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'Illegal and Void': the Effects of State and Federal Legislation on Filipino Migrants in the American Empire

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‘ILLEGAL AND VOID’:
THE EFFECTS OF STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION
ON FILIPINO MIGRANTS IN THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

by

Hayley McNeill

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ABSTRACT

‘ILLEGAL AND VOID’: THE EFFECTS OF STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION ON FILIPINO MIGRANTS IN THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

by

Hayley McNeill

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2016
Under the Supervision of Professor Rachel Buff

The colonial relationship between the United States and the Philippines helped periodize Filipino migration to America in the first half of the 20th century, drastically in the 1920s and 1930s. Young Filipino men moved from the American-governed islands to other American territories and throughout the West Coast. Filipinos moved consistently for work. The constant seasonal travel, state and federal legislation, and projected characteristics on the young men increased Filipinos inability to settle, enacted barriers against marriage, and halted Filipinos ability to reach adulthood. Laws surrounded by exclusionary attitudes, including the Cable Act, California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69, the Filipino Repatriation, and others, acted as violence against Filipinos because of the life-altering restrictions. Filipinos who entered the United States before 1934, experienced colonial and community surveillance. Filipinos continually opposed the sanctioned regulations through traveling to a different state for marriage and refusing a free return to the Philippines, asserting their right to be in America.

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INTRODUCTION

One evening in the 1930s, outside of San Luis Obispo on the California coast, highway patrolmen pulled over a car filled with Filipinos to see if any white women occupied the car with the young men. Carlos Bulosan, one of the young Filipino men in the car, later became a writer, poet, activist, a voice of Filipinos on the West Coast. Bulosan reflects on this experience in his personal history, *America is in the Heart*:

I came to know afterward that in many ways it was a crime to be a Filipino in California. I came to know that the public streets were not free to my people: we were stopped each time these vigilant patrolmen saw us driving a car. We were suspect each time we were seen with a white woman...it was this narrowing of our life into an island, into a filthy segment of American society¹

The surveillance of Filipino interactions with white women in California shaped how Filipinos lived their lives in the United States, along with other discriminatory action towards the migrant population. Bulosan's description of the criminalization represented the multiple forms of surveillance, control, and violence Filipinos faced in California and other West Coast states. Legislation, community actions, and societal norms worked as patrolmen, creating obstacles, enforcing barriers, and enacting violence against Filipinos in the 1920s through the 1940s in California and other Western states.

California was one of many locations Filipinos migrated and worked through, as part of the larger American empire and the movement of people, labor, and goods. Filipinos provided work for various industries in the empire, but when Filipinos acted as members of American society through recreational spaces and marriages, the United States turned against their labor force. Anti-miscegenation laws against Filipinos and aliens ineligible to citizenship established barriers preventing interracial interactions and the excluded persons from settling in the

¹ Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart: A Personal History* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press,

continental United States. These forms of legislation worked as state violence against Filipinos, impacting and altering their lives. The government and public saw Filipinos as laborers in the American empire. However, when the young Filipino men asserted themselves into American society, these forces saw Filipinos as threats.

This thesis examines legislative forces against Filipinos and their migration throughout American states and territories. The work begins in 1922 with the passage of the Married Women's Independent Citizenship Act, which worked as an anti-miscegenation law against aliens ineligible to citizenship. Exclusionary practices placed on Asian migrant workers in the continental United States expanded with the passage of the 1922 act. Filipino migration began to increase at this time, as the American public noticed the growing Filipino population.

Lawmakers passed state and federal legislation addressing Filipino-white interactions and Philippine independence throughout the next 24 years, ending the timeframe of this work in 1946. The United States fully granted the Philippines its independence in 1946, removing itself from the governance of the island nation and further limiting the abilities for Filipinos in America. The legislation enacted between 1922 and 1946 displayed the opposition Filipinos faced, which helps to periodize and characterize the Filipino migratory experience in the United States.

I. TOPIC AND NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Throughout the following chapters, I argue how federal and state laws acted as a source of violence against young Filipino men and enable extralegal violence by surrounding community members. I analyze the migration from the Philippines, to Hawaii and Alaska, and then to California and other West Coast states. The movement throughout these areas is a

significant factor to recognize and keep in mind for the Filipino experiences, versus the placement in one location. The movement of people between American territories corresponds with the corporate and government structures established throughout these places, which created the larger American empire. Anti-miscegenation and Philippine independence legislation represented the violence from lawmakers while newspaper accounts help make up the local community and police responses. Although I cover longer histories prior to the 1920s, the time period begins with the passage of the Married Women's Independent Citizenship Act in 1922 and the overall increase of Filipinos entering the United States in the 1920s. The time frame ends in 1946 when the Philippines gained their independence and the exclusionary legislation came into full effect, keeping the focus on the Filipino experience.

The Filipino migrant population in California was largely young males, most between the ages of 16 and 30. Despite many of men being in their 20s, the United States still largely considered Filipinos as youth. The Filipino's migratory lifestyle influenced the public view of the young men. The colonial view of Filipinos as their "little brown brother" after the Philippine-American War also influenced Americans view of Filipinos. Colonizing language tends to incorporate child-like depictions of the native population; in the Philippines, this child-like description stuck and was slightly altered when Filipinos entered the United States. Working and living within the United States and American territories, migrants can be understood as dependents of the larger government; Filipinos traveled and worked throughout American territories because of the web of goods and labor the United States set up in these locations. The youth aspect is important to Filipino experiences, and creates a more complex understanding to anti-miscegenation and public perception.

Filipino migrants entered California as the third wave of Asian immigrants, following Chinese and Japanese populations. I consider Filipinos to be migrants versus immigrants because of the United States' asserted power and governance in the Philippines from 1898 to 1946. Dorothy Fujita-Rony writes about this terminology: "Even using the term *immigrant* for the pre-World War II period is problematic because Filipina/os came to Seattle during this era as American colonials who were not entering a foreign country but 'returning home' to the United States."² Despite the United States presence in the Philippines up until 1946, after the passing of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934, Filipinos were no longer considered colonial subjects. I consider Filipinos to be both migrants and colonials; Filipinos moved throughout Western states and territories for work and were individuals under American colonial rule. The relationship between the United States government and the Philippine government reflected the treatment of the respective individuals.

Filipino migrants moved within already established communities in the United States, with attention to the attitudes against them. Many white communities saw Filipinos as another phase of the "Asian invasion." Some Japanese communities held onto nationalistic beliefs, which created strict boundaries around their communal interactions and a push away from Filipino men, outside of work related relationships. The large presence of Filipino men in various Chinatowns offers an interesting and advantageous relationship; Filipino men occupied these spaces and the Chinese owners continued their businesses.

Because they had been in the United States longer, the Chinese and other ethnic communities had spent time establishing housing, business, employment and other communal amenities, while the young Filipino men moved within these spaces. The migratory aspect of the

² Dorothy Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919-1946* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 14.

Filipino population brings up a series of questions defining this population and how others saw them. This type of border crossing is similarly seen in Nayan Shah's *Stranger Intimacy* as he explores the way in which South Asian migrant workers occupied spaces within societal boundaries. The migratory patterns made it difficult to establish their own permanent communities, and those who did tended to be marginalized.

The United States' involvement in the Philippines in the first half of the 20th century allowed for the migration of Filipinos into the continental United States, especially California for proximity and employment opportunities, despite strict immigration laws at the time. Following the Spanish-American War in 1898, the United States gained control of the Philippines from Spain. The transition of external power instead of Philippine independence resulted in the Philippine-American War lasting from 1899 to 1902, with American forces conquering those of the Philippines. The United States' continuous hold of power over the Philippines made independence for the islands uncertain.

In 1916 the United States Congress took the first steps towards eventually granting independence to the Philippines with the Jones Law, or the Philippine Autonomy Act, establishing a constitution and a Philippine president within the territory. The process towards independence officially began with the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934, with the United States Congress authorizing complete self-governance of the Philippines in 1946. Once the Tydings-McDuffie Act began the process of independence, the United States government no longer considered Filipinos as U.S. nationals, but considered them 'aliens ineligible to citizenship.' Filipinos went from having the ability to enter the United States as nationals when no other Asian immigrant could, to being barred with a smaller quota than any other immigrant group. Throughout this course of American involvement, Filipinos viewed themselves in equivalence

with American citizens, as they too had an American government and an American approved constitution. That perspective changed upon Filipinos' arrival to the United States, as American citizens certainly did not share the same label. The American-Philippines relations shaped the closer look at the general white public's response to Filipinos.

The young Filipino migrants followed the seasonal agricultural and canning work throughout West Coast states, moving up and down the coast frequently. A majority of these young men came to the continental United States in hopes of an education and working to pay for school, but most became stuck in the migratory work cycle. A number of Filipinos also worked in the domestic and service industry as janitors, servants, busboys, and other jobs. Whether in an asparagus field or a hotel kitchen, young Filipino men struggled to get by and constantly moved to find more work. The economic opportunities for Filipinos were confined to these types of work. Often, Filipinos joined Mexican laborers in the agricultural fields, working side by side with another migrant stream the United States government and corporations aligned for.³ The economic and social discrimination against Filipino converged to form their migratory life in the United States.

For this topic, understanding the forces around Filipino migratory lives includes a focus on anti-miscegenation legislation. Federal and state legislation, changes to them, and marriage license cases attempt to present a new angle to this history, while incorporating newspaper accounts as well. Overwhelmingly, male Filipino migrants outnumbered females with a male to female Filipino migration ratio of 14:1. Their socialization was kept under surveillance by the general public from fears of interracial relationships emerging. This gender imbalance can be seen in the immigration of Japanese and Chinese persons as well, but due to restrictions on the

³ Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 130.

migration of women. The Filipino migrants did not have the same restrictions, yet had a large gender imbalance. As young men, the Filipinos did not have wives to connect them back to the Philippines, or to take with them to the United States. Also, many Filipinos came to the United States for education, which could have limited females from coming along. Either way, long-term relationships rarely existed as the nature of Filipino work was migratory and the inability to settle down because of these anti-miscegenation laws did propelled the migratory status of Filipino workers. The legislation also projected a promiscuous character onto the young Filipino men from the normative, dominant culture.

Anti-miscegenation legislation worked as racial violence against Filipinos in California. The restrictions placed upon Filipinos through these laws acted as a form of violence, which caused the men to alter their lives in order to survive – the law became a form of violence. While the effects of the laws can also be considered trauma, it is important to consider these acts as violence in order to better historicize the anti-miscegenation laws, these events, and the actions against Filipinos. Bringing these laws and their effects on Filipinos under the historical trope of racial violence best situates it within the larger historiography of racial violence in the United States. The anti-Filipino sentiments are understood as part of American exclusionary attitudes, not a single instance. The attitudes and actions against African Americans, Native Americans, and European and Asian immigrants are connected within this longer history of state and physical violence.

With the Cable Act, the fear and disdain toward Asian immigrants caused the harsh reactions to women marrying aliens ineligible to citizenship. The Filipino Repatriation Act attempted to remove the ‘racial menace’ of Filipinos in the United States. California changed the Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 as direct results of constraints on which women Filipino men

could marry; an attempt at direct control over how these men lived their lives. Fears around Filipinos, and Asian immigrants, generated these restrictions and enacted the violence that occurred.

The trauma of these events, or the experience of the violence, is an important aspect to this research as well. Examining how trauma was sustained is more of understanding who these Filipino men were and what their life cycle consisted of, while the acts of violence were the laws. These two aspects work together to present a fuller picture of how these laws worked as racial violence, legally and socially.

Federal and state legislations acted as forms of violence impacted the everyday lives and activities of Filipinos in the United States. The legislation as well as government and economic actions periodize this Filipino experience. A large portion of young Filipino men entered the West Coast in the 1920s and 1930s to fulfill the labor needs of the area. These Filipinos faced the restricting legislation and violence against them, migrated throughout the West Coast, populated the taxi-dance halls and Chinatown gambling houses, and grew into adult males in the 1940s. The experience is bracketed by government acts encouraging the migration to the United States and then the movement out of the country. The restrictions Filipinos faced at the time characterized and control the lives led and opportunities denied within the West Coast.

II. HISTORIOGRAPHY

The secondary sources grounding the examination of California's Filipinos migration and anti-miscegenation laws are broken into six sections. These sections provide a framework in each area allowing for a more complex analysis when bringing the various areas of study together. The sections include Filipino migration into the United States, anti-miscegenation legislation,

Filipinos in taxi-dance halls, exclusion and eugenic thinking, youth concepts, and the relationship between the Philippines and the United States. Numerous sources provide a full and multi-perspective look at each section.

a. Filipino migration and experience

Carlos Bulosan maps the Filipino migratory experience in *America is in the Heart*. The consistent traveling of Filipinos in the West Coast is mirrored in Dorothy Fujita-Rony's *American Workers, Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919-1941*.⁴ Fujita-Rony's book is centered in Seattle but sketches the movement of the people, power, economy, and culture through the West Coast. The argument to call Filipinos migrants is also detailed in *American Workers, Colonial Power* as Fujita-Rony describes how the U.S. national status technically made them migrants, relating to the larger United States-Philippines relationship. The status and interconnectedness of movement and community for Filipinos in the West Coast add valuable structure to my own analysis.

