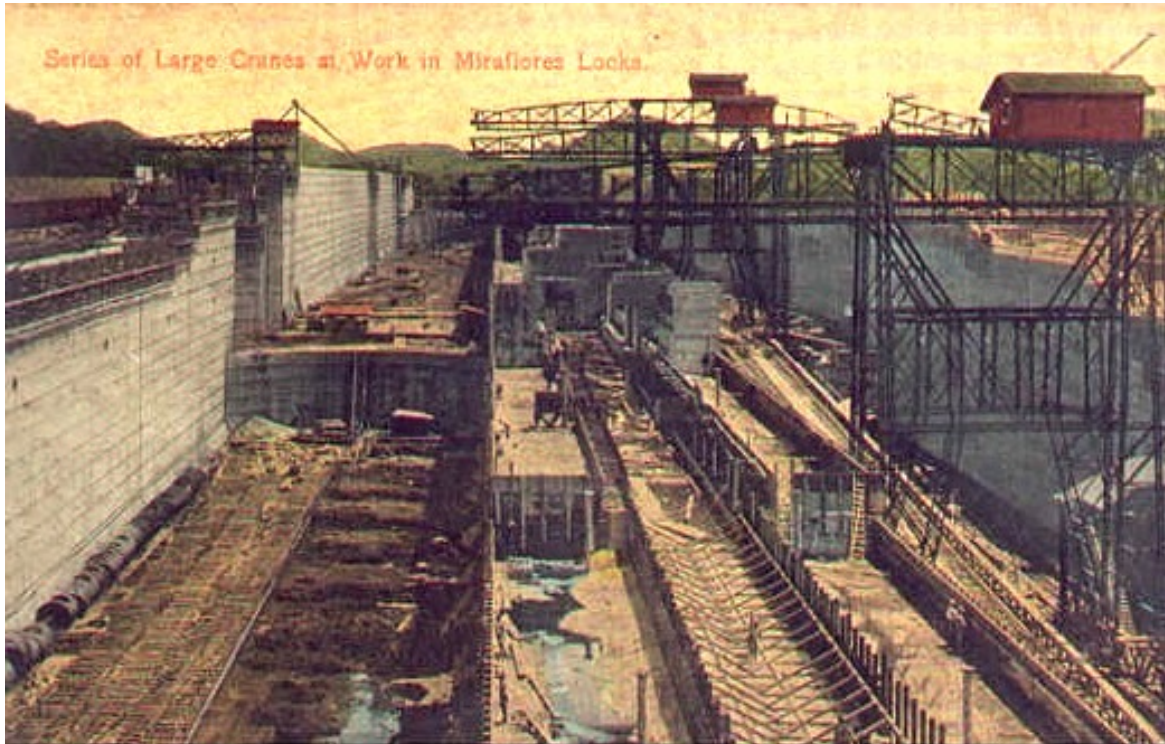


Figure 2.34

“Series of Large Cranes at Work in Miraflores Locks,” I. F. Maduro colorized postcard.<sup>262</sup>

---

<sup>262</sup>“Series of Large Cranes at Work in Miraflores Locks,” I. F. Maduro postcard, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/documents/panamacanalhistory031.htm>.



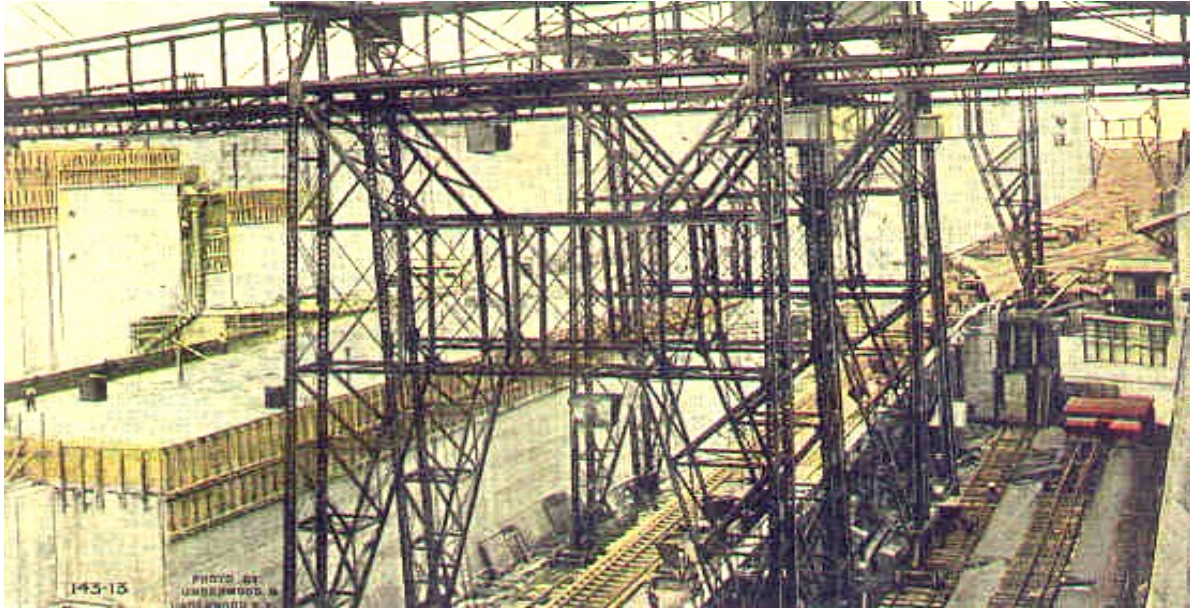


Figure 2.35

Colorized postcard showing the Miraflores Locks under construction.<sup>263</sup>

---

<sup>263</sup>Postcard, Underwood and Underwood Co., Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/documents/panamacanalhistory030.htm>.

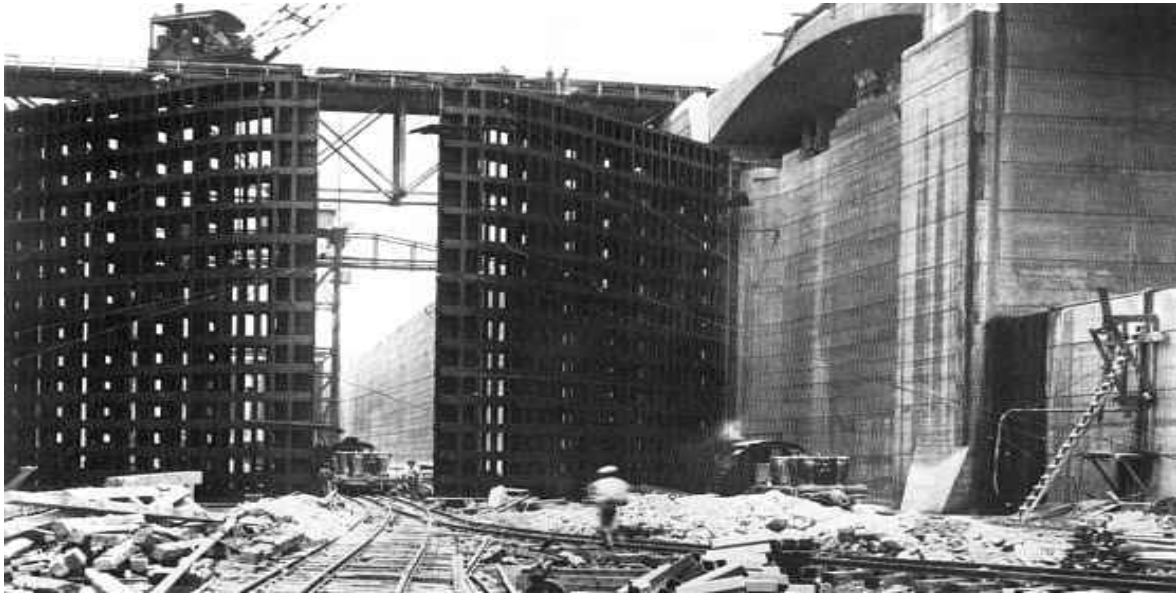


Figure 2.36

Gates of the Miraflores Lock under construction, 1913, photograph likely by Ernest Hallen.<sup>264</sup>

---

<sup>264</sup>Photograph, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto026.htm>.



Figure 2.37

Miraflores Locks at first flooding, 1913, photograph likely by Ernest Hallen.<sup>265</sup>

---

<sup>265</sup>Photograph, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto027.htm>.

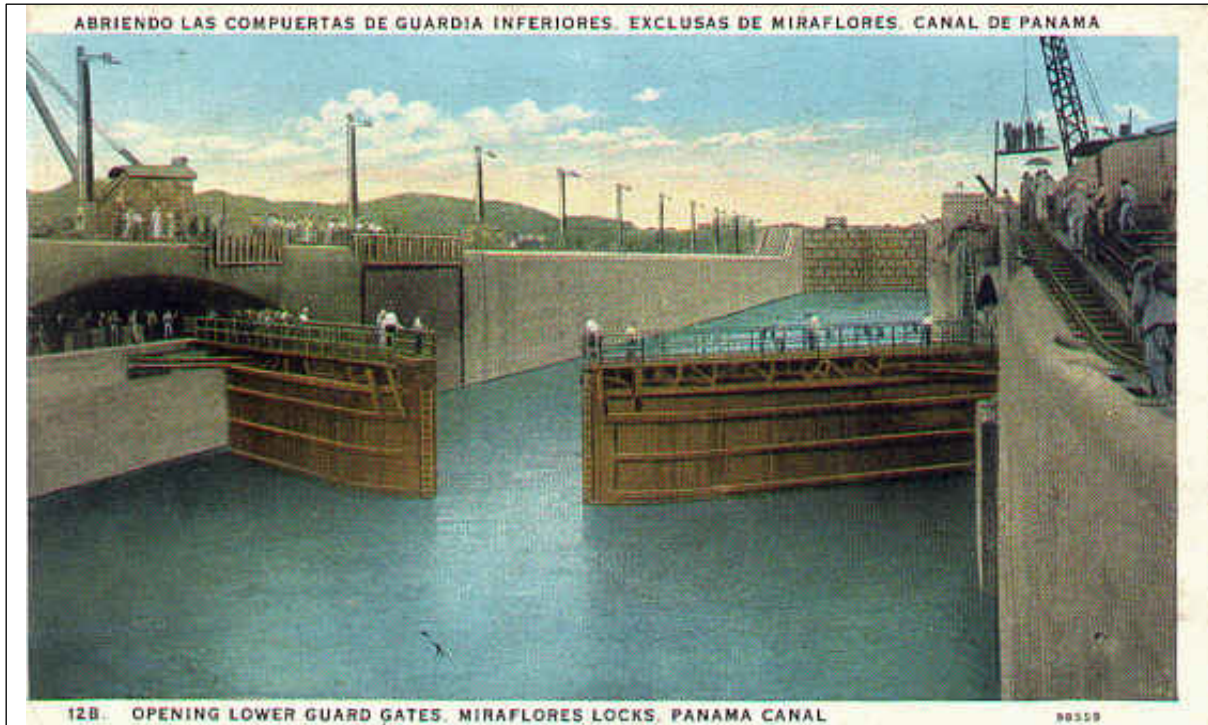


Figure 2.38

Postcard, "Opening Lower Guard Gates, Miraflores Locks, Panama Canal."<sup>266</sup>

---

<sup>266</sup>“Opening Lower Guard Gates, Miraflores Locks, Panama Canal,” postcard, Online Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/documents/panamacanalhistory032.htm>.





Figure 2.39

“Panama Canal, a Mecca for Tourists,” colorized postcard.<sup>267</sup>

---

<sup>267</sup>“Panama Canal, a Mecca for Tourists,” postcard, in author’s possession.

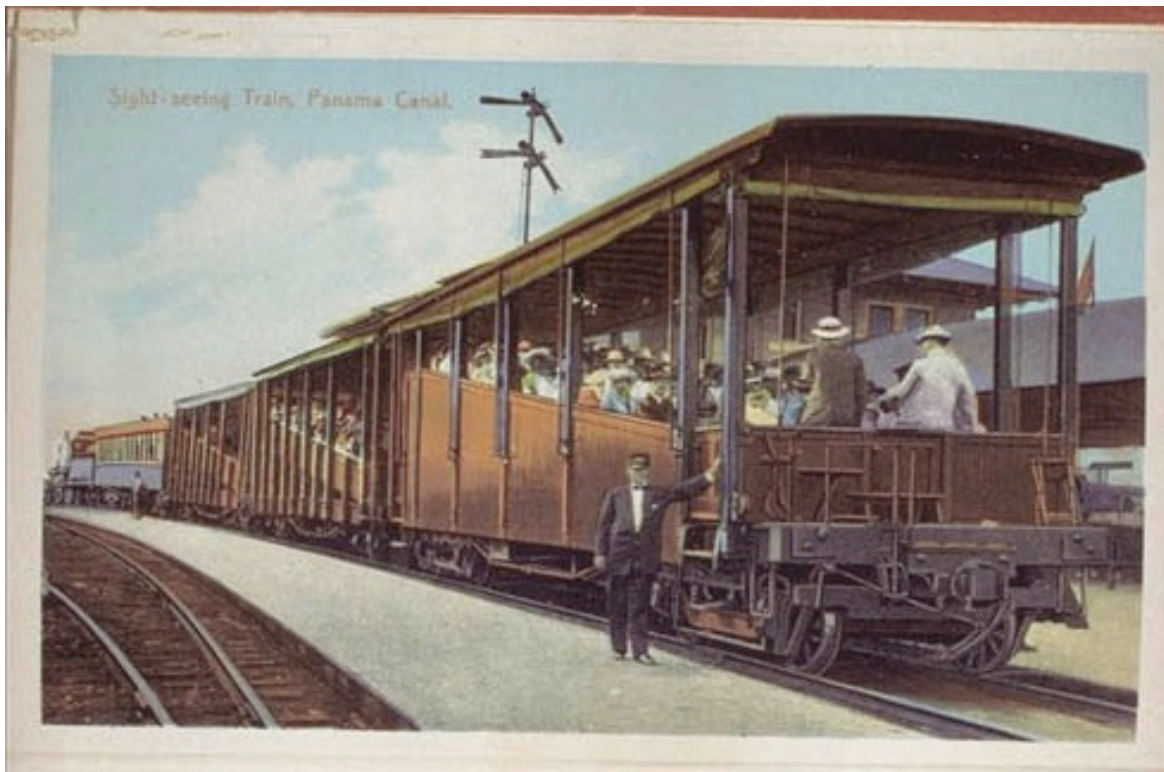


Figure 2.40

Postcard, “Sight-Seeing Train, Panama Canal,” 1913.<sup>268</sup>

---

<sup>268</sup>“Sight-Seeing Train, Panama Canal,” postcard, “Make the Dirt Fly!” online exhibition, Smithsonian Institution Libraries, accessed 2 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sil.si.edu/Exhibitions/Make-the-Dirt-Fly/2299.html>.



Figure 2.41

*Jamaica, Panama Canal, Central and South America*, travel brochure issued by the Passenger Department of the United Fruit Company Steamship Service, 1912–13.<sup>269</sup>

---

<sup>269</sup>*Jamaica, Panama Canal, Central and South America*, travel brochure, United Fruit Co., Steamship Service Passenger Department, 1912–13, “Make the Dirt Fly!” online exhibition, Smithsonian Institution Libraries, accessed 2 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sil.si.edu/Exhibitions/Make-the-Dirt-Fly/99-2939a.jpg>.



Figure 2.42

*The Tourist's Panama*, travel brochure issued by the Illinois Central Railroad, 1912–13. Illinois Central RR promotion of Panama offers some indication of the breadth of American tourist interest in the canal, even before construction was completed.<sup>270</sup>

---

<sup>270</sup>*The Tourist's Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala Reached by Beautiful Sea Trips from New Orleans, Delightful to Visit the Year Round*, travel brochure, Illinois Central Railroad, Passenger Department, 1912–1913, “Make the Dirt Fly!” online exhibition, Smithsonian Institution Libraries, accessed 2 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sil.si.edu/Exhibitions/Make-the-Dirt-Fly/99-2940a.jpg>.



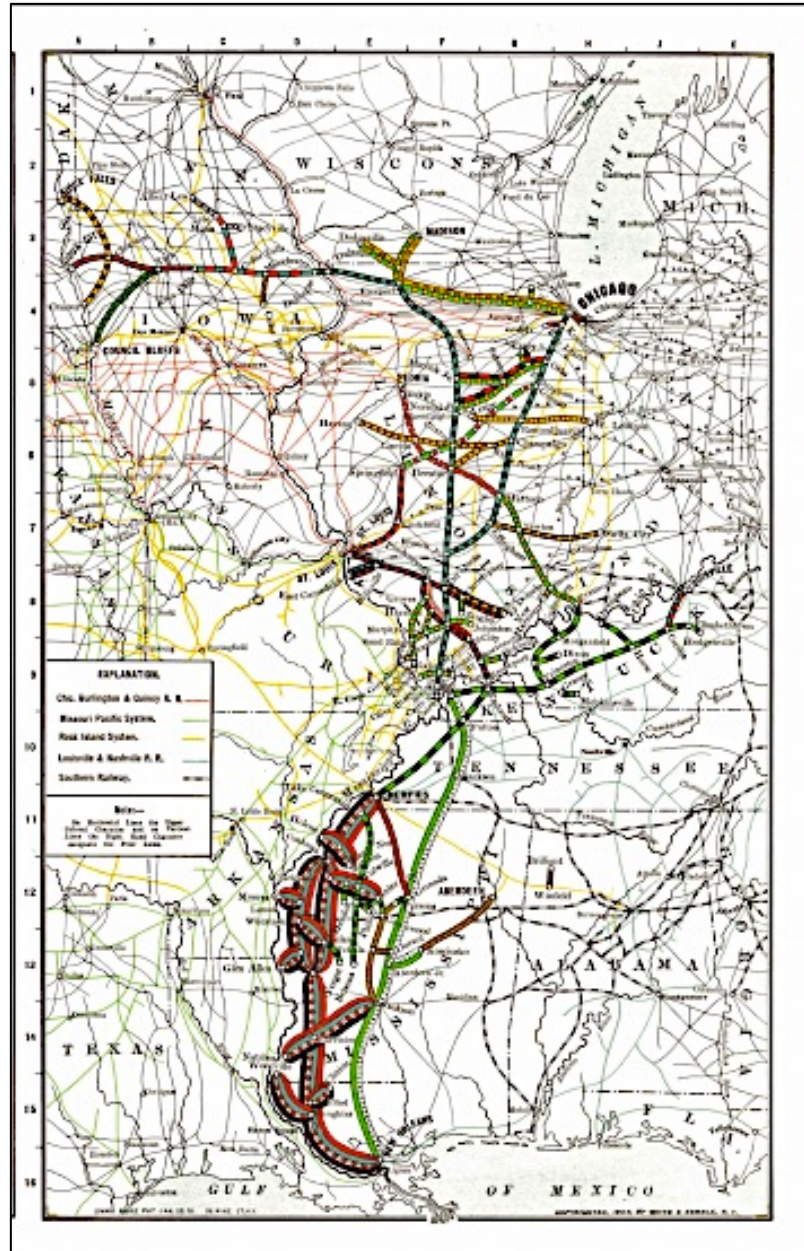


Figure 2.43

Illinois Central RR map, 1905, indicating its connections from Sioux Falls, Chicago, St. Louis, and Louisville to New Orleans, the debarkation point for the Panama Canal.<sup>271</sup>

<sup>271</sup> Illinois Central Railroad Company map, from *White and Kemble's Atlas and Digest of Railroad Mortgages* (New York, 1905), Rails and Trails Transportation History Sources, accessed 12 Mar. 2016, <http://www.railsandtrails.com/Maps/WhiteKemble/IC1905/IC1905Map-1501.pdf>.

### Chapter 3 : Social and Domestic Engineering in the Panama Canal Zone

The Americans arrived in Panama not only to build the canal but to also colonize their zone of control. As the early years of occupation unfolded, ICC administrators gradually shifted from a mode of crisis management to one of creating a model society for people like themselves—U.S. citizens who were white, male, prosperous, and pro-empire. The standard of living for Zonian operatives rose dramatically between 1904 and 1914, from life threatening to comfortable, as the ICC worked to conduce them to remain on their jobs and send for their dependents.

But at the onset of construction, the Panama Canal Zone maintained a reputation as a dangerous, deprived, and disorderly place. All workers endured substandard housing during the early years. Even white male U.S. citizens, privileged in so many respects, lived in tents and boxcars while grimly jesting about the chances of going home in the “wooden overcoat.” ICC officials feared protests, walkouts, and riots over the dismal working and living conditions. In Jamaica men refused to sign up with recruiters; Antilleans already in the PCZ walked off the job and booked return passage (as Bigelow had witnessed); Spanish workers went on strike; and the Italian government wondered if U.S. managers weren’t even worse than the French had been. What was to prevent Panamanians from organizing an insurrection, just as Filipinos had? American nativists feared that foreign workers recruited to the PCZ might become eligible for U.S. resident status, or perhaps even citizenship. The prospect of immigrants of color using Panama merely as a stop on the way to the United States played upon deep xenophobic anxieties.

The natural environment in the PCZ also daunted American settlers, in reality and in their imagination. Extremes of heat, humidity, and rainfall posed many logistical challenges.

Tropical diseases presented the foremost threat, particularly yellow fever and malaria, although the public health risks included smallpox, typhoid, dysentery, hookworm, pneumonia, and even bubonic plague. Panama also evoked white cultural anxieties, with notions of racial degeneration, civilizational regression, and moral dissolution in the tropics. European debates regarding the burdens of colonialism, and racist discourses surrounding human evolution, shaped these fears. British concerns about the effects of climate and empire on Anglo occupiers particularly influenced American imperialists.<sup>272</sup>

Promoters of imperialism had to counter these lines of resistance in order to generate sufficient support for the Panama Canal. In addition to cultivating broad American political and financial support, the U.S. government needed to recruit many thousands of laborers from around the world, and skilled workers and managers from the United States. For the ICC, American domination and control of this heterogeneous population necessitated the imposition of a racial hierarchy. Canal Zone officials also had to convince white American women that it was safe to migrate to the PCZ and raise their families there. The project thus relied on a base of sustained political support among a plurality of U.S. citizens, and for this proponents of imperialism in Panama turned to marketing techniques and visual propaganda.

Before-and-after imagery of the PCZ portrays a transformation of the jungle into a string of idyllic American small towns. This chapter juxtaposes those scenes of well-ordered homes

---

<sup>272</sup>For a history of American concerns in the PCZ period, see Cullinane, *Liberty and American Anti-Imperialism, 1898–1909*. For contemporaneous English fears of the tropics, see Benjamin Kidd, *The Control of the Tropics* (New York: Macmillan, 1898). Kidd argued that rather than lifting tropical natives to a higher level of development, white men in the tropics were destined to sink to the indigenous level; he declared that regarding “the white man . . . neither physically, morally, nor politically, can he be acclimatized in the tropics” (54).

and handsome buildings alongside illustrations of “primitive” Indian villages and shoddy black slums. Photographers presented white Zonians as benevolent agents of progress bringing uplift to people of color mired in stereotypical disease, poverty, and squalor. At every visual turn, American images cast blacks as inferior to whites. Zonian imagery not only displayed racially disparate living quarters, it suggested a lesser worth of black life. White popular culture of the Canal Zone favored the racist folklore of the American South. Behind the pretty pictures in the magazines of orderly streets lay a white supremacist social order, both old and new.

Imperial boosters portrayed the canal as a gift to the entire world, to all of human civilization. But the American settler colony in Panama had to appear beneficent as well, legitimated by local progress and consent, not just imposed by sheer military force and treaty boundaries. The U.S. government asserted that Americans were bringing the imperial beauty of good government to the Canal Zone, symbolized by the new administrative city, Balboa, with its Beaux-Arts-style buildings and classical grid street plan (Figure 3.53). The rising Zonian standard of living, achieved through careful social engineering, became a public relations tool.

### **Workingmen on Strike for a Gendered Division of Labor**

Between 1904 and 1907, American men caused widespread social instability in the Zone as they repeatedly “bargained, complained, lobbied, quit, or organized strikes” to protest their living and working conditions.<sup>273</sup> In addition to generous wages and benefits, they expected comfortable homes and familiar social structures that offered a middle-class lifestyle. The U.S.

---

<sup>273</sup>Greene, *Canal Builders*, 121.

government implemented policies to encourage the migration of American wives in order to combat labor unrest, improve morale, and boost productivity. Zonian schoolteacher turned author Sue Core emphasized the importance of female domesticity to the creation of a stable American society in the PCZ: “To keep such workers steadily on the job they would need homes; places where not men alone, but families, could live. The arrival of thousands of women and children would call for decent living conditions; for schools, stores and sidewalks.”<sup>274</sup> In the zone of colonization, infrastructure would inevitably follow domesticity.

Before white women began arriving in appreciable numbers, circa 1906, to perform unpaid domestic labor for their husbands, white men chafed at being forced to do “women’s work,” particularly the onerous task of laundry. The “Wash Men” in Figure 3.1 recall the all-male frontier world of California’s Gold Rush camps and the resulting gender inversions.<sup>275</sup> As the wives of Antillean laborers began to arrive in Panama they took on such work for hire, changing the racial and gender hierarchy in a familiar direction. The postcard “Washing Day at Lagarto, Panama,” Figure 3.2, suggests some of the power relations. The white man fully visible standing on the trestle foundation appears to be smoking a pipe; he also appears to be holding an umbrella and a palm frond with gloved hands. His appearance in a full suit, with a relaxed pose, standing aloof above women of color at work, casts a chilling note of voyeurism and flâneurism. He is removed from the named activity, “washing day,” yet stands as a central focal point in the scene. His presence can only be explained as a leisurely spectator, curious about the washerwomen to the point of following, observing, and being photographed with them. He does

---

<sup>274</sup>Core, *Panama Yesterday*, 166.

<sup>275</sup>Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: Norton, 2000).

not appear intimidated by the female sphere of Antillean women, and his comfortable stance makes them look like the aliens in their own realm. This trick on the eye is effected through the intended audience of consumption of such postcards as this one—white, bourgeois, American spectators who would “naturally” identify with the white male rather than the black women. The ratio of Antilleans to the white male is 15:1, yet his presence works to stake a claim on the setting, offering a synecdoche for American occupation of the Canal Zone. He also stands as a symbol of Western culture—highlighted by the full suit, the gloves, the leisurely stance—in stark juxtaposition with the “primitive” women, who lack technology, infrastructure, modesty, full clothing, a private, indoor work space, and thus modernity. The women lacked the race and class privilege of devoting their labor to their own families, a dependency reinforced by the deflated pay of Antillean men. The postcard reassured Americans on the mainland that Zonian settlement was building a social hierarchy to uphold U.S. gender and race norms.

Despite this source of domestic labor, white men resented being compelled to pay for it, and the American discontent persisted, so the Roosevelt Administration visibly sought out white women’s help in domesticating the PCZ, which was threatened by male workers’ “unrest and dissatisfaction.”<sup>276</sup> Roosevelt turned to Gertrude Beeks, a Progressive welfare and labor reformer and National Civic Federation officer who toured the PCZ in 1907 and suggested to the U.S. government ways that women might work on domesticating the Zone for the stability of the imperial construction effort.<sup>277</sup> Beeks in turn recommended another female Progressive activist,

---

<sup>276</sup>Mary I. Wood, *The History of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs* (New York: GFWC/Norwood Press, 1912), 228.

<sup>277</sup>Gertrude Beeks, “The Nation’s Housekeeping at Panama,” *Outlook*, 2 Nov. 1907, 489–93; Beeks, “What a Woman Saw in the Canal Zone: Civic Worker’s Report Urges Particular

Helen Varick Boswell, to tackle the problem on behalf of the U.S. government. Boswell was a colleague in the National Civic Federation, and of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Secretary of War William Howard Taft recognized the importance of Boswell's support for the government's imperial ambitions, and directed the ICC to pay for all of Boswell's expenses during her 1907 tour of the Canal Zone.<sup>278</sup>

In response to critiques by Progressive female activists like Beeks and Boswell, American officials in the Zone began to offer incentives to encourage the migration of white U.S. women to the Zone in order to create family life and social stability. As a result, Beeks estimated that 1,200 white American women and children had settled in the Zone by 1907.<sup>279</sup> Although the ICC employed a few women as teachers, nurses, and clerks in the Zone, the majority of white women there were homemakers, wives of the Gold Roll men. Boswell helped to organize women's clubs throughout the PCZ to offer a sense of community and a social outlet for Zonian women, who were excluded from the ICC-sponsored but exclusively male YMCAs. Photographs of women and children represented their presence as a stabilizing social force in the PCZ, and a key component of its imperial culture. Such representations projected domestic tranquility and sought to assuage concerns about the prudence of the Panama project, especially in the face of reports of widespread male worker unrest and high job turnover.

Rather than cleaning up the Zone for women, the ICC used women to clean up the Zone for men. Upon her arrival in the PCZ in 1907, Rose Hardeveld expressed disgust at the smelly

---

Care Be Taken of Bachelor Employees," *New York Times*, 30 Sept. 1907, A1; Beeks, "Panama Canal Conditions," *American Federationist* 14, no. 11 (1907): 849–66.

<sup>278</sup>Wood, *History of GFWC*, 228–29.

<sup>279</sup>Beeks, "Nation's Housekeeping," 492.

cantinas frequented by drunken men in Zone villages. She wrote “conditions were appalling in the cities of Colon and Panama, with their crooked gambling houses, filthy saloons and brothels. . . . The authorities realized that the only way to counteract these evils was to bring to Panama the wives and children [of the men] building the canal.”<sup>280</sup> The presence of the Hardeveld family (Figure 3.3) represented the moral uplift that the ICC was relying upon women to provide.

White men in the Canal Zone could soon enjoy recreation just like at home in barbershops, bowling alleys, billiard rooms, and reading rooms. After negative publicity about brothels and saloons, the ICC built and funded seven clubhouses throughout the Zone and the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) managed them. They were attractive multistoried buildings with grand entrances, balconies, and extensive, screened porches. Images showed men in armchairs, smoking pipes, reading and writing, bowling, playing billiards, and engaging in various forms of sober recreation (Figure 3.4).

### **Projecting White Safety through Women and Children**

Ostentatious domesticity—resourceful white housewives, innocent white children, bourgeois houses with landscaped yards—provided photographic proof of the success of American empire in the PCZ. Safe and attractive homes and paved streets helped to impose order and declare the propriety of the landscape for white women and children. A photograph by Hallen, Figure 3.5, of single-family homes in the aptly named town of Empire demonstrates the suburban nature of the government housing for white families. The houses were pleasant, “airy

---

<sup>280</sup>Hardeveld, *Make Dirt Fly*, 22, 33–34.



wooden structures with screened verandas.”<sup>281</sup> Freestanding for privacy yet clustered for sociability and easy access to work sites, the homes provided ventilation with high ceilings, raised footing foundations, and copper mesh screens, and were landscaped with palm trees to provide aesthetic appeal.

The suburban life that the Zone offered to white Americans was still a minority experience on the mainland United States at the time, but it was an alluring one. Historian Dolores Hayden notes that suburbs in the United States emerged in the 1870s, grew rapidly with electric streetcar lines in the late 1880s, and presented a robust presence by the mid-1920s.<sup>282</sup> Historian Kenneth T. Jackson also locates the origins of U.S. suburbs in the expansion of commuter rail lines between 1865 and 1900. Jackson points to the 1880s as the decade in which the middle-class dream of a stand-alone, single-family house began to manifest itself, as “these ideas began to assume the aspects of a movement.”<sup>283</sup> Images of Zonian housing portrayed a middle-class dream come true, with its suburban-style homes. To be sure, Zonians were tenants rather than owners, but they were living in freestanding, well-built, and handsome homes. The ICC fully furnished the homes and fitted them with the latest amenities, including electricity, potable running water, indoor plumbing, sewer systems, and garbage removal.<sup>284</sup> White housing was laid out in grids or concentric patterns in small towns near the primary work sites, with

---

<sup>281</sup>Edith Crouch, *Architecture of the Panama Canal Zone: Civic and Residential Structures and Townsites* (Anglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2014), 41.

<sup>282</sup>Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820–2000* (New York: Vintage, 2003), 10, 75–76.

<sup>283</sup>Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 91.

<sup>284</sup>Crouch, *Architecture of PCZ*, 41.

modest yet ample yards. And the best feature, for many Zonians, was that the U.S. government provided this housing for free to its white employees.

Photographers often posed white children outdoors, particularly in yards lush with tropical vegetation, as in Figure 3.8. If young girls with bows in their hair could sit outside, respectable femininity could be maintained, even in the tropics. Group photographs at white public schools, such as Figure 3.9, showed safe, healthy children, thriving despite the tropical climate. In contrast, black Silver Roll public schools such as Figure 3.10 were severely underfunded, second-rate institutions. While the student-to-teacher ratio in the white schools was 17:1, in the black schools it was 115:1.<sup>285</sup> In addition to dilapidated buildings, black students had to make do with out-of-date, second-hand textbooks and poorly trained teachers.

Photographs of white children suggested that American imperialism was superior to the British version. As one 1916 book proclaimed, Americans had succeeded where the British had failed: “Hundreds of sturdy, sunburned American children (for though the English cannot raise healthy white children in India, we can in Panama) go galloping about on little native ponies, or study in the Canal Zone public schools. The pupils of the high school publish a monthly paper called the *Zonian*. Several patrols of boy-scouts have been organized, and they have the advantage of a real jungle to scout in.”<sup>286</sup> Zonian life was becoming even more authentically American than life on the mainland in some respects.

---

<sup>285</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 384.

<sup>286</sup>Farnham Bishop, *Panama, Past and Present*, 199.

American officials believed that white women were “gentle tamers” who would bring order and morality.<sup>287</sup> Imperial settlement was the perfect project for white, middle-class American women inclined toward adventure and meaningful work. One needed to go inside the government-provided home with its bedroom, kitchen, dining room, and parlor to truly view the American way of life. A photomontage from a 1911 book, Figure 3.12, shows a typical Zonian home. The parlor contains an upright piano, end tables with flowers, and shelves for knick-knacks, covered with doilies. The sketches surrounding the photographs depict a woman cooking at a stove and then playing piano in the parlor while her husband reclines in a mission-style chair and reads a newspaper. The caption emphasizes government largesse and subsidy, rather than coziness: “Married quarters are furnished free by the Government, and fuel, light and water supplied without charge. These allowances amount to about \$40.00 per month.”<sup>288</sup>

Because of government-subsidized services, even lower-middle-class white women in Panama were able to move up the social ladder and lighten their domestic load. The 1911 pictorial book also shows large ICC-subsidized laundry facilities, with “a capacity of 7,500 pieces daily.”<sup>289</sup> A photograph of the plant reveals scores of Antillean women washing and pressing clothing in the steamy heat, laboring behind the scenes of Zonian life.<sup>290</sup> The work that

---

<sup>287</sup>The term is from Dee Brown’s formative yet problematic history, *The Gentle Tamers: Women of the Old Wild West* (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), which argued that white men conquered the physical landscape of the frontier while white women domesticated the social environment, thus civilizing white men.

<sup>288</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 103.

<sup>289</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 27.

<sup>290</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 27.

they had once performed outdoors on riverbanks had been moved indoors, and modern mechanization had been applied, but the hot and difficult work still fell to women of color.

### **Imposing Deliberate Cruelties: The ICC's Racial Hierarchy**

White Americans brought Jim Crow culture to the Canal Zone as part of their campaign to make the place like home, and photographers rendered idealized white life all the more potent by contrasting it with images of black life. Zonians favored tropes of racist imagery of West Indians, such as “mammy” characters, men as whistling and shuffling “boys,” indolent washerwomen, and lazy, unskilled laborers.<sup>291</sup> Postcards on the theme of “Alligator Bait,” however, comprised perhaps the most disturbing visual culture in the genre. Popular postcards produced in Panama show black infants left alone in wild areas as alligators threatened to devour them (Figure 3.14 through Figure 3.17). Such images depicted blacks as living so close to nature that they were threatened by it, suggesting both poverty and the notion that they were less civilized. The images alleged the negligence and indifference of black parents, an attack on black culture and society. They also signaled Zonian indifference to black life, an integral part of the American imperial culture of white settler society.

The fact that these postcards were often labeled with captions in the genre of “Alligator Bait” suggests white bemusement at the terror of black children. As Figure 3.14 suggests, blacks

---

<sup>291</sup>See, for example, Sue Core’s memoir, *Maid in Panama* (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Clermont Press, 1938), which recounts life during the construction era for white settlers. Core’s book is replete with racist, stereotypical drawings and anecdotes about West Indians. For a short biography of Core, who wrote fifteen books about the PCZ and Panama, see Eleanor McIlhenny, “Lively Retirees,” *Panama Canal Review (Balboa Heights, PCZ)*, 7 Sept. 1962, 11.

often lived along the fringes of the PCZ, relegated to shanties like the one in the background of the postcard, placing them at greater risk of animal predation. Such postcards depicting the suffering of black children suggest that white Americans viewed West Indians in the PCZ as less than human and thus not worthy of basic human empathy, even in childhood. Black babies were often portrayed barefoot and wearing little clothing, suggesting both their vulnerability and the primitive level of civilization imputed to them.

In addition to popular culture depictions in photographs and postcards, reports exist of actual instances in which whites used black children as alligator bait. An 1890 article in a Roanoke newspaper reprinted a story about British colonials using black children as alligator bait in their hunting expeditions. The article claimed that Ceylonese parents willingly rented their infants to the hunters to earn a small fee because they had “unbounded confidence” in the skill of English men.<sup>292</sup> An illustration in *The Graphic* of London in 1888 depicts the story (Figure 3.18). A British colonial hunter tracks an alligator, haggles with parents over the rental of their child, and then uses it as bait to kill the alligator. The illustration portrays the Ceylonese baby and family as black. The caption refers to the “man-eating crocodile” but it is the baby who is actually at risk, and in the final frame the child cries in terror.

A 1908 article in the *Washington Times* told of a New York zookeeper who “pressed into service” two “picanninies” for use in an aquatic holding pen to lure alligators out of winter hibernation into their summer exhibit.<sup>293</sup> The *Atlanta Independent* reported in a 1923 article entitled “Babies Used as Alligator Bait in State of Florida” that white hunters were paying black

---

<sup>292</sup>“Babies for Crocodile Bait,” *Roanoke Times*, 20 June 1890, 3.

<sup>293</sup>“Baits Alligators with Picaninnies,” *Washington Times*, 13 June 1908, 2.

mothers two dollars for use of their children, and claimed that the hunters never missed.<sup>294</sup> At least one international wire service picked up the story, suggesting wide distribution. The *Oakland Tribune* carried the story and elaborated that “in the matter of color, the additional information is vouchsafed that black babies in the estimation of alligators are far more refreshing, as it were, than white ones.”<sup>295</sup> The *Tribune* repeated the claim that there was no harm done because the hunters never missed their mark. Popular articles such as these indicate that white consumers of PCZ postcards depicting black children as “alligator bait” would have readily understood the prevailing implications—the cheapness of black life, the complicity of black parents, the expertise of white male hunters, the alleged humor, and the connection to imperialism.

In contrast, photographs from books, magazines, and postcards portrayed white settlers as members of alligator hunting parties. Munchow included photographs in her book on this theme, Figure 3.20, and similar images appeared in *National Geographic*, Figure 3.19, and on postcards, Figure 3.21. White American men posed with alligators they had killed to convey their sense of mastery over the tropical environment. By 1910, white Americans had conquered the Panamanian wilderness to the extent that they could now have fun with it at the expense of other peoples and project their fears of wilderness danger onto others.

Rather than a threat to daily life, particularly the safety of white American children, alligators became an insignia of Zonian recreation and cultural pride, part of the aesthetics of

---

<sup>294</sup>“Babies Used as Alligator Bait in State of Florida,” *Atlanta Independent*, 11 Oct. 1923, 1.

<sup>295</sup> T. W. Villiers, “Picaninny Bait Lures Voracious ‘Gator to Death,” *Oakland Tribune*, 21 Sept. 1923, 11.

leading a strenuous outdoor life. It was exactly the sort of life that Theodore Roosevelt espoused. American nurse Louise Bidwell, who worked in the PCZ during the early construction years, recalled in her memoir the hunting trips into the jungle. Men sometimes killed dozens of alligators in a day for sport.<sup>296</sup> As one souvenir photo book declared, “alligators abound in the rivers and streams of the Isthmus, and good sports are as a rule well rewarded when hunting them, but the success depends on the man behind the gun.”<sup>297</sup> Tourists could enlist a guide for their hunt and hire Antillean men to haul the alligators out of the water. The American imperial zone in Panama was a place where white men could test and demonstrate their race and gender supremacy.

In popular illustrations, it was not white racism or American empire that devoured young black children, but rather nature and black neglect. Racism was not simply a matter of Jim Crow culture but also of low Silver Roll wages, dangerous jobs, a dearth of childcare, substandard housing, and the need for both parents to work outside the home. The American-owned Panama Railroad Company had originally created the system of payroll segregation, with white workers from the United States paid in gold specie and all foreign workers paid in silver coins. The ICC perpetuated the Gold Roll/Silver Roll system in 1904, and by 1914 had expanded segregation throughout the Zone, with separate entrances for blacks and whites at commissaries, segregated

---

<sup>296</sup>Greene, *Canal Builders*, 117.

<sup>297</sup>M. H. Putney, *Panama and the Canal Zone Illustrated from Actual Photographs with Descriptive Matter Accompanying Each View* (Panama City, Panama: I. L. Maduro Jr., n.d. [ca. 1915]), image titled “Native Life in Republic of Panama,” n.p.

schools, swimming pools and beaches, black and white drinking fountains, train cars, hospital wards, and a whites-only baseball league.<sup>298</sup>

Although alligator-bait pictures were among the most egregious depictions of white racist politics, photographers produced a range of images that connected Antillean workers to white supremacist tropes, particularly from the U.S. South. A postcard captioned “Alligator Bait, Florida” (Figure 3.22) makes clear the continuities. By drawing on these tropes, images of the PCZ made the colony seem less like the Philippines and more like Florida. This repositioning disassociated the PCZ from imperial violence “abroad” and placed it within the framework of U.S. mainland culture.

### **American Control through the Built Environment**

Americans in the Zone created paved roads, sidewalks, sewerage, electrification, sanitation systems, and public health crusades as part of the campaign to sell the construction project. The built environment was a key component of the narrative of progress and civilization in the occupation zone.

Photographs of Antillean shantytowns depicted their squalid status, the ugly “before” that preceded U.S. imperial occupation. Shelters were flimsy, crowded, and offered minimal privacy. Black women cooked outdoors or on open-air platforms, and families bathed in public, often in rivers. Worst of all, black slums presented health and sanitation dangers. Figure 3.23, a photograph of Silver Roll housing for black ICC employees, offers a typical example. Windows

---

<sup>298</sup>McPherson, *Yankee No*, 89.



and doors stand open, leaving residents unprotected from mosquitoes and vermin. The overcrowded conditions ensured that any outbreak of disease would quickly spread throughout the neighborhood. The rutted street is a pool of mud, with children playing barefoot. The narrow, unpaved walkway along the building is inadequate for the volume of pedestrian traffic, forcing people into the street.

A postcard of the city of Colón before the American occupation, Figure 3.25, depicts a drainage ditch running down the center of a dirt street without sidewalks. Staked planks act as baffles to prevent erosion, and planks across the ditch offer limited access to opposing sides of the street. A barrel is highlighted on the center left center, positioned to catch runoff from the roof above. Roofs lacked rain gutters, and windows were unscreened. The standing water of the ditch and rain barrels conveyed the threat of mosquitos.

A photograph portraying a West Indian family in their home, Figure 3.24, emphasizes the substandard housing conditions that they endured. Laundry is draped around the exterior of the house, and various dishes and basins are visible around the porch and yard area, indicating that cooking and washing took place outdoors. The open windows do not have wire screens, merely shutters against the elements.

Accounts from Zonian memoirs reinforce the visual messages of “before” photographs depicting squalor and filth. Marie Gorgas, wife of Chief Sanitation Officer William Gorgas, recalled her first visit to Panama City (a border city located in the Republic of Panama but under U.S. control): “The streets, unspeakably dirty and mud-filled, swarmed with naked children; the ugly frame houses rested on piles, under which greenish slimy water formed lagoons. Such

dilapidation and desolation!”<sup>299</sup> Rose Hardeveld recorded her arrival in the PCZ in 1905 at Colón (a border city under U.S. control) with revulsion and contempt. From her train, Hardeveld described the sights and smells of “the backwash of the sea that collects in certain areas of the city and stays there with the sewage and garbage that is never disposed of in any way,” and noted that “houses were built on timbers right in the ocean. Green scummy water lashed and licked at the posts. Coconuts and rotten vegetables floated on the surface of the water. Naked brown children with tousled heads, and mangy-looking dogs stared listlessly at the train.”<sup>300</sup> Sue Core, a sixth-grade teacher at Ancon Elementary School from the late 1910s until her retirement, recalled the housing conditions that Americans faced in the early years: “There was no ice, no baths, no running water. Sewage systems were unheard of and garbage was dumped out the back door or into the street. Drinking water was carried from too shallow wells or caught from roofs where buzzards roosted. Even in Panamanian cities there was little paving, and in Zone construction towns, none. Streets and sidewalks became torturous quagmires of sticky mud and slush during the wet season; whipped by swirling clouds of dust during the dry.”<sup>301</sup> Paved roads, sidewalks, sewerage, electrification, sanitation systems, and public health crusades against infectious diseases were among the first endeavors that the Americans undertook in the PCZ, as part of the campaign to sell the construction project.

A photograph by Ernest Hallen, “Widening of Sidewalks – Panama” (Figure 3.26), repeats the unappealing “before” state of urban life in Panama prior to U.S. occupation with its

---

<sup>299</sup>Marie D. Gorgas and Burton J. Hendrick, *William Crawford Gorgas: His Life and Work* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page, 1924), 153.

<sup>300</sup>Hardeveld, *Make Dirt Fly*, 19, 20.

<sup>301</sup>Core, *Panama Yesterday*, 164.

streets of rutted mud. A raised, concrete sidewalk is being widened to protect pedestrians as a first step before the street is then paved. Another photograph, Figure 3.27, reveals the process of installing a storm sewer in Colon in 1910, before street paving. Chief engineer Goethals included this photograph in his article for *National Geographic*; it is also likely by Hallen.

An article by Goethals in the *National Geographic* the following year included photographs that reiterated reiterates the message of pre-American ugliness and squalor. “A Street in the City of Panama As It Appeared When the United States Obtained Control of the Canal” (Figure 3.28), shows a rutted river of mud and standing water, refuse, an overturned barrel, and a broken, abandoned wagon. The unpaved sidewalks are narrow, virtually nonexistent. Almost certainly taken by Hallen, the photo places a woman and child of color in the frame as the filthy street scene. The “after” shot of the same street corner after American paving (Figure 3.29). The caption reads: “All the streets of Panama and Colon have been renovated in a similar manner. Many miles of macadamized roads have also been built in outlying districts.”<sup>302</sup>

Photographers also readily contrasted Zonian dwellings with the substandard structures used by peoples of color. Figure 3.30 portrays White Gold Roll housing for single men in the PCZ, from *Scientific American* in 1912. The neat, private houses contrast with ICC housing for black men, crowded mass barracks (Figure 3.31). The photograph by Ernest Hallen shows the folding bunk cots provided to “Negro” workers. The room was devoid of privacy, and personal belongings had to be stowed along the rafters. Laundry items were hung above the bunks to dry

---

<sup>302</sup>George W. Goethals, “The Panama Canal,” (1911): 151.

in the only available space. Silver Roll shelters did not include the wire mesh screens that the ICC provided in abundance for Gold Roll housing. Black workers often opted for finding their own housing outside the Zone to be with their families, but the housing they could afford was overwhelmingly substandard, as in Figure 3.24.<sup>303</sup> American buildings were well ventilated, raised above the ground for cooling air circulation, often multistoried, with generous wrap-around verandas screened against mosquitoes. White women performed their cooking and other domestic work indoors, their families would never have dreamed of bathing in public. They sent their laundry out to ICC facilities, or hired Antillean women who washed it outdoors.

An illustration of white housing in Ancon (Figure 3.32) reveals appealing architectural designs. The top right photo of a two-storied house is representative of a single-family dwelling; the second house from the top in the left column is an example of an ICC official's house. The original caption observes that "the houses, with the surrounding shrubbery, make a beautiful scene," noting the landscaping efforts devoted to white housing.<sup>304</sup> The bottom left photo is the interior of a bachelor's quarters. Even this small, dormitory-like space is clean, bright, well constructed, and sanitary. This Gold Roll space stands in sharp contrast with the bachelor housing for Silver Roll employees in Figure 3.31. The ICC never provided adequate housing for black workers.<sup>305</sup> In contrast, photo-essays offered ample evidence of the superiority of American dwellings and the privacy and sanctity of white living spaces. As architectural historian Dianne Harris argues, "architecture is not benign, even (and sometimes especially)

---

<sup>303</sup>Crouch, *Architecture of PCZ*, 41.

<sup>304</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 105.

<sup>305</sup>McCullough, *Path between Seas*, 610.

when it is spectacularly beautiful or when it is so ordinary we hardly notice it.”<sup>306</sup> Harris also observes that “architecture is about race (and perhaps especially) when it is situated in an all-white suburb—a fact that architectural historians have tended to overlook completely.”<sup>307</sup>

Zonian settlements were essentially all-white suburbs, and their racial segregation was part of the appeal to their inhabitants. The differences in attractiveness and functionality between white and black housing and public accommodations not only reflected power, they inscribed it.

### **Public Health Before and After: An American Victory over France**

Americans were fond of contrasting their triumphs with French failures, especially in two areas, construction efforts and massive loss of life. A photograph of abandoned French train engines and equipment, Figure 3.41, is a typical representation. Postcards frequently depicted heavy machinery submerged in water or subsumed in jungle growth. Such images provided a visual foil for American construction efforts.

While construction contrasts provided a nice publicity backdrop, the significant death toll during the French construction era presented a major obstacle to U.S. canal promoters in their early publicity efforts. During the years of intensive French excavation (1880–1888) some 25,000 workers died, half of the West Indian workforce that the French recruited.<sup>308</sup> Sue Core

---

<sup>306</sup>Dianne S. Harris, *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 3.

<sup>307</sup>Harris, *Little White Houses*, 3.

<sup>308</sup>U.S. Chief Sanitary Officer William C. Gorgas estimated the French-era death toll at 22,000, but noted that the actual number could never be known because the French deliberately undercounted fatalities by recording only deaths at hospitals, which were a small percentage of

depicted the pre-American landscape as dangerous and disorderly: “Mosquitoes rose in black swarms from the steaming, swamp-ridden countryside and, since screening was practically unknown, malaria and yellow fever washed over the beleaguered land unhindered. Epidemics of typhoid, dysentery and cholera occurred with terrifying regularity.”<sup>309</sup>

By 1906, once ICC workers got yellow fever under control, it was time to make the contrast explicit. David McCullough estimates 350 white deaths and 4,500 black deaths during the U.S. construction era.<sup>310</sup> Although advances in medical understanding over these years drove the reduced mortality, Americans often criticized the French for misplaced priorities and misguided notions.

In photographic contrasts, “before” consisted of French cemeteries of failure and “after” of life-saving American hospitals. The French had built a hospital in 1882 in Ancon (near Balboa on the Pacific coast), L’Hospital Notre Dame de Canal (Figure 3.43). Because of the miasma theory of contagion, the hospital grounds abounded with fragrant flowers and shrubbery, visible in the photograph. To protect the flowerbeds from leaf-cutter ants, however, groundskeepers surrounded them with moats of water that became breeding areas for mosquitoes. Because the hospital windows weren’t screened, patients became prime targets for mosquito-born diseases. Once the Americans took over canal construction, they criticized the

---

the actual total. Julie Greene cites a figure at 20,000, in *Canal Builders*, 26. The current Panamanian Canal Authority puts the toll at 22,000, following Gorgas; accessed 17 Apr. 2015, <http://pancanal.com/eng/general/canal-faqs/index.html>. The Library of Congress places the French-era death toll at 25,000; *American Memory*, Library of Congress, accessed 6 Mar. 2015, [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+pa0022\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+pa0022)). Most of the dead were from the 50,000 West Indians the French recruited; see Conniff, *Black Labor*, 17.

<sup>309</sup>Core, *Panama Yesterday*, 164.

<sup>310</sup>McCullough, *Path between Seas*, 602.

French for focusing on aesthetic treatments (in the battle against “bad air”) rather than medical science, and emphasized that French flower gardens spread disease rather than preventing it.<sup>311</sup>

The ICC condemned L’Hospital Notre Dame de Canal but built a new one on the same site (Figure 3.44) because of its scenic, breezy location on the side of Ancon Hill. ICC landscapers removed the terraced flower gardens and planted rows of Royal Palms along the hospital’s entrance avenue, visible in the postcard. The ICC also quickly replaced the well-intentioned but medically untrained French nuns (Figure 3.45) with professional nurses from the United States (Figure 3.46). Without even venturing inside the hospital, booster photographers managed to convey its modernity, medical expertise, and sanitary status. In contrast to the French hospital, Americans screened their windows, visible in both the hospital postcard and the photograph of U.S. nurses. A subsequent postcard reveals U.S. efforts to keep up with the rapidly evolving body of medical knowledge, and to keep Americans informed of progress in the Zone. The ICC replaced its original wood-frame Ancon Hospital with a second structure in 1915 (Figure 3.47), this time constructed of concrete. The second Ancon Hospital was larger and even more impressive, with the latest medical technologies.

Postcards of the new hospital presented visual evidence that Americans intended to remain in the Zone after the canal was completed. The whiteness of the concrete buildings stands out in contrast to the verdant hillside. The structure’s design delineates a *cordon sanitaire*, with the triangular enclosure of the atrium grounds. By showing the exterior of the imposing edifice, rather than an interior shot of a ward filled with patients, the photographer offers the reassuring appearance of control and containment. The photograph of the hospital’s

---

<sup>311</sup>Parker, *Panama Fever*, 135.

Administration Building (Figure 3.48), most likely by Ernest Hallen, also suggests U.S. command of public health in the Zone. The building's symmetry projects a calm, rational order. Its size indicates a substantial bureaucracy at work protecting Zonians. The long entrance and cascading stair steps, leading up to a flagpole, focuses the vision of visitors—and viewers of the photograph—on the great power of the imperial state, exhibited here through medical infrastructure.

The popular press hailed the improvements in public health, while also suggesting the notion of “the white man’s burden.” *National Geographic Magazine* carried articles in 1909 and 1911 by Goethals, with photographs of street cleaning and paving, installation of storm sewers, provision of drinking water reservoirs, and pesticide spraying.<sup>312</sup> *Scientific American* published an entire issue devoted to the Panama Canal in 1912, including photographs of an Antillean worker spraying oil in mosquito habitats (Figure 3.35) and a before-and-after pairing from 1908 and 1911 publicizing the paving of muddy city streets (Figure 3.38 and Figure 3.39). The subtitle, “Teaching the Tropics How to Live,” is quite revealing in its attitude of uplift.<sup>313</sup> *Popular Mechanics* ran an illustrated article (Figure 3.40) heralding the canal’s opening that called the PCZ “the healthiest spot on earth.”<sup>314</sup>

---

<sup>312</sup>George W. Goethals, “The Panama Canal,” *National Geographic Magazine* 20, no. 4 (1909): 334–55, and Goethals, “The Panama Canal,” (1911): 150, 151, 162, 163, 168.

<sup>313</sup>A. J. Orenstein, “The Sanitation of the Canal Zone: Teaching the Tropics How to Live,” *Scientific American*, 9 Nov. 1912, 393.

<sup>314</sup>“The Canal Zone is Fortifying Its Right to the Title of ‘The Healthiest Spot on Earth,’” *Popular Mechanics*, Oct. 1914, 485.



## Racial Segregation as a White Amenity in the PCZ

The progress of “civilization” was easily represented through photographs of fine hotels and dining rooms, civic institutions, and all of the comforts of modern middle-class life. An American visitor during the construction era declared that for white Zonians, “the life of the five thousand American engineers and clerks and foremen, and that of their wives and children, is very much like what it would be at home.”<sup>315</sup> Images depicted an array of ICC clubhouses and YMCA buildings, complete with bowling alleys, billiard rooms, reading rooms, theatres, barbershops, gymnasiums, and swimming pools. They also showed several libraries, twenty-one hotels, hospitals, bathing beaches, the recreation oasis of Taboga Island, parks, gardens, bandstands, baseball fields, tennis courts, tea rooms, dining rooms, ice cream parlors, club facilities, lodge halls, American-style primary and secondary public schools, Protestant churches, marketplaces, twenty-two government-subsidized general commissaries, American banks, nineteen post offices, court houses, pharmacies, jewelers, photography studios, ballrooms, newspapers, and passenger trains with first- and second-class coaches for whites as well as Jim Crow cars. Recreation was also carefully segregated, and photographs showed golf courses and yacht clubs exclusively available to Gold Roll American residents.<sup>316</sup> A photograph by Ernest Hallen shows white settlers enjoying a segregated game of baseball, Figure 3.49, just as they could “back home,” unabashed official evidence of the structural racism.

---

<sup>315</sup>Farnham Bishop, *Panama, Past and Present*, 199.

<sup>316</sup>Haskin, *Panama Canal*, 175.

The photographs and postcards in Figure 3.49 through Figure 3.53 offer evidence of how the public relations campaign made the most of architecture in the Zone. Photos showed that from the quotidian bleachers of a baseball diamond to imposing administration buildings, the built environment sheltered white Zonians and offered a comfortable standard of living that exceeded what many could hope to attain on the mainland.

A photograph of the Balboa Hotel Dining Room, Figure 3.50, suggests how imperial boosters publicized the high living standards among Zonians. The ICC built it in 1917, and the report on construction noted that the building's design circumvented the need for columns, in order to maintain a large, open dining room with good air circulation. The report notes that the series of four Gold Roll restaurants built that year all used this pavilion design because it was deemed the most healthful for a tropical climate.<sup>317</sup> The photo conveys the open and airy atmosphere, with the high ceiling without obstructions. The dining room was segregated according to U.S. practices, with an all-white clientele and a black wait staff. The contrasting furniture of white tables above black chairs subtly mirrors the color line of the dining room. The photo portrays racial segregation as if it were an amenity.

