

“BLOODLUST BARBARIANS AND RIOTOUS HORDES”:
BOXERS, THE AMERICAN PRESS, AND U.S. IMPERIALISM IN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

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Scholarship on early US-China foreign policy primarily focuses on the economic aspects of the relationship such as the Open-Door Policy and the various 19th century Western treaties that secured trade rights for the United States following major conflicts in China such as the First Opium War and the Arrow War. While these elements are significant for the understanding of US-China relations, one impactful event is often overlooked, the American intervention during the Boxer Rebellion. This analysis focuses on how the American press was used as a tool to promote a representative narrative of the Boxers that justified the U.S. military in China. This decision represented a turning point in US-China relations, but was additionally a part of a larger foreign policy shift in the Pacific, primarily in the Philippines. The cultural study of American intervention during the Boxer Rebellion demonstrates how the promotion of a “noble cause” in China persuaded and justified the decision to intervene to American readers. This military action not only impacted China’s domestic situation, but also had a lasting effect on US-China relations until the Communist victory in 1949.

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Introduction

The last decade of the nineteenth century was undoubtedly significant for the United States domestically and abroad. The advancements in production and manufacturing technology coupled by the transnational transportation network allowed the U.S. economy to boom and expand. This expansion of the domestic market increasingly created a surplus, which incentivized the United States to look for overseas opportunity. The idea to expand overseas initiated domestic concerns regarding American foreign policy. Looking at European nations like Great Britain and France who acquired formal colonies across the globe, some political activists and members of the State Department feared that territorial gains for the sake of economic gain would lead to future imperialistic ambition. This fear was confirmed by the declaration of war on Spain and other events such as the annexation of Hawaii and the Philippine-American War. The correlation between seeking economic opportunity abroad and military intervention is evident in cases like Hawaii and the Philippines. But one location is often overlooked in the discussion of American expansionism, China.

Previous scholarship on early U.S. foreign policy towards China has focused primarily on the Open-Door Policy and the so-called “piggy backing” onto other Western nations’ policies following key conflicts in China such as the Opium War and the Arrow War. But the implications of America’s decision to become militarily involved in China during the Boxer Rebellion echo greater significance than previously mentioned by scholars. The act of deliberate military intervention reflected a shift in American foreign policy towards China. Before the Boxer Rebellion, the United States relied on legal, economic, and political methods to safeguard

the nation's interest in China. This changed when the United States decided to send thousands of troops to march on Beijing and partake in the occupation of the capital after the conflict.

Referring to how the decision was made to go to war in China, it can be answered by recognizing that the United States decided it was necessary to use a more aggressive interventionist policy in China to best protect economic interest.

Concentrating on the idea of a shifting policy towards China with a more interventionist approach, my study raises the question regarding why this shift occurred at the turn of the 19th century into the 20th century. My analysis will focus on how the media was used to reinforce and channel a narrative and representation of the Boxers that justified the use of military force in China. The durability of this narrative was repeated by multiple factions to sway public opinion during the latter half of the 19th century to promote a more interventionist approach in China. Each of these factions (religious leaders, economists, military theorists) used the American press and their own publications to voice their opinion to the American reader and the government before and after the conflict. These various ideological influencers also had a clear image of how they envisioned China's role during this time of America's rise as a global power. This phenomenon not only promoted, but justified the military intervention during the Boxer Rebellion. More specifically, this study focuses on the ways in which cultural representations of the Boxers and America's "noble cause" informed U.S. policies at home and abroad. This was accomplished through popular culture (newspapers, periodicals, cartoons), political discussion, and domestic opinion regarding representations of the Boxers and America's vision of future US-China relations.

It is also fruitful to examine the greater overseas expansion leading up to American military participation in the Boxer Uprising, primarily looking at the Philippines. The discourse

of media coverage on the Philippine-American War and the Boxer Rebellion share similar critical themes and discussions regarding America's role in the Pacific. Pro-war and anti-war promoters voiced their opinions regarding the Boxers and the Filipinos at length, even comparing them as one in the same in some cases. Additionally, after the Boxer Rebellion and the Philippine-American War, the United States introduced similar policies that sought to guide and "Americanize" educational reform in these two nations. This further expands the interventionist dilemma, through military and education, to include China and the Philippines.

Literature Review

One of the most significant works on the history of the Boxer Rebellion and the philosophy of history is Paul Cohen's *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth*. Rather than structuring his book within an argumentative framework, Cohen presents his study with three epistemologies that appear to the historian: the historian seeking to reconstruct and understand the past, makers of the past with their own historical consciousness, and those that can be considered myth-creators who from a future perspective are motivated by ambitions other than explaining the historic past. This is categorized as the "event" created by historians, the "experience" by those who lived it, and the "myth" that is created to serve future political goals. Although Cohen does not directly encourage the use of one category over the other or provide clear closure on these methodological issues, he encourages the historian to maintain a level of openness for interpretative possibilities and critical thinking regarding theoretical approaches to history. Cohen's structure for his book offers my study with a framework for analysis. The chapters of my project will incorporate Cohen's framework of the "myth" and "experience", using primarily American newspapers and other periodicals that

covered the conflict from the United States. Both of these frameworks will be used alongside each other throughout my study, interpreting sources that emerge during the time of the conflict, and after the liberation of the legations had ceded. Viewing the Boxer Uprising through this collection of lenses of experience and myth offers the reader multiple perspectives for how to perceive the history of the conflict. This will give my project greater depth for understanding and interpretation of sources.

Since my project focuses on US foreign policy towards China and ideas of representation, it is important to place events like the Boxer Uprising within context of the time and consider the “misinterpretations” of intentions that could potentially influence the discourse of the historiography. Louis Perez’s book, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography*, acknowledges these challenges of historiographic representation. Focusing on the Spanish American War in Cuba, Perez analyzes the complex relationship between the United States and Cuba and elaborates on the way “US policy paradigms of 1898” influenced contemporary accounts of the conflict and continued to shape historiographic representations throughout the 20th century. Although Perez offers a thorough analysis of US foreign policy during the Spanish American War, he seems to ignore other actors that could help shape the historiographical representation of the conflict. Such as economic interest, the military, social actors, etc. For my study, attention to historiographical representation and “Intervention and Intent” will be an integral part of my analysis.

One of the leading scholars during the twentieth century that challenged this stance was Michael H. Hunt in his book, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914*. Arranged in chronological and topical order, his analysis covers two main themes: the so-called “special relationship” that Americans felt as a unique status amongst other

Western nations in China, and the influence of American interest groups that supported a paternalistic and exploitive relationship towards the “uncivilized” Chinese. A key area in his study is the examination of social and political conditions that affected policy and practice, especially concerning immigration. Drawing on sources in both Chinese and English, his work offers an informative insight into both the domestic policies that influenced foreign policy and the multi-dimensional aspects of engagement between China and the United States. Although Hunt’s analysis provides great insight into the history of American foreign policy towards China, his scope of study is limited to the bilateral relationship between the US and China. Instead of focusing solely on the analysis of the two-sided relationship, my study will situate American foreign policy towards China within a larger framework of the Pacific. This regional scope of interest will allow me to analysis US-China foreign relations through a larger frame of American foreign policy actions that occurred during the last decade of the 19th century.

Sources and Methodology

The primary source material for this project are drawn largely from popular American newspapers, magazines, journal publications, etc. during the period between the last decade of the 19th century and early years of the 20th century. These sources can be interpreted to demonstrate the concerns and opinions of major publishers like *The New York Times*, and examine what the American reader was exposed to in terms of representing America’s “duty” in China and the Boxer crisis. Many of these periodicals are digitally archived online, and are easily accessible. For visual sources, propaganda cartoons such as *Harper’s Weekly*, *Puck*, and *Judge* can also be analyzed to further enrich the representations of the Boxer Rebellion by offering illustrations and drawings. Multiple examples of such cartoons showcase American

involvement in the Boxer Uprising and use sensationalism to influence what the American reader should think about the conflict and America's role. Several important figures like Mark Twain, Josiah Strong, and Alfred Thayer Mahan wrote extensively about American expansionism and their opinions regarding imperialism. Their writings provide multifaceted perspectives on the ideological discourse leading up to, and during the Boxer Rebellion.

The State Department's Office of the Historian has a considerable digitalized archive of materials concerning U.S. foreign policy. These records are categorized chronologically and separated by topic or geography. Sources include telegraphic correspondence and transcribed correspondence that pertain to the Boxer Uprising, and are titled according to who initiated the correspondence and who received it. These are useful sources for investigating how government officials, both in the United States and China, interpreted what was occurring in China at the time of the Boxer Rebellion through the decision to return the excess indemnity.

Chapter Outline

The first chapter of my thesis focuses on the ideological discourse in the two decades leading up to the turn of the century when the United States sent troops to intervene in the Boxer Rebellion. There are three main actors that are examined throughout the chapter analysis; religious figures, economists, and military theorists. Notable mentions for these groups are Josiah Strong, American diplomat to China Elihu Root, and Alfred Thayer Mahan. Each of these group of actors used the American press and their own writings to voice their opinions regarding America's worldview as a rising global power, and spoke of where China fit within their vision of the world. Not only was China's role significant in America's rise,

but deemed important enough for the United States to justify military force in the summer of 1900.

The second chapter examines the media representations and rhetoric of the Boxers and how sensationalism provoked a sense of rumor and panic to the American reader. Additionally, these same media outlets were used by Anti-Imperialists like Mark Twain to convey their anti-war reasonings and sentiments. It was a series of social debate, social persuasion, and sensationalism on behalf of pro-war supporters that ultimately swayed the public to intervene. This conclusively led to key figures in Washington deciding to participate, due to stories, representations, and pleas from pro-interventionist interest groups. Furthermore, some comparative analysis will be drawn between China and the Philippines. Both conflicts occurred within a few years of each other, and several political circles and academics drew comparisons between the two wars through the lens of American expansionism. Additionally, ideas of representations and American identity were questioned in the discussion of American intervention in both of these areas.

The third chapter of my thesis explores the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion and America's decision to establish the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship. Following the conclusion of the conflict, the United States was among the other foreign powers whom demanded that China pay an indemnity for the damages and costs of the Boxer Rebellion. While the historiographical narrative promotes the idea that the United States decided to return the excess indemnity out of goodwill and China happily accepted, the historical political records and periodicals from the first decade of the 20th century tell a very different story. The decision to return the indemnity was determined by years of tension, fluctuating relations,

constant discussion. It was by no means a simplistic black and white situation, but a series of negotiations founded on the basis of the United States acting in their own best interest.

Chapter 1: The Storm Before the Storm: Ideological Discourse and America's Vision of China

During the latter half of the 19th century, the United States experienced a series of significant transitions. Following the period of Reconstruction in the South, Americans continued to increasingly expand westward in search of financial opportunity and land ownership. This phenomenon was undoubtedly heavily credited by the creation of the transcontinental railroad, which generated a transportation network stretching across the continental United States. Non-state actors like merchants, missionaries, and sailors were active in the Pacific well before the completion of the transcontinental railroad, but this was a major project sponsored by the US government to solidify the two coasts for future domestic and overseas opportunity. As the Western United States began to develop more urbanized centers, industrialization rapidly grew and expanded primarily back in the East coast. The advancement in production and manufacturing technology coupled by the transnational transportation network allowed the U.S. economy to boom and expand, creating new social classes and industrial capabilities. Although this phenomenon benefited domestic economic potential, it came with questions of new opportunities and plans for where the United States should go next.

While the concern for America's economic future seemed to be the focus of this era, more significant questions emerged from this topic of economic interest. The demand for additional markets corresponded with America's concern regarding imperialism, in the form of acquiring territories abroad carried out by the military. Great Britain, France, and other Western powers were considered to be highly imperialistic due to their vast colonization of territories in Asia and Africa. Unlike certain European nation-states, the United States proudly boasted that

Americans were the promoters of freedom and democracy. However, this status as a freedom-loving nation was drastically challenged during the last decade of the 19th century. The formal conclusion of the Spanish-American War resulted in a newfound sense of nationalism and established the United States as a global power. The aftermath of the conflict also spurred the decision to annex Hawaii, claim former Spanish territories across the Pacific, and initiate the Philippine-American War. But before the United States became heavily militarily involved in the Pacific during the last couple years of the 19th century into the 20th century, crucial questions were asked by politicians, economists, and religious figures; what kind of power would the United States be and what obligations did it have for the rest of the world as a rising global power?

Revisionist historians of American foreign relations have greatly emphasized this period of American history as an era of empire, in which the United States used economic reasoning to incentivize the search for new markets located beyond the borders of the continental United States. One of the most profound scholars for this school of thought (known as the Wisconsin School of American diplomatic history) is William Appleman Williams. His book, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, characterizes the economic aspect of American foreign policy as being domestically dependent on the continual increase of overseas economic expansion.¹ The significant event for this period is the Crisis of the 1890s, in which a broad support network for economic overseas expansion was initiated to recover from the domestic economic depression.² Sharing a similar approach to Williams is Walter LaFeber, who emphasized in his book *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion 1860-1898* that economic factors caused and

¹ William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W.

² *Ibid.*, 29-30.

resulted in land and commercial expansion.³ A couple decades after the publication of the above-mentioned books, historians of American foreign relations broadened their analytical framework beyond the narrow scope of economic forces in the last decade of the 19th century. While economic factors cannot be ignored in the historiography, other influential elements such as culture and ideology were included in the historical discussion of American expansion.

In her book, *Spreading the American Dream*, Emily S. Rosenberg uses the term Liberal-Developmentalism to describe the latter half of the 19th century. Liberal-Developmentalism caused the promotion of the American dream of advanced technology and mass consumption, by “elevating the beliefs and experiences of America’s unique historical time and circumstance into developmental laws thought to be applicable everywhere”.⁴ Three key points are taken from Rosenberg’s work to describe the period leading up to 1900; the emphasis on the importance of free trade, the promotion of the ideal world being an extensive open market, and the positioning of private Americans playing a more significant role than government policymakers regarding America’s obligation to the world.⁵ Another paramount historian that expanded upon the historiography of American foreign relations is Michael Hunt, whose book *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* outlined three themes of American thinking that shaped American diplomacy during the 18th, 19th, and 20th century. The primary focus of this work highlights the importance of beliefs and ideology in U.S. foreign relations. His argument is central to this chapter’s analysis due to his emphasis of ideology in foreign relations during the 19th century. As he states,

³ Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion 1860-1898* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), xxxii.

⁴ Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 7.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

“the roots of ideology should leave room for noneconomic impulses, in particular those stemming from racial or ethnic identity, strong nationalist preoccupations, an evangelical faith, and pronouncedly regional concerns”.⁶ Rather than focusing almost exclusively on economic factors like William Appleman Williams and William LaFaber, Hunt offers an in-depth outlook on the usage of ideology and how public rhetoric was used as a form of communication, full of symbolism and mythology that was closely monitored by specific rules.⁷

The correlation between ceasing economic opportunity abroad, ideology, and military activity has been heavily studied for the period between 1890 to the 20th century. This chapter examines the ideological discourse that occurred primarily from the 1880s up until the American decision to intervene in the Boxer Rebellion in the year 1900. As William LaFeber commented on the years prior to 1890, “These years provided the roots of empire, not the fruit. The fruit of empire would not appear until the 1890’s...”.⁸ The ideological fruit of empire grew from the likes of prominent figures who published. As I demonstrate throughout this chapter, policymakers and government officials were heavily influenced by the publications of these individuals. It is important to establish the context in which these influential figures viewed the Pacific and more specifically, China. But one action is often overlooked in the discussion of America’s rise as a global power, America’s decision to militarily intervene during the Boxer Rebellion. Even before the United States decided to send troops to suppress the Boxers, various influential Americans were already discussing where China fit within their respective outlook of the world as America was rising to become a global power. Religious leaders, economists, and

⁶ Michael Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 12.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁸ LaFeber, 61.

military theorists all had visions for where China fit within their worldview of a globally dominant America. Domestic opinion in the United States debated whether or not to pursue these goals abroad, but eventually the pro-imperialist supporters won the superiority. The presidential decision to send troops to China during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 resulted from ideological, religious, and economic ambitions that were popularized prior to the Boxer attacks. These ideologically driven ideas concerning the future of the United States and where China fit within this vision were so persuasive, that when the time came when Boxers were reportedly endangering these ambitions, the decision to militarily intervene was not only justified, but necessary.