The relationship of Filipinos to the larger racial make-up of California is explored in Rick Baldoz's *The Third Asiatic Invasion: Empire and Migration in Filipino America, 1898-1946*.⁵ Baldoz places Filipino migration in the context of Chinese and Japanese immigration, and the fears that arise from the movement of people in native born populations. The issues of citizenship weave throughout Baldoz' chapters, as both a social citizenship and an institutional citizenship. The response of nativist groups and the influence of Eugenic thinking provide assistance to my own argument and analysis of Filipino life and the forces against them. Baldoz' coherent history delves into multiple aspects of Filipino migration in connection to the larger

⁴ Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power*.

⁵ Rick Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion: Empire and Migration in Filipino America, 1898-1946* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2011).

United States empire.

Howard DeWitt's work from the 1970s about anti-Filipino movements came before its time. DeWitt carefully catalogs various works that have come before him and the events resulting from the strong anti-Filipino movements in the 1920s and 1930s.⁶ DeWitt also connects labor organizing and interracial relations to the anti-Filipino movements and actions. Although not much can be discovered about DeWitt himself, his work can be seen in the footnotes of many Filipino sources currently. Ultimately, these sources and the information provided come down to understanding these young Filipino men who entered into the United States within a specific time period and how their experience was bracketed within that time, the location, and responses to them. The Filipino migration into California is its own periodization, which the following sections of sources play into the shaping of this experience.

b. Anti-miscegenation legislation

Since I examine the Filipino experience through the lens of marriage and relationships, an essential piece is anti-miscegenation legislation and its history. Anti-miscegenation legislation in the United States has its history rooted specifically in attempting to prevent marriage between black men and white women. Maryland enacted the first anti-miscegenation law in 1661, quickly followed by Virginia.⁷ The laws spread throughout colonial America, solidifying the color-line. As America grew, the laws grew to incorporate other non-white men who could not marry white women. The actions of these laws, for the case of my larger project, can be seen as another form

⁶ Howard DeWitt, *Anti-Filipino Movements in California: A History, Bibliography and Study Guide* (San Francisco, CA: R and E Research Associate, 1976). Howard DeWitt, *Images of Ethnic and Radical Violence in California Politics, 1917 – 1930: A Survey* (San Francisco, CA: R and E Research Associates, 1975). Howard DeWitt, "The Filipino Labor Union: The Salinas Lettuce Strike of 1934," *Amerasia Journal* 5, no. 2 (1978): 1 -21.

⁷ Rachel F. Moran, *Interracial Intimacy: The Regulation of Race and Romance* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2001).

of racial violence and oppression because of the restrictions they imposed and impacted in longer trajectory of ones life. Works by Megumi Dick Osumi, Candice Lewis Bredbenner, Rachel Moran, Peggy Pascoe, and Nayan Shah provide the history and framework for anti-miscegenation laws and the focus of Asians in western America.

Megumi Dick Osumi's article "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws" in *Asian and Pacific Experience: Women's Perspectives* traces how specific legislation has impacted Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos in California.⁸ Osumi's declares there are three levels of anti-miscegenation:

...the anti-miscegenation laws were enacted for a blatantly racist purpose, to prevent the intermingling of whites with an allegedly inferior and debased race. On another level, because most Asian immigrants were male, the laws were sexist, chiefly aimed at restricting the sexual independence and freedom of white women. Also, these laws contributed to the attempt to control the number of Asians and to treat them as economic and sexual threats. If they could not marry, they would find it difficult to have families and political power of their own in this country.⁹

Along with state laws prohibiting white and non-white marriage, the federal law of the Married Women's Independent Citizenship Act limited the marriage possibilities of American women. Under this act, American women lost their citizenship through marrying an alien. The laws confined and stigmatized women's heterosexual interactions, as the laws did for racially othered males. Osumi alludes to Asian immigrants attempts at establishing themselves in the United States with the importance of economic opportunities. The laws tried to reduce the longevity of non-white men in the United States, therefore reducing the concerns of sexual aggressiveness and economic gains. The racist and sexual threat levels interpretation of the legislation lead to how I hope to frame the Civil Code changes, especially with the heavy influence of nativist groups, Commonwealth Club of California in particular. The lack of power and place through the

⁸ Megumi Dick Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," in *Asian and Pacific Experience: Women's Perspectives*, ed. Nobuya Tsuchida (Minneapolis, MN: Asian/Pacific American Learning Resource Center and General College, University of Minnesota, 1982): 1 – 37.

⁹ Ibid, 27.

restrictions of the laws can lead to the push for community and power in other marginalized aspects of Filipino life.

The historical narrative presented by Osumi provides a solid background in the California specific legislation. For federal laws, Candice Lewis Bredbenner's *A Nationality of Her Own: Women, Marriage, and the Laws of Citizenship* examines various legislation between the turn of the century to the 1930s.¹⁰ The Expatriation Act of 1907 and the Cable Act of 1922 are the two main pieces of legislation Bredbenner delves into, and is one of the few books to extensively discuss the Cable Act. The Cable Act is a key component to my project by examining the law's effect on "aliens ineligible for citizenship," not only the limitations placed on women. Filipinos came under the term of 'aliens ineligible to citizenship' legally in 1934 and socially upon their arrival to the United States.

The history of anti-miscegenation law in the United States is thoughtfully detailed in Rachel Moran's *Interracial Intimacy: The Regulation of Race and Romance*.¹¹ Moran writes the long history of anti-miscegenation legislation from early colonies to the modern interpretations and impacts of previous laws and changes. Early black-white anti-miscegenation laws provide the framework to understand how and why laws changed depending on region and time period. Peggy Pascoe's work continues along a similar path as Moran but with a West Coast focus.¹² Pascoe's examination of the West Coast frontier through racial and gender terms places anti-miscegenation legislation within society's broader exclusionary practices. West Coast anti-miscegenation and racial thinking differs from the rest of the country; the recognition of

¹⁰ Candice Lewis Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own: Women, Marriage, and the Law of Citizenship* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998).

¹¹ Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*.

¹² Peggy Pascoe, "Race, Gender, and the Privileges of Property: On the Significance of Miscegenation Law in the U.S. West," in *Over the Edge: Remapping the American West*, ed. Valerie J Matsumoto and Blake Allmeninger (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999).

differences is important to properly presenting and examining the Filipino experience.

Nayan Shah's *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West* focuses on the migratory lives of South Asian workers in the early decades of the 20th century.¹³ The spaces and relationships these workers formed were within the borders and control imposed on them. These barriers, as Shah maps out, were not just legally defined barriers, but social and cultural implications that still held power. Although Shah relies heavily on court cases, he still presents the social borders to the various interracial relations. Shah's work presented a different perspective for interracial migratory relationships, and the migratory life in general. Even though his work examines South Asian men and non-heteronormative engagements, the organization and purposeful use of sources influences what I hope to do with my own work. Examining how Shah works with court cases and the law to present the legal and social effects helps to better understand the Filipino migratory experience. The borders Shah presents for these men shaped the relationships they were able to form, just as Filipino men's social relationships were formed in the marginalized dance halls.

c. Taxi-dance halls

Taxi-dance halls housed the space for interracial interactions for Filipino men and white women, sometimes leading to relationships. Filipinos frequently attended these dance halls where they would pay for each dance with a taxi-dancer. White communities excluded Filipinos from most social and recreations spaces. Taxi-dances halls became one of the spaces Filipino men could enter and interact with women. Despite being able to enter these facilities, it was still a restrictive environment due to community and police surveillance.

¹³ Nayan Shah, *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011).

Linda Espana-Maram explores the significance of taxi-dance halls and other cultural spaces of Filipinos in her book *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles' Little Manila: Working-Class Filipinos and Popular Culture, 1920s-1950s*.¹⁴ Espana-Maram presents how “Filipinos were simultaneously immigrants, gendered subjects, laborers, members of an aggrieved population, and consumers.”¹⁵ The convergence of these factions of their identity specifically merged with the age of the Filipino men as Espana-Maram delves into how the Filipino young men presented their masculinity through various public body displays, such as dancing, boxing, and gambling.

Espana-Maram’s chapter “‘White Trash’ and ‘Brown Hordes’: Taxi Dance Halls and the Policing of Working-Class Bodies” specifically delves into these spaces, the Filipino patrons, acts of surveillance, and the taxi-dancer women. The relationship between Filipino patrons and white taxi-dancers is also explored in Rhacel Salazar Parrenas’ article “‘White Trash’ Meets the ‘Little Brown Monkeys’: The Taxi Dance Hall as a Site of Interracial and Gender Alliances between White Working Class Women and Filipino Immigrant Men in the 1920s and 30s,” in which she presents the status and role of the white dancers in comparison to the Filipino situation. Both actors in the recreational space were marginalized from tradition society. Parrenas explains a number of the taxi-dancers either migrated from the South or from Easter European countires. These women could provide a unique perspective on Filipinos because of their similar migration backgrounds and their close interactions with the young men.¹⁶

Similar to how Espana-Maram examines the Filipino body in various locations in

¹⁴ Linda Espana-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles' Little Manila: Working Class Filipinos and Popular Culture, 1920s – 1950s* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006).

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 7.

¹⁶ Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, “‘White Trash’ Meets the ‘Little Brown Monkeys’: The Taxi Dance Hall as a Site of Interracial and Gender Alliances between White Working Class Women and Filipino Immigrant Men in the 1920s and 30s,” *Amerasia Journal* 24, no. 2 (1998): 115 – 134.

connection to the young men performing masculinity, Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns also looks at the Filipino body and its performance in her piece “‘Splendid Dancing’: Filipino ‘Exceptionalism’ in Taxi Dancehalls.”¹⁷ San Pablo Burns ties the Filipino dancing to the Filipino colonial subject as threats white men faced. In both situations of heterosexual interactions and employment, Filipinos supposedly took opportunities away from white American males. This analysis reads the taxi-dance halls differently through connecting the spaces to the larger relationship of the United States and the Philippines.

San Pablo Burns’ article melds well with the next portion of sources, the eugenic thinking around the ‘other’: “Nativists’ paranoia about miscegenation and contagion (in the form of moral and physical concerns) converged repeatedly on the errant Filipino dancing body.”¹⁸ While contagion tends to be linked to the colonial spaces themselves, I believe the similar framework and logic can be applied to colonial subjects within the United States and closely tied to eugenic thinking occurring.

d. Eugenic and exclusionary thinking

Alexandra Minna Stern’s *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* focuses on the West Coast, particularly California, in its formation into the modern age.¹⁹ The ideology tied to the frontier allowed for eugenic experimentation to have a high impact on the formation of California, “it’s geography, inhabitants, and institutions.”²⁰ This ideology also attracted various Americans to the west along with immigrants settling in

¹⁷ Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns, “‘Splendid Dancing’: Filipino ‘Exceptionalism’ in Taxi Dancehalls,” *Dance Research Journal* 40, no. 2 (Winter, 2008): 23 – 40.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 33.

¹⁹ Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Bekeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

²⁰ *Ibid*, 84.

California. Through the varied western population, Eugenic thinkers formulated new theories and programs, confining the identity and possibilities of said peoples. Although Stern does not incorporate Filipinos into her research as much as Mexican Americans, Mexican immigrants, and African Americans, Sterns' work still provides the eugenic nature of California governmental structures. For my research, Stern aids in building a eugenic and frontier framework which can be applied to the Filipino experience in Western states.

States of Delinquency: Race and Science in the Making of California's Juvenile Justice System by Miroslava Chavez-Garcia also does not discuss Filipinos in-depth.²¹ Chavez-Garcia's examination of the treatment of Mexican American and African American youth can apply to the smaller Filipino youth population. Chavez-Garcia incorporates eugenic thinking into how the juvenile justice system was created, highlighting the surveillance aspect when dealing with racial others, along with the heavy belief of genetic inferiorities based in race.

While both Stern and Chavez-Garcia tie Eugenics to peoples within the United States, James A. Tyner views Eugenics and its role in exclusions from the United States.²² Tyner's article "The Geopolitics of Eugenics and the Exclusion of Philippine Immigrants from the United States" lays out the rise of United States intervention in the Philippines in connection to immigration laws through "racist and nationalistic ideologies."²³ Tyner frames his analysis of eugenic thinking in both the United States and the Philippines, attempting to show how this logic affected the role Filipinos had under American power on both soils.

²¹ Miroslava Chavez-Garcia, *States of Delinquency: Race and Science in the Making of California's Juvenile Justice System* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012).

²² James A. Tyner, "The Geopolitics of Eugenics and the Exclusion of Philippine Immigrants from the United States," *Geographical Review* 89, no. 1 (Jan., 1999): 54 – 73.

²³ *Ibid*, 54.

e. Youth concepts

Youth works in two ways through the thesis: as a descriptor attached to the young Filipino men and how the public views them; and a marker of a fearful future for the white public through interracial youths. In both cases, the varied normative youth experience can be compared against the Filipino experience. As mentioned earlier, most of the Filipino migrants were between the ages of 16 and 30. Despite these men being beyond what is generally considered a young age and in their 20s, the public still labeled them as so, socially and politically. Newspaper and social hygiene articles labeled Filipino men as youth. Globally, labeling Filipinos as youth in the continental United States is reflective of the country referring to Philippine citizens as “our little brown brother” during colonial rule; it is a continuation of viewing racialized others as below the white hetero-normative society. Also, the youth title of Filipinos reveals the dependent nature of colonial subjects on an empire. American involvement in the Philippines, Hawaii, and Alaska created the path Filipinos could travel for work in American industries. The work and migration of Filipinos were tied to the American empire, therefore terming Filipinos as dependents of America.