An official ICC photograph of the Balboa Clubhouse, Figure 3.51, shows a building designed to be functional but also appealing to Zonians. The two-storied portico with a second-floor balcony offered just a touch of stateliness, while the rest of the building looks similar to Gold Roll housing stock. The entire building was screened with rustproof copper mesh to allow air circulation, and it featured roof vents and a raised pier foundation. Each large town had its

---

<sup>317</sup>“Panama Canal Restaurants,” photograph, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 11 May 2015, [http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/PCC%20Restaurants/pccr\\_index.htm](http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/PCC%20Restaurants/pccr_index.htm).

own clubhouse and to Americans following the canal story they represented a welcome improvement over the earlier era of saloons, gambling houses, and brothels.

During the French era, administration was weak and diffuse and officials were unable to impose imperial order. Fully in charge, the ICC made the Zone run smoothly, and projected that power through its architecture. The old French Panama Canal Company Administration Building, Figure 3.52, was located in the city of Panama. Upon assuming occupancy, the ICC found the French building much too small to be functional and resolved in January 1905 to build the new Balboa building in the PCZ, with room for seventy offices.<sup>318</sup> The Balboa Administration Building, Figure 3.53, represented the new American transcendence over the French. The imposing, red-tile-roofed building, situated atop a hill with sets of wide stairways leading from a palm-lined promenade, suggested the United States' status as an expanding global power. In comparison, the Victorian-era Second Empire French building looks small and antiquated. Its location in the city's commercial district lends the associations of a private, retail space rather than an imperial, administrative one. The old French headquarters could easily be mistaken for a bank; the new American headquarters was unmistakably statist.

Imperial boosters made extensive use of visual “before-and-after” contrasts to sell the social world of the Panama Canal Zone. In the beginning there was a wild, out-of-control, wasted, uncomfortable, unsafe, and unsanitary landscape. It was marked by the failures of the Spanish, Colombian, and French colonial powers, and it was inhabited by primitive indigenous peoples and uncivilized black immigrants. Diseases dominated the Zone, a site for epidemics of malaria, yellow fever, dysentery, and typhus. Silver Roll residents squatted in shanty settlements

---

<sup>318</sup>See ICC, *Report of the Isthmian Canal Commission* (Washington DC: ICC/GPO, 1905), 52–53.

that were squalid breeding grounds for diseases, and their slums were eyesores and sources of miasma. The Zone was a burial ground before the U.S. occupation, evidenced by the vast cemeteries that the French left behind when they abandoned their canal project, and it was certainly an outpost unfit for the presence of white women and children. Discomfort and hardship characterized life in the PCZ at its best, disability and mortality at its worst.

Thanks in large part to photographs, the advocates of empire achieved a monumental reversal of these associations. According to popular images, Americans made their zone of occupation safe, productive, and orderly. The white Gold Roll enclaves were attractive and secure. Life for Zonians was clean, healthy, “civilized,” and comfortable to the point of luxury. The U.S. government pushed Indians out of the PCZ, and employed Antilleans in the most strenuous and unpleasant labors, freeing whites for lives of professional satisfaction, devotion to family, and leisure. White women and children took up residence and established family life. The ICC controlled the environment, physically and visually, rendering the American enclave in the jungle as paradisaal.

Government control of the PCZ was a physical reality but it was also imaginary in the sense that the ICC and its allies built up that control through images. The illustrators of U.S. imperialism in the Zone invited Americans to envision life there as peaceful and beneficial. By persistently creating a portrait of control through the production of innumerable photographs and postcards, canal promoters made government mastery over the Canal Zone more real. Picturing triumph in the PCZ endowed the enterprise there with a positive aura, and positive representations aimed to convince Americans that the U.S. government had triumphed with its new template for imperialism. Social engineering in the Zone fostered success because it allowed boosters to generate so many positive images, helping imperialism to flourish.

### Chapter 3 Figures



Figure 3.1

Photograph labeled “Wash Men, House #90, Gorgona, CZ.”<sup>319</sup>

---

<sup>319</sup>“Wash Men, House #90, Gorgona, CZ,” photograph, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 21 July 2014, <http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Photos/photoof574.htm>.



Figure 3.2

“Washing Day at Lagarto, Panama,” picture postcard of black washerwomen, at a village on the Chagres River that the creation Gatun Lake destroyed.<sup>320</sup>

---

<sup>320</sup>“Washing Day at Lagarto, Panama,” postcard, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 21 July 2014, <http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Photos/photoof175.htm>.



Figure 3.3

Rose and Jan van Hardeveld and their children, Gertrude, Jacob, Janna, and Cornelia, outside the Hardeveld home, “House Number One,” in Las Cascadas, PCZ, circa 1913.<sup>321</sup>

---

<sup>321</sup>Photograph, 100 Years Panama Canal Project, accessed 12 Jan. 2015, <http://100yearspanamacanal.com/index.php/about-mission/read-our-newsblog/19-panama-the-canal/72-heroic-workers-jan-van-hardeveld>.



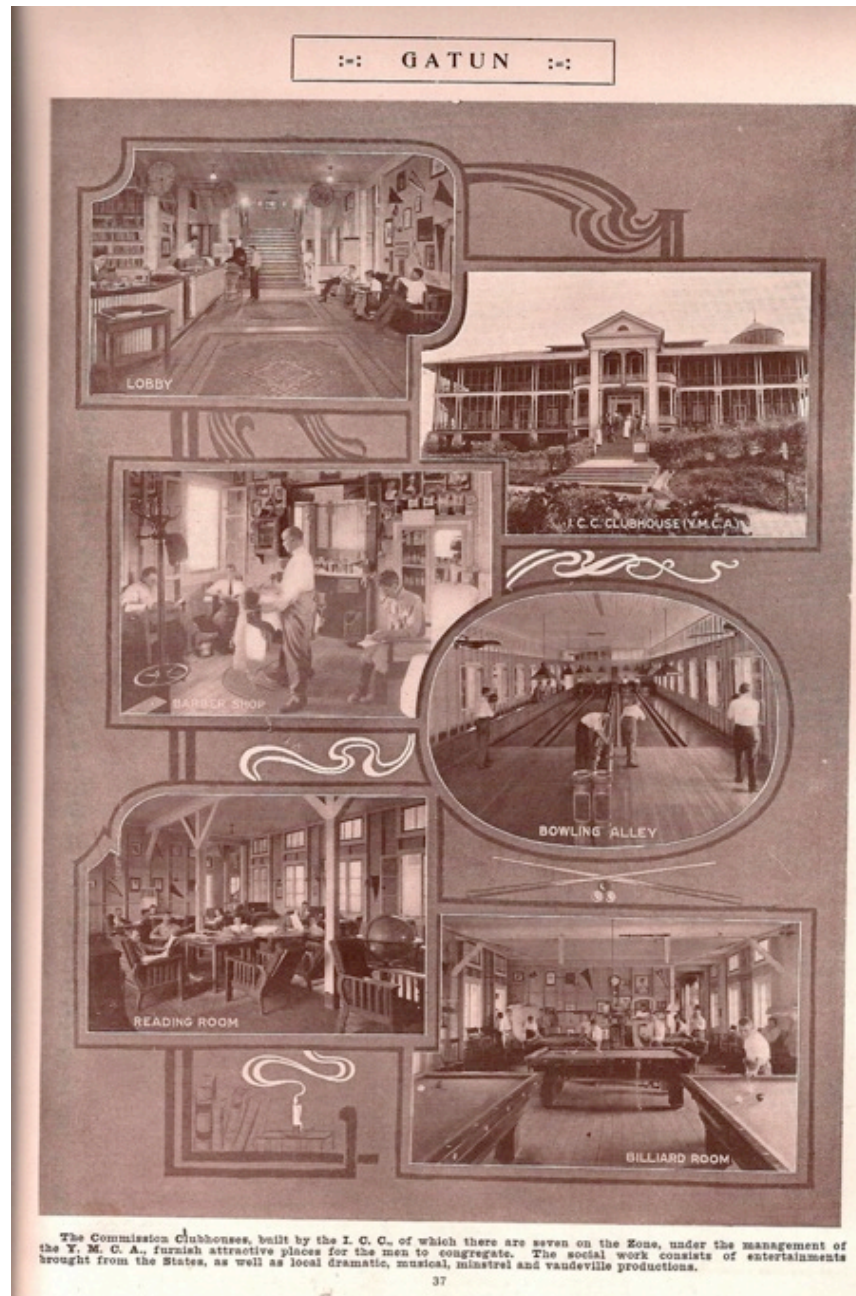


Figure 3.4

Scenes from the Gatun Clubhouse, built by the ICC and managed by the YMCA, one of seven clubhouses constructed by the U.S. government for white workingmen in the PCZ.<sup>322</sup>

<sup>322</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal, 37.*





Figure 3.5

"Type No. 17 – One Family House – Empire" by Ernest Hallen, official U.S. government photographer of the Panama Canal Zone.<sup>323</sup>

---

<sup>323</sup>Ernest Hallen, "Type No. 17 – One Family House – Empire," photograph, University of Florida Digital Collections, accessed 31 July 2014, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/PCMI008046/00001/1x?search=type+%3d-17>.



Figure 3.6

“Tropical Plants,” white child in the yard of a Zonian home, circa 1916. Note the Panama hat, which became a cultural symbol of U.S. imperialism. The caption also suggests the original sense of a “plantation,” as Americans who viewed the PCZ as their permanent residence often came to claim it as their native land.<sup>324</sup>

---

<sup>324</sup>Mrs. Ernest von Munchow, *The American Woman on the Panama Canal: From 1904 to 1916* (Balboa Heights, PCZ: Star and Herald, 1916), 2.

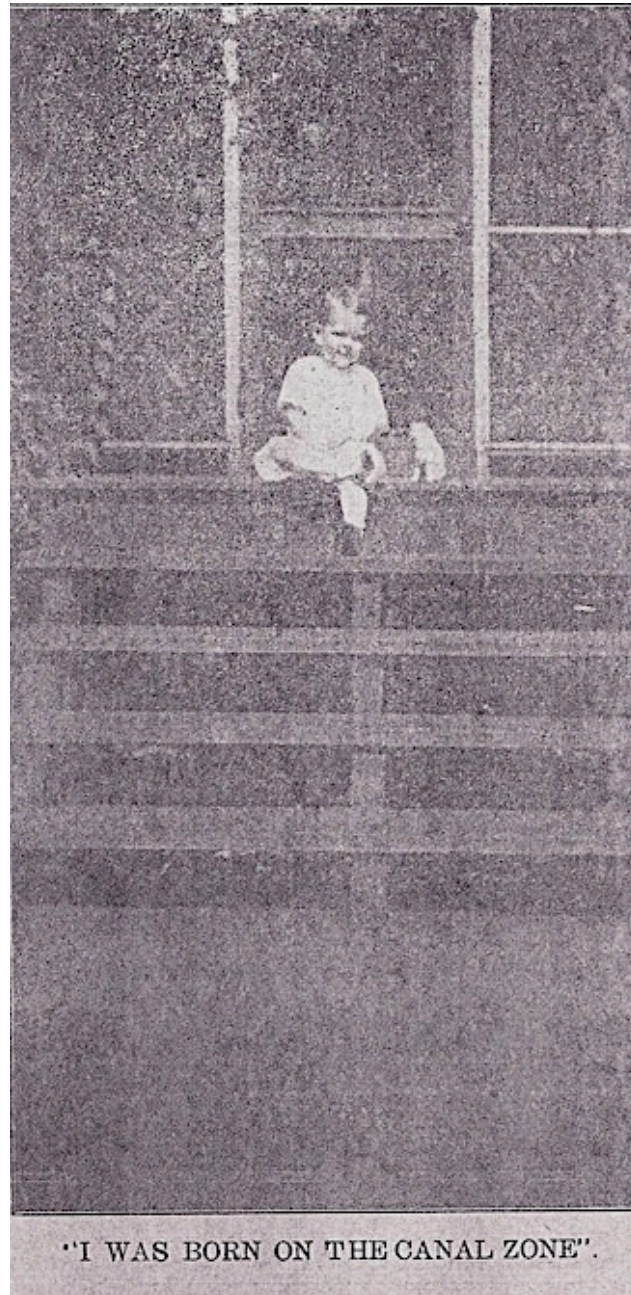


Figure 3.7

"I Was Born on the Canal Zone," white American child on the front steps of a Zonian house.<sup>325</sup>

---

<sup>325</sup>Munchow, *American Woman Panama*, 26.





Figure 3.8

Photograph of Zonian children in a yard, early twentieth century.<sup>326</sup>

---

<sup>326</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 12 Jan. 2012, [http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Gus/w\\_c61.htm](http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Gus/w_c61.htm).



Figure 3.9

Photograph of children at the Pedro Miguel segregated white public school in the PCZ.<sup>327</sup>

---

<sup>327</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 12 Jan. 2012, [http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Gus/w\\_c74.htm](http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Gus/w_c74.htm).



Figure 3.10

An old Jamaican school in the early part of the 20th century in the PCZ. Note that the school is not raised several feet above the ground for cooling ventilation, nor does it have screened-in porches wrapping around each floor, as white schoolhouses of the time did.<sup>328</sup>

---

<sup>328</sup>Photograph, The Silver People Chronicle, accessed 21 July 2014, <http://thesilverpeoplechronicle.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/oldjamaicanschool.jpg>.



Figure 3.11

Photograph of families on a boarded sidewalk in front of a home, likely in either Las Cascadas or Pedro Miguel, PCZ, early twentieth century. Note the tropical landscaping and wrap-around screen porches.<sup>329</sup>

---

<sup>329</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 12 Jan. 2012, [http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Gus/w\\_c65.htm](http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Gus/w_c65.htm).



Figure 3.12

Photomontage of typical married quarters provided without charge to white employees.<sup>330</sup>

<sup>330</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 103.





Figure 3.13

Examples of the service infrastructure for white settlers established within the PCZ by the U.S. government, including ice production and cold storage, bakeries, and laundry facilities<sup>331</sup>

<sup>331</sup> *Trip: Panama Canal*, 27.



Figure 3.14

“Alligator Preparing for Lunch, Chagres River, Panama,” I. F. Maduro colorized postcard.<sup>332</sup>

---

<sup>332</sup>“Alligator Preparing for Lunch, Chagres River, Panama,” postcard, private auction website, accessed 31 July 2014, <http://pictures2.todocoleccion.net/tc/2008/12/31/img399.jpg>.



Figure 3.15

“Alligator Bait. On the Chagres River, Panama Canal,” colorized postcard, circa 1910.<sup>333</sup>

---

<sup>333</sup>“Alligator Bait. On the Chagres River, Panama Canal,” postcard, Old Postcard Exhibition No. 1, accessed 31 July 2014, <http://www.oldpostcards.se/exhibition1994/pc12.htm>.





Figure 3.16

“There is Trouble on the Canal Zone Panama,” photographic postcard.<sup>334</sup>

---

<sup>334</sup>“There is trouble on the Canal Zone Panama,” postcard, Irvin and Thomas, Cristobal, PCZ Panama, in author’s possession.



Figure 3.17

“His Last Prayer on the Canal Zone, Panama.”<sup>335</sup>

---

<sup>335</sup>“His Last Prayer on the Canal Zone, Panama,” postcard, private auction website, accessed 5 May 2015, [http://images.delcampe.com/img\\_large/auction/000/197/711/779\\_001.jpg](http://images.delcampe.com/img_large/auction/000/197/711/779_001.jpg).

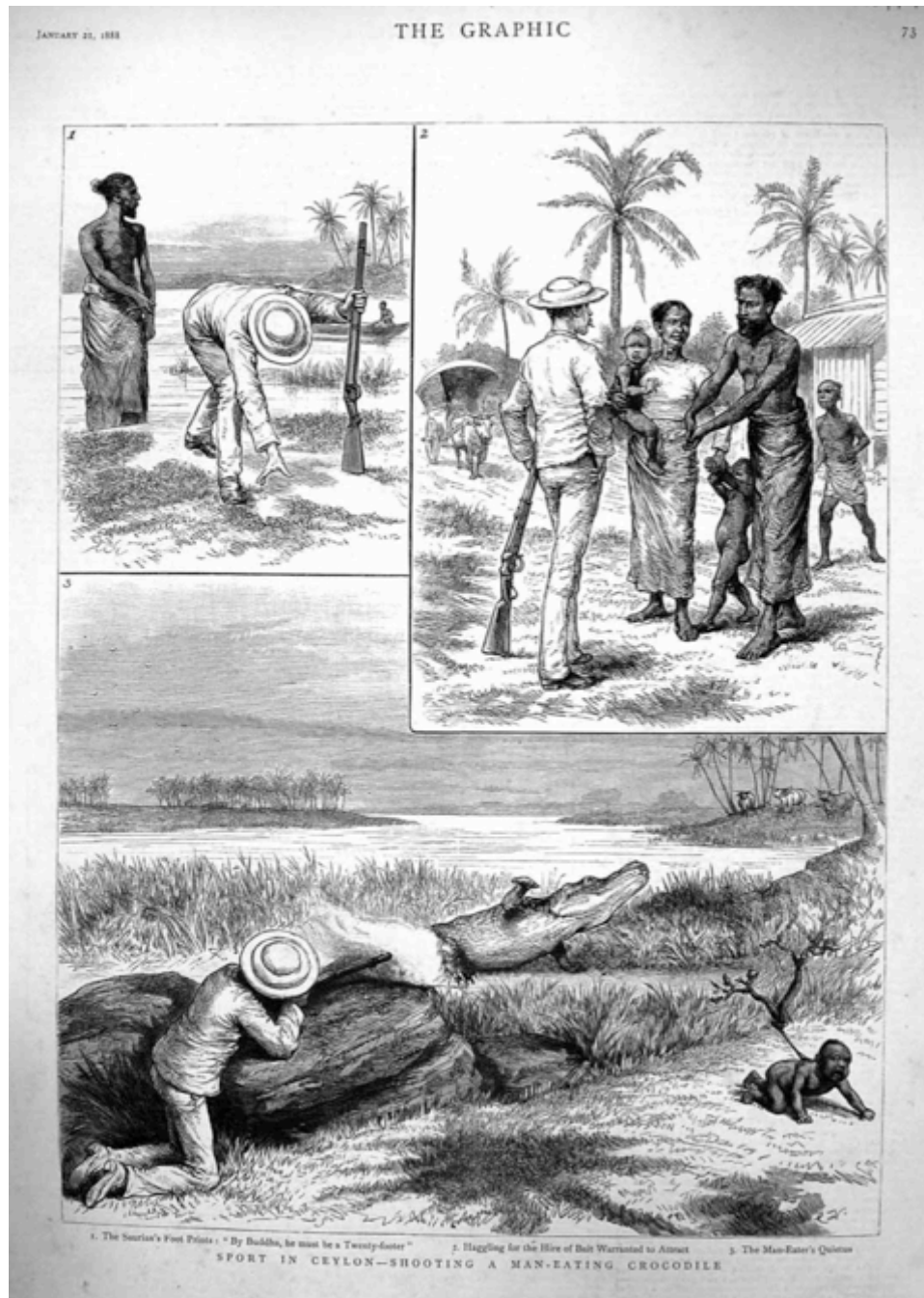


Figure 3.18

“Sport in Ceylon—Shooting a Man-Eating Crocodile,” from an 1888 British magazine. Frame 2 is captioned “Hagglng for the Hire of Bait Warranted to the Attack.”<sup>336</sup>

<sup>336</sup>“Sport in Ceylon—Shooting a Man-Eating Crocodile,” *The Graphic* (London), 21 Jan. 1888, 73.





Figure 3.19

“A Bag of Alligators, on the Panama Canal Zone,” from *National Geographic*, 1912.<sup>337</sup>

---

<sup>337</sup>Henry Pittier, “Little-Known Parts of Panama,” *National Geographic Magazine* 23, no. 7 (1912): 640.

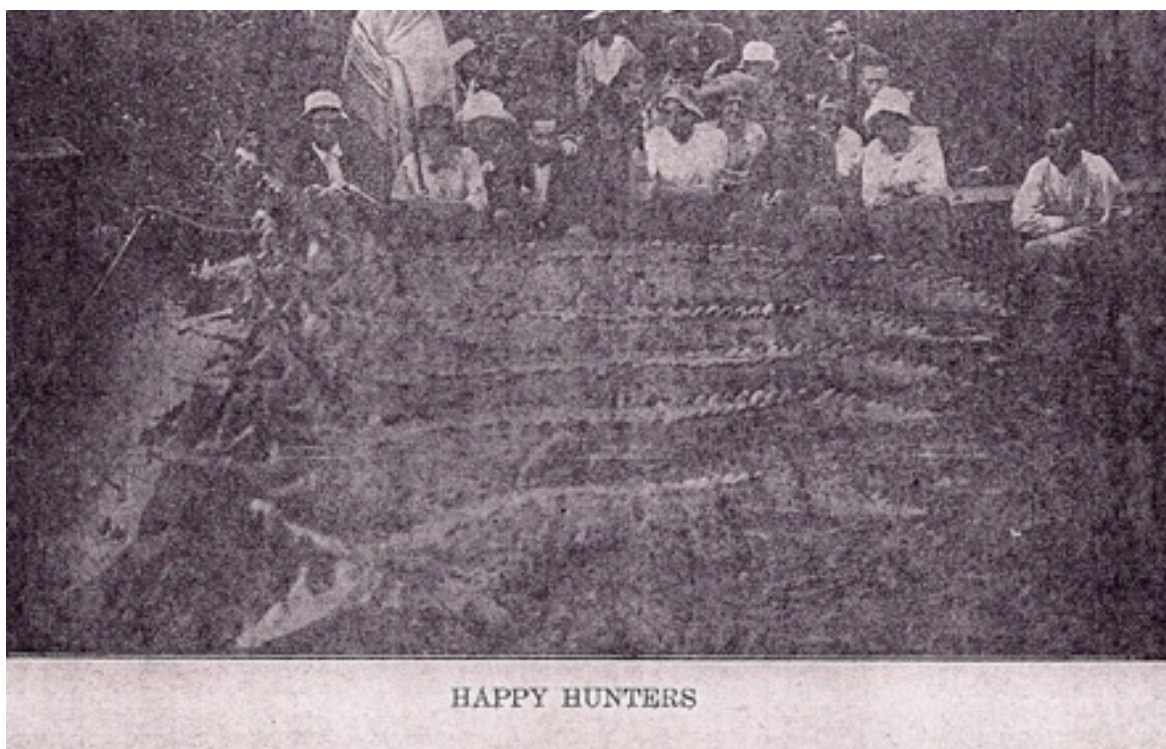


Figure 3.20

“Happy Hunters,” photograph of an alligator hunting party of men and women, from a 1916 book about white American women’s experiences of colonial life during the construction years in the PCZ.<sup>338</sup>

---

<sup>338</sup>Munchow, *American Woman Panama*, 46.





Figure 3.21

“Alligator Hunting at the Mouth of the Canal at La Boca, Panama,” showing the Pacific entrance to the canal at Balboa.<sup>339</sup>

---

<sup>339</sup>“Alligator Hunting at the Mouth of the Canal at La Boca, Panama,” postcard, eBay, accessed 2 May 2015, [http://thumbs4.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/281678609171\\_/Vintage-Panama-Canal-Zone-Post-Card-Alligator-At.jpg](http://thumbs4.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/281678609171_/Vintage-Panama-Canal-Zone-Post-Card-Alligator-At.jpg).



Figure 3.22

“Alligator Bait, Florida,” colorized postcard.<sup>340</sup>

---

<sup>340</sup>“Alligator Bait, Florida,” postcard, The Authentic History Center Digital Archive, accessed 12 Jan. 2012, <http://www.authentichistory.com/diversity/african/3-coon/7-alligator/index.html>.



Figure 3.23

Black Antillean family housing just outside the PCZ boundaries.<sup>341</sup>

---

<sup>341</sup>Photograph, *U.S. Slave Blog*, accessed 30 July 2014, <http://usslave.blogspot.com/2011/07/panama-canal.html>.





Figure 3.24

A West Indian family at their home in the PCZ.<sup>342</sup>

---

<sup>342</sup>Photograph, original from Roberto F. Chari Library, at *Maeve Friel Blog*, accessed 6 May 2015, <http://maeviefriel.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/West-Indian-women-at-home-300x241.jpg>.

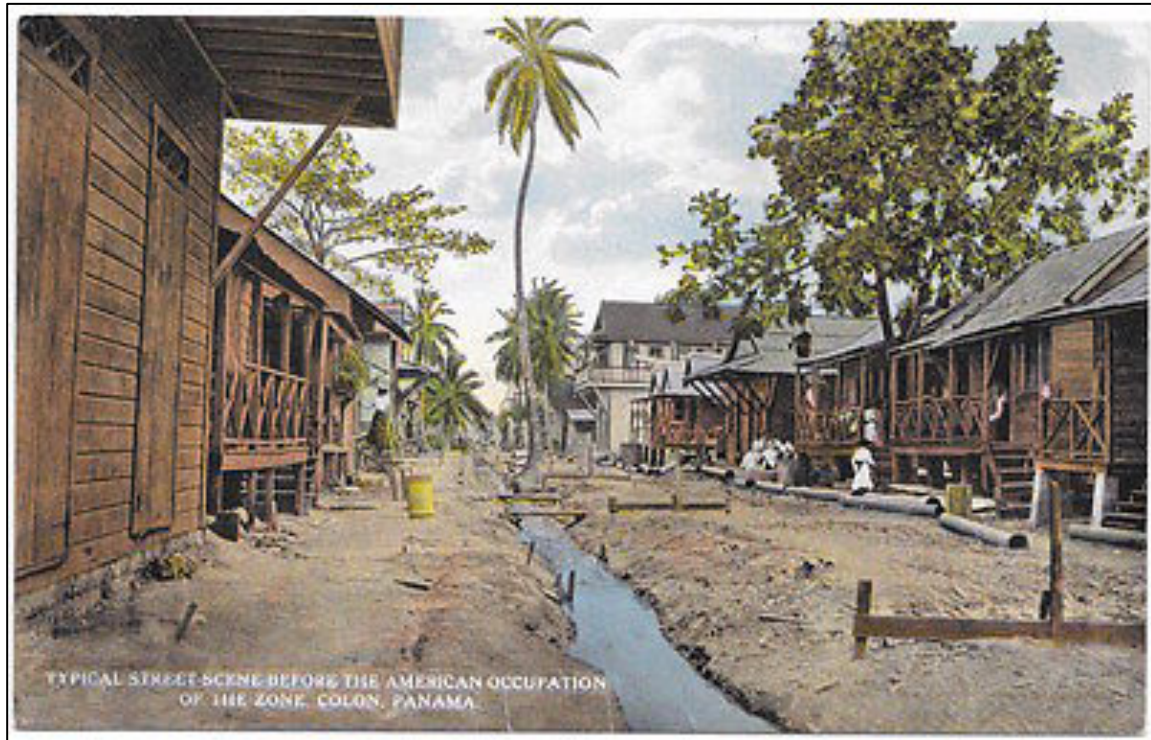


Figure 3.25

Postcard depicting a “typical street scene before the American occupation” in Colon. The Pacific coast city was located outside PCZ boundaries but the ICC took control of it from the Republic of Panama because of its proximity to the canal’s entrance.<sup>343</sup>

---

<sup>343</sup>“Typical Street Scene Before the American Occupation of the Zone, Colon, Panama,” postcard, eBay, accessed 3 June 2015, [http://thumbs4.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/361196523239/\\_Postcard-Typical-Street-Scene-in-Colon-Panama-95792.jpg](http://thumbs4.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/361196523239/_Postcard-Typical-Street-Scene-in-Colon-Panama-95792.jpg).



Figure 3.26

“Widening of Sidewalks – Panama,” photography by Ernest Hallen.<sup>344</sup>

---

<sup>344</sup>Ernest Hallen, “Widening of Sidewalks – Panama,” photograph, University of Florida Panama Canal Museum Collection, accessed 18 Sept. 2014, <http://ufpcmcollection.wordpress.com/>.





Figure 3.27

Construction of a storm sewer in Colon, PCZ in 1910, photograph in *National Geographic*.<sup>345</sup>

---

<sup>345</sup>George W. Goethals, "The Panama Canal," (1911): 169.



Figure 3.28

Photograph captioned “A Street in the City of Panama As It Appeared When the United States Obtained Control of the Canal,” from an article in *National Geographic* by chief U.S. engineer George W. Goethals, 1911.<sup>346</sup>

---

<sup>346</sup>Goethals, “The Panama Canal,” (1911): 150.





Figure 3.29

In contrast to the preceding “before” street scene, the follow-up “after” photograph, captioned “The Same Street Repaired by the American Administration,” *National Geographic*, 1911.<sup>347</sup>

<sup>347</sup>Goethals, “The Panama Canal,” (1911): 151.



Toro Point, showing labor quarters with self-closing garbage cans. July, 1911.

Figure 3.30

White “Gold Roll” housing provided by the ICC for single men, from a 1912 article in *Scientific American*.<sup>348</sup>

---

<sup>348</sup>Orenstein, “Sanitation of the Canal Zone,” 393.

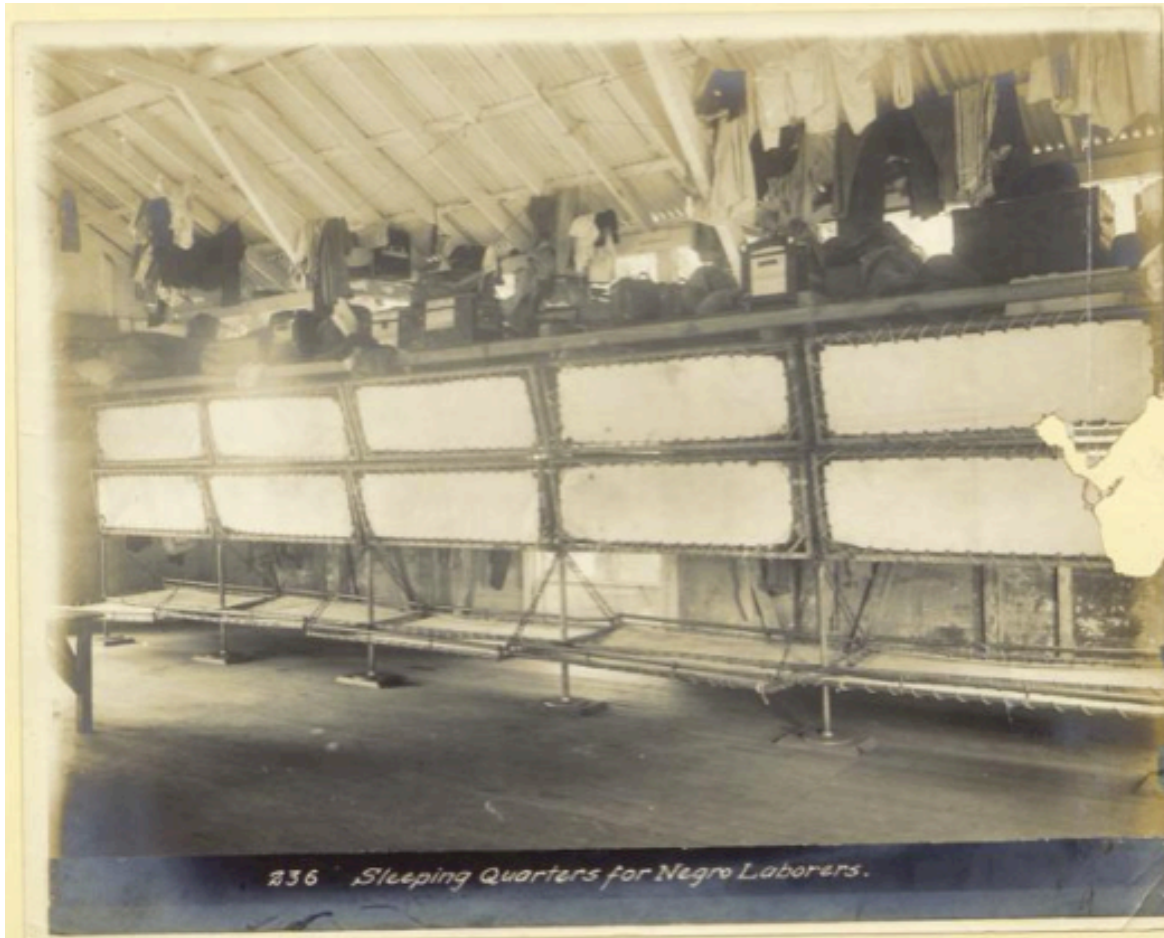


Figure 3.31

“Sleeping Quarters for Negro Laborers,” Ernest Hallen photograph.<sup>349</sup>

---

<sup>349</sup>Ernest Hallen, “Sleeping Quarters for Negro Laborers,” gelatin silver print, University of Florida Digital Collections, accessed 10 May 2015, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/PCMI003201/00001/>.



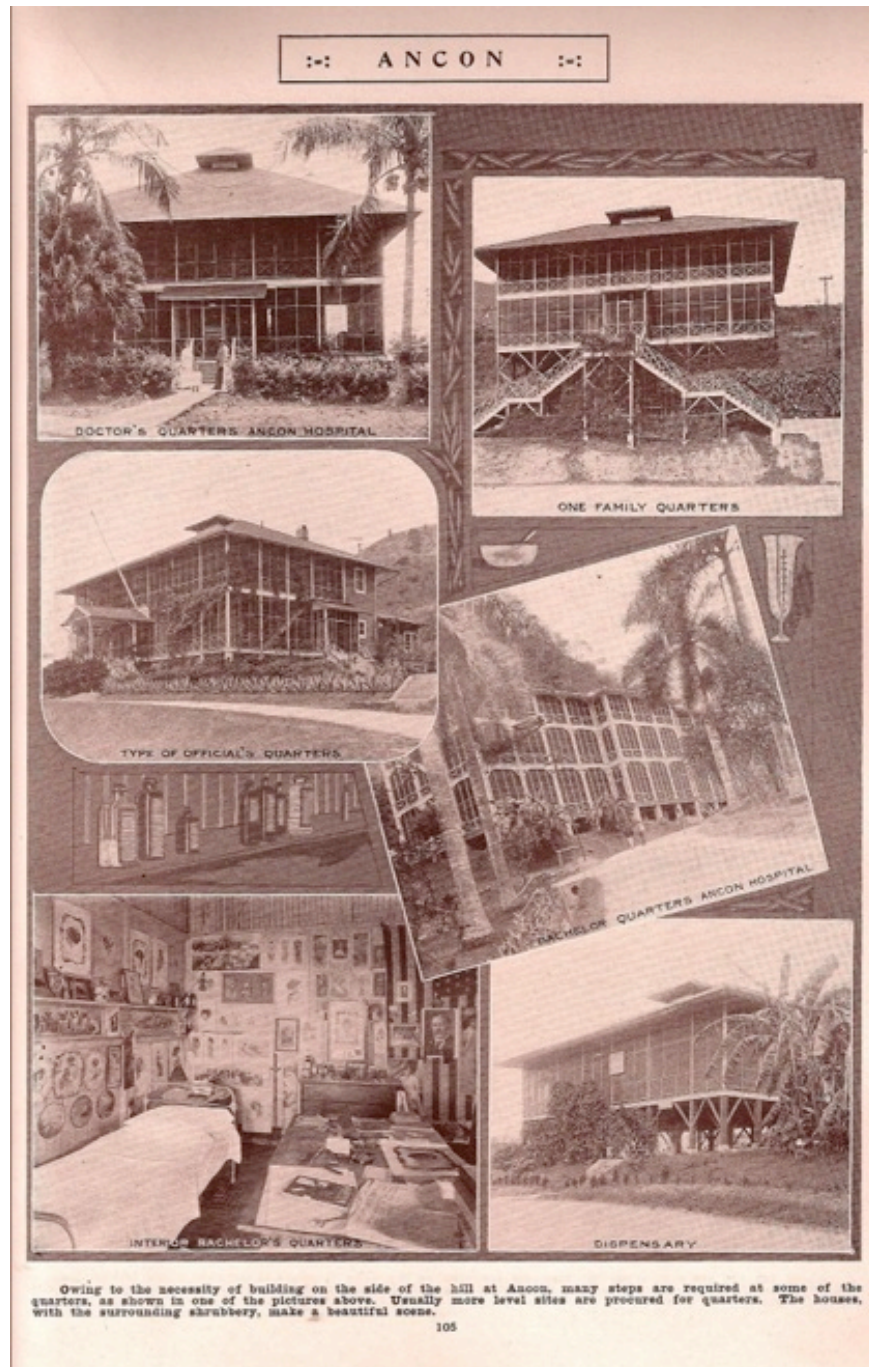


Figure 3.32

Photographs of ICC housing for white workers in Ancon, PCZ.<sup>350</sup>

<sup>350</sup>*Trip: Panama Canal*, 105.



Figure 3.33

1905 mosquito fumigation brigade of the Sanitation Department, Panama City, PCZ. Note that most of the workers appear to be men of color.<sup>351</sup>

---

<sup>351</sup>Farnham Bishop, *Panama Past and Present*, 155.



Figure 3.34

“Sanitary factotum . . . on his beat,” image of a barefoot Antillean laborer spraying in a jungle swamp, from a history of the canal project written by an early Zonian.<sup>352</sup>

---

<sup>352</sup>Core, *Panama Yesterday*, 156.





Figure 3.35

“Spraying to kill mosquitoes, Panama Canal, 1912. This man has a tank of oil on his back and he is spraying it into ditches to kill mosquitoes.” Original caption from a *Scientific American* article in 1912.<sup>353</sup>

---

<sup>353</sup>Orenstein, “Sanitation of the Canal Zone,” 392.



Figure 3.36

Photograph of an early horse-drawn wagon for spraying oil on standing water, PCZ, 1905.<sup>354</sup>

---

<sup>354</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 27 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto006.htm>.



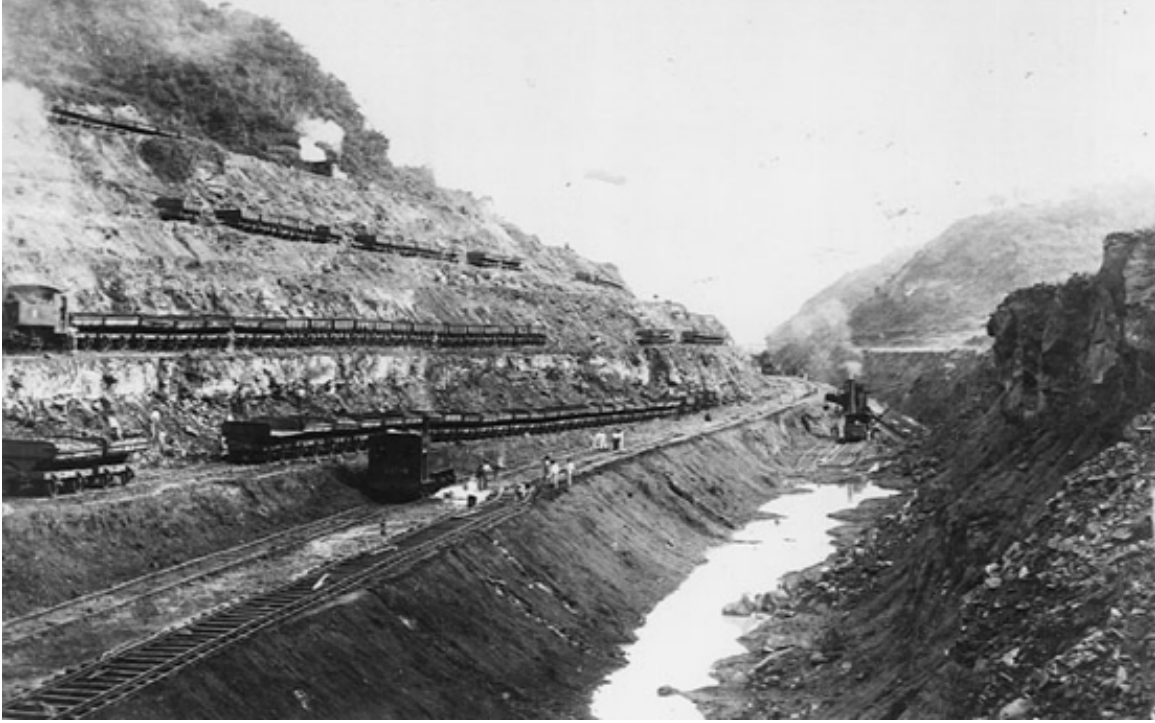


Figure 3.37

Excavation for the Panama Canal at the Culebra Cut, December 1904. Note the standing water in the bottom of the ditch. Such pools were endemic during the construction era, particularly during the rainy season, raising the risk of mosquito-born diseases. As historian Paul Sutter has observed, the main source of mosquito habitat in the PCZ resulted from human alterations to the environment.<sup>355</sup>

---

<sup>355</sup>“Excavation for the Panama Canal at the Culebra Cut, December 1904,” photograph, U.S. National Archives, Library of Congress, accessed 31 Aug. 2014, [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/panama/pa01\\_04a.jpg](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/panama/pa01_04a.jpg). See also Paul S. Sutter, “Nature’s Agents or Agents of Empire? Entomological Workers and Environmental Change during the Construction of the Panama Canal,” *Isis* 98, no. 4 (2007): 724–54.



Colón—D Street, from Eleventh Street, looking north. December, 1908.

Figure 3.38

*Scientific American* “before” photograph of unpaved streets in Colón with standing water, 1908.<sup>356</sup>

---

<sup>356</sup>Orenstein, “Sanitation of the Canal Zone,” 392.

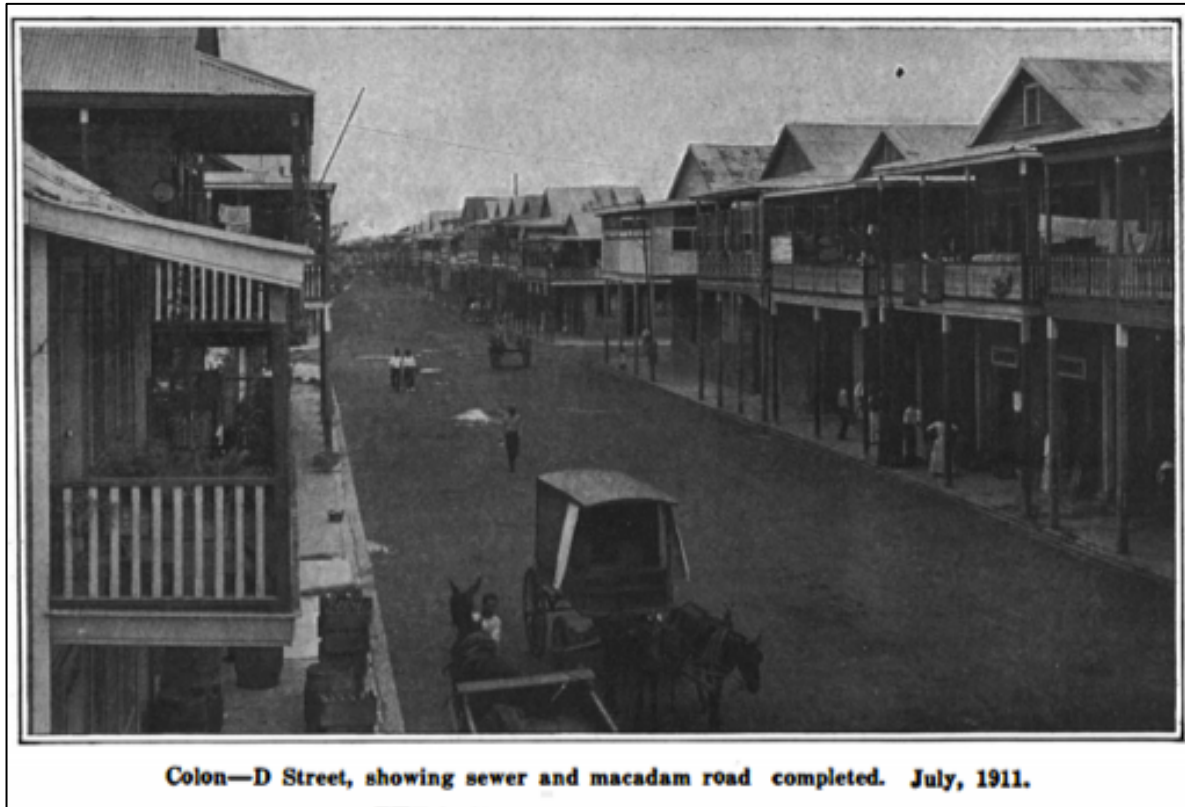


Figure 3.39

The paired “after” photograph of the same Colón street three years later, with sewer installation and pavement, *Scientific American*, 1911.<sup>357</sup>

---

<sup>357</sup>Orenstein, “Sanitation of the Canal Zone,” 392.

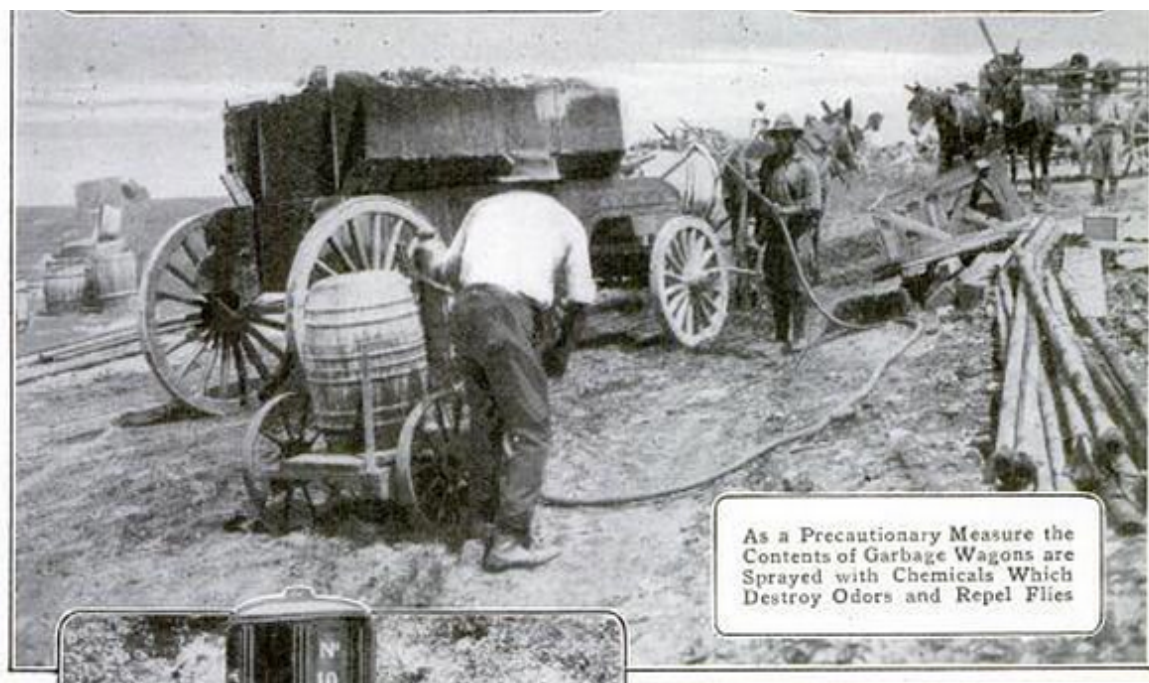


Figure 3.40

Part of a photomontage from a 1914 *Popular Mechanics* article about public health and sanitation efforts in the PCZ, showing Antillean men spraying garbage wagons and barrels.<sup>358</sup>

---

<sup>358</sup>“The Canal Zone is Fortifying Its Right to the Title of ‘The Healthiest Spot on Earth,’” *Popular Mechanics*, Oct. 1914, 485.



Figure 3.41

Abandoned French engines and construction equipment in the Panama Canal Zone, 1906.<sup>359</sup>

---

<sup>359</sup>C. L. Chester, photograph, 1906, "Army Engineers and the Building of the Panama Canal, 1907–1914," U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, accessed 12 Feb. 2015, <http://www.armyengineer.com/history/panama/engineers/Images/Abandoned-French.jpg>.



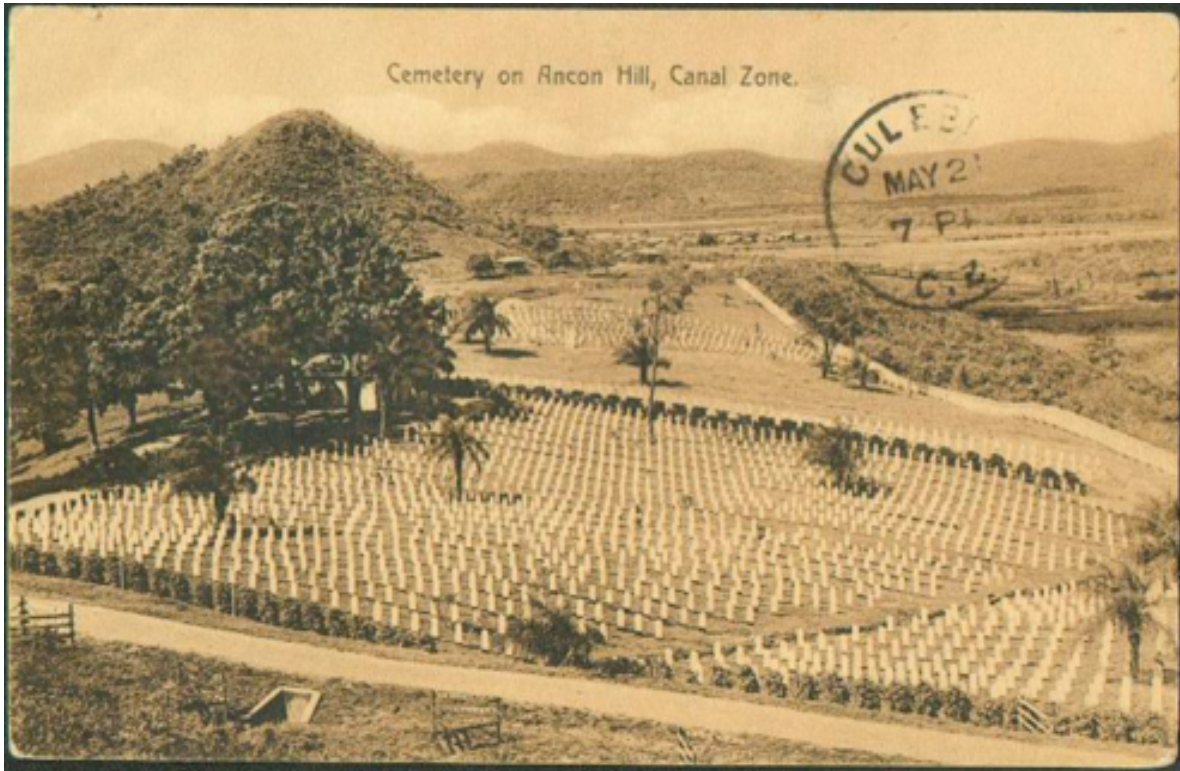


Figure 3.42

Postcard captioned “Cemetery on Ancon Hill, Canal Zone” showing thousands of graves from the French construction era. The graves were moved in 1914 to make way for expansion of U.S. settlement in the PCZ.<sup>360</sup>

---

<sup>360</sup>“Building the Canal: Old World Failure,” *BBC News*, 8 Dec. 1999, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/552963.stm>.



Figure 3.43

Old French “L’Hospital Notre Dame de Canal” in Ancon.<sup>361</sup>

---

<sup>361</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal online course, accessed 14 May 2015, <http://image.slidesharecdn.com/panamacanalcourseday2final-140321150853-phpapp01/95/panama-canal-course-day-2-final-39-638.jpg>.



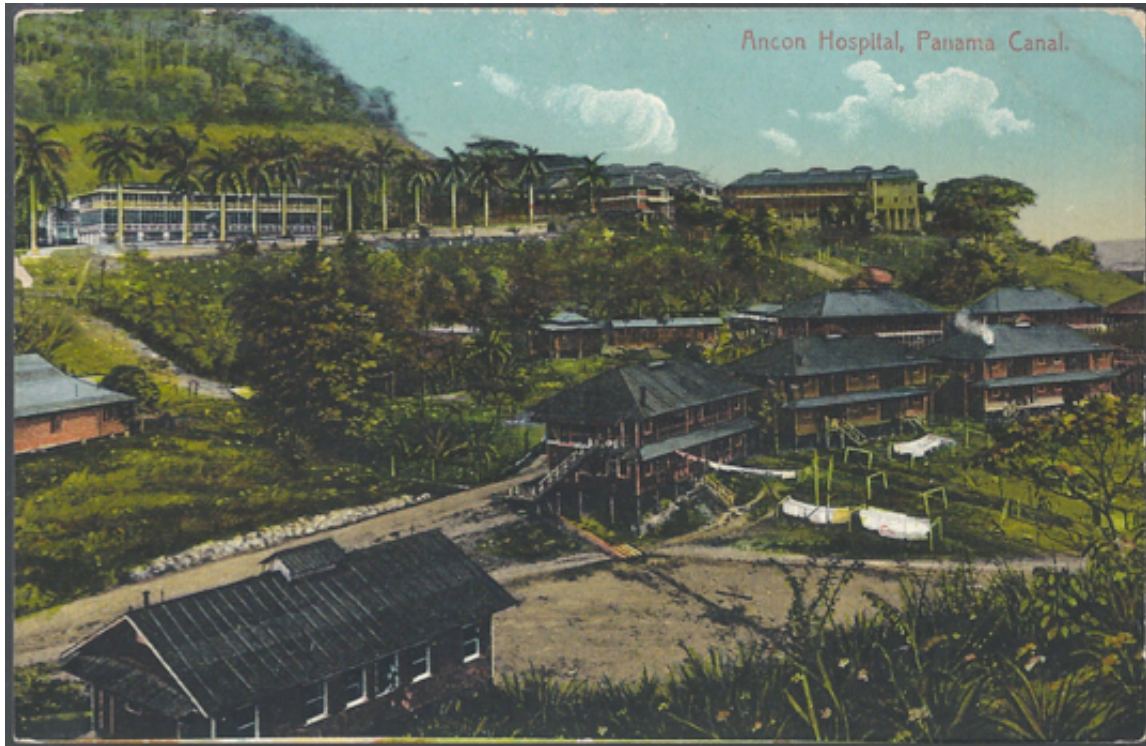


Figure 3.44

A construction-era postcard of the original wooden structure of American Ancon Hospital (top of image, behind the row of palm trees), built in 1904 on Ancon Hill.<sup>362</sup>

---

<sup>362</sup>“Ancon Hospital, Panama Canal,” postcard, in author’s possession.



Figure 3.45

A Sister of the Order of St. Vincent de Paul serving as a nurse in L'Hospital de Notre Dame, Ancon, circa 1882–1888.<sup>363</sup>

---

<sup>363</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal online course, accessed 14 May 2015, <http://image.slidesharecdn.com/panamacanalcourseday2final-140321150853-phpapp01/95/panama-canal-course-day-2-final-39-638.jpg>. Although the photograph is undated, the French canal company stopped employing physicians, who worked as contractors, after the 1889 bankruptcy that effectively suspended French construction work.



Figure 3.46

Photograph of American nursing staff in front of Ancon Hospital in the construction era.<sup>364</sup>

---

<sup>364</sup>Photograph, *American Experience*, PBS, original from the U.S. National Archives, accessed 14 May 2015, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/photo-gallery/panama-gallery/>.





Figure 3.47

Photographic postcard of the second, masonry structure of Ancon Hospital from the top of Ancon Hill looking down on the town of Ancon, circa 1915–1928.<sup>365</sup>

---

<sup>365</sup>“General View of Ancon and Ancon Hospital,” postcard, Gevaert (Belgium), in author’s possession. Ancon Hospital was rebuilt in 1915 and its name changed to Col. William Crawford Gorgas Hospital in 1928.

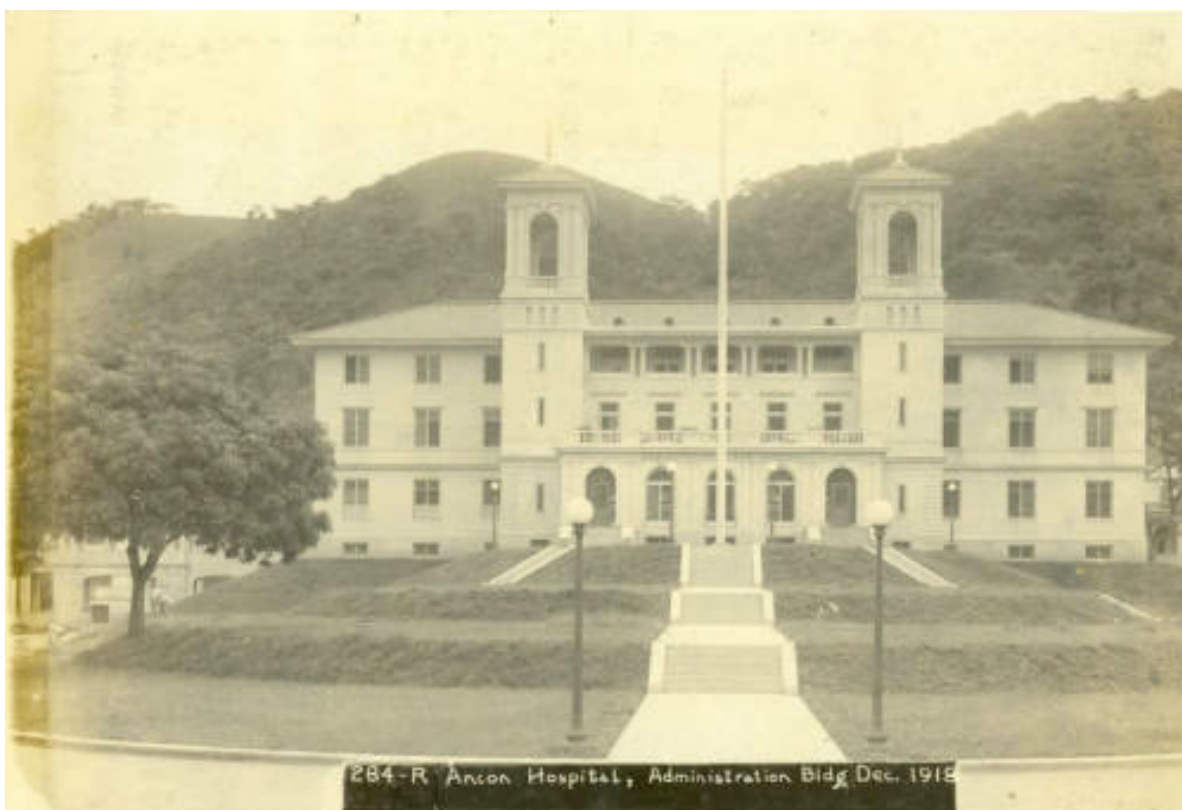


Figure 3.48

Photograph, "Ancon Hospital, Administration Bldg., Dec. 1918." Although uncredited, the style and labeling are consistent with the work of Ernest Hallen.<sup>366</sup>

---

<sup>366</sup>"Ancon Hospital, Administration Bldg., Dec. 1918," photograph, U.S. Army Academy of Health Sciences, Stimson Library, Digital Collection of Samuel Taylor Darling Memorial Library, accessed 22 Jan. 2015, <http://cdm15290.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15290coll8/id/323/rec/20>.