Anglo-Saxon Superiority and the Expansion of Civilization

Within a global context, the last few decades of the 19th century contained several examples of active Western expansionism to extend influence around the world. Regions in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific were highly contested by Western powers seeking new colonies and territories. Most instances consisted of political and economic goals, using the military as a primary source of power to accomplish their objectives. But these acts of expansion and imperialism were driven by an underlying ideological motive. Social Darwinism was one of the most dominant modes of ideological discourse during the latter half of the 19th century that supported a hierarchy of races and a “survival of the fittest” mentality for geopolitics. This theory categorized humans in a similar manner that Charles Darwin did plants and animals during his time in the Galapagos Islands and through his publication of *The Origins of Species* in 1859. Ideas of natural selection and survival of the fittest were applied to world civilizations,

including the promotion of a global racial hierarchy with the Anglo-Saxon civilization being the dominant race in a new transitional era of human history.

Recognition and pride in Anglo-Saxon heritage began to take hold during the first half of the 19th century, as Americans placed themselves within a trans-Atlantic community with the British as fellow English-speaking peoples.⁹ The latter half of the 19th century however, used racial theories such as Darwinism to further bolster their racial recognition and reference to others. Americans now thought of themselves as a race in comparative and competitive terms, and to find themselves in an Anglo-Saxon community of interests.¹⁰ That is why imperialists in the United States and Western Europe called upon Darwinism to defend the subjugation of weaker races, often referencing *The Origin of Species*, which referred in its subtitle to *The Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life*.¹¹ Through this classification of race with the Anglo-Saxons being the superior, the question begged as to how the white race should interact with lesser races. With this dominant position, responsibility to the rest of the world's "inferior races" became a popular discussion. The main conclusion was that this theory reinforced the lucrative idea that existing social and racial hierarchies were indeed "natural" and inevitably destined to be strengthened on a global scale for the future.¹² Leading up to the turn of the twentieth-century, religious leaders, economists, and military activists in the United States

⁹ Hunt, 77-78.

¹⁰ Hunt, 79.

¹¹ Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1955), 171.

¹² Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 83.

voiced their own opinion concerning America's "duty" as a rising power and their global positioning as an Anglo-Saxon civilization.

Central to the ideas of racial theories was the concept of "duty". The slogan "duty determines destiny" was used famously by William McKinley, and proved to be a useful tool to employ when the operative scope of destiny was a bit hazy.¹³ One of the most influential writers who outlined the Anglo-Saxon sense of "duty" was Rudyard Kipling. Kipling was a famous British novelist, writer, and poet during the 19th and 20th century. In addition to writing critically acclaimed short stories and poems, he wrote one of the most controversial pieces of imperialist literary works; "The White Man's Burden". "The White Man's Burden" is a short piece of writing that describes the obligations of the white race and its responsibility to civilize those who are incapable of national progress and development. The poem was actually written in response to America's war in the Philippines and offered guidance as to how the United States should move forward in its island conquests.¹⁴ The poem consists of several stanzas, but one in particular strikes a serious chord regarding war and peace. It reads, "take up the White Man's burden, the savage ways of peace, fill full the mouth of Famine, and bid the sickness cease; And when your goal is nearest (the end for others sought), watch sloth and heathen folly, bring all your hope to nought".¹⁵ The first two lines of this stanza reference the justification of war as a way of achieving peace and future civilization. That it is a part of the white man's burden, to initiate war if necessary, in order to further progress the development of lesser peoples and civilizations. War in this sense can almost be thought of as a necessarily evil in order to attain

¹³ Ibid., 86.

¹⁴ Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden," *The San Francisco Call*, February 05, 1899, Sunday Edition ed., accessed June 30, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>.

¹⁵ Ibid.

the greater good. That is why he continues to write “and when your goal is nearest...watch sloth and heathen folly...”. It refers to the “backwardness” of civilization, heathen ways full of negative characteristics that will progress towards Western reform once victory is achieved. This poem proved to be one key example of how the United States should carry out its duty to the world. To do one’s duty is simply to do right, so duty was difficult to oppose in the abstract.¹⁶

Global Conversion: Anglo-Saxon Christendom
and the Rise of Christian Progress

Ideological discourse of Anglo-Saxon superiority was also discussed by religious leaders, who synthesized these ideas of domination and expansion to reinforce their own agenda for global proselytization projects. In the 1890s, America’s mission included Protestant Christianity as a spiritual precondition for modernization.¹⁷ One of the most prominent and vociferous religious leaders who drove this rhetoric was Reverent Josiah Strong. Reverent Strong was the secretary of the Evangelical Society of the United States in 1885, when he wrote his most popular book *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*. Soon after this book was published, it sold 175,000 copies in English alone, and was used primarily to raise funds for future missions.¹⁸ In his writings, Strong was interested in global Christianity and the economic expansion that came with it. Although Strong shared similar concerns with Frederick Jackson Turner’s Frontier Thesis (which emphasized the demand for a new frontier with the closing of the internal frontier), Strong demanded a roaring Protestant missionary charge which would

¹⁶ Anderson, 88.

¹⁷ Rosenberg, 8.

¹⁸ Hofstadter, 178.

conquer the American West for Christians and then use the continent as a home base for overpowering the world.¹⁹ For Strong, wealth was synonymous with power, and a progressive civilization will be represented by wealth and its desire for an increasing amount. He writes, “As civilization increases, wealth has more meaning, and money a larger representative power...with the growth of civilization, therefore, money will be an ever-increasing power, and the object of ever-increasing desire...the love of money is the besetting sin of commercial peoples, and runs in the very blood of Anglo-Saxons, who are the great wealth-creators of the world”.²⁰ Even though material possessions and insatiable desires for money was seen as a Christian sin to individuals like Reverent Strong, he views it as an integral genetic component of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. During the 1893 Columbian Exposition, John Fiske (who spoke at the Congress of Evolution), applauded Anglo-Saxon productivity as well as the global extension of American institutions and industrial civilization, including Protestant Christianity.²¹ According to William Appleman Williams, economic expansion and desire for wealth coincided with religious ideas for remaking the world. As with economic and political leaders, missionaries decided that what was good for Americans was also good for underdeveloped foreigners who required the change and guidance of the United States.²² It was during this time in the 1890s that Strong was credited with introducing a religious version of manifest destiny that was imperialist at a moment when

¹⁹ LaFeber, 72.

²⁰ Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1885), 115.

²¹ Rosenberg, 8.

²² Williams, 63-64.

the old continental vision was beginning to dwindle.²³ Part of the greatness of the Anglo-Saxon civilization was its ability to economically prosper, and with an increasing appetite to acquire more and more wealth, power domination throughout the world would rightfully follow.

Moreover, Strong focused on the duties of the church, and highlighted the importance of the expansion of Anglo-Saxon supremacy to be carried out with Christian virtues. Another influential book written by Strong is *The New Era or Coming Kingdom*. This text was written after the publication of *Our Country*, and includes similar themes of Christian universal conquest and elitist characteristics of Anglo-Saxon civilization. From his perspective, Christianity is a necessary mechanizing tool for the spread of Anglo-Saxon progress across the world. “We have seen that the Anglo-Saxon is accumulating irresistible power with which to press the die of his civilization upon the world. But this die is by no means completely cut as yet and fit for its work. Our civilization is only partially Christianized. And it is this fact which accounts for the existence of the great problems which vex modern society and shame our best wisdom”.²⁴ Christianity is a driving force for global progression, and an imperative component for this new era of civilization.

This rise of the cult of Anglo-Saxonism boasted itself as the top civilization in this transitional period in human history. This Darwinist attitude supported the belief in Anglo-Saxon racial superiority that many American thinkers obsessed over in the latter half of the nineteenth-century. This discourse of racial theory spanned religious beliefs, political science,

²³ Stephanson, 79.

²⁴ Josiah Strong, *The New Era, or The Coming Kingdom* (New York: The Baker & Taylor CO., 1893; repr., New York: The Regina Press, 1975), 81. Citations are to the reprinted edition.

history, and eventually biology.²⁵ But most of these academic disciplines drew their analytical framework from the scientific principles of Darwin. E.A. Freeman wrote his book *Comparative Politics* in 1874 and stated, “a political constitution is a specimen to be studied, classified, and labeled, as a building or an animal is studied, classified, and labeled by those to whom buildings or animals are objects of study”.²⁶

Through this scientific analytical framework, what made the Anglo-Saxon civilization so superior was its ability to combine the best qualities from past civilizations, most predominantly the Greeks and the Romans. These two civilizations were viewed as the pinnacles of past world civilizations. The intellectualism and freedom of the Greeks and the organization and government of the Romans served as a historical platform from which historians during the nineteenth-century referenced civilizational progress. That is why the latter half of the nineteenth-century was seen by scholars and government officials as a transition era, the era of the Anglo-Saxon civilization. While some religious leaders included the Hebrews as a boastful civilization for religious accomplishments, all three were belief to be manifested in the Anglo-Saxons. Josiah Strong commented that, “the miracle is that these three supreme characteristics are all united in one and the same race. Here is a race which unites the Greek individualism with the Roman genius for organization-the only race in history which has emphasized either of these two great principles without, in large degree, sacrificing it to the other”.²⁷ The pavement for justified expansion was validated by the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon civilization. Without

²⁵ Hofstadter, 172-73.

²⁶ Hofstadter, 173.

²⁷ Strong, 69-70.

the guidance and tutelage of the Anglo-American race, the rest of the world would not be able to reach sufficient progress.

How did American religious leaders perceive China during this transitional period of a rising Anglo-Saxon civilization? American Protestant missionaries had been coming to China since the 1830s, with Elijah Colman Bridgman being the first American missionary to China. Part of the reason why these Protestant missionaries wished to go to China was because they wanted to influence and alter the world view of the Chinese.²⁸ The China that these missionaries had envisioned before their arrival was compromised by the reality of what they saw once they immersed themselves throughout China's cities and villages. The inspiration to convert Chinese "pagans" to Christianity also included the desire to introduce the teachings of Western civilization, which would reform China towards a progressive nation. By the mid-1830s, some missionaries even began to supplement their religious publications with secular materials that offered a vision of the West, with the intention of impressing Chinese readers.²⁹ Just like the writings of Josiah Strong, missionaries like Bridgman believed that the key to progress was leadership from the Anglo-Saxon race joined with the Christian faith. As Fred Drake noted in his chapter *Protestant Geography in China*, "slumbering China awaited the Christian kiss".³⁰ In the 1890s, the organization and intensity of American Protestant missionaries in China changed drastically. Organizations like the Student Volunteer Movement of the YMCA formed in the 1880s and chose China as their main target, mostly due to the pure size of the population and the

²⁸ Fred W. Drake, "Protestant Geography in China: E.C. Bridgman's Portrayal of the West," in *Christianity in China: Early Missionary Writings*, ed. Suzanne Wilson Barnett and John King Fairbank, 89-106 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 90.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 93.

potential for mass Christian conversion.³¹ The distribution of religious material also reflected the attitudes of racial destiny and Anglo-Saxon superiority, arguing that racial and cultural virtues were transferable.³² If racial ideology was fused into religious doctrine, then China was a prime candidate for the expansion of Western civilization. Evangelizing the many millions of Chinese was regarded as an obligation, and righteous duty on behalf of the Anglo-Saxon Christendom.³³

The Last Prize to Conquer: Attitudes of American

Economic Opportunity in China

The expansion of American commercial interest and involvement in the Pacific during the latter half of the nineteenth-century was unparalleled from earlier periods of U.S. trade in the region. The first explanation for this phenomenon is the sheer size of domestic productivity had drastically increased the demand for overseas markets. The second reason pertaining specifically to China has been analyzed by historians such as Michael Hunt, William Appleman Williams, Walter LaFeber, and Thomas McCormick as the Open-Door Policy. The Open-Door Policy can be described as a strategic foreign policy stance that was advocated by intellectuals, businessmen, and politicians in the 1890s who were opposed to traditional colonialism but favored a method of an open door through which America's economic might would enter and dominate all underdeveloped areas of the world.³⁴ According to Michael Hunt the end of the 1890s saw a drastic transformation in the Open-Door Policy due to groups of publicists and popularizers

³¹ Rosenberg, 29.

³² Rosenberg, 28.

³³ Strong, 357-58.

³⁴ Williams, 45.

(namely W.W. Rockhill, Charles Denby, Henry Cabot Lodge, Josiah Strong, and Alfred Thayer Mahan) who stepped forward on this transition to bring the message of the open door stance to a wider audience calling for action to preserve the Open-Door policy.³⁵ Both Hunt and McCormick also acknowledge the troubles and risks of China's domestic situation in the 1890s that called for significant American involvement. Politicians were nervous over Russia's ambitions in North China and Manchuria, carving out territories in China.³⁶ As demonstrated by McCormick, American companies like Baldwin Locomotive, Bethlehem Iron, Cramp and Company, and the American Development Company were issued concessions for railroads and mining that relied on the "openness" of China to continue to profit and assist China in its quest to modernize.³⁷ To these American businessmen and politicians, the Open-Door policy was essential for achieving America's interests and preventing China from total Western control. China was the main and decisive scene in the struggle for control of world civilization, and required the moral and material uplift that could be provided by the United States.³⁸

Geographically speaking, China's coast was seen by businessmen and politicians to be facing towards America's Pacific coast. Nineteenth-century conquest from the East coast to the West coast of the United States secured America's position to be in closer proximity to China. This led to the conclusion amongst diplomats and statesmen that China is practically America's

³⁵ Michael Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 177.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Thomas McCormick, *China Market: America's Quest for Informal Empire 1893-1901* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1967), 71-72.

³⁸ Hunt, 177.

“back door”.³⁹ It was also understood that China’s coast, which was the commercial hub for trade, was accessible only by seaports. Extensive maritime networks of global trade were at unprecedented levels during this period, and especially with the geographic nature of China, Western nations had to rely on ports for coastal or inland trade. The construction of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 made it possible for manufactured goods and resources to be transported from the East coast to West coast, allowing trade with China to be much easier than it had been before. This incentivized the United States to further press its ambitions to trade with the Middle Kingdom.