Two works provide the framework for understanding these two implications of youth at the time. For viewing youth as a permanent and transitory life stage, John Modell *Into One's Own* is useful.²⁴ Modell's book discussed the history of youths transitioning into adulthood. Filipinos diverged from this life path, allowing for the material to be read against the Filipino experience.

Peter Kraftl's “Young People, Hope and Childhood-Hope” traces and theorizes how the

²⁴ See and John Modell, *Into One's Own: From Youth to Adulthood in the United States, 1920-1975*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989.

idea of hope and innocence is attached to children.²⁵ Fears around interracial relationships leading to strict anti-miscegenation legislation included societal concerns of interracial children. While children tended to be the symbol of hope for the future, interactional children were not a part of this hopeful notion. Kraftl's article helps to articulate this belief on children and is valuable in arguing the exclusion Filipinos faced.

It is also essential to keep in mind that during this time period the Great Depression occurred in the United States. The economic crisis strongly impacted the economic and exclusionary actions against Filipinos and other non-white persons, but it also affected the meaning of youth. At the time, the hope placed on youth and the age range of being youth increased in response to the alter life path available. Filipinos were still excluded from these life path changes but acknowledging the marginalization exposed the tensions at the time.

f. United States and the Philippines relationship

Through better understanding the Philippines, the United States' involvement with the Philippines, and the longer history of colonialism in the Philippines, I can provide a more complex and complete narrative of those Filipinos entering the United States. The language around colonization and the view of native populations influence the relationship also. The long history of outsider control in the Philippines and the creation of state in the Philippines can be found in works by William J. Pomeroy and Stanley Karnow.²⁶ These works emphasize how the history of the Philippines is understood through its interactions, or forced interactions, with other nations.

²⁵ Peter Kraftl, "Young People, Hope, and Childhood-Hope." *Space and Culture* 11, no. 2 (May 2008): 81 – 92.

²⁶ William J. Pomeroy, *The Philippines: Colonialism, Collaboration, and Resistance* (New York: International Publishers, 1992). Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989). Also see Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005).

These interactions lead to the emergence of the surveillance state in the Philippines, a topic deeply detailed in Alfred McCoy's *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State*.²⁷ The relationship between the United States and the Philippines became intertwined at this time, providing false hopes for the Filipino men entering the United States during this period.

The situation Filipino migrants came from, the spaces they occupied, the relationships they formed, and how others viewed them shapes the Filipino American experience. This experience is found in the 1920s, 1930s, and the early part of the 1940s, as Philippine specific legislation and immigrant restrictions framed the movement of Filipinos. Each of the secondary source topics covered a significant portion of how primary sources relating to anti-miscegenation laws and public responses can be analyzed, showing how the legislation can be a form of racialized violence. This reading comes from the oppressive nature of treatment of Filipinos, their own situation, and how the public opinion formed around them.

III. METHODOLOGY

The work is organized to represent the lives of Filipinos and the varying levels of restrictions placed upon young Filipino men. Federal, state, and community actions are all be examined to create a fuller picture of the actions against Filipinos. The first chapter presents the Filipino experience and the migration aspect to their lives. The second chapter explores how federal lawmakers enacted violence against Filipinos with marriage and independence acts. State anti-miscegenation laws and court cases then fill out the third chapter. The perspective of each

²⁷Alfred McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

chapter is paired with Filipino responses as well, attempting to express the Filipino experience and reactions to the forces placed against them in the United States.

The first chapter details the life path and migration cycle Filipinos encountered once leaving the Philippines. United States' control over the Philippines impacted Filipino's lives in the islands and presented the young men with the opportunity to freely enter the United States. The importance of seasonal work became apparent with the movement between Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California by Filipinos. Being defined as young despite their actual age positioned Filipinos into a peculiar place in society, denying them certain opportunities. The chapter will end with examining taxi-dance halls. These places of recreation for Filipinos became microcosms of police force, lawmakers, and general public's reactions against Filipinos, while also being spaces for Filipinos to express themselves and relate to their lives back home.

Forms of violence enacted by lawmakers are explored in the second chapter. Specifically, the Married Women's Independent Nationality Act, the Tydings-McDuffie Act, and the Filipino Repatriation Act break up the chapter. The history of the Married Women's Independent Nationality Act and the Act itself explore how the term 'aliens ineligible to citizenship' connected to marriage laws. The Tydings-McDuffie Act started the process of granting independence to the Philippines while simultaneously removing the U.S. national status Filipinos held in the United States, transforming the young Filipino men to 'aliens ineligible to citizenship.'

The Filipino Repatriation Act quickly followed the Tydings-McDuffie. The Act attempted to remove Filipinos from the United States and return them to the Philippines on Uncle Sam's dollar. The crossover of these three acts and the timeline in which they appear present how lawmakers could enact violence through legislative acts, how hegemony worked

against Filipinos in the United States, and how immigration laws and marriage laws worked closely together.

Chapter three takes a closer look at marriage laws with Filipinos through anti-miscegenation legislation in California. In 1933, California altered sections 60 and 69 of its Civil Code to include the exclusion of Filipinos to marrying whites in the state. Various Los Angeles County court cases attempting to determine the racial classification of Filipinos showcased lead up to this change. The racial thinking of the time and the influence of eugenic ideals exposed the thought process of California's general public and lawmakers. The chapter concludes with a look at anti-miscegenation legislation in surrounding states to broaden the understanding of the Filipino experience outside of white-Californian reactions.

The exclusion of Filipinos from interactions and relationships with non-Filipina women impacted their lives in the United States. It was not just the inability to marry, but the denial of a prescribed life path in the country the young men grew up being told they belonged to. United States control in the Philippines provided Filipinos youths with a hope for a better life. Once in the United States, Filipinos faced exclusion and violence from federal, state, and local forces. Relationships with white women created fear in white communities and fueled these forms of violence.

This work establishes itself within larger historical frameworks. It's important to place the Filipino migratory and anti-miscegenation experience within a longer Filipino history and the American exclusionary attitudes of the 1930s. The laws and practices against Filipinos through this time period weave throughout other exclusionary and racist acts of the time, exposing popular American sentiments. The work ends in 1946 with the Philippines independence, the

removal of American involvement, and the distancing of America's empire from the island nation. By this time, the exclusionary practices had solidified against Filipinos.

A number of primary sources will provide the necessary perspectives and support for these chapters. The federal and legislation of the Married Women's Independent Nationality Act, the Tydings-McDuffie Act, the Filipino Repatriation Act, and California Civil Code sections 60 and 69 exhibit the language and actions in which legislative violence occurred. These acts fulfilled a federal and state perspective of Filipinos. Portions of court cases regarding Filipino-white marriages leading up the Civil Code changes will also be used.

A broader perspective of Filipinos comes through in a collection of *Los Angeles Times* articles on varying topics. The newspaper articles both reflect and establish broad public concerns and beliefs around Filipinos. Conversations around taxi-dance halls, marriages, repatriation, and other Filipino related events place Filipinos in and out of various societal roles.

Articles from the *Journal of Social Hygiene* also evidence concerns around Filipinos at the time but from a narrower perspective. The *Journal of Social Hygiene* held strong eugenic beliefs and provided a key article surrounding Filipino actions. The example of eugenic thinking throughout chapters one and three will come from these articles. The similarities between the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Journal of Social Hygiene* support the claims of eugenic thinking influencing broader public beliefs and highlight the exclusionary actions of the time.

Lacking from the above sources is the voice of the Filipinos at the time. The Filipino voice will appear as excerpts from works by Carlos Bulosan, Filipino writer, poet, and activist, and transcriptions of interviews done in Geoffrey Dunn's and Mark Schwartz' "Dollar A Day, 10 Cents a Dance" documentary. Dunn's and Schwartz' documentary from 1984 provides the voice and experiences of Filipino men and women, their children and non-Filipina wives. Bulosan's

America is in the Heart and *If You Want to Know What We Are* represent his own experiences growing up in the Philippines, traveling to and throughout the West Coast, and facing the rampant discrimination of the time. Bulosan's experiences are his own but are also shared with the thousands of young Filipino men who entered the United States throughout the 1920s and 1930s to be blinded by a life of constant migration and hostility.

Although a bulk of the sources are not the voices of Filipinos of the time, the restrictions and perspectives provided in the other primary sources structure what Filipinos experienced. Bulosan exerts and the interviews completed by Dunn and Schwartz brings to life the violence and control faced through legislation and perspectives. These sources weave throughout each chapter, perspective, and act of violence.

CHAPTER 1: FILIPINO MIGRATION IN THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

Migration is entwined with the Filipino experience in the early decades of the 20th century. To look at one location is to misinterpret what Filipinos faced when moving from the Philippines into the United States. The movement characterized part of the life cycle for Filipinos, for once the young men decided to leave the Philippines for the United States, their lives changed. Moving to the West Coast meant constant migration throughout the Western states, following agricultural seasons and other available work.

Because of the migratory aspect of Filipinos life path once leaving for the United States, exclusions from other aspects of a tradition life followed. The inability to settle, the denial of American citizenship, restrictions placed on relationships, and the struggle for economic success filled many Filipinos lives upon entering the United States. Another hindrance for Filipinos when approaching America was the label of youth that was placed on the islanders. The classification of youth affected Filipinos status in America, regardless of their biological age.

In John Modell's *Into One's Own: From Youth to Adulthood in the United States, 1920-1975*, Modell presents youth as a transition stage. The life path for moving from youths to adulthood incorporates sexualization, marriage, and education. Sexualization allows for youth to initially learn how interact with youth of opposing sexes, in a hetero-normative society, in public spaces. This life path was applied to the white American public, while racialized and delinquent others were denied access to this path.²⁸ The American public denied Filipinos the opportunity to grow up and viewed Filipinos permanently as youth. Filipinos and women were stigmatized for public interactions, so the couples interacted in the marginalized spaces of taxi-dance halls.

²⁸ Modell, *Into One's Own*.

Community members and police forces denied Filipinos adulthood in the early decades of the 20th century. The general public and government structures viewed Filipinos as youths even when the men ranged from their late 20s or 30s; the childlike description of colonial subjects is common, but this descriptor stayed with the men as they moved to the United States. By enforcing anti-miscegenation statutes, limiting housing ability and economic opportunities, American individuals and government structures denied Filipinos the path to becoming adults. Youth was not a transition period for Filipinos and other marginalized persons. By being denied the opportunity to move out of youth and into adulthood, the youth label became permanent. For Filipinos, the environment these young men entered in the United States automatically stunted this transition because of the projected characteristics of a racial other and sexual menace. The role of surveillance and regulation of Filipinos in public, recreational, and work environments paralleled the watchfulness on youths.

The colonial thinking utilized by the United States viewed the Philippines as an underdeveloped territory in need of development, which would come from American governance. The governing body viewed both the territory and its people in this way. For Filipinos and their island nation, the United States laid a path of development. However, according to the United States racial thinking, Filipinos could only develop so far. Colonial thinking combined with the developmental thought of biological adolescence on Filipinos, halting the development process.

For youths, researchers determined the idea of a developing adolescence; the adolescent continues to develop until reaching adulthood. One would assume this same logic would be placed on the Filipino youth, but the racial difference of Filipinos took away the possibility of development. The United States saw Filipinos as permanently adolescent, unable to develop into

adults. Therefore, the development possibilities of colonial thinking clashed with the intrinsic nature of Filipinos as youths. Regardless of the colonial governance over the Philippines and Filipinos, the individuals would only be able to develop so far. American's racial thinking shortened the development capabilities of Filipinos, while the process of development appeared with the colonial thinking and practices. No matter the education status, the hygiene and style, the language skills, or any other factors of Filipinos, the United States denied the young men the possibility of developing into adults and into American citizens.

This chapter is composed of five sections, which attempts to imitate the migration path Filipinos traveled once leaving the Philippines. The movement between American territories to the continental United States traces the workings of the American empire. From colonial involvement in the Philippines to contract work in the American businesses in the territories of Hawaii and Alaska, Filipinos moved throughout the web of spaces tied to the United States. Government involvement and business connections created the web Filipinos migrated on for employment.

The first section details the history of the Philippines and the reasons behind Filipinos leaving the islands. The second section is focused on Hawaii, the next large port Filipinos entered. The Hawaii section situates the island nation within the context of immigration and exclusion laws. The United States' relationship with Hawaii and the Philippines is essential to the migration pattern and the periodization of Filipino migration. The third section examines the canning industry in Alaska. After leaving Hawaii, most Filipinos landed in Seattle or San Francisco. The canning industry had contractors at these ports to attract Filipinos instantly after their arrival to head north. Parallels are drawn in these three locations with the colonial relationship of the United States to the Philippines, Hawaii, and Alaska.

The fourth section then looks at Filipinos in California and how community attempted to form despite the constant migration. Within California, taxi-dance halls became a central space of Filipinos to socialize. These dance halls will be the focus for the fifth section with public perception of Filipino occupation of the halls with white women. The chapter concludes with connecting the migration pattern back to the Philippines and how Filipinos viewed themselves as American.