Figure 3.49

A segregated white baseball park at Ancon in the PCZ, photograph by Ernest Hallen.<sup>367</sup>

---

<sup>367</sup>Haskin, *Panama Canal*, 298.



Figure 3.50

Interior of the Balboa Restaurant Dining Room, 1919.<sup>368</sup>

---

<sup>368</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 3 Aug. 2014, <http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/PCC%20Restaurants/pccr2.htm>.





Figure 3.51

Balboa Clubhouse circa 1916. The second floor included a reading room that was also used for screening films. The ICC clubhouses allowed women and families, unlike YMCA facilities.<sup>369</sup>

---

<sup>369</sup>Photograph, Panama Canal Zone Cyber Museum, accessed 31 July 2014, <http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Photos/photoof140.htm>.



Figure 3.52

“Old French Administration Building, Panama,” from a popular 1914 American book about the Panama Canal.<sup>370</sup>

---

<sup>370</sup>Willis John Abbot, *Panama and the Canal: The Story of Its Achievements, Its Problems and Its Prospects* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1914), 276.



Figure 3.53

Colorized postcard of the Administration Building in Balboa, the headquarters of the ICC in the Zone.<sup>371</sup>

---

<sup>371</sup>“The Administration Building, Balboa, Panama Canal Zone,” postcard, private auction website, accessed 20 Jan. 2012, <http://www.playle.com/pictures/PMK69070.jpg>.

Chapter 4 : San Diego and the Panama-California Exposition:  
Hydraulic Power, Homesteading, and Geographies of Empire

At first glance, the landscapes depicted in two photographic postcards from the early twentieth century, “View of Chagres River” (Figure 4.1) and “Desert Scene, Arizona” (Figure 4.2), reveal no apparent relationship. In 1919 the verdant rainforests on the northern Caribbean slopes of Panama averaged 179 inches of rain each year, and a downpour in 1910 deposited a record 2.5 inches of rain in just five minutes.<sup>372</sup> In the rain shadow of the Sierra Nevada, the Sonoran Desert of Arizona receives only three to fifteen inches of precipitation annually.<sup>373</sup> With one receiving as much rainfall in an hour as the other might see in a year, the postcard scenes manifest no similarities. In addition to these environmental extremes, it is also not apparent what these disparate locations have to do with San Diego.

For all their contrasts, the Arizona desert and the Panama jungle share a history of imperial bonds with San Diego in the early twentieth century. With the advent of the Panama Canal, San Diego sought to develop and capture the U.S. Southwest as its own inland empire, leveraging the jungle waterway as a means of dominating regional trade. For San Diego promoters, Panama was the gateway to control of Arizona’s agricultural production because San Diego was the first U.S. port of call on the Pacific side of the Panama Canal. These strategists

---

<sup>372</sup>H. G. Cornthwaite, “1919: Panama Rainfall,” *Monthly Weather Review* 47, no. 5 (1919): 300.

<sup>373</sup>Mrill Ingram, “Desert Storms,” in *A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert*, ed. Steven J. Phillips and Patricia Wentworth Comus (Berkeley: University of California Press/Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, 2000), 41.

believed that their city could use U.S. imperialism to become the transportation hub for the entire U.S. Southwest, by linking a new inland empire of their own to world markets with the completion of the Panama Canal. The water flowing through the Central American rainforest would lift San Diego to commercial dominance over the American desert.

The desert and the jungle also shared the common fate of subjugation by American hydraulic engineers who harnessed wild, majestic rivers like the Colorado and the Chagres. San Diego lured agricultural settlers to the interior desert valleys of California and Arizona because of massive federal irrigation projects in the West. The U.S. government recruited settlers to the Panama Canal Zone because it needed their labor for the mammoth water control project. Settlers to “the land of little rain” in the U.S. West would now be able to trade readily with the Atlantic world because of the locks and dams of Panama, built by American engineers in a land of torrential rain.<sup>374</sup> Promises of hydraulically engineered prosperity drew migrants to locations previously viewed as inhospitable to American settlement.

American empire in the tropics of Panama inspired a new wave of U.S. mainland imperial expansion on the eve of World War I, particularly across the interior valleys between San Diego and Phoenix. San Diego used its world’s fair of 1915–1916, the Panama-California Exposition (PCE), to drive immigration and development in its desert hinterland. San Diego’s efforts to forge an inland empire reveal that domestic U.S. imperialism did not evolve in a linear westward sweep across the continent. The history of the PCE also shows that instead of looking across the Pacific Ocean to Asia, San Diego primarily responded to the Panama Canal by directing its imperial reach inward.

---

<sup>374</sup>The term is from Mary Austin, *The Land of Little Rain* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1903).

## The Panama-California Exposition

San Diego and San Francisco competed bitterly for the right to hold the world's fair celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal. San Francisco boosters first announced their intent in 1904, with U.S. seizure of the PCZ, but the 1906 earthquake delayed their plans. In 1909, San Diego civic leaders announced their plans to pursue an exposition. A fierce, vitriolic battle ensued. After intense lobbying, espionage, double-crossing, and other political intrigues, Congress agreed in 1911 to authorize both cities to hold Panama expositions in 1915, although it designated San Diego's a corollary one. San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) would be the much larger of the two, international in scope, while San Diego's Panama-California Exposition (PCE) would focus on regional exhibits.

PCE boosters pitched a focus on California history, Latin America, Native Americans, and the Desert Southwest, with exhibits highlighting the region's Spanish heritage. Fair planners retained Bertram G. Goodhue, an authority on Spanish colonial architecture, to design the PCE's buildings in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. San Diego devoted 640 acres to the PCE in a 1,400-acre tract of land known as City Park. The largely undeveloped land had been the Spanish pueblo's commons. San Diego renamed it Balboa Park for the exposition, after the first European to cross the Isthmus of Panama and view the Pacific Ocean from an American shore. The PCE opened 1 January 1915 and closed 1 January 1917, attracting nearly 4 million visitors. San Diego's urban growth and tourism were the PCE's primary official goals, according to historian Matthew Bokovoy.<sup>375</sup>

---

<sup>375</sup>Matthew F. Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880–1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 36.

The PCE's regional orientation led to a focus on its Southwestern heritage, and Spanish colonial history provided fair planners with an indispensable cultural bridge between modern American empire and the tradition of Western civilization. From the earliest days of exposition planning, beginning in 1909, San Diego sought to take up the mantle of Spain's colonial legacy. According to PCE president David C. Collier, the fair "best represented the Spanish and Indian heritage of North America," and would "portray the romance, history, and beauty and the native arts of the Great Southwest and of Latin America."<sup>376</sup> The city aimed to position itself as a metropole within the former Spanish empire by assuming economic control of the U.S. Southwest, a region that had been New Spain from the sixteenth century until 1821, and Mexico until 1848. Spain, and later Mexico, loosely ruled the region known as Alta California, from the California coast inland to what became New Mexico and north to Wyoming, including Colorado, Utah, and Nevada. Spanish missionaries established San Diego as the first settlement in Alta California with a mission and a presidio, founded in 1769.<sup>377</sup> San Diego aspired to carve out a dominion for itself from the old Alta California, particularly across Arizona. San Diego also set out to trade on its status as the southern anchor of the California mission system vis-à-vis Panama Canal transit. A PCE advertising poster suggests this history and geography, Figure 4.4, indicating the California towns that the Spanish crown established as missions and presidios.

Other expositions of the era constructed Beaux-Arts buildings modeled after Greco-Roman architecture, in tribute to the Western genesis of democracy and republic. This style of architecture dominated antecedent world's fairs in Chicago (1893), Nashville (1897), St. Louis

---

<sup>376</sup>Bokovoy, *San Diego World's Fairs*, 26–27.

<sup>377</sup>David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 237–65.



(1904), and the PCE's contemporaneous fair, the PPIE in San Francisco (1915). With their classical geometry, columnar facades, triangular pediments, porticos, broad entrances, and domed rotundas in the tradition of U.S. Capitol architecture, such buildings implied democratic rule and secular government. In contrast, the PCE's Spanish architecture posed the risk of suggesting absolute monarchism and Catholic divine right. Thus in their efforts to associate San Diego with Spain's imperial power, fair designers had to carefully reconcile their affinity for Spanish architecture without evoking the Black Legend or the anti-democratic traditions of kings and popes. San Diego promoters strategically cast Spain as a symbol of the Mediterranean heart of Western civilization, and as a precedent for empire-building global power.

San Diego boosters began pursuit of this vision in the pre-exposition years.

Urban planner John Nolen drew up a compatible vision of civic redevelopment in his 1908 *San Diego: A Comprehensive Plan for Its Improvement*. According to California historian Kevin Starr, Nolen was dismayed at the haphazard growth of the city; he viewed it as “just another shabby provincial town” rather than the coastal oasis that it could be.<sup>378</sup> Nolen advocated for comprehensive aesthetic improvements to situate the city in closer harmony with its natural landscape. He proposed the development of City Park (the largely unused former Spanish commons) into a series of public parks. Nolen's plan included widening streets, removing overhead power lines, planting trees, creating squares and open spaces throughout the city, including a grand downtown plaza, and constructing an esplanade along the harbor.<sup>379</sup> Nolen

---

<sup>378</sup>Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream, 1850–1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 401.

<sup>379</sup>For a cultural history of tree cultivation in California, see Jared Farmer, *Trees in Paradise: A California History* (New York: Norton, 2013).

also proposed the building of a wide, extensive *paseo*—a Spanish-style walkway for strolling, unbroken by crossings—through the heart of the city down to San Diego Bay, lined with “flower beds, pergolas, terraces, splashing fountains, basins, and cascades.”<sup>380</sup> Nolen’s plan argued for improving San Diego’s image, and environment, by evoking the Spanish empire and emphasizing the city’s Mediterranean qualities.

The Chamber of Commerce rejected Nolen’s plan, likely because the city’s leaders were motivated by profits in real estate development rather than civic beautification. As Starr observes, “fairs were better business than urban renewal.”<sup>381</sup> Nolen’s plan did, however, influence the eventual design for the PCE grounds, with his emphasis on Spanish/Mediterranean/tropical landscaping.<sup>382</sup> The PCE board of directors adopted City Park as the site for the world’s fair.

In 1911 the PCE hired its primary architect, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, who guided the exposition in a Spanish direction. He concurred with Nolen’s vision and designed the fair to evoke the Mediterranean world, to emphasize San Diego’s similar climate, its Spanish heritage, and its closer proximity to Europe with the opening of the canal. Goodhue was a leading proponent of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, a style that became synonymous with Southern California in the early twentieth century, in large part because of the PCE. The style employed a mixture of Spanish Baroque, Spanish Colonial, Moorish Revival, Mexican Churrigueresque, and Mission Revival styles, among other influences. The Indian Arts Building

---

<sup>380</sup>Starr, *Americans and California Dream*, 402.

<sup>381</sup>Starr, *Americans and California Dream*, 402.

<sup>382</sup>Bokovoy, *San Diego World’s Fairs*, 52–54, 145.

(Figure 4.5) and California Building (Figure 4.6) are prime examples of Spanish Colonial Revival style at the PCE.<sup>383</sup> Fair planners also settled on a Mediterranean landscaping style that incorporated Spanish elements. The PCE directors liked Goodhue's vision; investment in a Mediterranean-themed world's fair offered the prospect of revenue, and it was good for branding and publicity, particularly the visual marketing campaign. As an aspect of publicity, the fair's architecture furnished a powerful visual connection to the legacy of Spanish imperialism.<sup>384</sup>

Exposition planners deliberately created a built environment that romanticized the Spanish empire. In an official postcard from the year before the fair opened (Figure 4.7), representatives of Spanish culture play music while nestled in a tropical garden beside the California Building. The scene conveys intimacy, in contrast to a performance for listeners in a formal setting. A woman in a colorful dress plays a mandolin while a *Californio* in traditional dress plays a harmonica.<sup>385</sup> The woman appears to be white and the man "off white," signaling their European descent as North American-born colonists of Spanish ancestry, or *criollos*. Their positioning "in a tropical garden" is suggestive. Such visual representations by imperial boosters of subjects of color in proximity to tropical nature usually signaled civilizational inferiority. In this postcard, however, the positioning also implies the quaintness and charm of

---

<sup>383</sup>The buildings show several signature elements: Roman arches, arcades (arched, open walkways/corridors bordering exterior walls), terraced towers, turrets, mission bells in *campanarios* (bell walls), *campaniles* (bell towers), fenestration (often arched), red tile roofs, thick, smooth stucco/concrete walls without decoration, and elaborately detailed, sculpture-encrusted facades.

<sup>384</sup>Bokovoy, *San Diego World's Fairs*, 50–55.

<sup>385</sup>The man's *Traje de Charro* suit typifies the formal *caballero* clothing worn by elite *Alto Californios*, with silver buttons sewn along the outer seams of the pants. His "sugar-loaf" hat also indicates status, as it was distinctive of upper-class *Californios*. This selection of attire signaled that he was a colonial Californian of high status, a member of the regional, racial elite.

Spanish/Mexican culture, rendering it romantic, nostalgic, and touristic. The postcard scene suggests the Progressive-era “cultural gifts”/“immigrant gifts” movement in the United States, as white arbiters decided to accept and promote selected cultural practices from among ethnic and immigrant groups. Music was particularly popular and well received among white audiences, especially the performance of ethnic folk music.<sup>386</sup>

### **Spectacles of Imperial Dominance: Botany**

Completion of the Panama Canal forged another direct link between the jungle and the desert, a connection that PCE organizers manifested in their design of the fairgrounds. From the earliest stages, exposition planners set out to turn the dry topography of the grounds into a lush showcase of tropical horticulture, in part to suggest a Mediterranean ambience. Fair designers imported plants from around the world and cultivated them in the semi-desert climate, highlighting a culmination of the transportation and irrigation technologies of hydraulic engineering. Plants from distant tropical settings that suited San Diego’s exposition plan were imported and made to thrive in the arid climate, suggesting imperial reach.

The PCE boasted a fairgrounds planted in “a wealth of vines and floriculture such as has never been seen outside of a very few royal residences in the semi-tropics.”<sup>387</sup> Mention of the

---

<sup>386</sup>See Hoganson, *Consumers’ Imperium*, esp. chap. 5, music on 213.

<sup>387</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” booklet, ([San Diego]: s.n., n.d.), n.p., box 159, fol. 1875, MS 1276, Ivancovich Family Collection, Arizona Historical Society, Tucson [hereafter cited as AHS].

living manner of monarchs invoked the luxuries and pleasures afforded to colonizers. This rhetoric of aristocratic lifestyle that the West offered to white settlers pervaded PCE and San Diego publicity, and stands in contradiction to the Jeffersonian ideal of the rugged yeomanry who were enticed to populate the West. Reconciliation of republican farmers living like royalty was apparently part of the magic of the California dream. PCE promoters sold potential settlers on the nobility of tilling the soil for a living while reassuring them that it would not be a laborious life, requiring only the harvesting of the valuable fruits and nuts that grew profusely in the California climate.

Booster references to the fair's "semi-tropic" verdure also contained a message of imperial ambition: "The horticultural exhibit itself will be contained in the largest conservatory ever built, in which will be a specimen of every plant known to the botanist."<sup>388</sup> It was a measure of imperial hubris that the PCE boasted of its power to acquire specimens from the entire world. A collection of this magnitude implied mastery of both nature and global politics. Such access and possession was surely one of the pleasures of empire.

A 1915 guidebook to the PCE included a "Horticulture" section, and boasted of the PCE's tropical landscaping throughout the grounds, especially within the showcase greenhouse: "Within the Botanical Building . . . is a rare collection of tropical and semi-tropical plants. Growing in thick profusion are the palm and bamboo, varieties of banana trees, the aralia, and many other plants found in Central and South American jungles. Above an open pool filled with lilies, drops from the ceiling a heavy growth of vitis, one of the air plants, while sweeping fronds

---

<sup>388</sup>"1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition," n.p., AHS.

of tropical ferns border the water.”<sup>389</sup> The pamphlet enumerates other “rare growths from the tropics” and claims that although they were housed in the Botanical Building, they were cultivable outdoors, year-round in San Diego’s “nearly perfect” climate. The booklet ends with “The Exposition Flora,” a guide to all of the plantings around the grounds, divided into types (trees, vines, flowers) and organized by color. The flora subsection runs for twenty-five pages and lists the national origin of each plant; they represented a sampling of ecosystems from all over the globe, and many were from the Latin American tropics.<sup>390</sup>

The PCE followed the model of modern botanic gardens, well established by the sixteenth century, that displayed the fruits of empire as Europeans ventured abroad and brought home intriguing, exotic species. The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew were archetypal of this endeavor, not simply as repositories of botany raided from around the world, but as monuments to the power of dominant states to venture where they wished and take whatever they liked. Not only were imperial states free to explore and exploit, they also possessed the requisite technologies to acquire, propagate, and sustain their global plunder, no matter the climate or environment of origin.<sup>391</sup> This degree of technological control over the environment, and the provision of such pleasure gardens to citizen-consumers, was part of the imperial aesthetic.

---

<sup>389</sup>“The Official Guide Book of the Panama-California Exposition San Diego 1915,” booklet, ([San Diego]: [Panama-California Exposition Co.], n.d.), 37, item no. Eph.917.9498.37, Panama-California Exposition Collection, Braun Research Library, Southwest Museum, The Autry National Center of the American West, Los Angeles [hereafter cited as Braun].

<sup>390</sup>“The Official Guide Book of the Panama-California Exposition San Diego 1915,” 55–79, Braun.

<sup>391</sup>“1915 All The Year, Panama-California Exposition: The San Diego Exposition,” pamphlet, ([San Diego]: Panama California Exposition Co., n.d.), n.p., item no. Eph. 917.9498.47, Panama-California Exposition Collection, Braun; “Magic Spanish City at San Diego,” *Out West Magazine* 8, no. 6 (1914): 295.

Botanical gardens were a marriage of spectacle and science, ornament and technology. San Diego's horticultural exhibit was thus a bid to join in the global contest. PCE designers collected seeds and extracted mature plants, and shipped them from around the world to California. Fair literature boasted of "huge palms, weighing 70 tons, for the removal and transportation of which twenty horses were required."<sup>392</sup> Exposition publicity claimed that the fair possessed 1.5 million plant specimens across the grounds and in greenhouses, nurseries, and lath-houses.<sup>393</sup>

Exposition horticultural displays made claims that carried a double valence: the American capacity to plunder the world for useful and attractive biological forms, and the ability of San Diego to cultivate these souvenir tropical plants in a desert environment. This claim of transnational dominance was manifest in the publicity copy from an aptly named participant, International Harvester, describing the PCE fairgrounds:

The slopes of the canyons at the Exposition grounds are filled with giant palms and ferns. Acacias in all varieties, tall eucalyptus, grevilleas, peppers, firs, cypress and other ornamental trees are assembled from all corners of the world. A five-acre grove of oranges is so cultivated that a portion is in bud, another in bloom and others in every stage of growth, including the ripened fruit, at all times. Groves of lemons, pomegranates and all California fruitbearing trees are also found. In one section are seven hundred of the finest citrus trees that could be found in all Southern California. Nearby are groves of deciduous trees and gardens and berry vines of endless variety, forming in all a complete exemplification of the economic trees and other growths, not only of the Pacific Coast, but of distant lands.<sup>394</sup>

---

<sup>392</sup>"1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition," n.p., AHS.

<sup>393</sup>"1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition," n.p., AHS.

<sup>394</sup>*Panama-Pacific International and Panama-California Expositions: Souvenir* (Chicago: International Harvester Co. Inc., 1915), n.p., subheading "San Diego Panama California Exposition."



The PCE's display of botany advertised and displayed the environmental manipulation and subjugation of nature made possible by the joint ventures of the Panama Canal, which opened the world to easy access by the United States, and the federal water reclamation projects that enabled California to dominate the West. Americans were engineering the Southwest as a global botanical garden, a re-creation of the world's harvest in an irrigated desert nursery.

### **Romanticizing Spain's Imperial Heritage in the Southwest**

In addition to drawing on a romantic, nostalgic aesthetic associated with the Spanish past, PCE promoters also stressed a modern, technological one embodied by the U.S. present. The PCE presented San Diego as the gateway to both the past and the future; as California historian Kevin Starr has observed, the fair tried to capture "the romance of the past and the promise of modernity;" it was a city "poised between past and present, glimpsing the modern but filled with nostalgia for an imagined past."<sup>395</sup> This sentimentalism for the old Spanish Southwest while exalting U.S. progress was inherently contradictory, yet the PCE managed to offer both.<sup>396</sup>

In order to reconcile tensions between the two imperial models, the PCE claimed that the rapidly expanding U.S. empire expressed a logical progression possessing the best of both worlds. Spain's empire was a flawed prologue, destined for subsumption by U.S. imperialism, but it had infused California and the Southwest with a rich, romantic culture. As María

---

<sup>395</sup>Starr, *Americans and California Dream*, 404, 405.

<sup>396</sup>For some of the other contradictions inherent in Southern California's history, e.g. corporatization vs. republicanism and landed independence for whites only, see Henry Knight, *Tropic of Hope: California, Florida, and the Selling of American Paradise, 1869–1929* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013), 197 and passim.

DeGuzmán argues in *Spain's Long Shadow*, the United States viewed “Orientalized, racialized, and primitivized Spain . . . as a vanquished imperialist over and around whose abjected body the Anglo-American empire might be erected.”<sup>397</sup> This ideological construction cast U.S. empire as an “antiempire, innocent of the barbarities of the Spanish Empire.”<sup>398</sup> In taking up Spain’s mantle, the PCE cast California not as an oppressive overlord of native peoples or the conqueror of Mexico, but as an innocent inheritor of an undeveloped territory.

Despite its many flaws (in Anglo-American eyes), Spain was nonetheless an “ethnically white” (“off-white,” in DeGuzmán’s term), European, Christian nation.<sup>399</sup> These relative status markers naturalized Spain’s founding of a global empire, yet its de-emphasized Black Legend transgressions made imperial dissolution seem justified and inevitable. United States seizure of Spanish colonies was thus an inevitable progression of Manifest Destiny. The outcome of U.S. victory over Spain in 1898 was not the alleged liberation of the colonized territories, but rather their repositioning within a putatively more modern, democratic, benevolent American empire.

PCE boosters claimed that San Diego was uniquely positioned to take up the imperial inheritance of Spain, and promised to exhibit the cultural legacy of the Southwest at their fair to substantiate the claim. San Diego’s status as a regional fair led it to pursue an “ethnological collection, ancient and modern, especially the congress of Indian Nations of North and South America, gathered in characteristic villages, engaged in their native occupations.”<sup>400</sup> San Diego

---

<sup>397</sup>María DeGuzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xxv.

<sup>398</sup>DeGuzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow*, xxv.

<sup>399</sup>DeGuzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow*, xxvii.

<sup>400</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

declared its proximity to, and special understanding of, Native Americans of the desert Southwest, a claim that San Francisco could not assert. The PCE would depict conquered races that were rapidly disappearing, making their study at the fair a rare opportunity for public exposure and education.<sup>401</sup> This publicity goal coincided with San Diego's aim of an inland empire in the Southwest, since cataloguing conquered peoples was a prerequisite for rule.

Like the visual references to the Spanish colonial period, the Indian exhibit at the PCE reveals American nostalgia for the pre-modern era. The "Painted Desert" exhibit extolled primitivism, a belief in the superiority of a simpler or less sophisticated way of life. As Leah Dilworth notes, primitivism functions self-reflexively and is often reactionary to modernity, industrialization, and "alienated individualism."<sup>402</sup> Recruitment copy directed at white tourists and potential settlers often emphasized the alienation from modern life that many Americans felt, and a growing desire to return to the land and live off of it.<sup>403</sup> PCE publicity materials fed the dream of leading a simpler life than was possible in industrialized cities. California promised settlers an escape to a less enervating, less dependent way of life. The campaign appeared successful in terms of population growth, as San Diego more than doubled in just six years, from 39,750 in 1909, when exposition planning began, to 100,000 by 1915, the year the fair opened.<sup>404</sup>

---

<sup>401</sup>"1915 All The Year, Panama-California Exposition," n.p., Braun.

<sup>402</sup>Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 4.

<sup>403</sup>"Magic Spanish City," 293.

<sup>404</sup>Starr, *Americans and California Dream*, 402.

## San Diego's Domestic Empire

San Diego fair promoters emphasized their connections to Southwestern markets and sources of culture to distinguish the region from San Francisco, their more powerful exposition rival. San Diego's imperial gaze thus fell upon the desert Southwest as a tributary and the Panama Canal as a conduit to the U.S. East Coast and Europe—particularly with the connections to Spanish and Mediterranean cultures and hopes of white immigration from the east.

Exposition literature contains recurrent characterizations of the interior region as a dependency of San Diego, primarily through structures of transportation and irrigation. As a PCE booster wrote in a 1915 article in *Sunset Magazine*: “The operation of the Canal brings about the certain development of the tremendous resources of the West. . . . It is the possibilities of this vast empire which San Diego will tell.”<sup>405</sup> San Diegans calculated that they could take advantage of irrigation canals and railroad routes to forge a dependency out of the Southwest up to the Mississippi Valley, including Southern California and the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado—the old Alta California. The opening of the Panama Canal would draw rail shipment of agricultural goods produced west of the Mississippi River to San Diego, where they could then be shipped around the world via the new canal.<sup>406</sup> PCE organizers

---

<sup>405</sup>Walter V. Woehlke, “The Land of Sunny Homes,” *Sunset Magazine*, March 1915, 466.

<sup>405</sup>“San Diego: All the Year 1915 Panama California Exposition,” pamphlet, ([San Diego]: s.n., n.d.), n.p., MS 200, box 92, fol. “San Diego, California—Panama-California Exposition, 1915–1916,” California Ephemera Collection, 1860–, Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles Special Collections [hereafter cited as Young].

<sup>406</sup>*Exposition News (San Diego)* 1, no. 3 (1912): n.p.; “Magic Spanish City,” 299, 301.

estimated that the inland empire produced “each year \$143,000,000 in farm products alone.”<sup>407</sup>

At the very least, San Diego aspired to ship those products.

The greater vision was to profit from the flow of humans who would pursue the dream of Western homesteading. As PCE publicity material put it, “irrigation, reclamation, and those methods of development which are calculated to induce immigration and colonization will be specialized, and, by intelligent treatment of these subjects, immigration to the counties, states and countries represented will be induced.”<sup>408</sup> San Diego boosters hoped to capitalize both on produce and producers, transshipment of goods and immigration of settlers. The PCE offered promoters a marketing tool for the Southwestern empire that they coveted, to lure new residents to Southern California and to capture a larger market share of regional shipping.

San Diego proclaimed itself the core urban area between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Coast and declared that it could both serve the Southwestern hinterland and draw tribute from it. Fair publicity declared “San Diego is holding this exposition because it is the first port of call on the west coast of the United States north of the Panama Canal, and the natural seaport of a large tributary inland country.”<sup>409</sup> The slogan became something of a mantra and was often repeated, as in a 1913 *Sunset Magazine* article entitled “San Diego: First Port of Call.”<sup>410</sup>

The “tributary” rhetoric’s double meaning was appropriate given the system of water reclamation in the U.S. Southwest and the geography of San Diego as a Pacific access point. A

---

<sup>407</sup>“San Diego: All the Year 1915,” n.p., Young.

<sup>408</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>409</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>410</sup>Agnes C. Laut, “San Diego: First Port of Call,” *Sunset Magazine* 30, no. 2 (1913): 110-120.

PCE booklet linking the fate of San Diego to the Panama Canal explained the connection to empire:

The Canal . . . makes the Pacific coast line an extension of the Atlantic coast line in regard to European trade. It means that we can develop our rich and fertile valleys to grow the raw products, to utilize the vast deposits of coal and oil, to harness the rivers now flowing down our mountain sides, to develop the power to manufacture the raw article into the finished produce and supply the markets of the world. It means the building of a new empire upon the Pacific Coast of which San Diego is the first port of call.<sup>411</sup>

The Panama Canal and the railroads would connect the desert backcountry to the Pacific Ocean and the world, with San Diego as a regional metropole for the growing empire. San Diegans eyed the vast lands of the Southwest that could be brought into their empire: “This exposition will call attention in a forceful way to the vast areas of good, but at the present time unproductive land in the states of the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast regions, and all of the states that have a comparatively small population today, but where there area a natural resources capable of development to sustain a population as dense as any country in the world.”<sup>412</sup> On the eve of the exposition, eight million acres in the inland empire were under development and cultivation, producing an estimated \$150 million in annual revenues, but promoters calculated that forty-four million acres were currently “untouched,” with potential revenues of an additional \$800 million per year.<sup>413</sup> San Diego fair planners intended to pull this territory into the city’s orbit and extract

---

<sup>411</sup>R. M. Johnson, Earl W. Hill, and Harry G. Seber, *Panama Canal Extravaganza* (San Diego: Moyer Co., [1916]), 18.

<sup>412</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>413</sup>“Magic Spanish City,” 301.

tribute. The San Diego plan was “to induce immigration” from every county, state, and country that it could reach via the Panama-California Exposition.<sup>414</sup>

### **Incorporating the Spanish Legacy: Defining Imperial Whiteness**

In keeping with its architecture, the gardens of the PCE emphasized tropical and southern Mediterranean plants that evoked both the Southern European connections expanded by the canal and the Spanish/Mexican traditions of the colonial era.<sup>415</sup> The result would be a disarming exposition setting, one that aimed to depoliticize the very themes that it dealt with—U.S. imperialism “at home” in the desert Southwest and “abroad” in the Panama Canal Zone.

Because San Diego sought to capitalize on its Spanish legacy, *La Leyenda Negra*, the Black Legend of Spanish colonial rule that Anglophones had developed and publicized for centuries, was handled diplomatically at the PCE. This was a noteworthy diversion from an ancient narrative. The coerced labor of indigenous peoples by the Catholic mission system had been the central focus of English critiques of Spanish colonial rule from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. The Spanish system of *encomienda*, developed and practiced by Columbus at the beginning of Spanish conquest, endured with modifications until the era of Latin American independence in the nineteenth century. Encomienda provided land grants to Spanish colonists that included slave labor from the native peoples who resided on the conquered land. The Black

---

<sup>414</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>415</sup>Starr, *Americans and California Dream*, 407; Carleton Monroe Winslow, *The Architecture and the Gardens of the San Diego Exposition* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1916).



Legend also publicized the operation of the Spanish Inquisition, Catholic tribunals that interrogated and tortured indigenous populations in the New World in an effort to assure complete and authentic conversion and conformity to Catholicism. Internal Spanish debates and indictments over slavery, genocide, and brutality under the *encomienda* system that Bartolomeo de las Casas (1484–1566) articulated throughout the first half of the 1500s became the prime exhibit in English denunciations. Las Casas's eyewitness, polemical account of the genocidal nature of Spanish colonialism, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1552), was quickly translated into English and distributed throughout Europe. Although every European nation involved in the era of New World colonial competition participated in the Atlantic slave trade, English Protestants singled out Catholic Spain for condemnation because of Spain's unique system of large-scale, coerced labor among the *Indios* of Spanish America.<sup>416</sup> The Black Legend provided a convenient distraction from the Anglo-American heritage of African slavery in the New World.

Rather than excoriating their colonial predecessors over the Black Legend, since that would have made the inheritance seem problematic, PCE planners instead chose to romanticize the Spanish colonial era. American promoters did not want to taint the American regime by association, or be perceived as following in the footsteps of colonial oppression and coercive violence. Instead, PCE literature presented a nostalgic version of Spanish colonialism, represented by patios and bougainvillea, caballeros with guitars, dancing señoritas with castanets, stucco and mission bells. PCE publicity expunged Indian slave labor and the

---

<sup>416</sup>For an overview of the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, English, and French trades in African slaves, see D. W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*, vol. 1, *Atlantic America, 1492–1800* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986).

Inquisition. San Diego's promotional literature instead engaged in imperial solidarity with the "off-white" Spanish.

PCE boosters built on what they saw as a Spanish foundation for white American settlement. Along with proximity to the canal's western approach and predictions of the trade and development that the Panama Canal's opening would create, San Diego claimed the precedent of being "the first white settlement on the Pacific coast of what is now United States territory."<sup>417</sup> As a result, PCE popular literature spoke glowingly of the Spanish colonial era, the European settlers that it had brought, the beautiful system of missions they built in California, their construction of the north-south artery of El Camino Real, and the early agricultural outposts that the friars established.<sup>418</sup>

The Spanish legacy of colonialism in the U.S. Southwest that the San Diego fair staged thus stood as a significant departure from the traditional Anglo-American narrative. Despite the fact that the U.S. took the Southwest and much of the West from an independent Mexico as the spoils of the U.S.–Mexico War of 1846–1848, San Diego boosters now cast the American West as a world more Spanish than Mexican, and Spain as a former colonial empire thoroughly cleansed of brutality and oppression. Although there were references to the "backwardness" of the Spanish administration of Latin America, boosters nostalgically refashioned the colonial era for their purposes and made it peaceful and picturesque. A fair brochure described the idyllic setting: "The architecture is all of the Spanish Colonial type, and the grouping of the buildings is

---

<sup>417</sup>*Official View Book, Panama-California International Exposition, San Diego, California* (San Diego: J. L. Eno, 1916), n.p., pamphlet, item no. Eph. 725.9109794987 P36, vert. file Panama California Exposition, Braun.

<sup>418</sup>"Magic Spanish City," 291.

so arranged that the complete whole resembles a picturesque medieval city amid tropical verdure.”<sup>419</sup> San Diego imperialists depicted a benign provenance for Spanish colonialism. No longer a rival nation, Spain within the bounds of the PCE represented an legacy example of the beauty of empire. The past was now comfortably quaint, not coercive, and the present was characterized by the limitless potential for American development of the land that the Spanish had failed to fully exploit. Despite Spain’s deficits in American eyes, it was nonetheless charming and picturesque, and it offered cultural gifts.

An illustration from a PCE souvenir book typifies the mythos of Western colonization to which San Diego laid claim.<sup>420</sup> It portrays the towers and domes of the exposition floating up in the sky surrounded by clouds as a heavenly vision. On the ground directly below the floating city a friar stands on a small hill or *cerrito*, his arms raised in veneration while holding a staff topped with a crucifix. Behind the priest there is a mission building. To the priest’s right, Indians on a hilltop express reverence; some are holding crude spears and raising their arms to heaven, while others sit cross-legged on the ground. All are depicted (stereotypically and inaccurately) in the style of Plains Indians, bare-chested, in feathered headdresses and breechcloths. On the left side of the panel, Spanish conquistadors occupy a counterpoised hilltop. They are all in full armor, in *comb morion* helmets, chain mail, breastplates, and metal gauntlets, brandishing steel lances much larger than the Indians’ wooden weapons. Unlike the

---

<sup>419</sup>*Panama-Pacific International Souvenir*, (International Harvester Co.,) n.p.

<sup>420</sup>“Official Views: San Diego Panama-California Exposition,” pamphlet, ([San Diego]: [Panama-California Exposition Co.], n.d.), n.p., box 159, fol. 1875, MS 1276, Ivancovich Family Collection, AHS.

Indians, all of the Spaniards are standing. In the background of the tableaux lurk two Spanish galleons, backing up the imperial grip of the conquistadors no matter what the native reception. The portrayed reception, however, is one of passive submission before the ostensibly superior Christian, European invaders, thus obviating a retelling of the Black Legend.

Exposition visual publicity trafficked in racial and ethnic stereotypes designed to appeal to white visitors and viewers and thus make the new brand of imperialism comfortable. Caricatures appear throughout PCE souvenir booklets, photographs, and postcards. Geographically misplaced Plains Indians were portrayed in teepees with eagle-feather bonnets. Mexican men appear in repose beside agaves with sombreros pulled over their faces in stereotypical siesta compositions. A photo captioned “The Kiva in the Painted Desert of the Santa Fe, Showing Dog Dance” shows some of the Indian men in feathers, performing a sacred dance for gawking, ticket-holding whites.<sup>421</sup>

In carrying forward the ideology of empire, PCE and Panama Canal boosters had to tackle the problem of luring white settlers to non-temperate zones. British experts had testified in the nineteenth century to the impossibility of white settlement in the jungles of the British Empire.<sup>422</sup> Dr. Alfred Balfour, director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, declared that white people could not survive in the tropics: “So far as the race is concerned I am persuaded that the hot and humid tropics are not suited to white colonization and never will be with our present knowledge, even if they are rendered as free from disease as

---

<sup>421</sup>“Official Views: San Diego PCE,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>422</sup>Glenn T. Trewartha, “Recent Thought on the Problem of White Acclimatization in the Wet Tropics,” *Geographical Review* 16, no. 3 (1926): 467–78.

England.”<sup>423</sup> Others asserted that any hot climate, whether arid or tropical, fostered torpor and determined the desultory nature of indigenous cultures in those areas.<sup>424</sup> Having divided the world into temperate and torrid zones, and having then racialized this geography to assign immutable characteristics, San Diego’s proponents of inland empire were at now pains to sell the idea that white settlers could indeed successfully inhabit the desert Southwest. Internal settlement would require a fundamental shift in public opinion.

According to San Diego fair boosters, both the desert Southwest and the Panama Canal demonstrated white American triumph over the Spanish colonial past. A 1915 article in *Sunset Magazine* offered readers a summary of what Southern California had been like only a few years before: “It was isolated, half Spanish, without railroad connections, dusty in summer, muddy in winter, a typical part of the Southwestern cow country. . . . Lean longhorns and sonorous Castilian names were its principal possessions.”<sup>425</sup> In sharp contrast, a postcard from 1915, Figure 4.12, pictures an entirely different world. The advent of U.S. irrigation had transformed the dust-blown desert borderlands into a fruiting and flowering Eden.

The Panama Canal represented a comparable American triumph over the old Spanish empire through technological dominance. Spain had considered an isthmian canal since the sixteenth century but was baffled by the engineering challenges. It finally settled for a trans-isthmian highway paved with stones and traversed by pack mule trains (see Figure 4.13). PCE promoters contrasted this reliance upon jungle paths and beasts of burden with an account of the

---

<sup>423</sup>Balfour, quoted in Trewartha, “Recent Thought on Tropics,” 467.

<sup>424</sup>Linda Nash, *Inescapable Ecologies: A History of Environment, Disease, and Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

<sup>425</sup>Woehlke, “Sunny Homes,” 463.

daring construction of the trans-isthmian railway by the U.S.-owned Panama Railroad Company.<sup>426</sup> The railroad clearly served as a preview of the engineering achievements of the canal, foreshadowing even greater American glory in Panama.

### **The Machine in the Garden: Aesthetic Linkages between Desert and Jungle**

The railroad was key to both the settlement of the U.S. West and the creation of the Panama Canal. With completion of the Panama Railroad in 1855, and the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869, Americans were well aware of the integral role that rail played in settlement and development. Historical analysis has, however, often overlooked the aesthetic appeal of these railroads.

Leo Marx has written eloquently about the theme of “the machine in the garden,” as the expansion of railroads in the American East created tensions between the ideal of a pastoral landscape and the pursuit of technological progress. Marx asks us to “consider how the spectacle of the machine in a virgin land must have struck the mind.”<sup>427</sup> The anxieties regarding urban development and the loss of the natural world that beset Eastern residents of the United States in the nineteenth century did not apply to the question of the desert Southwest or the Panama Canal. California’s Imperial Valley was not Walden Pond. Instead of destroying an Eden in the West, technology created one. Without massive irrigation projects and transcontinental railroads, there

---

<sup>426</sup>Johnson et al., *Panama Canal Extravaganza*, 5.

<sup>427</sup>Marx, *Machine in the Garden*, 206.

would have been no Southwestern agriculture, no blossoming of the American desert (Figure 4.12, Figure 4.27).

The PCE represented railroads as central to modernity. The investment of sugar magnate and San Diego promoter John D. Spreckels in the Santa Fe rail line across the southern United States in the 1890s saved San Diego from backwater status. The Santa Fe Railway rushed to build a vast new depot in San Diego in time for the opening of the PCE. The Santa Fe Railway was a main sponsor of the PCE, providing financing and corporate expertise to its directors. Most visibly, the Santa Fe oversaw the “Painted Desert” Indian exhibit at the PCE, designed by premier Fred Harvey architect Mary Colter. The PCE and the Santa Fe Railway developed close ties, in hopes of promoting tourism, migration, and agriculture for both the company’s profits and San Diego’s future as a dominant force in the Desert Southwest.<sup>428</sup>

The Santa Fe Railway put San Diego on the map in the 1890s, and provided the main source of transit for the millions of visitors to the PCE in 1915–1916. The Santa Fe, which ran through northern Arizona with a connecting line to Phoenix, also offered San Diego the opportunity to capture Arizona as an economic tributary. In addition, the railroad promised the possibility of large-scale migration to California, one of the PCE’s main goals.

One of San Diego’s cherished dreams, a direct rail line from San Diego to Yuma, Arizona, was in the planning stages at the turn of the century but did not materialize in time for the PCE. City and exposition boosters longed for a direct rail line through San Diego’s interior, to enable real estate and agricultural development as well as trade with Arizona. Spreckels broke

---

<sup>428</sup>Bokovoy, *San Diego World’s Fair*, 18–19, 68–70; James N. Price, “The Railroad Stations of San Diego County,” *Journal of San Diego History* 34, no. 2 (Spring 1988): 122; Richard Crawford, “New Santa Fe Depot Nearly Sidetracked,” *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 30 Jan. 2010, CZ1.



ground on the San Diego and Arizona Railway in 1906, raising the hopes of PCE boosters that it might be completed in time for the fair. The 148-mile route between San Diego and Yuma nearly circumvented San Diego County, dipping south of the U.S.-Mexico border because of the Pacific Coastal Range that dominates the county (Figure 4.16). The railway bore north into Imperial County and connected there with the Southern Pacific Railroad in El Centro for service to Arizona, eventually fueling agricultural production in the Imperial Valley. However, engineering difficulties, the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), natural disasters, World War I, labor shortages, and the influenza epidemic of 1918 all delayed completion until 1919, delaying fair-driven dreams of settler immigration.<sup>429</sup>

Promoters of the exposition and the city did succeed in lobbying for a new train station in San Diego to receive fair visitors and prospective settlers. The San Francisco architectural firm of Bakewell and Brown designed the new Union Station for the Santa Fe railroad (Figure 4.18). Workers razed the old Santa Fe Depot, a Gothic-style building inadequate in capacity for the anticipated flood of fair visitors. Santa Fe workers built a new Mission Revival Style building that complemented the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style of the PCE. San Diego's Union Station stood as the grandest Santa Fe depot in the West. Its twin campaniles, inlaid with red tile, became iconic, as did the station's massive arch. The station included a Fred Harvey Company dining room, lunch counter, and a souvenir shop that carried PCE publicity materials.

---

<sup>429</sup>See Robert M. Hanft, *San Diego and Arizona: The Impossible Railroad* (Glendale, CA: Trans-Anglo Books, n.d. [ca.1984]); John A. Wilson, "Formidable Places: Building a Railroad in the Carriso [sic] Gorge," *Journal of San Diego History* 40, no. 4 (Fall 1994): 179.

The new Union Station opened in March 1915, to accommodate fairgoers. The station served both the Santa Fe and the San Diego and Arizona Railways.<sup>430</sup>

These advances in railroad development not only facilitated greater commerce and migration, they also contributed to the aura of technological supremacy that pervaded the imperial decade. Photographs of Carrizo Gorge, as in Figure 4.17, were intended to impress and even amaze the viewer. For this reason, Carrizo Gorge became the logo of the San Diego & Arizona Railway (Figure 4.16), but it also represented a larger concept—American mastery over a hostile terrain that required imperial dominance. Tunneling through and bridging Carrizo Gorge, like excavating the Culebra Cut, represented design ingenuity and sheer determination. A San Diego & Arizona Railway map (Figure 4.16) includes a cross-section of the elevation of the mountains that workers had to blast and dig through, with the Carrizo Gorge tunnel just east of the San Diego County–Imperial County line. Comparable images of other engineering feats proliferated during the 1910s, including the route of the Santa Fe Railway line, Figure 4.19, and the Panama Canal, as shown in Figure 4.20, with the Culebra Cut visible as the peak elevation in the profile graphic. Such images offered graphic evidence that American imperialists would not accept topographic or environmental limits to their expansionist designs.

Maps represent ideological statements, as several geographers and historians have noted. Art historian Diane Dillon observes that the decisions about what maps include and exclude are always ultimately political ones, reflecting the perspective of the cartographer.<sup>431</sup> The maps

---

<sup>430</sup>Donald Duke, *Santa Fe: The Railroad Gateway to the American West* (San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1995).

<sup>431</sup>Michael P. Conzen and Diane Dillon, eds., *Mapping Manifest Destiny: Chicago and the American West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press/Newberry Library, 2007), 8.

shown of rail lines in the U.S. West and the course of the Panama Canal do not indicate the locations or identities of indigenous peoples, their ancestral homelands, their cultural regions, their displacement, or pre-conquest boundaries. Instead, the maps naturalize the centering of elevation changes that preoccupied U.S. developers, privileging engineering considerations above all else. By including mountain ranges but excluding first nations, the maps highlighted American access to former “wilderness,” falsely suggesting that these areas had been uninhabited prior to white settlement.

Imperial boosters could point to railroads, dams, and canals across the U.S. West and in the PCZ as evidence of the nation’s superior level of civilization and its right to colonize undeveloped territories. Infrastructure enabled imperial domination, but boosters also realized that it made good publicity material. Images like Carrizo Gorge (echoing images of Panama’s geographic wonders) presented a scenic vista, symbolic of the beauty of conquest. Promoters helped to create the sense of American entitlement to impose empire through the public relations culture that they produced, a culture that portrayed imperial ascendancy as modern and awe-inspiring, and above all admirable and attractive.

### **Hydraulic Empire at Home: Arizona Irrigation Colonialism**

Yuma marked the connecting midpoint between California and Arizona, and boosters declared it “likely to become one of the largest and most important centers in the new empire which in a few years will flourish.”<sup>432</sup> Phoenix had grown from a territorial outpost to a city that

---

<sup>432</sup>“A New, Great City, a New Highway, a New Railroad,” *Exposition News (San Diego)* 1, no. 3 (Feb. 1912): n.p.

increasingly relied upon San Diego for shipping and transit, and PCE planners anticipated that the Panama Canal would only intensify this relationship: “In these days there is never a public function held in the city of San Diego, without Phoenix figuring prominently in the proceedings.”<sup>433</sup> Developers scrutinized farmland surrounding Phoenix for potential profits, and they identified an agricultural community on its northwestern border as a prime location for linkage to San Diego’s inland empire: “Glendale and the country tributary is truly an oasis in the desert. There are forty thousand acres of this unparalleled land tributary to Glendale.”<sup>434</sup> The boosters’ repeated use of the word “tributary” reveals the imperial bent of their thought.

PCE promoters pronounced the agrarian settlements in Arizona classless societies, just as Southern California was purported to be. Phoenix was “one of those rare places that makes the same irresistible appeal to the man with a fortune and his brother in search of one.”<sup>435</sup> This gloss was likely part sales-pitch and part gospel of American exceptionalism that held up the frontier as the antidote for the excesses of wealth and poverty that afflicted the urban East. A 1912 exposition publicity newspaper proclaimed:

These orchard lands . . . will doubtless support a large population, as ten acres of oranges will keep an American family—in the Rooseveltian sense, in comfort. . . . The land on which these marvels can be accomplished may be purchased within six miles of Phoenix, in cultivation today, with an assured water supply. . . . Intensely farmed, these properties yield a revenue of from twenty to forty per cent. These lands being all under the Roosevelt Reclamation project, eliminates practically all risks of failure and makes farming here a sure thing.<sup>436</sup>

---

<sup>433</sup>“Progressive Phoenix,” *Exposition News (San Diego)* 1, no. 3 (Feb. 1912): n.p.

<sup>434</sup>“Glendale, Arizona: The Garden City,” *Exposition News (San Diego)* 1, no. 3 (Feb. 1912): n.p.

<sup>435</sup>“Glendale, Arizona: The Garden City,” n.p.

<sup>436</sup>“Progressive Phoenix,” n.p.

The mention of the “Rooseveltian family” refers to large families with numerous children, in keeping with Theodore Roosevelt’s injunctions to white Americans to stave off “race suicide” through procreation.<sup>437</sup> The orchard’s revenues would be sufficient to support the many children who would in turn be needed to work during the harvest. In such PCE publicity copy, “Rooseveltian Reclamation” would enable more Americans to become farmers, and it would foster a society of family farming on small, ten-acre plots in the West, rather than making a gift of public water to agribusiness.

Exposition publicity proclaimed the importance of Western irrigation to San Diego’s imperial future.<sup>438</sup> President Roosevelt signed the National Reclamation (Newland) Act in 1902, rapidly accelerating hydraulic engineering. Rivers were forced off course, dams created reservoirs, and impoundment water was pumped through hydroelectric turbines and channeled through elaborate irrigation canal systems. PCE promoters declared before a 1910 Senate hearing: “the San Diego exposition is to be devoted to a demonstration of irrigation, cultivation,

---

<sup>437</sup> A 1913 publication referred to the “Rooseveltian family” as one with many mouths to feed, in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference of Charities and Corrections* (Madison: Democratic Printing Co., 1913), 38. A federal tax credit proposed in 1913 would have applied only to the first two children, which produced vehement protests from the ex-president himself that it discriminated against the “Rooseveltian family” and would lead to race suicide, in Roy G. Blakey, “Income Tax Discrimination and Differentiation,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 13 (1914): 227. A journal article in 1913 compared the “Rooseveltian family” to the *Mother Goose* rhyme of “the old woman who lived in a shoe” and also mentioned the fight against race suicide, in William Hughes Mearns, “Simple Simon and Other Real Persons,” *English Journal* 2 (Jan.–Dec. 1913): 375. A 1909 Unitarian journal referred to a family as “the Rooseveltian type” because it contained twelve children, in Jane A. Stewart, “The Tennyson Family,” *Christian Register*, 5 Aug. 1909, 832.

<sup>438</sup> “1915 All The Year Panama-California Exposition,” n.p., Braun; “Magic Spanish City,” 299.

and reforestation of arid lands and of the development and resources of the great Southwest.”<sup>439</sup>

Without water diversion, San Diego had no hopes of large-scale development.

As was true elsewhere, people of color did the most difficult labor of reclamation.

Members of the Apache nation from a reservation north of Phoenix dug the construction road between Theodore Roosevelt Dam and Phoenix by hand, a route subsequently known as the Apache Trail.<sup>440</sup> Employment of Apache men to provide the hard work necessary to realize the grand engineering enterprise of Roosevelt Dam parallels the use of Antillean laborers to perform the most arduous tasks in building the Panama Railroad and the Panama Canal, and Chinese labor on the Transcontinental Railroad. In all of these cases, the contributions of peoples of color were hidden beneath celebrations of white engineering mastery, in promotional materials designed by elite men for a dominant white audience.

Publicity leading up to the San Diego fair opportunistically linked the Salt River Project in central Arizona, and its dam named after the imperial president, to the dam being built in Panama: “San Diego hopes to welcome the shipping of the world by reason of the construction of the Panama Canal, and that waterway was only rendered possible by the Gatun Dam. Phoenix is the centre of a paradise of farms, created from an arid waste by the Roosevelt Dam.”<sup>441</sup>

---

<sup>439</sup>U.S. Senate, *The Panama-Pacific and Panama-California Expositions: Hearings before the Committee on Industrial Expositions, 62d Congress, S.J. Res. 43* (Washington DC: GPO, 1912), 8.

<sup>440</sup>Shaun McKinnon, “Roosevelt Dam Is the Cornerstone of Phoenix-Area Growth,” *Arizona Republic*, 18 Mar. 2011, <http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2011/03/18/20110318phoenix-growth-roosevelt-dam-impact.html>.

<sup>441</sup>“Progressive Phoenix,” n.p.

Americans delivered and diverted water in the desert and in the rainforest, defying both scarcity and abundance. Roosevelt championed the hydraulic engineering projects in both environments, and when the former president visited Roosevelt Dam for the dedication ceremony on 18 March 1911, he shouted to the adoring crowd that “the two great achievements of his administration” were the Reclamation Act and the Panama Canal.<sup>442</sup> The PCE reciprocated by singing his praises in 1912: “It is this gigantic piece of engineering, secured by an ambitious and energetic community, with the help of a great, big American, to confer a splendid benefit upon mankind at large, that has attracted the attention of the world to Phoenix. It is the great dam that has marshaled irrigation experts and all their allied workers, from all over the universe, on the banks of the Salt River. There they have come and seen and wondered.”<sup>443</sup>

With Roosevelt Dam and Lake, begun in 1905 and completed in 1911, water flowed through the Salt River Project canal system, and PCE promoters and San Diego developers calculated that the area around Phoenix could be “divided into six thousand farms, with an average of forty acres each. It is estimated that 300,000 may be prosperously supported.”<sup>444</sup> As the Salt River Project irrigation system expanded and land pressures grew, the advertised size of a farm necessary to enable sustainable operation was steadily lowered, allowing developers to increasingly subdivide the remaining available tracts.

The white conquest of nature in the West included the controlled placement of Native Americans, whom fair designers and city boosters viewed as part of the landscape itself.

---

<sup>442</sup>“Water for Phoenix: Building the Roosevelt Dam,” *Journal of Arizona History* 18, no. 3 (1977): 279–80.

<sup>443</sup>“Progressive Phoenix,” n.p.

<sup>444</sup>“Progressive Phoenix,” n.p.



Descriptions of Native Americans in PCE publicity relegated them to the category of ancient peoples lacking hydraulic technology. A 1912 fair brochure promoting settlement in the Southwest described the history of the Indians in what became Arizona:

Ruins, majestic in their magnitude and antiquity, demonstrate that in bygone ages, before Columbus was born, some prehistoric people had subjected the rich valleys of Arizona. The crumbling, stony fabrics, still stand. But the Indians that followed were awed by the buildings and knew not the magic of the fresh water canal. The Spaniards dubbed these valleys “The Land That God Forgot.” Then came the Anglo-Saxon, aggressive and ingenious. He has been irrigating and prospering from the early days, but progress was pedestrian until the people of Phoenix and the farmers of the Salt River Valley persuaded President Roosevelt to father their scheme for the construction of a dam that would change 240,000 acres into the most fertile soil under God’s skies.<sup>445</sup>

In fact, Native Americans in the Southwest practiced intensive cultivation and irrigation for a millennium. But the Hohokam of southern Arizona did not irrigate via a centralized bureaucracy of federally funded dam and canal infrastructure within a capitalist economy.<sup>446</sup> This demarcation between “primitive” and modern indicates that the criteria were not actually productivity, self-sufficiency, or agriculture, but rather the sort of large-scale Western water engineering projects that Roosevelt “fathered,” ones that facilitated white empire building.

---

<sup>445</sup>“Glendale, Arizona: The Garden City,” n.p.

<sup>446</sup>Donald Worster, *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 32–36. For an illustrated history of Hohokam (ca. 600–1450 CE) irrigation in the Phoenix area, see Jerry B. Howard, “Hohokam Legacy: Desert Canals,” *Water History*, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://www.waterhistory.org/histories/hohokam2/>.

## **Luring Homesteaders – Recruiting the “Landless Man” to a “Manless Land”**

With so much irrigation and railroad infrastructure in place by the early twentieth century, PCE boosters could focus on the remaining component of their inland empire: the recruitment of white settlers to bolster the population of their small city. Upon commencement of the U.S. canal project in Panama, a broad group of San Diegans viewed their city as perfectly positioned to take advantage of the white immigration that would ensue. Promoters espoused the idea that restless Americans and Europeans would take advantage of the shortened distance to the American West and the availability of allegedly affordable land there, and relocate to California and Arizona in significant numbers. A PCE publicity brochure spoke of the boosters’ desire to recruit the “landless man” to a region that they declared a “manless land,” balancing the two deficits.<sup>447</sup>

With universal hunger for land as the bedrock of American independence, combined with the Western agricultural boom enabled by irrigation and railroads, and San Diego’s new proximity to Europe via the Panama Canal, PCE boosters believed that a flood of new Anglo-European settlers seemed inevitable: “Every state in the great western half of North America is exhibiting its developed and undeveloped resources to be examined and decided upon, and thousands of discontented, land-hungry men in the United States and Europe will come to San Diego to see and decide for themselves.”<sup>448</sup> San Diegans proclaimed that they would win this

---

<sup>447</sup>“1915 All The Year, Panama-California Exposition,” n.p., Braun.

<sup>448</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

contest because of the advantages bestowed by the Panama Canal and their connections to Arizona, making their port city more appealing than other locations in the West.

An early publicity brochure for the PCE mapped out the geography of San Diego's hoped-for inland colonies. In Figure 4.28, a well-developed network of railroad lines connects San Diego to the interior West as far east as Texas, then north through Oklahoma and Kansas, with St. Louis and Chicago plotted on the horizon, and even New York City beyond. The projected tributary area north of San Diego includes Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, as well as the Los Angeles basin. The ocean routes indicate Japan and China, Australia and Honolulu, Manila, and Panama, showing the parameters of the expanding U.S. empire, but San Diego's focus was inland. The Panama Canal, PCE boosters hoped, would help capture the U.S. West in a web of trade dependence.

What the PCE did not acknowledge to its targeted audience was the deeply conflicted history of immigration to and settlement in California, one shaped by class tensions, virulent racism, and xenophobia. Planners also failed to mention that the vast majority of arable land in Southern California had been claimed long ago, primarily by large-holders who had ushered in an era of agribusiness, in stark contrast to the model of family farming that the PCE touted.<sup>449</sup>

Asian exclusion was an integral, if unspoken, component of the PCE's immigration pitch. Fair promoters and San Diego boosters sought white settlers from within the United States and from Europe. Carey McWilliams first told California's history of land monopolization, racial exclusion, and migratory farm labor in the early twentieth century in *Factories in the Field*.