Territorial colonization of other regions in the world were also seen as motivation for the United States to look towards China, to avoid further competition from European powers who had already formally claimed places in Africa, South America, and parts of Asia. Especially in Asia, American diplomats like Truxton Beale felt that Europeans were still chasing the eighteenth-century “ignis fatuus” of establishing colonies for exclusive markets.⁴⁰ From this perspective, China was seen as the last stronghold for free market opportunity in Asia. Although China was not formally colonized in its entirety, it is interesting that American policymakers and diplomats still considered China a “free” entity. Several Western-initiated military conflicts in China during the nineteenth-century resulted in numerous unequal treaties which further perpetuated Western dominance along the coast and Chinese inland. These treaties included the forceful opening of more trading ports, extraterritorial rights for Westerners, and concessions to foreign powers. While it is true that the opportunity to trade in China was very appealing and

³⁹ Truxton Beale. "Strategical Value of the Philippines." *The North American Review* 166, no. 499 (1898): 759-60. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25119026>. (accessed February 17, 2019).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

did not exist as an exclusive market to any one nation, Americans like Beale seem to ignore the fact that the present market situation in China was not the result of a free willing and consensual agreement with the West.

Economic incentives for manufacturing and trade was additionally included as a lucrative gain for American producers. US minister to China, Charles Denby Jr., sent a message to the State Department in 1887 explaining how American manufacturers and producers would be ignorant not to take advantage of the Chinese market. He cites hardware as an example, describing how Chinese hardware is inferior and American manufacturers could take advantage of this by selling superior quality products at a competing price.⁴¹ His overall economic impression of China was that it was incapable of supplying itself with the products that American manufacturers were eager to sell. Additionally, China was ripe with opportunity for enriching the United States. In an article titled, *America's Opportunity in Asia*, he says "...the prosperity are there waiting for the railroads to come to them. The commercial activity which good communications will create is inconceivable. If to the Empire of China, with its vast population, its vast territory, its limitless resources, the electric spark of American enterprise could be communicated, the trade that would spring into existence would surpass all the records of history".⁴² Enthusiastic individuals like Charles Denby Jr. envisioned a grand China that would welcome American goods into their markets, and serve as an endless vessel into which American manufacturers could continuously pour their products.

⁴¹ "Our Trade With China," *The New York Times*, September 25, 1887, <https://www.nytimes.com/1887/09/25/archives/our-trade-with-china.html> (accessed February 18, 2019).

⁴² Charles Denby Jr., "America's Opportunity in Asia." *The North American Review* 166, no. 494 (1898): 32-39. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25118938>.

All of these factors lead to the conclusion that a rising American power viewed China as a beacon for prosperous economic trade. Multiple factors led American statesmen and manufacturers to this realization. Geographically, China was in close proximity to the West coast of the United States. The only barrier between the two nations was the Pacific Ocean, which was viewed as a highway rather than an obstacle in this new era of naval prioritization and maritime expansion.⁴³ China was also regarded as a free market, whose trading ports were not subjected to one nation's monopolized trading rights and therefore open with endless opportunity. Lastly, officials were confident that the Chinese would welcome American products. Not only would American manufactured goods be well-received, Americans were convinced that China needed them. Even if Americans felt that China was backward in its civilization, there was still hope for a rewarding future. Railroads, infrastructure, and industrialization were all recognized as necessary advancements that the Chinese people needed. It would provide both the United States and China with mutually beneficial progression. This mentality initiates the belief that China and a rising American power have a strong symbiotic relationship. As the United States export economy continues to expand, the Chinese would gain significant advantages and grow as well. This phenomenon would be a win-win for both nations involved. In the words of American diplomats like Charles Denby Jr., all the United States had to do was realize the situation and act on it.⁴⁴

The Rise of the New Navy: Attitudes in Support of

Naval Expansion as a Means of Securing Commercial Opportunity Abroad

⁴³ Ibid., 32.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 39.

Highlighting the importance of the sea as a highway for commercial opportunity strongly incentivized the construction of a strong naval force. Not only would this advanced navy be used to project its presence and influence beyond the boundaries of the continental United States, but also defend its economic interest with the deployment of modern warships. Following the American Civil War, the United States did not appear to have a sufficient navy that could compete with other world powers. One of the first major supporters of the construction of a modern navy was Navy Secretary William H. Hunt, who appealed to Congress in 1882 to provide funds for the Navy to build modern ships.⁴⁵ His efforts to convince Congress did not succeed, but Congress did permit the construction of protected cruisers the following year. Protected cruisers were not what the United States needed though. For some naval enthusiasts, the United States needed to construct steel-armored battleships. These ships would be crucial for the protection of American overseas interests and military capabilities. This era of the “New Navy” in the late nineteenth-century was heavily supported by men like the Secretary of the Navy under president Benjamin Harrison, who deemed steel battleships as absolutely necessary for the United States to become a global power.

In a report to Congress in 1889, Benjamin F. Tracy began by introducing a chart that outlined the number of armored, unarmored, and total warships currently active by the top eleven nations. Ranking at the top was England and France, followed by Austria and Sweden/Norway at the bottom. Interestingly, China was ranked 9th in his list of data. The United States, according to Secretary Tracy, did not possess the naval capabilities to defend itself by examining the numbers. It simply did not have the quantity needed in the event of a conflict. The number

⁴⁵ Embracing Steel: In 1880s Navy Transitions from Iron Ships (Naval History and Heritage Command, 2014), <https://usnhistory.navylive.dodlive.mil/2014/11/07/embracing-steel-in-1880s-navy-transitions-from-iron-ships/> (accessed March 22, 2019).

of authorized completed ships in 1889 consisted of eleven armored ships (only three of which were battleships) and thirty-one unarmored ships.⁴⁶ Tracy follows up his data statement by voicing that this New Navy should be for defensive purposes, but his explanation for the remainder of the report gives off a more intrusive tone. “The defense of the United States absolutely requires the creation of a fighting force”.⁴⁷ This proclamation echoes the attitude of naval enthusiasts who supported the ideal that a strong naval presence would enable the United States to exploit commercial opportunity and secure it by force. The beacon of admiration looked towards the British Empire, whose colonial history and economic success in various parts of the world had been dependent on the efficiency of its navy. If the United States wanted the recognition from other nations to be seen as a global power, a modern navy with state-of-the-art warships was absolutely necessary. The use of the term “modern” in this context was relative to the strength and effectiveness of other nations’ navies, with the United States striving to beat out the competition.

These new upgrades to the United States Navy were met with great support and admiration from the American public. Congress passed a bill in 1890 known as the Battleship Act to fund the construction of “three sea-going coast-line battle ships designed to carry the heaviest armor and most powerful ordnance”.⁴⁸ These additions would go into effect the following year, and the first modern warships were named the USS Texas, USS Maine, and

⁴⁶ Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy to Congress*, U.S. Capital Visitor Center (Washington, DC: U.S. Capital Visitor Center, October 1889), <https://www.visitthecapitol.gov/exhibitions/artifact/report-secretary-navy-congress-secretary-navy-benjamin-f-tracy-october-15-1889> (accessed March 20, 2019).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁸ Naval Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1891 (Battleship Act of 1890), U.S. Capital Visitor Center (Washington, DC: U.S. Capital

Armored Cruiser No. 2. One of the most commendable characteristics of these ships was that they were truly American in terms of their construction and upkeep. Before this congressional act, the United States Navy relied on Great Britain for the outfitting of steel warships. As one article in the *New York Times* commented, this was problematic because “the breaking out of war between England and this country would place all our arsenals and stations of supplies in the hands of the enemy...the loss of such arsenals would be ruinous if not fatal”.⁴⁹ In this sense, the United States was now completely self-sufficient for its naval maintenance and construction. Once these ships were completed, testing began in the Pacific and the Atlantic to assess the limitations of these vessels in terms of distance. Whether or not Secretary Tracy directly mentioned this to Congress, this New Navy was being consciously constructed for long-distance military capabilities.

The testing of these armor-clad vessels in the Pacific and the Atlantic did not go unnoticed by European powers. Foreign newspapers were shocked and surprised at the newest additions to the United States Navy, since opinions of the American navy before had been filled with sarcasm and mockery.⁵⁰ The fascination with America’s New Navy even drew the attention of top members of the British Navy, so much so that individuals like Mr. J.H. Biles (a highly respected English naval architect) went to visit several naval yards in the United States to examine the quality and the process for constructing these new warships. At a meeting of the Institute of Naval Architects, Mr. Biles gave a speech commending the New Navy of America.

⁴⁹ “The New American Navy: A Bright Outlook for the Year Just Begun,” *The New York Times*, January 03, 1890, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1890/01/03/106037279.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2019).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

His overall commentary was that the United States is now in the process of constructing a navy that is equal, and in some regards, surpasses anything that could be found in Europe.⁵¹ While some vessels could be found in Europe, others were viewed as innovative and mechanically advanced. One example of this was the newly constructed USS Vesuvius. The Vesuvius was inspected with great interest by Mr. Biles, who deemed this vessel as exclusively an American production.⁵² He described the dynamite guns equipped on the ship as extremely unique for naval architecture, and “one that would probably mark an epoch in naval warfare”.⁵³ The United States was so proud of its most recent constructions that the United States Navy decided to host an exhibit at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. A replica of the USS Illinois was showcased on the Great Lakes and permitted guests to tour the ship above and below deck.⁵⁴ Although this was a replica of the real ship built out of bricks and wood, the message was clear; the United States wanted to advertise and flaunt its New Navy to the rest of the world. A new period in U.S. naval history had begun, and will soon prove to be very valuable for assisting the United States in the Pacific.

The most dominant individual for leading this new discourse of military strategy and theory was Alfred Thayer Mahan. Mahan was a prominent nineteenth-century historian, naval officer, and strategist. He wrote extensively on the importance of sea power and contemporary

⁵¹ “Praise for Our New Navy,” *The New York Times*, March 20, 1891, <https://www.nytimes.com/1891/03/20/archives/praise-for-our-new-navy-an-english-naval-architect-on-american.html> (accessed March 28, 2019).

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Donald L. Miller, “The White City,” *American Heritage*, July/August 1993, <https://www.americanheritage.com/white-city> (accessed March 28, 2019).

geopolitics. While serving as the president of the United States Naval War College and as a naval lecturer, Mahan published his most significant book, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783*. In this book he argued that the success of the British Empire was due to its command of the seas and the decline of rival European power's naval supremacy, these two factors led to the global political, economic, and military dominance of Great Britain.⁵⁵ This argument as to why the British was so successful was widely supported and accepted by the United States military. It was actually Mahan's book that inspired the concept of the "New Navy" and Secretary Tracy's decision to appeal to Congress for the construction of state-of-the-art battleships. In his book Mahan also greatly acknowledged the need for new markets beyond the borders of the continental United States. His solution for commercial success abroad was simple, the United States required an efficient merchant fleet for transport, armored vessels for protection, and various stations for refuel to support the continuation of overseas trade and transportation. While this was not a new idea for the United States, it was Mahan first book that greatly resonated with policymakers and militarists who were already supporting the same ideas of expansionism and commerce.

During the Spanish-American War, Mahan published a series of essays that reflected his views on international relations and the geopolitics in Asia. The collection of essays known as *The Problem of Asia*, refer both to U.S. involvement in the Pacific and the future of China. He states that, "for the problem of Asia is a world problem, which has come upon the world in an age when, through the rapidity of communication, it is wide awake and sensible as never

⁵⁵ Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History: Securing International Markets in the 1890s* (Washington, DC: United States Department of State), <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/mahan> (accessed March 28, 2019).

before...”.⁵⁶ One of the reasons that Mahan concentrates so heavily on China is because of the nation’s momentous size and potential. He argues that a nation with over four hundred million people, under one effective political organization, and equipped with modern technology, will go far in determining the future of the world.⁵⁷ But one of the main problems with Asia, specifically the Chinese, is that the East does not progress.⁵⁸ He further describes the Chinese civilization as being “backwards” and “immobile”. In order to achieve progress and civilization, China must reform from within on the basis of commerce and intellectual interaction with the United States, including the support by U.S. military intervention if necessary, to produce this developmental advancement of higher races.⁵⁹

Conclusion

The war in the Philippines was already underway, but several members of McKinley’s cabinet were ready to commit further military personnel to the war in China. In a series of communications between the Secretary of State and the President, Hay suggested this message to be sent to foreign representatives on behalf of McKinley, “in aiding to prevent a spread of the disorders to other provinces of the Empire and a recurrence of such disasters, it is...to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace to China...protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the

⁵⁶ A. T. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia and Its Effect Upon International Policies* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1900), 19.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 176-77.

principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire.”⁶⁰ The messages between the Secretary of State and the President specifically mention the treaty of 1858 with China, which was the treaty in which several Western nations were able to obtain rights in China that Great Britain had won through military force. The details of the agreement put Western powers, including the United States, at an immense economic and political advantage in China.

The message between Secretary of State Hay and President McKinley strongly resemble the attitudes shared by religious, economic, and military personnel during the last two decades of the 19th century. Just like the policymakers in Washington, each of these fields of interests had a significant place for China in America’s future. For religious figures, China had ample opportunities for converts, and the nationalistic sentiment of the religious teachings coincided with ideas of expansion and American-directed progress. For economists, the China market was not only the dream destination for profit, but the dream was now a neighbor across the ocean now that the continental United States was secured. Military theorists and naval enthusiasts like Alfred Thayer Mahan and Secretary Tracy had the solution for securing overseas markets and commercial opportunity abroad. The New Navy was designed to allow the United States to go out into the Pacific, and support a network of trade for commercialism and defense of American interests. As we shall see in the next chapter, the killings of Christians by Boxers proved to be another significant motivating factor for military involvement in China by the American press. But the principles of these foundational ideas and visions of China correspond with the additional motives. The emphasize here lies in the strong desire for the United States to protect the nation’s interests in China, even if it means going to war.

⁶⁰ Lewis L Gould, *The Presidency of William McKinley* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1983), 222.

Chapter 2: “Is This Imperialism?”: Rumor Panic, Rhetoric, and Visual Representations during the Boxer Rebellion

“In this hour of peril and through trials that shall follow, we must remember that we are a Christian as well as a commercial nation. We are a moral as well as a material force. We are a civilizing as well as an exploiting agency. This is a supreme test in the competition of nations, in a struggle where the principle of the survival of the fittest has its stern and cruel application. Possibly now, as China and the allied nations of the world are in deadly struggle in North China, whether with riotous hordes or government forces, our Anglo-Saxon race, our Anglo-Saxon religions, our Anglo-Saxon systems of society and government are at stake. We cannot, therefore, quail before our responsibility. There is no question of imperialism or expansion involved other than that of the salvation and extension of our race and our institutions”

- “America’s Duty in China” by John Barrett,

written in *The North American Review* August 1900

The event known as the Boxer Rebellion was an armed uprising led by peasant youth originating in the plains of Northern China between 1898-1901. Prior to 1900, bands of Chinese “Boxers” (as labeled by the Western press) had been committing violent acts towards foreign missionaries and Chinese Christians. As numbers of followers and killings increased in May of 1900, the Boxer movement had spread to Beijing, where foreign dignitaries, diplomats, and in some cases their families were besieged within the foreign legations. It wasn’t until June 1900 that members of the Eight Nation Alliance sent troops to China to lift the siege on the foreign

legations, and eventually rescue those trapped inside on August 14th, 1900.⁶¹ Historians focusing on the Boxer Rebellion have analyzed its origins and significance in a number of ways. John Esherick's book *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising* argued that the origins of the conflict stemmed from socioeconomic ecology and the popular culture in a particular region in the North China plain.⁶² Historian David J. Silbey demonstrates a military history of the Boxer Rebellion, stating that the victory of the armies of the Eight-Nation Alliance was not inevitable and the cohesion of the Alliance was trivial throughout the conflict.⁶³ A last significance work is from Paul A. Cohen, who provides a multifaceted account of the Boxer Rebellion as event, experience, and myth. Historians of U.S. foreign policy or Sino-American relations such as Michael Hunt, Warren Cohen, William Appleman Williams, and Walter LaFeber gloss over the Boxer Rebellion throughout their works, but do not analyze the conflict in depth in comparison to the Open-Door Policy. The common description of the Boxer Rebellion by these historians is that the American intervention during the Boxer Rebellion was to preserve an Open-Door Policy that would otherwise be threatened if the other Western nations were charged with suppressing the uprising.⁶⁴

While this conviction may be true, the purpose of this chapter is to examine the press media, political cartoons, and myth-making of the Boxers. The cultural history surrounding the

⁶¹ Members of the Eight-Nation Alliance include: The United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Japan, Russia.