Throughout the sections are excerpts from Carlos Bulosan's writings. His experience parallels that of many young Filipino men. Bulosan's honesty and observations provide insight into the Filipino experience in their migratory life. Bulosan had many questions himself as he left the Philippines, eager and worried about the life he was to encounter:

Why had I left home? What would I do in America? I looked into the faces of my companions for a comforting answer, but they were as young and bewildered as I, and my only consolation was their proximity and the familiarity of their dialects.²⁹

I. THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines were no stranger to colonial rule by the time the United States took possession of the islands in 1898. The island nation holds a long history of colonialism and the transition from Spanish to American rule is just a portion of that history. The international and internal tensions of the 1800s in the Philippines set the stage for events and decisions in the early decades of the 20th century. The class division in the Philippines created the environment for Filipinos to search for better while the United States' control on the island nations provided Filipinos with the option for what that better could be.

In the mid-1500s, Spain claimed the island nation of the Philippines as their own. Spanish colonial rule kept the Philippines almost solely for themselves until the mid-1800s when the

²⁹ Bulosan, *America is in the Heart*, 97.

country decided to open up Philippine ports for international trade. This decision of international trade drastically increased the exports on the islands and increased the wealth for landowning Filipino families. William J. Pomeroy explains the connection between landowners and merchants:

Foreign merchants, especially British and American, financed export crops and directly stimulated the prosperity and ambitions of many Filipino landowners. . . . Newly well-to-do Filipino families began to send their sons to universities in Europe, where they came in contact with liberal thought.³⁰

Education and wealth in landowning came to shape the situation of many Filipinos who eventually left for the continental United States.

A group of Filipinos who had been educated in Western countries due to the wealth of international trade grew to be revolutionaries. Prior to the Spanish-American War, the fight for Philippine independence emerged and led to the exile of certain Filipino revolutionaries. As the Spanish-American War reached outside of Cuba in 1898, the United States military joined forces with the Filipino revolutionaries. The fight against Spanish powers in the Philippines came quickly with the combined forces of the United States and Filipinos.

With Spanish defeats and surrenders in the Philippines, Cuba, Guam, and Puerto Rico, the Spanish-American War ended in 1898. Both countries agreed to sign the Treaty of Paris, which granted the United States all of Spain non-African colonies.³¹ Filipino revolutionaries initially sided with American forces against Spanish rule when the United States promised the island nation its independence at the end of the war. However, following Spanish defeat the United States decided to keep the Philippines as a colonial province, disregarding their previous agreement. The discrepancy between agreement and action led to the Philippine-American War between Filipino revolutionaries and American forces.

³⁰ Pomeroy, *The Philippines*, 16.

³¹ Cuba became a protectorate and gained its independence a few years following, while Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines became colonies.

Violent fighting over the Philippines' independence between Filipinos and American military began swiftly after the signing of the Treaty of Paris. Although the War is traditionally bracketed as lasting between 1899 and 1902, the fighting between the two forces continued on past the United States' declaration of governance over the islands. The United States military and government approached the Philippines with determination, a trait Alfred McCoy describes: "From the very start of the U.S. occupation, aggressive colonial policing was a response to tenacious Filipino resistance."³² McCoy explains the infrastructure set up by the United States exerted surveillance and control over the island and its people, specifically the fire department, telecommunications, and sanitation. Despite these actions and American colonial rule, peasant Filipinos saw hope in the United States.

Following the end of the Philippine-American War, landowners and education came back into focus. The peasant classes tended to view the landowners and the system of absentee landlordism as corrupt, while the education by Americans held possibilities for a better life. However, a choice between the two often had to be made, as peasants could rarely afford to pay for an education and work the land for a different owner, and the division between support for the Filipino professional class and American colonial rule grew.

Most peasants worked either in the system of absentee landlordism or on haciendas by the early decades of the 20th century. Absentee landlordism allowed families to own large portions of land, and have the land worked and goods harvested, without actually living on the land or checking in regularly. The system did not provide peasant families with proper compensation and frequently moved peasant families. Carlos Bulosan recalls his disdain for the system:

³² McCoy, *Policing American's Empire*, 61.

I hated absentee-landlordism, not only because it had driven my family from our home and scattered us, but also because it had shattered the life and future of my generation. This system had originated in Spanish times when most of the arable lands and navigable waters were controlled by the church and powerful men in the government. It came down our history, and threatened the security of the peasantry till it became a blight in our national life.³³

Bulosan expresses the longevity of the absentee landlordism system and the potential long-term effects. The mention of generations of the system to come shows how Bulosan did not carry hope for a brighter future under absentee landlordism, and it was not just his own life growing up which would be oppressed, but all those who came after him as well.

Although absentee landlordism controlled the economic possibilities of Filipino peasants, so did the Filipino political class who sided with American governance. Complete unity throughout the Philippines barely existed and once the islands came under American control, the possibility of unity became scarcer. Upper class, educated Filipinos continued to take advantage of the peasant class and alter the economic opportunities:

The sons of the professional classes studied law and went to the provinces, victimizing their own people and enriching themselves at the expense of the nation. In a few years there lawyers were elected to the national government, and once secure in their exploitation of the peasantry and a new class of dispossessed peasants who were working in the factories or on the vast haciendas.³⁴

No matter the type of work peasants did, they were stuck under the command of other Filipinos attempting to further improve themselves. The class and experience division between Filipinos pushed the peasant class to seek change in the form of migration.

Despite the surveillance and governance the United States exerted, the opportunity for an American education under colonialism attracted the peasant class. Education acted as the path to a better future, one away from absentee landlordism and other forms of exploitation. With the United States building schools and promoting the idea of democracy, the peasant class saw an

³³ Carlos Bulosan and E. San Juan, *If You Want to Know What We Are: A Carlos Bulosan Reader* (Minneapolis, MN: West End Press, 1983), 15.

³⁴ Bulosan, *America is in the Heart*, 24.

attainable goal in gaining an American education. Bulosan reflects back on what education brought to the Philippines:

In Spanish times education was something that belonged exclusively to the rulers and to some fortunate natives affluent enough to go to Europe. But the poor people, the peasants, were denied even the most elementary schooling. When the free education that the United States had introduced spread throughout the islands, every family who had a son pooled its resources and sent him to school.³⁵

While sending a child to school did not cost any money, the opportunity cost was significant.

When a child went to school, one less body worked the land and most families could not afford to lose the time and materials. Bulosan's family only sent him to school for short periods of time because his work on the land was needed to the family to survive.³⁶ The possibility of a better life through education presented itself to the peasant Filipino class, but the actual execution of this life was rare.

Regardless of the ability to achieve this dream, the idea of America still stuck with Filipinos. The United States provided Filipinos with U.S. national status, which closely tied to how Filipinos viewed America and being American. Filipinos saw themselves as Americans due to the national status and the capability to move to the United States when others could not due to immigration restrictions; American citizens and government disagreed with the Filipino interpretation though.

In a 1932 *Los Angeles Times* article written by a Filipina woman, Midi Yanez, presents her experiences as a Filipina woman living in the United States. Yanez writes, "They forget that we too are, in a sense, American. Many of our boys were wounded or killed while fighting for America during the World War."³⁷ Yanez recognized the lack of full American citizenship for Filipinos, but American relations existed for Filipinos. The inclusion of wartime involvement

³⁵ Ibid, 14.

³⁶ Ibid, 48.

³⁷ Midi Yanez, "A Filipino Girl Answers Back: She has her own opinions of Americans." *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Feb 28, 1932.

highlighted the support and pride Filipinos had in America, further connecting Filipinos to an American identity. Yanez continues to comment, “I found that Americans were just like we are. Some are good, some bad. Many are brilliant and more are ignorant.”³⁸ Yanez related Americans to Filipinos just as she did Filipinos to America; Yanez did not try to turn one population into another but drew parallels and similarities between the two. For Yanez, and many other Filipinos, Americans and Filipinos were one in the same.

The national status given to Filipinos by the colonizing American forces granted Filipinos with some aspects of citizenship without officially making them part of America. Mae Ngai defines the U.S. national status as, “a colonial subject who owed allegiance to the American flag and who could, concomitantly, travel freely within the territorial domain of the United States.”³⁹ Importantly, the national definition allowed of Filipinos to enter and work in the United States, which was a perk of Filipinos and American businesses alike.

As Filipinos entered the continental United States and its other territories, Filipinos saw themselves as Americans. The young men travelling to the United States had almost solely grown up under colonial American rule, filled with hope of the dreams they could achieve through American ways. Bulosan recalls the transformation his cousin Consorcio went through upon entering American: “He did realize later that he had become an American before he received his papers, when he began to think and write lovingly about *our* America.”⁴⁰ The American vision Bulosan and his cousin had was shared with Midi Yanez and her parallels of Americans and Filipinos.⁴¹ These attitudes attached to many actions in the United States, one being Filipino relationships with white women. A 1930 *Los Angeles Times* article reports on the

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 96.

⁴⁰ Bulosan, *If You Want to Know What We Are*, 58.

⁴¹ Yanez, “A Filipino Girl Answers Back: She has her own opinions of Americans,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1932.

denial of a marriage licenses for a white-Filipino couple, ending the piece with: “Wherever the question of the Filipino’s status has arisen in the past, the islanders have maintained that because they are American citizens they have the same intermarriage rights as white Americans.”⁴²

Filipinos viewing themselves as American because of the colonial relationship and national status resulted in tensions through West Coast society. The issue of interracial relationships is a sliver of the conflicts that arose between whites and Filipinos.

The national status expected Filipinos to give allegiance to the United States, yet the United States did not reciprocate the sentiment.⁴³ Prior to Filipinos entering the United States, the American government could provide these ideals of national status and education to Filipinos regardless of proper outcomes. However, once Filipinos landed in the West Coast, the feelings toward supporting the islanders and showing them the American way quickly changed. Ngai comments on American views of Filipinos: “Mainstream American politics had rationalized the colonial possession of the Philippines as a benevolent project that would civilize the backward Filipinos, but that mythology turned into a social crisis when real Filipinos showed up in California in the late 1920s.”⁴⁴

The transition in American sentiments occurred when Filipinos were no longer a far away people. Tensions from white Americans rose as Filipinos occupied the spaces on the West Coast and thought of themselves as American. The colonial situation in the Philippines led to Filipinos dreaming of better lives in the United States. Most Filipinos would face disappointment once entering America, but the young men had to first complete the long passage to the United States.

⁴² “License to Wed Denied to Filipino: Riverside County Clerk to Refuse Sanction for Union with White Girl,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Nov 7, 1930.

⁴³ This relates back to Yanez’s comment on Filipino men too dying for America during World War I.

⁴⁴ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 94.

II. HAWAII

The distance between the Philippines and California is vast, but the islands of Hawaii stand between the two locations. Starting in 1906, Hawaii became both a pit stop and a destination point for Filipinos looking for work. The large sugar plantations on the islands attracted immigrant workers, and led to the opportunity for workers to reach the continental United States. Prior to Filipino workers, Japanese labor filled the islands and the transition of labor forces holds an important history. The movement of Filipinos out of the islands marks an important transition in their history. The immigrant and labor history of Hawaii is significant to then understand the immigration and exclusion conversations that took place in the 1920s.

The Kingdom of Hawaii was an independent islands nation, abundant in sugar production. In the 19th century, United States businesses and government saw the economic opportunity in these islands and set up a number of treaties with Hawaii. The most notable of these was the Reciprocity Treaty of 1876, in which the sugar harvested and produced in Hawaii could enter the United States without being taxed. The Reciprocity Treaty propelled Hawaii into mass production of the good, especially as “the area planted in sugar cane leaped from 12,000 to 214,000 acres, the plantation labor force jumped from 3,200 hands to almost 44,000, and the amount of sugar exported rose from 13,000 to over 500,000 tons.”⁴⁵ This expansion in sugar took place between 1875 and 1910, and the United States made sure to keep a close watch on the Kingdom.

In 1898, 22 years after the Treaty, the United States annexed Hawaii. Around this time, Hawaii’s pineapple market grew and gained global trading traction. With the importance of sugar and the history of economic ties, it is unsurprising the United States furthered its control over the Hawaiian kingdom. According to Rick Baldoz, the “annexation was directly tied to the political

⁴⁵ Chan Sucheng, *Asian Californians* (San Francisco, CA: MTL/Boyd and Fraser, 1991), 13.

machination of American plantation interests in the islands, who wanted to prevent members of the Hawaiian monarchy from interfering in their business affairs.”⁴⁶ United States businesses had invested time and money in their Hawaiian interests, just as the American government worked to ensure the best outcome for their interests in the islands’ economy. As Hawaii became an American territory, the United States became more watchful of the types of laborers allowed to work on the islands, because of the proximity and access to the mainland.

Although Filipinos largely worked on the islands starting in 1906, other Asian immigrant workers preceded them and partially paralleled the Asian migration history in California. The first wave of Asian immigration into Hawaii was the Japanese, while the Chinese entered California instead. Initiated in 1885, Japanese laborers entered Hawaii under labor contracts. Both the economic hardship in Japan at the time and the need for more manual laborer hands in Hawaii pushed and pulled the citizens to the islands.⁴⁷ For most of these Japanese laborers, Hawaii was their main destination with only a small percentages actually moving onto California.

American exclusion acts and labor conditions help explain the transition of labor that took place from this moment into the 1920s. Once the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act came into effect, California needed a new labor source since the number of Chinese entering the United States to work halted. Japanese laborers became the next targets for recruitment, but mainly Japanese workers in Hawaii, not Japan, to ensure no more Japanese immigrants entered the American empire. The second exclusionary act was the Gentlemen’s Agreement in 1907 between the United States and Japan. This more informal but equally impactful agreement

⁴⁶ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 49.