---

<sup>449</sup>Bokovoy, *San Diego World's Fair*, 97; Richard White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": *A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 436.

Although California boosters and real estate promoters loudly and frequently announced that the Golden State was under-populated and in need of settlers, state and federal laws had methodically excluded working-class Chinese immigrants since the Gold Rush. During a long era of backlash from 1850 to 1902, Chinese workers were pushed out of the gold fields, into and out of work on the transcontinental railroad, and then recruited to and driven from Southern California as farm workers. As migratory workers in the 1870s and 1880s, Chinese immigrants were primarily responsible for establishing California's transition from wheat to fruit crops, the genesis of the citrus industry that the PCE was marketing in the 1910s. The state Geary Act of 1885 ushered in a new wave of violence against Chinese farmworkers, targeting them with vigilante violence and inciting riots in what McWilliams called a civil war.<sup>450</sup> The federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, passed because of strenuous California lobbying, was renewed in 1892 and made permanent in 1902, thus preventing land acquisition by Chinese immigrants.<sup>451</sup> By the turn of the twentieth century, Chinese workers had been driven from California agriculture and sought refuge in the cities.<sup>452</sup>

The question of Japanese immigration and agricultural labor, however, remained an unsettled topic for whites into the early twentieth century. After racist, reactionary whites drove Chinese laborers from the fields of Southern California in the 1890s, Japanese workers replaced

---

<sup>450</sup>Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1939), 74–76.

<sup>451</sup>For the history of anti-Chinese racism in California, see Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

<sup>452</sup>McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 65–76.

them and predominated from 1900 until 1913.<sup>453</sup> Roosevelt's "Gentlemen's Agreement" of 1907 created informal limits on Japanese immigration, while new efforts to recruit settlers to California threatened to upset the delicate diplomatic balance and inflame longstanding racial prejudices. By 1909, some Japanese farm workers had managed to save enough of their meager wages to begin buying farmland, precipitating a new wave of anti-Asian backlash among whites. Japanese ability to buy farms led to a competition with white buyers that drove up land prices, fueling white accusations of being 'pushed off our own land by foreigners.' The California legislature hotly debated the question of Japanese immigration in 1913 in an attempt to balance the demands of rural versus urban constituencies. Agribusiness declared its utter dependence on Japanese immigrants as seasonal workers, while nativists, especially labor unions, demanded Japanese exclusion, citing job and landownership competition.<sup>454</sup>

The fact that the two California world's fairs vigorously promoted migration to the state exacerbated these longstanding tensions. Nativists in the state assembly proposed a bill in 1913 preventing "aliens" from owning land in California. At the time, Japanese immigrants in California numbered around 45,000, owned 331 California farms, and leased another 282.<sup>455</sup> Backers of San Francisco's fair objected to the alien land bill, arguing that it would alienate international participation in the exposition, which they eagerly solicited. The Japanese government, which had committed to exhibits at the two fairs, watched political developments closely. The U.S. government expressed grave concern that the 1913 bill would undermine the

---

<sup>453</sup>McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 102.

<sup>454</sup>McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 111.

<sup>455</sup>George E. Mowry, *The California Progressives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), 154.

1907 Gentlemen's Agreement and antagonize the Japanese government. European interests also protested the bill, since they already owned several mining corporations in the state. A compromise was finally reached that allowed European stockholders to buy land but prohibited Asian immigrants from doing the same and thus rising above the status of seasonal agricultural laborers.<sup>456</sup> California's 1913 Alien Land Act specifically targeted Japanese immigrants because of their success as family farmers. White landowners wanted Japanese immigrants to pick the fruit crops of Southern California owned by white farmers and corporations, but they henceforth precluded the Japanese from becoming land-owning settlers.<sup>457</sup> In 1920 the California legislature passed an even more draconian Alien Land Law, and the federal 1924 Immigration Restriction Act codified Asian exclusion with strict national quotas.

San Diego boosters tried to have it both ways, as revealed by a postcard of the Japanese Pavilion at the PCE (Figure 4.29). Fair promoters sought Japanese trade agreements, and portrayed Japanese culture as refined, aesthetically beautiful, and culturally fascinating. Americans also respected Japan for its militarism. At the same time, the state of California was forcing Japanese residents off the land. Because they were selling independent farming as a way of life to white settlers, PCE boosters said nothing publicly about Asian exclusion and went along with the general dispossession of Japanese farmers. Fair boosters were unwilling to advocate racial equality as part of their development plan. Because the PCE Board of Directors overlapped with the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, with deep ties to agribusiness, the fair's promoters likely favored retention of Japanese residents as "alien," landless, transient labor. The

---

<sup>456</sup>Mowry, *California Progressives*, 154–55.

<sup>457</sup>McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 111.

Japanese were thus treated as a cultural commodity at the world's fair, one that white Americans enjoyed consuming, but a path to citizenship for Japanese immigrants in the United States was deliberately blocked due to the ideology of white supremacy. This ideology fueled the fair itself, San Diego's boosterism, development of the state of California, and the nation's empire.

A map from the PCE decade shows alleged concentrations of Asians in the agricultural regions of California, including San Diego's inland empire (Figure 4.30). The use of dark shading suggests ominous racial differences and portrays Asians as a kind of stain upon the land. The 1913 law caught California's Asian residents in a circularity of action: barred from becoming citizens, they were then branded inassimilable, but proponents of exclusion laws argued that Asian inability to assimilate was the reason for codifying them as aliens. California imposed the label and legal status of "alien" not because Asians failed to work hard and independently support themselves, but rather because they had done so all too well.

In spite of the rhetoric of land for immigrants from "all over the world," California thus systematically excluded Asians during the early twentieth century. PCE planners solicited a wave of white immigrants from Europe via the new canal, and promised them a yeoman's Eden.<sup>458</sup> Yet California's longstanding racial divides were anything but peaceful.

The California pastoral aesthetic had long been a fabrication. As McWilliams observed, land available to small farmers was largely gone by 1850, and farming was already a large-scale industry by 1860.<sup>459</sup> California farming required extensive irrigation, a capital-intensive process

---

<sup>458</sup>"1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition," n.p., AHS. McWilliams noted that large agricultural landowners also hoped that the Panama Canal would bring floods of cheap labor to their fields, a migration that did not materialize, *Factories in the Field*, 104.

<sup>459</sup>McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 49, 57.



that drove the land firmly into the hands of bankers, real estate developers, and agribusiness. Corporate monopolization imposed the practice of landless, underpaid, seasonal, migratory farmworkers. Nativists ardently scapegoated a succession of Chinese, Japanese, Hindu, Mexican, and Filipino farmworkers. By 1922, eighty-five percent of Imperial Valley farmland was in the hands of absentee owners.<sup>460</sup> Americans overwhelmingly ignored this evidence that Asian immigrants were not the real force driving small white farmers off the land, as indicated by the 1920 map in *The Independent*.

Despite the stark reality of factory farming, PCE promoters cheerfully extolled the probability of waves of white settlers pouring into San Diego's inland empire with the opening of the Panama Canal: "Formerly the only route of approach for millions of desirable immigrants who wanted to settle on the fertile lands of these regions has been from east to west through the gateways of the Atlantic coast. Comparatively few of these immigrants have ever reached the States west of the Missouri River. But one out of every eight inhabitants of the United States live in this territory, over half our total area. With the opening of the Canal, all this will be changed."<sup>461</sup> Agents would now steer European immigrants to the Pacific Coast, since steamer fares to San Diego would be lower than the combined cost of steamship passage to New York and railway fares across the continent.<sup>462</sup>

The fair's "Southern California Model Farm and Citrus Grove" offered physical proof of a very attractive way of life to the fairgoers who toured it, and visual evidence to armchair

---

<sup>460</sup>McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 146.

<sup>461</sup>"1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition," n.p., AHS.

<sup>462</sup>"1915 All The Year, Panama-California Exposition," n.p., Braun.

viewers who could easily read all of the details of its operation. Postcards of the model farm circulated widely, presenting a very attractive way of life (Figure 4.31 through Figure 4.34). A crop expert who toured the model farm told the local newspaper that although the back-to-the-land movement was a fine thing, “agricultural demonstration goes further, and the importance of the model intensive farm in particular cannot be over-emphasized.” He felt that the model farm “should accomplish a great deal toward helping the back-to-the-land movement simply by proving to a certainty that vast acreage is unnecessary.”<sup>463</sup> The tone was decidedly populist.

Located on the fairgrounds and sponsored by a coalition of Southern California counties, the model farm exhibit covered sixteen acres and featured a wide variety of fruit trees as well as grains and a vineyard. The plot included a six-acre model farm, a three-acre demonstration field, five acres of citrus groves, and two acres for the formal gardens and buildings. A few more adjacent acres were set aside for cultivation so that in addition to cash crops, homesteaders could also tend a kitchen garden and raise poultry to meet their own needs. PCE boosters also touted the allure of bungalow life, with its privacy, conveniences, and affordability, and sold blueprints for the fair’s eight-room model home for \$1.00.<sup>464</sup>

The bungalow farming way of life that the PCE modeled was deeply designed to be appealing to white immigrants and working-class Americans, who needed their home investment to pay off not so much in terms of cash equity as in terms of generating income and protecting them from poverty, as historian Becky Nicolaides has shown regarding bungalow suburbs in

---

<sup>463</sup>F. C. Summer, quoted in “Exposition Shows Possibilities of Farming,” *San Diego Union*, 27 Jan. 1915, 1.

<sup>464</sup>Matthew F. Bokovoy, “Inventing Agriculture in Southern California,” *Journal of San Diego History* 45, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 66.

early-twentieth-century Los Angeles.<sup>465</sup> Southern California small farm settlers valued their homes for their potential productivity, not as real-estate commodities. Bungalow immigrants to California often built their own houses with a blueprint and sweat equity. The small-scale farm that the PCE was selling fitted this requirement perfectly. The back-to-the-land movement that PCE promoters allied themselves with encouraged settlers to pitch a tent on their land while they built their own homes. The bungalow ranch promised to generate income and allow for substantial yet respectable subsistence gardening in the backyard, yet it also provided the privacy and upward mobility of owning a stand-alone home with a landscaped front yard, features that were out of reach for many working-class families in this era.

With the Panama Canal's opening in 1914, Southern California was now in a race with other Western states to lure restless white immigrants. A PCE publicity booklet declared: "The San Diego Exposition will be, in fact, an exposition of opportunity, and of the West. The exhibits will be exhibits of actual progress. Each state and section will endeavor, in its own way, to first attract the visitor, and then to present to him all that it has to show in the effort to secure him as a settler or investor."<sup>466</sup> Through the PCE, San Diego promoters and developers pitched their city as the ideal settler destination, but they also planned to benefit from exhibits by competing states at the fair. Thus San Diego aggressively promoted the fair's publicity opportunities to other Western states: "It is the work of the states that desire increased population, industrious husbandmen and busy workmen, to locate them. . . . The states west of the Mississippi River need millions of homemakers. It is a well known fact that each new home

---

<sup>465</sup>Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920–1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 29–30.

<sup>466</sup>"1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition," n.p., AHS.

in any state west of the Mississippi River is worth an average of one thousand dollars a year to that state. There is no limit to the number of these desirable settlers any state may be able to get through its participation at San Diego.”<sup>467</sup> Any migration to any part the American West was liable to strengthen the city’s status as an imperial hub.

### **Peripheral Inland Colonies: The Back-to-the-Land Movement**

In spite of the encroachment of industrialization, California was ground zero for a back-to-the-land movement in the early twentieth century, and San Diego exposition promoters positioned the fair to take full advantage of the movement. The introduction of irrigation in the 1870s fueled the first interstate export of deciduous fruit in 1886.<sup>468</sup> This shift toward “intensive” or “specialty” crops allowed new opportunities for smallholding family farmers. An 1892 article in *The Californian* noted the small farm trend: “Ten acres of orchard, vineyard or garden will afford profitable employment equal to that required upon one thousand acres of ordinary wheat land in this State.”<sup>469</sup> Ten acres, a bit less than the exposition’s sixteen-acre model farm, appeared as an entirely accessible dream to many white Americans in search of self-sufficiency and a new beginning in the West.

PCE publicity capitalized on a growing sense of urban ennui. “‘Back-to-the-Land’ is Theme in the Address of President Davidson,” declared the front page of the *San Diego Sun* on 1

---

<sup>467</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>468</sup>McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*, 62–63.

<sup>469</sup>W. H. Mills, “Marketing California Fruits,” *Californian Illustrated Magazine* 2, no. 5 (1892): 708.

January 1915, reporting on an opening-day address by G. Aubrey Davidson, PCE president, founder of the Southern Trust and Commerce Bank, and president of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce. A PCE publicity brochure repeated the message: “To the man or woman who is weary of the smoke and grime and nervous tension of the city, the Exposition carries a direct appeal—the call of the land, a land of fertility and loveliness, of cheer and abundance.”<sup>470</sup> Another fair brochure appealed to the “city man” who had “a definite desire to go back to the land and, a determination to leave behind him the dust and noise and tension of the city.”<sup>471</sup> A man of “small strength and small capital” could live well on a five-acre plot if he planted such intensive orchard crops as citrus, peach, cherry, pear, apricot, and walnut. A Western crop expert visiting the fair concurred, and told the *San Diego Union* that the PCE exhibits proved “that on a few acres a man with intelligence and energy can make a good living, a good deal better living, than is obtainable by the average man in the great city.”<sup>472</sup> The PCE presented the irony of San Diego boosters promoting their city through an agricultural movement that rejected urban life.

Migration boosters played up the theme of financial accessibility to the land, by advertising that small farms around San Diego were uniquely situated to readily produce a “competency” for energetic, intelligent, patient men. A recruitment brochure from the PCE entitled “Why Not San Diego County, California?” acknowledged the drawbacks of San Diego’s

---

<sup>470</sup>Woehlke, “Sunny Homes,” 466.

<sup>470</sup>“1915 All The Year, Panama-California Exposition,” n.p., Braun.

<sup>471</sup>“San Diego: All the Year 1915,” n.p., Young.

<sup>472</sup>Summer, quoted in “Exposition Shows Possibilities of Farming,” 1.

“Back Country,” but spun them as advantages. The county did not possess an irrigation system, or a railroad connection within thirty miles, but this had kept land affordable. Promoters claimed that San Diego County was perfectly suited for deciduous orchards without irrigation, promising that “a crop failure is unknown,” and that “this land can now be bought for \$15 to \$50 per acre,” while land in the apple regions of Washington and Oregon cost \$150 per acre without water, and \$200 to \$600 per acre with irrigation.<sup>473</sup> San Diego orchards, they claimed, could easily support smallholders, even without irrigation, if one were patient and resourceful. One acre of non-irrigated land could sustain 50 apple trees, averaging 400 crates of fruit per year after reaching maturity in 7 years, yielding \$800–\$1,600 on the Eastern market. The key, however, was railroad transportation, which did not yet exist. The brochure averred that this had kept land prices affordable, and it sold the future: “But with the coming of the railroad this district will jump into prominence and eventually will be one vast apple orchard capable of wealth production . . . . A good living is assured while the opportunities for making money, actually acquiring wealth, are here open to the man of humblest means who is willing to work and wait for the railroad which is bound to come.”<sup>474</sup> PCE boosters marketed potential settlers on the idea of “getting in on the ground floor” and waiting for their fruitarian paradise to mature while the inevitable infrastructure developed around them. Land without water or transportation was actually a blessing, a bargain opportunity for “men of the humblest means” to join the California dream of yeoman competency. PCE boosters promised that it would not require backbreaking

---

<sup>473</sup>*Why Not San Diego County, California?* ([San Diego]: San Diego County Board of Supervisors/San Diego County Chamber of Commerce/Sunset Magazine/Sunset Publishing House, n.d.), 15, 27.

<sup>474</sup>*Why Not San Diego*, 27.

labor, only foresight and fortitude. The brochure challenged prospects: “Are you going to be one of the far-seeing and wise ones desirous of bettering their condition?”<sup>475</sup> Fair promoters proclaimed “this region is a veritable poor man’s Eden;” in San Diego’s “back country,” “in no place on earth can a poor man live so cheaply and with energy and industry get ahead so rapidly as here.”<sup>476</sup> Exposition publicity tendered the promise of a meritocracy on the land.

Those who migrated to California from all across the country were sure to meet like-minded settlers with whom they could build communities in the unsettled interior. A PCE booklet assured that “San Diego’s Exposition . . . will attract visitors from all over the world; visitors who are tired of the cities and want to get back upon the land; visitors who are at the same time homeseekers, who want opportunities for new investments in new fields of endeavor . . . to exploit.”<sup>477</sup> The “Why Not San Diego County?” brochure proclaimed: “the people of San Diego will welcome you and the country will do the rest.”<sup>478</sup> Another promised that thousands of small farms just like the PCE’s model farm had already sprung up in the West, and that “many people will go to the Coast in 1915 with the idea of settling there;” in this way “a community will spring up, and there must follow good roads and schools and churches, and more or less social communication.”<sup>479</sup> The publicity specifically assured women contemplating farm life,

---

<sup>475</sup>*Why Not San Diego*, 2.

<sup>476</sup>*Why Not San Diego*, 3.

<sup>477</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>478</sup>*Why Not San Diego*, 2.

<sup>479</sup>“San Diego: All the Year 1915,” n.p., Young.

“the days of drudgery and isolation are gone.”<sup>480</sup> In order to create an inland empire that they could exploit, San Diego boosters used the PCE to build up a vision of white independence and community through micro-homesteading in the Imperial Valley and across the West.

It was no accident that San Diego’s inland empire was named the Imperial Valley. Real estate developers and land speculators named it thus in 1900, in hopes of luring white settlers and making huge profits. The Imperial Land Company immediately began construction of the Imperial Canal between the Colorado River and the valley to support agriculture.<sup>481</sup> Developers and boosters promised modern bungalows situated on affordable plots of land with plentiful water. Images like the postcard of an irrigation canal in the Imperial Valley (Figure 4.38) offered visual evidence that farming in the desert was possible. Homesteads would render smallholders prosperous through produce they could cultivate self-sufficiently with ease and economy thanks to government-subsidized irrigation projects and an ideal climate.

San Diego boosters made a somewhat ambivalent sales pitch regarding scale to potential settlers, promising that individuals could make do with less land than Midwesterners and profit nicely from “small, income-producing farmlets,” while using irrigation water only sparingly on “ten acre miniature farms.”<sup>482</sup> In this model, large tracts of land could be almost infinitely subdivided. Some developers asserted that farms “could be best operated as forty-acre units,” so

---

<sup>480</sup>“San Diego: All the Year 1915,” n.p., Young.

<sup>481</sup>Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 26. In 1904, Imperial Canal owners created a new cut that allowed the Colorado River to break through canal headworks during flood stage in 1905, diverting its flow to the west and flooding the dry Salton Basin. The river continued to flow inland until 1907, when the Southern Pacific Company finally intervened to protect its rail line through the Imperial Valley. The flooding created the thirty-five-mile long Salton Sea.

<sup>482</sup>Woehlke, “Sunny Homes,” 464, 467, 472.



that the available land in the Southwest could furnish “700,000 potential farms,” each farm “peopled with an average of seven persons.”<sup>483</sup> Equipping these 700,000 farms for habitation and production would only cost \$4 million, they claimed, a mere \$5.71 per homestead. Other promoters asserted that Western farming prosperity in the 1910s was possible with as few as five acres, placing the California dream within the reach of many who could not afford farmland in the Midwest.<sup>484</sup> The micro-homesteading movement at the PCE was far removed from the 1862 Homestead Act principles, which had offered an average of 160 acres per family.

Exposition proponents used public relations methods to connect small-scale colonies with large-scale irrigation projects in order to encourage white settlement around San Diego’s interior. The region’s leading newspaper, the *San Diego Union*, proclaimed hopefully in November 1907 that thousands of tourists and colonists, taking advantage of the low train-fares to Southern California, had already made San Diego their destination. PCE directors and the Chamber of Commerce, two groups that largely overlapped, hoped to enlist many more such settlers by way of the fair. In their recruitment efforts, PCE directors reached out to the Little Landers colony in San Ysidro, led by William E. Smythe. San Diego boosters had welcomed the advent of the Little Landers in 1908. In fact, the San Ysidro colonization venture was initially prompted by a San Diego Chamber of Commerce promotional effort to divert the steady stream of Midwestern immigrants arriving in Los Angeles to the San Diego region. PCE planners explained that connected to fair’s “irrigation section . . . will be the exhibit of the ‘Little Landers,’ which will be of especial value in showing the intending settler the best methods of intensive cultivation of the

---

<sup>483</sup>“Magic Spanish City,” 301.

<sup>484</sup>Woehlke, “Sunny Homes,” 468.

soils of the states of the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast regions.”<sup>485</sup> PCE promoters turned to the Little Landers movement in part because the traditional forty-acre farm was now largely out of reach financially in the West.

A photograph of three Little-Landers from the PCE era (Figure 4.36) indicates this vision of white independence, achieved through access to small plots of land. The bungalow is very modest, much smaller than the PCE model, but it retains the same functions and appeals of privacy and autonomy. The small garden suggests food production for household consumption rather than for the cash economy. The modest chicken coops on the right edge of the picture also suggest subsistence production. Other bungalows are visible in the distance, indicating the beginnings of a rural community.

The Little Landers enthusiastically responded to the PCE, and planned to participate. The colony’s directors announced through the *San Diego Union* on 18 October 1911 that they had already agreed to stage an exhibit of three one-acre model farms at the PCE in 1915. Smythe, the colony’s leader, promoted both the PCE and the movement. In a 1913 speech, Smythe declared of the region “we are now assured of a perfect water system,” and promised to organize an exhibit at the PCE on “intensive cultivation” that would demonstrate how to live on less than an acre of land.<sup>486</sup> In the end the Little Landers did not join the fair, but they inspired the official Model Farm, and PCE organizers still touted the movement’s ideas and methods.

---

<sup>485</sup>“1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition,” n.p., AHS.

<sup>486</sup>“Little Landers’ Bonds Over-Subscribed, Sold,” *San Diego Sun*, 11 Feb. 1913, photo reproduction in William E. Smythe, *The Little Landers of Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: House of the Little Landers, 1913), n.p.

In spite of their democratic pronouncements, the Little Landers succumbed to the racism and xenophobia that prevailed in California during the early twentieth century. Although Smythe declared in speeches that white Californians should be grateful to “the excellent Chinese and the admirable Japanese who have been good enough to come here and raise something for us to eat,” the San Ysidro colony’s board of directors eventually embraced racial exclusion.<sup>487</sup> The Little Landers’ by-laws, passed in 1908, were amended by 1914 to exclude “Orientals and Negroes” from owning property in the colony.<sup>488</sup> The timing of the amendment to the by-laws closely followed the California 1913 Alien Land Act. Even Progressive, utopian settlers in the era’s back-to-the-land movement espoused white supremacy. Consistent with this racist prejudice, visual materials from the PCE carefully excluded any depictions or mentions of people of color. The PCE’s visual culture appears to have assumed that the fair’s audience was white. Exposition publicity materials did not explicitly declare that Southern California had been declared a whites-only zone, but the absence of any message of inclusiveness would have been significant, given the racially charged atmosphere of the 1910s.

---

<sup>487</sup>Smythe quoted in the *San Diego Union*, 16 Dec. 1908; cited in Lee, “The Little Landers Colony of San Ysidro,” *Journal of San Diego History* 21 (Winter 1975): 26.

<sup>488</sup>Smythe, quoted in the *San Diego Union*, 1 Jan. 1914; cited in Lee, “The Little Landers Colony of San Ysidro,” 46.

## Indian Dioramas: White Constructions of Nostalgia and Primitivism

As if an apologia for the forced displacement of Indians in Panama, the PCE created exhibits representing Native Americans that demonstrated their purported primitivity and naturalized their removal from their ancestral lands. The exhibits implied that just as Native Americans in the Southwest had been forced to give way to the domestic expansion of white settler empire, so the Darien Indians were also now forced to yield their homeland to the white U.S. imperial project there. Inevitability relieved white Americans of responsibility.

In both geographical settings, visual materials argued implicitly that the failure to make productive use of the land (by Anglo-American standards) justified native dispossession. Alfred T. Mahan had written in 1890 about the right of “powerful and stable states” to seize “the waste spaces of the world,” regions too politically weak to develop or defend themselves, where “political possession is little more than nominal,” and Mahan referred to North, Central, and South America as examples of U.S. prerogative.<sup>489</sup> Expressing agreement with his intellectual mentor, Theodore Roosevelt wrote in his 1905 history of the eighteenth-century Indian Wars “the pioneers of civilization tread the world’s waste spaces or fight their way to the overlordship of barbarous empires.”<sup>490</sup>

The San Diego exposition staged Indian life as quaint and picturesque, yet still barbarian. Both the Hopi pueblo, replicated at the PCE’s “Painted Desert” exhibit with Santa Fe Railroad

---

<sup>489</sup>Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power*, 324–26. Mahan also asserted that “the successful piercing of the Central American Isthmus” was imperative for U.S. national security, 325.

<sup>490</sup>Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West* (New York: The Current Literature Publishing Co., 1905), 4:62.

corporate sponsorship and pictured on innumerable PCE postcards, and the Kuna grass hut, portrayed on PCZ postcards, represented primitive civilizations that justified U.S. imperialism throughout the Americas. In both settings, pre-modern peoples were pushed aside to make way for grand engineering projects, rail and hydraulic, that placed white Americans in firm control of the land and its resources. The professional discipline of anthropology gave official, institutional sanction at the San Diego world's fair to the supposed right of white Americans to perpetrate such forced removals and territorial acquisitions.

The argument for U.S. expansion into Panama was presented with considerable scholarly and scientific authority. With the Smithsonian National Museum, the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology, prestigious anthropologists and archaeologists, including Alfred Kroeber of the University of California, and such Southwestern booster/scholars as Charles Lummis all vouching for the science of racial domination, fairgoers and the wider consuming public would have had little inclination to question the ethics of dispossessing the Indians of North and Central America. The PCE boasted of its scholarly credentials: "To teach the progress of man through the ages—his life, his husbandry, his science, art, music, methods—the Smithsonian Institution has sent special investigators all over the world to collect materials which will be included in an archeological exhibit, to be the greatest ever shown. . . . Its great educational value is attracting the serious attention of scientists throughout the world."<sup>491</sup> The exhibit represented yet another feedback loop: imperial power enabled archaeology and anthropology on a global scale, providing evidence that imperial elites could then use to scientifically justify imperialism.

---

<sup>491</sup>"1915 Entire Year: The San Diego Exposition," n.p., AHS.

The fair's grandiose anthropological exhibit, "The Story of Man through the Ages," relied on scientific racism and reinforced the ideology of indigenous primitivity. The exhibit's principal designers, Dr. Edgar Lee Hewett of the School of American Archaeology and Dr. Ales Hrdlicka of the Smithsonian Institution, collaborated to present a racial hierarchy of human development. They directed expeditions that raided sites in Latin America and around the world to provide specimens of cultural and physical anthropology. According to the successor museum created to house those specimens, it was "most comprehensive physical anthropology exhibition ever assembled."<sup>492</sup> Housed in the Science and Education Building, the display promised "the steady advance of man from the earliest days as proved to the satisfaction of scientists by data which have been unearthed from time to time. There are interesting types of the white, black and red races and an imposing array of skulls selected so as to show the steady advance of humanity. The exhibit is largely self-explanatory."<sup>493</sup> The "self-explanatory" description is a good indication of the teleology of the enterprise. The placement of peoples of color in a hierarchy that categorized them as evolutionarily less evolved was important cultural work at an exposition celebrating U.S. imperialism in Panama and the American Southwest. Exposition organizers solicited anthropologists to stage an exhibit that naturalized white racism, an essential service in the building of San Diego's inland empire, and nation's Latin American one.

The exposition's other large-scale anthropological effort at justifying empire resided on the fair's midway. Fred Harvey Company architect Mary Colter designed the "Painted Desert" Hopi Village Indian diorama, a faux pueblo inhabited by one hundred Pueblo, Taos, Apache, and

---

<sup>492</sup>Quote from *San Diego Museum of Man*, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://www.museumofman.org/history#sthash.XLYknZOx.dpuf>.

<sup>493</sup>"Official Guide Book of the PCE," 27, Braun.

Zuni Indians. As historian Matthew Bokovoy puts it, “the pseudopueblo appealed to the Victorian generation’s fascination with Indian primitivism and tourist yearnings to escape from the industrial age in the rustic lifestyle of the Southwest.”<sup>494</sup> The appeal of watching Southwestern Native Americans was directly related to the appeal of relocating to San Diego’s inland empire, in that both emphasized the escape from industrialism and the enervating characteristics of modernity. The pueblo itself was a work of art, or rather artifice, designed to appeal to white audiences. The *San Diego Union* publicized the fact that the Indians built the pueblo themselves, without metal nails or screws, hinges or joints, and it showed edges and surfaces, testifying to its authenticity.<sup>495</sup> The act of visually consuming the hand-built exhibit promised to be restorative to white fairgoers suffering from the effects of industrialized society.

The pueblo spectacle also produced primitivism for white viewers to consume. Hopi residents were instructed to shed all signs of modern life, for the sake of imagined authenticity. Because they enacted traditions for ticketholders, cultural activities took place outdoors. Outdoor labor marked class status among whites, and racial status between whites and peoples of color. Such practices as baking bread outdoors in an oven built on the ground displayed a clear message to white viewers with middle-class sensibilities. This public display of domestic work marked the Indians as abjectly uncivilized. PCE designers intended their white audience to compare Indian and Anglo ways of life and find the former lacking in terms of sophistication. A prospectus for the PCE discussed shaping white public opinion by contrasting, unfavorably,

---

<sup>494</sup>Bokovoy, *San Diego World’s Fair*, 114.

<sup>495</sup>“Indians at Work on Exhibit for Exposition,” *San Diego Union*, 10 Oct. 1914.

traditional Indian agriculture with the modern methods on display at the Model Farm and International Harvester exhibits nearby.<sup>496</sup>

*Out West* magazine published publicity copy from the PCE in 1914 to lure visitors to the Indian Exhibit, which was located along the midway section of the fair, named “The Isthmus.” The article promised “real” yet pacified Indians in a walled compound, the performance of sacred rituals, and access to highly sought-after, collectible, handcrafted Indian artifacts for sale.<sup>497</sup> Ticketholders could watch the production of “authentic” wares that they might then purchase in the adjoining gift shop, including blankets, baskets, jewelry, and pottery. In the early-twentieth-century context of growing industrialization, the deskilling of labor, and mass production of consumer goods, these displays attracted large crowds. Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo has written about the “notion of imperialist nostalgia, the curious phenomenon of people’s longing for what they themselves have destroyed.”<sup>498</sup> The fair offered visitors this contradictory experience of triumph over “primitives” and simultaneous enjoyment of their culture. For many Americans, Indian culture was all the more alluring because they viewed it as vanishing.

The fact that hired Indians participated in the display was easily construed as a kind of tacit admission by them of the accuracy of the ethnographic exhibit regarding the primitivism that experts attributed to them.<sup>499</sup> While the rest of the fair showcased cutting-edge technologies

---

<sup>496</sup>Richard W. Amero, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2013), 159.

<sup>497</sup>“Magic Spanish City,” 302–303.

<sup>498</sup>Renato Rosaldo, “Imperialist Nostalgia,” *Representations* 22 (Spring 1989): 121.

<sup>499</sup>Bokovoy, *San Diego World’s Fair*, 114.



and the advancing industrialization of white society, Native Americans were on display creating handcrafted items in ancient ways. Fair planners designed the Indian exhibit to resonate as an appealing imperial foil for the best of modernity and technology that U.S. culture had to offer.

The Indian exhibit at the PCE sought to naturalize white subjugation and displacement of Southwestern Indians, and by extension, the displacement of the Indians of Panama. In both cases, boosters offered white Americans visual evidence that “the natives” had peacefully assented to their fate. Indians in Panama posed for pictures rather than fighting the invading Americans. Native Americans boarded Santa Fe trains and went to live and work at the San Diego fair exhibit. These were reassuring messages to white viewers who held conflicted feelings about indigenous peoples, including admiration and guilt. Sanitized representations of pacified Indians in both the Southwest and in Panama were useful in forestalling popular resistance to imperialism.

“The Isthmus” midway also included a diorama of the canal, the “Panama Canal Extravaganza,” billed as “the only actual working model of the greatest waterway in all history.”<sup>500</sup> The exhibit showed how the canal’s locks and gates worked, and suggested the terrain and elevation that the canal had triumphed over. The Panama Canal exhibit gave fair visitors the opportunity to admire the technology of the canal. Just as Americans now possessed the actual Isthmus of Panama and bent it to their will, the fair’s midway “Isthmus” offered virtual imperial access to ticketholders. Visitors to the San Diego exposition could visually consume the spectacular hydraulic engineering achievements of Americans in the Panama Canal Zone without actually having to make the trip to Latin America. The exhibit also conveyed the

---

<sup>500</sup>“Official Guide Book of the PCE,” 25, Braun. In fact, San Francisco’s PPIE also contained a working model of the Panama Canal on its midway, as is discussed in chap. 5.

all-important “before-and-after” aspects of life in the PCZ, the triumphs over Spain and France in Panama (echoing the U.S. imperial triumph over Spain in the U.S. West), and the marvelous American engineering feats there:

Only a small number of the American people will have an opportunity to see the real canal. This Extravaganza offers them an admirable opportunity of studying careful the exact manner of its operation. The concession includes also a typical street in old Panama, showing the conditions as the American engineers found them when they started this tremendous work, which had been the dream of the Spaniard and Frenchman and Saxon for centuries. While ships are shown passing through the model of the canal, a lecturer explains the points of vital interest . . . and some of the difficulties which the engineers had to cope with, and which they overcame.<sup>501</sup>

This description manages to convey several key themes of ascendant U.S. imperialism: the French and Spanish failures, the primitivity of Panamanian life before the American civilizers arrived, the sophisticated technology of the canal, the heroism of U.S. engineers, the pleasure of imperial possession, and the Western “right to look,” to scrutinize possessions in a panoptical manner. The Panama Canal represented a trophy of U.S. imperialism on many levels. The subjugation of peoples of color was elided in the midway model, but since the PCE’s ethnographic exhibit asserted white supremacy according to Social Darwinism and racial hierarchies, fair organizers likely considered the matter, as they put it, self-explanatory.

A postcard entitled “The Panama Canal Extravaganza” (Figure 4.46) depicts the model and suggests the sense of spectacle that the exhibit sought to convey. Placed alongside images of the fair’s Cabrillo Bridge (Figure 4.47), with its evocation of Roman aqueducts, the fair’s visual culture, both in person and in published photographs, suggested how hydraulic engineering enabled and defined empires. With this as the standard, given the universal acclaim on the

---

<sup>501</sup>“Official Guide Book of the PCE,” 26, Braun.

Panama Canal as the greatest engineering work in history, the United States by definition now represented the greatest empire in history.

Read against each other, PCE portrayals of indigenous culture in the Desert Southwest and in Central America made a case for U.S. imperialism as an inevitable, attractive, constructive force. While fair designers portrayed Indians as admirable artisans, white Americans overwhelmingly held the power of technology, particularly through hydraulic engineering. In the narrative of U.S. imperialism, the Indians of the Panamanian rainforest and the U.S. Southwestern deserts had been held captive by their environments, and stood in the way of progress. American engineering fundamentally altered those environments, removing primitives and allowing large-scale white settlement. With native peoples safely subjugated, white Americans expressed considerable interest in viewing indigenous ways of life from an imperial perspective, both “at home” in Southern California and “abroad” in Panama.

Between 1909 and 1916, San Diegans waged an imperial marketing project that aimed to use U.S. global power to promote their regional interests. PCE promoters employed a visual cultural that exalted San Diego, southern California, and the desert Southwest, to encourage expansion of an American domestic empire that followed the contours of the former Spanish Empire in North America. Hydraulic and railroad technologies provided the means to imperial power in both Panama and the U.S. Southwest. These technologies also provided sources for attractive images of domestic empire-building that emphasized its constructive power—irrigation, land reclamation, and transportation networks. Visual marketing of the PCE emphasized the popular benefits of such technologies, especially family farming, landed independence, and mobility. San Diego promoters tried to leverage the city’s proximity to the Panama Canal and the American desert in order to link the two regions, to the benefit of their

city. San Diego elites attempted to subject the farmers of the U.S. Southwest to a kind of core-periphery relationship of imperial dependency usually thought of as transnational, not intra-national. The San Diego fair also blurred distinctions between the categories “at home” and “abroad.” While boosters of the Panama Canal Zone worked to domesticate the “foreign” enclave in Latin American and make it appear like the U.S. “homeland,” San Diego exposition promoters treated the mainland “domestic” regions of southern California and Arizona as imperial tributaries to be conquered.

## Chapter 4 Figures



Figure 4.1

Mouth of the Chagres River on the Atlantic coast, I. L. Maduro Jr. postcard.<sup>502</sup>

---

<sup>502</sup>“View of the Chagres River,” postcard, eBay, accessed 18 May 2015, [http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/MTA0M1g4MjQ=/z/wfQAAOSwPgxVTW1F/\\$\\_57.JPG](http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/MTA0M1g4MjQ=/z/wfQAAOSwPgxVTW1F/$_57.JPG).

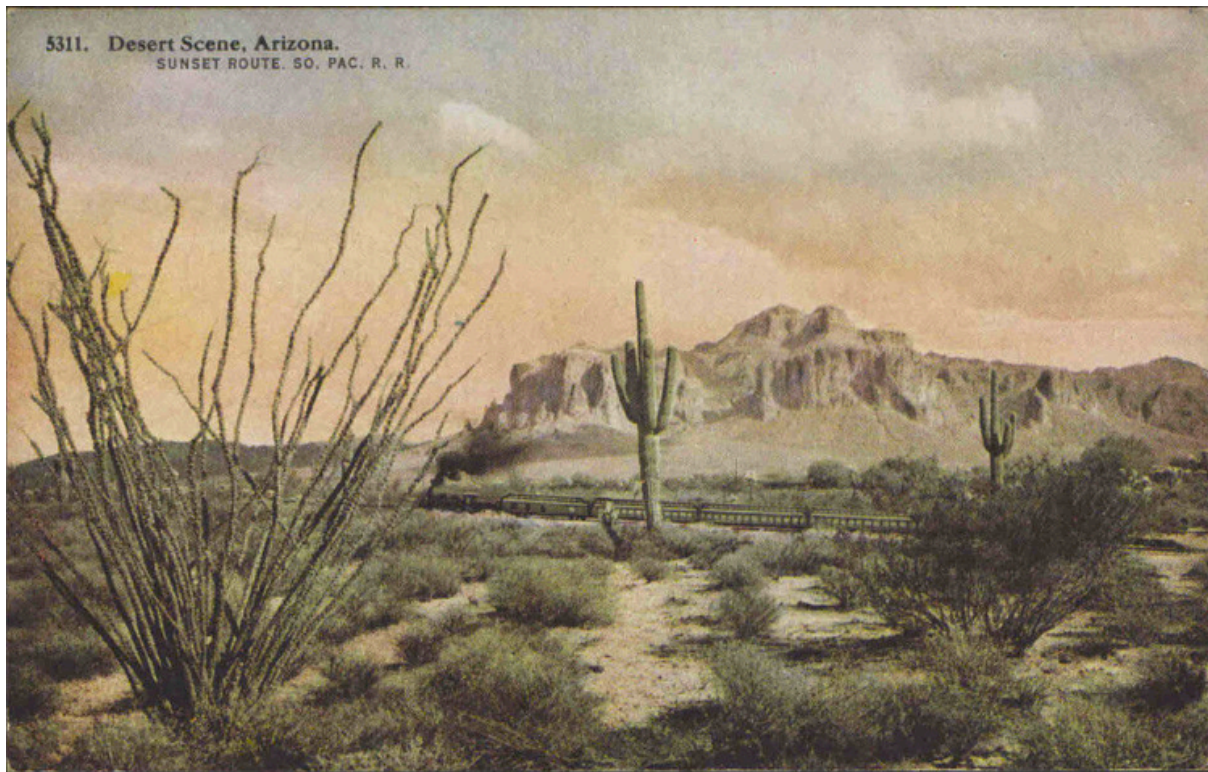


Figure 4.2

“Desert Scene, Arizona. Sunset Route, So. Pac. R.R.,” postcard by BVN Co.<sup>503</sup>

---

<sup>503</sup>“Desert Scene, Arizona,” postcard, eBay, accessed 18 May 2015, [http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/NzAyWDEwMjQ=/z/OHgAAOSwEeFVLscR/\\$\\_57.JPG](http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/NzAyWDEwMjQ=/z/OHgAAOSwEeFVLscR/$_57.JPG).





Figure 4.3

Poster for the Panama-California Exposition showing the fair grounds, city of San Diego, San Diego Harbor, and San Diego Bay.<sup>504</sup>

---

<sup>504</sup>“The San Diego Exposition,” poster, California State Library, accessed 3 Sept. 2014, <http://www.library.ca.gov/calhist/lightbox/images/examples/16.jpg>. The image was also produced as a postcard.

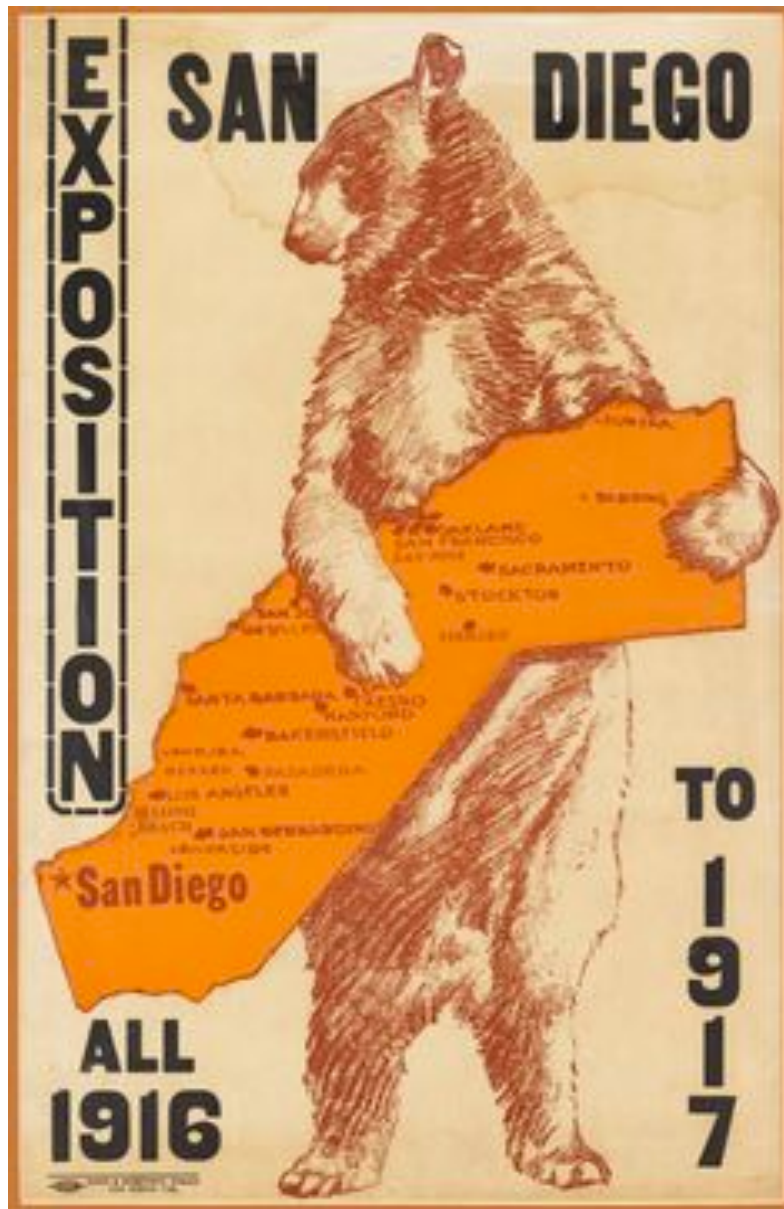


Figure 4.4

A PCE poster highlighting San Diego's geographic proximity to the western entrance of the Panama Canal, and also its position at the southern end of the California mission system, as the first settlement.<sup>505</sup>

<sup>505</sup>Poster, Pintrest, accessed 23 Sept. 2014, <http://media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/236x/2e/bb/72/2ebb7278336aa1a409785b4c6f6d4b11.jpg>.





Figure 4.5

The Indian Arts Building at the PCE designed by Carleton Winslow, exhibiting Spanish Colonial Revival elements of style.<sup>506</sup>

---

<sup>506</sup>“Indian Arts,” postcard, Oakes Co., PCE collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 10 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/expo/indnart.jpg>.



Figure 4.6

Postcard of the California Building designed by Bertram G. Goodhue, an example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style that dominated the Panama-California Exposition.<sup>507</sup>

---

<sup>507</sup>“California Bldg.,” postcard, PCE collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 12 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/expo/350tower.jpg>.



Figure 4.7

“In a Tropical Garden,” official PCE photographic postcard, 1914.<sup>508</sup>

---

<sup>508</sup>“In a Tropical Garden,” postcard, Poole Bros./PCE Co., 1914, PCE collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/expo/pootrop.jpg>.





Figure 4.8

PCE postcard showing off the botanical richness of the San Diego fairgrounds.<sup>509</sup>

---

<sup>509</sup>“Greetings from San Diego,” postcard, PCE collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 8 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/cardlist/list410.htm>.



Figure 4.9

Botanical Building, PCE postcard.<sup>510</sup>

---

<sup>510</sup>Postcard, PCE collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 8 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/cardlist/list410.htm>.

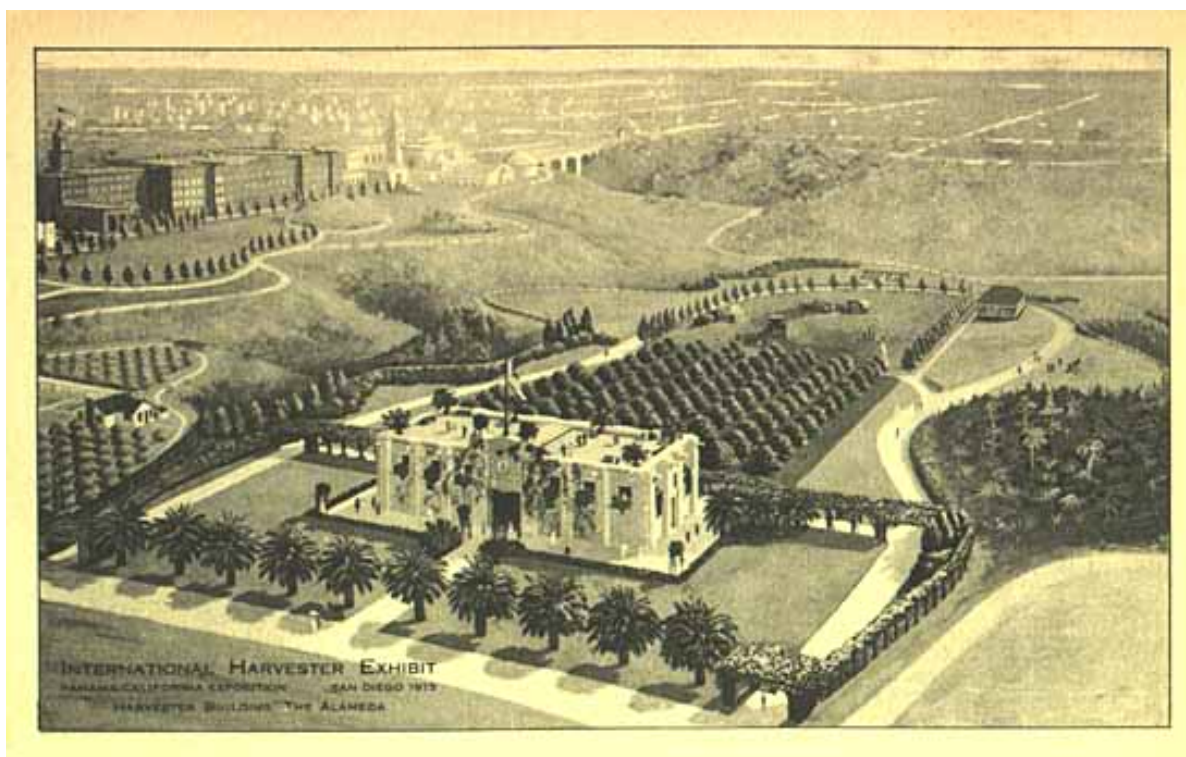


Figure 4.10

International Harvester Exhibit at the PCE, fronted by mature palm trees, with a model citrus orchard behind the exhibition building.<sup>511</sup>

---

<sup>511</sup>“International Harvester Exhibit,” postcard, PCE collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 8 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/cardlist/list410.htm>.





Figure 4.11

Postcard depicting the Spanish Colonial Revival architecture at the PCE exemplified by Goodhue's California Building at the center with its landmark dome and tower. The arches of Cabrillo Bridge, designed by Frank P. Allen Jr., are suggestive of a Roman aqueduct, an additional layer of imperial association.<sup>512</sup>

---

<sup>512</sup>“The Bridge of Cabrillo,” postcard, University of California, San Diego Special Collections, accessed 8 Aug. 2014, <http://ucsdspecialcollections.tumblr.com/post/29058393019/the-bridge-of-cabrillo-leads-to-the-fairy-palaces>.



Figure 4.12

“An Irrigation Ditch, Southern California,” 1915 postcard.<sup>513</sup>

---

<sup>513</sup>“An Irrigation Ditch, Southern California,” postcard, Van Ornum Colorprint Co., Los Angeles, postmarked 5 Aug. 1915 from Los Angeles with special PPIE cancellation; private auction website, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.atticpostcards.com/images/PV40/006pc2.jpg>.





Figure 4.13

“The Old Las Cruces–Panama Trail, 1914,” representing the level of Panamanian transportation as it existed before the advent of the U.S. railroad and canal.<sup>514</sup>

---

<sup>514</sup>“The Old Las Cruces-Panama Trail, 1914,” photograph, Panama Canal History Museum, accessed 26 July 2014, <http://www.canalmuseum.com/photos/panamacanalphoto041.htm>.



Figure 4.14

Image of the Santa Fe Railway's "California Limited" line between Kingman, Arizona and San Diego, on a 1915 Fred Harvey Company postcard. The "California Limited" ran between Chicago and Los Angeles, with connecting service to San Diego.<sup>515</sup>

---

<sup>515</sup>"California Limited in Crozier Canyon, Arizona," postcard, Blogspot, accessed 17 May 2015, [http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-AM4inerpY7c/TkXSOkBtNUI/AAAAAAAAAAtw/HyIGZUckvMo/s1600/CrozierCanyon\\_CalifLimited\\_FH.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-AM4inerpY7c/TkXSOkBtNUI/AAAAAAAAAAtw/HyIGZUckvMo/s1600/CrozierCanyon_CalifLimited_FH.jpg). The Fred Harvey Company was the Santa Fe Railway's hospitality concession.



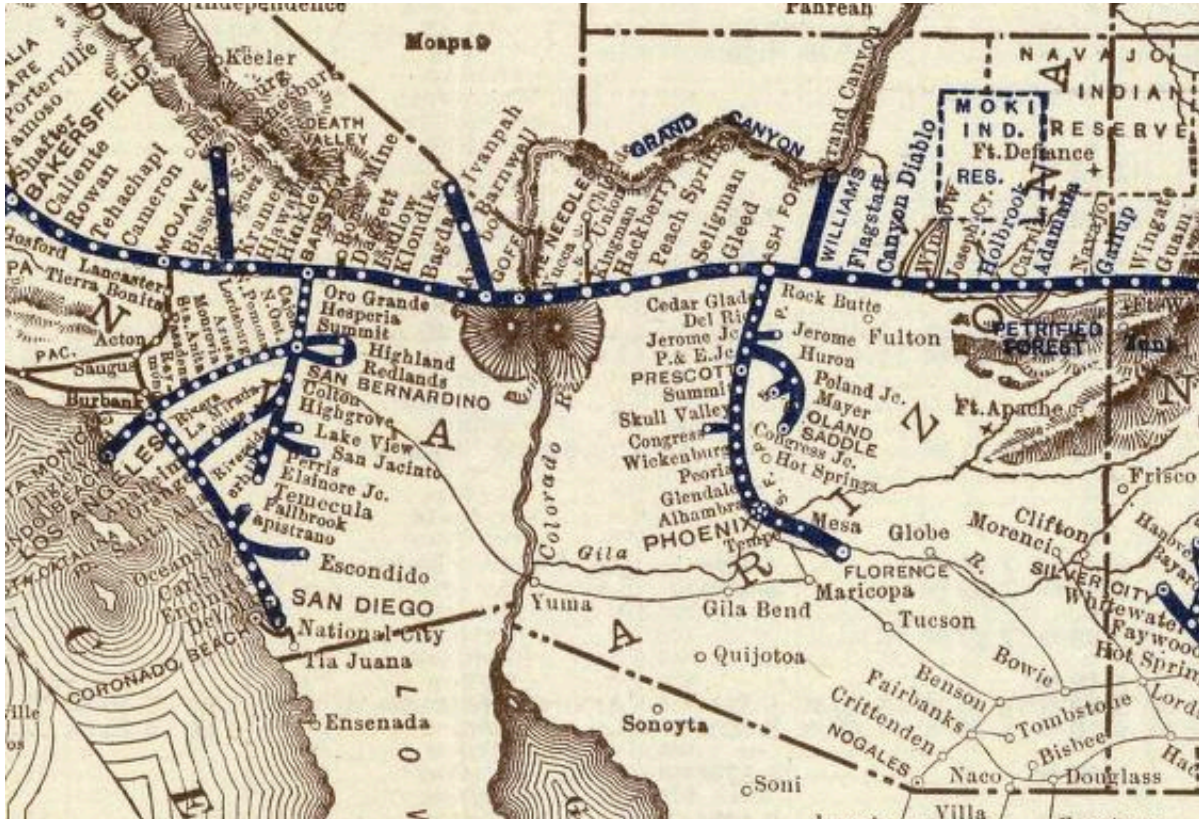


Figure 4.15

Southern California and Arizona, showing the circuitous lines between San Diego and Phoenix, from a map published by the Santa Fe Railroad Company in 1904.<sup>516</sup>

<sup>516</sup>Map, Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company, *Santa Fe* (Chicago: Poole Brothers, 1904), David Rumsey Map Collection, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~24554~900050:Santa-Fe->

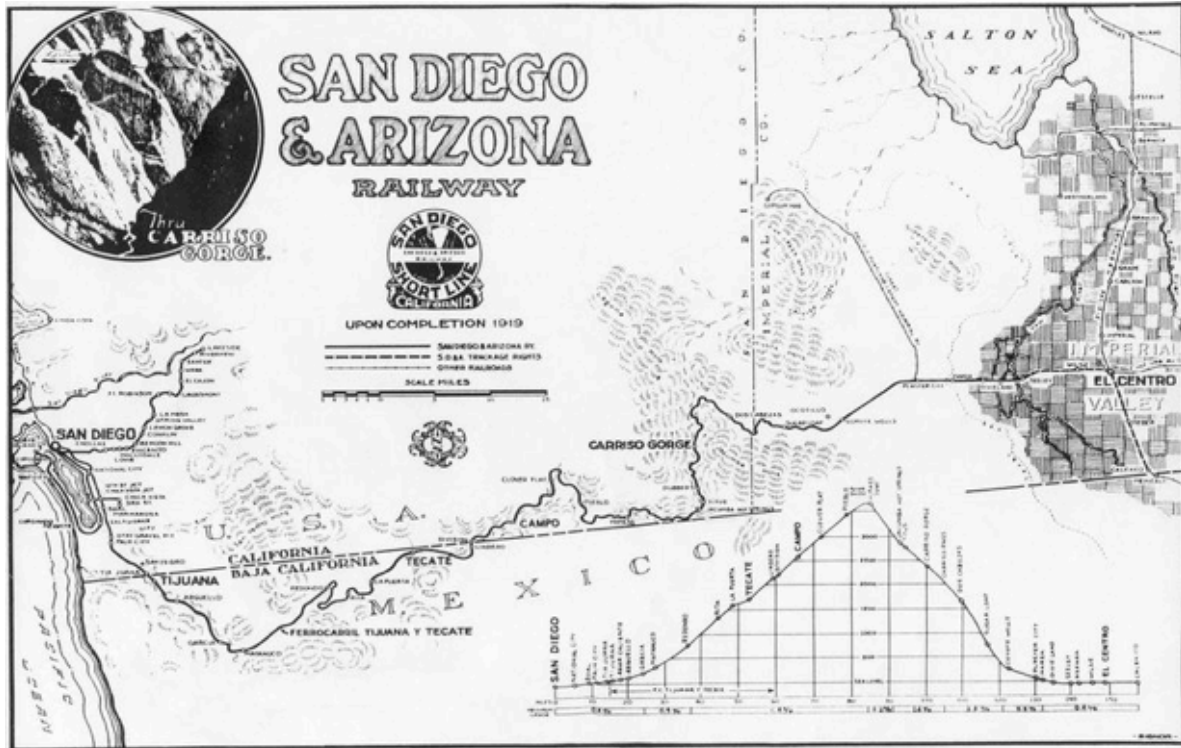


Figure 4.16

Route of the completed “San Diego Short Line” through the Carrizo Gorge, the San Diego and Arizona Railway in 1919.<sup>517</sup>

<sup>517</sup> Map of the San Diego and Arizona Railway Co. Short Line, 1919, Citizendium, accessed 2 June 2015, [http://en.citizendium.org/wiki/File:SDA\\_route\\_map.jpg](http://en.citizendium.org/wiki/File:SDA_route_map.jpg).



Figure 4.17

View of Carrizo Gorge looking east from the tunnel, 7 October 1918, one month before the line opened.<sup>518</sup>

---

<sup>518</sup>“Carrizo Gorge, looking east from west of Tunnel No. 1, Oct. 7, 1918,” photograph, San Diego Railway Museum, accessed 3 June 2015, [http://sdrm.info/gallery/sda/gorge/gorge\\_t6\\_1919.jpg](http://sdrm.info/gallery/sda/gorge/gorge_t6_1919.jpg).