⁶² Daniel H. Bays, review of *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, by Joseph W. Esherick, *The American Historical Review*, February 1989, https://www.jstor.org/eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/stable/1862207?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

⁶³ David J. Sibley, *The Boxer Rebellion and the Great Game in China* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), 231-32.

⁶⁴ Hunt, 197.

Boxers and American involvement in the Boxer Rebellion has not been studied by historians of Sino-American relations or U.S. foreign relations. Several historians have studied the cultural history of the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War such as Bonnie M. Miller's *From Liberation to Conquest: The Visual and Popular Cultures of the Spanish-American War of 1898* which focuses on the notion of exploring the interaction of a wide array of cultural forms in the promotion of war and empire as spectacle.⁶⁵ Additionally, Louis A. Perez Jr.'s book *The War of 1898: The United States & Cuba in History & Historiography* provides an excellent lens for which to view the Boxer Rebellion as a crucial element for the United States' to solidify its economic goals of an Open-Door Policy while promoting a "moral cause" justification for intervention. Perez analyzes the *Maine* as a critical component for rendering the war as a mission "inspired by noble intentions, a selfless undertaking to liberate..."⁶⁶ Through the analysis of domestic press coverage and political cartoons, one can see the promoted noble intentions and "just cause" mentality of news reports and visuals. The media was also a tool for those opposed to American troops participating in the Boxer Rebellion. Spokesmen for the Anti-Imperialists League like Mark Twain were heavily active in voicing their opposition to the conflict through the publication of articles and interviews. It is significant for the historiography of the Boxer Rebellion to analyze the cultural elements of the conflict, through which the promotion of spectacle and opposition to involvement in the press were influential for the American reader.

⁶⁵ Bonnie Miller, *From Liberation to Conquest: The Visual and Popular Cultures of the Spanish-American War of 1898* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), ProQuest Ebook Central (Accessed May 30, 2019).

⁶⁶ Louis A. Perez Jr., *The War of 1898: The United States & Cuba in History & Historiography* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 114.

According to the American press, it was predominantly the endangerment of missionaries that called for the United States' military intervention in China. Starting in 1897, newspapers across America were beginning to report about violent incidents in Northern China by followers of the Boxer movement. These Boxers were labeled as such because of their devotional practice to physical exercise. It wasn't until the fall of 1899 that the situation changed dramatically.⁶⁷ Foreign newspapers published headlines about the unrest in Northern China and the potential danger that could come from such a widespread movement for Westerners, it was also during this time that newspapers started referring to the activity as a rebellion rather than a movement.⁶⁸ The rhetoric for a majority of articles in the United States placed a strong emphasis on the so-called "heathen" practices of the Boxers.⁶⁹ In a story on the origins of the Boxers, foreign correspondence reported, "each band was conducted by a "demonized" leader, who, by the selection of an epileptic patient or by the aid of hypnotism, caused a "medium" to display wild or unnatural symptoms or to utter wild and strange speech, this serving as a basis for the claim of this society to spiritual power".⁷⁰ As a Christian American reader, such striking descriptions of these esoteric Chinese Boxers would evoke a heightened sense of urgency to protect fellow Christians from their attacks, knowing that Christians were the targets. The rising conflict with

⁶⁷ Paul Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 44.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ The Library of Congress digital archives for Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers and *The New York Times* digital archives show results of many different articles from different regions and cities across the United States that refer to these characteristics.

⁷⁰ "North China Terrorized: Bands Organized to Destroy the Homes of Christian Converts," *The New York Times*, April 05, 1900, <https://www.nytimes.com/1900/04/15/archives/north-china-terrorized-bands-organized-to-destroy-the-homes-of.html> (accessed April 03, 2019).

the Boxers would not be framed purely as a domestic rebellion that required the involvement of foreigners, but a religious crusade to put down the “heathens” who wish to kill followers of the Christian faith.

American missionaries were not the only personnel mentioned to be in danger of slaughter from the Boxers. Leading up to 1900, headlines appeared across the United States with big bold letters stating that French, Belgian, and German missionaries were being killed in parts of Northern China. By fall of 1899, letters poured in to the Western ambassadors from missionaries throughout the northeast of China, telling disturbing stories of growing anti-Christian, anti-Western, and antimodern sentiment.⁷¹ Not only were nationalities specified, but also their respective Christian denominations; Protestant, Methodist, Catholic, etc. Initially Roman Catholics were targets of the attacks in Shandong, but soon after Protestants were grouped into the casualties to make it appear that all Western Christians could potentially be killed. Reports additionally included accounts of Chinese Christian converts being initial targets for Boxer attacks.⁷² Chinese Christians were driven from their homes, looted, murdered, and in some cases forced to kneel before heathen idols under threat of decapitation.⁷³ While Western missionaries were a priority concern, Chinese Christians were equally viewed as hopeless victims of Boxers. American missionaries spoke out that all Christians were in danger and in need of rescue, not just Americans or European personnel. This phenomenon of using hyperbolic and extreme language for news headlines can be explained by Cohen’s chapter on Rumor and Rumor Panic. Cohen borrows the definition of rumor from Ralph L. Rosnow who

⁷¹ Sibley, 51.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

characterizes rumors as “public communications that are infused with private hypotheses about how the world works”.⁷⁴ Furthermore, “rumors flourish in an atmosphere of uncertainty because they attempt to relieve the tension of cognitive unclarity”.⁷⁵ Before the presidential decision to send troops to China to relieve the foreign legations, the reports coming into the American legations in Beijing or transmissions being sent to Washington DC were very plausibly fueled by rumors. Missionaries across Northern China could have witnessed some of the atrocities that were occurring to Chinese Christians or fellow Western missionaries, but the significance is that in periods of uncertainty and confusion, rumors and panic can flourish as demonstrated in these articles.

Some American missionaries were highly active in the press to voice their opinions regarding the appropriate course of action in China. To some missionaries like Reverend Gilbert Reid, The United States should do their best to assist China towards “progress and improvement”. Reverend Reid was the president of the International Institute of China in Beijing. In the same month that the foreign powers decided to send troops to Beijing, Rev. Reid published an article in *The North Atlantic Review* called “The Powers and Partition in China”. While Reid did not explicitly state his approval of military action, his argument definitely alludes to the necessity of force to protect America’s goals for China. He opens his article by stating that the future of America and the “new balance of power” highly depended on the action in China.⁷⁶ This event didn’t have just the involvement of the United States, but the competition from other Powers.

⁷⁴ Cohen, 147.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 160.

⁷⁶ Gilbert, Reid. "The Powers and the Partition of China." *The North American Review* 170, no. 522 (1900): 634-41. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25104996> (accessed April 12, 2019).

Meaning that the United States required active participation in the events in China to ensure that their goals and rights were preserved at all cost, given the circumstances of several other nations involved with their own ambitions of territorial occupation.

As with most policymakers at this time, Reid believed that the United States shared a special relationship with China. This special relationship consistently stems from the reference that Americans never occupied provincial territory in China. Furthermore, unlike the other Western Powers and Japan, the U.S. still did not have any intention of carving China up into a colony, despite the political and economic goals of preserving America's trade rights with the Open-Door policy. What is of the utmost importance however, is that the integrity of China remained intact.⁷⁷ The dismemberment of China or its government would be detrimental to American commercial and missionary interests.⁷⁸ In other words, the best interest of China is determined on the basis of the best interest of the United States. Here we see again the interwoven intentions of American religious and economic pursuits in China. Not only was the Christian faith in danger of losing its enterprise and presence in inland China, but also the immeasurable benefits from the Chinese commercial market. If the United States was going to be a successful rising power, it needed to preserve the integrity of China in order to maintain its influence and economic rights guaranteed by various treaties during the 19th century.

While Reverent Reid chose to focus more on retaining the "friendly" relationship between China and the United States, newspapers across the United States viewed the conflict as a religious crusade to avenge those missionaries who had fallen victim to the Boxers. An article column published in the *Hawaiian Star* wrote, "The world rang with the tale of their atrocities,

⁷⁷ Ibid, 640.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 640.

and the armies of Christendom, united as they have not been since the days of the crusades, have been sent to put down with a strong hand and a mighty arm the intolerant and murderous heathen. The very existence of China as an independent sovereignty, trembles in the balance because of this intolerance in action”.⁷⁹ This attitude written in the pages of newspapers across America reveal the intense appeal of sensationalism during this period. The narrative that was constructed to justify military action in China used a strong religious sentiment to gain support for war, it was a holy war of Christian against heathen. It did not matter whether American or French, Catholic or Protestant, all that mattered to the Boxers was that they were exterminating all things foreign from China, and that their desire for foreign and Christian blood was only going to increase.

The advancement of communications technology through the telegraph leading up to the turn of the 20th century made reports from China much more accessible to domestic audiences. The events leading up the decision to form an allied coalition force were well documented, and could be telegraphed to newspaper publishers and government officials around the world. Additionally, war correspondents would be sent to China to report back to their respective publishers. By examining periodicals from 1898-1900, one can see that this conflict was truly global in its entirety. One example to demonstrate this is from an article in the *The New York Times* describing the situation in China growing increasingly dangerous. In the report it states that eight Americans are missing, two British warships had arrived at Taku, Russian mounted Cossacks searched for refugees and ended up killing 16 Boxers, 35 German Marines arrived in

⁷⁹ “Intolerance,” *The Hawaiian Star*, November 05, 1900, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82015415/1900-11-05/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1899&index=2&rows=20&words=China+missionaries&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=&date2=1900&proxtext=Missionaries+in+China&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1> (accessed April 13, 2019).

Tianjin, and 3 Belgian engineers had also arrived.⁸⁰ Another front page piece from *The San Francisco Call* announces in June 1900 that 30 Austrians, 75 French, 50 Germans, 79 British, 40 Italians, 23 Japanese, 75 Russians, and 58 American troops are in Beijing.⁸¹ But, these sources should be taken with a grain of salt, because reports on casualties or victories can be misrepresented and misleading. Referring back to Cohen's section on the power of rumor and influence of panic, Paul Fussell comments that, "like any kind of narrative, it compensates for the insignificance of actuality...it is harder to understand why they require false bad news as well. The answer is that even that is better than the absence of narrative. Even a pessimistic, terrifying story is preferable to unmediated actuality".⁸² The most dramatic instance of this was in mid-July of 1900, when announcements had reached the highest official levels in Washington, London, and other world capitals that all foreigners in the capital had been killed in two days, filled with great detail over how the events had unfolded.⁸³ The reports were completely untrue, and fed into the phenomenon that when a particular category of people are already in place, certain kinds of rumors (even terrible ones), are much easier to accept as factual.⁸⁴ This can

⁸⁰ "Situation in China Grows Very Serious," *The New York Times*, June 05, 1900, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1900/06/05/102597144.pdf> (accessed April 12, 2019).

⁸¹ "While Foreigners Fight for Life, America Prepares Brigade and Fleet for Immediate Service in China," *The San Francisco Call*, June 24, 1900, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1900-06-24/ed-1/seq-13.pdf> (accessed April 12, 2019).

⁸² Cohen, 161.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

explain why American readers were exposed to the stories that were presented, and how the Boxers were created by the media through rumor and panic for the American reader.

“Is This Imperialism?”- Political Cartoons
during the Boxer Rebellion

Political cartoons have been used in the United States for centuries to make a point about a current issue or event. The use of political cartoons by publishing companies serve as a visual aid to make the reader think about the issue being presented in the illustration, and may even be intended to change your mind towards the illustrator’s point of view. Abe Ignacio has broken down the power of political cartoons into three distinct characteristics in his book, *The Forbidden Book: The Philippine-American War in Political Cartoons*. He outlines that traditionally cartoons represent a picture of reality presented as the essence of a situation, a mood or attitude often achieved through artistic metaphor and allegory, and finally the artist incorporates a message about what should be done about the situation.⁸⁵ These three characteristics will be covered for this section’s analysis of political cartoons concerning the Boxer Rebellion. Much like the Philippine-American War and the Spanish-American War, prominent illustrated magazines like *Puck*, *Judge*, and *Harper’s Weekly* illustrated critical positions on the Boxers. These publications were among the most influential opinion makers of their day, and held enormous political influence in capturing the character of the opposing ideologies and political positions.⁸⁶ The use of political cartoons in conjunction with the press

⁸⁵ Abe Ignacio, *The Forbidden Book: The Philippine-American War in Political Cartoons* (San Francisco: T’Boli Publishing and Distribution, 2004), 2.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 2-3

during the latter half of the 19th century served as a significant role in representing to the American reader who the Boxers were, what the situation was, and what America's obligation was in China.

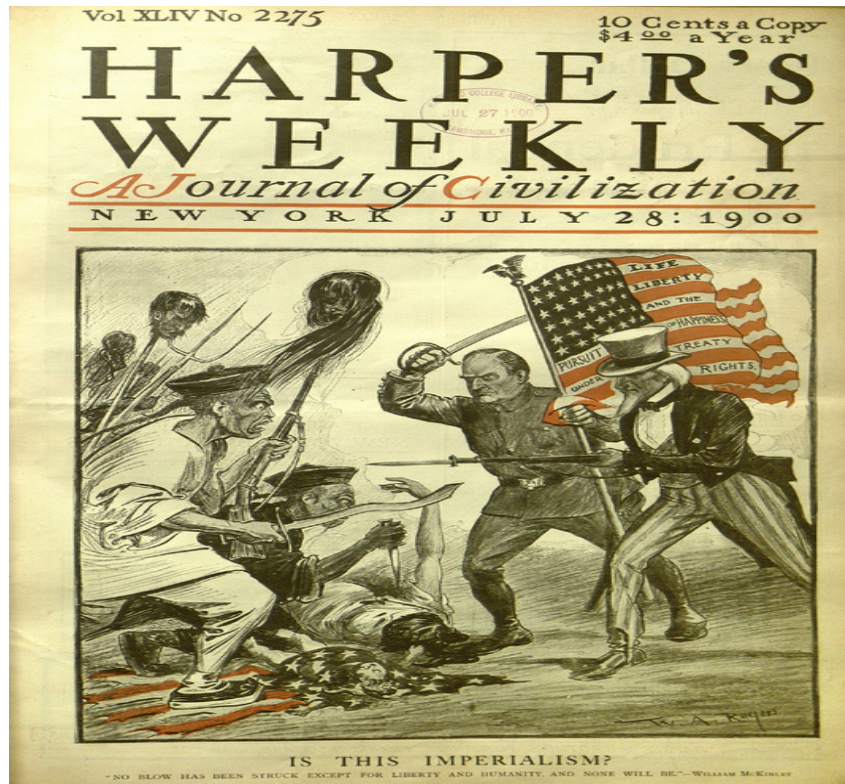
Another important phenomenon that occurred was the rise of Yellow Journalism. Yellow Journalism was a style of writing that offered sensationalism over facts. It helped to create a climate that was conducive to the outbreak of international conflict, military intervention, and U.S. expansion overseas, but it did not by itself cause the United States to go to war.⁸⁷ One famous example of this is the coverage of the USS Battleship Maine exploded in Havana Harbor. Yellow journalists immediately began reporting rumors of the incident and called for war. What makes Yellow Journalism in this period significant in the history of U.S. foreign relations is that it demonstrates the power of the press to capture the attention of a large audience and to influence public reaction to international events.⁸⁸ The sensationalist style of yellow journalism contributed to creating public support for the Boxer Rebellion, a war that would ultimately expand the reach of the United States.