⁴⁷ Sucheng, *Asian Californians*, 15.

stopped Japan from granting passports to Japanese laborers and barred them from entering the United States from Hawaii, Canada, and Mexico.⁴⁸

These two acts worked to bookend the Japanese movement into American territories in a short period of time. Korean immigration to Hawaii as contract laborers occurred between 1902 and 1905; a movement that stopped once Japan slowly took control over of Korea.⁴⁹ Sugar planters could draw on the pool of Korean laborers, not only for extra hands, but to lessen the power Japanese laborers had to organize and demand working conditions and wages. Although Japanese laborers moved to California to replace Chinese workers, many stayed in Hawaii and continued as the majority of the workers until the 1920s.

The United States became aware of the potential of foreign born workers to migrate to the continental United States once in Hawaii; the Gentlemen's Agreement points exactly to this. Following the halt of Japanese and Korean laborers, Hawaii then turned to the Philippines. As the Philippines were under the control of the United States, American sugar planters knew they could tap into the island's labor supply without getting pushback from the United States, and started to do so in 1906.

The Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association (HSPA) represented all aspects of the sugar businesses in Hawaii, including labor recruitment. In 1906, a lawyer acting as a HSPA agent went to the Philippines "to secure an agreement with American colonial officials for the importation of Filipino labor to Hawaii."⁵⁰ The agreement between Hawaii's leading business association and colonial leaders in the Philippines showed the importation of labor as structured and planned event. The movement of Filipinos from one island nation to another could be seen as a product shipment. Since the business associates saw the Filipinos as a collective labor force,

⁴⁸ Ibid, 17.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 19.

⁵⁰ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 49.

the young men were products in better increase the production of sugar. The more sugar produced, the more profit the American forces made. Understanding how government and business structures viewed Filipinos help explain the movement to California later on.

Large waves of Filipino labor did not occur until the mid-1910s and reached its height in the 1920s, despite the 1906 agreement. The call for Filipino laborers heightened as a number of Japanese laborers moved to California. Also, Hawaii business more than welcomed Filipino workers as the remaining Japanese laborers began to organize for higher wages and better working conditions, similar to when Korean workers entered Hawaii. Following the 1924 Quota Act, Filipino labor in Hawaii increased further as no other Asian immigrants could enter the country. Ultimately though, Filipinos experienced the same poor treatment as the organizing Japanese workers and started to gravitate towards the mainland.

Baldoz points to the work conditions and labor strife as reasons behind Filipinos leaving Hawaii to enter California and other West Coast states:

The exodus from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland was the product of both economic and political factors. Exploitative conditions on the sugar plantations led many Filipinos to leave for the mainland after completing their employment contracts, in search of better job opportunities. The violent labor conflicts that swept across Hawaii in 1924 also propelled Filipinos to relocated to the West Coast for work.⁵¹

Hawaii decreased as a final destination for Filipinos as the young men began to move to the continental United States drastically in the 1920s. Some Filipinos would stop in Hawaii and work a contracted term before moving on, but a prolonged stay in Hawaii no longer played a part of the life cycle for Filipino migrant workers.⁵² These men left the abusive sugar plantations in hopes of a better life in America, and at the same time steamship companies recognized the potential profit in importing labor to the United States.

⁵¹ Ibid, 65.

⁵² Sucheng, *Asian Californias*, 25.

Restrictions on Asian immigrants in the United States in the 1920s coincided with an expansion of shipping industries in the Pacific. Californian businesses needed a continued labor force regardless of immigration laws, and found that in a collaborative effort with steamship companies. These shipping companies “aggressively advertised in the Philippines,” to ensure profits and continued relationships with farming and canning industries.⁵³ These relationships converged with the labor needs and immigration restrictions; shipping-Philippine relationships more than quadrupled the number of Filipinos migrants on the West Coast in the 1920s from years previously.⁵⁴

The yearly average of Filipinos entering California between 1920 and 1922 was 618, but between 1926 and 1929 the yearly average was 5,408.⁵⁵ The jump saturated West Coast fields, industries, and urban centers with a new labor force and a group of young men attempting to better their lives. The work available on the West Coast consisted of agricultural, canning, industrial, and domestic work.⁵⁶ Notably, Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican laborers filled these positions prior to and throughout Filipinos migration to the states. Smaller populations of South Asian immigrants and African Americans also worked these jobs, with lower class white participating in domestic work. This type of labor differed from Hawaii, where work focused on the sugar plantations.

The movement of Filipinos into the United States came through the intersection of immigration laws at the time and labor needs of burgeoning West Coast industries. Hawaiian sugar plantations took advantage of Filipino labor as immigration restrictions began, which then led to the same actions taking place on the West Coast. The path for Filipinos entering the United

⁵³ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 60.

⁵⁴ Sucheng, *Asian Californians*, 23; “The result was that the number of Filipino emigrants more than quadrupled in the 1920s.”

⁵⁵ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 66.

⁵⁶ Sucheng, *Asian Californians*, 27.

States included a stop in Hawaii because of this history, while it also helps to periodize Filipino migration in the United States. Once leaving Hawaii, Filipinos landed in either San Francisco or Seattle, swiftly being taken up to another United States' territory, Alaska.

III. ALASKA

Ports in Seattle and San Francisco held importance for the canning industry in Alaska as places of export for the goods and of labor recruitment. Labor contractors in these ports recruited young Filipino men who had recently landed to travel further north for work. The cannery work came through independent contractors and lasted three months. The three-month stints fit into what became the migratory pattern on the West Coast, as workers would follow the agricultural harvest seasons and spend the time between seasons in the Alaska.

Similar to other West Coast labor industries, Filipinos joined Japanese and Chinese laborers in canning factories. Because Filipinos were late to the canning industry and other Asian immigrant workers had been there for longer, the young Filipino laborers occupied the bottom ranking jobs. Baldoz describes the working situation: "Opportunities for social mobility were limited and Filipinos were relegated to the lowest paying, least desirable jobs at the canneries, working as cutters, slimers, scalers, guttes, and lidders."⁵⁷ Into the mid-1920s, Filipino workers easily outnumbered both Japanese and Chinese laborers combined, but continued to hold the same canning positions.

Similarities existed between the canning industry in Alaska and the sugar plantations in Hawaii. Because of the location of each, isolation and self-reliance characterized the industries. Aside from the workers, the industries took care of every step of the process. Also, because both locations were American territories at the time, the concentration of

⁵⁷ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 62.

white Americans was fairly low. The interactions between young Filipino men and Alaska natives became frequent but were less concerning to authorities or other white communities than white-Filipino heterosexual interactions in the continental United States. Independent labor contracts brought Filipino workers to both locations.

The independent labor contractors took advantage of new workers, both in getting them to Alaska and reducing their payments once in the canning industry. Bulosan tells of how he ended up in Alaska only a day after landing in Seattle when no one in the room he was staying in could pay the rent:

In this way we were sold for five dollars each to work in the fish canneries in Alaska, by a Visayan from the island of Leyte to an Ilocano from the province of La Union. Both were oldtimers; both were tough. They exploited young immigrants until one of them, the hotel proprietor, was shot dead by an unknown assailant.⁵⁸

In order to pay the rent the young men did not have, the landlord traded them to a labor contractor, which sent them up to Alaska. Under the contract, the contractor could deduct boarding fees, transportation fees, and other fees he deemed necessary. In Bulosan's case, the labor contractors probably took money out to pay the hotel proprietor. The amount of money Filipinos actually received at the end of their three-month stint forced the young men to quickly find more work.

Filipinos moved back south after cannery work, to follow the agricultural season in California. The migratory pattern illustrates the life cycle for Filipinos as the young men only settled in one location for couple month period. California became the focus of their lives in the United States, but Alaska canneries held a piece of their migratory lives as well.

Individually, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Philippines were territories of the United States, but when looking at the locations together, the colonial empire of the United States forms. Alaska and Hawaii held respective industries with connections to American business, as American

⁵⁸ Bulosan, *America is in the Heart*, 101.

government watched over the territories. The role of the United States in the Philippines allowed for Filipino movement into other territories and American steamship companies provided the transportation. The American empire created a transnational pattern of labor, people, and goods. Filipinos travelled the American empire, into the continental United States, working and producing Americans goods there as well.

IV. CALIFORNIA

The exclusion acts and business expansions explained previously help to periodize the influx of Filipinos in California. The Chinese Exclusion Act, the Gentlemen's Agreement, and the 1924 Quota Act worked to exclude Chinese and Japanese immigrants from entering California. While nativist intentions fueled the exclusionary acts, economic interests of Californian businesses drove the continued importation of labor. The 1924 Quota Act barred Asian peoples from immigrating to the United States, but created a drastic increase in Filipino migration to fulfill the needed labor roles.

The importance of cheap labor has been a common theme for previous immigration into the West Coast. Around the 1850s, large numbers of Chinese immigrants came to California for work. By 1882, the United States had passed the Chinese Exclusion Act to reduce the number of Chinese laborers entering the country, as the United States government feared the laborers would become public charges. As the number of Chinese laborers lessened, Japanese immigrants increased on the West Coast. As explained with Hawaii, Japanese immigration halted with the Gentlemen's Agreement. The increase of individuals followed by legislation of exclusion characterized the racial make-up in California. The influx of Filipinos follows the same pattern,

with these young men being the third large wave of Asian migration and a strong resistance to Filipinos following quickly after their arrival.

Anti-miscegenation legislation followed the same pattern as a function of exclusionary actions against Asian immigrants in California. From the Chinese to the Japanese and then onto Filipinos, legislators continued to make alterations to the state's Civil Code upon the arrival of each peoples. Interaction with white women by Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino men concerned the white public and state officials, who enacted legislation and surveillance against the persons and the spaces occupied. Anti-miscegenation laws worked as another form of the exclusionary practices against the waves of Asian immigration.

The ability for Filipinos to still enter the United States unrestrictedly because of their U.S. national status became an important factor for business, particularly agriculture and canning industries. These companies advertised the job opportunity to Filipinos, continuing to create their employee base at the same wages given to the other Asian immigrant workers in previous decades, allowing the companies to keep wages low and working conditions poor.⁵⁹ The 1920s became a time of high Filipino migrations as “the Filipino population in California increased from about 270 in the 1920s to more than 30,000 in 1930s.”⁶⁰ Of that number, about 87% of the Filipinos in California were male, most between the ages of 16 and 30, emphasizing the increase in cheap, able-bodied workers from the perspective of labor employers.

Along with being young and male, a percentage of the Filipinos in California were also educated. A common tale to hear was of a young Filipino man studying in American academies in the Philippines and then migrating to the United States to attend university. The focus on education and the hopes of possibly returning to the Philippines one day helped to explain the

⁵⁹ See Howard DeWitt's work for the economic aspect of Filipino migration.

⁶⁰ Espana-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles' Little Manila*, 106.

gender imbalance of Filipinos in California. However, once educated Filipinos began living in the United States, they started to see how it would be a struggle to survive in the California environment and little could be accomplished once the degree was achieved. In order to pay for school, most Filipinos would do various types of labor between school years, but many eventually did that work full time, as Espana-Maram explains, “roughly 80 percent of the Filipino immigrants in the 1920s and 1930s became migratory laborers, routinely traveling among farms, canning industries, and cities.”⁶¹ The movement between different cities and states became a way of life for the Filipino young men.

Filipinos joined Mexican laborers in agricultural fields of the United States. Mexican laborers increasingly worked in California, Arizona, and Texas fields, growing, harvesting, and tending to the expanding agricultural industry in the Western states. As a majority of the workers in the fields, Mexicans had created a long tradition of working for American business. Ngai declares the continued employment of Mexican laborers in American fields “constituted a kind of ‘imported colonialism.’”⁶² The nature of Mexican agricultural workers drew parallels with the experience of Filipino migrants workers when combined employment in the fields.

With continuous movement between places, Filipinos struggled to form traditional communities. Once a Filipino entered the United States, the choices he could make for himself lessened considerably because of economic, social, political, and cultural forces at work. Despite, the lack of choices in a Filipino’s life once he entered the United States, the Filipino men still created communities that could travel with them, an argument Espana-Maram makes:

...creation of a portable community. Filipinos, relegated to working in closely supervised positions and living in ghettos, created a vibrant street culture where recreational centers informal networks. The solidarity, however tenuous, produced in this communal system helped numerous Filipino laborers⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid, 110.

⁶² Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 129.

⁶³ Espana-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles’ Little Manila*, 10.

No matter where Filipino men moved to for work, a system of communities established itself both from those one traveled with and from the spaces occupied upon arrival. These communities and type of community formation could be seen as forced upon Filipinos because of the movement patterns of the young men. However, the ‘portable community’ could also be a choice made by the workers, still asserting their place in the United States. Arguing for ‘portable communities’ provides Filipino migrants with a sense of agency; the young men consciously made a decision for themselves and built these relationships. However, these communities could have been forced by the restrictions of their living in the United States; ‘portable communities’ made the best of the situation. The occupation of recreational spaces allowed Filipinos to move within and out-of the established marginalized communities, such as Chinatown gambling houses, boxing rings, and importantly for public fears around interracial relationships, taxi-dance halls.