Figure 4.18

Commemorative postcard marking the 1919 completion of the San Diego and Arizona Railway. The image shows San Diego's Union Station passenger terminal, which the Santa Fe Railway completed in 1915 in conjunction with the opening of the PCE.<sup>519</sup>

---

<sup>519</sup>“Union Depot,” postcard, scanned original from personal collection, private collection, accessed 2 June 2015, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:San\\_Diego-Union\\_Depot\\_post\\_card\\_ca\\_1920.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:San_Diego-Union_Depot_post_card_ca_1920.jpg).



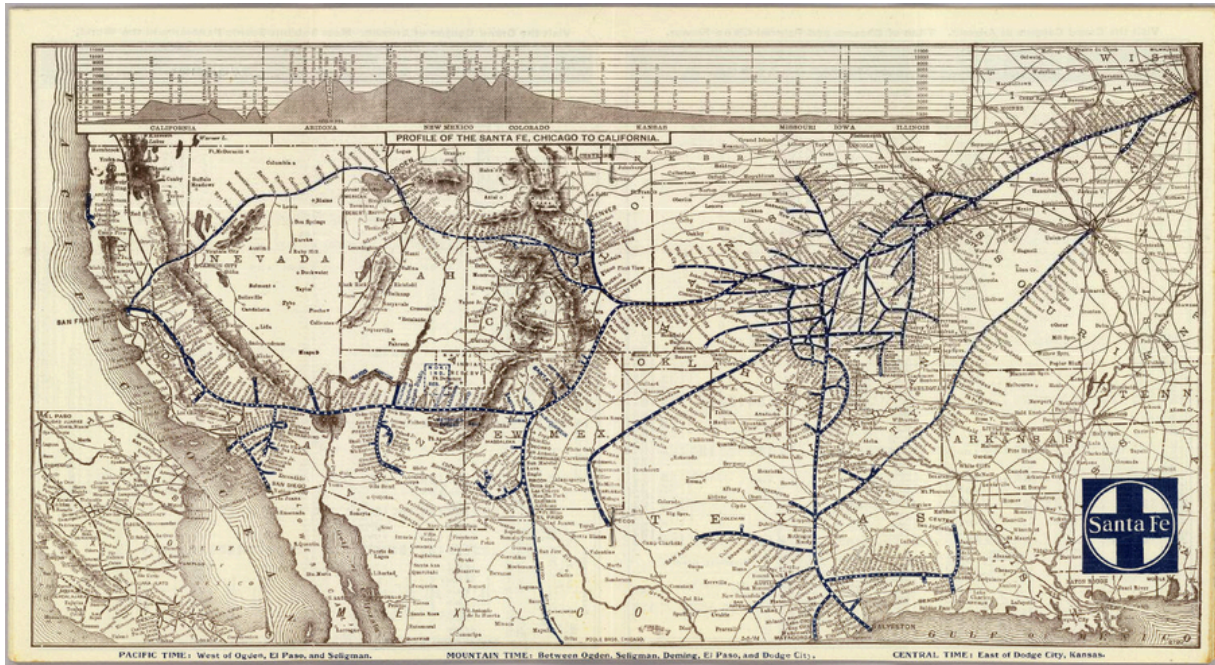


Figure 4.19

Santa Fe Railroad map, 1904, with profile view of elevation changes between Chicago and the California coast.<sup>520</sup>

<sup>520</sup>Map, Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company, *Santa Fe* (Chicago: Poole Brothers, 1904), David Rumsey Map Collection, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~24554~900050:Santa-Fe->

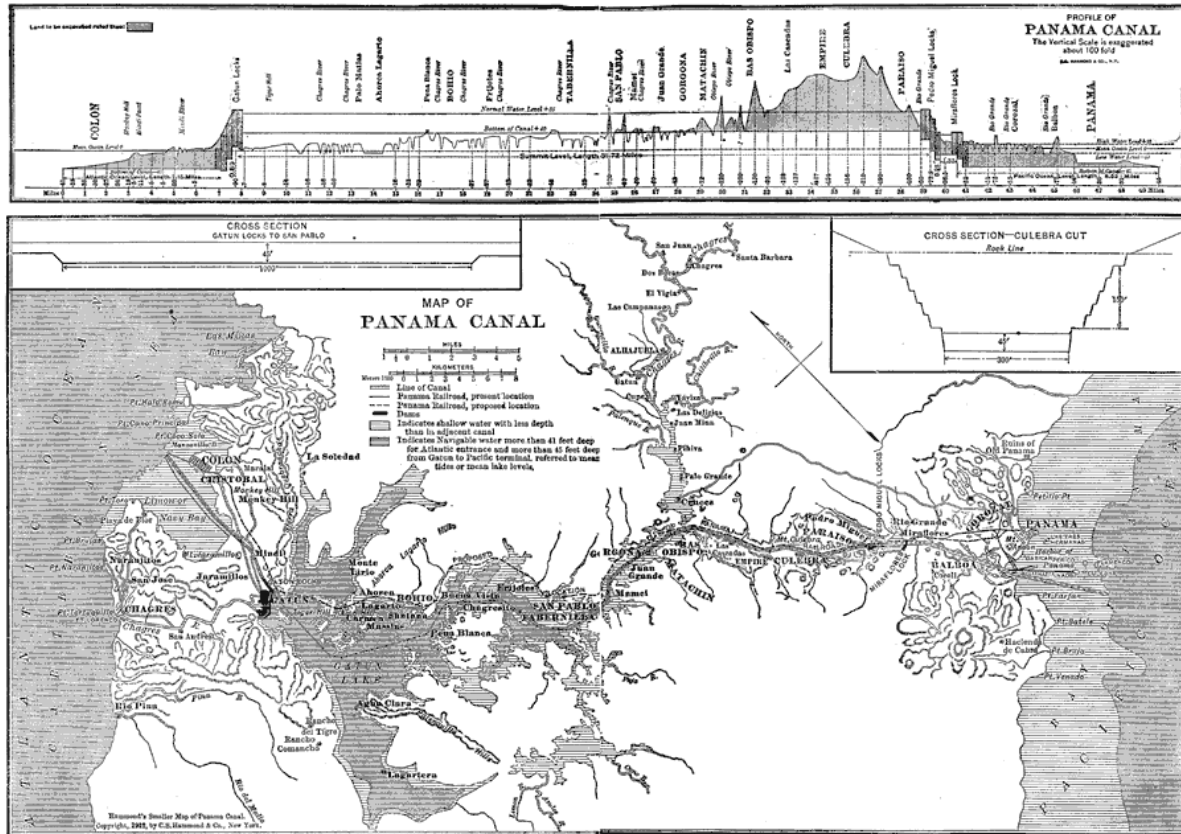


Figure 4.20

Map of the Panama Canal in 1912, showing the cross section of elevation changes.<sup>521</sup>

<sup>521</sup>“Map of Panama Canal,” *The Free Press Almanac Encyclopedia and Atlas* (NY: C. S. Hammond and Co./Manitoba Free Press, 1912), 112; Educational Technology Clearinghouse, historic maps collection, University of South Florida, accessed 3 June 2015, <http://etc.usf.edu/maps/pages/10300/10340/10340.gif>.





Figure 4.21

Native American laborers hired by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1906. San Carlos, White Mountain, and other Western Apache tribes supplied the bulk of the workforce for road construction and supporting infrastructure for Roosevelt Dam.<sup>522</sup>

---

<sup>522</sup>“Building the Apache Trail,” photograph, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, accessed 17 May 2015, [http://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/AZ100/1900/apache\\_workers.html](http://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/AZ100/1900/apache_workers.html).



Figure 4.22

Map of the Salt River watershed, with Theodore Roosevelt Lake. By 1913 the controlling Salt River Project owned six reservoirs, nine canals, and hundreds of miles of laterals (distribution ditches) providing irrigation to Phoenix and the greater Salt River Valley. San Diego's targeted agricultural colony, Glendale, lies to the northwest of Phoenix.<sup>523</sup>

---

<sup>523</sup>Map of the Salt River watershed, Wikipedia, accessed 11 Aug. 2014, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salt\\_River\\_\(Arizona\)#mediaviewer/File:Salt\\_River\\_Map.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salt_River_(Arizona)#mediaviewer/File:Salt_River_Map.jpg); "Canal History," Salt River Project, accessed 17 May 2015, [http://www.srpnet.com/water/canals/history.aspx#western\\_canal](http://www.srpnet.com/water/canals/history.aspx#western_canal).



Figure 4.23

“Roosevelt Dam,” postcard circa 1915. The dam was built in a box canyon eighty miles northeast of Phoenix, at the confluence of the Salt River (Rio Salado) and Tonto Creek. The dam was completed in 1911 and the reservoir filled to capacity by 1915, providing the primary source of water to Phoenix.<sup>524</sup>

---

<sup>524</sup>“The Apache Trail of Arizona and Roosevelt Dam,” postcard, Roland G. Still, ca. 1915, Apache Trail postcard gallery, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.lost-dutchman.com/dutchman/entries/aptrail.html>.





Figure 4.24

1909 Salt River Project irrigation canal with electric pump: “Hydroelectric power from Roosevelt Dam cut the cost of groundwater pumping for Valley farmers. Groundwater pumping facilities in the early 1900s resembled windmills without the blades; a large derrick was needed to both install and maintain the pump structure,” caption from the Salt River Project website.<sup>525</sup>

---

<sup>525</sup> Photograph, Salt River Project, accessed 10 Aug. 2014, <http://www.srpnet.com/gallery/trd/1909.aspx>.



Figure 4.25

Erection of electric towers between Roosevelt Dam hydraulic generators and the Phoenix Valley; “Power from Roosevelt Dam to the Valley was first transmitted in September 1910. The United States Wind Engine and Pump Co., a windmill company in Illinois, was selected to supply transmission towers. Tower assembly on site took 12 men. Eventually, crews were raising an average of seven towers per day, with 14 of them per mile.”<sup>526</sup>

---

<sup>526</sup>Photograph, Salt River Project, accessed 10 Aug. 2014, <http://www.srpnet.com/gallery/trd/1909.aspx>.



Figure 4.26

Power lines through the desert between Roosevelt Dam and Phoenix, 1909.<sup>527</sup> The hydroelectric project was built at a moment when the U.S. West was at the point of converting from animal power to electrical power.

---

<sup>527</sup>Photograph, Salt River Project, accessed 10 Aug. 2014, <http://www.srpnet.com/gallery/trd/1909.aspx>.





Figure 4.27

“Picturesque Drive along Banks of Irrigation Canal, Phoenix, Arizona,” postcard c.1910. Such images of irrigation in the Desert West were popular during the era, with their suggestions of engineered verdancy. The appeal of such scenes was not only commercial, it was also aesthetic, as the caption suggests.<sup>528</sup>

---

<sup>528</sup>Postcard, private online album, accessed 18 May 2015, [http://pix.epodunk.com/AZ/az\\_phoenix01.jpg](http://pix.epodunk.com/AZ/az_phoenix01.jpg).

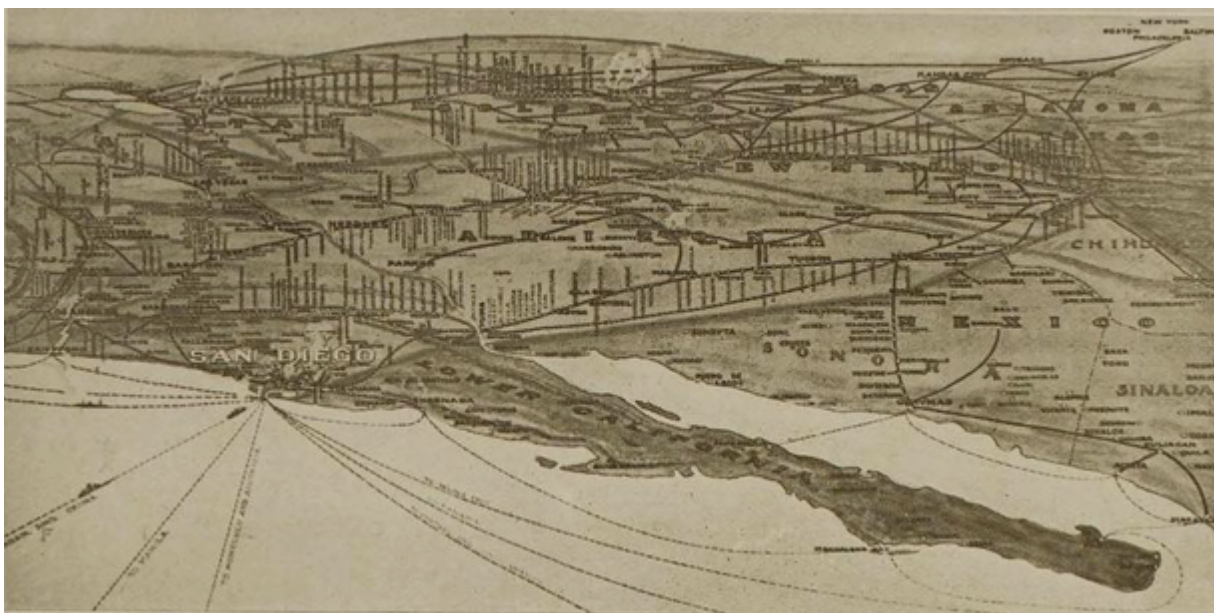


Figure 4.28

“San Diego, Nearest Pacific Port,” a map of the city’s aspirations for its domestic empire, from a PCE publicity brochure. The map indicates the ocean route from the Panama Canal to the San Diego harbor, and a network of rail lines from San Diego to the north through Colorado, to the east to Oklahoma, and as far northeast as Kansas City.<sup>529</sup>

---

<sup>529</sup> *Why Not San Diego*, 15.





Figure 4.29

“Official View, In the Japanese Gardens—Pavilion of Japan and Formosa,” PCE postcard, 1914.<sup>530</sup>

---

<sup>530</sup>“Official View, In the Japanese Gardens—Pavilion of Japan and Formosa,” postcard, Poole Bros., Chicago, 1914, for the PCE Co.; PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/expo/poojapa.jpg>.

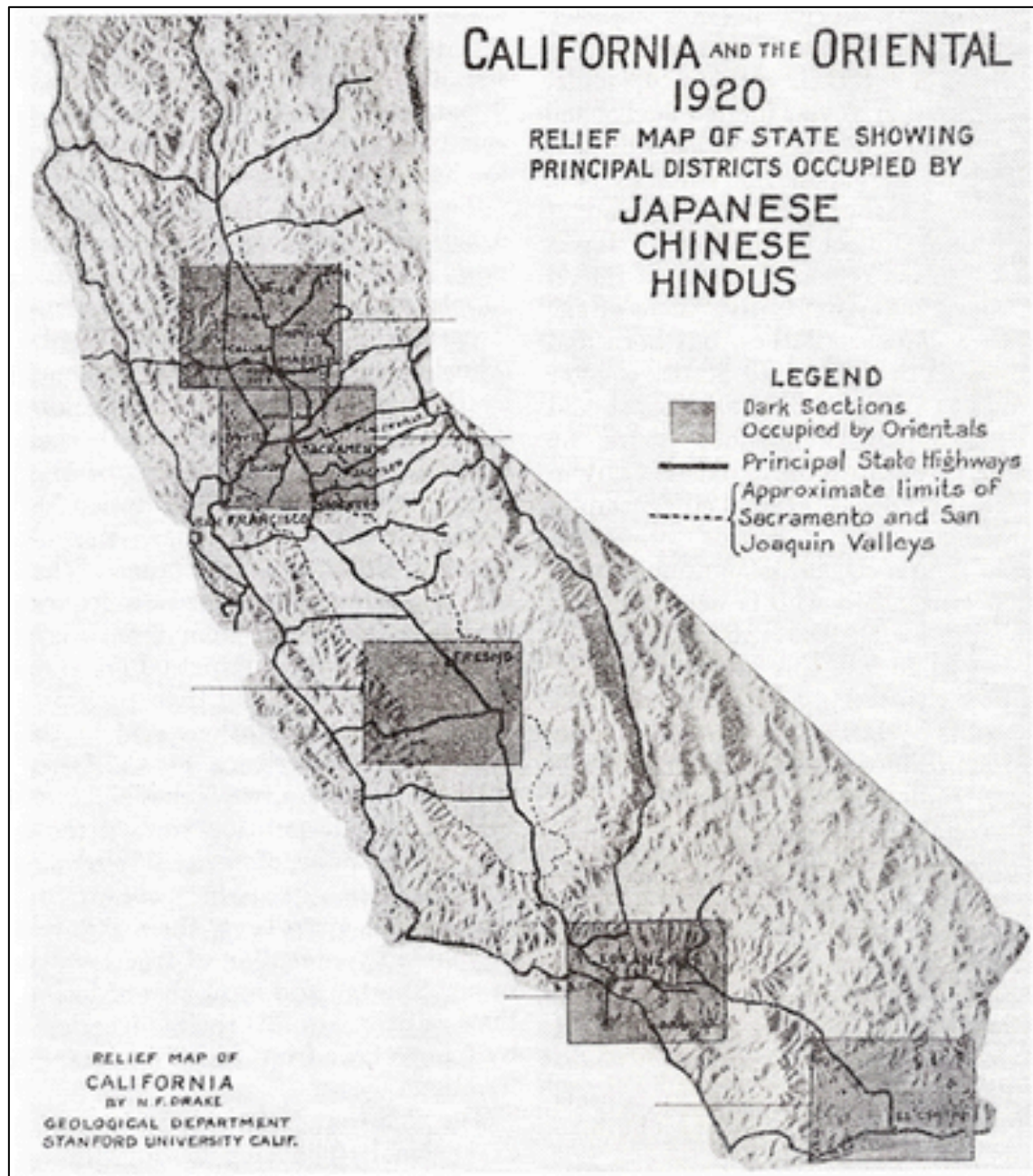


Figure 4.30

1920 Map of the “Oriental” population in California. The Geology Department at Stanford University produced the map depicting an alleged concentration of Asians inland from San Diego in the Imperial Valley surrounding El Centro.<sup>531</sup>

<sup>531</sup>“California and the Oriental,” map, in Earl S. Parker, “The Real Yellow Peril,” *The Independent (New York)*, 7 May 1921, 476.



Figure 4.31

Model Farm and Bungalow at the PCE, showing the citrus orchard. In the right background the California Building and Tower can be seen, and to the far left the domed Botanical Building.<sup>532</sup>

---

<sup>532</sup>Postcard, PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/99spring/images/2552-2.jpg>.





Figure 4.32

“Model Bungalow, San Diego Fair,” front view of the house showing a grassy yard and landscaping with shrubs and trees.<sup>533</sup>

---

<sup>533</sup>“Model Bungalow, San Diego Fair,” Oakes photograph, PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 9 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/cardlist/list350.htm>.



Figure 4.33

“Model Ranch, San Diego Expo,” photo postcard of model bungalow exhibit with the backyard planted in an extensive vegetable garden.<sup>534</sup>

---

<sup>534</sup>“Model Ranch, San Diego Expo,” photo postcard, PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 10 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/expo/660modelranch.jpg>.

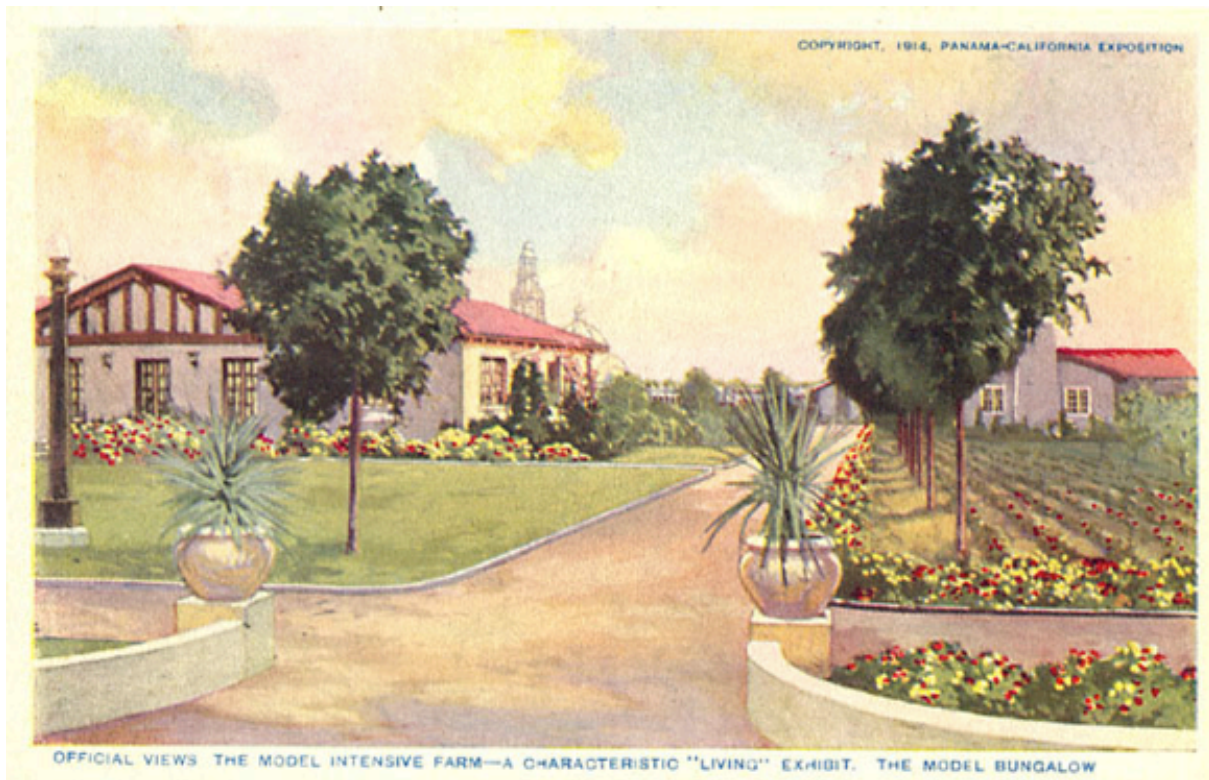


Figure 4.34

An official PCE postcard from 1914 showing a rendering of the fair’s model farm. The original caption reads “Official Views: The Model Intensive Farm—A Characteristic ‘Living’ Exhibit. The Model Bungalow.” The postcard emphasizes the lush landscaping of the modest bungalows, with extensive flowerbeds bordering cultivated fields, and prodigious flowers around the bungalow itself. The tower and dome of the California Building are just visible behind the house on the left.<sup>535</sup>

---

<sup>535</sup>“Official Views: The Model Intensive Farm,” postcard, Poole Bros., Chicago, 1914, for the PCE Co.; PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pascal/expo/poomode.jpg>.



Figure 4.35

PCE Model Farm Bungalow, lanternslide, 1915. Similar to the black-and-white photograph above (Figure 4.32), the view suggests how widely the PCE Model Farm was publicized. The slide's hand-colored, intensely green lawn suggests the power of irrigation in California and the Desert Southwest, and the visual marketing of San Diego as verdant.<sup>536</sup>

---

<sup>536</sup>PCE Model Farm Bungalow, lantern slide, Ryerson and Burnham Archives, Archival Digital Collection, The Art Institute of Chicago, accessed 17 May 2015, <http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/mqc/id/26587/rec/1>.





Figure 4.36

“A Happy Home on Two House Lots,” photograph in a Little Landers publicity brochure, circa 1915. The basic house was typical, as was the garden with animal buildings (usually chicken coops). Little-Lander plots were most often one or two acres in size.<sup>537</sup>

---

<sup>537</sup>“A Happy Home on Two House Lots,” photograph from *San Ysidro: Home of the Little Landers Colony*, publicity brochure, (n.p.: s.n., n.d.), n.p., cited in Lawrence B. Lee, “The Little Landers Colony of San Ysidro,” *Journal of San Diego History* 21 (Winter 1975): 29.



Figure 4.37

“Just an Acre,” photograph from a publicity booklet for the Little Landers Colony in San Ysidro, circa 1911–1916.<sup>538</sup>

---

<sup>538</sup>“Just an Acre,” photograph in Lee, “The Little Landers Colony of San Ysidro,” 40.



Figure 4.38

“Irrigation Canal, Imperial Valley, El Centro, California,” postcard circa the PCE era.<sup>539</sup>

---

<sup>539</sup>“Irrigation Canal, Imperial Valley, El Centro, California,” postcard, Francis Drug Co., El Centro, eBay, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://www.ebay.com/itm/El-Centron-CA-California-Irrigation-Canal-Farming-Imperial-Valley-Francis-Drug-/>.



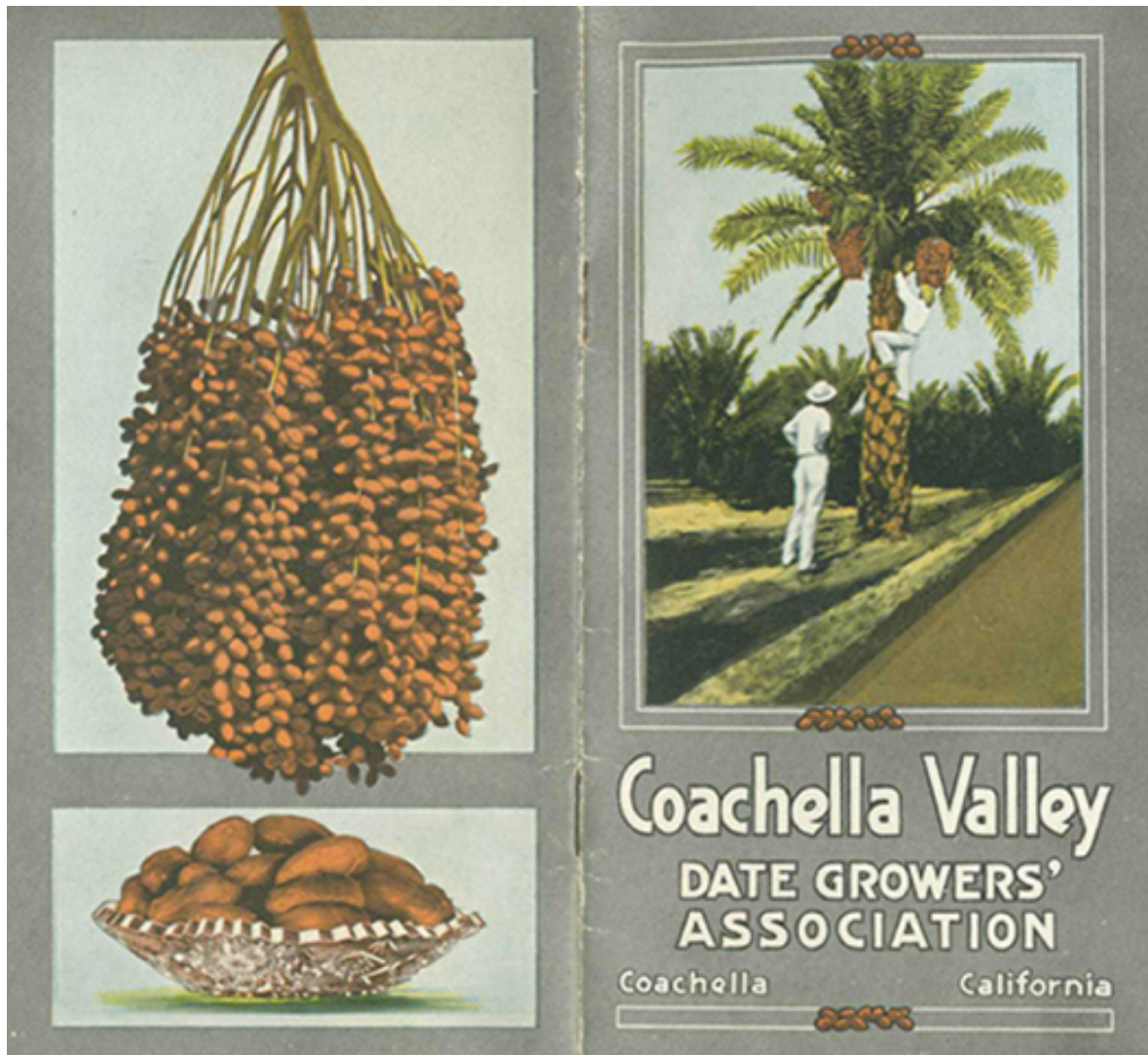


Figure 4.39

“Coachella Valley Date Growers’ Association” publicity pamphlet produced for the California expositions, circa 1915. The front cover image shows the irrigation ditches that made the intensive cultivation possible.<sup>540</sup>

<sup>540</sup>“Coachella Valley Date Growers’ Association,” pamphlet, California History Room, California State Library, reproduced in Sarah McCormick Seekatz, “Harem Girls and Camel Races: Middle Eastern Fantasies in the Deserts of Southern California,” *Incendiary Traces Blog*, 5 Feb. 2013, <http://www.incendiarytraces.org/articles/2013/02/05/harem-girls-and-camel-races-middle-eastern-fantasies-in-the-deserts-of-southern-california>.



Figure 4.40

“A Typical Southern California Garden,” postcard portraying the desert region transformed into a lush landscape of flowerbeds, palms, grass, and deciduous trees through irrigation.<sup>541</sup>

---

<sup>541</sup>“A Typical Southern California Garden,” postcard, Matt Bokovoy, “Phantoms of the Southern California Past,” Blogspot, 1 Nov. 2007, [http://mattbokovoy.blogspot.com/2007\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html](http://mattbokovoy.blogspot.com/2007_11_01_archive.html).



Figure 4.41

“Indian Village, rock cliffs with ladder,” Oakes PCE photo postcard.<sup>542</sup>

---

<sup>542</sup>“Indian Village, rock cliffs with ladder,” postcard, PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 9 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/cardlist/list350.htm>.





Figure 4.42

“Pueblo Village, The Painted Desert,” official PCE publicity photograph.<sup>543</sup>

---

<sup>543</sup>“Pueblo Village, The Painted Desert,” postcard, Historic Photo Gallery, Balboa Park Association, accessed 5 Aug. 2014, <http://www.balboapark.org/old2015/historicphotos>.





Figure 4.43

“Out-door Oven in The Painted Desert,” PCE postcard.<sup>544</sup>

---

<sup>544</sup>“Out-door Oven in The Painted Desert,” postcard, PCE Co., ca. 1916, PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/expo/oven390.jpg>.



Figure 4.44

“Pueblo Indians Baking Pottery, The Painted Desert,” Fred Harvey/PCE postcard circa 1916.<sup>545</sup>

---

<sup>545</sup>“Pueblo Indians Baking Pottery, The Painted Desert,” postcard, Fred Harvey Co./PCE Co., ca. 1916, PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/expo/oven3902.jpg>.



Figure 4.45

“Blanket Weavers, ‘The Painted Desert,’” PCE postcard by the Fred Harvey Company circa 1915. The Navajo women are carding, spinning, and weaving with wool, showing several stages of traditional artisan production.<sup>546</sup>

---

<sup>546</sup>“Blanket Weavers, ‘The Painted Desert,’” postcard, Fred Harvey Co./PCE Co., ca. 1915, PCE Collection, San Diego History Center, accessed 8 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/cardlist/list410.htm>.



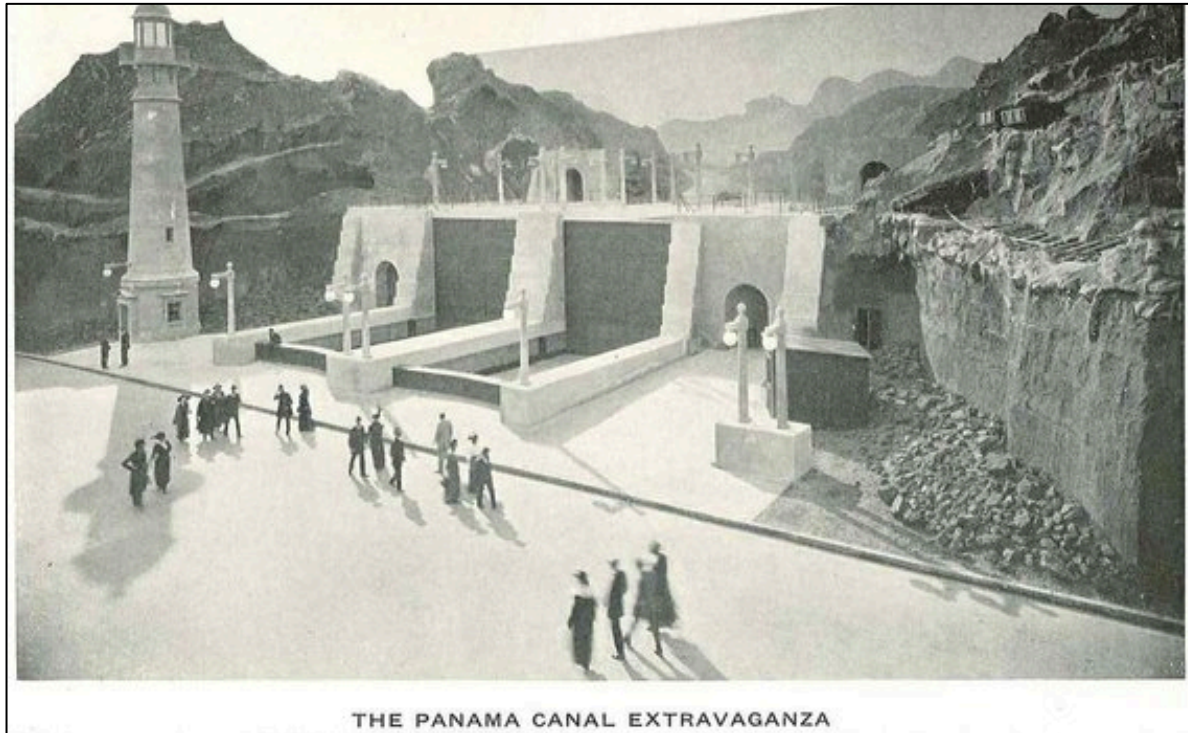


Figure 4.46

“The Panama Canal Extravaganza,” PCE postcard of the midway diorama.<sup>547</sup>

---

<sup>547</sup>“The Panama Canal Extravaganza,” postcard, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 30 Oct. 2012, [http://media.utsandiego.com/img/photos/2012/10/30/Canal1915\\_r620x349.JPG](http://media.utsandiego.com/img/photos/2012/10/30/Canal1915_r620x349.JPG).

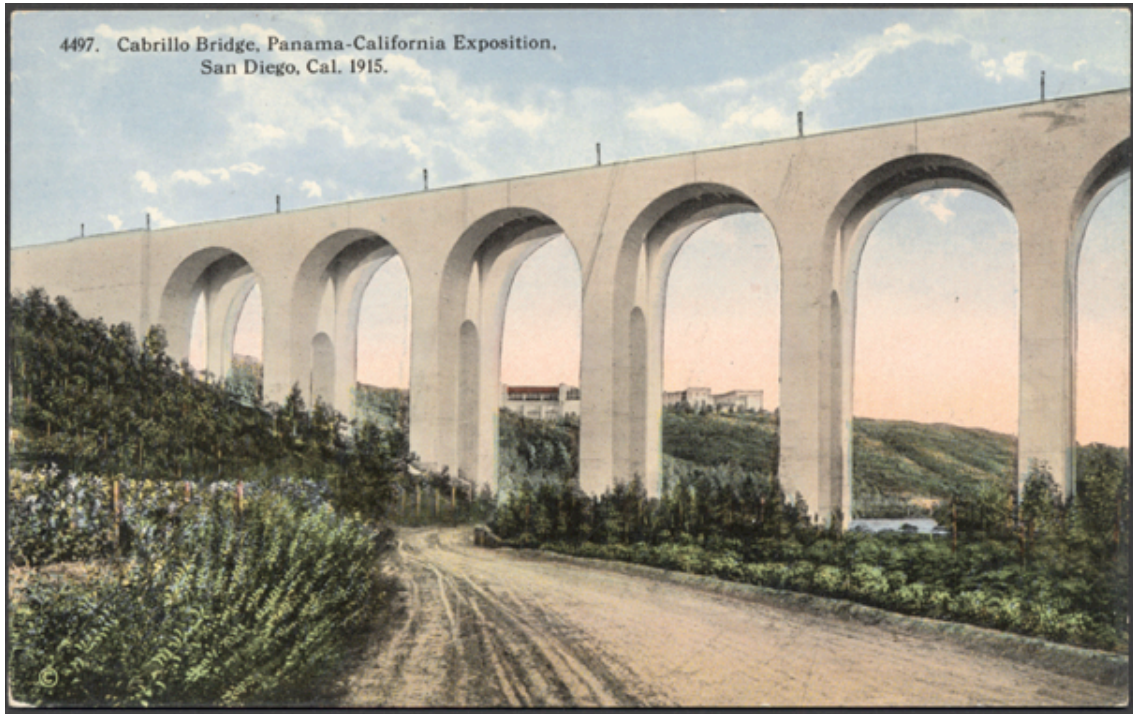


Figure 4.47

“Cabrillo Bridge,” 1915 postcard showing the main entrance bridge to the PCE designed in the architectural style of ancient Rome.<sup>548</sup>

---

<sup>548</sup>“Cabrillo Bridge,” postcard, Wolfsonian Library, Florida International University, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://libimages.wolfsonian.org/XB2000.45.180.jpg>.

## Chapter 5 : San Francisco and the Panama-Pacific International Exposition:

### Civic Imperialism as a Work of Art

By the time the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) opened in San Francisco in 1915, negative public opinion regarding intervention in Panama no longer threatened opposition to U.S. annexation of former Spanish colonies. What required selling at that point was not the zone of occupation or the canal itself, which had opened in August 1914, but rather an entrenchment of steadfast public allegiance to the notion that U.S. empire was not only beneficent but also inherently enchanting. San Francisco boosters promoted this beguiling association of beauty and empire in popular culture, in the process of advancing their city as the Pacific metropole of American imperialism.

The PPIE raised the cultural production of U.S. imperialism to a new, artistic level. San Francisco fair publicity utilized the themes of order, progress, and technology from the Panama Canal Zone and the San Diego PCE that had proven effective, but also increasingly emphasized an added realm of aesthetic pleasure. Although it was commissioned to mark the Panama Canal's completion, the PPIE broadened the ritual of imperial display to transcend the concrete example of success in Panama. San Francisco promoters aspired to inclusion of an intangible realm of beauty in their arsenal of civic imperialism. Exposition designers used the Panama Canal as a catalyst for an abstract projection of empire, and made it into a sublime spectacle.

The PPIE operated through a capacious vision of aesthetics. It included sublime beauty, attractive images, and sensual pleasures, especially through the fair's architecture, landscaping, sculpture, lighting, and color scheme. Between 1910 and 1915, for imperial marketing purposes, planners advanced these concepts to their targeted audience, a demographic of white,

economically secure U.S. citizens. The PPIE's publicity campaign perpetuated tactics that accompanied the U.S. acquisition of the Canal Zone in 1904: engage citizens with attractive visual images, mobilize them as willing consumers in a culture of empire, and mute any negative public opinion regarding imperial expansion with impressive stories of technological triumph.

The exposition's focus on the Panama Canal shifted appreciably during the fair's inception and planning stages, from 1906 to 1915; with few exceptions, fair publicity steadily de-emphasized the canal over time. What began as the fair's *raison d'être* became a midway sideshow by the time the United States completed the canal and the fair opened. Depictions of the canal predominated in early promotional literature for the PPIE, typically drawings of large ships passing through the imagined channel or relief maps of the canal's route across the isthmus. By 1915, visual publicity for the exposition marginalized such references to the canal in favor of representations of the fair's light shows, architecture, and grounds. This shift in prominence reveals a re-centering at the PPIE toward a more abstract, aesthetic imperial beauty at the expense of highlighting the new site of American colonial occupation. For all of its triumphs, the PCZ might still have suggested an unattractive side to U.S. imperialism, in its hegemonic trampling of Panamanian sovereignty and permanent military occupation.

Novelist Laura Ingalls Wilder visited the PPIE during the summer of 1915 and her descriptions of it offer an insight into the ways that the fair appealed to fairgoers through visions of sublime beauty rather than displays of raw imperial power. Laura stayed in San Francisco with her daughter Rose Wilder Lane, a reporter for the San Francisco *Bulletin*, while Laura's husband, Alonzo, remained in Missouri to tend their farm. Laura visited the fair nearly every day, and wrote home often to describe her impressions:



The buildings are built like those of a city and the streets and the four corners of streets form the courts. One goes through beautiful archways in the buildings into the courts where fountains splash and lovely flowers and green things are growing. There are life-like statues and figures of animals and birds. The foundation color of the buildings is a soft gray and as it rises it is changed to the soft yellows picked out in places by blue and red and green and the eye is carried up and up by the architecture, spires and things, to the beautiful blue sky above. I have never imagined anything so beautiful.<sup>549</sup>

Wilder's letter detailing the PPIE gives no indication of her thoughts about the U.S. occupation of Panama, or the wider U.S. empire, an absence that held in all of her letters from the fair.

Instead, she wrote "one simply gets satiated with beauty. There is so much beauty that it is overwhelming."<sup>550</sup> It was a visceral response to artistic forms that were designed to overwhelm, rather than a reasoned consideration of the dilemmas of empire. Wilder's apolitical response to the fair persisted throughout the summer. Her letters suggest how the realities of imperial politics, and the will to confront and analyze them, could so easily recede into the background at a sensorially captivating spectacle.

The PPIE intermittently reminded its visitors (as well as its viewers of publicity materials) of the Panama Canal triumph, but for the most part it sold them on the magnificent spectacle of the fair itself. Planners inscribed the PPIE with multiple narratives and layers of meaning that sometimes overshadowed each other. San Francisco vied with the Panama Canal for visibility at the fair, since boosters wanted their city to take center stage as the gateway to the Pacific. The PPIE functioned as a celebration of nationalism and imperialism, as world's fairs invariably did. As an international exposition, organizers sought inclusiveness and worried

---

<sup>549</sup>Laura Ingalls Wilder, *West from Home: Letters of Laura Ingalls Wilder, San Francisco, 1915* (New York: Harper Collins, 1974), 35–36.

<sup>550</sup>Wilder, *West from Home*, 35.

about alienating foreign powers as well as domestic constituencies. The fair also celebrated consumerism, technology, manufacturing, progress, eugenics, white supremacy, modernity, and Progressivism, among many other issues. In trying to be all things to all people, the fair was about so many things at once that it risked the perception of being about nothing in particular. Fine arts exhibits competed with crass commercial displays; educational lectures contended with tawdry midway concessions for visitors' attention. The exposition was a visual cacophony, a dazzling spectacle with so much sensory information to take in that visitors could easily lose sight of the celebration of the newly opened canal.

However, despite its variegated nature, one can discern patterns regarding how the fair shaped perceptions of imperialism. The cultural discourse leading up to the Panama Canal and the PPIE raised issues about how to market U.S. empire to its citizens. The driving question was how to put imperialism in the best possible light at the world's fair. Although PPIE organizers were imperial boosters, the publicity approach that they developed between 1910 and 1915 cultivated an aesthetic that celebrated empire indirectly, through associations with sublime beauty rather than overt references to coercive U.S. power. The fair's infrastructure worked to abstract U.S. imperialism. It offered the fair as an implicit argument for empire rather than the explicit one for the Panama Canal Zone.

### **Organizing San Francisco's Resurgence**

San Francisco elites, particularly affluent white men, acted to transform the city into a hub of U.S. imperialism at the turn of the century. Upon President Roosevelt's seizure of the PCZ in 1904, the San Francisco Merchants' Exchange announced plans to stage a Panama Canal

exposition. Although the 1906 earthquake and fire delayed planning, it also galvanized the city because the fair now offered the added opportunity of urban renewal. As the city commenced rebuilding, civic attention turned back to the campaign to host an imperial world's fair.<sup>551</sup>

San Francisco promoters presented a city reborn from the ruins of the 1906 disaster (see Figure 5.1). After the initial shock and recovery efforts, fair promoters resumed lobbying for an exposition, arguing that it would be the perfect accelerant for the city's physical rebuilding and enhancement of its power as an imperial center. When President William H. Taft announced in October 1909 that the official opening date for the Panama Canal would be 1 January 1915, the city mobilized to secure bestowal of the world's fair. The San Francisco Merchants' Exchange met immediately to plan and raise funds, and by December 1909 had organized a committee. On 22 March 1910, organizers incorporated the Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company. PPIE boosters subsequently redoubled their efforts and on 28 April 1910 raised over \$4 million from private investors in just two hours.<sup>552</sup> By the time the fair opened in 1915, the PPIE Company's budget was \$50 million.<sup>553</sup>

The exposition became a catalyst for the city's dual aspirations of recovery from the cataclysm and engagement in the expanding empire. The city's official flag, depicting a phoenix rising up from the flames, suggested both a renaissance and a connection to mythical antiquity.

---

<sup>551</sup>Rydell, *World's a Fair*, 214.

<sup>552</sup>*Universal Exposition San Francisco 1915 Celebrating the Opening of the Panama Canal: A Pictorial Review of the Exposition's Progress to March 15, 1913* ([San Francisco]: Panama-Pacific International Exposition, 1913), 4.

<sup>553</sup>Frank Morton Todd, *The Story of the Exposition, Being the Official History of the International Celebration Held at San Francisco in 1915 to Commemorate the Discovery of the Pacific Ocean and the Construction of the Panama Canal* (New York: G. P. Putnam/PPIE Co., 1921), 1:55, 1:63.

Classical Roman iconography dominated San Francisco publicity between the 1906 earthquake and the 1915 world's fair, advancing imperial associations. The image of a shattered city hall (Figure 5.2) with broken colonnades, a fragment of lintel, and a crumbled façade beneath the dome evokes Roman ruins and subtly suggests a setting for empire, albeit one in need of reinforcement. Similar images proliferated in the aftermath of 1906. They reflected a place refashioned and ready to lead in the twentieth-century struggle for imperial advantage. In the scramble to host the imperial fair, San Francisco civic leaders promoted their city as superior to rivals New York, Washington DC, Baltimore, New Orleans, and other Pacific coast cities.

Homer S. King, an early president of the PPIE Company, wrote a promotional piece for *Sunset* magazine in 1910 entitled "California's Exposition Ambitions," articulating the city's goals. In it he claimed that San Francisco's destiny included not just hosting the fair, but dominating the entire Pacific Rim. King proclaimed that "the exposition does fall upon California and the West as both a duty and an honor," and San Francisco asked for the honor "before all American cities."<sup>554</sup> The city sought to lead the country, "to dominate the politics and commerce of the Pacific . . . to rule the Pacific, threatened in war and peace by evermore aspiring nations." San Francisco aspired to leading "California, greatest of Pacific Coast states," and its neighboring states to the north in this dominance of the Asian Pacific, influencing the 800 million people "along the opposite shore" in Asia, and defending U.S. interests at home and abroad, whether in war or in peace, commerce or combat.<sup>555</sup> While acknowledging the Panama

---

<sup>554</sup>Homer S. King, "California's Exposition Ambitions," *Sunset* 25, no. 6 (1910): 623.

<sup>555</sup>King, "California's Exposition Ambitions," 623.

Canal, King made it clear that San Francisco's focus was due west. The city cast an imperial gaze across the entire Pacific realm.

Fair planners also explicitly equated San Francisco's own physical restoration with the construction of the Panama Canal. A publicity booklet reveled in the city's rebirth: "The entire business section and a great part of the residence section has been beautifully and strongly rebuilt at a total cost of just about what it has taken to dig the Panama Canal—\$375,000,000."<sup>556</sup> San Franciscans sold their city as a wonder to rival the Panama Canal in ambition, determination, and magnificence. On 15 February 1911, president William H. Taft signed a resolution designating San Francisco the official host of the world's fair to celebrate the future opening of the Panama Canal. The canal opened on 15 August 1914, and the fair ran from 20 February 1915 until 4 December 1915.

### **Minimizing the Panama Canal at the San Francisco Fair**

Visitors to the fair in 1915 might have missed the connection to the Panama Canal altogether, but in 1910 it was still visible. A 1910 postcard (Figure 5.3), for example, links the geographies of San Francisco and Panama with a relief map of the canal, and situates San Francisco as an international city surrounded by flags of the world. It suggests the Pacific

---

<sup>556</sup>Panama-Pacific International Exposition Co., *Condensed Facts Concerning the Panama-Pacific Universal Exposition, San Francisco, 1915, Celebrating the Opening of the Panama Canal* (San Francisco: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition Co., Division of Exploitation, 1914), n.p., pamphlet, Pamphlets—Misc., 1913–1915, fol. 2, Panama-Pacific International Exposition [PPIE] Vertical Files, San Francisco Ephemera Collection, The Daniel E. Koshland San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library [hereafter cited as SFPL].

connection between the two places with San Francisco Bay in the background behind the exposition site. It also portrays San Francisco as a female figure with the California bear at her side, powerful yet calm beneath the touch of her hand. A colorized version of the postcard depicts the bear wearing a string of orange California Poppies, the state flower. The female figure of the city trumpets the completion of the canal, the opening of the PPIE, and the imperial significance of the two interconnected events.

One of the few vestiges of the connection between the PPIE and Panama by 1915, a diorama of the Panama Canal occupied a space in the “Joy Zone,” the fair’s midway. A postcard from the fair, Figure 5.4, shows the concession on the midway. This concession contained a working model of the canal that covered five acres. A 1915 fair booklet offered reproduced letters from ICC officials vouching for the exhibit’s verisimilitude. It was built to exacting scale; even the rate of transit of miniature ships through the canal was accurate. The model featured working locks, moving ships, and electric engines or “mules” that towed ships through the canal. Visitors sat in 1,200 “opera chairs” in two tiers on 144 cars on a revolving platform that slowly circled the exhibit inside an oblong auditorium. Individual telephone headsets provided a lecture on the immediate features of the vista below in a tour that took twenty-three minutes.<sup>557</sup>

In addition to a detailed explanation of the engineering of the model canal, the booklet explained the overall vision that the exhibit imparted:

The topography thus reproduced is carried out in panoramic perspective upon the vertical walls surrounding the actual territory reproduced, thus giving to the spectator a boundless horizon, miles in extent. The panoramic painting on these walls was done by noted artists and accurately portrays the topography of the Republic of Panama adjacent

---

<sup>557</sup>Young Women’s Christian Association, *Three Days At the Exposition, Compliments of the National Young Women’s Christian Association* (San Francisco: A. Carlisle and Co., [n.d.]), 8, 11; PPIE Vertical Files, “Women,” San Francisco Ephemera Collection, SFPL.

to the Canal Zone and shows an additional area of approximately four thousand square miles, so that the entire reproduction represents a section of The Isthmus of Panama more than 5,000 square miles in extent.<sup>558</sup>

The model canal exhibit thus offered visitors an immersive spectacle that sought to produce an experience of viewing the Panama Canal. It offered Americans a domestic opportunity to enjoy the foreign imperial possession: “now it is possible for every individual—who has not been able to visit Panama—to see and fully understand the great work of our Government.”<sup>559</sup> The trompe l’oeil around the arena presented a vista of the surrounding PCZ and Republic of Panama for thousands of miles. The concessioners advertised the exhibit as better in some respects than the real thing; such a “bird’s-eye view” would have been unavailable to tourists on the ground in the PCZ, or even on board a ship, as would have been the instructive lecture.

The diorama offered the panoramic perspective and “magisterial gaze” so important in canal depictions, as seen in a PPIE publicity photograph, Figure 5.5. The extravagantly detailed display, conceived of and designed by Chicago engineer L. E. Meyers after a 1911 visit to the PCZ, functioned to categorize the building of the canal as an engineering feat, achieved without human or environmental cost. The model’s designers protested its location on the midway alongside concessions, arguing for inclusion in one of the regular exhibition halls because of its educational value. The fact that directors relegated the model canal to sideshow status in the “Joy Zone” indicates just how peripheral the canal had become to the imperial spectacle by 1915. With the canal’s completion the year before, the pressure for marketing it subsided.

---

<sup>558</sup>*The Panama Canal at San Francisco* (San Francisco: Panama Canal Exhibition Co., 1915), n.p.

<sup>559</sup>*Panama Canal at San Francisco*, n.p.



In a publicity photograph from the fair (Figure 5.6), a female visitor to the diorama surveys the U.S. imprint on the Latin American jungle. Her presence connotes several messages about empire. Such a stance by any white U.S. citizen would suggest possession of the land. Because of gender conventions, her presence is particularly suggestive that the PCZ has been made safe. She also suggests the presumed civilizing effect of a female presence in a frontier zone. Her class position, signaled by an elaborately fashionable plumed hat, signals moral certitude regarding the American occupation. By definition, affluent white women were respectable and only lent their approval by association with worthy undertakings, so her very presence diminished any questions of guilt or injustice. The mirroring of her image by the harbor water suggests a further lesson: the U.S. government wanted its female citizens to invest in, and see themselves reflected in, the nation's imperial projects. Although the federal government constrained women at many levels—for example, barring them from most jobs in the Zone, excluding them from ICC housing unless attached to a man through coverture, and prohibiting them from voting—it still needed women's support, in practical terms as “civilizing” settlers and for the moral influence they could exert. Thus the fair's cultural productions did not rely exclusively on appeals to masculinity.

Imperial publicists refined their message with the passages of time and place, from 1904 Panama to 1915 San Francisco. Their promotional focus shifted from the material achievements in the PCZ to intangible wonders in a celebration of empire through radiant lighting, harmonious landscaping, and complementary colors at the PPIE. The fair created visions of imperial beauty that weren't explicitly about the Panama Canal at all. The iconic “Jewel City” image of the fair used for postcards and souvenir ephemera, Figure 5.7, evoked the architectural splendor of the classical Mediterranean world, not the Americans' modern and utilitarian “big ditch” in Panama.

The PPIE's signature themes of nocturnal floodlights and graceful architecture, as on the cover of *Sunset* magazine in 1915 (Figure 5.8), displaced the canal as a motif. Exposition graphics reveal that by the time the gates opened in 1915, the fair was only nominally devoted to the Panama Canal. Instead, images convey the fair's artistic genres and devices, including color, architecture, landscaping, lighting, sculpture, and murals. The exposition promoted a synthetic ambience of U.S. empire, while the canal itself faded from view.

### **Marketing Empire as a Beautiful Spectacle**

The PPIE epitomized the "City Beautiful" movement, which influenced the fair's design and visual grandeur. The movement's principles included rational and efficient urban planning, but it also focused on creating pleasing appearances through implementing coordinated color schemes, de-cluttering the visual cityscape, making the city friendly for pedestrians, and introducing verdant and flowering landscaping. The PPIE embodied all of these City Beautiful ideals with its devotion of space to pedestrians, extensive use of gardens and landscaping, a coordinated and harmonious palette of building exteriors, immaculate grounds, uncluttered skyline, stunning vistas, and orderly crowds, as an aerial view shows (Figure 5.9). The fair's grounds reflect Jules Guerin's Mediterranean-Californian color design. The fair offered palatial exhibit halls and Beaux-Arts and neoclassical architecture inspired by Imperial Rome.

City Beautiful advocates believed that an attractive and imposing urban landscape would inspire moral virtue and civic pride. PPIE planners hoped to leverage urban and imperial loyalties in a reciprocal dynamic that would advance local and national interests. The fantasy of a "Dream City," "Jewel City," "Walled City," and "City of Domes," as the PPIE was variously

called, encouraged Americans to embrace a symbiosis of U.S. empire and the City Beautiful movement. This dynamic relationship between urbanism and imperialism worked multilaterally. It encouraged a sense of loyalty to the Panama Canal project among urban populations that stood to benefit from it. It touted the ICC's civic planning in the PCZ and suggested that such enlightened design justified American colonization. And it fueled a vision of U.S. global occupation that the PPIE ambitiously promoted as a city within a city, a contrived one within a painfully real one.

The landscape environment of the PPIE moved interior design—associated with the private sphere, home, and women—outdoors, to the public, urban, commercial sphere traditionally dominated by men. Descriptions by fairgoers emphasized the softness of the fair's lighting and ambience, and these accounts suggest how the exposition layered a kind of domestic aura on exterior spaces. Fair designers created a monumental tribute to empire—eleven enormous palaces spread over 635 acres of land, covering seventy-six city blocks—then bathed it in the warm, soft glow of interior lighting.

The fair's "Tower of Jewels" (Figure 5.15) offers evidence that the fair's visual promotion of imperialism also used the approach of decorative arts. Designed by Thomas Hastings of the New York architectural firm Carrère and Hastings, the building was a forty-three-story, stepped Italianate tower at the center of the fair, the tallest on the grounds. Its exterior was bedecked with over 100,000 "Novagems," prisms of Austrian hand-cut glass in a spectrum of colors. A small mirror dangling on a wire, designed to catch the sunlight and amplify the projected lighting effects at night, backed each individual jewel prism. Jewels were particularly gendered as consumer goods for women, designed to adorn the female figure and to display refinement and socioeconomic status. Although both men and women were dazzled by

it, the “Tower of Jewels” represented private, feminine adornment moved outdoors on a grand scale as a decoration for imperialism. The tower’s approach indicates that the imperial aesthetic at the PPIE was not exclusively coded as masculine.

General Electric Company (GE) funded the fair’s captivating lighting display, and a team of its best engineers designed the PPIE’s special effects, carefully coordinated with the fair’s color scheme. Walter D’Arcy Ryan, director of GE’s Illuminating Engineering Laboratory and of the PPIE’s Illumination Department, estimated that GE spent some \$52,000 on the fair’s lighting (the equivalent of \$1.26 million in 2014).<sup>560</sup> The centerpiece of GE’s lighting spectacle was the “Great Scintillator” (Figure 5.10 and Figure 5.11). It consisted of a stationary barge in Yacht Harbor in San Francisco Bay, just offshore from the exposition at the Marina. The Great Scintillator featured forty-eight searchlights in two tiers, equipped with lenses in seven different colors, offering the instant illumination power of 2.6 billion candles.<sup>561</sup> The array of projectors, each a yard across, used the colored lenses to produce a fan of rainbow colors across the nighttime sky. Ryan variously described it as an “Aurora Borealis” and a “Ghost Dance.”<sup>562</sup> The U.S. government provided sixty specially drilled U.S. Marines, stationed at the Presidio for the duration of the PPIE, to operate the lights with military precision each night (Figure 5.12).<sup>563</sup>

---

<sup>560</sup>W[alter] D’Arcy Ryan, “Illumination of the Exposition,” *California’s Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 318.

<sup>561</sup>Ryan, “Illumination of the Exposition,” *California’s*, 319.