One of the first illustrations to depict the Boxers on the cover of its magazine was *Harper's Weekly* in July of 1900. Reports of Christian killings by the Boxers were already rapidly expanding to readers, and the American media was increasingly promoting the necessity of military intervention to rescue Americans and Christian converts from the murderous Boxers. Although, the call to action represented in these pictorials echo a greater theme beyond the simple message of rescuing Christians from the Boxers. These selected illustrations depict a

⁸⁷ "U.S. Diplomacy and Yellow Journalism, 1895-1898," Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/yellow-journalism> (accessed April 12, 2019).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

moral crusade for the world in which “civilization and progress” is pitted against “barbarism”, a common belief by imperialists at the end of the 19th century which also included other conflicts such as the Second Boer War 1899-1902 and the Philippine-American War 1899-1902.⁸⁹ These two battling concepts of civilization against barbarism were vividly portrayed, and depicted with visual stereotypes of colossal hero against his enemy.⁹⁰



The above image illustrates the anticipated clash between the United States and the Boxers in China. The Boxers are represented as monstrous (almost non-human) beings, brandishing primitive weapons and displaying severed heads on pikes. The Boxer who is

⁸⁹ Ellen Sebring, “Civilization & Barbarism: Cartoon Commentary & “The White Man’s Burden” (1898-1902), *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 13, no. 27 (2015), <https://apjff.org/2015/13/27/Ellen-Sebring/4339.html> (accessed April 15, 2019).

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

kneeling down seems to be stabbing a fallen woman, and a small girl draped in a torn American flag is trampled by an approaching Boxer. The United States on the other hand is represented by Uncle Sam and President William McKinley. Uncle Sam has his modern rifle leveled towards the Boxers, and carries an American flag with a phrase from the Declaration of Independence written on it. President McKinley wields a saber in an upright position ready to strike with a stern look for the upcoming confrontation. It is interesting to note that *Harper's Weekly* wrote "A Journal of Civilization" above the illustration, perhaps to signify that their magazine is a respectable source of modern American reading. The phrase at the bottom of the picture says, "Is this Imperialism? No blow has been struck except for liberty and humanity, and none will be". This question is meant to be asked rhetorically, because the United States sees itself as a civilizing power, not a force eager for conquest. Additionally, this image was meant to suppress any criticisms regarding America having imperialist intentions, by offering the reader an illustration of the barbarians who committed atrocities against Christians.



⁹² Ibid.

The above illustration is from *Judge Magazine* on December 08, 1900. The scenario in this illustration shows the United States pitted against China on a narrow cliff with no space for either one to move around the other, implying that this confrontation is inevitable. The phrase at the bottom, “some one must back up” provides additional support to reiterate the inevitability of the collision. For the United States, Uncle Sam is depicted driving a motor vehicle with “progress” and “auto truck of civilization and trade” emblazoned on the surface. Within the truck are numerous “civilizing” components. These items include railroads, telegraph poles, cotton, trollies, education etc. The cannon mounted on the front of the vehicle is lead by the light, and reads “force if necessary” with Uncle Sam raising his arm towards China. This again demonstrates how the United States is a civilizing power, and wishes to improve and assist China with goods and resources for progressive purposes while also willing to use military force if necessary. The light shining reflects this idea as well, with the light leading the way for America while China is shrouded in darkness. Much like the first cartoon, China is depicted as a gigantic beast, a hostile dragon that is resisting the will to progress along American standards. The man riding the dragon is a Boxer, who wields a bloody broadsword and carries a banner that reads “400 million barbarians”. Again, there is a similarity in the depictions of the Chinese. The Chinese are represented as blood-thirsty, ferocious, and going to war with hundreds of thousands of Boxer hordes who are ready to slaughter more foreigners. The overall message of the image represents the urgency and inevitability of conflict between Chinese barbarians and the civilizing Americans.

The below image is from another *Harper's Weekly* magazine on June 09, 1901. The cartoon depicts Uncle Sam confronting a Boxer. Uncle Sam's position is ironically in a boxing stance, facing the Boxer with gloves of "New Navy" battleships.



The caption for this image reads, "I occasionally do a little boxing myself". This depicts the attitude that the United States should act militarily aggressive in response to the Boxer attacks. As with the other cartoons, the Boxer appears to be almost non-human in his presentation. But unlike the other pictures, the Boxer here seems to be grimacing and surprised at the chosen gloves of Uncle Sam, noticing that his bloody sword is incompatible with the weapons of the United States for the upcoming conflict.

Political cartoons during the Boxer Rebellion were not drawn only for those who supported military intervention. Anti-imperialist writers also included illustrations for satirical and anti-war purposes.

⁹³ William A. Rogers, *The Boxers*, political cartoon illustration, 1900, Harper's Weekly Magazine, <https://www.harpweek.com/09Cartoon/BrowseByDateCartoon.asp?Month=June&Date=9> (accessed April 15, 2019).



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Here is an illustration that embodies a very different message than the previous cartoons in support of American intervention. The two men above in the clouds are Jesus Christ and Confucius. Both individuals are gazing down on the fighting between a Boxer and a Western soldier while holding hands. The caption “are our teachings then in vain?” suggests that both the Boxer and the Westerners are fighting a falsely justified war in the name of each other their respective religions. The Boxer banner reads, “Do not do unto others what you would not that others should do unto you. Confucius”, and the Westerner’s banner says, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them. Jesus”.⁹⁵ Combining the caption at the bottom with the words written on the banners signify that both sides of the war are not practicing what

⁹⁴ Udo Keppler, “Are Our Teachings, Then, In Vain?” cartoon, *Puck*, October 03, 1900.

⁹⁵ Ibid, Sebring.

they preach. Meaning that the religious justifications for the war are not supported by the leaders of their religion they are fighting in the name of.



This last image shares similar visual representations with the second pictorial. The threat is a large dragon labeled “Boxer”, with ominous clouds hanging above its’ head saying “murder”, “anarchy”, and riot”. These words definitely fit within the attitudes of rumor panic used in the news articles covering the conflict. The unique characteristic of this piece is that China seems to be depicted as two visuals, as a ferocious dragon that threatens civilization and as a small, young man upon the throne. The size difference between Lady Liberty and the young emperor Guangxu is representative of how this artist viewed the status and power of the United States versus China. Lady Liberty tells the emperor that “the dragon must be killed before our troubles can be adjusted. If you don’t do it I shall have to”.⁹⁶ The troubles that Lady Liberty is referring

⁹⁶ Ibid.

to could be the potential threat of Russia moving further inland from Manchuria, which was a primary concern for Hay and Rockhill if the United States did not intervene to suppress the Boxers.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the other nations potentially could tighten their grip of territorial occupation if the Boxers were not eliminated.

Political cartoons that were drawn during the Boxer Rebellion showcase a multitude of opinions and reactions concerning the attacks from the Boxers in China. A majority of illustrations from pro-interventionists artists depicted the Chinese as sub-human, savage, warlike, and attacking in fierce hordes. The United States on the other hand was stern, noble, martial, and determined to reach its goals of progress in China. One of the most commonly used terms for these cartoons used the word “necessity” in their drawings. The recurrence of this term signifies that Americans should feel obligated to put down the Boxers and continue its ambitions of assisting China with the correct course of action, the correct action being aggressive military action. The use of this word also absolves the United States of any guilt the nation might feel for its actions in China; it’s not imperialism, it’s necessary force for the greater good! The inclusion of anti-war cartoons in popular magazines also provides significant insight into the public discourse. Illustrating the hypocrisies of the conflict by criticizing the religious motives and the ideological influences reveal a complex global issue over whether or not the conflict is justified by foreign powers. While it is difficult to gauge whether there was a higher quantity of pro-war or anti-war cartoons published and sold throughout the United States, the important take-away from this phenomenon is the distribution of these cartoons were designed to sway public opinion

⁹⁷ Robert E. Hannigan, *The New World Order: American Foreign Policy 1898-1917* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 100.

with sensationalists illustrations and contribute to support of the United States' decision to intervene during the Boxer Rebellion.

“I am opposed to having the eagle put its talons on any other land”:

Mark Twain and Anti-Imperialist Sentiment in the United States

Although American missionaries and the press represented the nation's military intervention and expansion in the Pacific as a moral cause, there was a number of anti-imperialists spokesmen who opposed American aggression and military activity in the Pacific. One of the most acclaimed activists for anti-imperialism was Mark Twain. Twain is well-known in the United States for his authorship of novels like *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, but during the Philippine-American War, he was also the vice-president of the Anti-Imperialist League. The Anti-Imperialist League was an organization founded by educators, intellectuals, and social reformers whom protested U.S. annexation of the Philippines.⁹⁸ Some notable members include William James of Harvard, William Graham of Yale, Carl Schurz, Jane Addams, and even industrialist Andrew Carnegie lent his monetary support and name.⁹⁹ Just like the European imperialist powers, the United States after the Spanish-American War held overseas land possession of their own. Not only were these overseas possessions going to be costly and expensive to maintain, but the atrocities committed by American soldiers as “pacification” during the Philippine-American War were viewed by

⁹⁸ Hunt, 39.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

members of the Anti-Imperialists League as horrendous.¹⁰⁰ Twain is quoted writing in the *New York Herald*, “I am opposed to having the eagle put its talons on any other land”, in reaction to the war in the Philippines.¹⁰¹

The Philippine-American War was one of the first major conflicts that Twain commented on. Especially with the Philippine-American War, Twain felt that the United States had betrayed the Filipinos in their quest for independence. When the conflict first started, he was in support of U.S. involvement in the Philippines. But after reading the Treaty of Paris, the true intentions of the United States as an occupying force, not a liberating force, became apparent. In an interview with a *New York Herald* reporter, Twain said “But I have thought some more, since then, and I have read carefully the Treaty of Paris, and I have seen that we do not intend to free, but to subjugate the people of the Philippines. We have gone there to conquer not to redeem”.¹⁰² With the liberation of the islands from Spain, America stepped in as the new invading force of occupation. Siding with the Filipinos, Mark Twain was rather supportive of men like Emilio Aguinaldo, the revolutionary leader and first president of the Philippines that was defeated by the United States. In one of Twain’s articles on the Philippine-American War, he commends Aguinaldo’s accomplishments as being identical to Washington, Tell, Joan of Arc, the Boers, and other individuals who are written in honorable history.¹⁰³ He writes further by saying,

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Jim Zwick, ed., *Mark Twain’s Weapons of Satire* (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 5.

¹⁰² Selina Lai-Henderson, *Mark Twain in China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), ProQuest Ebook Central (University of Hawaii at Manoa), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uhm/detail.action?docID=2011553> (accessed April 11, 2019).

“whose ideals are held in reverence by the best men and women of all civilizations...”¹⁰⁴

Opposed to what contemporary pro-imperialist would argue about the nature of the Philippine civilization, or lack thereof, Twain reveals that he regards Aguinaldo as an honorable historical figure that is in no way limited by his race. He even goes so far as to compare him to George Washington. This comparison transcends racial boundaries and recognizes both figures with admiration. By grouping these figures in related company, this says a lot about Twain’s view of the Philippine conflict and America’s decision to militarily engage in the Philippines. Aguinaldo is no different than Washington, who led the American colonists against the British crown. Therefore, he is just as bravely American as Washington, fighting for a valid and just cause for his people.

The magnitude of the savage fighting on the Philippine islands equally disturbed Twain and other members of the Anti-Imperialist League. A subsection of his article is titled, “Thirty Thousand Killed a Million”. In this section he mentions several ominous statistics throughout; the American death toll, estimated Filipino death toll, length of the war, and the American cost to support the conflict.¹⁰⁵ As he offers the reader the statistics, he constantly repeats the phrase, “thirty thousand killed a million”. As if the defeat of the noble Filipinos under Aguinaldo were not enough, the sheer degree of killing and slaughter that took place struck a sinister chord for anti-imperialist like Twain. The Anti-Imperialists understood that with war came slaughter, with soldiers came death. Whether or not the narrative of conquests was justified, the realities of war surfaced as a strong argument against further American encroachment in the Pacific.

¹⁰³ Zwick, 88.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 61-62.

The Anti-Imperialist League's concern with American expansion did not limit itself to the Philippine-American War. The U.S. involvement in the Boxer Uprising additionally became a controversial military expedition. As mentioned earlier in this chapter and chapter one, pro-imperialists thinkers justified U.S. participation in the Boxer Rebellion due to economic, political, and religious concerns. For individuals like Twain, China was not so different from the Philippines. American expansionism and imperialistic ambitions were transparently shown in both instances. At a meeting of the Public Education Association in New York, Mark Twain announced that he was in full support of the Boxers:

“Why should not China be free from the foreigners, who are only making trouble on her soil? If they would only all go home, what a pleasant place China would be for the Chinese! We do not allow Chinamen to come here, and I say in all seriousness that it would be a graceful thing to let China decide who shall go there. China never wanted foreigners any more than foreigners wanted Chinamen, and on this question I am with the Boxers every time. The Boxer is a patriot. He loves his country better than he does the countries of other people. I wish him success. The Boxer believes in driving us out of his country. I am a Boxer too, for I believe in driving him out of our country”.¹⁰⁶

There are several important messages to take away from this speech. First, within the first line of his speech, Twain recognizes the sovereignty of China and resents the presence of foreigners in the Chinese state. Claiming that the Chinese should be “free”, implies that the European and American influences in the country have played a more counterproductive role in assisting China rather than a welcomed existence that has been beneficial for China. Much like his previous statement regarding the Philippines, Twain was supportive of U.S. aid to the

¹⁰⁶ Lai-Henderson, 54.

Philippines to liberate the Filipinos from the Spanish. It was only until the United States became an occupying force out of conquest that he had an issue with imperialistic actions in the Pacific. The same argument is presented here with China, with Americans acting as conquerors rather than liberators in their plans to put down the Boxers. This view runs against the pro-imperialist narrative of uplift and preservation of American religious and commercial interests. Instead of using underlying rhetoric of “let me help you help me”, Twain views the relations as purely an extraction of rights for the sole benefit of the Western powers, and not the religious crusade against heathen armies that were so popular during the start of the Boxer attacks. The main point being that the situation in China and America’s decision to intervene against the Boxers is not from an attitude to liberate China, but to further cement and enforce America’s unbalanced relationship.

The second point deals with the experience of Chinese immigrants in the United States and anti-Chinese discrimination. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was a significant landmark piece of legislation for US-China foreign relations. The law was passed to suspend Chinese immigration to America and prohibit Chinese immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens. The Act was renewed in 1892, and in 1902 it made Chinese immigration illegal. These pieces of legislation were accompanied by hundreds of cases of anti-Chinese violence, slander, and other forms of intolerance throughout the United States. It is interesting to note that Reverend Reid (mentioned in the previous section) stated that the average American only dislikes the Chinese because he had only been exposed to the Chinese laborer, not the better class of Chinese.¹⁰⁷ Twain clearly does not agree with the unilateral arrangement concerning US-China relations. If

¹⁰⁷ Reid, 640.