V. TAXI-DANCE HALLS

Within California, Filipinos occupied certain spaces throughout the state to create a sense of community and belonging. One location young Filipino men frequented consistently was taxi-dance halls. Taxi-dance halls, also referred to as closed dance halls, were dance halls in which male customers would pay 10 cents to dance with a working woman for a song or minute. These women were generally called taxi-dancers or taxis, or on some occasions “nickel hoppers.”⁶⁴ Taxi-dance halls became an important space for Filipino men, as they were recreation space for the young men to interact with women and participate in a lively activity. However, the interactions with white women caused police and community members to closely surveil the halls and Filipinos. This surveillance combined with the state and community concerns of

⁶⁴ “Dance Methods Lead to Inquiry,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Apr 17, 1929.

Filipino migrants, the believed sexual aggressiveness of the young men, and the colonial status of Filipinos and the Philippines.

Taxi-dance halls were most popular in California, although there is record of the halls in Chicago around this time period as well. Former Juvenile Protective Association investigator Paul Cressy conducted one of premiere sociological studies on taxi-dance halls in 1932. Cressy focused on Chicago but mentioned the popularity of the spaces in California as well. Cressy's work was a reflection of his work with the Juvenile Protection Association. When Cressy studied the taxi-dance halls, his background instantly connected the spaces to concerns and surveillance of youths. The halls became spaces communities feared would corrupt youths.

Cressy also noted the people frequenting the halls, specifically "the group of men who are denied social acceptance elsewhere because they bear an invidious racial mark...Of these Orientals nine-tenths are Filipinos, and the Chinese contribute virtually the remainder."⁶⁵ Throughout California and Chicago, the general public and detailed investigators recognized Filipinos regularly attending taxi-dance halls. Filipinos would embrace public spaces because their living spaces were in poor conditions and not really theirs, as Espana-Maram argues. By attending and taking part in the taxi-dance halls, young Filipino men had a place to occupy as their own. These public recreational spaces tended to be filled with migratory and lower class workers, and the taxi-dance halls especially were known for Filipino, Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican patrons, occasionally with white men as well.

Social reformer and police forces looked down upon taxi-dance halls in California, frequently publicizing their distaste in newspapers. Their criticism came from multiple angles, including the customer-base and the acts of the women. In a 1929 *Los Angeles Times* article

⁶⁵ Paul G. Cressy, *The Taxi-Dance Hall: A Sociological Study in Commercialized Recreation and City Life*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1932, 109.

about attempts to open up another taxi-dance hall, states that the hall was “closed on the ground that it was ‘immoral and improper and not for the best interests of the community.’”⁶⁶ The words “improper” and “immoral” were used multiple times in the article, referencing the Filipino and Mexican workers who attend the dance hall. Connecting the customers to the community presents the public fear of the racialized others disrupting their own lives and spaces.

Espana-Maram’s chapter on taxi-dance halls, “‘White Trash’ and ‘Brown Hordes’: Taxi Dance Halls and the Policing of Working-Class Bodies,” looks at the spaces, the relationships between taxi-dancers and patrons, and the role of surveillance and public perception of the dance halls. Public surveillance of the dance halls came in the form of police forces, moral reformers, and nativist organizations. These forces worked and watched in different capacities, but they all policed the hall spaces and bodies within them. The commentary from the surveillance impacted the general public’s view of taxi-dance halls as reports flourished in newspapers.

Taxi-dance halls were a central place of recreation of Filipinos in California, which led to the public making the two synonymous. The following section continues to look at taxi-dance halls and criticisms around them, in terms of the popularity of Filipinos in the halls, the role of taxi-dancers, and the efforts of surveillance in and around taxi-dance halls and the occupation of the spaces by young Filipino men.

a. Filipino Popularity

In the public’s perception, young Filipino men and taxi-dance halls became interchangeable. Taxi-dancers also made the connection with the Filipino patrons, but under a different attitude. A 1931 *Los Angeles Times* article articulated the view and experience of taxi-dancers from Jeanne de Al Moreau, a working taxi-dancer at the time. In the article, reasoning

⁶⁶ “Taxi Dance Hall Permit Revoked by Supervisors,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Sep 12, 1929.

behind Filipinos being popular and preferred by the working women comes down to background and physical means. As Jeanne describes:

Filipinos as a rule are splendid dancers. Lots of the Filipino patrons of the hall where I work come from well-to-do families in the islands. Many of them attend schools here and dancing is their favorite diversion. This dance hall is one of the few places here where they are welcomed to the dance floor, hence the large patronage it enjoys from these little brown men.⁶⁷

Taxi-dancers tended to see Filipinos as more mannered and courteous than other patrons because the young men either had an education in the Philippines or were hoping for one in the United States, which also meant the taxis placed them in a higher class than other patrons. Being better dancers also became a perk for taxi-dancers working with Filipinos, as it would be a more enjoyable experience. Jeanne de Al Moreau's comment hints at recognizing the restrictions Filipinos faced; the close interactions between taxis and Filipino patrons could provide insight into Filipinos experiences, unlike the perception of the general public's on the migrant population.

The "Confessions of a Taxi Dancer" article also compares white patrons to Filipinos, Japanese, and Chinese clients, as "white men, as a rule, are the worst offenders where getting fresh with the girls is concerned."⁶⁸ Taxi-dancers enjoyed the treatment and style of the usually educated Filipino men, especially as they were the most attended customers. However, Filipino popularity in the dance halls also meant the violence that occurred around these spaces were tied to the Filipino men as well, creating the cultural synonyms. One Filipino man, Max Lamar, remembers the worst part of taxi-dance halls was leaving through the mobs of white men outside the dance halls.⁶⁹ Physical violence of riots and individual incidents against Filipinos tended to be blamed on Filipinos regardless. The negative view of the dance halls by the general public grew from these synonyms along with the role of working women.

⁶⁷ de Al Moreau, "Confessions of a Taxi Dancer," *Los Angeles Times*, 1931.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ *Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance*, Schwartz and Dunn, 1984.

b. Taxi-Dancers

The general public viewed taxi-dancers with a lower social status because of their form of work. The women who worked in the taxi-dance halls were majorly white and from lower classes, some even being eastern European immigrants or migrants from southern states.⁷⁰ The public saw the women “stressing their sex and yet committing no immoral act,”⁷¹ because of they were paid to dance with men, and presenting themselves to be appealing in order to continue to get business. The label of prostitutes did not fully attach itself to the taxi dancers, but it was assumed that those taxi interactions could lead to other, more ‘immoral’ acts.

Although the public was viewing these women as low class, there was also a push for the public to better understand their work. There are multiple newspaper articles in which the dance hall owners and the women themselves explain the work, the necessity of a job, and the moneymaking, not pleasure-seeking, aspects of the work. Throughout these articles, there is emphasis placed on how the women did not engage with Filipino men outside of the dance halls, as if to keep in line with the racial attitudes at the time.

A large part of the necessity of the job was being able to live, therefore the need to make money. During the Great Depression, some portions of the general public provided a sense of sympathy towards the taxi-dancers as they struggled to get by and support their family: “many young married women have applied for work in the dance halls to tide things over until their mates can return to work.”⁷² Through this *Los Angeles Times* quote, taxi work is presented as not a long-term affair, but work to make ends meet. The *Los Angeles Times* presents married taxi-

⁷⁰ Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, “‘White Trash’ Meets the ‘Little Brown Monkeys’: The Taxi Dance Hall as a Site of Interracial and Gender Alliances between White Working Class Women and Filipino Immigrant Men in the 1920s and 30s,” *Amerasia Journal* 24, no. 2 (1998): 115 – 134.

⁷¹ A L. Wooldridge, “The Taxi Dancer Gets Her Man!” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Jul 3, 1932.

⁷² Wooldridge, “The Taxi Dancer Gets Her Man!” *Los Angeles Times*, 1932. The first part of that quote start, “Since the days of depression set in and unemployment became so universal,” connecting the work to the depression era lifestyle.

dancers as more respectable because of the necessity of money at the time, and less likely to become prostitutes because of commitments to their husbands.

This was a change in attitude from seven years previously when married taxi-dancers and their husbands were both criticized: “No man, if he has a drop of red blood in his veins or a spark of pride in his soul is going to allow his wife to throw herself into the arms of scores of varied males nightly for the price of a nickel.”⁷³ The public presented husbands in this situation as not having control of their taxi-dancing wives, furthering the promiscuity of her actions. However, taxi-dance hall owners continuously told the public of measures and restrictions to keep ‘proper’ women in the halls and ‘improper’ ones out.

Some of the measure to keep taxi-dancers business only within the walls of the hall can be seen in an interaction between a taxi-dancer and her supervisor. When a customer would ask the taxi-dancer to leave with him, the supervisors instructed the women to “tell them you’d love to go, but that you don’t feel you know them well enough,” which then led the customers to spend more money and “come scrambling back with a handful of tickets.”⁷⁴ The taxi-dancer were trained to keep men interested, in order to make a living, but stay distanced to keep some sense of respectability.

Regardless of the concerned and demonizing conversations around taxi-dancers, many of the women improved their economic status through taxi-dancing. The women took advantage of the marginalized and stigmatized positions in order to move up economically in the United States. The social status of the women lowered because of the dancing, but these women found a way to economically take control of their own lives. Filipino patrons paid well and consistently, which aided the taxi-dancers in their climb to economic success.

⁷³ Polly Carter, “Craze for Jazz and Thrills Lures Pleasure-Mad Girls to Ranks of Dancing “Taxis,”” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Jul 19, 1925.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

c. Surveillance

As taxi-dancer women's status decreased on the social ladder in the 1930s and various public figures began to notice the increase of young Filipino men in the state and in the taxi-dance halls, these spaces began to be more closely watched. Surrounding community members, local police, federal forces, and the dance hall owners all closely observed the taxi-dance halls and the players within the spaces. The surveillance of the dance halls, dancers, and patrons provides another important step to understanding why the space became central to creating restrictions of interracial relationships.

To take a step back briefly, the surveillance of taxi-dance halls can be seen as a parallel of the United States government regulating the Philippines as a whole. Alfred McCoy's book *Policing America's Empire* traces the build up of the Philippines as a surveillance state through multiple levels of organizations.⁷⁵ The constant viewing of the other and being critical of their actions and movements creates the surveillance mentality and I believe this same process of surveillance existed within the taxi-dance halls, with different organizations watching the actions of Filipinos and those they interacted with.

The extension of surveillance into the dance halls emphasizes the status of Filipinos as colonial subjects. The United States policing forces not only continued to watch Filipinos as U.S. nationals in the continental United States, but they also observed the young Filipino men specifically in taxi-dance halls, knowing the centrality of the spaces for Filipino congregation.

Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns expands upon the idea of studying Filipinos in the taxi-dance halls,

A closer look at the exceptional Filipino dancing body reveals that it was never too far away from the American empire's disciplining of the colonial subject. The Filipino body's smooth gliding across the dance floor was inseparable from the growing threat of miscegenation and contagion. Nativists' paranoia about miscegenation and contagion (in the form of moral and physical concerns) converged repeatedly on the errant Filipino dancing body. Filipinos in taxi dancehalls are routinely narrated as the corporeal icon for

⁷⁵ McCoy, *Policing America's Empire*.

miscegenation between Filipinos and white women, even as those narrations continue to be challenged and negated.⁷⁶

San Pablo Burns argues that the Filipino body represented a threat to white American men. The physical interactions and moral implications incorporate the Filipino male body and transfer to the white female body, manifested in taxi-dancers, which cause concern and led to surveillance of the space overtime.

The role of reforms in the dance halls became a theme of surveillance as various restrictions and hopes for change were common in *Los Angeles Times* articles. One later instance of this came in a 1940 article titled “Dance Hall Inquiry Prompted by Federal Men, Says Bodkin.” Henry G. Bodkin was the President of the Police Commission in Los Angeles at the time and was looking for new regulations to better keep the taxi-dance halls up to society’s standards.⁷⁷ The inclusion of federal investigation into the dance hall situations shows the Police Commission being at a loss and believing in the severity of the ‘immorality’ filling the taxi-dance halls. Concerns of ‘immorality’ related to the interactions between colonial subjects and American women. The investigation by federal forces reflected the larger colonial standing of Filipinos. The guardian figure of American territories watched and regulated the spaces occupied by colonial subjects.

Ultimately, the federal investigators proposed a matron to patrol the dance floor “in addition to reports from the dance-hall detail, limit dimming of lights, eliminate soft-drink commission and charge a straight 10 cents a dance.”⁷⁸ There had already been a consistent police detail on the halls and dancers but the federal report encouraged a stricter and stronger force.

⁷⁶ Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns, “‘Splendid Dancing’: Filipino ‘Exceptionalism’ in Taxi Dancehalls,” *Dance Research Journal* 40, no. 2 (Winter, 2008): 33.

⁷⁷ “Dance Hall Inquiry Prompted by Federal Men, Says Bodkin,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Nov 7, 1940.

⁷⁸ “Dance Hall Inquiry Prompted by Federal Men, Says Bodkin,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Nov 7, 1940.

However, in the article, the exact conditions of the hall were not mentioned, just that the conditions were “bad.”⁷⁹ Years previously, communities blamed the actions of women for the conditions of the halls. These complaints and actions led the charge with the hall reforms, altering how the conditions of the dance halls incorporated actions of morality along with physicality of the space.