<sup>562</sup>Ryan, “Illumination of the Exposition,” *California’s*, 319.

<sup>563</sup>F. F. Barbour, “The Ryan Electric Color Scintillator at the Exposition,” *Pacific Service Magazine* [Pacific Gas and Electric Co.] 7 (1915): 6; Royal Cortissoz, “An Art Critic on the Fair Lighting,” *Pacific Service Magazine* 7 (1915): 7.

The indirect lighting scheme was unprecedented among world's fairs at a time when any form of electrical illumination was still novel and exciting. Previous fairs had primarily employed electric lighting through the use of strings of incandescent light bulbs to outline the contours of buildings. (The 1893 Colombian Exposition in Chicago, Buffalo's 1901 Pan-American Exposition, and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904 had all used this method.) Ryan rejected this type of lighting because it had become "now commonplace" at world's fairs, and because "it suppresses the architecture, which becomes secondary."<sup>564</sup> Ryan also avoided this style because of the harsh lines, glare, and visual fatigue produced by bare light bulbs. The PPIE lighting engineers from GE instead used 370 searchlights and 500 rooftop projectors from around the grounds and the surrounding city.<sup>565</sup> The indirect lighting bathed the fairgrounds in a lambent glow. Weighted "Greek banners" (see Figure 5.13) and brass shields mounted on tall standards masked clusters of powerful arc lamps aimed at the buildings so as to make them seem animated from within in a manner that was "wonderfully pleasing."<sup>566</sup> A YWCA guide concurred: "The effect produced is a wonderful glow, as though the light were part of the very texture of the buildings themselves."<sup>567</sup> Pulsating red lights lit the exterior of the

---

<sup>564</sup>W[alter]. D'A[rcy] Ryan, "Illumination of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition," *General Electric Review* 18, no. 6 (1915): 580.

<sup>565</sup>John E. Findling, ed., "Panama-Pacific International Exposition," *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 221–22.

<sup>566</sup>Ben Macomber, *The Jewel City: Its Planning and Achievement; Its Architecture, Sculpture, Symbolism, and Music; Its Gardens, Palaces, and Exhibits* (San Francisco: J. H. Williams, 1915), 134; Ryan, "Illumination of the PPIE," *GE Review*, 580, quotes on 581.

<sup>567</sup>YWCA, *Three Days*, 24.

Tower of Jewels, reportedly to symbolize the beating heart of the American continent.<sup>568</sup> In the Court of the Universe, twin pools contained sculpted figures atop fluted columns. The columns were actually made of glass with a hollow core. Ryan specified that they be sandblasted inside for light diffusion and concealment of the ninety-six 1,500-watt lamps inside each of the two columns rising from the central fountains.<sup>569</sup> By day they appeared to be sculpted from travertine marble, but at night they turned into glowing pillars of white light (see Figure 5.14).

Visitors frequently commented on the mysterious, magical illumination of the fair as one of its most impressive features. They described the lighting effects as stimulating yet at the same time calming. According to a PPIE brochure, “one of the most attractive and beautiful features of this Exposition is the electrical illumination. By an entirely new system of flood lighting, a soft, restful, yet perfect light pervades the courts at night, revealing in wonderful clearness the facades and walls of the palaces and the natural colors of the shrubbery and flowers, giving an effect as bright and soft as daylight.”<sup>570</sup> Ryan, the GE engineer, characterized the overall effect of his indirect lighting schema: “The direct source is completely screened in the main vistas and ‘behind the scenes’ effects are minimized to a few locations and are nowhere offensive.”<sup>571</sup> His

---

<sup>568</sup>Erik Mattie, *World's Fairs* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 133. Frank Morton Todd described the nightly lighting ritual as “burning the tower,” in his *History of the Exposition*, 2:345.

<sup>569</sup>“A Sense of Wonder: The 1915 San Francisco World’s Fair,” Museum of American Heritage, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://www.moah.org/1915/>.

<sup>570</sup>Panama-Pacific International Exposition Co., *The Panama-Pacific International Exposition San Francisco 1915: Official View Book*, 3d ed. (San Francisco: Robert A. Reid, 1915), n.p., pamphlet, Pamphlets—Misc., 1913–1915, fol. 2, Fairs and Festivals—Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco Ephemera Collection, SFPL.

<sup>571</sup>Ryan, “Illumination of the PPIE,” *GE Review*, 580.

description is applicable to the way planners fashioned imperialism throughout the fair, embedding it “behind the scenes” so that it would be “nowhere offensive.”

Engineers designed the fair to captivate, and by all accounts it appears to have succeeded. Visitors who witnessed it spoke of its artistic qualities to the exclusion of any expressions of the fair’s implications for U.S. imperialism as a concrete reality in Panama or elsewhere. During her visit to the PPIE, Laura Ingalls Wilder described a viewing of the light show from Telegraph Hill: “The white Tower of Jewels is in sight from there. The jewels strung around it glitter and shine in beautiful colors. The jewels are from Austria and . . . decorate all the cornices on the high, fancifully built tower. A searchlight is directed on the tower at night to show it off and it is wonderful.”<sup>572</sup> The “shine” appears to have obstructed her view of imperialism, since she never mentioned its existence, much less her thoughts about it, even in private letters to her spouse.

Emily Post also journeyed to the PPIE and recalled her visit with amazement. After naming sights that fairgoers could not afford to miss, she wrote that “you were luckiest if you . . . looked down upon it at night when the scintillating central point, the Tower of Jewels, looked like a diamond and turquoise wedding-cake and behind it an aura of prismatic-colored search lights—the most thrilling illumination possible to imagine.”<sup>573</sup> Post’s privileged vantage point—looking down upon the “thrilling” spectacle with “the magisterial gaze” that Albert Boime suggested—failed to provide her with a useful perspective on empire.

The poet Edwin Markham, who witnessed an inaugural display of the Great Scintillator, understood the magical power of lighting up the night. He wrote: “I have to-night seen the

---

<sup>572</sup>Wilder, *West from Home*, 31.

<sup>573</sup>Emily Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate* (New York: D. Appleton, 1916), 230.



greatest revelation of beauty that was ever seen on the earth. I may say this meaning it literally and with full regard for all that is known of ancient art and architecture, and all that the modern world has heretofore seen of glory and grandeur. I have seen beauty that will give the world new standards of art, and a joy in loveliness never before reached. This is what I have seen—the courts and buildings of the Panama-Pacific Exposition illuminated at night.”<sup>574</sup> Declaring an entirely new standard of beauty was extreme praise, particularly coming from an artist, and the surpassing of “ancient architecture” suggests imperial transcendence as well.

Art critic Royal Cortissoz described the nightly illumination of the “Column of Progress,” modeled after Trajan’s Column in Rome (in an unsubtle indication of the fair’s imperial yearnings). He recalled that “suddenly, out of the night, sprang this column—a portentous shaft of rosy light. The archer was silhouetted against the sky like some supernatural being, immobile, yet thrilling with life. I had never seen anything statelier or more beautiful—anything with so simple a grandeur enveloped in so romantic a beauty. And this waking of the pillar, that had been lost in the dark, to a sublime life, which presently faded as one watched, was but a prelude to sensations, if anything, more moving.”<sup>575</sup> Cortissoz recognized the fair’s sublime operation, and its architectural association with past empires.

Visitor accounts also convey the aura of antiquity that the fair sought to create, both for the sake of aesthetics and for an invocation of imperial provenance. Bernard Maybeck’s Palace was the preeminent example, though not the only one. The overall built environment imposed an ambience of ancient Rome. In his essay “A Magic City of Temples,” Australian urban planner

---

<sup>574</sup>Edwin Markham quoted in John Winthrop Hammond, *Men and Volts: The Story of General Electric* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., [1941]), 364.

<sup>575</sup>Cortissoz, “Art Critic,” 7.

and booster of American architecture George Taylor wrote of his visit to the PPIE that the exposition had a venerable feel and soft quality: “This artificial impress of time was everywhere. Nothing seemed new and garish. Even the material of the building was not that glaring white plaster distinctive of Expositions of the past, but an ivory-yellow toned hydraulic lime trowelled to represent the streaked laminations of old travertine lime stone. That ivory tone was the base for the play of the whole of the color glories of Master Artist Jules Guerin’s palette.”<sup>576</sup> A 1913 issue of *Modern Painter* discussed the choice of the ivory-colored travertine favorably, declaring “it is not garish, as a dead white would be, especially in the sunlight. . . . and most important of all, it does away with a certain ‘new’ effect which pure white would give, and which is deadly to art.”<sup>577</sup> The PPIE’s representations avoided the appearance of such new, garish, artless power.

Taylor’s perception reflects the aesthetic intent of the fair’s designers. George W. Kelham, the chief architect of the PPIE, expressed the designers’ desire to avoid the glare of Chicago’s white buildings. Kelham explained the deliberate process of developing the material used to finish the exposition’s buildings and confidently predicted that “each and every one will realize that the effect is harmonious and agreeable, that there is a general color tone that glows with the softness of a piece of antique marble.”<sup>578</sup> The fair’s designers succeeded in contrasting San Francisco’s sophistication with the gaudiness of Chicago’s fair.

---

<sup>576</sup>George Taylor, “A Magic City of Temples,” *Building*, 12 Mar. 1915, 97.

<sup>577</sup>“Color Scheme of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition,” *Modern Painter* 22, no. 4 (1913): 50.

<sup>578</sup>George W. Kelham, “Texture of Buildings at the Exposition,” *California’s Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 328.

These adjectivally rich accounts provide some sense of the aesthetic impact that the fair produced on its viewers. Visitors appear to have grasped for words that could adequately convey their sense of wonderment. Emily Post declared that “to visualize the . . . Exposition in a few sentences is impossible,” and the PPIE’s historian asserted that “the effect was at once delicate and dazzling beyond all power to describe.”<sup>579</sup> It is clear, however, that the PPIE’s Scintillator light shows succeeded spectacularly in transforming the theme of imperialism from an issue of force and violence into one of exquisite beauty. The power of searchlights replaced the power of cannons in the popular imagination. The U.S. government deployed marines for entertainment rather than invasion. On the face of it, there was no objectionable content in this new visual marketing of empire. By all contemporaneous accounts, even an anti-imperialist would have been hard-pressed not to enjoy the show.

The exposition’s sensuality sometimes bordered on the sexual. Cortissoz’s suggestive articulations of the “portentous shaft of rosy light” and the “waking of the pillar,” descriptions of a tower pulsating in red light, the Great Scintillator, and accounts of fireworks, fog, the warm glow, and dreaminess all contain erotic undercurrents and suggest an altered state of consciousness and surrender to a visceral experience.

The fair also suggested sexual pleasure through the trope of Orientalism. The author of a PPIE guidebook declared that “the Spirit of the East that has added its domes, its minarets, its soft glowing colors, will remain and join hands with the Spirit of the West, that strong, pulsating energetic spirit, and the harmony produced will vibrate from the shores of the Occident to the

---

<sup>579</sup>Post, *By Motor Golden Gate*, 229; Todd, *History of the Exposition*, 2:345.

shores of the Orient.”<sup>580</sup> The description employs terms that typify Orientalism’s gendered binary hierarchies, with the East as “soft” and “glowing” versus the West as “strong” and “energetic.” The language of “glowing” and “pulsating” again connotes sensuality, if not sexuality, and this contributed to the fair’s marketing appeal.

### **Soft-Selling Imperialism through Ambience**

Architecture constituted a key component of the fair’s artistic appeal. Guidebooks to the fair advertised the gardens by John McLaren, color scheme by Jules Guerin, and buildings designed by “some of the best know architects in the United States”: George W. Kelham, William B. Faville, Bernard R. Maybeck, Willis Polk, Robert D. Farquhar, Louis C. Mullgardt, Clarence R. Ward, Henry Bacon, Arthur Brown Jr. and John Bakewell Jr., and the firms McKim, Mead, and White, and Carrère and Hastings.<sup>581</sup> These designers and architects were among the most accomplished practitioners of the Beaux-Arts school and of the City Beautiful movement. Bakewell and Brown were protégés of Bernard Maybeck, and Brown studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris before returning to San Francisco to set up practice with Bakewell. Arthur Brown went on to design the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House, and the new San Francisco City Hall, which opened in 1915 during the PPIE.

---

<sup>580</sup>Juliet James, *Palaces and Courts of the Exposition: A Handbook of the Architecture Sculpture and Mural Paintings with Special Reference to the Symbolism* (San Francisco: California Book Co., 1915), 4.

<sup>581</sup>YWCA, *Three Days*, 25.

Although art critics, writers, and fairgoers argued over which architectural work was the most exquisite—the Column of Progress, the Tower of Jewels, Court of the Universe, Mullgardt’s Tower—Bernard Maybeck’s Palace of Fine Arts emerged as the most iconic structure at the PPIE. Visitors were awed by it, and visual representations of it proliferated. Myriad accounts testified to its sublime beauty. Frank Morton Todd, the PPIE Company’s official historian, recalled the hold that the Palace had on visitors: “Many enthusiasts claimed for it the distinction of being the most beautiful architectural composition in the world.”<sup>582</sup> Thomas Edison exulted “the architect of that building is a genius. There is not the equal anywhere on earth.”<sup>583</sup> The emissary of King George of England pronounced it one of the two most beautiful buildings in the world, alongside the Taj Mahal, in a fitting comparison of spectacular imperial assets.<sup>584</sup> The building prompted such an outpouring of public adoration that a movement for its preservation began even before the fair ended. Phoebe Apperson Hearst led the effort, and the resulting Palace Preservation League ensured that the building was spared demolition.

The public response to the edifice was not coincidental, or unintended. In a 1915 essay on the Palace of Fine Arts, Maybeck acknowledged his sense of the power of architecture “as a

---

<sup>582</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 2:284.

<sup>583</sup>Thomas Edison quoted in Hamilton M. Wright, “The Miracle Workers of the Exposition,” *California’s Magazine* 1, no. 4 (1916); quoted in Gray Brechin, “Sailing to Byzantium: The Architecture of the Fair,” in *The Anthropology of World’s Fairs: San Francisco’s Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915*, ed. Burton Benedict (London and Berkeley: The Lowie Museum of Anthropology/Scolar Press, 1983), 106.

<sup>584</sup>“Wonderful Pictorial Record of Every Phase of the World’s Greatest Exposition, Gathered by Cardinell Vincent Co., Official Exposition Photographers,” *California’s Magazine* 2 (1916): 259.

conveyor of ideas and sentiments.”<sup>585</sup> While pondering the building’s design, he felt “that the keynote of a Fine Arts Palace should be that of sadness modified by the feeling that beauty has a soothing influence.”<sup>586</sup> Maybeck wanted the architecture of the Palace to produce the same effect that looking at the paintings inside would have, another example of PPIE designers turning buildings inside-out to create an interior sensation in the outdoor, public realm. The architect sought to create a feeling of “modified melancholy” and he spoke of using “those forms in architecture and gardening that will affect the emotions in such a way as to produce on the individual the same modified sadness.”<sup>587</sup> Maybeck’s design intentions succeeded; countless visitors commented on the wistfulness of the Palace and lagoon, and speculated on its larger meaning. One of the more famous images of the Palace, a hand-tinted Cardinell-Vincent photograph of the building and, equally important, its lagoon, Figure 5.20, suggests a sense of nostalgia. The building’s feigned antiquity suggested abandonment, with swans as its only residents.

Maybeck consciously took inspiration from Greek and Roman ruins for the Palace, and explained why they were his models: “An old Roman ruin, away from civilization, which two thousand years before was the center of action and full of life, and now is partly overgrown with bushes and trees—such ruins give the mind a sense of sadness.”<sup>588</sup> Maybeck wrote that only Roman ruins could convey “just this note of vanished grandeur,” while he also considered

---

<sup>585</sup>Bernard R. Maybeck, *Palace of Fine Arts and Lagoon* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1915), 1.

<sup>586</sup>Maybeck, *Palace of Fine Arts*, 9.

<sup>587</sup>Maybeck, *Palace of Fine Arts*, 9.

<sup>588</sup>Maybeck, *Palace of Fine Arts*, 10.

“Greek temples” for inspiration.<sup>589</sup> In his introduction to Bernard Maybeck’s essay, Frank Morton Todd acknowledged the Palace’s allusions to antiquity, stating “it represented the beauty and grandeur of the past.”<sup>590</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Ben Macomber concurred, writing in 1915 that the Palace “looks at though it might have stood there for twenty centuries, a well-preserved Roman villa.”<sup>591</sup> Maybeck’s essay on the Palace begins with an epigraph from Edgar Allan Poe’s famous lines “To the glory that was Greece / And the grandeur that was Rome.” For Maybeck, this encapsulated the Palace’s pedigree, and its cultural mission.

While he designed the building, with its Corinthian colonnade and Romanesque rotunda, to express the sadness that characterizes Western imperial decay, the building’s beauty also had the “soothing influence” that he intended. Maybeck’s sense of sadness at the passing of an empire and its civilization is arresting, given the fateful imperial path that the United States had embarked upon by the early twentieth century. Fairgoers do not appear to have recognized the irony that empire contributed to Rome’s collapse. In an essay discussing the PPIE’s artistic vision, Mary Austin wrote about how much Californians had in common with the ancient Greeks, including “great natural beauty” and “an adventuring, colonizing people,” but she failed to note the fate of the Greek city-states that pursued empire.<sup>592</sup> Visitors discerned the “note of vanished grandeur” that Maybeck intended, but interpreted it in terms of other tragedies, notably

---

<sup>589</sup>Maybeck, *Palace of Fine Arts*, quotation on 10, “Greek temples” on 11–12.

<sup>590</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 2:316.

<sup>591</sup>Macomber, *Jewel City*, 102.

<sup>592</sup>Mary Austin, “Art Influence in the West,” *Century Magazine*, Apr. 1915, 833.



the 1906 earthquake and the outbreak of World War I.<sup>593</sup> Neither of these interpretations is fully persuasive, however, since Maybeck began designing the Palace in 1913, well after the earthquake recovery and a year before the war began. Judging from Maybeck's own words, the sadness that his architecture expressed appears to be one of imperial ruin, a wistful combination of beauty and loss.

Macomber reported the Palace's captivating power in terms of psychology, after an interview with the architect. The journalist wrote: "Maybeck surprised me by saying that there is nothing specially remarkable about the Palace itself. 'What is it the people like?' he asked, and himself replied, 'It is the water and the trees.' When I reminded him of the colonnade seen from points . . . where no water is in view, he answered: 'The public was bribed to like that. Leaving off the roof between the colonnade and the gallery was a direct bribe. A few other simple devices give the effect the people like. One of these is the absence of windows in the walls, a device well known to the old Italians.'"<sup>594</sup> Maybeck's candid admission of architectural manipulation of the public is significant, and it corresponds to Jules Guerin's discussion of his use of color, below. It reveals that exposition designers were conscious of how to mold public opinion, to shape emotional responses and psychological outcomes. This artistic skill offered a critical tool to imperial marketers, who could use the aesthetic talents of the fair's designers to package imperial associations in psychologically disarming ways.

Maybeck's generous use of water in his design of the Palace also worked psychologically to soothe the viewer and blunt the hard power of empire. Architectural historian Dianne Harris

---

<sup>593</sup>Maybeck, *Palace of Fine Arts*, 3.

<sup>594</sup>Macomber, *Jewel City*, 101–102.

argues that Maybeck used water to link the Palace of Fine Arts and the fair with “Mediterranean imagery,” and “as grandiose civic embellishment.”<sup>595</sup> I suggest that both of these uses furthered the association of the PPIE and its architecture with the Greek and Roman city-states, examples of civic empire that PPIE planners so keenly imitated. The Palace’s lagoon served to reflect yet also soften the U.S. power that the temple represented.

Images of the Palace of Fine Arts proliferated in PPIE publicity, extending the fair’s entrancing reach far beyond the fairgrounds. Todd’s retrospective observed “it was made the subject of thousands of studies, with brush and crayon and camera. Bits of it went all over the world, pictorially,” where it produced “a wonder and a magic, a spell,” and “a sense of infinite longing.”<sup>596</sup> It is noteworthy that the fair’s official historian was well aware that the Palace affected viewers in an emotional register. The extensive production of images of the Palace supports Robert Rydell’s observation that world’s fair postcards solicited “sentiments of . . . enchantment.”<sup>597</sup>

Architects embedded historical messages in the fair’s built environment. Greek columns symbolized democratic government, while Roman arches signified imperial power. The PPIE suggested that the United States could have both, that the U.S. government had learned how to reconcile liberty and imperial power. Imperial boosters eagerly embraced the references to antiquity because they offered an elegant veneer of classical beauty for expansionist projects.

---

<sup>595</sup>Dianne Harris, *Maybeck’s Landscapes: Drawing in Nature* (San Francisco: William Stout Publishers/College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley, 2004), 74, 122.

<sup>596</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 2:314, 2:317.

<sup>597</sup>Rydell, “Souvenirs of Imperialism,” 53.

Exposition architecture explicitly evoked imperial Rome. Historian Gray Brechin has noted that “the architectural vocabulary was overwhelmingly classical—the Court of the Universe suggested the forecourt of St. Peter’s Basilica, the Court of the Seasons Hadrian’s Villa, the Palace of Machinery the Baths of Caracalla, the Column of Progress Trajan’s Column.”<sup>598</sup> The fair’s official historian also pointed out the imperial inflections of PPIE architecture in his description of opening day at the “Court of the Universe” at the center of the fairgrounds (Figure 5.24). He witnessed the “imposing procession that passed beneath its imperial arches with the pomp of Roman triumphs. For such functions it was artistically fitting and grand. The Roman Colosseum could have been set down inside it.”<sup>599</sup> In this telling, the grandeur of American empire had surpassed that of Rome. The fair’s architecture placed citizens in the tableaux, provided a sense of triumph, and made them part of the imperial pageant.

Painter and muralist Jules Guerin envisioned the fair’s color design, which visitors declared captivating. Everything within the PPIE walls reflected the official color scheme, down to the gravel on the paths. Guerin had worked with Daniel Burnham on the Chicago Plan in 1907 and was immersed in the City Beautiful movement. Viewers praised Guerin’s color design not only for its softness, but also for its coherence, economy, and restraint. A contemporaneous artist wrote, “Mr. McKim said of Jules Guerin that he could show less and express more than anyone he knew.”<sup>600</sup> A description of the PPIE grounds sang the praises of his work: “This is

---

<sup>598</sup>Brechin, “Sailing to Byzantium,” 102.

<sup>599</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 2:299.

<sup>600</sup>Harold Van Buren Magonigle, *Architectural Rendering in Wash* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1921), caption to frontispiece [n.p.].

the first Exposition to have a uniform color scheme. From one end to the other, throughout the entire area of the site . . . the same beautiful, soft, entrancing color scheme prevails.”<sup>601</sup>

Guerin’s color plan also contained psychological designs. As a writer for *Scribner’s* pointed out in a 1914 interview with the artist, “color has a subtle effect upon all of us, whether we are conscious of it or not.”<sup>602</sup> While visitors widely commented on the fair’s palette as suggestive of the Italian landscape, or as paying tribute to California’s incomparable natural beauty, Guerin revealed that his color choices were motivated by a desire to disarm viewers and control their emotional responses: “‘It isn’t merely,’ Mr. Guerin added, ‘because the women will not sit next to certain colors, like green, for example; it is also because, quite unconsciously, colors affect the spirits. Orange happens to be the best spending color. It produces a feeling of happiness and well-being. Too much brightness, on the other hand, has the opposite effect. It is confusing.’”<sup>603</sup> Guerin’s mindfulness of the psychological effects of color corresponds to Maybeck’s awareness of how to manipulate public responses to his architecture through visual “bribes” and traditional stylistic “devices.” The exposition’s carefully chosen colors treated fairgoers like customers, predisposing them toward a positive emotional response.

Witnesses to the PPIE clearly conveyed a sense that the fair’s beauty so entranced them that they lost sight of the earthly realities of empire. In a 1915 guidebook to the fairgrounds,

---

<sup>601</sup>“Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915: Description of the Exposition Site,” brochure, The Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, accessed 15 Aug. 2014, <http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist9/ppietxt1.html>.

<sup>602</sup>Jesse Lynch Williams, “The Color Scheme at the Panama-Pacific Exposition: A New Departure,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 56, no. 3 (1914): 280.

<sup>603</sup>Williams, “Color Scheme Departure,” 289.

*Palaces and Courts of the Exposition*, art critic Juliet James offered a breathless description of the origins of the PPIE as if it were an ancient fable:

One day a man appeared on the hilltop o'erlooking this wondrous city and by his magic power, being filled with music, with color-music, he cast a spell and behold a pastel city by the sea – such an one as only those who dream could think of a city glowing with warmth of color, with a softness and mystical charm such as only the brain of Jules Guerin could produce. He is the conductor of this wondrous symphony, this beautiful Mozart fantasia, and if you listen, you can hear the strains of the great beautiful melodies . . . rising to great climaxes, falling back to great chords of harmony, or, in an allegro movement, causing you almost to trip with delight in the joy of it all.<sup>604</sup>

In addition to the recurring sexual innuendo, the description's language—of magic power, spell, dream, charm, fantasia, and tripping with delight—suggests the hypnotic power Guerin's color design, and the overall effect of the fair.

Frank Morton Todd also used music as a reference for his description of how the fair's built environment had a cumulative effect on viewers. In his five-volume history he wrote: "The various members of the composition seemed to mount and mount in aspiring crescendo, from the sanded roadways and the beds of flowers and shrubs, out of the banks and islands of living green trees, by the lofty walls and the rising clerestories with the angels on their gables, by the basilica vaults and the sea-green domes, by the pink Italian towers of the south courts, to the support and accentuation of the dominant feature, the Titan Tower of Jewels."<sup>605</sup> Todd's description is very sensual and begins with strong sexual overtones. He suggests that the fair's buildings and landscaping swept visitors away in a rush of visual pleasure that was best analogized to a musical crescendo.

---

<sup>604</sup>James, *Palaces and Courts*, 3.

<sup>605</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 2:283.

The sculptural work at the fair played an integral role in making empire more attractive and more defensible. Sculpture's artistry helped mask the ugliness of dominance, and the chosen themes helped to justify conquest. James Earle Fraser's "The End of the Trail" is the most iconic sculpture from the PPIE and it is freighted with implications for U.S. imperialism "at home" and "abroad." The piece was widely understood to stand for the end of a Native American way of life in the U.S. West. A contemporaneous commentator, Stella Perry, declared: "it is easy to apply the message of this statue to the tragedy of the American Indian's decline."<sup>606</sup>

Because the statue presents a lone figure without an opponent, it is less apparent what produced the tragic decline. Portraying the vanquished without the victor masked cause and effect, and removed the culpability of the U.S. government and its citizens. Perry claims that the "Indian brave" is "storm-spent," a clever euphemism for genocidal war. He slumps "in the abandon of helpless exhaustion," not from an imperial U.S. cavalry but simply the weather. As with American representations of Indian removal in Panama, PPIE boosters equated imperial actions with a force of nature. This rendered U.S. empire inexorable and thus innocent. The technological superiority of the United States is symbolized by comparison with the saddled "Lord of the Isthmus" (Figure 5.29) riding firmly with his feet in stirrups versus the bareback Indian rider in "The End of the Trail."

Alexander Stirling Calder's "Fountain of Energy" also diverted attention away from the reality of U.S. imperialism, toward abstraction. The piece directed fairgoers and visual readers to look upward toward the heavens. The angelic heralds standing on the shoulders of "Energy" suggest divine right. "Energy" holds out his arms in a pose that is commanding; his gesture has

---

<sup>606</sup>Stella G. S. Perry, *The Sculpture and Mural Decorations of the Exposition* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1915), 36.

parted the earth in Panama, but it also invokes divinity. Calder explained, “it is the sculpture that interprets the meaning of the exposition, that symbolizes the spirit of conquest and adventure, and lends imagery to all the elements that have resulted in the union of the Eastern and Western seas.”<sup>607</sup> With art providing interpretation and imagery, empire in Panama could seem like an adventure and a unifying experience. Although the statue commemorated conquest, it simultaneously masked the process. The fountain does not depict the subjugation of any people, only the channeling of water, in this case purely for pleasure.

The “Fountain of Energy” worked to transform the Panama Canal into an attractive idea rather than a place. The reality of the canal site itself, as history and geography, was obscured. The abstraction of “Energy” circumvented any questions of sovereignty related to the United States, Panama, or Colombia. In addition to these subliminal and also not-so-subtle messages, the fountain also worked as a commanding spectacle for visitors. A 1915 photographic souvenir book observed, “with its flashing silvery spray it is a constant source of delight to beholders.”<sup>608</sup> In this the fountain represented a microcosm of the PPIE itself, in the use of flashing spectacles and aesthetic delights to obscure the negative aspects of U.S. domination in the Panama Canal Zone and the nature of its coercive political power there.

Photography of the fair’s dazzling beauty extended the reach of the imperial spectacle far beyond California. The exposition’s official photographer, the Cardinell-Vincent Company, established an industry of photographs, postcards, souvenir books, slides, and a news bureau. A

---

<sup>607</sup>A. Stirling Calder, “Sculpture,” *California’s Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 321.

<sup>608</sup>Panama-Pacific International Exposition Co., *The Red Book of Views of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (San Francisco: Panama-Pacific International Exposition Co./R. A. Reid Co., 1915), n.p.



1916 article in *California's Magazine* profiling the company explained, "photography constitutes one of the most important assets of a great exposition. It carries forward the purpose of an exposition by bringing to millions a new appreciation of art and beauty."<sup>609</sup> President John D. Cardinell employed a staff of 150, including a "daring army of photographers detailed to portray the Exposition" that produced some 40,000 negatives.<sup>610</sup> The company turned out hundreds of thousands of photographs each month, reaching millions of viewers. The magazine declared the importance of photography in "exploiting" the spectacle of the world's fair: "This is the era of pictures: pictures that tell a story in every language. The splendid and rapid work of the Cardinell Vincent Company was a wonderful asset in the exploitation of the Exposition, spreading its beauties to the far corners of the world."<sup>611</sup> The company succeeded in spreading the imperial majesty of the PPIE around the country, exposing a wide audience to the visual associations between the nation's expanding empire and the magnificent beauty of the fair.

Civic pride in San Francisco held full sway at the fair, opening up a path that sidestepped the uneasy realities of U.S. occupations abroad. A clear expression of this urban pride can be found in Ben Macomber's *The Jewel City*. Macomber was a *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter who collected his columns about the PPIE for a 1915 book. He describes the aesthetic design of the PPIE in great detail and the publisher's introduction emphasizes the importance of aesthetic beauty to the PPIE experience: "No more accurate account of the Panama-Pacific International

---

<sup>609</sup>"Wonderful Pictorial Record of Every Phase of the World's Greatest Exposition, Gathered by Cardinell Vincent Co., Official Exposition Photographers," *California's Magazine* 2 (1916): 259.

<sup>610</sup>"Wonderful Pictorial Record," 258.

<sup>611</sup>"Wonderful Pictorial Record," 258.

Exposition has been given than one that was forced from the lips of a charming Eastern woman of culture. Walking one evening in the Fine Arts colonnade, while the illumination from distant searchlights accented the glory of Maybeck's masterpiece, and lit up the half-domes and arches across the lagoon, she exclaimed to her companion: 'Why, all the beauty of the world has been sifted, and the finest of it assembled here!'"<sup>612</sup> This anecdote suggests the triumph that San Francisco achieved in building its utopian city-within-a-city with such artistic caliber that even an East Coast sophisticate found it breathtaking. This was precisely the level of cultural refinement that San Francisco sought as a foundation for its claims to imperial greatness and status as a metropole.

In his recounting of the PPIE's opening day, Todd described the throng of 150,000 visitors crowding through the gates as "an army of citizens."<sup>613</sup> It is an apt description for how imperial boosters intent upon public relations viewed them. Because they were citizens, their support had to be solicited. Todd's reference evokes both the militarism inherent in empire and the need to mobilize citizens to support ongoing imperial ventures.

According to Todd's account, the fair's beauty was overpowering for the "army of citizens": "They were in the presence of newly-created majesty, overflowing beauty, and of the images . . . of all the history that had built up western civilization and culminated on this day. With reverence be it said, they 'became as little children.'"<sup>614</sup> Whether or not Todd was right about fairgoers' reactions, his history does reveal the delight of the exposition's elite at the sight

---

<sup>612</sup>Macomber, *Jewel City*, xii.

<sup>613</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 2:299.

<sup>614</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 2:266.

of a crowd apparently subdued by the fair's artistic presentation of imperial Western civilization. The PPIE drew nearly twenty million visitors (at a time when San Francisco's population was 417,000 and Oakland's was 150,000), indication that it did indeed possess a powerful attraction. A photograph from an exposition guidebook, Figure 5.23, captures a characteristic crowd engaged in consuming the beautiful culture of the imperial fair. The PPIE's spectacle influenced viewers well beyond its grounds. Colorized photographs, souvenirs, booklets, postcards, and lanternslides sought to convey a sense of the fair's spectacle to viewers unable to attend, and to reinforce memories for those who could.

The official PPIE history also offers clues about how its built environment functioned to impose social control. Todd emphasized the fair's architectural unity, declaring, "all chance of discord had been eliminated. . . . The principle of harmony was even made to envelop the whole central group, bonding it into one solid and consistent mass."<sup>615</sup> His description could just as well characterize the effect that the PPIE sought to exert over its visitors against the possibility of dissent against imperialism within its walls. The exposition was designed to be an all-consuming experience of adulation, a manipulation of the senses that would preclude critical analysis.

The underlying reality of this marketing was that it encouraged Americans to become consumers of the spectacle of empire. Military occupations, gunboat diplomacy, the big stick, racial segregation, Indian removal, the dilemmas of colonization—consciousness of all these things was discouraged by a classical "fantasia" that promised a hypnotic sense of harmony. In this mythos, empire was a pleasant cultural commodity, available to anyone willing to embrace it. Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo argues that "ideological discourses work more through

---

<sup>615</sup>Todd, *Story of the Exposition*, 1:287.

selective attention than outright suppression.”<sup>616</sup> The PPIE selectively directed public attention away from the costs of empire to its packaging as a sublime cultural commodity. Wrapping the celebration of empire within artistic displays created a disarming path toward acceptance that erstwhile skeptics might walk without considering the ultimate ramifications.

While both California cities coveted the increased trade the canal promised to deliver, San Francisco also aspired to a loftier goal—inheritance of the legacy of the Roman Empire. The example of an imperial city-state appealed to San Francisco boosters, who believed that their city could dominate the Pacific Rim on behalf of the United States. Their quest led to the spectacular architecture, built environment, and artistic atmosphere of the PPIE, as the city strove to stage a monumental evocation of the glories of Western civilization. The fair explicitly compared San Francisco to Rome, but did so through portrayals of cultural grandeur rather than militarism. Architecture, landscaping, color design, lighting technology, and fine arts shaped the cultural production of the fair, rather than military displays intended to draw comparisons with Rome’s legions. The PPIE’s imperial spectacle abstracted empire as a sublime artistic vision and produced responses of awe and elation among fairgoers and consumers of visual publications. Although the fair made token mentions of it, the Panama Canal receded into the background as San Francisco’s imperial splendor took center stage. By 1915, American citizens and consumers did not need to be sold on the engineering wonders of the canal (both civil and social) so much as the allure of empire as a larger concept—packaged as an exquisite force for American aggrandizement and global benefit.

---

<sup>616</sup>Rosaldo, “Imperialist Nostalgia,” 122.

Despite the ironic midway name of “the Joy Zone,” the embrace of empire was a portentous one. Although the PPIE endeavored to present empire as a source of beauty and joy, imperialism was non-democratic, violent, brutal, and oppressive. It entailed the potential of going off to war in long-term conflicts to repress independence movements. It meant accepting the subjugation of targeted peoples around the world. Following the path of pleasure that led through the PPIE, consumers of the fair were now participating in a celebration of empire’s coercive power. The Panama-Pacific International Exposition was an aesthetic sideshow that perfected the art of selling imperialism.

## Chapter 5 Figures



Figure 5.1

“Ruins of San Francisco,” aerial photo by George Lawrence taken five weeks after the fires were extinguished, revealing the extent area to which the city had been razed. The view is looking southwest from Nob Hill across Market Street and the Civic Center toward the Haight-Ashbury and Mission Dolores neighborhoods.<sup>617</sup>

---

<sup>617</sup>George Lawrence, “Ruins of San Francisco,” photograph, in Michael Pidwirny, “San Francisco Earthquake of 1906,” 15 Apr. 2011, *The Encyclopedia of Earth*, U.S. Geological Survey, [http://www.eoearth.org/files/165401\\_165500/165434/sf06-city.gif](http://www.eoearth.org/files/165401_165500/165434/sf06-city.gif).



Figure 5.2

City Hall after the earthquake, hand-tinted photograph, 1906. The image evokes a subtle, ethereal beauty among the rubble. The architecture in ruins also suggests the Roman Empire and thus San Francisco's imperial legacy—one that PPIE boosters sought to rebuild and expand.<sup>618</sup>

---

<sup>618</sup>“A View of the Ruins of the City Hall after the Earthquake and Fire,” 18–20 Apr. 1906, hand-tinted photograph, San Francisco: Rider Cardinell Co., 1906, “The Panama-Pacific International Exposition: Exhibit Items,” Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, accessed 14 Aug. 2014, <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/Exhibits/Looking/waycacouldbe.html>.



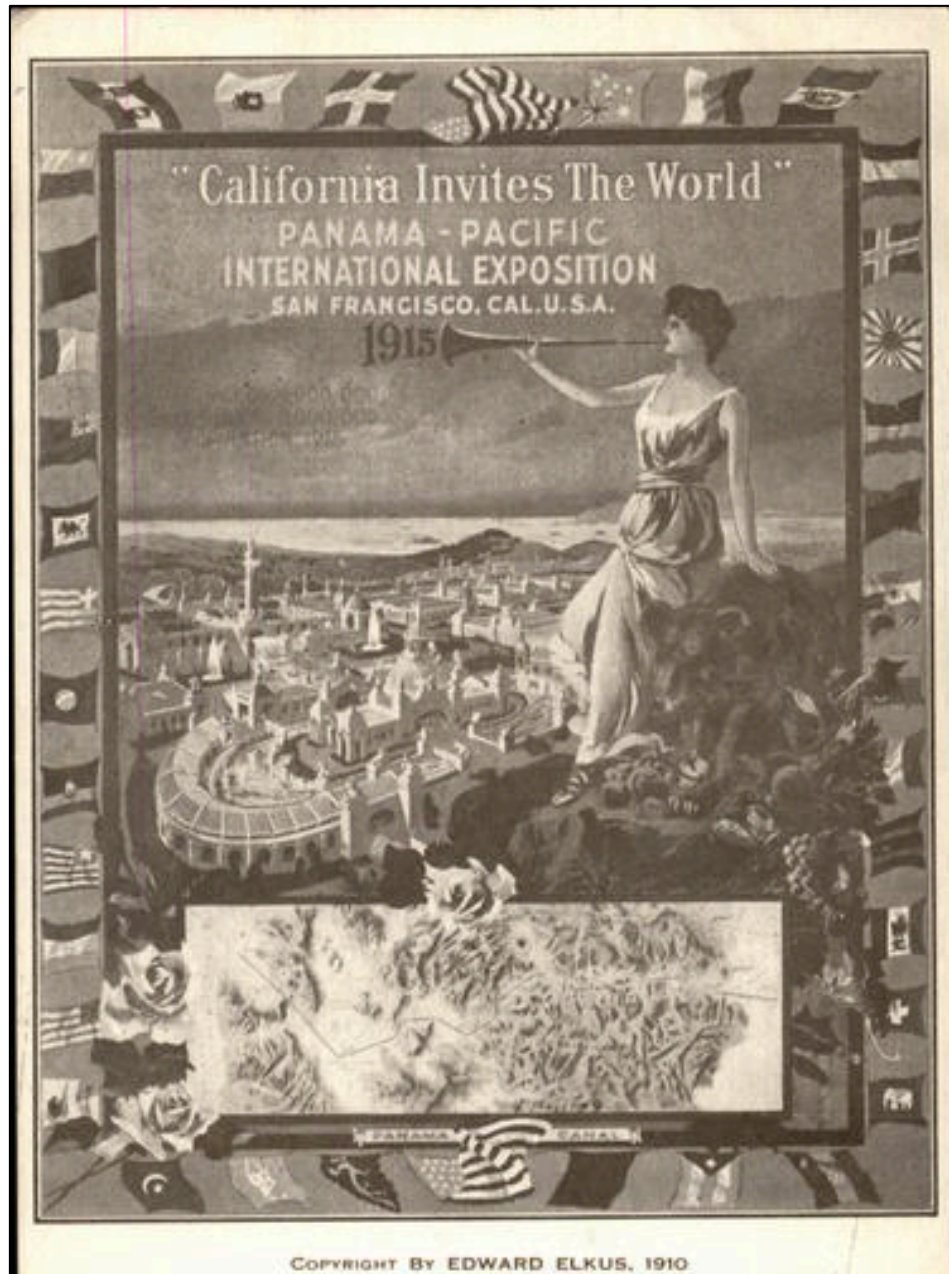


Figure 5.3

"California Invites the World," postcard produced five years before the fair opened.<sup>619</sup>

---

<sup>619</sup>"California Invites the World," postcard, Edward Elkus, Exposition Novelty Co., San Francisco, 1910, PPIE postcard gallery, accessed 13 Aug. 2014, <http://www.postcard.org/pie-brn-horn.htm>.

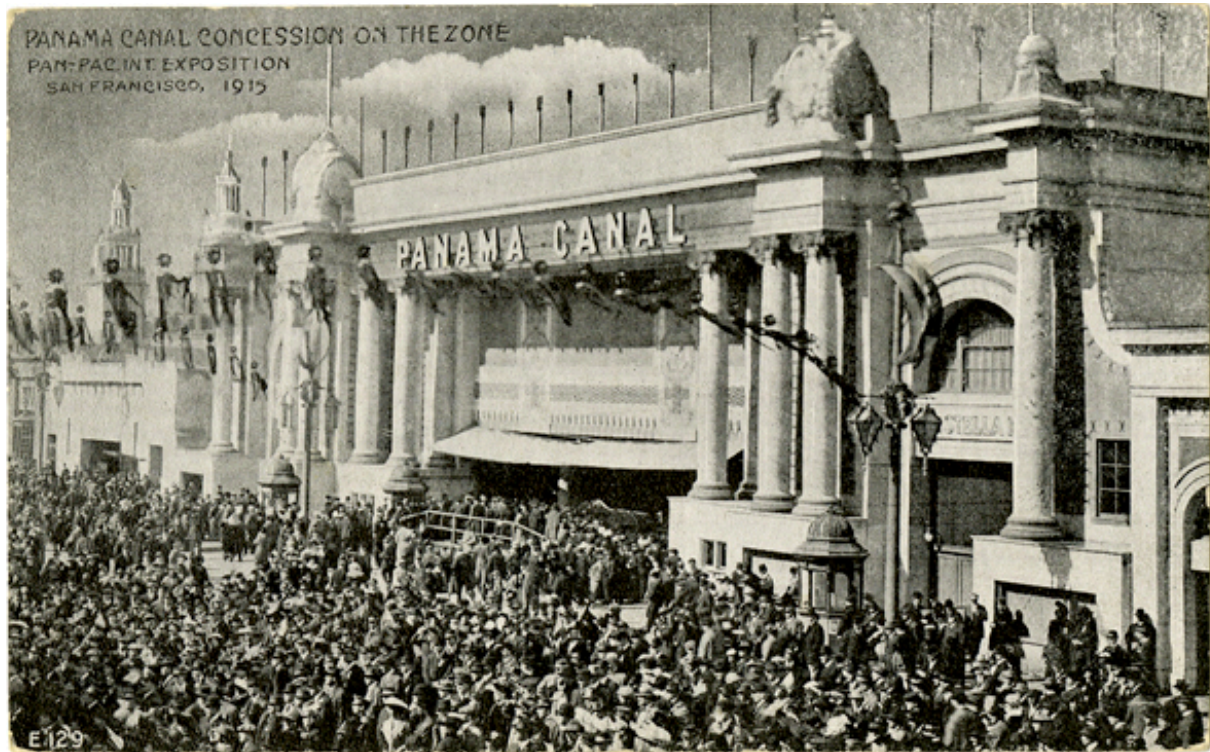


Figure 5.4

“Panama Canal Concession on the Zone,” postcard by the official PPIE photographer.<sup>620</sup>

---

<sup>620</sup>“Panama Canal Concession on the Zone,” postcard, Cardinell-Vincent Co., Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) Records, MS 1628, North Baker Research Library, California Historical Society [hereafter cited as CHS].





Figure 5.5

Photograph of the Panama Canal concession diorama. Visitors viewed the model from seats on a moving platform in the covered balcony that encircled the open-air exhibit.<sup>621</sup>

---

<sup>621</sup>“Panama Canal,” photograph, call no. BANC PIC 1959.087–ALB, v. 3 [p.85], file name brk00012009\_34a.tif, Charles C. Moore albums of Panama-Pacific International Exposition views, vol. 3, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California Digital Library, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://cdn.calisphere.org/data/13030/z7/hb096nb0z7/files/hb096nb0z7-FID657.jpg>.



Figure 5.6

Photograph of a female visitor standing on the diorama of the model Panama Canal located in the “Joy Zone” midway of the PPIE. She stands at the Pacific entrance to the canal, with the Miraflores and Pedro Miguel Locks behind her. The city of Panama, protected by a seawall, is in the lower right of the photograph. The city lay just outside the boundaries of the PCZ, but the ICC controlled it, asserting that U.S. interests superseded Panamanian sovereignty.<sup>622</sup>

---

<sup>622</sup>Photograph, from the private collection of Donna Huggins, in Donna Ewald and Peter Clute, *San Francisco Invites the World: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991), 109.





Figure 5.7

Cover of a PPIE souvenir booklet showing a popular graphic that centered on the Tower of Jewels at night.<sup>623</sup>

---

<sup>623</sup>*The Jewel City: San Francisco 1915* (San Francisco: Pacific Novelty Co., [1915]), cover, "California Calls You: The Art of Promoting the Golden State, 1870–1940," California History Digital Collections, California State Library, accessed 21 May 2015, <http://www.library.ca.gov/calhist/travel/pdfs/JewelCity.pdf>.



Figure 5.8

Cover of the January 1915 issue of *Sunset*, showing the familiar rainbow graphic; in this case the Palace of Fine Arts is the fair's centerpiece, portrayed at night to feature the light show.<sup>624</sup>

<sup>624</sup>*Sunset* 34, no. 1 (1915), front cover, original at The Huntington Library, San Marino, California, reproduced in Erika Esau, *Images of the Pacific Rim: Australia and California, 1850–1935* (Sydney: Power Institute of Art, University of Sydney, 2010), 277.





Figure 5.9

“Aeroplane View: Main Group of Exhibit Palaces, Panama-Pacific International Exposition.” The view looks southeast, stretching from the Palace of Fine Arts at the lower right to the Palace of Machinery at the top left, with the Tower of Jewels in the top center. The Column of Progress is also visible at Yacht Harbor on the marina.<sup>625</sup>

---

<sup>625</sup>“Aeroplane View: Main Group of Exhibit Palaces, Panama-Pacific International Exposition,” illustration, in Gabriel Moulin, *Views of the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in Natural Colors* (San Francisco: Pacific Novelty Co., [1915]), n.p., Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) Records, MS 1628, CHS.





Figure 5.10

Postcard of “Night Illumination Showing the Great Rainbow Scintillator” and the PPIE grounds.<sup>626</sup>

---

<sup>626</sup>“Night Illumination Showing the Great Rainbow Scintillator,” postcard, Souvenir Publishing Co., San Francisco, [1915], item no. EXP915a.388pc, World’s Fair Collection, Henry Madden Library, California State University Fresno, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://cdmweb.lib.csufresno.edu/cdm/ref/collection/worldsfair/id/14843>.



Figure 5.11

Lanternslide night view of General Electric's Scintillator on its barge in the Marina with fireworks, spectators in the foreground.<sup>627</sup>

---

<sup>627</sup>Branson DeCou, hand-colored lantern slide, 20 Feb. 1915, accession number DC1.750.0487L, Branson DeCou Digital Archive, MS 38, Special Collections/Digital Collections, McHenry Library, University of California, Santa Cruz [hereafter cited as UCSC]; accessed 18 May 2015, <http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p265101coll30/id/1435/rec/10>. DeCou (1892–1941) was an American photographer and travelogue lecturer. He toured five continents during the early twentieth century and gave public lectures with his lanternslides.



Figure 5.12

U.S. Marines pose with the Scintillator searchlights mounted on a barge on the bay.<sup>628</sup>

---

<sup>628</sup>Photograph, *PPIE Centennial*, California Historical Society, 13 Apr. 2015, <http://www.ppie100.org/on-this-day-april-13/chs2014-1836/>.



Figure 5.13

“Banner Standard for G-E Ornamental Luminous Arc Lamps,” illustration of concealed indirect lighting methods described in the General Electric house journal.<sup>629</sup>

---

<sup>629</sup>Ryan, “Illumination of the PPiE,” *GE Review*, 580.





Figure 5.14

Night view of the “Fountain of the Rising Sun” in the Court of the Universe.<sup>630</sup>

---

<sup>630</sup>Branson DeCou, hand-colored lantern slide, 20 Feb. 1915, accession number DC1.750.0552L, Branson DeCou Digital Archive, MS 38, UCSC, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p265101coll30/id/1501/rec/72>.



Figure 5.15

“Tower of Jewels Illuminated,” night scene with Great Scintillator lighting, PPIE postcard.<sup>631</sup>

---

<sup>631</sup>“Tower of Jewels Illuminated,” postcard, *PPIE Centennial*, California Historical Society, 13 Apr. 2015, <http://www.ppie100.org/on-this-day-april-13/2015-05-13-towerofjewels-1/>.



Figure 5.16

Hall of Machinery with reflecting pool at night, illuminated by the Scintillator.<sup>632</sup>

---

<sup>632</sup>Branson DeCou, hand-colored lantern slide, 20 Feb. 1915, accession number DC1.750.0508L, Branson DeCou Digital Archive, MS 38, UCSC, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p265101coll30/id/1457/rec/31>.





Figure 5.17

Postcard of the Scintillator operating from its barge in San Francisco Bay. The “Tower of Progress” with its “Adventurous Bowman” atop is shown. The monument drew comparisons to Trajan’s Column (113 CE), the archetypal triumphal column from the Roman Empire, suggesting an imperial legacy from antiquity that the fair’s designers sought to evoke through the aesthetics of architecture.<sup>633</sup>

---

<sup>633</sup>“The Scintillator and Tower of Progress,” postcard, General Electric/Cardinell-Vincent Co., 1915, fol. “SF Fairs—PPIE—Night Illumination,” Fairs and Festivals—Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco Ephemera Collection, The Daniel E. Koshland San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.



Figure 5.18

Bernard Maybeck's Palace of Fine Arts, colored postcard from the PPIE.<sup>634</sup>

---

<sup>634</sup>“Palace of Fine Arts,” postcard, Pacific Novelty Co., 1915, negative no. SIA2012-7597 (front) and SIA2012-7598 (back), fol. 9A, box 87, record unit 70 – 1867–1940, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution Archives and the United States National Museum, Smithsonian Institution, accessed 18 May 2014, [http://siarchives.si.edu/collections/siris\\_sic\\_13467](http://siarchives.si.edu/collections/siris_sic_13467).



Figure 5.19

Panoramic photograph of Maybeck's Palace of Fine Arts with temple, colonnade, lagoon, and plantings.<sup>635</sup>

---

<sup>635</sup>J. D. [James David] Givens [b. 1863], photograph, gelatin silver print, ca.1919, digital ID pan 6a01981, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, accessed 10 June 2014, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pan.6a01981>.



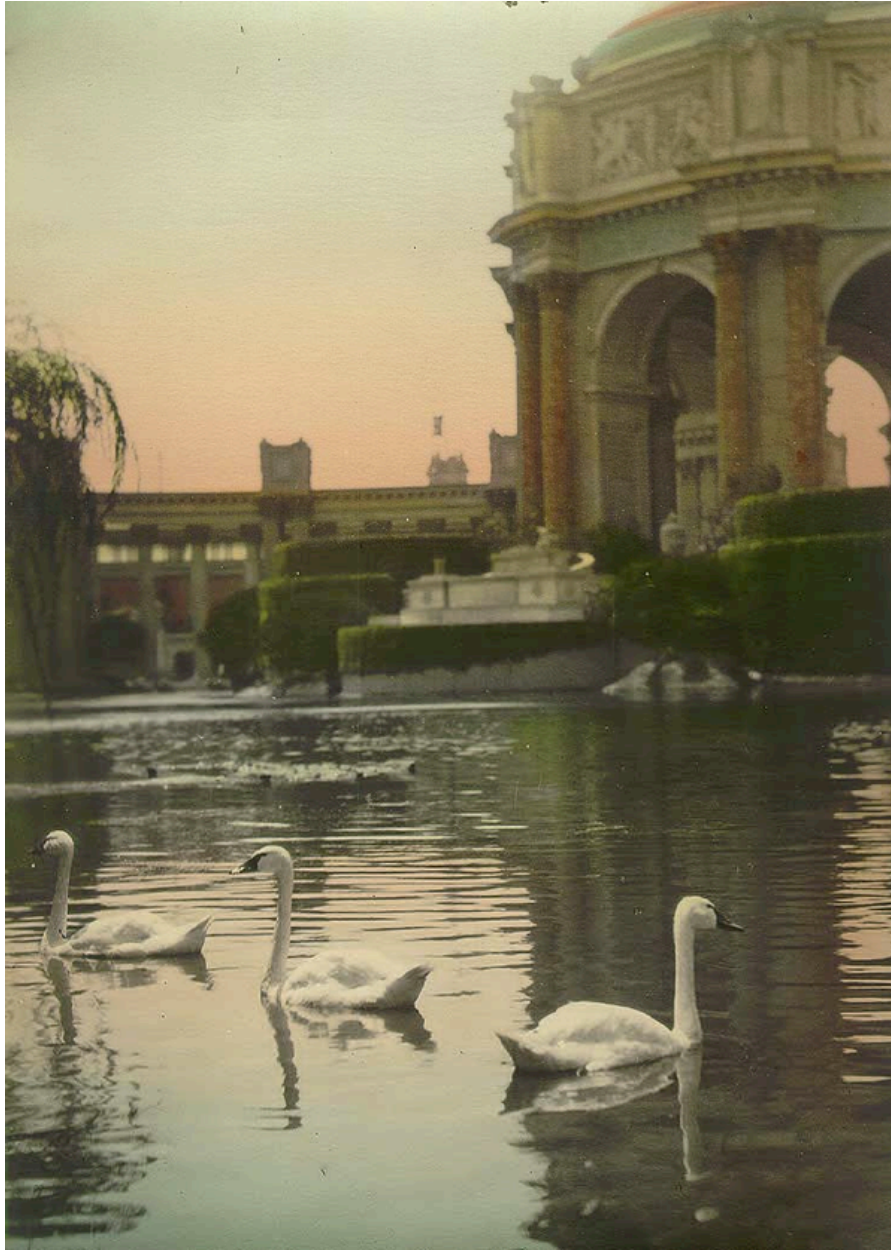


Figure 5.20

Hand-tinted photograph by Cardinell-Vincent of Palace of Fine Arts, lagoon, and swans, 1915.<sup>636</sup>

---

<sup>636</sup>Photograph, Cardinell-Vincent Co./PPIE Co., 1915, item no. 1969.035:07-PIC, file name I0016408a.tif, Photographs of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition Collection, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California Digital Library/Online Archive of California, accessed 21 Feb. 2014, <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf0199n9gm/>.



Figure 5.21

The Palace of Fine Arts, hand-colored photograph by the Cardinell-Vincent Company, official PPIE photographers.<sup>637</sup>

---

<sup>637</sup>Photograph, Palace of Fine Arts, call no. BANC PIC 1959.087–ALB v. 3 [p.127], filename brk00012051\_34a.tif, accession number ucb.b10724263, Charles C. Moore albums of Panama-Pacific International Exposition views, vol. 3, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California Digital Library, accessed 3 June 2015, <http://cdn.calisphere.org/data/13030/z7/hb096nb0z7/files/hb096nb0z7-FID700.jpg>.

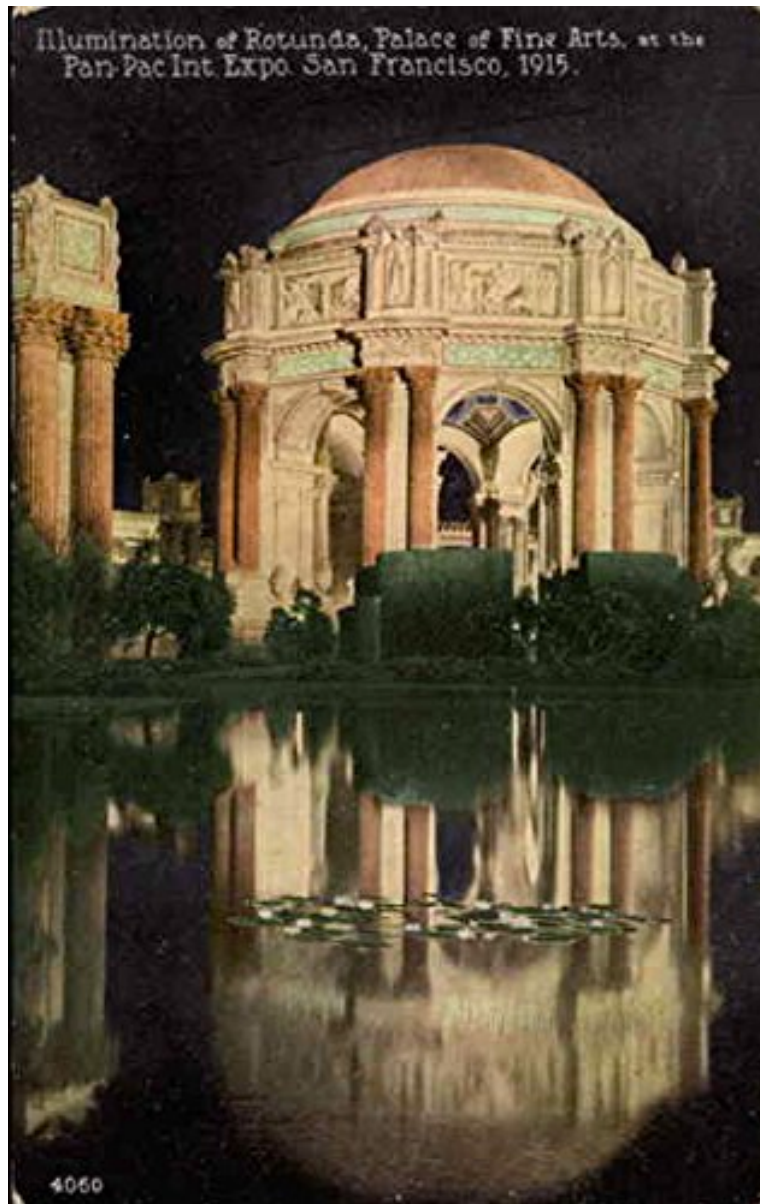


Figure 5.22

“Illumination of the Rotunda, Palace of Fine Arts,” PPIE postcard. The colorized photographic postcard shows Jules Guerin’s color palette, the softness of interior ambient lighting by Walter D’Arcy Ryan, and the central importance of Bernard Maybeck’s lagoon design.<sup>638</sup>

---

<sup>638</sup>“Illumination of the Rotunda, Palace of Fine Arts,” postcard, Edward H. Mitchell, San Francisco, Amazon, in author’s possession. For an analysis of the centrality of water in Maybeck’s architectural and landscape designs, see Dianne Harris, *Maybeck’s Landscapes*, esp. 122–39.