Chinese immigrants can be discriminated against in the U.S., then the Chinese have the right to outcaste foreigners from their own nation.

The third point, and the most significant, is Twain's support for the Boxer cause and even calling himself a Boxer. This was the first time that Twain publicly announced his support of the Boxers in a public setting, speaking in front of an audience rather than through a newspaper article or an interview. Not only does he voice his allegiance to the Boxers, but calls them patriots. This puts the Boxer on a par with Americans, using this specific term to really stress his point regarding the nature of the Boxer cause. These two conflicts, the Philippine-American War and the Boxer Rebellion, are equally viewed by Mark Twain as one in the same. The Filipinos and the Boxers are both fighting for a cause to expel foreign conquerors from their nation, a war of liberation. Much like Twain's admiration for Emilio Aguinaldo, the Boxers are freedom fighters who have a justified motive. Recognizing the high level of violence and suppression perpetuated by American imperialism and colonialism on a global scale, Twain was appealing to the humanitarian side of the Chinese, and criticizing the behavior of his own country abroad, the same behavior that American missionaries outspokenly defended as appropriate.

One of the major differences in Twain's anti-imperialist literature for China compared to the Philippines, is his direct attack on missionary activity following the liberation of the foreign legations. One man in particular was under intense scrutiny, the Reverent William Ament. Ament was one of the leading missionaries in China with the American Board of Foreign Missions.¹⁰⁸ After the Boxer Uprising, U.S. military personnel and missionaries alike partook in the looting of China. The looting was carried out by the majority of soldiers of the Eight-Nation

¹⁰⁸ Twain, Mark. "To the Person Sitting in Darkness." *The North American Review* 172, no. 531 (1901): 161-76. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25105120>. 162.

Alliance, but American missionaries were unexpectedly culprits as well. Those missionaries who were trapped inside the legations or were threatened outside the capital were supposed to be the victims of the Boxers, but now they were clearly alongside the military as conquerors, taking part in the mass stealing and looting after the military victory. Twain wrote that everywhere Ament went he aggressively demanded money as compensation for the Boxer damage.¹⁰⁹ Even though Ament attempted to justify himself and mitigate the wrongdoing of his actions compared to others who looted, Twain did not hold back in the American press.

The major concern towards missionaries like Reverend Ament was that they were robbing innocent Chinese of the little money they had to compensate for the Boxer's slaughter of Chinese Christian converts. Everywhere Ament went, he collected money that had to be paid as an indemnity. According to *The North American Review*, Ament collected thirteen times the real indemnity in the name of propagation of the Gospel.¹¹⁰ The method of collecting an outrageous indemnity was seen as pure theft and unnecessary, especially since the Reverend was single handedly the one who went around various parts of the Chinese countryside. In response to such criticisms of injustice, Ament said "I deny emphatically that the missionaries are vindictive, that they generally looted, or that they have done anything since the siege that the circumstances did not demand. I criticise the Americans. The soft hand of the Americans is not as good as the mailed fist of the Germans. If you deal with the Chinese with a soft hand they will take advantage of it".¹¹¹ Here we see again the recycled narrative to justify imperialistic action in China. The religious crusade against the Boxers required the intervention of missionaries to

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

collect compensation for loss of life and property. This to Ament was completely justified action in accordance with the religious nature of the conflict. Furthermore, his attitude regarding the Chinese reinforces the justified action of using force and intimidation to get what is rightfully owed; he reveals this by denouncing the softness of the Americans and praising the mailed fist of the Germans.

After presenting the facts of Ament's actions and listing several examples, he famously said, "shall we go on conferring our Civilization upon the peoples that sit in darkness, or shall we give those poor things a rest?"¹¹² He continues by saying, "Shall we bang right ahead in our old-time, loud, pious way, and commit the new century to the game; or shall we sober up and sit down and think it over first?"¹¹³ The game that Twain is referring to is the competition amongst Western nations to expand abroad. The United States is now participating in this game by having conquered the Philippines and militarily intervening in the Boxer Rebellion, and Twain questions the merit of it for the new century. Hinting that the United States should "sober up", it implies that he does not think the U.S. is reasoning clearly, and most likely stepping away from American core values. For the Philippines, Twain writes that "if it had been played according to the American rules, Dewey would have sailed away from Manila as soon as he had destroyed the Spanish fleet...", "But we played the Chamberlain game, and lost the chance to add another Cuba and another honorable deed to our good record."¹¹⁴ There is an extreme level of shame in Twain's tone. The Chamberlain game indicates the attitude of Army officer John Chamberlain, who served as a leading officer during the Philippine-American War. Rather than resort to

¹¹² Ibid., 164.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 170.

military conquest and aggressive expansion, Mark Twain and other members of the Anti-Imperialist League sought to preserve the values of freedom and democracy in American foreign policy.

On March 21, 1901, an article was published in *The New York Times* announcing that the investigation to charge Reverend Ament for looting and illegally collecting indemnities on behalf of the church found Ament not guilty. Fourteen members of the North China Mission sent a report to the American Board stating that they had voted that Ament's actions of selling the moved property for the benefit of Chinese refugees was justified, and the remaining money collected was to be used for the best interest of the North China Mission.¹¹⁵ Twain's remarks against Ament were quickly quieted, and he was even at times scrutinized for even challenging Ament's intentions. The Anti-Imperialist League was concerned with appealing to the humanity side of America's recent conquests. In both the Philippines and China, prominent members like Mark Twain sought to publicly appeal to the American public through interviews, newspapers, and journals, claiming that the Filipinos and the Boxers were fighting for liberation and against subjugation. Claiming that the United States was the barbarian in these acts of imperialism fell upon deaf ears, because the majority of publicists repeated the same message that a religious war was absolutely necessary to quell the acts of violence against fellow Christians, but having no sense of self-reflection for the violence that was perpetuated by them.

Conclusion

¹¹⁵ "Actions of Missionaries Indorsed," *The New York Times*, March 21, 1901 <https://www.nytimes.com/1901/03/22/archives/action-of-missionaries-indorsed.html?searchResultPosition=1> (accessed April 15, 2019).

In the summer of 1901, Buffalo Bill's Wild West show was making its way around several cities in Pennsylvania. Buffalo Bill's performances had built up quite a reputation over the past couple decades, and were world renowned for their theatrical adventure and romanticized showmanship. Typically, the shows would highlight the spectacle of Native American warriors, firearm tricks, and other exciting phenomenon from the American West, but this year's traveling show would include a spectacular performance, one that was advertised as the largest reenactment ever put on by Buffalo Bill. The event that captured the attention of hundreds of Americans was the "Capture of Pekin". The description of this event was written in the largest font on the front page of newspapers, and excitedly mentioned that over 1,200 men and horses will be participating, with all the Allied Powers being correctly represented.¹¹⁶ It was to be the climax of the show, celebrating the military masterpiece of victory over the Chinese with real artillery and firearms.

The conclusion of the finale was a huge success. When the first American soldier made it over the walls of Beijing, the crowd roared and applauded the magnificent courage and heroism of scaling the walls to liberation those trapped inside. The performance was so dramatic and intense, that the spectators ran out of the stands into the dirt arena to cheer loudly for the Americans climbing up the ladders.¹¹⁷ The showmanship of the evening seemed to have

¹¹⁶ "Buffalo Bill's Wild West," *Butler Citizen*, September 05, 1901, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86071045/1901-09-05/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1901&sort=relevance&rows=20&words=BILL+BUFFALO&searchType=basic&sequence=0&index=13&state=Pennsylvania&date2=1902&proxtext=Buffalo+Bill&y=20&x=7&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=2> (accessed April 17, 2019).

¹¹⁷ John R. Haddad. "The Wild West Turns East: Audience, Ritual, and Regeneration in Buffalo Bill's Boxer Uprising." *American Studies* 49, no. 3 (2008): 5-38. <https://muse.jhu.edu/> (accessed April 17, 2019).

succeeded, the crowd of Americans were overwhelmed with patriotism and marveled at the sight of the brave reenactment.

This is the narrative that the American press had been promoting since the first reports came in explaining the killings of missionaries in China. For most of the media coverage during the conflict, this war was a religious crusade. Hordes of heathen Chinese were mercilessly killing and torturing Christians and foreigners, and the United States answered the noble call to rescue and avenge those who had suffered under the sword of the Boxers. While religious passion was a significant factor for the public support of war, securement of American interests and rights in China was also at risk if the Boxers were not stopped. The key to protecting America's commercial and treaty rights was to preserve the integrity of China. If China was to be dismembered by the Boxers or the other foreign powers, then the United States believed to be in danger of losing the "special relationship". The narrative of necessity and a justified cause was further perpetuated by political cartoons. Sensationalist illustrations combined with Yellow Journalism proved to be an effective source in influencing public opinion. Although there were cartoons published and activists like Mark Twain who resented America's decision to militarily get involved and tried to persuade the American public otherwise, it was the durability of the justifying narrative that cemented the public support for military action against the Boxers.

Chapter 3: The Power of Education: Negotiation and Indemnity After the Boxer Rebellion

One of the most often overlooked pieces of legislation concerning Sino-American relations during the 20th century is the US decision to implement the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship in 1908. Despite the broad lack of attention in academia, historians of US foreign relations who have commented on the Boxer Indemnity have generally written the same story. The story goes as follows. After the conclusion of the Boxer Uprising, the United States made acceptable indemnity demands to China despite significant damages to Americans during the conflict. Additionally, the US tried to convince other Western nations to scale down the amount of indemnities China owed as payment. Despite China's shortcoming on the payment to the US, Theodore Roosevelt's administration agreed to return the surplus. The Chinese government then decided to use these funds to send Chinese students to the United States for educational purposes as a sign of appreciation. This interpretation of the story represents the integrity and progressiveness of American foreign policy towards China, and China's gratitude towards the United States.

This version of the story is generally the one told by scholars of Sino-American relations during the 20th century. That the United States spontaneously acted out of good will, and in turn the Chinese government extended their thanks by sending Chinese students to American universities. Historians during the early 20th century echoed this narrative of generosity and influenced later evaluations of this act. Harley Farnsworth McNair wrote in 1924, "American nationals feel that their government has acted justly in returning excess funds to China... It is pleasing to realize that the American sense of justice, friendship, and desire for fair play rises to

the top each time...”.¹¹⁸ This stance was echoed by Carroll B. Malone two years later in an article titled, “The First Remission of the Boxer Indemnity”. Malone wrote, “The published documents show that China expressed her deep gratitude...and apparently quite voluntarily stated her intention of using the money for the education of Chinese students in the United States. This was done as an expression of her appreciation of friendliness of the American government.”¹¹⁹ Political speeches and commentary after the establishment of the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship certainly influenced this narrative. University faculty in the United States along with politicians such as Theodore Roosevelt spoke of how wonderful this opportunity would be for securing the future of Chinese-American relations and demonstrating American progressiveness through education.

Contemporary scholarship in the United States has attempted to rectify this story, notably in articles and book chapters that offer a more wholesome analysis that comprises both American and Chinese perspectives. Examining more sources from the State Department and congressional hearings have also painted a different picture that runs counter to the original story. Conducting a more in-depth analysis of State Department documents during the first decade of the 20th century has uncovered that Sino-American relations were very complex and highly negotiated regarding the Boxer Indemnity. Members of Congress and the State Department were not uniformly decided over whether or not funds should even be returned. Furthermore, how much indemnity should be taken and later, returned, was also controversial. What is clear is that by 1908, the United States wanted these funds to be specifically used for educational purposes.

¹¹⁸ Michael H. Hunt, "The American Remission of the Boxer Indemnity: A Reappraisal," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1972): 540, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2052233>. (accessed December 10, 2018).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

The Chinese government had different ideas for where the funds should be used. Instability and external threats in Manchuria, along with public projects such as railroads, were initially mentioned as primary areas of interest for using these funds. The United States responded by threatening to withhold these funds if the Chinese government did not agree to use them in a way that the US decided. This brought in a new argument over whose money was it? The United States' or China's? In the end, it was pressure from the United States to heed to their demands that resulted in the use of funds for scholarship opportunities.

This chapter focuses on the powerful role of popular media and examine how these public outlets served dualistic roles as promoters of the historical myth, and as channels for more accurate depictions of early 20th century US-China relations. Although this chapter utilizes various documents from the State Department, these sources are used to reinforce the argument that early 20th century relations between China and the United States were highly politically contested and exhibited imbalanced negotiations regarding economic privileges in China and social issues in the United States. Starting with the signing of the Boxer Indemnity Protocol, the United States found itself at odds with the other members of the Eight-Nation Alliance over what course of action to take in China. Discussions regarding punishments and the indemnity amount were highly contested amongst the nations involved during the Boxer Uprising. Furthermore, the period between 1901 and 1908 was a time of teetering relations between the United States and China, primary due to China's domestic reforms and policies, treatment of Chinese in the US, and American foreign policy ambitions for the wider Pacific region. In the end it was the American press who spurred the myth of generosity and friendship, further cementing the illusion of harmony for future generations.

End of the Boxer Uprising: Loot, Occupation, Chaos,

and Justified Punishment After Liberation

After the armies of the Eight-Nation Alliance lifted the siege on the foreign legations and marched through Beijing in August 1901, a new conflict emerged, although in quite a different manner. This new conflict that took place after the liberation of the legations was not between China and the West; but between those nations that still inhabited occupation zones after the fighting had ended. If the original end goal of the Western nations were to free those trapped inside the legations, then the frivolous looting and persistent foreign military presence that ensued throughout the capital and in the countryside was a sinister repercussion. International newspapers described the weeks following the attack on Beijing as a “carnival of loot”, in which Western soldiers participated in pillaging, robbery, and rape of Chinese citizens.¹²⁰ Various nations blamed the most heinous of crimes against one another, but all members of the Eight-Nation Alliance were guilty of such mistreatment.

Actions like this following the liberation caught the attention of Americans and called into question the intentions of what the United States was still doing in China. Ex-Senator John B. Henderson sent a letter to *The Evening Star* demanding an answer as to why American troops were still in China. He wrote, “if the army was really sent to Peking to rescue our Minister, why does the army remain there, after the Minister and all his family, his friends, and his visitors, have been rescued, not only alive, but without wounds or injury?”¹²¹ Henderson goes on to challenge

¹²⁰ David J. Silbey, *The Boxer Rebellion and the Great Game in China* (New York: Hill and Wang, A Division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 218-19.

¹²¹ "ASKS WHY TROOPS REMAIN; Ex-Senator J.B. Henderson Says the President Has No Right to Keep Them in China," *Special to The New York Times*, August 31, 1900, accessed November 4, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1900/08/31/archives/asks-why-troops-remain-exsenator-jb-henderson-says-the-president.html>.

the presidential authority to further wage war in China, and the moral dilemma surrounding the assistance in militarily occupying parts of China. The closing remarks of the letter serve as a precursor for what is to come in the years following the end of the Boxer suppression. He writes, “they know what they want, and when ready for the feast, we must join in the filthy banquet, take our share of the wicked spoils, or else suffer the usual fate of the robber bandit who avows a conscience. The great war is yet to come, not against China, but between the bloody devourers of China.”¹²² Henderson’s comments soon rang true, and read deeply into the rising conflict over punishment and financial reparation.