The *Los Angeles Times* detailed examples of indecent acts by the taxi-dancers in their 1925 piece “Craze for Jazz and Thrills Lures Pleasure-Mad Girls to Ranks of Dancing ‘Taxis’.” In the article, the following comment is made: “despite all the rules that the dance-hall authorities may seek to impose, only about 25 per cent go home each night with some one they have picked up while the moaning saxophones have thrilled them around the floor.”⁸⁰ At this time, there were already regulations restricting the private lives of the dancers, essentially taking away a private life. The implication of the taxi-dance hall being a sexually charged atmosphere, led to the belief of women going home with various men. Taxi-dancers would have to regularly check in with dance-hall owners and police officers about their whereabouts as a way for these authority figures to impose restrictions and punishments against a taxi-dancer’s sexuality.

Years later in 1932, the restrictions around taxi-dancers become more public, as an article listed the “Strict Rules for These Girls.”⁸¹ One rule worked to better keep track of the taxi-dancers: the taxi-dancers “must work five days a week, no less (This way, the police know where she is practically all of the time.”⁸² Both of these articles show the direct actions of dance hall owners and police forces closely watching the women and their actions, increasing the role of

⁷⁹ “Dance Hall Inquiry Prompted by Federal Men, Says Bodkin,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1940.

⁸⁰ Carter, “Craze for Jazz and Thrills Lures Pleasure-Mad Girls to Ranks of Dancing ‘Taxis.’” *Los Angeles Times*, 1925.

⁸¹ This section is listed within “The Taxi Dancer Gets Her Man!” article. Wooldridge, “The Taxi Dancer Gets Her Man!” *Los Angeles Times*, 1932.

⁸² *Ibid.*

surveillance. Policemen and dance hall owners could easily enact restrictions on the taxis, but could not do the same to patrons. Surveillance of the Filipino patrons acted in place of strict rules. An exception to this was the police and public actions in Watsonville, California in 1930.

Watsonville, a large agricultural town south of Santa Cruz, had a population that would change with the seasons as labors filled the town and left for work. Filipino and Mexican workers filled the streets when harvests time came around. The racial tensions between white and Filipinos ran high in Watsonville and those tensions broke with the interactions between white women and young Filipino men. The *Los Angeles Times* ran a piece on February 2, 1930 titled “Taxi Dance Girls Start Filipinos on the Wrong Foot: Lonely Islanders’ Quest for Woman Companionship Brings Problems of Grave National Moment.” The article sets out to blame the violence erupting between Filipino and white young men on heterosexual interracial interaction, specifically how “the islanders were accustomed to dancing with white girls.”⁸³ The role of the American empire was also seen in the article hinted at the journey of the colonial subjects and the problematic situations that arose. While federal forces examined the Filipino situation in the “Dance Hall Inquiry Prompted by Federal Men” article, community and local involvement and surveillance was presented within the “Taxi Dance Girls Start Filipinos on the Wrong Foot” article. The colonial power of the United States acted on these varying levels from federal to local involvement.

On January 21st of that same year, riots broke out near a dance hall in Watsonville in which the local police intervened “between the white and brown youths.”⁸⁴ This riot came

⁸³ Jackson Berger, “Taxi-Dance Girls Start Filipinos on Wrong Foot: Lonely Islanders’ Quest for Woman Companionship Brings Problems of Grave National Moment.” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Feb 2, 1930.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

months after a neighboring town's Filipino-white riot in Exeter.⁸⁵ The violence against young Filipino men grew and the taxi-dance halls became a central location to form reasoning for such violence in the white public's eye.⁸⁶

The *Los Angeles Times* reported on a similar but less violent act of public disturbance. The community played an essential role in an Ontario instance described in the article "Arrest Owner of Dance Hall."⁸⁷ The community surveillance of the space led to the arrest of the owner and continued protests against the hall's existence even during the owner's arrest. The supposed restriction of white men entering the halls created a space white men could not control. By bringing the threat to youth, the community attempted to further demonize the taxi-dance halls and the actions within them. The community saw the youth as malleable people and did not want them to be corrupted by these spaces. The white communities viewed their own youth in a transitory stage, while the young Filipino men would be permanently viewed as youth. The reasons for such detailed surveillance and the community backlash is deeply tied to youth and interracial aspects.

Filipino occupation of taxi-dance halls became engrained in their California life. The role of surveillance and the public's perception of the spaces, as seen through newspapers, were reflective of the perception of Filipinos as well. Taxi-dance halls became centers for conflict and white response to interracial relationships increased. However, the roles of taxi-dance halls to Filipinos relates back to experience in the Philippines and was an important aspect to their migratory life cycle.

⁸⁵ Howard DeWitt, *Anti-Filipino Movements in California: A History, Bibliography and Study Guide*. San Francisco, CA: R and E Research Associate, 1976, 34-35.

⁸⁶ "Eight white youths of Watsonville have been charged with rioting as result of that foray and await trial." Berger, "Taxi-Dance Girls Start Filipinos on Wrong Foot," *Los Angeles Times*, 1930.

⁸⁷ "Arrest Owner of Dance Hall," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Jun 14, 1929.

VI. CONCLUSION: ACHIEVING AMERICA

Despite the discrimination Filipinos faced in the United States, Filipinos still held on to a sense of belonging. The frequent occupation of taxi-dance halls continued even though violence usually followed. For Filipinos, dancing was a connection back to the Philippines, an activity they regularly did with passion. Bulosan describes his first time dancing with, “the world is like a cradle upon the biggest ocean in the universe. There are no other sounds except the beating of your hearts, and...the wild blaring of the trumpet and the savage boom-boom bring you back to reality.”⁸⁸ By attending dance halls, Filipinos could connect their Philippine traditions with their new American-ness; for Filipinos, they could attend the halls and dance with white women because they too were American. It is unsurprising that Filipinos connected themselves to America. The colonial relationship with the United States in the Philippines informed Filipinos of their own American status. Filipinos saw and travelled the West Coast; the young men worked the land and grew up throughout the western states.

Even with the sense of belonging, Filipinos still faced disappointment of what made America. The discrimination, denial, and confines of economic opportunity for Filipinos filled them with discontent:

Toward the end I was disappointed. I had worked on a farm all my life in the Philippines, and now I was working on a farm again. I could not compromise my picture of America with the filthy bunkhouses in which we lived and the falling wooden houses in which the natives lived. This was not the America I wanted to see, but it was the first great lesson in my life...Wherever I went I found the same horror, the same anguish and fear...Yet slowly I began to doubt the *promise* that was America.⁸⁹

Yet, Filipinos stayed in the United States because they knew the situation back home was not going to improve. The contentious relationship for Filipinos in the United States continued under the same circumstances of which they entered the country.

⁸⁸ Bulosan, *America is in the Heart*, 77.

⁸⁹ Bulosan, *If You Want to Know What We Are*, 15.

As more Filipinos filled the West Coast, aggressive resistance by white Americans grew. The exclusionary legislation against Chinese and Japanese immigrants granted Filipinos entry to the United States but soon exclusionary legislation reached them as well. The role of federal and state legislation further shaped what migratory lives Filipinos lived in the United States.

CHAPTER 2: VIOLENCE ENACTED BY FEDERAL LAW

Between 1922 and 1935, federal lawmakers authored and passed pieces of legislation which restricted the lives of Filipinos and aliens ineligible to citizenship. The legislation acted as racial violence against Filipinos and Asian immigrants through the effects of limiting capabilities and building barriers for these non-white persons in the United States. I use ‘violence’ in the sense of a form of state violence, where an entire group of people is harmed instead of a single physical act. I interpret the federal laws in this chapter as violence because of the harmful effects on Filipinos nationals.

The Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act, passed in 1922, partially allowed for a woman’s citizenship to no longer be connected to that of her husband’s. However, this change did not apply to women who married aliens ineligible to citizenship, also known as Asian immigrants. The history of derivative citizenship leading to the Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act is traced in this chapter, leading to how the legislation acted as a form of anti-miscegenation because of the barrier of marriage to aliens.

The relation of Filipinos to the Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act comes through the status of Filipinos as aliens. Socially, the public could view Filipinos as aliens because of their Asian heritage and being racialized others in the state. Legally, California Representative Richard Welch attempted to deem Filipinos as aliens ineligible to citizenship in 1929. Welch’s proposed bill failed since the United States still held power over the Philippines at the time. The alien transition did occur with the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934.

The Tydings-McDuffie Act, also known as the Philippine Independence Act of 1934, began the process of granting the Philippines their independence while instantly making

Filipinos aliens ineligible to citizenship within the United States. This status change placed Filipinos within the group of person American-born women would lose their citizenship for if married. Through these terms, the Married Women's Independent Citizenship Act can be seen as anti-miscegenation legislation since it created barriers based on race for marriage.

Following the Tydings-McDuffie Act, Congress passed the Filipino Repatriation Act in 1935 to provide free transportation for Filipinos back to the Philippines. While *Los Angeles Times* articles advertised the Repatriation Act to its readers and emphasized the possibility for Filipinos to return to the Philippines, the intentions behind the act show exclusionary and removal attitudes.

The social and legal status of Filipinos as aliens ineligible to citizenship created the ties between the Married Women's Independent Citizenship Act, the Welch Bill, the Tydings-McDuffie Act, and the Repatriation Act. The loss of citizenship for women due to marrying an alien placed the Married Women's Independent Citizenship Act as anti-miscegenation. The law affected Filipinos as the young men's status changed. The federal legislation constructed racial violence against Filipinos, impacting their migratory lives in the United States.

I. NATURALIZATION, EXPATRIATION, AND INDEPENDENT CITIZENSHIP

Race, citizenship, and gender weave together in the legal history of the United States. For immigrants, citizenship held the ultimate entry to the new country. The social and legal capabilities of citizenship were not equal for all immigrants though. The race and gender of various immigrants affected the status of citizenship. Nancy Cott explains the meaning of citizenship,

A focus on immigration and naturalization emphasized that citizenship is a political fiction, an identification that can be put on like new clothing by the properly readied wearer. Or taken off. Being fiction does not mean that citizenship is false but that it is purposefully constructed, all the more reason that its meanings and the

rewards and obligations it conveys may vary over time and among citizens...Whatever else it entails, citizenship is a distinctive form of social classification that colors personal standing in any community.⁹⁰

Cott points to the construction of citizenship and its malleability, terms based on race and gender. The United States government denied aliens the right to citizenship based on their race, as with Japanese and Chinese person. The denial of the citizenship also denied of other rights within the country. Marriage acted similarly to and with citizenship, as Cotts declares, “Marriage is also a civil status that can be taken on or ended, yet when in force has a powerful impact on personal identity.”⁹¹ The citizenship status and abilities of immigrants connected to one’s marriage capabilities, a history traced through American legislation.

The evolution of citizenship laws to marriage laws can be traced from the Naturalization Law to the Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act, ultimately leading to what Candice Bredbenner expertly describes as, “Marrying an alien could be either an act of disloyalty or one of patriotism, depending on the sex and nationality of the actor.”⁹² The divide between disloyalty and patriotism starts in 1855 with Section 2 of the amendments made to the Naturalization Law of 1802. The Expatriation Act of 1907 reinforced and disputed these changes, specifically in Sections 3 and 4. The Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act of 1922 the altered the clauses within the Expatriation Act. The web of the connections between these acts helps to argue the divide described above and the disdain towards American-born women marrying ‘aliens ineligible to citizenship,’ which eventually led to understanding how this too was a restriction placed upon the men who were categorized as ‘aliens ineligible to citizenship.’

Over a hundred years prior to the passage of the Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act, in 1802 Congress passed the Naturalization Law. This 1802 law repealed the

⁹⁰ Nancy F. Cott, “Marriage and Women’s Citizenship in the United States, 1830-1934,” *American Historical Review* 103, no. 5 (December 1998), 1440.

⁹¹Cott, “Marriage and Women’s Citizenship in the United States, 1830-1934,” 1440-1441.

⁹² Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*, 105.

Naturalization Act of 1798 by altering what was to become the naturalization process. In 1855, two amendments made further alterations. The focus of the 1855 amendments at the time concerned the citizenship of children born outside the United States. However, also included in 1855 was Section 2, which stated: “*And be it further enacted*, That any woman who might lawfully be naturalized under the existing laws, married, or who shall be married to a citizen of the United States, shall be deemed and taken to be a citizen.”⁹³ Section 2 made marriage the naturalization process for foreign-born women. When a woman married an American citizen male, she gained his citizenship without going through any application, residency guidelines, or other measures to ensure citizenship.

The amendment to the 1802 law also worked to began the process of tying a woman’s citizenship status to that of her husband, a process known as derivative citizenship. The Naturalization Law’s Section 2 made a foreign-born woman’s citizenship contingent on her husband’s, an act of allowance or force depending on one’s perspective. At this point, the use of derivative citizenship only applied to foreign-born women becoming American citizens through their husbands, but this grew in 1907.

The 59th Congress passed the Expatriation Act of 1907 on March 2nd of that year. The Act worked with access to citizenship and Americans abroad, but mainly paid attention to married women and expanded the power of derivative citizenship. Section 3 of the Act reads: “That any American woman who marries a foreigner shall take the nationality of her husband.”⁹⁴ Section 3 shared the same idea of the 1855 amendment: a woman taking the citizenship of her husband. However, the Expatriation Act extended this specifically to American-born women, and as Ann

⁹³ An Act to secure the Rights of Citizenship to Children of Citizens of the United States born out of the Limits thereof, 10 Stat. 604, 33rd Cong., 2nd sess. (February 10, 1855), 71.