Figure 5.23

A photograph of the crowd of fairgoers on opening day, 20 February 1915, from a souvenir book. The setting is looking at the Fountain of Energy from the Tower of Jewels across the plaza. The South Gate main entrance on Scott Street, with its arched hedge wall and portals, is visible behind the fountain.<sup>639</sup>

---

<sup>639</sup>PPIE Co., *PPIE Official View Book*, n.p., “An Exposition Audience.”





Figure 5.24

“Court of the Universe,” PPIE postcard. Its “Arch of the Rising Sun” is one of the two “imperial arches” that Frank Morton Todd refers to in his official history. Todd noted the court was large enough to hold the Roman Coliseum, and Gray Brechin has described it as resembling the forecourt of St. Peter’s Basilica. The “Fountain of the Rising Sun” shown on the right is one that Walter D’Arcy Ryan illuminated at night to look like a crystal column of light (Figure 5.14).<sup>640</sup>

---

<sup>640</sup>“Court of the Universe,” postcard, Edward H. Mitchell, San Francisco, Amazon, accessed 23 Aug. 2014, <http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/51YeIWYqh-L.jpg>.



Figure 5.25

Jules Guerin's official palette for the PPIE's color design, and a 1915 hand-colored photograph of the Palace of Fine Arts reflecting the color discipline. When discussing the colors in interviews, rather than referring to the numbered code that such an industrial scale required, Guerin spoke of them aesthetically, by name: "French Green, Oxidized Copper Green, Blue Green, Deep Cerulean Blue, Oriental Blue, Yellow Golden Orange, Pinkish Red Gold, Russet, Terra Cotta, Gray, Travertine."<sup>641</sup>

---

<sup>641</sup>"The Palace of Fine Arts," photograph, Cardinell-Vincent Co., in PPIE Co., *Colortypes of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco, 1915* (San Francisco: Robert A. Reid/PPIE Co., 1915), [p. 2], Fairs and Festivals—Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco Ephemera Collection, The Daniel E. Koshland San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library. PPIE color palette in Chuck Holmgren, "Conflicts in Cosmopolitanism: San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition," American Studies Program, University of Virginia, accessed 15 July 2014, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma03/holmgren/ppie/color.html>.



Figure 5.26

Photograph of the Avenue of Palms looking toward the Tower of Jewels. The scene shows Guerin's color plan down to the flagpoles, and walkways paved in sand baked to match the travertine color of building exteriors.<sup>642</sup>

---

<sup>642</sup>Photograph, Park Archives and Records Center, Golden Gate National Recreational Area, National Park Service, accessed 20 May 2015, <http://www.nps.gov/goga/learn/historyculture/images/PPIE-GOGA-26979-Palm-Avenue.jpg>.



Figure 5.27

“The End of the Trail,” statue by James Earle Fraser from the PPIE grounds.<sup>643</sup>

---

<sup>643</sup>Perry, *Sculpture*, 37.





Figure 5.28

"Calder's Fountain of Energy"<sup>644</sup>

---

<sup>644</sup>PPIE Co., *Red Book of Views*, n.p., "Calder's Fountain of Energy."



Figure 5.29

Detail of “Lord of the Isthmian Way” from Calder’s “Fountain of Energy.”<sup>645</sup>

---

<sup>645</sup>Perry, *Sculpture*, 16.

## Chapter 6 : Conclusion

Perhaps the most significant legacy of U.S. colonization in Panama is the aestheticized culture of imperialism that it introduced. The PCZ publicity campaign steered Americans away from the burdens and responsibilities that citizens must (or at least *should*) contend with when their nation pursues militarized imperial occupation. Canal advocates contravened these duties of citizenship by transfixing a nation and neutralizing its debate. Rather than reasoning with citizens, promoters targeted the public as a passive audience, a depoliticized consumer base, through a revisionist publicity onslaught of sensory materials designed to advance empire down to a subliminal level. Panama was a turning point, away from the recent and appalling scenes of violence in the Philippines, toward a new refraction of U.S. imperialism as not only consensual and mutually beneficial, but undeniably attractive as well. This revamped marketing strategy shifted justification away from the nineteenth-century version of a defensive, pragmatic “white man’s burden”—empire as a necessary evil (and a topic best avoided because it provoked moral unease)—to a more preemptive and sanguine approach.

The new visual imperialism portrayed American occupation as an alluring cultural practice, layering over the raw domination with a very pleasant—and at times even sublimely artistic—facade. Celebratory representations of the new U.S. colony in Panama beautified the coercions of empire, and aimed to so control visual publicity as to forestall negative opinion, rather than countervail it. The generation of progressively beautiful images from the PCZ and the California fairs presented a cultural, aesthetic argument to Americans (and the world) that the United States could intervene in lesser-developed countries without instigating massacres, crushing independence movements, and committing human-rights violations. The new engineers



of imperialism combined awe-inspiring mechanical wonders with a culture war that idealized American character and society of the colonial enclave.

On 9 March 2003, just ten days before president George W. Bush ordered the U.S. military invasion of Iraq, a remarkable photograph appeared above the fold in the *New York Times* (Figure 6.1) that suggests the direct legacy of the PCZ public relations campaign waged a century earlier by another imperial president, and a similarly acquiescent, tractable, complaisant establishment press. The photograph shows an airman from Texas aboard the USS *Kitty Hawk*, then deployed in the Persian Gulf. He is standing alone on the stern flight deck of an aircraft carrier just a few feet from the edge, practicing his golf swing by driving balls into the ship's wake. The Texan, wearing a black cowboy hat, jeans, and a numbered athletic jersey, has just started to drop into his swing from the high point of the golf club's raised arc. The caption explains: "after six weeks at sea, crew members were allowed a day off and two beers each."<sup>646</sup>

The image conveys much about the continuity in U.S. imperial incursions. It evokes the awe-inspiring technological wonders of empire, in this case the aircraft carrier. The photograph renders invisible the people who inhabited the targeted territory on the eve of the catastrophe about to befall them. The lessons of the PR campaign in the PCZ were reflected a century later in Iraq, when the Pentagon "embedded" journalists with military forces. This practice, which virtually ensured that the perspectival orientation of photojournalists in 2003 would be pro-imperial, worked much like Joseph Bucklin Bishop's careful marshaling of visiting reporters to sanguine minders in the PCZ. The 2003 airman displays no concern regarding the thousands of civilians who would soon be killed, and the millions displaced, by the imminent U.S. invasion.

---

<sup>646</sup>Associated Press photograph, captioned "Gulf Break," *New York Times*, 9 March 2003, A1.

The American's stance is relaxed, casual, recreational, self-absorbed, privileged (having the rare opportunity to do something that brings particular pleasure), and entitled (justly authorized to do something restricted). His cowboy hat and Texas origins suggest the mythical conquest of the frontier that so deeply influences U.S. culture. For visual consumers, particularly white men who could imagine themselves into his position, the photograph also suggests an exotic, unparalleled setting for adventure. It advertises the ability that middle-class Americans (particularly white males) possess to replicate their culture, pursue pleasure, and maintain their preferred style of life anywhere on the planet.

The hubristic American imposition of colonial enclaves has endured from the Panama Canal Zone to the "Green Zone" in Baghdad. The photo of an American hitting golf balls from an aircraft carrier in the Middle East in 2003 is worthy of comparison with a postcard of Americans playing golf in the Panama Canal Zone in the early twentieth century, Figure 6.4. Together, the two images provide a glimpse of how proponents of U.S. global occupation have styled this empire to appear attractive in the eyes of a targeted "Middle America" over the past century. The 2003 photograph conceals the weapons on board the ship that the crew turned on the Iraqi people just ten days later. Then and now, photographs and personal witness foster a false sense of empirical accuracy. Imperialism—as Americans learned from the PCZ—need not *appear* brutal or repulsive, but rather could be a leisurely pursuit, one entirely compatible with "normal," everyday life, comfort and recreation, and attractive cultural practices. The seaman stands in for the multitude of obedient subjects of the U.S. government who perform valuable service in its imperial projects and can consequently expect to be rewarded.

The Panama iteration of imperialism created a cultural template for current depictions of U.S. interventions, because it presented a much more attractive façade than previous

performances. American invasions and occupations in Mexico (1846–1848, 1914–1917), the Philippines (1898–1935), Cuba (1898–1902, 1906–1909), the Dominican Republic (1905), Nicaragua (1909, 1923–1928), and Haiti (1915–1934) provoked grassroots resistance driven by the desire for freedom, independence, and national self-determination. Because the United States widely proclaimed these values as its own, militarized conflicts with these countries stigmatized American imperialism as hypocritical, repressive, and aggressively acquisitive. Visual publicity from the PCZ and the California expositions was designed to counter this stigma. Images of intrepid American engineers in Panama supplanted the preceding imperial imagery of U.S. soldiers waterboarding Filipino nationalists. Administrators designed the PCZ to show the virtues of empire. Subsequent representations from San Diego’s PCE and San Francisco’s PPIE visually distanced U.S. imperialism even further from the ugliness of domination. The expositions achieved this through attractive images of settler-society progress and abstractions of artful beauty. The California fairs thus expanded the production of a culture designed to elicit popular support for empire.

Issues of brutality and resistance haunted boosters of empire during the early construction years of the Panama Canal and it is a measure of their success that public attention was drawn away from a violent past and refocused on the peaceful orderliness and beauty of the PCZ, along with the constructive and aesthetic displays at the world’s fairs. Promoters of the Panama Canal succeeded in seizing and occupying foreign territory without the sorts of cruelties that had been perpetrated in the Philippines, but more than that, they changed the parameters of the discourse. They shifted the topics conversation from military subjugation to civil engineering and civilian homesteading. The beauty of the PCZ was that it did not require waterboarding. The U.S. government “pacified” Panamanians by completely excluding them from the table when it signed

the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty. As in the Philippines, U.S. forces again burned native villages, but in this case the ICC used its civilian Zone police force rather than troops, and kept images and reports largely out of sight.

Popular magazines like *National Geographic* served as conduits for official propaganda; they did not send photojournalists on assignments that might have increased American empathy for displaced Indians. Periodicals also did not engage in reporting intended to create support for black workers in the PCZ. Investigative journalism regarding racial discrimination disappeared after Poultney Bigelow's 1905–1906 testimony. Instead, photographers created visions of the PCZ as a handsome, orderly, Progressive enclave, one of nonviolence, classlessness, statist efficiency, and technocratic management. The utopian Zone that boosters fashioned precluded controversy, and their dominant publicity appears to have manufactured American consent.

As the canal approached completion, planners for the California expositions directed the flow of imperial publicity in new channels. San Diego boosters focused on how the Panama Canal would benefit their domestic empire, unleashing a flood of new white settlers to Southern California and the Desert Southwest and creating a new era of homesteading. San Diego's vision of development combined agriculture and technology. Because of the hydraulic and railroad engineering that the U.S. West shared with the Panama Canal, images of the beauty of water and land reclamation abound in exposition exhibits and published images.

San Francisco's exposition took a much more aesthetic approach to selling imperialism; the fair exploited the power of beauty. The fair's imperial architecture appeared solid and imposing but it was largely a façade of smooth surfaces over hollow interiors, and the fair's connections to Panama were remarkably abstract, but it all was rendered visually appealing. The

PPIE managers' use of aesthetic packaging to buttress empire locally and abroad marks an adept understanding of how culture and politics are related.

As Hannah Arendt argued in "The Crisis of Culture," aesthetic judgment is integrally linked to political identity, in ways that are not immediately obvious, and these linkages were most apparent at the PPIE, the apotheosis of U.S. imperial propaganda in the 1910s. She notes that "merely aesthetic matters . . . have always been supposed to lie outside the political realm," yet Arendt argues that "the capacity to judge [aesthetics] is a specifically political ability."<sup>647</sup> This is because "truly political activities . . . cannot be performed at all without the presence of others, without the public, without a space constituted by the many."<sup>648</sup> Visiting fairs and other imperial sites and viewing printed images of them provided an essential platform. Consumers judged the images of beauty that producers offered to them, but they did so within an imagined community of U.S. imperialism that shaped a political reality. Arendt notes that "the thinking process which is active in judging something . . . finds itself always and primarily . . . in an anticipated communication with others with whom I know I must finally come to some agreement."<sup>649</sup> Americans faced a moment of decision regarding imperial expansion between 1904 and 1916, and the public had to reach some agreement. Boosters hoped that the American middle-class would lead the way in forging a national consensus for empire.

Second, the act of judging beauty is political because it is a function of the *polis*, the duty of citizens within the city-state to decide what their world should look like. Political opinions

---

<sup>647</sup>Hannah Arendt, "The Crisis in Culture: Its Social and Its Political Significance," in *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Penguin, 1977), 221.

<sup>648</sup>Arendt, "Crisis in Culture," 217.

<sup>649</sup>Arendt, "Crisis in Culture," 220.

and aesthetic judgments share a basis in persuasion, and this process of consensus building creates a community of citizens with shared values. Arendt argues:

To classify taste, the chief cultural activity, among man's political abilities sounds so strange . . . but . . . we all know very well how quickly people recognize each other, and how unequivocally they can feel that they belong to each other, when they discover a kinship in questions of what pleases and displeases. From the viewpoint of this common experience, it is as though taste decides not only how the world is to look, but also who belongs together in it.<sup>650</sup>

The act of judging the expansion of U.S. empire as attractive and pleasing forged a unified community among the citizens who consumed empire's visual culture. As supporting empire became a matter of taste, joining that world of cultural "good taste" offered membership in a powerful political community.

Finally, Arendt argues, "culture and politics, then, belong together because it is not knowledge or truth which is at stake, but rather judgment and decision."<sup>651</sup> In visual culture, empire became a matter of taste and good judgment, not empiricism. Cultural consumers of U.S. imperialism in the era decided, apart from knowledge or truth about the colony in Panama, that they wanted the world to look like the PCZ and the two world's fairs. The fabricated beauty of these imperial sites coaxed citizens into acquiescence, if not outright assent. Consumers chose not to resist empire, thus shaping how their common world was to look henceforth and what kind of things appeared in it—more colonies, more "protectorates," more bases, greater imperial reach, and more spectacles of beauty.

It is possible to follow the evolution of empire from horror to beauty through a progression of images that suggest how Americans faced empire. The preceding negative

---

<sup>650</sup> Arendt, "Crisis in Culture," 223.

<sup>651</sup> Arendt, "Crisis in Culture," 223.

connotations of imperialism from the Philippines that Panama boosters strove to overcome are symbolized in a 1906 photograph of the stacked coffins containing the remains of American soldiers in the Philippines awaiting repatriation (Figure 6.2). They were a small sample of the 10,000 American soldiers killed.

In May of 1902, Senator George Frisbie Hoar, who had argued against war in the Philippines from the beginning, delivered an excoriating three-hour speech on the Senate floor. Widely reported and reprinted, it left many in the nation stunned and President Roosevelt fuming. Hoar's speech, "Subjugation of the Philippines Iniquitous," called President Roosevelt to account for his territorial expansion through military force:

What has been the practical statesmanship which comes from your ideals and your sentimentalities? You have wasted nearly six hundred millions of treasure. You have sacrificed nearly ten thousand American lives—the flower of our youth. You have devastated provinces. You have slain uncounted thousands of the people you desire to benefit. You have established reconcentration camps. Your generals are coming home from their harvest bringing sheaves with them, in the shape of other thousands of sick and wounded and insane to drag out miserable lives, wrecked in body and mind. You make the American flag in the eyes of a numerous people the emblem of sacrilege in Christian churches, and of the burning of human dwellings, and of the horror of the water torture.<sup>652</sup>

This was the setting for Roosevelt's pursuit of the Panama Canal project, particularly during its first years of controversy and setbacks.

Yet where the Philippines incursion had confronted Americans with casualties, atrocities, and long-term liabilities, visual representations of the Panama Canal Zone offered spectacular accomplishments that appeared conflict-free. The title of a 1912 *Scientific American* issue, "Panama Canal—The World's Greatest Engineering Work," sums up the nationalistic sense of

---

<sup>652</sup>George Frisbie Hoar, "Subjugation of the Philippines Iniquitous," in *The World's Famous Orations*, vol. X: *America—III, 1861–1905*, ed. William Jennings Bryan (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1906), 222.



satisfaction. The magazine's cover image, entitled "The Two Shovels", extols the heroism of white, male, American workers. It does this both through their physical strength—the worker in the foreground with sleeves rolled up to reveal his muscular forearms—and their engineering technology—the Panama Railroad train and the Bucyrus steam shovels in the foreground and background, made famous by Roosevelt's photograph. The illustration captures a sense of strenuous American engagement on the world stage, in a constructive rather than a violent mode. The romanticized image also omits the labor of West Indians, who performed the majority of the canal's pick-and-shovel work, and the removal of indigenous peoples, thus marketing a sanitized vision of power relations in the PCZ.

In addition to the canal structure itself, the settler society of the Panama Canal Zone became a model of social organization that provided imperial publicists with abundant material, especially in the form of visual representations. The Zonian experience of peaceful and pleasant settler life provided a stark contrast to militarized contact zones in previous U.S. occupations. A postcard circa 1920 of Zonians playing golf (Figure 6.4) sends a clear message about the comforts of enclave life in the PCZ for white Americans. It denotes nature tamed and a "civilized" social order imposed. The presence of women signals the imperial safety, security, and innocence that the Zone offered. The image reveals the racial segregation in the PCZ that most Americans accepted with a sense of familiarity and entitlement. The image also suggests a degree of class mobility for middle-class whites that would have been out of reach for many of their counterparts on the mainland, further contributing to the Zone's utopian aura.

With the Panama Canal completed, imperial boosters turned their attention from selling the Central American project in particular to marketing empire more generally as an attractive idea. This shift included expanding the locus of empire in the PCZ to include the domestic front.

At the PCE, boosters publicized Indian removal, hydraulic engineering, and land reclamation in the U.S. Southwest to foster a settler society radiating out from San Diego to its hinterland. A postcard from the PCE, Figure 6.5, symbolizes the campaign. Amid the grand Spanish Colonial Revival architecture of the fairgrounds, the Model Farm offered a blueprint for comfortable homesteading in Southern California for middle-class whites. Situated in a former desert, the surrounding citrus orchards and gardens evidenced the power of irrigation, while the bungalow represents white, middle-class access to the dream of independence.

It is no coincidence that Theodore Roosevelt, the imperialist president of the Panama Canal, was also an ardent supporter of Western irrigation. Although they served different engineering functions, Roosevelt Lake in Arizona and Gatun Lake in the PCZ were in fact knots in the same web of empire. Donald Worster has argued in *Rivers of Empire* that “nothing makes more clear the link between water control and the social orders humans have created than irrigation history.”<sup>653</sup> I suggest that analyzing the Panama Canal in a similar way contributes to our understanding of empire by making clearer the links between the canal’s hydraulic engineering and the social hierarchy of imperialism in the PCZ that it fostered. This hydraulic hierarchy pervaded the PCZ but it also extended back to the mainland, particularly at the PCE.

Exposition publicity also contained the aesthetic appeal of making a “wasteland” bloom, invoking an ancient dream articulated in the Old Testament: “The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom.”<sup>654</sup> In this context, white settlers to the U.S. Southwest were creating a beautiful garden and fulfilling Biblical prophecy, an indisputable

---

<sup>653</sup>Worster, *Rivers of Empire*, 20.

<sup>654</sup>Isaiah 35:1.

calling. As PCE promoters framed it, white settlers engaged in irrigation farming occupied a new Turnerian frontier line, one of land reclamation and conquest of an inland empire. This made white settlers to Southern California and Arizona pioneering agents of civilization within an expanding culture of U.S. imperialism that spanned—and blurred—domestic and foreign.

By the time of the PPIE, photographs of coffins from the Philippines were the farthest things from public attention, as the San Francisco fair produced spectacles that linked imperialism with sublime beauty. A hand-colored lanternslide by photographer Branson DeCou offers some idea of the sensational vision that the exposition produced. General Electric's Scintillator can be viewed on its barge in the Marina, dominating the nighttime sky with the prismatic "Aurora Borealis" effect that engineer Walter D'Arcy Ryan designed. Weighted banners atop tall masts hide powerful arc lights that made buildings glow with the indirect lighting designed by Ryan. DeCou's slide intimates the beauty of the lightshows that fair visitors described so vividly and passionately. The image's perspective, looking past the long colonnade of the Palace of Transportation, imparts a sense of the imperial ambience of the world's fair, a visual association that visitors noted and PPIE boosters welcomed. Author Mary Austin, commenting on the PPIE as an artistic vision, wrote "one would have to hark back to the days of Pompeii and the Greco-Roman splendor to find its like."<sup>655</sup> The scene projects a magnificent, placid orderliness. The fair provided a theatrical stage for U.S. imperialism, one so abstracted it that it became a matter of light and color rather than territorial occupation. The PPIE spectacle produced a beautiful distraction and a deliberate forgetfulness of things not seen.

---

<sup>655</sup>Austin, "Art Influence in the West," 830.

## Centennial Legacies of Imperialism

Like the Panama Canal Zone, the two world's fairs that celebrated the canal's opening are long gone except for a few vestigial structures and landscapes. The fairs must now be approached through archives and ephemera. The architecture has mostly been razed, and the structural fragments that remain have been repurposed, a common pattern in urban history.

The two world's fairs still possess a firm hold on popular imagination, however. While San Diego hoped to hold a grand centennial celebration of its Panama-California Exposition, it scaled back its plans after spending more than \$2.6 million on planning efforts that yielded nothing but calls for audits and investigations. The centennial scandal is a reminder of the city's organizing struggle in the hosting competition with San Francisco leading up to the world's fairs. San Diego's 2015 planners decided to focus on highlighting Balboa Park, with its Plaza de Panama, in hopes of attracting local visitors rather than aiming for national ones. According to the San Diego *Union-Tribune*, the PCE "was built around the completion of the Panama Canal and elevated San Diego to the world stage. The city's Chamber of Commerce organized it to bring attention and money to the first American West Coast port of call north of the canal."<sup>656</sup> These are exactly the themes that the PCE sounded a century ago, its "first port of call" status and emergence onto "the world stage." With the past as prologue, San Diego is still struggling to assert itself as a civic center of an imperial order, and has only managed to do so as a limited

---

<sup>656</sup>Mark Walker, "Balboa Park Celebration Plan Seeks Local Appeal," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 28 Mar. 2014, <http://utsandiego.com/news/2014/mar/28/balboa-park-centennial-celebration-reboot/>.

regional force. The dream of rugged individualism and homesteading by smallholders has long since passed away, victim to agribusiness.

San Diego failed to become the kind of imperial center that it aspired to be in 1915, as other California ports have surpassed San Diego's port trade volume. As of 2014, Long Beach was North America's busiest container shipping port, Los Angeles was second, Oakland seventh, and San Diego ranked 131 out of 149, in the bottom twenty percent of U.S. ports.<sup>657</sup>

What the Panama Canal did bring to San Diego, however, is a thriving militarism. The 1923 map in Figure 6.7 illustrates the apportioning of San Diego Bay into zones of naval anchorage and mooring. It identifies suitable locations for battleships in San Diego Bay, and various military reservations and installations around the city. The geography covered by the map includes the future sites of the Camp Pendleton and the San Diego, Miramar, Coronado, and Point Loma bases. San Diego became a navy town, currently with six major naval and marine bases and hundreds of support facilities in the immediate area. The U.S. Navy's San Diego base is the largest on the West Coast, and the homeport of the Pacific Fleet.<sup>658</sup> The Panama Canal distinctively shaped the city's growth and development, although in ways not fully anticipated in the pre-World War I era.

In the Imperial Valley, global warming and prolonged drought now threaten to undermine the economic development that accompanied desert irrigation and dominance of the

---

<sup>657</sup>“North American Port Container Traffic Ranking 2014,” data from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Port Industry Statistics, American Association of Port Authorities, accessed 20 Mar. 2016, <http://www.aapa-ports.org/Industry/content.cfm?ItemNumber=900>.

<sup>658</sup>“San Diego Military Bases,” San Diego Tourism Authority, accessed 20 Mar. 2016, <http://www.sandiego.org/articles/military/military-information.aspx>.

U.S. Southwest as a tributary of southern California during the early twentieth century.<sup>659</sup>

Southern California has enjoyed a century of prosperity from its agricultural empire, but the new millennium has challenged the complacent confidence in engineering miracles. In a region entirely reliant upon irrigation, manipulation of watersheds means little when there is scarce rainfall and no snowpack. California's deepening crisis, "the most severe drought in the last 1,200 years," now threatens the intensive irrigation systems, constructed during the imperial exposition era, with obsolescence.<sup>660</sup>

Water-rights laws and regional agreements from the early twentieth century kept the Imperial Valley fully irrigated with Colorado River water while most other Western regions were forced to ration. The 1922 Colorado River Compact, the legal culmination of negotiations that began in 1917, divides up the river among seven states. California won the largest allotment among the states by claiming historical usufructuary rights.<sup>661</sup> While Californians extracted an unequal share of the Colorado from their Western neighbors, Imperial Valley developers likewise engineered disproportionate access to the state's water quota. As the *Los Angeles Times* has noted: "The Imperial Irrigation District receives 3.1 million acre-feet of water annually from

---

<sup>659</sup>Steven Cuevas, "Symposium Addresses Drought's Impact on Imperial, Coachella Valleys," *California Report*, National Public Radio, 19 Mar. 2014, archived audio, <http://audio.californiareport.org/archive/R201403190850/c>.

<sup>660</sup>Daniel Griffin and Kevin J. Anchukaitis, "How Unusual Is the 2012–2014 California Drought?" *Geophysical Research Letters* 41, no. 24 (2014): 9017–9023.

<sup>661</sup>For a comprehensive history of water use in the U.S. West, see Norris Hundley, *Water and the West: The Colorado River Compact and the Politics of Water in the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009). For a history of irrigation in the Imperial Valley, see Eric I. Boime, "Fluid Boundaries: Southern California, Baja California, and the Conflict over the Colorado River, 1848–1944," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, San Diego, 2002).

the Colorado River. The rest of . . . California receives 1.3 million. This means that 180,000 people in the Imperial Valley receive approximately 70% of California's allocation of water from the Colorado River.”<sup>662</sup> The remaining 30% has to be divided among approximately 39 million residents.<sup>663</sup> Despite the historic drought, the Imperial Valley has actually continued to receive a *surplus* of irrigation water each year, which it then sells to the Los Angeles district. It is unclear how long this arrangement can continue with California's growing water wars, both intrastate and across the U.S. West.<sup>664</sup> Viewed through the lens of prolonged drought, the promises and assumptions by San Diego promoters at their world's fair of an endless supply of cheap, abundant water sound quaint at best.

### **Nostalgia for San Francisco's "Innocent Fair"**

The theme of innocence was (and remains) crucial to the project of denying the coercion inherent in U.S. imperialism. A documentary film about the PPIE produced in 1962 masks the fair's imperial objectives. *The Innocent Fair: A Nostalgic Visit to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco 1915*, was constructed from PPIE newsreels serendipitously found in an antique store in the Bay Area in 1961. The edited silent newsreels

---

<sup>662</sup>Tony Perry, "Despite Drought, Water Flowing Freely in Imperial Valley," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 Apr. 2015, <http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-drought-imperial-valley-20150412-story.html#page=1>.

<sup>663</sup>California's population in 2015 was 39,144,818; data from "U.S. and World Population Clock," the U.S. Census Bureau, accessed 20 March 2016, <http://www.census.gov/popclock/>.

<sup>664</sup>Perry, "Despite Drought."



combined with the early-1960s commentary present an intriguing interpretation. As the fair opens in February 1915, the narrator intones “it truly was a world apart, a world of wonders and light, an innocent world, for by May of 1915 the Lusitania had been sunk, and we would never be so young, so innocent again.”<sup>665</sup> In the film’s telling, the creation of the Panama Canal Zone did nothing to threaten American innocence. It was entrance into the First World War—not the Mexican–American War or embarkation on imperial holdings in Cuba, the Philippines, Hawaii, or the PCZ—that tarnished America’s status as a “young” and “innocent” nation. The theme of innocence is integral to the projection of tranquility and beauty.

Along with innocence, the documentary highlights the aesthetic quality of the fair: “The exposition was the first to have complete artistic supervision; even the colors of each building were chosen from a master palate, and the sand on the paths was burned in kilns to turn to the same color as the travertine walls of the palaces.”<sup>666</sup> This careful orchestration paid tremendous dividends in the quest to depoliticize the imperial fair. The narration further informs that “this was the first exposition with indirect lighting, the first in which the flowers and the gardens were completely changed overnight as they faded. Indeed, John McLaren’s gardens were the talk of the horticultural world; hundreds of full-grown trees were transported from all over northern California to the exposition grounds.”<sup>667</sup> The fluorescence of imperialism never faded within the

---

<sup>665</sup>*The Innocent Fair: A Nostalgic Visit to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco 1915*. Original: 16 mm film, optical black-and-white with sound, filmed 1915; Broadcast: San Francisco: KPIX-TV [CBS-5], Television, 1962; Video: MPEG4, 25:19, posted 22 Sept. 2011, Collection of the San Francisco Bay Area Television Archive, Leonard Library, San Francisco State University, <https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/sfbatv/bundles/189620>.

<sup>666</sup>*Innocent Fair*.

<sup>667</sup>*Innocent Fair*.

walled enclave of the PPIE, and the lush displays provided cover. The fair's beauty was designed to be a totalizing experience, a simulacrum of the pleasures of empire itself, without any of the burdens. As the narrator declared, "in 1915 you just didn't build a courtyard, you built a way of life."<sup>668</sup> Empire was fast becoming a way of life in the early-twentieth-century United States.

The Palace of Fine Arts exemplifies the legacy of the fair's deep aesthetic appeal. Fairgoers considered the Palace transcendent among all the fair's architecture at the time, granting it amnesty in December 1915. *The Innocent Fair* opens with a title screen depicting the Palace of Fine Arts (Figure 6.8) and describes its popularity: "At the opposite end of the Fairgrounds stood everybody's favorite building, Bernard Maybeck's wonderful Palace of Fine Arts. It stood reflected in its lagoon as if it were a dream solidified. Even before the Exposition was over, the people of San Francisco were demanding that the Palace of Fine Arts be preserved."<sup>669</sup> The Palace was indeed saved and currently stands as the only architectural remainder on the former fair grounds.<sup>670</sup> Maybeck's Palace seduced fairgoers with its sublime beauty, and the predations of empire were never farther from their minds than when they were within sight of the magnificent building that became an emblem of the PPIE.

---

<sup>668</sup>*Innocent Fair*.

<sup>669</sup>*Innocent Fair*.

<sup>670</sup>The only other original structure from the PPIE still standing in its original location is the San Francisco Civic Auditorium (renamed Bill Graham Civic Auditorium in 1992). Designed by Beaux-Arts architect John Galen Howard, it is located on San Francisco's Civic Center plaza. A few state buildings and the Japanese Tea Garden building from the PPIE grounds were relocated to other sites after the fair closed.

San Franciscans planned an ambitious centennial celebration that began on 20 February 2015, the day the exposition opened. Coordinated by the California Historical Society and the Maybeck Foundation, the centennial sought to “recapture the zeitgeist of the PPIE” and promised a large exhibition of photographs, documents, and artifacts from the fair along with interpretative texts and presentations by historians.<sup>671</sup> The PPIE remains a vivid event in the history of San Francisco, one that has reached mythical proportions as evidence of the city’s willpower and ability to overcome cataclysmic adversity and rise to establish a dominant presence on the Pacific Rim. As the official centennial website asserts, “this exhibition reflects on a moment in San Francisco's history when the city stepped onto the world stage to represent the country and state at the beginning of a century in which both would figure prominently.”<sup>672</sup> As with San Diego’s publicity, this echoes the century-old claim to the “world stage” made during the PPIE. Absent in the centennial, however, are any mentions of the imperial framework beneath the surface of the PPIE, in keeping with the ways the 1915 event kept the theme submerged beneath a façade of beauty. The spirit of the PPIE was to affirm U.S. imperialism without explicitly evoking it, and this dynamic continues to the present. In the history and memory of the PPIE, the fair represents both a spectacle of beauty that dazzled fairgoers and the media-consuming public at large, and a space where San Francisco staked a claim to its position as an imperial center through constructions of beautiful civic grandeur.

---

<sup>671</sup>“Mayor Lee Announces Year-Long Exhibits and Programs at Palace of Fine Arts to Commemorate 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition,” Office of the Mayor, City and County of San Francisco, posted 4 June 2014, <http://www.sfmayor.org/index.aspx?page=846&recordid=601&returnURL=%2Findex.aspx>.

<sup>672</sup>“Mayor Lee Announces.”

The centennial celebration clearly emphasized the aesthetic quality of the fair, with numerous fine arts organizations participating.<sup>673</sup> The crown jewel of the centennial was the renaissance of the Palace of Fine Arts (Figure 6.9), which the Maybeck Foundation finished restoring and seismically retrofitting in 2010 after seven years and a cost of \$21 million.<sup>674</sup> The Exposition Preservation League and Phoebe Apperson Hearst saved the Palace from demolition at the fair's closing, and a committee of women from elite San Francisco society again championed it for its centennial restoration. The popularity of the Palace has endured, and it is estimated that 1.5 million people visit it each year.<sup>675</sup>

The centennial presentation of the PPIE echoes themes from the creation of the Panama Canal. Both sites were initially viewed as wastelands, unfit for settlement and possessing no commercial value. Architect Louis C. Mullgardt, a member of the PPIE's architectural commission and designer of the "Court of Ages," called the fair's site "a strip of waste land" in his introduction to a book about the fair's architecture and landscaping.<sup>676</sup> The excavation of the canal and control of its watershed has a microcosmic parallel in the creation of the PPIE fairgrounds from a marshy stretch of San Francisco's Bay. The mayor's website for the centennial exults that "at the dawn of the twentieth century, a splendid walled city of domed palaces, palm-lined courts, and monumental statuary arose on San Francisco's northern shore.

---

<sup>673</sup>"Mayor Lee Announces."

<sup>674</sup>"Renovation and Restoration," Campaign for the Palace of Fine Arts, accessed 20 Mar. 2016, <http://www.lovethepalace.org/renovate.html>.

<sup>675</sup>"Renovation and Restoration."

<sup>676</sup>Louis Christian Mullgardt, *The Architecture and Landscape Gardening of the Exposition* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1915), 4.

Like a mirage, the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) appeared practically out of nowhere on a strip of land previously submerged by water. In just three short years, the 635-acre site between the Presidio and Fort Mason, known today as the Marina District, was filled with sand dredged from the bay and transformed into an elaborate Byzantium.”<sup>677</sup> The Canal Zone was certainly a much more ambitious and imposing undertaking, at 553 square miles, but the triumphant note is similar. Engineering skill, a prerequisite for empire, was paramount, and the results were impressive and attractive. Where there had recently been wetlands, there now stood monumental works of engineering and architecture that attested to the superiority of the United States and promoted aesthetic pleasure to the citizens who consumed the sites, whether in person or vicariously through images and texts. The reference to Byzantium is an acknowledgement that San Francisco viewed itself as an imperial city and used the PPIE to put on a beautiful, grandiose spectacle in order to signal that imperial status to the world.

### **“Americans Sat in Colonial Luxury in the Canal Zone”**

Although it lasted much longer than the world’s fairs, the Zone as an American possession has also proved fleeting, with the U.S. occupation lasting less than a century. The PCZ was under exclusive U.S. control from 1903 until 1979, and then under joint Panamanian control from 1979 until 2000. The Panama Canal Zone is now primarily traceable through the memoirs and guidebooks of the time of occupation, along with photographic images. Since the

---

<sup>677</sup>“Mayor Lee Announces.”

government enclaves created for Americans have been abandoned or repurposed, displaced former Zonians remain committed to maintaining memories of a vanished way of life.<sup>678</sup>

The aesthetic approach that U.S. imperial boosters employed in the PCZ was strategically brilliant. It depoliticized an inherently political issue, a debate over the scope of U.S.-government power in constructing an empire. It also de-militarized what was a significant military occupation, albeit without the trappings of a shooting war. At the time of final transfer of the canal to Panama in 1999, the U.S. Department of Defense relinquished twenty-two military bases and fifty-five other military facilities, including a host of service structures and amenities for U.S. military and civilian personnel.<sup>679</sup> The aesthetic appeal of the Panama Canal Zone's neat and attractive towns belied this deep militarization, creating instead a façade of civilian settlement that conveyed peaceful consent and mutual benefit.

The settlement of American civilians in the Panama Canal Zone lent an air of innocence and tranquility. This achievement was particularly effected via the presence of women and children because they projected an aura of safety and security, the absence of racial conflict or military hostilities, and the familiar and comforting culture of suburban America. As a *Time* article in 1964 declared, the Panama Canal Zone had become "More American Than

---

<sup>678</sup>Judy Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter: An American Childhood in Panama* (Sarasota, FL: Peppertree Press, 2012), passim; "Welcome to CZ Brats," accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.czbrats.com>.

<sup>679</sup>"U.S. Military Presence Ends After Nearly 90 Years," CNN, 1 Dec. 1999, archived by Prof. Antonio de la Cova, Latino Studies Dept., Indiana University, *Latin American Studies*, <http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/canal/ends.htm>; "Southern Command Treaty Implementation Directorate," pamphlet, U.S. Department of Defense, transcribed at "Panama Canal Treaty Transition—Summary of U.S. Military Property Transfers," accessed 25 July 2014, [http://william\\_h\\_ormsbee.tripod.com/treaty\\_trans\\_summ\\_mil\\_p01.htm](http://william_h_ormsbee.tripod.com/treaty_trans_summ_mil_p01.htm).

America.”<sup>680</sup> The 36,000 U.S. citizens then residing in the PCZ enjoyed access to a wide variety of residential, recreational, and commercial amenities. The population in 1964 comprised 12,000 military personnel, 4,000 civilian employees, and 20,000 of their dependents. Zonians “regard the Zone as something sacred, a piece of the U.S. plunked down in Latin America. And they raise their children in security provided by the U.S. Government.”<sup>681</sup> Americans in the Zone lived life in a state of splendid isolation; “they have little contact with Panamanians; only about 10% of them bother to learn Spanish. A few Zonians even boast that they rarely cross the border to ‘the other side.’”<sup>682</sup> The PCZ was designed to be a bordered enclave, and it remained that way until the end of the American era.

Although the original system of racial segregation had weakened a bit by 1964, it was still present. In 1955 the U.S. government officially abandoned the racially segregated black and white Silver and Gold system of separate and unequal public accommodations (see Figure 6.10 for an example of segregation from the 1930s), but stubborn and pernicious discrimination endured, both formal and informal, particularly in pay rates. The *Time* article noted in 1964 that a Panamanian doctor who served as chief of a clinic at Gorgas Hospital in the PCZ was paid \$12,500, while his nearest American subordinate was paid \$19,000.<sup>683</sup> This level of racism was not offensive to a large body of white Americans, and certainly not to the Zonians, who basked in their premier status as white American citizens in a foreign enclave, surrounded by peoples of

---

<sup>680</sup>“More American than America,” *Time*, 24 Jan. 1964, 20.

<sup>681</sup>“More American than America,” 20.

<sup>682</sup>“More American than America,” 20.

<sup>683</sup>“More American than America,” 20.



color. Racism was normalized in the Zone much as it was at home. White Americans were tepid in their commitment to equality for all Americans within the United States in 1964, much less for “foreigners” in a Latin American enclave.

Former Silver Roll employees, however, did not take structural racism in stride; according to the 1964 *Time* reporting, they chafed at “a pay differential in all job classifications that embitters Panamanians.”<sup>684</sup> These simmering resentments and dreams of justice and equality inspired the Panamanian independence movement that culminated in the 1977 treaty for U.S. return of the canal to Panama.

In spite of the pioneer mythology that suffused Zonian lore since the earliest days of settlement, life in the Zone was quite comfortably suburban and ostentatiously celebrated as “all-American.” The 1964 *Time* magazine article sketched the contours of life in the PCZ for its white American population: “Salaries average \$8,000 a year—which goes a long way in the Zone. Balboa and Cristobal are model company towns with look-alike houses, bargain-priced groceries, liquor and clothing from Government commissaries, bowling and Hollywood movies at the service centers. Zonians go in for such back-home activities as the V.F.W., Lions Club and Boy Scouts. They have their own schools (including a junior college), country clubs and well-kept golf courses; 1,600 boats are registered at the yacht basin, and late-model cars are the rule, not the exception.”<sup>685</sup> Among the amenities available to Zonians were nearly four thousand units of family housing, twelve schools, thirty-one clubs and restaurants, thirty-five hotels, twelve soccer fields, three ball fields, ten swimming pools, five theaters, four bowling alleys,

---

<sup>684</sup>“More American than America,” 20.

<sup>685</sup>“More American than America,” 20.

four golf courses, eighteen community centers, nine gymnasiums, eight post offices, three airports, and two hospitals.<sup>686</sup>

This array of social resources constituted a propagandizing message of American culture that few members of the white middle class would have found objectionable. As a Zone official explained to the *Time* reporter, “they have a right to be proud of building a neat little bit of America in these tropics. . . . The difficulty is that in the course of the building they have become more American than the Americans themselves.”<sup>687</sup> With their patriotism and loyalty beyond question, Zonians viewed and presented themselves as epitomists of American culture and values. Who would dare argue with the V.F.W. and the Boy Scouts? With children riding their bikes through neat suburban neighborhoods while their parents drove late-model cars? It was a strain of imperialism that possessed a benign, even charming, aura for most Americans.

A recent memoir by Judy Haisten, an American who lived in the Zone from 1964 until 1984, portrays the persistent trope of a pampered paradise. The PCZ was a place where people could begin their lives over, a place for risk-takers, mixed marriages, and refugees from the States, a place without boundaries, of houses without fences, and “no prejudices.”<sup>688</sup> Her childhood was one of comfort, ease, and relative affluence. There was the luxurious Olympic-sized swimming pool in Gamboa that the children frequented, staffed by an elderly Jamaican

---

<sup>686</sup>“U.S. Southern Command Treaty Implementation Directorate,” inventory in preparation for the transfer of the PCZ to the Republic of Panama. For parallels between the leisure cultures of Zonians and U.S. non-combatants stationed in South Vietnam in the U.S.-Vietnam War, see Meredith H. Lair, *Armed with Abundance: Consumerism and Soldiering in the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

<sup>687</sup>“More American than America,” 20.

<sup>688</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 5.

man whom the children called “Smiley,” along with the golf courses and yacht clubs.<sup>689</sup> Haisten describes her family’s government-subsidized home, a large, spacious three-story house with hardwood floors, numerous windows, wrap-around screened decks, and a view of an “unspoiled thick jungle.”<sup>690</sup> Her family employed a live-in Panamanian maid, a woman who lived in the basement, cleaned up all of their messes, and “prattled in Spanish” that was unintelligible to her American employers because they didn’t make any effort to learn the language.<sup>691</sup> The family parrot mimicked their shouted commands to the maid, Maria, which often brought her running, much to the family’s amusement.<sup>692</sup> Haisten recalls that such domestic arrangements were typical for the American settlers.

Haisten’s childhood was filled with trips to community and recreation centers, sporting events, and family vacations to islands in the PCZ, all subsidized by U.S. taxpayers. Despite her descriptions of what can only be called a luxurious childhood in the Zone, Haisten reacted in anger upon reading a 1976 *New York Times* piece claiming that “Americans sat in colonial luxury in the Canal Zone.”<sup>693</sup> Zonians liked to think of themselves as patriotic, courageous, and hardy pioneers who anchored U.S. national security in a Latin America outpost. They bridled at the suggestion that they were spoiled occupiers, although the ease of life in the Zone was integral to its allure for them.

---

<sup>689</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 7, 9, 81–82.

<sup>690</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 5–7.

<sup>691</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 13, 18, 20, 124.

<sup>692</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 23.

<sup>693</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 256.

Likewise, in contradiction to the racial stereotyping she portrays in her recollected childhood, Haisten bristled at any suggestion of white discrimination against people of color in the Zone. She reacted with rage to the U.S. debate over President Jimmy Carter's proposal to return the canal to Panama: "How could U.S. journalists, supposedly schooled in objectivity, depict hard-working fellow Americans as rogue colonialists living pampered lives on some other country's land? The very idea infuriated me. No one was listening to these American citizens who lived in rented temporary government quarters. They had no chance of getting the true story out when powerful media giants portrayed Canal Zone residents as bullying the Panamanians, whom we loved."<sup>694</sup> Apparently the distinction of living as tenants rather than homeowners made the U.S. occupation classless and innocuous, and the imperious nature of the "love" that Zonians felt toward Panamanians escaped her notice. Zonians clearly loved having Panamanian maids, a practice from the earliest construction days down to the final exit from the PCZ. Even working-class Zonian families were able to afford maids, offering them upward mobility they likely would not have accessed on the mainland. Rather than causing distress, this racial segregation of service work seemed familiar to white, mainland Americans; it normalized the settlement process in the PCZ because racist hierarchies were so deeply normalized at home.

Decades of social unrest in Panama in the middle of the twentieth century surrounding such issues resulted in the turbulence of the 1960s and 1970s. Geographer Robert Aguirre has found that "the period from the 1930s through the 1960s in Panama could easily be characterized as a 'civil rights' movement against fractious coalitions of maritime-commercial elite by both

---

<sup>694</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 267.

cross-society rivals and intra-society opposition.”<sup>695</sup> Aguirre’s assertion is supported by the fact that Panamanians rebelled against U.S. domination in 1927, 1947, 1959, 1964, 1966, and 1976.<sup>696</sup> Periodic treaty revisions maintained U.S. control by propping up local elites and enriching them through exclusive access to global markets and canal commerce at the expense of ordinary Panamanians, who were ruled by an oligarchy from 1903 to 1968. A *New York Times* reporter covering large demonstrations in 1964 in the PCZ noted that “the Panamanians have been seeking, among other things, a larger share in canal revenues and equal status for their nationals in the zone’s jobs.”<sup>697</sup> Imperial equality was, of course, an impossibility.

In 1968 the Panamanian military overthrew the elected president. The army installed a “provisional” Junta but held power for over two decades, outlawing political parties, suspending the constitution, appointing all members of the national assembly, and granting the ruling general unlimited, lifetime power. Generals Omar Torrijos (r. 1968–1981) and Manuel Noriega (r. 1981–1989) ruled with prevailing U.S. support, despite the army’s escalating violations of civil rights, political arrests, torture, rape, and murder. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Panamanians endured persistent economic crises and military repression, but U.S. administrations supported the dictators as strategic Cold War allies until relations deteriorated in 1987.

---

<sup>695</sup>Robert W. Aguirre, *The Panama Canal* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2010), 223.

<sup>696</sup>“Two Students Slain in Panama Riots; Fighting in Colon Follows Death of Youth Leader,” *New York Times*, 7 June 1966, A15; Alan Riding, “Canal Zone Americans Are Beset by Mood of Isolation and Mistrust,” *New York Times*, 28 Sept. 1976, A2.

<sup>697</sup>Tad Szulc, “U.S. Denies a Vow on Canal Treaty,” *New York Times*, 16 Jan. 1964, A1.

Throughout these decades of repression and violence, white Americans sat at the top of the nation's hierarchy within the PCZ.<sup>698</sup> A *New York Times* article from 1976 noted the sharp divide in the PCZ between the worlds of Americans and Panamanians, and spoke to the turbulence of the 1960s and 1970s. The main thoroughfare through the Zone, known as John F. Kennedy Avenue by the Americans, was instead called Avenue of the Martyrs by the Panamanians, in reference to the seventeen Panamanian citizens killed by U.S. troops in the 1964 “flag riots” that erupted when Panamanian students attempted to fly a Panamanian flag beside the U.S. flag at Balboa High School in the PCZ.<sup>699</sup> A superintendent of the American schools in the Zone derided the “martyrs,” declaring ““those dead Panamanians are now national heroes, but a goodly number of them were shot looting.””<sup>700</sup> It was a familiar allegation, echoing white opinion in the United States that has often regarded civil rights demonstrators as looters and rioters. The school superintendent went on to assure *New York Times* readers that the 1964 riots had been minimally disruptive of the American way of life in the Zone: ““The schools were back in operation within a few days,’ he recalled. ‘Our maids didn’t miss a day. They went in and out of the zone throughout the trouble.’”<sup>701</sup> The importance of Panamanian maids to the functioning of life for the Americans in the PCZ is inadvertently revealed by his emphasis on their loyalty to (or dependency upon) their jobs during the widespread public protests of 1964. The Zonian

---

<sup>698</sup>Aguirre, *Panama Canal*, 224.

<sup>699</sup>Jonathan Kandell, “U.S. Enclave Prizes Status Quo in Panama,” *New York Times*, 8 May 1976, A6.

<sup>700</sup>Kandell, “U.S. Enclave,” A6.

<sup>701</sup>Kandell, “U.S. Enclave,” A6.

lifestyle of relative affluence was based upon a racially tiered system of wage inequality, one that ultimately proved unsustainable for the Americans, even with the use of military force.

The apartheid-like conditions in the Zone were conspicuous and undeniable, and along with the unequal distribution of canal revenue they fueled Panamanian revanchism. The 1976 *New York Times* article noted that in addition to political fault lines, vast economic ones loomed as well: “By whatever name, that main thoroughfare is one of the dividing lines between the wooden tenements of a Panamanian slum and the manicured lawns of the United States-run Canal Zone.”<sup>702</sup> The *Times* reported that in 1963 transit tolls generated \$62.3 million for the U.S. government, “of which \$1.9 million . . . was handed over to the government of Panama.”<sup>703</sup> The connotations of the phrasing “handed over to the government of Panama” suggests that the United States made a gift of the money, or that the payment was extorted. For Panamanians, the 1963 annual treaty payment amounted to a mere three percent of U.S. revenues, a clear cause for civil unrest. The *Times* reporter went on to observe that Zonians “assert that there are solid patriotic motives to maintain the status quo in the Canal Zone. But it is the specter across Kennedy Avenue—the fear of losing a way of life and their livelihood—that has fueled their resistance to a new Panama Canal treaty.”<sup>704</sup> Zonians fiercely guarded their government-subsidized lifestyle of ease, comfort, and inequality.

---

<sup>702</sup>Kandell, “U.S. Enclave,” A6.

<sup>703</sup>Alan Flippen, “New Challenges for Panama Canal at 100,” *New York Times*, 21 Aug. 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/22/upshot/new-challenges-for-panama-canal-at-100.html>.

<sup>704</sup>Kandell, “U.S. Enclave,” A6.



Coverage of the 1964 “riots” by the *New York Times* reveals the vehemence with which Zonians and mainland Americans resisted losing control of their colony in Panama, and their strenuous sentiment indicates the continuing influence of the construction-era public relations effort. A *Times* article from 15 January 1964 included a photograph of student demonstrators, Figure 6.11. The *Times*’s caption describes a “parade” of students “demanding” reversion of the “permanent title” to the canal and the PCZ that the United States possessed, suggesting that they were not to be taken seriously. In fact the *Times* characterized the Panamanian demonstrations of January 1964 as “bloody rioting by Panamanians against the Canal Zone” and noted that four U.S. soldiers and twenty-one Panamanians were killed that year during clashes between the military and students. The paper also reported that the Panamanians caused “great property damage,” and it blamed the Panamanians themselves, rather than U.S. soldiers, for the “scores of wounded” among them.<sup>705</sup> It is noteworthy that the caption phrases the conflict as “bloody rioting against the Canal Zone,” inferring that the PCZ nearly possessed the status of personhood.

American possessed the PCZ so jealously, there was even animosity among some Zonians toward peers who mixed too freely across the racial borders of the Zone. An American resident in the PCZ explained the divisions: “‘O.K., there are some people here who don’t like to go into Panama,’ he said. ‘But there are some of us who go native so much that the Americans here get annoyed.’”<sup>706</sup> In addition to the issue of “going native,” a common anxiety in imperial societies, the statement indicates the nature of the racialized economic apartheid

---

<sup>705</sup>Henry Giniger, “‘Martyrs’ of Riot Hailed in Panama; 3d Anniversary of Clashes Over U.S. Flag Marked,” *New York Times*, 10 Jan. 1967, A7.

<sup>706</sup>Kandell, “U.S. Enclave,” A6.

system that prevailed in the PCZ. Americans were free to cross over into Panama at will, for leisure, recreation, or even romance, but Panamanian access to the PCZ was restricted to non-residential employment in low-wage, manual labor. The border between the PCZ and Panama was porous but passage across it was not equal.

The military might that had always lurked behind the front of civilian enclaves in the PCZ was increasingly on display in the context of the Cold War. The 1976 *New York Times* article carried a remarkable photograph (Figure 6.12). It depicted U.S. soldiers practicing war maneuvers on a golf course in the PCZ, while a Panamanian gardener mowed the greens. It is a rare glimpse of the military might that was juxtaposed with what was for all appearances the tranquil domesticity of the PCZ. The visual evidence provides intriguing contrasts and ironies: a luxurious golf course, established and subsidized by the U.S. government for the benefit of Zonians, doubling as a theatre for war games while a Panamanian day-laborer performs the manual work of maintaining the facility for occupying American whites.

According to Zonians like Judy Haisten, the real offense committed by press and politicians during the 1970s debate was the violation of the perquisites and sense of entitlement that Zonians had enjoyed for most of a century. Zonians themselves had subscribed deeply to the notions that they were ultra-American, that they were a benevolent force for uplift and improvement in the PCZ, that their occupation was consensual (and thus not really an occupation at all), and that their relations with the Hispanic and Antillean residents of the Zone were based upon mutual love. This myth had been promulgated since the earliest construction days, and has been perpetuated down to the present by former residents of the Zone forced out in 1999, who still refer to themselves as “Zonians” and portray themselves as victims—a liminal, stateless people betrayed by their government and exiled from their homeland.

## The End of the PCZ Colonial Era

Over the course of the twentieth century, U.S. settlers in the Zone became Yankee occupiers who were finally sent home in 1999 by the Torrijos-Carter Panama Canal Treaty of 1977. The world that the Zonians had created didn't simply change hands, it ceased to exist. For Panamanians, it was the realization of justice long deferred. For Zonians, it was a tragic dispossession of a world they had created. The nostalgic and sometimes angry laments of the last generation of Zonians offer clues about the historical importance of the PCZ and the cultural mythology surrounding it that thrived in the United States as well as in the Zone.

President Carter negotiated the treaties with Panama ceding control of the canal in part because of the 1964 “flag riots.” Carter made a highly visible, public commitment to a new standard of honoring human rights in U.S. foreign policy, particularly in Latin America. He created a new position, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and appointed Patricia Derian to the position.<sup>707</sup> Carter acted in the context of the Cold War, the resignation of president Richard Nixon, and the failed U.S. war in Vietnam.

In sharp contrast to this lofty human rights rhetoric, historian Stewart Brewer has argued that pragmatic factors were more pressing. General Omar Torrijos seized power in a coup in 1968, and he clearly possessed the military might to control the canal. Torrijos was also an important U.S. ally in the Cold War, brutally repressing leftists in Panama and supporting U.S.

---

<sup>707</sup>“A Short History of the Department of State,” U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, accessed 21 Aug. 2014, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/short-history/carter>.

efforts to do the same throughout Latin America.<sup>708</sup> Whichever was the larger part of Carter's motivation, the U.S. government was no longer actively promoting the old romanticized view of the PCZ settler society promulgated since the construction era.

Economic historians Noel Maurer and Carlos Yu have argued that the United States relinquished the canal because it was no longer profitable or necessary. Maurer and Yu suggest that the loss of strategic value, the costs in aid payments, and falling toll revenue made the canal a liability rather than an asset by the mid-twentieth century. The canal became less important to the United States after World War II because of the construction of the Interstate Highway System and the shift among railroads to a more efficient fleet of diesel engines. Maurer and Yu also found that Zonians themselves played an unwitting and ironic role in the canal's return to Panama:

The canal was squeezed by rising costs due to American mismanagement. Panama Canal employees in essence captured canal management and ran it for their own benefit: salaries escalated . . . . In this, canal employees were greatly aided by the peculiar place the canal held in America's national mythology. Conservatives who would have been horrified at employee capture of other public enterprises such as, say, the Tennessee Valley Authority or National Aeronautics and Space Administration, not only tolerated but applauded the phenomenon in the Canal Zone. The result was that American aid transfers to Panama soon began to overshadow the revenues from the canal.<sup>709</sup>

Because of the extensive and rising costs of government subsidies, the good life that Zonians so ostentatiously celebrated actually contributed to the loss of that lifestyle.

---

<sup>708</sup>Stewart Brewer, *Borders and Bridges: A History of U.S.–Latin American Relations* (London: Praeger, 2006), 137.