When Kaiser Wilhelm II addressed German soldiers who were going overseas to suppress the Boxers in China, he stated in his speech, “Should you encounter the enemy, he will be defeated! No quarter will be given! Prisoners will not be taken!... may the name German be affirmed by you in such a way in China that no Chinese will ever again dare to look cross-eyed at a German.”¹²³ This speech echoes the mentality of some Western military personnel that sought revenge after the Boxer Uprising had ceased. One of the most severe punishments that nations like Germany, Great Britain, and France demanded during the occupation was the execution of Boxers and Chinese officials whom (potentially) were guilty of affiliation with the Boxers. Decapitation and death by firing squad were among the most common forms of execution, but decapitation was generally reserved for the public. This is because Western military personnel wanted to make an example of those who attack the property and persons of the Western nations.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Thomas Dunlap, “Wilhelm II “Hun Speech” (1900)”, German History in Documents and Images, accessed November 14, 2018. http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=755.

Public execution of Boxers and Chinese officials within the first few weeks happened without much controversy, but after several weeks of exhibiting these brutal acts in public, some Western nations began to reconsider. In March of 1901, reports from Beijing mentioned that the Russian minister desired to put an end to the creation of a new list of Chinese officials that were to be put to death.¹²⁴ William Rockhill, the U.S. Minister to China, was instructed to observe and assess the accused to judge whether or not punishment was justified. However, Minister Rockhill was instructed by the State Department to use his influence to prevent any more beheadings.¹²⁵ As stated in the news article, the State Department had issue with the execution of Chinese personnel without due trial, because it went against the American idea of justice and fairness.

Analyzing these opinions regarding looting and punishment demonstrates how complex and contested Western perception was towards their role in the aftermath of the Boxer Uprising. Were the Western nations at most supposed to rescue those trapped in the foreign legations and reinstall stability in China, or were they also meant to be tasked with issuing their own justified punishment to those that they deemed appropriate? For the American military, the rules for occupation came from General Order 100 which was installed during the American Civil War to guide Union occupation of the South. The rules outlined that the treatment of occupied territories as brother would treat brother, or parent, or child.¹²⁶ In shock over the chaos

¹²⁴ “Oppose Further Executions. Russian and American Representatives in Peking Likely to Stand Together on the Punishment Question,” *Special to The New York Times*, March 14, 1901, accessed November 04, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1901/03/21/archives/the-indemnity-negotiations-no-uniform-basis-for-demands-yet-agreed.html>.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Sibley, 216.

following the recapture of the city, Major General Adna Chaffee (commander of the American forces) told a journalist, “it is safe to say, that where one real Boxer has been killed since the capture of Peking, fifteen harmless coolies or labourers on the farms, including not a few women and children, have been slain”.¹²⁷ For American reporters who went to Beijing after the conflict, the looting and killings were on a massive scale.¹²⁸ The article outlining the instructions from the State Department to Rockhill clearly reveal the complicated nature of the situation. Encouraging the U.S. Minister to use his “influence” in hopes of preventing further beheadings demonstrates that the United States acknowledged that there was not a single authoritative representative who controlled the situation. As mentioned previously, some members of the Eight-Nation Alliance continued to loot and publicly execute Chinese officials. For nations like the United States, the popular impression was not in support for such actions. Even Western nations who were concerned with the treatment of Chinese did not entirely agree regarding the appropriate course of action. While the United States did not approve of killing as a punishment, the Russian Minister was opposed to all punishment of the Boxers, including imprisonment.¹²⁹ Realities like this further obscure the interpretation of the role of Western nations during the aftermath of the Boxer Uprising. Like Ex-Senator Henderson stated, the next war is a battle between those who seek to devour China, not China against the West.

The Boxer Protocol: Indemnity and Controversy

¹²⁷ Cohen, 55.

¹²⁸ Sibley, 217.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

The attempts made by Western nations to rectify China of its wrongs from the Boxer Uprising did not halt at executions and military occupation throughout the nation. Additionally, Western nations decided to place an indemnity on China as a formal conclusion of the conflict. An indemnity can be defined as reparations a victorious nation obtains from a losing nation following a formal conclusion to a war. This action takes the form of monetary payment, but is generally complimented with other demands in the mix of post-war negotiations. For example, following the conclusion of the Spanish-American War with the signing of the Treaty of Paris 1898, the U.S. agreed to pay Spain \$20,000,000 worth of indemnities in addition to ceding Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States. The most recent case of indemnity payment leading up to the Boxer Uprising was after the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895. The treaty of Shimonoseki outlined that China would cede various territories (namely Taiwan, the Pescadores, and the Liaotung peninsula) to Japan, allow Japanese nationals to open factories and engage in industry manufacturing in China, and force China to pay an indemnity of 200,000,000 taels.¹³⁰ This already hefty payment would soon be piled onto the monetary demands made by the Eight-Nation Alliance, only seven years later.

The signing of the Boxer Protocol in the summer of 1901 by the various participants of the Boxer Uprising outlined several clauses that China was expected to fulfill. One of the most significant aspects of this document were the financial demands placed on the Qing court. The agreement included the indemnity of 450,000,000 Haikwan Taels in gold, with a 4 per cent annual interest rate over the course of 39 years to each nation involved.¹³¹ Other clauses

¹³⁰ Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, ed. Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 417-18.

¹³¹ William W. Rockhill, 1901, Document 179, Report of William W. Rockhill Late Commissioner to China with Accompanying Documents, Affairs in China, Appendix, Foreign

included the destruction of the Taku forts, further negotiations surrounding commercial relations between the nations involved and China, the suspension of official examinations for five years in cities where foreigners were massacred or harmed during the Boxer Uprising, and the right for the Powers to station troops throughout various locations in China.¹³²

The decision to place an indemnity on China was not without controversy over the amount that was to be extracted. Initially, Secretary of State John Hay instructed the Minister to China, Edwin H. Conger, to claim \$25,000,000 worth of damages on behalf of the United States.¹³³ This amount served as a way for the United States to receive a sizable proportion of the indemnities, and as a bargaining tool in which Hay hoped the other powers would reduce their own claims. This strategy proved not to be effective at all. The other Powers deemed this number highly inflated compared to their own reports concerning expenses, and acknowledged that the number of American troops did not parallel the number of soldiers sent to China by some of the other nations such as Great Britain and France. In actuality, Hay's claim was nearly twice the real American claims against China in the summer of 1900.¹³⁴ But his bargaining failure to convince the other Powers to reduce their claims came at the expense of China, whose indemnity had been lowered towards the beginning of the indemnity discussion. Instead of lowering their claims as Hay had hoped, the Powers increased their own share of the indemnity. The so-called "friend" of China now left the Chinese in more debt than previously debated.

Relations of the United States, Historical Documents, United States State Department Office of the Historian. Reference URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1901China/d179>.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Michael Hunt. "The American Remission of the Boxer Indemnity: A Reappraisal," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (May, 1972): 541-42, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2052233>.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 542.

The decision to place an indemnity on China following the Boxer Uprising was only one aspect amongst a larger transition in China's relations with the Powers. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, an indemnity is generally accompanied with other demands such as territorial acquisition or extension. In regards to the situation in China, these monetary demands were designed in one aspect to economically hinder China's ability to compete with the other Powers. The issuing of railway concessions, opening of industrial manufacturing factories, etc. would force China to rely on foreign investments or loans to complete various modernizing projects. The rights to railway concessions were deemed the most crucial for the Chinese. After the indemnity was placed, the most ambitious railway scheme from Beijing to Wuhan failed to lure enough active capital from Chinese shareholders, and foreign powers went ahead and built railways in their areas of influence despite protests from the Qing government.¹³⁵ The inability for the Qing government to limit the amount of foreign businessmen from controlling the railway construction led localized populations in many areas of China to press for a "rights-recovery movement", involving local peoples to hold huge rallies, raise money through local bonds, and even eventually involved the newly reformed Chinese Army in 1910 and 1911.¹³⁶ Another aspect is simply to view these indemnities as another diplomatic method of signifying who is the winner and the loser. By forcing a nation to pay an egregious sum based on the terms of the winners, the defeated nation is monetarily reminded for years after. Regarding relations between the United States and China, the "special relationship" seems to have no longer existed. The United States was among the other nations whom helped to develop the terms of the agreement following the conflict, and demand these terms from a forced China.

¹³⁵ Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 250.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 252-53.

Heightened Tensions: China's Domestic Condition
and Chinese Immigrants in America

Relations between the United States and China became increasingly strained following the signing of the Boxer Protocol. Part of the reason why this pressure occurred was because of discussions arising regarding reform and ideas concerning citizenry, sovereignty, and national rights in China. The first decade of the 20th century was a critical period for these political theories and conversations. Rather than focusing on political transformation, Chinese intellectuals like Liang Qichao made organizing principles of a new national entity called “China” the center of their discussion.¹³⁷ Liang Qichao was the focal point of this movement while in Tokyo, where he was able to read Western political thought translated into Japanese. Several years before the 1911 Revolution, Liang published several essays and articles in Chinese that focused on the nation and people's rights. These ideas of people's rights and the nation circulated throughout intellectual circles on the Chinese mainland. For example, in Sichuan, newspapers like 民□ (People's News) were smuggled from Japan for study groups and students to read. This exposure to new concepts such as 国 (the nation), 民 (the people), and 民□ (people's rights), created a political enlightenment for intellectual elite.¹³⁸ The defeat by foreign powers in China during the Boxer Uprising, threat of foreign nations having more control, desire for national salvation, and eagerness for political reform, prompted Chinese educational elite to take a more radical approach to political reform. One Sichuan literatus said, “Since the allied troops of eight nations invaded China, the court has been in a disadvantaged position... Officials,

¹³⁷ Xiaowei Zheng. *The Politics of Rights and the 1911 Revolution in China* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2018), 66.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

educated elite, and even commoners all realize that things cannot continue in the old ways...”.¹³⁹

This increasingly popular political movement for reform amongst intellectual circles reflect the dissatisfaction towards the Powers who benefitted from the Boxer Protocol and disapproval of how Manchu rule has dealt with these foreign nations. It was a period for Chinese educated elites to reflect on their own aspirations for the Chinese nation and people’s rights, while also becoming progressively more critical of the Manchus and foreign powers in China.

Intellectual communities and educated elites were not the only circles of Chinese society whom became more critical of the foreign nations in China. During the same period between the signing of the Boxer Protocol and the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, public media in China was paying particularly close attention to the treatment of Chinese immigrants in the United States. Discrimination against Chinese immigrants in America can be traced back to the late 19th century, when the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was passed by U.S. president Chester A. Arthur and made permanent in 1902. This piece of legislation restricted Chinese laborers from immigrating to the United States. While these laws specifically targeted Chinese immigrants, larger racist ideas regarding the Chinese population in the United States persisted alongside the legislation. While ill-treatment of Chinese in America was nothing new by the turn of the century, one instant in particular resulted in significant repercussions for Sino-American relations. The epidemic outbreak in San Francisco’s Chinatown 1900-1904 created mass panic throughout California and caught nation-wide attention. If white Americans felt that Chinese were ill-suited to American society and possessed their own racial biases towards Chinese immigrants, this outbreak reinforced their ideas of a “dirty barbaric Asiatic race”.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

The epidemic outbreak started in 1900, when a Chinese resident in San Francisco's Chinatown fell suspiciously ill. Before the patient died, rumors spread that the disease he carried was the Bubonic Plague, and San Francisco's Chinatown was placed under strict quarantine.¹⁴⁰ Fifty police officers were instructed to create a perimeter around Chinatown, and ropes were stretched across to permit anyone from exiting the location.¹⁴¹ An interesting aspect that several articles mention that covered the epidemic is that white personnel in Chinatown during the quarantine were allowed to leave, while no Chinese under any circumstances could go beyond the ropes enforced by the police. Although these articles do not elaborate beyond stating that "whites" are permitted to pass out of the perimeter, perhaps this statement reflects the concern and escape option for Anglo-Americans, and the dismissive attitude towards Chinese in an effort to contain them with no urgency to medically assist. Racial attitudes towards Chinese viewed "Asiatic races" as dirty, filthy, and without concern for public health. As stated before, the outbreak of this epidemic was not useful in influencing Anglo-Americans otherwise. The public press was also responsible for spreading this stereotype. Using the words "Bubonic Plague" in all caps on newspaper headlines incentivized the reinforcement of prejudice already placed against Chinese immigrants. While the state of California continued to conduct house-to-house searches and ban Chinese individuals from leaving Chinatown, officials in China were closely watching events unfold, and many wanted the United States to pay for the bad treatment of Chinese immigrants and other unequal treatment regarding China.

¹⁴⁰ "Plague in San Francisco? Suspicious Case Discovered in China-town-Victim is Dead," *The New York Times*, March 08, 1900, accessed December 12, 2018, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1900/03/08/101052022.pdf>.

¹⁴¹ "San Francisco Quarantine: Policemen Keep Cordon Around Chinese District Against Plague," *The New York Times*, May 31, 1900, accessed December 12, 2018, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1900/05/31/105750864.pdf>.

The Chinese Boycott of 1905 was one major repercussion of America's anti-Chinese legislation and treatment. This policy placed a boycott on American goods in China, and caused widespread anxiety to many American businessmen and politicians that relied on the China trade. An additional action that the Chinese government executed was the repurchase of the American China Development Company's contract to finance and construct the Canton-Hankow Railway.¹⁴² Organized in 1895, the company was created to acquire mining, railway, and other industrial concessions in China. What makes this company so considerable are the big-name American businessmen that held stock in the company. Some of these names include former Vice President Levi Morton, Charles Coster of J.P. Morgan and Company, Carnegie Steel Company, and the presidents of the National City Bank of New York and the Chase National Bank.¹⁴³ In context of the domestic situation in China, the United States was but one of many Western powers seeking Chinese concessions throughout the country after China's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War. In 1895 the capital granted concessions to France for the construction of a railway line from Indochina to Yunnan. The following year Russia was given the right to construct the Chinese Eastern Railway across Manchuria to extend the Trans-Siberian Railway. Germany was also in the mix of Western nations racing to take advantage of a defeated China. During the first decade of the 20th century amidst China's outcry against foreign intervention and influence, this was a major event on behalf of China to regain a sense of economic independence.

¹⁴² Hunt, 544.

¹⁴³ William R. Braisted, "The United States And The American China Development Company," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (1952), https://www-jstor-org.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/stable/2049371?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents (accessed January 15, 2019).

Initially these actions made by China and the United States put relations between the two nations at a major dividing point. An article written by the *North China Daily News* explained how student protests in China were a response to the anti-Chinese policies in America, and that the Chinese Boycott was a reasonable response. The article reads that, “crowd of irresponsible students and talkers, who are full of patriotism because they have nothing to lose but their heads, which in a sense they have lost already...and terrible stories are told of the cruelties practiced on Chinese immigrants...”¹⁴⁴ While the tensions were high towards the beginning of the year 1905, relations cooled in the fall of the same year. The Chinese government loosened the boycott on American goods, and American politicians steadily began to understand that the repurchase of the railway was justified due to mismanagement and contract violations.¹⁴⁵ While the year 1905 proved to be a time of hardship for relations between China and the United States, talks regarding the return of the indemnity to China continued after the boycott ended.

The Power of Education: American Directed Reform in China and the Promising Vision
of Chinese Students in the United States

The decision to return the funds from the indemnity for educational purposes was continuously promoted by the United States since 1905. Members of the State Department and the Roosevelt administration were keenly aware of the ramifications surrounding the expulsion of the civil service examination in China in 1905, and equally aware of the potential benefits

¹⁴⁴ *The boycott*. Theodore Roosevelt Papers. Library of Congress Manuscript Division. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o280339>. Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library. Dickinson State University.

¹⁴⁵ Hunt, 554.

from its elimination. In December of 1905 the acting Chinese Secretary of the American Legation at Peking, Edward Williams, wrote a lengthy and detailed report to Minister Rockhill concerning recent educational reforms in China. He begins by stating that the recent action of exam elimination in China has opened the way for favorable consideration by the Chinese government to much needed educational reform for the whole empire.¹⁴⁶ In addition to outlining a brief history of the civil service examination in China, Williams comments on the limitations and shortfalls of such an education system for a modern national government. He states that, “such a system was more apt to secure pedantry than statesmanship”.¹⁴⁷ Through the lens of Williams, the previous educational system in China was not practical for the advancement of a progressive, modernizing nation.

Another important message in Williams’ report is the recognition of American missionary schools in China, whose institutions are necessary to foster the teachings of western knowledge that is necessary for China to succeed. A former missionary himself, Williams makes a bold claim that China needs American education in order to not only progress as a modern nation-state, but also prevent itself from falling victim to the great nations of the world. In this sense, missionaries and the schools they founded are absolute necessities for the future of a reformed China. But China was not the only place in which the United States felt that missionaries were crucial for American directed reform. The Philippines was also a location with a strong presence of American missionaries that sought to implement American values

¹⁴⁶ Mr. Williams, Chinese Secretary, to Minister Rockhill, 1905, Document 215, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With The Annual Message Of The President Transmitted To Congress December 05, 1905, United States State Department Office of the Historian. Reference URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1905/d215>.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 2.

through the education system. Beginning as early as 1901, the USS *Thomas* landed in the Philippines with 509 American teachers whom strove to build up a Philippine public-school system in the hopes for an occupation of “uplift”.¹⁴⁸ This drive to “uplift”, in essence to proselytize along American teachings and values, resonates deeply with the purpose of American missionaries in China. Furthermore, the *pensionado* program of 1903 incentivized young Filipino students to receive a federally funded opportunity to study abroad in the United States in hopes of introducing “assimilating” Filipinos to the United States as advertisements for the nation’s compassion and expertise in progress.¹⁴⁹ In this context, the *pensionado* program and the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship are cut from the same cloth. Both pieces of legislation exhibit characteristics of a new mode of discourse in the Pacific using soft power diplomacy, whose underlying post-war motives were designed to initiate empire-building programs of American directed reform for morality, education, and modernizing progress of the nation along US terms.

This new discourse of soft power diplomacy in the Pacific was not initiated purely from within the ideas of the State Department or responses concerning the Chinese domestic education crisis. Another motivating factor for sending Chinese students to the United States stemmed from a rising competitor within the region that rivaled American ambitions for a prosperous bilateral relationship with the Middle Kingdom. As Japan underwent significant economic, social, and political reform, it became a growing power within Asia that gained significant admiration from Western nations. One event in particular changed the way Western nations viewed Japan on a global stage and altered the power balance in East Asia, the Russo-Japanese

¹⁴⁸ Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 168.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 204-5.

War 1904-1905. This was the first time an Asian power militarily defeated a European nation, and Japan's status as a rising geopolitical power was noticed by nations throughout the world. During the conflict, Theodore Roosevelt commented on the rising status of Japan to his friend Sir Cecil Spring Rice, and explained his view on the consequences of a powerful Japan. He wrote, "I most earnestly hoped as well as believed that Japan would simply take her place from now on among the great civilized nations, with, like each of these nations, something to teach others as well as something to learn from them; with, of course, a paramount interest in what surrounds the Yellow Sea..."¹⁵⁰ This idea of Japan being included as a great power and as an leader for other Asian nations is very optimistic statement of the president's perceptions of Japan. While Roosevelt may have had high hopes for an elevated Japan as a dominant nation in Asia, other American officials viewed it as a disruption to American plans for China.

After the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War, an increasing number of Chinese students were sent to Japan to learn from the victors of the recent conflict. Although Chinese students had been studying in Japan for some time before the war, the post-war wave of students going to Japan was significant, since American officials in Tokyo were reporting back to the United States concerning what this would mean for the future of China's international relationships and educational influence of reform. Huntington Wilson, an American diplomatic representative in Japan, reported to Secretary of State Elihu Root from the American Legation in Tokyo that a noticeable number of Chinese students were coming to Japan. He comments that the number is "so large a scale as to promise to have some effect upon the relations of these two

¹⁵⁰ *Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Sir Cecil Spring Rice*. Theodore Roosevelt Papers. Library of Congress Manuscript Division. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o188381>. Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library. Dickinson State University.

peoples, and also upon Chinese administration...”.¹⁵¹ Moreover, he mentions that the number has reached 8,000, which was 3,000 more since last year in 1905.¹⁵² This careful observation and commentary by American representatives in Japan regarding the abolishment of China’s civil service exam, the increase of Chinese students in Japan, and the implications of this situation for future regional relationships, demonstrates how concerned the United States was to secure a strong bilateral relationship with China, with Americans directing the course of future reform.

Wilson goes on for a couple pages, and shifts focus towards the end to a more updated, opportunistic detail in his report. He mentions that Japanese authorities have most recently implemented strict regulations on Chinese students entering Japanese schools, making it harder for students to find a suitable school for higher education. In response, over a thousand students returned to China due to increased agitation of restrictions.¹⁵³ Although a direct response to Wilson has not been found yet, one can assume that this report served not only as a method for informing State Department officials of China’s recent activity with Japan, but also as a way to prompt the United States to hasten its attempts to implement American guided reform in China while Chinese students were dissatisfied with Japanese regulations.

Conclusion

¹⁵¹ Charge Wilson to the Secretary of State, 1906, Document 183, Papers Relating To The Foreign Relations Of The United States, With The Annual Message Of The President Transmitted To Congress December 03, 1906, (In Two Parts), Part II, United States State Department Office of the Historian, Reference URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1906p2/d183>.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

In July of 1908, Yikuang (also known as the Prince of Qing), received a telegram from Minister Rockhill. Rockhill was informing the Prince of Qing that the Congress of the United States had recently passed a bill concerning the President's decision to modify the indemnity bond given by China during the signing of the Boxer Protocol. The amount of \$24,440,000 owed in gold currency would be decreased to \$13,655,492.29, with an annual interest of four per cent.¹⁵⁴ An additional message was relayed that Congress passed this bill as an act of friendship, and to strengthen the bond between China and the United States. Prince Qing's response acknowledged the generosity and friendly intentions of the United States on this decision. China would send a substantial number of students each year to be educated in the United States and these students would serve in great roles once they return to China.

The American press was ecstatic about the confirmation of mutual friendship and the future of Chinese students coming to the United States. Articles from around the nation including *The New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *The Hawaiian Star* covered the announcement of America's generosity to return the excess indemnity, and enthusiastically composed a bright new future in the lines for the American public to read. In an interview with Minister Liang Cheng, he further promoted this idealized version of Sino-American relations. When asked about the Open-Door Policy in China, he said, "I am in favor of reciprocity...remember that of all the foreign powers the United States has been the most generous, the most just. America abstained from participation in the opium war, and America has done a great and friendly act in the recent indemnity reduction. In time, in time, all will be

¹⁵⁴ Minister Rockhill to the Prince of Ch'ing, 1908, Document 8, Papers Relating To The Foreign Relations of the United States, With The Annual Message Of The President Transmitted To Congress December 08, 1908, United States State Department Office of the Historian. Reference URL: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1908/d58>.

well”.¹⁵⁵ To the American reader, the United States’ relationship with China was destined for success. The United States was always fair to China, and has further proven its generosity by returning the excess indemnity. A new era of young Chinese scholars would be coming to the United States for an American education, and become leaders of a new China. This new China would be progressive and closer than ever to the United States, and possess a great deal of “Americanness” that will inspire future generations of Chinese for years to come. This is the story of US-China relations that the United States wished to be true; The indemnity claims made during the signing of the Boxer Protocol in 1901 was rectified by the sheer kindness of the United States, and that Americans always had the best interest of China in mind.

Despite this uplifting narrative told by the American media in 1907 and 1908, the first decade of the 20th century was not a course of culminating friendship and cooperation. The reality is that this period is characterized as unsteady and complex, with a continuous diplomatic dialogue between the United States and China. The events between the signing of the Boxer Protocol and the Congressional approval of the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship was heavily covered by the press, and the media wrote extensively about the political tug-of-war between China and the United States. But in the end, the press served as a perpetuator of the myth, revealing the powerful influencing capabilities of the media on US foreign policy and the American public. State Department records also debunked the spontaneity of returning the indemnity for the purpose of good-will and friendship. Once talks about returning the indemnity had begun, the decision to use the funds for education was almost instantaneous. The agreement was motivated by two factors; the support of State Department officials in favor of a larger

¹⁵⁵ “Why The Chinese Indemnity Was Reduced,” *The New York Times*, June 23, 1907, accessed February 24, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1907/06/23/106756421.pdf>.

American-led proselytizing project for reform in the Pacific (namely the Philippines and China), and the rise of Japan as a potential rival towards this strategy of foreign policy. This reevaluation of early 20th century US-China relations reveals that this period is not as simplistic, or innocent as academia would like to believe. The reality is that constant negotiation, diplomatic discussion, and influential individuals were at the forefront of this sensitive period in history.

Epilogue

The last U.S. Marine detachment (the last U.S. military presence) departed China on May 25, 1949, two days before the U.S. Navy announced that all United States Navy fleet and shore units would leave China permanently.¹⁵⁶ The American soldiers and Marines that served in China during the postwar period were not the first to return to China since the Boxer Rebellion. Between 1900 and 1905, Secretary of War Elihu Root ordered an Army legation guard to remain in Beijing after the Boxer insurrection (detachments from the Ninth Infantry in the Philippines were rotated as legation guards), and in 1905 Minister W.W. Rockhill requested a Marine detachment be returned as guards in Beijing.¹⁵⁷ As events in China became more unstable with events like the collapse of the dynasty (1912) and the Warlord Era (1916-1928), the number of servicemen stationed in China fluctuated based on the orders of the U.S. government. During the revolutionary violence of 1911, the War Department was ordered to furnish a force to protect American interests and citizens in North China, as deemed by the terms of the Boxer Protocol of 1901.¹⁵⁸ Army and Marine units were sent to Tianjin and Beijing (again from the Philippines) to protect the American legations in addition to lines of communication such the railways.¹⁵⁹ What started as a few hundred soldiers between 1900-1905 soon grew into the thousands towards the

¹⁵⁶ George B. Clark, *Treading Softly: U.S. Marines in China, 1819-1949* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), ProQuest Ebook Central (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University, 2013), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uhm/reader.action?docID=3000444> (accessed June 04, 2019), 222.

¹⁵⁷ Chester M. Biggs Jr., *The United States Marines in North China, 1894-1942* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company Inc., 2003), 138-39.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 140.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 140-41.

end of the Warlord Era. When Western nations decided that the international settlement of Shanghai was in danger of anti-foreignism, riots, panic, and disruption of trade in 1927, several Marine battalions from the Pacific and a regiment from San Diego were sent to Shanghai under the orders of “protection of American and foreign life and property”.¹⁶⁰ These same orders that circulated amongst the military leadership in 1927 could very well have been said in the summer of 1900, when the United States first represented its military intervention in China as a moral and justified cause.

As for Chinese students sent to the United States funded by the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship, their numbers similarly fluctuated depending on China’s domestic circumstances. A portion of the indemnity return was used to establish the Qinghua School in 1909, a preparatory school in China that was run entirely in the fashion of an American school, with American staff and an American curriculum.¹⁶¹ The first examination to send Chinese students to the United States took place in August 1909, in which 68 of the 630 applicants passed and were able to study abroad.¹⁶² In resemblance to U.S. military presence in China, the 1911 Revolution and the Second World War drastically affected the number of students in the United States. Unlike the military however, these events decreased the number of Chinese coming to America instead of Americans going to China. In 1936, 1,002 students went to America to study while the numbers dropped to less than a hundred per year between 1937-1945.¹⁶³ In the

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 152.

¹⁶¹ Ting Ni, *The Cultural Experiences of Chinese Students Who Studied in the United States During the 1930s-1940s* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), xiv.

¹⁶² Qian Ning, *Chinese Students Encounter America*, trans. T. K. Chu (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2002), 18.

postwar period, the numbers continued to drop until 1949, when the People's Republic of China forbid students to study in America for the next 30 years.¹⁶⁴

The significance of the Boxer Rebellion for the history of US-China foreign relations has been overlooked by scholars who emphasize the Open-Door Policy. While the Open-Door notes are crucial for this period in foreign relations, it was the Boxer Rebellion that determined the securement of America's economic privileges in China. The ideological discourse during the last two decades of the 19th century set the stage for America's military involvement during the uprising. Key influential ideological figures like Josiah Strong, Alfred Thayer Mahan, and American diplomats to China advocated America's sense of duty to the world as a rising global power and offered their own interpretations of where China fit within that vision. A nation ripe for mass conversion, an endless market for economic opportunity, and above all, a place where progress was needed with the assistance of the United States. If the Open-Door notes were the political and economic goals for China, the military intervention was the means of protection.

The key to influencing public support for America's military presence in China is credited with how the Boxers were represented to the American reader. Newspaper headlines, interviews, and writings from major news publishers like *The New York Times* consistently used fear-inducing rhetoric to create a threatening image of the Boxers for the American reader. The inconsistency of attacks, misrepresentation of information, and overall unknown and chaos of the early attacks created a media atmosphere of rumor and panic. Furthermore, popular magazines like *Harper's Weekly*, *Puck*, and *Judge* created visuals for the American reader to promote the hostile image of the Boxers and depict what the United States should do about the rising threat in

¹⁶³ Ibid., xviii.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

China. Pro-interventionists were not the only personnel who used the media to get their opinions out to the American reader. The Anti-Imperialist League utilized the press and cartoons in the same manner as pro-interventionists, most notable being Mark Twain who publicly spoke out against America's troops being in China. The overarching theme for this being that the media served as a platform for debate and discussion over America's role during the conflict, relying on sensationalism, representation, and panic to sway the opinion of the American reader.

The legacy of the Boxer Rebellion also had tremendous impacts on US-China relations. The signing of the Boxer Protocol 1901 ensured that America's presence and privileges were to remain intact, and additionally included an indemnity on China that would be negotiated for years following the Protocol. American military presence would also be a guaranteed right under the Protocol, which allowed the United States to use the readily available military as a tool to defend their claimed rights until the Communist victory in 1949. The transition of America's foreign policy towards China that included the military presence was also met with another development, the cultural investment of funding Chinese students to study in America with the returned indemnity funds. The decision to use the returned funds for abroad educational purposes was not instantly agreed upon, but required years of tug-of-war negotiation and compromise.

This study has offered readers with a new understanding of the Boxer Rebellion, one that analyzes the cultural history of the conflict and the legacy of America's intervention in China between 1900-1901. This period in the historiography of U.S. foreign relations focuses on the significance of the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War for America's rising presence in the Pacific, and seldom recognizes the impact and importance of the Boxer Rebellion within the context of the time and its aftermath for US-China relations. But the

military involvement of U.S. troops in the Boxer Rebellion, and most importantly, the press and political representation of the Boxers during this chaotic period, deserves a rightful focus and placement in the scholarship of U.S. foreign policy and the legacy of 20th century US-China relations.

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