<sup>709</sup>Sarah Jane Gilbert, "Panama Canal: Troubled History, Astounding Turnaround," interview with Noel Maurer, 20 Dec. 2010, *Working Knowledge*, Harvard Business School, <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/6402.html>. See Noel Maurer and Carlos Yu, *The Big Ditch: How America Took, Built, Ran, and Ultimately Gave Away the Panama Canal* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

The Panamanian uprisings in the 1960s destabilized the American imperial project and eventually led to its demise, but Americans pushed back against the protests. Zonians, conservative U.S. politicians, and imperialists led the resistance to Panamanian autonomy, and a majority of the American public favored U.S. retention of the canal and the PCZ. This persistent possessiveness of a way of life in the Zone, even in the face of fiscal losses, is a testament to the power and enduring legacy of the cultural campaign that the ICC and canal promoters waged during the construction era.

Predictions in the 1970s of the demise of the Panama Canal have subsequently rung hollow, yet American criticism of Panama persists. Panama has successfully operated the canal since 2000, defying the dire (and racially tinged) warnings by Zonians and American conservatives of inevitable incompetence and mismanagement. A widely carried 2014 Associated Press article is typical in its mixed tone of begrudging acknowledgement, accusations of mismanagement, and suggestions of American superiority and largesse. The reporter remarked “for the most part, the canal has blossomed under Panamanian management, contributing more than \$8.5 billion in government revenue since the Americans handed it over on Dec. 31, 1999,” in language that alternately suggests beneficence and duress, but he then qualified, “the 100th anniversary of the Panama Canal's opening Friday is being marred by doubts about the country's ability to harness the full benefits of a multibillion-dollar expansion beset by cost overruns, strikes and the threat of competition from rival projects.”<sup>710</sup> The criticism is ironic, given that the U.S. government also experienced cost overruns and strikes during its early construction era, and it avoided “the threat of competition from rival projects” by

---

<sup>710</sup>Juan Zamorano, “Panama Canal Turns 100 as Expansion Hits Snags,” Associated Press, 16 Aug. 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/panama-canal-turns-100-expansion-hits-snags>.

negotiating the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty in 1914, paying Nicaragua three million dollars to prevent construction of any future canal there.<sup>711</sup>

When Panama missed a projected 2011 deadline for canal expansion, a *New York Times* reporter declared in a front page news article that “the biggest questions today concern whether, in a country and region marked by official corruption, the canal authority, an autonomous agency of the Panamanian government, can handle such an undertaking.”<sup>712</sup> Given Maurer and Yu’s evidence of the postwar “capture” of the Panama Canal by Zonians for their own benefit, in a process of state-subsidized mismanagement, the commentary is historically uninformed. The reporter also repeats the standard give-away language of the canal’s transfer, saying “the United States handed it to Panama more than a decade ago.”<sup>713</sup>

The *New York Times* has also alleged Panamanian malfeasance by pointing to the country’s income inequality. Referring to Panama’s 2006 popular referendum on the canal expansion project, which passed with a 77 percent majority, the paper reproached Panama with the comment “backers portrayed the vote as a bet on the future of Panama's children in a country where poverty still affects a third of the population, a stain on what is arguably Latin America's most-thriving economy.”<sup>714</sup> That the persistent gap between rich and poor in Panama might be a

---

<sup>711</sup>The Bryan-Chamorro Treaty was ratified in 1916 and remained in force until 1971, when the U.S. Senate ratified a convention with Nicaragua to overturn it; see “Convention with Nicaragua Terminating the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty of 1914,” U.S. Senate consideration of Treaty Document 91-22, U.S. Congress, accessed 21 Mar. 2016, <https://www.congress.gov/treaty-document/91st-congress/22>.

<sup>712</sup>Henry Fountain, “Panama Adding a Wider Shortcut for Shipping,” *New York Times*, 17 Aug. 2011, A1, and <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/17/science/17canal.html>.

<sup>713</sup>Fountain, “Panama Adding Wider Shortcut,” A1.

<sup>714</sup>Zamorano, “Panama Canal Turns 100.”

legacy of formal American imperialism there from 1904 to 2000 is never addressed. This is despite Robert Aguirre's findings that Panama suffered for a century from a wide and expanding wealth gap between Panamanian managerial elites and exploited workers, a two-tiered social structure deliberately created and sustained by the ICC. The American-generated wealth gap had been apparent in 1976 to the *Times* reporter who observed that Zonians were primarily concerned with maintaining their affluence on the white side of disputed avenue, "the specter across Kennedy Avenue—the fear of losing a way of life."<sup>715</sup> In this context, the current inequality in Panama can reasonably be viewed as an issue of historical continuity, a lingering scourge of U.S. imperialism. The *Times*'s reprimand to Panama for its moral "stain" regarding income inequality in the midst of a "thriving economy"—particularly as it affects children—is also ironic given poverty rates in the United States. As the *Washington Post* reported in 2014, "in the richest nation in the world, one in three kids live in poverty."<sup>716</sup>

Ongoing American criticism of Panama, despite its canal expansion progress, appears driven by nationalistic resentment, an artifact of the publicity campaigns that U.S. government officials and boosters waged relentlessly during the U.S. construction era. The current tone of condescension toward Panama in the American press cannot be accurately assessed without considering American popular opposition to returning the PCZ to Panama during the debates of the 1970s, which in turn were informed by the construction-era marketing of empire.

---

<sup>715</sup>Kandell, "U.S. Enclave," A6.

<sup>716</sup>Christopher Ingraham, "Child Poverty in the U.S. Is among the Worst in the Developed World," *Washington Post*, 29 Oct. 2014, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/10/29/child-poverty-in-the-u-s-is-among-the-worst-in-the-developed-world/>.



Those American debates assumed that only the United States possessed the political will and technological ability to manage the project, and that “handing over” control of the canal would doom it to obsolescence. The current expansion project has instead made those debates appear obsolete. Nor is Panamanian management a threat to U.S. security. The canal expansion project will allow U.S. warships to expand in size, enabling a new class of Panamax II battleships. Predictions that relinquishing control of the canal would threaten U.S. imperial “forward projection” have thus far proved unfounded.

In their analysis, Maurer and Yu suggest that the real reason for U.S. hesitation to relinquish control of the canal to Panama was the state of public opinion by the 1970s. Presidents Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Gerald Ford all realized that the canal was no longer a prudent imperial possession, and “all made serious efforts to negotiate a handover,” but all were thwarted by public opinion. And although President Carter succeeded where his predecessors had failed, he paid for the accomplishment in the 1980 election. Maurer and Yu suggest “the reason was that a large swath of American public opinion opposed the Panama Canal treaties, but their motivation was a defensive American nationalism, not American national defense.”<sup>717</sup>

I would argue that this “defensive nationalism” reveals the legacy of the publicity campaign that the U.S. government and canal boosters waged during the construction era. Popular support for possession and occupation of the PCZ was a force that the government had assiduously cultivated for the better part of a century, so resistance to “giving away” the canal had deep roots. American public opinion in the 1970s can be traced back to the public relations

---

<sup>717</sup>Gilbert, “Panama Canal: Troubled History.”

efforts of Theodore Roosevelt, Joseph Bucklin Bishop, and Ernest Hallen, among others. The pro-empire publicity surrounding Panama that the ICC propagated between 1904 and 1914 effectively convinced the American public that the PCZ was an attractive, honorable, and valuable imperial possession. Those marketing campaigns moved the canal beyond the realm of rational economics and geopolitical strategy, into a place that resonated emotionally in public opinion due to the proliferation of images of imperial beauty. Thus the fact that the canal was operating at the loss by the 1970s made no difference in public opinion. Publicity had convinced Americans that the PCZ was sovereign, inalienable U.S. territory, based on cultural arguments, not economic ones. The campaign to encourage American possessiveness had relied not on balance sheets but rather on photographs that glorified engineering and the colonial way of life. The public backlash to Carter's 1976 decision to pursue a new treaty with Panama is a measure of just how successful the early-twentieth-century campaigns of cultural production were.

Zonian Judy Haisten reflects the "defensive American nationalism" that Maurer and Yu have observed, and is representative of the last generation of PCZ residents. Haisten argues that "the *New York Times* sharply criticized America for *stealing* the Panama Canal. The author dared to write that American history books conveniently omitted incriminating evidence of America's theft." She counters with "we couldn't steal something that hadn't existed in the first place. Before the Americans came, there was no canal and no canal locks. There was only jungle, malaria, yellow fever, and the failed attempt by France to build a canal."<sup>718</sup> Her position echoes arguments that American settlers and boosters had made from the earliest days of PCZ

---

<sup>718</sup>Haisten, *Canal Zone Daughter*, 256.

possession: Americans had a right to the land because previous occupants had failed to develop it, to make civilized use of it, the argument of Roosevelt and Mahan.

There remains to this day a diasporic community of former Zonians, who also refer to themselves as “CZ Brats.” Many of them settled in Florida. They maintain nostalgic networks online and hold annual reunions in Panama.<sup>719</sup> They cling to an identity as pioneer settlers of a benevolent enclave that they deny represented a form of U.S. imperialism or occupation. They recall life in the Zone as supremely pleasant and evoke it wistfully through shared photographs, ephemera, and stories about growing up there. Their reminiscences focus not on empire or U.S. foreign policy, but rather on their beloved everyday routines as children: attending movie theatres, playing ball on community diamonds, swimming at the recreation centers, visiting ice cream parlors, fishing, exploring the edges of the jungle, participating in school activities, and enjoying family outings and vacations in the Zone.

There is, of course, a politics to all of this innocent, childish pleasure, in the imposed and powerful structures of U.S. imperialism that created these amenities and maintained them to the exclusion of people of color in the PZC. These recollections by “Zonian Brats” portray a halcyon era of the enclave, and a lifestyle that white Americans did not challenge (in terms of its

---

<sup>719</sup>For a few examples, see “CZ Brats,” accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.czbrats.com>; “Canal Zone Images,” accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.czimages.com/default.htm>; “Canal Zone Memories,” accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.zonianlady.com/cz.html>; the Panama Canal Society of Florida, accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.pancanalsociety.org/links.html>; the “CZ Brats” Facebook page, accessed 25 July 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=o.2204472074&ref=mf>; Cristobal High School alumni “brats,” accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.chs73.com/CZ%20brats%20what%20is.htm>; Southern Command Network radio and television alumni, accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.scncz.com/>; CZ Angels, “We Can Go Back – But, Our Home is Gone,” accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.angelfire.com/tx/CZAngelsSpace/GoBack.html>; “My memories of the Canal Zone,” accessed 25 July 2014, <http://gozonian.org/CZmemory.shtml>; and “Fly With Me to Panama,” accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.angelfire.com/tx/CZAngelsSpace/index.html>.

racial, economic, or imperial injustices) during their near-century of occupation. It was so idealized, so thoroughly packaged as attractive, as to be above critique. Zonians appear united in their memories of imperial occupation as a benign and beautiful way of life, as they inventory all of the pleasures that their enclave lifestyle provided.

On the rare occasions when the race relations of the PCZ are acknowledged, primarily in memoirs, racism and racial segregation are treated as sources for humor at best, if not explicit prejudice. This trope was maintained from Rose Hardeveld's book covering the construction era, through the publications by Sue Core from the 1930s to the 1950s, particularly her 1938 *Maid in Panama*, down to Judy Haisten's 2012 book, and stories currently posted online by the "CZ Brats" community. Core wrote several books about everyday American life in the Zone before World War II, works that are valuable for their glimpses into racial and economic relations. *Maid in Panama* is a compilation of anecdotes by middle-class white American women regarding their interactions with their maids, who were all women of color. The book is profoundly racist in its text and images, with portrayals of black women dressed as Southern "mammies" who shuffled about their jobs in a state of languid incomprehension of modern American civilization. The women of color who worked for Zonian families as housekeepers and nannies are consistently portrayed as simple, unintelligent, and primitive. The descriptions of the family maid in Haisten's book about the 1960s do not diverge much from Core's racist stereotypes of the 1930s, or Rose Hardeveld's 1904–1914 stereotypes. Although scrubbed of the worst racial epithets, current Zonian websites contain numerous childhood reminiscences

regarding black and Panamanian domestic workers that reveal continuities in American racism.<sup>720</sup>

The Panama Canal project and the zone of occupation that accompanied it set important precedents for U.S. foreign policy. The canal itself and its commemorative expositions assuaged fears that followed the U.S.–Philippine War and thus cleared the way for further imperial excursions in the twentieth century. The cultural production of beauty surrounding the Panama Canal Zone and the two celebratory California world’s fairs won over Americans and distracted them from the grave dangers and tremendous costs of empire building. It would take a century before American citizens would begin a discussion about the costs of “blowback” from U.S. imperialism.<sup>721</sup> Centennial commemorations of the world’s fairs have presented them as glorious spectacles, failing to acknowledge that they were rooted in imperialism. Over the course of the twentieth century, the Panama endeavor emboldened policy makers, as they observed how effectively boosters produced an attractive visual culture that lulled citizens into a state of acquiescence to imperial expansion.

---

<sup>720</sup>For examples, see “Articles, Stories, Photos, and Memoirs,” Panama Canal Society, accessed 25 July 2014, <http://www.pancanalsociety.org/articles.html>; “Story Menu,” CZ Brats, accessed 25 July 2014, [http://www.czbrats.com/Menus/Story\\_Menu.htm](http://www.czbrats.com/Menus/Story_Menu.htm).

<sup>721</sup>This discussion was instigated in large measure by the work of historian Chalmers Johnson in his trilogy of books critiquing U.S. empire: *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Henry Holt, 2000); *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (London and New York: Verso, 2004); and *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008).

## Chapter 6 Figures



Figure 6.1

An airman practicing his golf drive from the deck of an aircraft carrier on the eve of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq.<sup>722</sup>

---

<sup>722</sup>Associated Press photograph, captioned "Gulf Break," A1, accompanying Neil MacFarquhar and Patrick E. Tyler, "Threats and Responses: Disarmament; Baghdad Resumes Dismantling Arms, But Lists Demands," *New York Times*, 9 March 2003, A1. The *New York Times* online archive omits the photograph but includes its caption, with the alternate title "Shipboard R&R."



Figure 6.2

Photograph captioned “Caskets of Dead American Soldiers, Philippines Insurrection, circa 1906,”<sup>723</sup>

<sup>723</sup>“Caskets of Dead American Soldiers, Philippines Insurrection, circa 1906,” photograph, the Burns Archive online, accessed 1 May 2015, <http://www.burnsarchive.com/Explore/Historical/Memorial/index.html>.





Figure 6.3

The cover of a 1912 issue of *Scientific American* devoted to the Panama Canal. The image tacitly celebrates the culturally constructed attractiveness of masculinity, whiteness, and technology, used for domination in the service of U.S. imperialism.<sup>724</sup>

<sup>724</sup>“The Two Shovels,” *Scientific American*, 9 Nov. 1912, front cover.



Figure 6.4

“New Panama Golf Club,” Maduro postcard circa 1915–1930.<sup>725</sup>

---

<sup>725</sup>“New Panama Golf Club,” postcard, “succession of I. L. Maduro Jr.,” eBay, accessed 14 Mar. 2015, [http://thumbs3.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/291446807758\\_/El-Nuevo-Golf-Club-De-Panama-New-Panama.jpg](http://thumbs3.picclick.com/d/1400/pict/291446807758_/El-Nuevo-Golf-Club-De-Panama-New-Panama.jpg).



Figure 6.5

“General View of Exposition Buildings, Citrus orchard and Model Farm in foreground, Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, Cal., 1915.”<sup>726</sup>

---

<sup>726</sup>“General View of Exposition Buildings,” postcard, I. L. Eno, 1915, Wolfsonian Library, Florida International University, accessed 23 Feb. 2015, <http://libimages.wolfsonian.org/XB2000.45.221.jpg>.





Figure 6.6

The Scintillator viewed from the Esplanade in front of the Palace of Transportation.<sup>727</sup>

---

<sup>727</sup>Branson DeCou, hand-colored lantern slide, 20 Feb. 1915, accession number DC1.750.0490L, Branson DeCou Digital Archive, MS 38, Special Collections/Digital Collections, McHenry Library, University of California, Santa Cruz, accessed 18 May 2015, <http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p265101coll30/id/1438/rec/13>.





Figure 6.8

Title frame from “The Innocent Fair,” a documentary film about the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, featuring the Palace of Fine Arts.<sup>729</sup>

---

<sup>729</sup>*Innocent Fair.*



Figure 6.9

The Palace of Fine Arts in 2010, after restoration in preparation for the PPIE centennial.<sup>730</sup>

---

<sup>730</sup>Stephen Pavlov, "Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco," 22 Mar. 2010, San Francisco Parks and Recreation District, accessed 24 Aug. 2014, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San\\_Francisco\\_Recreation\\_%26\\_Parks\\_Department](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco_Recreation_%26_Parks_Department).





Figure 6.10

Photograph of a Zonian woman on a beach in the PCZ, circa 1934. The sign indicates that “Farfán Beach is reserved for the use of the whites employees of the Panama Canal Company, the Panama Railroad, their families, and their guests.” The allowance of “their guests” without any qualification at a whites-only beach suggests, and appears to assume, that Zonians would not have had any friends of color.<sup>731</sup>

---

<sup>731</sup>“CZ Images,” accessed 12 Aug. 2014, <http://www.czimages.com/CZMemories/Photos/photoof28.htm>.



Figure 6.11

Photograph from *The New York Times* of the 1964 Panamanian uprising in the PCZ. The original caption reads “university students parade in Panama City on Jan. 15, 1964, demanding that the United States give up the permanent title to the canal and the Canal Zone.”<sup>732</sup>

---

<sup>732</sup>Szulc, “U.S. Denies,” A1.



Figure 6.12

Photograph accompanying a *New York Times* article, "U.S. Enclave Prizes Status Quo in Panama," 8 May 1976.<sup>733</sup>

---

<sup>733</sup>Kandell, "U.S. Enclave," A6.

## Selected Bibliography

### **Archival Sources**

Arizona Historical Society Library and Archives, Tucson

Arizona State University Archives and Special Collections, Tempe

North Baker Research Library, California Historical Society, San Francisco

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Braun Research Library, Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles, California

The Huntington Library, San Marino, California

Daniel E. Koshland San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, San Francisco Public Library

University of Arizona Library Special Collections, Tucson

Young Research Library, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles

### **Newspapers Consulted**

*Arizona Republic* (Phoenix)

*Atlanta Independent*

*Canal Record* (Ancon, PCZ)

*Christian Register* (Boston)

*Desert News* (Salt Lake City)

*Exposition News* (San Diego)

*Fort Worth Telegram*

*The Graphic* (London)

*The Independent* (New York)

*Los Angeles Herald*

*Los Angeles Times*

*New York Times*

*New York Tribune*

*Oakland Tribune*

*Panama Canal Review* (Balboa, PCZ)

*Panama Star and Herald* (Panama City, Panama)

*Roanoke Times*

*Sacramento Union*

*San Diego Sun*

*San Diego Union*

*San Diego Union-Tribune*

*San Francisco Call*

*San Francisco Chronicle*

*San Mateo Daily Journal*

*Washington Post*

*Washington Times*

## **Published Works**

Abbot, Willis John. *Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose*. London: Syndicate Publishing, 1913.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Panama and the Canal: The Story of Its Achievements, Its Problems and Its Prospects*. New York: Dodd Mead, 1914.

Adams, Charles Francis. *The Panama Canal Zone: An Epochal Event in Sanitation*. Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1911.

Adas, Michael. *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 2006.

Aguirre, Robert W. *The Panama Canal*. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2010.

Allen, James, ed. *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*. Santa Fe, NM: Twin Palms Publishing, 2000.

Ameringer, Charles D. "The Panama Canal Lobby of Philippe Bunau-Varilla and William Nelson Cromwell." *American Historical Review* 68, no. 2 (1963): 346–63.

- Amero, Richard W. "The Southwest on Display at the Panama-California Exposition, 1915." *Journal of San Diego History* 36, no. 4 (1990): 183–219.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2013.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London and New York: Verso, 1983.
- Anderson, Warwick. *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006.
- Armagnac, Alden P. "Enlarging the Panama Canal for Bigger Warships." *Popular Science Monthly* 137, no. 3 (1940): 42–45.
- Arendt, Hannah. "The Crisis in Culture: Its Social and Its Political Significance." In *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*. New York: Penguin, 1977.
- Asbury, Herbert. *The Barbary Coast: An Informal History of the San Francisco Underworld*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1933.
- Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company. *Santa Fe*. Chicago: Poole Brothers, 1904.
- Austin, Mary. "Art Influence in the West." *Century Magazine*, Apr. 1915, 829–33.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Land of Little Rain*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1903.
- Avery, Ralph Emmett. *America's Triumph at Panama: Panorama and Story of the Construction and Operation of the World's Giant Waterway from Ocean to Ocean*. Chicago: Regan Printing House, 1913.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Panama Canal and the Golden Gate Exposition: Authentic and Complete Story of the Building and Operation of the Great Waterway—the Eighth Wonder of the World*. New York: Leslie-Judge, 1915.
- "Babies for Crocodile Bait." *Roanoke Times*, 20 June 1890, 3.
- "Babies Used as Alligator Bait in State of Florida." *Atlanta Independent*, 11 Oct. 1923, 1.
- "Baits Alligators with Picaninnies." *Washington Times*, 13 June 1908, 2.
- Baker, Ray Stannard. "The Glory of Panama: How the Big Ditch, Dug on Honor, Is a Great Example of the New Idealism in Public Service." *American Magazine* 76 (Nov. 1913): 33–37.



- Barbour, F. F. "The Ryan Electric Color Scintillator at the Exposition." *Pacific Service Magazine* [Pacific Gas and Electric Company] 7 (1915): 6–7.
- Barrett, John. *Panama Canal: What It Is, What It Means*. Washington, DC: Pan-American Union, 1913.
- Beeks, Gertrude. "The Nation's Housekeeping at Panama." *Outlook* 2 (1907): 489–93.
- . "Panama Canal Conditions." *American Federationist* 14, no. 11 (1907): 849–66.
- . "What a Woman Saw in the Canal Zone: Civic Worker's Report Urges Particular Care Be Taken of Bachelor Employees." *New York Times*, 30 Sept. 1907, A1.
- Bender, Thomas, ed. *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Author as Producer." In *Thinking Photography*, edited by Victor Burgin, 15–31. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982.
- Bennett, Ira E. *History of the Panama Canal: Its Construction and Builders*. Washington DC: Historical Press, 1915.
- Berger, John. *About Looking*. New York: Vintage, 1991.
- . *Understanding a Photograph*. New York: Aperture, 2013.
- Berger, Martin A. *Seeing Through Race: A Reinterpretation of Civil Rights Photography*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.
- Berry, Rose Virginia Stewart. *The Dream City: Its Art in Story and Symbolism*. San Francisco: Walter N. Brunt, 1915.
- Bigelow, Poultney. "Our Mismanagement in Panama." *The Independent*, 4 Jan. 1906, 9–21.
- Bishop, Chip [Charles Owen]. *The Lion and the Journalist—The Remarkable Friendship of Theodore Roosevelt and Joseph Bucklin Bishop*. Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2012.
- Bishop, Farnham. *Panama, Past and Present*. New York: The Century Co., 1913.
- Bishop, Joseph Bucklin. *The Panama Gateway*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913.
- . *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time: Shown in His Own Letters*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.

- . *Uncle Sam's Panama Canal and World History, Accompanying the Panama Canal Flat-Globe; Its Achievement an Honor to the United States and a Blessing to the World*. New York: J. Wanamaker/World Syndicate Co., n.d., ca.1913.
- Bishop, Joseph Bucklin, and Farnham Bishop. *Goethals, Genius of the Canal: A Biography*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930.
- Blakey, Roy G. "Income Tax Discrimination and Differentiation." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 13 (1914): 227.
- Boime, Albert. *The Magisterial Gaze: American Landscape Painting, 1830–1865*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991.
- Boime, Eric I. "Fluid Boundaries: Southern California, Baja California, and the Conflict over the Colorado River, 1848-1944." Ph.D. diss., University of California, San Diego, 2002.
- Bokovoy, Matthew F. "Inventing Agriculture in Southern California." *Journal of San Diego History* 45, no. 3 (1999): 66–85.
- . *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880–1940*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.
- Brechin, Gray. *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- . "Sailing to Byzantium: The Architecture of the Fair." In *The Anthropology of World's Fairs: San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915*, edited by Burton Benedict, 94–113. London and Berkeley: Lowie Museum of Anthropology/Scolar Press, 1983.
- Brewer, Stewart. *Borders and Bridges: A History of U.S.–Latin American Relations*. London: Praeger, 2006.
- Brody, David. *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Brown, Dona. *Back to the Land: The Enduring Dream of Self-Sufficiency in Modern America*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.
- Buell, James W. "Types and Development of Man." In *Louisiana and the Fair: An Exposition of the World, Its People, and Their Achievements*. St. Louis: World's Progress Publishing Co., 1904.
- Bullard, Arthur. *Panama: The Canal, the Country and the People*. New York: Macmillan, 1914.

- Burgin, Victor, ed. *Thinking Photography*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982.
- Calder, A[lexander] Stirling. "Sculpture." *California's Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 321–24.
- "The Canal Zone Is Fortifying Its Right to the Title of 'The Healthiest Spot on Earth.'" *Popular Mechanics*, Oct. 1914, 484–85.
- Carballo, E. Chaves. "Ancon Hospital: An American Hospital During the Construction of the Panama Canal, 1904–1914." *Military Medicine* 10 (Oct. 1999): 725–30.
- Carse, Ashley. *Beyond the Big Ditch: Politics, Ecology, and Infrastructure at the Panama Canal*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014.
- Cherny, Robert W., Mary Ann Irwin, and Anne Marie Wilson, eds. *California Women and Politics: From the Gold Rush to the Great Depression*. Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2011.
- "Child Photography: Even in Panama the Babies Have Their Specialist." *New York Tribune*, 23 July 1911, C3.
- Collins, John O. *The Panama Guide*. Panama: Vibert and Dixon, 1912.
- "Color Scheme of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition." *Modern Painter* 22, no. 4 (1913): 49–50.
- Colortypes of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco, 1915*. San Francisco: Robert A. Reid, 1915.
- "Commission Hospital Service." *Canal Record* (Ancon, PCZ), 12 Aug. 1908, 397.
- Conniff, Michael L. *Black Labor on a White Canal, 1904–1981*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985.
- Conzen, Michael P., and Diane Dillon, eds. *Mapping Manifest Destiny: Chicago and the American West*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press/Newberry Library, 2007.
- Core, Sue. *Maid in Panama*. Dobbs Ferry, NY: Clermont Press, 1938.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Panama Yesterday and Today*. New York: North River Press, 1945.
- Cornish, Vaughan. *The Panama Canal and Its Makers*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1909.
- Cornthwaite, H. G. "1919: Panama Rainfall." *Monthly Weather Review* 47, no. 5 (1919): 300.

- Cortissoz, Royal. "An Art Critic on the Fair Lighting." *Pacific Service Magazine* [Pacific Gas and Electric Company] 7 (1915): 7–8.
- Crawford, Margaret. *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of American Company Towns*. London and New York: Verso, 1995.
- Crawford, Richard. "New Santa Fe Depot Nearly Sidetracked." *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 30 Jan. 2010, CZ1.
- Crouch, Edith. *Architecture of the Panama Canal Zone: Civic and Residential Structures and Townsites*. Anglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2014.
- Cullather, Nick. "Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State." *Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (2002): 512–37.
- Cullinane, Michael Patrick. *Liberty and American Anti-Imperialism, 1898–1909*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Daguerre, Louis Jacques Mandé. "Daguerreotype." In *Classic Essays on Photography*, edited by Alan Trachtenberg, 11–13. New Haven, CT: Leete's Island Books, 1980.
- Daniel, Cletus E. *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870–1941*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981.
- Davies, Andrea Rees. *Saving San Francisco: Relief and Recovery after the 1906 Disaster*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012.
- DeGuzmán, María. *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.
- Dennis, Bernard G., ed. *Engineering the Panama Canal: A Centennial Retrospective*. Reston, VA: American Society of Civil Engineers, 2014.
- Deutsch, Sarah. *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870–1940*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Dilworth, Leah. *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past*. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998.
- Doyle, Grace. "Interesting Westerners." *Sunset* 32 (1914): 865.
- Drummond, Bruce. "Propagation and Culture of the Date Palm." Washington DC: U.S. Bureau of Plant Industry/U.S. Department of Agriculture/GPO, 1919.

- Duke, Donald. *Santa Fe: The Railroad Gateway to the American West*. San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1995.
- Dumenil, Lynn. *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995.
- Enock, C. Reginald. *The Panama Canal: Its Past, Present, and Future*. London and Glasgow: Collins' Clear-Type Press, n.d., ca.1914.
- Esau, Erika. *Images of the Pacific Rim: Australia and California, 1850–1935*. Sydney: Power Institute of Art/University of Sydney, 2010.
- Evans, Walker. "Main Street Looking North from Courthouse Square: A Portfolio of American Picture Postcards from the Trolley-Car Period." *Fortune*, May 1948, 102–106.
- Ewald, Donna, and Peter Clute. *San Francisco Invites the World: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991.
- "Exposition Shows Possibilities of Farming." *San Diego Union*, 27 Jan. 1915.
- Fairchild, David. "The Jungles of Panama." *National Geographic Magazine* 41 (Feb. 1922): 131–45.
- Farmer, Jared. *Trees in Paradise: A California History*. New York: Norton, 2013.
- Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008.
- Faust, Karl Irving. *Campaigning in the Philippines*. San Francisco: Hicks-Judd Co., 1899.
- Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus: The Price of America's Empire*. New York: Penguin, 2004.
- Fillin, Lucille, and Walter Fillin. "The Picture Postcard." In *Wish You Were Here: The History of the Picture Postcard, an Exhibition Organized by the Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University, Hempstead, Long Island, NY*. Hempstead, NY: Hofstra University, 1974.
- Finnegan, Margaret. *Selling Suffrage: Consumer Culture and Votes for Women*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Flanagan, Maureen A. *Seeing With Their Hearts: Chicago Women and the Vision of the Good City, 1871–1933*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Flippen, Alan. "New Challenges for Panama Canal at 100." *New York Times*, 22 Aug. 2014.

- Forbes-Lindsay, Charles Harcourt. *Panama and the Canal To-day: An Historical Account of the Canal Project from the Earliest Times, with Special Reference to the Enterprises of the French Company and the United States, with a Detailed Description of the Waterway As It Will Be Ultimately Constructed*. Boston: L. C. Page, 1910.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Panama, the Isthmus and the Canal*. Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1912.
- Fountain, Henry. "Panama Adding a Wider Shortcut for Shipping." *New York Times*, 17 Aug. 2011.
- Franck, Harry A. *Zone Policeman 88: A Close Range Study of the Panama Canal and Its Workers*. New York: Century Co., 1913.
- Fraser, John Foster. *Panama and What It Means*. London: Cassell, 1913.
- Friedberg, Anne. "The Mobilized and Virtual Gaze." In *The Visual Culture Reader*, 3d ed., edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff, 253–62. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Gause, Frank A., and Charles Carl Carr. *The Story of Panama: The New Route to India*. Boston: Silver, Burdett, 1912.
- Geary, Christraud M., and Virginia-Lee Webb, eds. *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998.
- Geertz, Clifford. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- Giniger, Henry. "'Martyrs' of Riot Hailed in Panama; Third Anniversary of Clashes Over U.S. Flag Marked." *New York Times*, 10 Jan. 1967.
- Gorgas, Marie D., and Burton J. Hendrick. *William Crawford Gorgas: His Life and Work*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page, 1924.
- Gilbert, James. "Fixing the Image: Photography at the World's Columbian Exposition." In *Grand Illusions: Chicago's World's Fair of 1893*, edited by Neil Harris et al., 100–132. Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1993.
- Goethals, George W. "The Panama Canal." *National Geographic Magazine* 20, no. 4 (1909): 334–55.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Panama Canal." *National Geographic Magazine* 22, no. 2 (1911): 148–69.
- Greene, Julie. *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal*. New York: Penguin, 2009.

- Greenberg, Amy S. *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Grier, Thomas Graham. *On the Canal Zone, Panama*. Chicago: Wagner and Hanson, 1908.
- Griffin, Daniel, and Kevin J. Anchukaitis. "How Unusual Is the 2012–2014 California Drought?" *Geophysical Research Letters* 41 (30 Dec. 2014): 9017–23.
- Gullett, Gayle. *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women's Movement, 1880–1911*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Haisten, Judy. *Canal Zone Daughter: An American Childhood in Panama*. Sarasota, FL: Peppertree Press, 2012.
- Hales, Peter B. *Silver Cities: The Photography of American Urbanization, 1839–1915*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984.
- Hall, Alfred B., and Clarence L. Chester. *Panama and the Canal*. New York: Newson, 1910.
- Hall, George Weed. "The General Electric Company's Exhibits at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition." *General Electric Review* 18, no. 6 (1915): 560–71.
- Hall, Stuart. "The Determination of News Photographs." In *The Manufacture of News: Social Problems, Deviance and the Mass Media*, edited by Stanley Cohen and Jock Young, 226–43. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1973.
- Hammond, John Winthrop. *Men and Volts: The Story of General Electric*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., n.d., ca. 1941.
- Hanft, Robert M. *San Diego and Arizona: The Impossible Railroad*. Glendale, CA: Trans–Anglo Books, n.d., ca. 1984.
- Hardeveld, Rose van. *Make the Dirt Fly!* New York: Pan Press, 1956.
- Harpers' Pictorial History of the War with Spain*. New York: Harper and Bros., 1899.
- Haskin, Frederic Jennings. *The Panama Canal*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page, 1913.
- Harris, Dianne. *The Nature of Authority: Villa Culture, Landscape, and Representation in Eighteenth-Century Lombardy*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Maybeck's Landscapes: Drawing in Nature*. San Francisco: William Stout Publishers/College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley, 2004.



- . *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.
- Harris, Neil, Wim de Wit, James Gilbert, and Robert W. Rydell. *Grand Illusions: Chicago's World's Fair of 1893*. Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1993.
- Harris, Moira F. "Curt Teich Postcards of Minnesota." *Minnesota History* 54, no. 7 (1995): 304–15.
- Harrison, Earle. *The Panama Canal: Illustrated by Color Photography from the Original Autochrome Photographs*. New York: Moffat, Yard, 1913.
- Haskin, Frederic J. *The Panama Canal*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1913.
- Hawkins, Stephanie L. *American Iconographic: National Geographic, Global Culture, and the Visual Imagination*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010.
- Hayden, Dolores. *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820–2000*. New York: Vintage, 2003.
- Henderson, Sandra L. "The Civitas of Women's Political Culture: The Twentieth Century Club of Berkeley, 1904–1929." In *California Women and Politics: From the Gold Rush to the Great Depression*, edited by Robert W. Cherny, Mary Ann Irwin, and Anne Marie Wilson, 175–208. Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2011.
- Heuer, Elizabeth B. "Introduction to 'Main Street Looking North from Courthouse Square.'" In *Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity*, edited by David Prochaska and Jordana Mendelson, 157–61. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010.
- Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925*. Rev. ed. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992.
- Hoar, George Frisbie. "Subjugation of the Philippines Iniquitous." In *The World's Famous Orations*, Vol. 10: *America—Pt. 3, 1861–1905*, edited by William Jennings Bryan, 220–27. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1906.
- Hoganson, Kristin L. *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865–1920*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- . *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by John Cumming. New York: Continuum, 1944.

- Horsman, Reginald. *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Hudson, Lynn M. "'This Is Our Fair and Our State': African Americans and the Panama-Pacific International Exposition." *California History* 87, no. 3 (2010): 26–45.
- Hundley, Norris. *Water and the West: The Colorado River Compact and the Politics of Water in the American West*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
- Ingram, Merrill. "Desert Storms." In *A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert*, edited by Steven J. Phillips and Patricia Wentworth Comus, 41–50. Berkeley: University of California Press/Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, 2000.
- Iriye, Akira. "Beyond Imperialism: The New Internationalism." *Daedalus* 134, no. 2 (2005): 108–16.
- Isenberg, Alison. *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Issel, William, and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco, 1865–1932: Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- "*I Took the Isthmus: Ex-President Roosevelt's Confession, Colombia's Protest and Editorial Comment by American Newspapers on 'How the United States Acquired the Right to Build the Panama Canal.'*" New York: M. B. Brown Co., 1911.
- Jackson, Kenneth T. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876–1917*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2000.
- James, Juliet. *Palaces and Courts of the Exposition: A Handbook of the Architecture, Sculpture and Mural Paintings with Special Reference to the Symbolism*. San Francisco: California Book Co., 1915.
- Jeffrey, Ian. *How to Read a Photograph: Understanding, Interpreting and Enjoying the Great Photographers*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2008.
- Johnson, Chalmers. *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*. New York: Henry Holt, 2000.
- . *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008.

- . *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic*. London and New York: Verso, 2004.
- Johnson, R. M., Earl W. Hill, and Harry G. Seber. *Panama Canal Extravaganza*. San Diego: Moyer Co., n.d., ca. 1916.
- Johnson, Susan Lee. *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush*. New York: Norton, 2000.
- Johnson, Willis Fletcher. *Four Centuries of the Panama Canal*. New York: Henry Holt, 1906.
- Kandell, Jonathan. "U.S. Enclave Prizes Status Quo in Panama." *New York Times*, 8 May 1976, A6.
- Kaplan, Amy. *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.
- . "Manifest Domesticity." *American Literature* 70, no. 3 (1998): 581–606.
- Kaplan, Amy, and Donald E. Pease, eds. *Cultures of United States Imperialism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Kelham, George W. "Texture of Buildings at the Exposition." *California's Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 325–28.
- Kennan, George. "The Philippines: Present Conditions and Possible Courses—III." *Outlook*, 9 Mar. 1901, 576–84.
- Kennedy, Paul. *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*. New York: Random House, 1987.
- Kidd, Benjamin. *The Control of the Tropics*. New York: Macmillan, 1898.
- King, Homer S. "California's Exposition Ambitions," *Sunset* 25, no. 6 (1910): 623–24.
- Knight, Henry. *Tropic of Hope: California, Florida, and the Selling of American Paradise, 1869–1929*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013.
- Kramer, Paul. *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- . "The Water Cure: Debating Torture and Counterinsurgency—A Century Ago." *New Yorker*, 25 Feb. 2008, 38–43.
- Kress, Gunther, and Theo van Leeuwen. *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

- Lair, Meredith H. *Armed with Abundance: Consumerism and Soldiering in the Vietnam War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.
- Laut, Agnes C. "San Diego: First Port of Call." *Sunset Magazine* 30, no. 2 (1913): 110–20.
- Lears, Jackson. *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877–1920*. New York: Harper Collins, 2009.
- Lee, Lawrence B. "The Little Landers Colony of San Ysidro." *Journal of San Diego History* 21, no. 1 (1975): 26–51.
- Lindsay-Poland, John. *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Lipsky, William. *San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition*. Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.
- Littman, Robert R. "The Picture Postcard." In *Wish You Were Here: The History of the Picture Postcard, an Exhibition Organized by the Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University, Hempstead, Long Island, NY*. Hempstead, NY: Hofstra University, 1974.
- Longwell, Dennis. "Panama Canal Photographs by Ernest 'Red' Hallen." *Art Journal* 36, no. 2 (1976–77): 123–25.
- Love, Eric T. L. *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865–1900*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Lutz, Catherine A., and Jane L. Collins. *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Mack, Gerstle. *The Land Divided: A History of the Panama Canal and Other Isthmian Canal Projects*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944.
- Macomber, Ben. *The Jewel City: Its Planning and Achievement; Its Architecture, Sculpture, Symbolism, and Music; Its Gardens, Palaces, and Exhibits, with Colored Frontispiece and More Than Seventy-Five Other Illustrations*. San Francisco: John H. Williams, 1915.
- Major, John. *Prize Possession: The United States and the Panama Canal, 1903–1979*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- "Magic Spanish City at San Diego." *Out West Magazine* 8, no. 6 (1914): 293–301.
- Magonigle, Harold Van Buren. *Architectural Rendering in Wash*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

- “Magoon Here, Replies to Poultney Bigelow.” *New York Times*, 29 Jan. 1906, A1.
- Mahan, Alfred Thayer. *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660–1783*. Boston: Little Brown Co., 1890.
- The Makers of the Panama Canal: 1911*. New York: F. E. Jackson and Son, 1911.
- The Manitoba Free Press. *The Free Press Almanac Encyclopedia and Atlas*. New York: C. S. Hammond and Co., 1912.
- Markwyn, Abigail. *Empress San Francisco: The Pacific Rim, the Great West, and California at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014.
- Marshall, Logan. *The Story of the Panama Canal*. Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1913.
- Mason, Silas C. “The Date in California.” *California’s Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 470–76.
- Mattie, Erik. *World’s Fairs*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998.
- Marx, Leo. *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Maurer, Noel and Carlos Yu. *The Big Ditch: How America Took, Built, Ran, and Ultimately Gave Away the Panama Canal*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Maybeck, Bernard R. *Palace of Fine Arts and Lagoon*. San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1915.
- “Mayor Phelan in a Long Message Declares and Defines His Policy.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 Jan. 1900, A9.
- McCarty, Mary L. *Glimpses of Panama and of the Canal*. Kansas City, MO: Tiernan-Dart Co., 1913.
- McCormick, James. *American Foreign Policy and Process*. 5th ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2009.
- McCullough, David. *The Path between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870–1914*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977.
- McIlhenny, Eleanor. “Lively Retirees.” *Panama Canal Review* (Balboa, PCZ), 7 Sept. 1962, 10–15.
- McKinlay, Duncan E. *The Panama Canal*. San Francisco: Whitaker and Ray-Wiggin Co., 1912.

- McPherson, Alan. *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.–Latin American Relations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- McWilliams, Carey. *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1939.
- Mears, J. Ewing. *The Triumph of American Medicine in the Construction of the Panama Canal*. Philadelphia: Wm. J. Dornan, 1911.
- Meinig, D. W. *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*. Vol. 1, *Atlantic America, 1492–1800*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986.
- Merry, William L. “The Nicaragua Canal: The Political Aspect.” *Overland Monthly* 23, no. 137 (1894): 497–501.
- Miller, Bonnie M. *From Liberation to Conquest: The Visual and Popular Cultures of the Spanish–American War of 1898*. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011.
- Miller, George, and Dorothy Miller. *Picture Postcards in the United States, 1893–1918*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1976.
- Mills, J. Saxon. *The Panama Canal: A History and Description of the Enterprise*. New York: T. Nelson and Sons, 1913.
- Mills, W. H. “Marketing California Fruits.” *The Californian Illustrated Magazine* 2, no. 5 (1892): 703–8.
- Mirzoeff, Nicholas. *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.
- Missal, Alexander. *Seaway to the Future: American Social Visions and the Construction of the Panama Canal*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- . *Seeing Through Race*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.
- Moore, Sarah J. *Empire on Display: San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1913.
- “More American Than America.” *Time*, 24 Jan. 1964, 20.

- Morphet, Richard. "The Picture Postcard." In *Wish You Were Here: The History of the Picture Postcard, an Exhibition Organized by the Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University, Hempstead, Long Island, NY*. Hempstead, NY: Hofstra University, 1974.
- Mowry, George E. *The California Progressives*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951.
- Mullgardt, Louis Christian. *The Architecture and Landscape Gardening of the Exposition*. San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1915.
- Munchow, Mrs. Ernest von. *The American Woman on the Panama Canal: From 1904 to 1916*. Balboa Heights, PCZ: Star and Herald, 1916.
- Neely, F. Tennyson. *Neely's Photographs: Fighting in the Philippines, Authentic Original Photographs*. London, Chicago, New York: F. Tennyson Neely, 1899.
- Nelson, Cary. "Love Your Panzer Corps: Rediscovering the Wartime Poem Postcard." In *Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity*, edited by David Prochaska and Jordana Mendelson, 167–81. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010.
- Neuhaus, Eugen. *The Art of the Exposition*. San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1915.
- Nicolaides, Becky M. *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920–1965*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Nida, William Lewis. *Story of the Panama Canal*. Chicago: Hall and McCreary, 1913.
- Nye, David E. *American Technological Sublime*. Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1994.
- The Official Handbook of the Panama Canal*. Washington DC: GPO, 1915.
- Official View Book, Panama-California International Exposition, San Diego, California*. San Diego: J. L. Eno, 1916.
- Ohmann, Richard. *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century*. London and New York: Verso, 1996.
- Orenstein, A. J. "The Sanitation of the Canal Zone: Teaching the Tropics How to Live." *Scientific American* 107, no. 19 (1912): 392–405.
- "Panama." *Outlook*, 13 Jan. 1906, 62–63.
- Panama and the Canal Zone, Illustrated from Actual Photographs with Descriptive Matter Accompanying [sic] Each View: Scenes of the Panama Canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific*. Panama City, Panama: I. L. Maduro, Jr./C. T. and Co., n.d., ca. 1915.



*Panama-Pacific International and Panama-California Expositions: Souvenir*. Chicago: International Harvester Co. Inc., 1915.

“Panama-Pacific International Exposition.” In *Historical Dictionary of World’s Fairs and Expositions*, edited by John E. Findling, 219–26. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990.

Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company. *Condensed Facts Concerning the Panama-Pacific Universal Exposition, San Francisco, 1915, Celebrating the Opening of the Panama Canal*. San Francisco: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition Co., 1914.

———. *The Panama-Pacific International Exposition San Francisco 1915: Official View Book*. 3d ed. San Francisco: Robert A. Reid, 1915.

———. *The Red Book of Views of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition*. San Francisco: Panama-Pacific International Exposition Co./R. A. Reid Co., 1915.

“Panama: Poultney Bigelow Reaffirms His Criticisms of the Canal Work.” *New York Times*, 12 Jan. 1906, A8.

Parker, Earl S. “The Real Yellow Peril.” *The Independent*, 7 May 1921, 476.

Parker, Matthew. *Panama Fever: The Epic Story of the Building of the Panama Canal*. New York: Anchor, 2007.

Pennell, Elizabeth Robins. *Joseph Pennell: An Account by His Wife Elizabeth Robins Pennell Issued on the Occasion of a Memorial Exhibition of His Works*. Washington DC: The Library of Congress/GPO, 1927.

Pennell, Joseph. *Joseph Pennell’s Pictures of the Panama Canal*. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott, 1913.

Pepperman, Walter Leon. *Who Built the Panama Canal?* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1915.

Perry, Stella G. S. *The Sculpture and Mural Decorations of the Exposition*. San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1915.

Peterson, Jon A. *The Birth of City Planning in the United States, 1840–1917*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

Petroski, Henry. *Invention by Design: How Engineers Get from Thought to Thing*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.

———. *Remaking the World: Adventures in Engineering*. New York: Vintage/Random House, 1997.

- Pittier, Henry. "Little-Known Parts of Panama." *National Geographic* 23, no. 7 (1912): 627–62.
- "Placing the Blame for the Philippine 'Barbarities.'" *Literary Digest* 24, no. 20 (1902): 667–68.
- Post, Emily. *By Motor to the Golden Gate*. New York: D. Appleton, 1916.
- "Poultney Bigelow's Panama Roast." *Sacramento Union*, 12 Jan. 1906, A6.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Presbry, Frank. *The History and Development of Advertising*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1929.
- "President Sails for the Isthmus." *Los Angeles Herald*, 6 Nov. 1906, A1.
- Price, James N. "The Railroad Stations of San Diego County." *Journal of San Diego History* 34, no. 2 (1988): 122–74.
- Prochaska, David, and Jordana Mendelson, eds. *Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010.
- Putnam, Lara. *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.
- Putney, M. H. *Panama and the Canal Zone Illustrated from Actual Photographs with Descriptive Matter Accompanying Each View*. Panama City, Panama: I. L. Maduro Jr., n.d., ca.1915.
- Riding, Alan. "Canal Zone Americans Are Beset by Mood of Isolation and Mistrust." *New York Times*, 28 Sept. 1976, A2.
- Rockett, Perley Fremont. *Our Boys in the Philippines: A Pictorial History of the War*. San Francisco: P. F. Rockett, 1899.
- Roediger, David R. *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. New York: Verso, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White*. New York: Basic Books, 2005.
- Roosevelt, Theodore. *Special Message of the President of the United States Concerning the Panama Canal, Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress on Dec. 17, 1906*. Washington DC: GPO, 1906.

- . *The Winning of the West*. New York: The Current Literature Publishing Co., 1905.
- Rosaldo, Renato. "Imperialist Nostalgia." *Representations* 22 (Spring 1989): 107–22.
- Rothenberg, Tamar Y. *Presenting America's World: Strategies of Innocence in National Geographic Magazine, 1888–1945*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007.
- Russell, Thomas H. *The Panama Canal: A Pictorial View of the World's Greatest Engineering Feat Linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, with a Brief History and Description of the Gigantic Undertaking*. Chicago: Hamming Publishing Co., 1913.
- Ryan, W[alter] D'A[rcy]. "Illumination of the Exposition." *California's Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 317–20.
- . "Illumination of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition." *General Electric Review* 18, no. 6 (1915): 579–93.
- Rydell, Robert W. *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- . "Souvenirs of Imperialism." In *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards*, edited by Christraud M. Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb, 47–63. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998.
- Rydell, Robert, W., John E. Findling, and Kimberly D. Pelle. *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000.
- Sanborn, Mrs. Frederick G. "Work and Purposes of the Woman's Board of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition." *California's Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1915): 375–76.
- Saxton, Alexander. *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- Schroeder, Jonathan E. "Consuming Representation: A Visual Approach to Consumer Research." In *Representing Consumers: Voices, Views and Visions*, edited by Barbara B. Stern, 193–230. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Schirmer, Daniel B. *Republic or Empire: American Resistance to the Philippine War*. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing, 1972.
- Schor, Naomi. "Cartes Postales: Representing Paris 1900." In *Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity*, edited by David Prochaska and Jordana Mendelson, 1–23. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010.

- Schultz, Rima Lunin, and Adele Hast, eds. *Women Building Chicago, 1790–1990: A Biographical Dictionary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.
- Scott, William Rufus. *The Americans in Panama*. New York: Statler, 1912.
- “Seeing the Canal.” *Canal Record* (Ancon, PCZ), 18 Dec. 1912, 133.
- Sekula, Allan. “On the Invention of Photographic Meaning.” In *Thinking Photography*, edited by Victor Burgin, 84–109. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982.
- Sewell, Jessica Ellen. *Women and the Everyday City: Public Space in San Francisco, 1890–1915*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.
- Shah, Nyan. *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco’s Chinatown*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- Shaper, Don Cameron. “The Home Electrical at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.” *General Electric Review* 18, no. 6 (1915): 572–78.
- Shiras, George. “Nature’s Transformation at Panama: Remarkable Changes in Faunal and Physical Conditions in the Gatun Lake Region.” *National Geographic* 28, no. 2 (1915): 159–94.
- Sibert, William L., and John F. Stevens. *The Construction of the Panama Canal*. New York: D. Appleton Co., 1915.
- Simpson, Anna Pratt. *Problems Women Solved: Being the Story of the Woman’s Board of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition*. San Francisco: The Woman’s Board, 1915.
- Smythe, William E. *The Little Landers of Los Angeles*. Los Angeles: House of the Little Landers, 1913.
- Sneider, Allison L. *Suffragists in an Imperial Age: U.S. Expansion and the Woman Question, 1870–1929*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Solnit, Rebecca. *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.
- . *River of Shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the Technological Wild West*. New York: Penguin, 2003.
- Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1977.
- Souvenir of the 8th Army Corps Philippine Expedition: A Pictorial History of the Philippine Campaign*. Manila, Philippine Islands: Dow Bros., 1899.

- Spain, Daphne. *How Women Saved the City*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- “Sport in Ceylon—Shooting a Man-Eating Crocodile.” *The Graphic*, 21 Jan. 1888, 70–76.
- Staff, Frank. *The Picture Postcard and Its Origins*. New York: Praeger, 1966.
- Starr, Kevin. *Americans and the California Dream, 1850–1915*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.
- . *Inventing the Dream: California through the Progressive Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- . *Material Dreams: Southern California through the 1920s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Stellman, Louis J. *That Was a Dream Worth Building: The Spirit of San Francisco’s Great Fair Portrayed in Picture and Words*. San Francisco: H. S. Crocker Co., 1916.
- Stewart, Jane A. “The Tennyson Family.” *Christian Register*, 5 Aug. 1909, 832.
- “Stolen Property.” *New York Times*, 29 Dec. 1903, A8.
- Stoler, Ann Laura, ed. *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006.
- Stoll, Steven. *The Fruits of Natural Advantage: Making the Industrial Countryside in California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Street, Richard Steven. *Beasts of the Field: A Narrative History of California Farm Workers*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004.
- Sugrue, Thomas J. *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*. New York: Random House, 2008.
- Sutter, Paul S. “Nature’s Agents or Agents of Empire? Entomological Workers and Environmental Change During the Construction of the Panama Canal.” *Isis* 98, no. 4 (2007): 724–54.
- Szulc, Tad. “U.S. Denies a Vow on Canal Treaty.” *New York Times*, 16 Jan. 1964, A1.
- “Taft Scorns Bigelow and Panama Charges.” *New York Times*, 11 Jan. 1906, A1.
- Tagg, John. *The Burdens of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Currency of the Photograph." In *Thinking Photography*, edited by Victor Burgin, 110–41. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982.
- Taylor, George. "A Magic City of Temples." *Building*, 12 Mar. 1915, 96–106.
- Tobriner, Stephen. *Bracing for Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838–1933*. Berkeley: The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley/Heyday Books, 2006.
- Todd, Frank Morton. *The Story of the Exposition, Being the Official History of the International Celebration Held at San Francisco in 1915 to Commemorate the Discovery of the Pacific Ocean and Construction of the Panama Canal*. New York: G. P. Putnam, 1921.
- Tompkins, E. Berkeley. *Anti-Imperialism in the United States: The Great Debate, 1890–1920*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970.
- Trachtenberg, Alan. *The Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Classic Essays on Photography*. New Haven, CT: Leete's Island Books, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1989.
- Tracy, Edith H. *The Panama Canal during Construction: From Photographs*. New York: Redfield Bros., 1913.
- Trewartha, Glenn T. "Recent Thought on the Problem of White Acclimatization in the Wet Tropics." *Geographical Review* 16, no. 3 (1926): 467–68.
- A Trip: Panama Canal*. Panama City, Panama and New Orleans: Avery and Garrison Publishers, 1911.
- Trumbull, Frank. *The Panama Canal: Some Impressions and Comments*. New York: s.n., 1913.
- "Two Students Slain in Panama Riots; Fighting in Colon Follows Death of Youth Leader." *New York Times*, 7 June 1966, A15.
- U.S. Department of Commerce. *Trade Directory of Central America and the West Indies*. Issue 22. Washington DC: GPO, 1915.
- U.S. Isthmian Canal Commission. *Panama Canal: Official Handbook*. Ancon, PCZ: Isthmian Canal Commission, 1913.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Report of the Isthmian Canal Commission*. Washington DC: GPO, 1905.

- U.S. President. *Special Message of the President of the United States Concerning the Panama Canal, Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress on Dec. 17, 1906*. Washington DC: GPO, 1906.
- U.S. Senate. *Investigation of Panama Canal Matters: Hearings Before the Committee on Interoceanic Canals of the United States Senate in the Matter of the Senate Resolution Adopted January 9, 1905, Providing for an Investigation of Matters Relating to the Panama Canal*. Vol. 1. Washington DC: GPO, 1906.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Panama-Pacific and Panama-California Expositions: Hearings before the Committee on Industrial Expositions*. 62d Cong., S. J. Res. 43. Washington DC: GPO, 1912.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Trials or Courts Martial in the Philippine Island in Consequence of Certain Instructions." Doc. 213, 57th Cong., 2nd sess. Washington DC: GPO, 1903.
- Vaught, David. *Cultivating California: Growers, Specialty Crops, and Labor, 1875–1920*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- Villiers, T. W. "Picaninny Bait Lures Voracious 'Gator to Death." *Oakland Tribune*, 21 Sept. 1923, A11.
- Waldo, Fullerton L. *The Panama Canal: A Personal Study of Actual Conditions*. New York: Engineering Magazine, 1907.
- Walker, Mark. "Balboa Park Celebration Plan Seeks Local Appeal." *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 28 Mar. 2014.
- Walker, Richard. *The Conquest of Bread: 150 Years of Agribusiness in California*. New York: The New Press, 2004.
- "Water for Phoenix: Building the Roosevelt Dam." *Journal of Arizona History* 18, no. 3 (1977): 279–94.
- Weir, Hugh C. *The Conquest of the Isthmus: The Men Who Are Building the Panama Canal—Their Daily Lives, Perils, and Adventures*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1909.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *With the Flag at Panama: A Story of the Building of the Panama Canal*. Boston: W. A. Wilde, 1911.
- Wexler, Laura. *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- "The White Man's Burden." *San Francisco Call*, 7 Feb. 1899, A8.



- White, Richard. *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.
- Wiebe, Robert H. *The Search for Order, 1877–1920*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1966.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *West from Home: Letters of Laura Ingalls Wilder, San Francisco, 1915*. New York: Harper Collins, 1974.
- Williams, Jesse Lynch. "The Color Scheme at the Panama-Pacific Exposition: A New Departure." *Scribner's Magazine* 56, no. 3 (1914): 277–89.
- Williams, William Appleman. *Empire as a Way of Life: An Essay on the Causes and Character of America's Present Predicament Along with a Few Thoughts About an Alternative*. Rev. ed. With an Introduction by Andrew Bacevich. New York: Ig Publishing, 2007.
- Wilson, John A. "Formidable Places: Building a Railroad in the Carriso [sic] Gorge." *Journal of San Diego History* 40, no. 4 (1994): 179–97.
- Winn, Frank L. "The Nicaragua Canal: Military Advantages to the United States." *Overland Monthly* 23, no. 137 (1894): 489–97.
- Winslow, Carleton Monroe. *The Architecture and the Gardens of the San Diego Exposition*. San Francisco: Paul Elder and Co., 1916.
- Woehlke, Walter V. "The Land of Sunny Homes." *Sunset Magazine*, Mar. 1915, 463–70.
- "Wonderful Pictorial Record of Every Phase of the World's Greatest Exposition, Gathered by Cardinell Vincent Co., Official Exposition Photographers." *California's Magazine* 2, no. 3 (1916): 257–61.
- Wood, Mary I. *The History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs*. New York: General Federation of Women's Clubs/Norwood Press, 1912.
- Worster, Donald. *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Wyndham, A. W. *The Panama Canal*. New York: Howard F. Curtis, 1907.
- Young Women's Christian Association. *Three Days At the Exposition, Compliments of the National Young Women's Christian Association*. San Francisco: A. Carlisle and Co, n.d., ca. 1915.