⁹⁴ An Act In reference to the expatriation of citizens and their protection abroad, H. Res. 24122, 59th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 2534, daily ed. (March 2, 1907): H1228-1229.

Marie Nicolosi describes it, “Congress codified *derivative citizenship* for American women. Derivative citizenship...deprived American women of their political birthright.”⁹⁵ No longer did foreign-born woman gain American citizenship through marriage to an American man, but American-born women lost their American citizenship through marriage to a foreign-born man. In both cases, a woman altered her citizenship to match the immobile male citizenship.

The transition between Section 2 of the 1855 amendments and Section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 began favoring of women residing within the United States. Foreign-born women who came to the United States were able to gain American citizenship through expected womanly duties of marriage and homemaking. Lawmakers viewed the foreign-born women as becoming Americanized through marriage, ensuring they will not become public charges and value their American citizenship.⁹⁶ On the other side, American-born women who married foreign-born men made the decision to no longer honor their country, to not produce strong American children, and to place their allegiances elsewhere. The American government saw this form of marriage as disloyal and therefore penalized through the laws.

Section 4 of the Expatriation Act continued the favoritism present in these laws: “That any foreign woman who acquires American citizenship by marriage to an American shall be assumed to retain the same after the termination of the marital relation if she continues to reside in the United States.”⁹⁷ Section 4 reinforced the 1855 Act, as women gained American citizenship via marriage regardless of the longevity of the marriage. The ability to retain residency and citizenship following the end of a marriage granted foreign-born women more

⁹⁵ Ann Marie Nicolosi, “‘We Do Not Want Our Girls to Marry Foreigners’: Gender, Race, and American Citizenship,” *NWSA Journal* 13, no. 3 (Fall 2011), 1.

⁹⁶ Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*.

⁹⁷ An Act In reference to the expatriation of citizens and their protection abroad, H. Res. 24122, 59th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 2534, daily ed. (March 2, 1907): H1228-1229.

political independence than American-born women who married foreign-born men, especially starting in 1920.

American women gained the right to vote in 1920 as Congress ratified the 19th Amendment. However, any woman who had married an alien did not have this right despite being born in the United States because she no longer carried American citizenship under the Expatriation Act. On the other side, any foreign-born woman who gained citizenship through marriage could vote. This fact caused various women's group to start working towards a common cause again following the 19th Amendment, and that goal was independent citizenship.

Independent citizenship at this time worked against the barriers set-up by derivative citizenship. Particularly, women's groups worked towards independent citizenship, largely under the collaborated Women's Joint Congressional Committee (WJCC). These women saw independent citizenship as "the abolition of marital expatriation and naturalization."⁹⁸ Through removing restrictions on expatriation and naturalization tied to marriages, women's citizenship would no longer be tied to that of their husbands. Thereby, derivative citizenship would be removed from law in the United States. In order to best achieve this, the WJCC turned toward making close relationships with the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization to ensure measures in those fields. Albert Johnson, John Raker, and John Cable were three of the leading men in the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization tied to the changes for independent citizenship.

The WJCC and the Immigration and Naturalization Committee focused on current laws for American-born women and foreign-born women, those specifically outlined in the Expatriation Act of 1907. Eventually the WJCC and Immigration and Naturalization House Committee agreed upon certain restrictions on foreign-born women's residency and repeals of

⁹⁸ Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*, 3.

the 1907 Act for American-born women. The WJCC had issues with the bill, but “still endorsed the bill, despite the restrictions it maintained on women’s control of their citizenship.”⁹⁹ To the WJCC, the 1922 Act was the best they were going to get.

The Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act, also known as the Cable Act due to Ohio Representative John L. Cable work on the bill, became law on September 22, 1922 after it smoothly passed through Congress and the desk of President William Harding. The name given to the act, Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act, made it appear as though the WJCC’s goal was achieved. However, what the Cable Act actually enacted did not necessarily fully grant independent citizenship. A sliver of derivative citizenship still existed within the United States aimed at those women who married alien men.

The Cable Act worked to repeal the aspects of the 1855 Naturalization Law that the Expatriation Act expanded upon. Section 2 of the Cable Act states:

That any woman who marries a citizen of the United States after the passage of this Act, or any woman whose husband is naturalized after the passage of this Act, shall not become a citizen of the United States by reason of such marriage or naturalization; but, if eligible to citizenship, she may be naturalized upon full and complete compliance with all requirements of the naturalization laws...¹⁰⁰

Section 2 of the Cable Act established that foreign-born women not automatically gaining American citizenship through marriage to an American citizen. A marriage certificate no longer passed as a form of naturalization, as it had for the past 67 years. The process of naturalization for women in this situation altered and shortened from the traditional form of naturalization, but still ensured extra effort to gain citizenship than previous legislation. The WJCC advocated for this change in law because, to them, it showed that a woman must be persistent and truly value American citizenship to make it through the obstacles of naturalization.¹⁰¹ The support for this

⁹⁹ Ibid, 90.

¹⁰⁰ An Act Relative to the naturalization of citizenship of married women, 67th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 411, daily ed. (September 22, 1922): 1021-1022.

¹⁰¹ Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*, 92.

change displayed the continuation of Congress preferring foreign-born women marrying American citizens, since these women had to prove their loyalty to the country. The other side of the favoritism showed the disdain for women who willingly married non-American citizen men, an act described as a “voluntary surrender of citizenship” and as “defiant and deliberate.”¹⁰² These American-born women were still seen as traitors in the eyes of Congress, but the Cable Act attempted to improve citizenship statuses for American-born women as well.

The third section of the Cable Act dealt specifically with the citizenship status of American-born women who married immigrant men. The section worked to repeal some aspects of derivative citizenship. Section 3 states:

That a woman citizen of the United States shall not cease to be a citizen of the United States by reason of her marriage after the passage of this Act, unless she makes a formal renunciation of her citizenship before a court having jurisdiction over naturalization of aliens: *Provided*, That any woman citizen who marries an alien ineligible to citizenship shall cease to be a citizen of the United States.¹⁰³

After the ratification of the Cable Act, generally women no longer lost their citizenship due to marrying an immigrant man. Section 3 of the Cable Act responded to and repealed Section 3 of the Expatriation Act, the section that expanded derivative citizenship to all women within the United States.¹⁰⁴ However, many instances when a woman could still lose her citizenship, through renunciation, as stated above, or through consistent residency abroad for at least two years in her husband’s native nation existed.¹⁰⁵ Also, the fact that a woman still lost her

¹⁰² Ibid, 91.

¹⁰³ An Act Relative to the naturalization of citizenship of married women, 67th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congression Record* 411, daily ed. (September 22, 1922): 1021-1022.

¹⁰⁴ Section 7 of the Cable Act specifically repealed Section 3 of the Expatriation Act and explained the meaning of such a repeal: “That section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 is repealed. Such repeal shall not restore citizenship lost under such section nor terminate citizenship resumed under such section. A woman who has resumed under such section citizenship lost by marriage shall, upon the passage of this Act, have for all purposes the same citizenship status as immediately preceding her marriage.”

¹⁰⁵ Sec 3 “If during the continuance of the martial status she resides continuously for two years in a foreign State of which her husband is a citizen or subject, or for five years continuously outside the United States, she shall thereafter be subject to the same presumption as is a naturalized citizen of the United States under the second paragraph of section 2 of the Act entitled “An Act in reference to the expatriation of citizens and their protection abroad,” approved March 2, 1907.”

citizenship when she married “an alien ineligible to citizenship” stood. Section 3 of the Cable Act only allowed women to keep their American citizenship under specific instances.

Prominently, Section 3 only applied to marriages *after* the Act was passed; for alien marriage prior to the passage of the Cable Act, Section 4 describes the situation,

That a woman who, before the passage of this Act, has lost her United States citizenship by reason of her marriage to an alien eligible to citizenship, may be naturalized as provided by section 2 of this Act: *Provided*, That no certificate of arrival shall be required to be filed with her petition if during the continuance of the marital status she shall have resided within the United States. After her naturalization she shall have the same citizenship status as if her marriage had taken place after the passage of this Act.¹⁰⁶

Even though a woman was born an American citizen, she still had to apply for naturalization following her marriage to an alien prior to September of 1922. These women could not automatically regain their American citizenship. Nicolosi describes the Cable Act as “the processes of repealing the Expatriation Act of 1907, but only in a piecemeal fashion.”¹⁰⁷ The Expatriation Act stood for the lawfulness of derivative citizenship and the Cable Act did remove some of the standards for such citizenship, but Section 3 and 4 stood as representatives of derivative citizenship.

The restrictions left for derivative citizenship once again highlighted the divide of loyalty and disloyal of marriage in the United States, as Bredbenner described. Although foreign-born women now had to apply for naturalization, the process was less intensive than standard naturalization processes. The belief of foreign-born women being Americanized through marriage still held strong, the fear was that these women cared more for their new country than American-born women in relationships with aliens.

American-born women continued to be demonized for their marriages to aliens and the laws at the time reflected that with residency restrictions and having to apply for naturalization in

¹⁰⁶ An Act Relative to the naturalization of citizenship of married women, 67th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congression Record* 411, daily ed. (September 22, 1922): 1021-1022.

¹⁰⁷ Nicolosi, “‘We Do Not Want Our Girls to Marry Foreigners’: Gender, Race, and American Citizenship,” 15.

cases prior to the Act being passed. Derivative citizenship did not go away and the Married Women's Independent Citizenship Act did not grant independent citizenship to all women. Even under Section 4 of the Cable Act, a woman could still not regain American citizenship if she initially married an alien ineligible to citizenship, as her husband was unable to do the same.

The government favoring foreign-born women over foreign-born men in the United States mirrored the immigration beliefs at the time, especially when considering the restriction on women marrying 'aliens ineligible to citizenship.' The naturalization laws between 1855 and 1922 acted as marriage laws, reflecting racial, ethnic, and immigration ideology in the United States – restricting the rights of women who stepped outside of what was socially acceptable and further affecting the men who are 'aliens ineligible to citizenship.'

II. BROADER IMPACTS OF THE CABLE ACT

The Cable Act had wider reaching effects than the pseudo-granting of independent citizenship for women. As the legislation acted as a form of anti-miscegenation law and furthered aliens and Filipinos inability to settle and follow a conservative life path in the United States. "Aliens ineligible to citizenship" was a racialized term for Japanese, Chinese, and other Asian persons from the Naturalization Act of 1790. The consequence of marrying an alien ineligible to citizenship created a life-changing barrier for American-born women. The legislation applied to Filipinos through public perspective and the attempt to make Filipinos alien with the Welch Bill.

The Cable Act acted as anti-miscegenation legislation because of the conditions around marrying an alien ineligible to citizenship. Under Section 4 of the Cable Act, if a citizen woman married an alien, she would lose her American citizenship. The term 'alien ineligible to

citizenship’ was a euphemism for Asian immigrants in the United States, an argument Mae Ngai makes in *Impossible Subjects*.¹⁰⁸ The inclusion of Section 4 brought race into the Cable Act. The deterrent around marrying an alien ineligible to citizenship was so strong that it in fact placed legal barriers around American citizen women marrying Asian immigrant men. Because of the inclusion of race into the Cable Act and the consequence of marrying an alien man, the Cable Act acted as anti-miscegenation legislation. Specifically, the Cable Act acted as a form of anti-miscegenation legislation in California that responded to the changing racial landscape of the time.

The phrase ‘alien ineligible to citizenship’ was important to both the argument and to later legislation. ‘Alien ineligible to citizenship’ had been used since the Naturalization Act of 1790 but its meaning and usage solidified with the alien land law cases in the early decades of the 20th century.¹⁰⁹ This term came to mean persons who could be in the United States but could not become citizens, and throughout history this word referred to immigrants and migrants from Asian descent, as those who the persons who began to be strictly restricted from the United States and from a social and legal citizenship. While persons born on American soil are American citizens, the children of Japanese and Chinese immigrants who were born in the United States tended to be seen as aliens regardless. The social perspective on Asian persons placed these children and generations in a conundrum; legally, these persons hold American citizenship, socially they are excluded and those who are actually aliens ineligible to citizenship hold both.

¹⁰⁸ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 9.

¹⁰⁹ The alien land laws hoped to prevent Asian immigrants from permanently settling in the United States by creating legislation which prevented them from owning land.

Regardless of citizenship status at this point, the United States government held power to determine the standings, circumstances, and opportunities of all persons, a key point Lisa Lowe expresses:

...to observe that the life condition, choices, and expressions of Asian Americans have been significantly determined by the U.S. states through the apparatus of immigration laws and policies, through the enfranchisement denied or extended to immigrant individuals and communities, and through the processes of naturalization and citizenship.¹¹⁰

The control the United States has on individuals is through the means of legislation, granting and denying rights to large groups of people. For Asians, and Asian Americans, these restrictions have existed since the mid-1800s, and the Cable Act was another act in the exclusionary timeline with the inclusion of the ‘aliens ineligible to citizenship.’

The clause of, “any woman citizen who marries an alien ineligible to citizenship shall cease to be a citizen of the United States,” intended to deter American citizen women from marrying men of Asian descent because of their racial standing through the consequence of the women losing their home country and its protection.¹¹¹ The effects and consequences of the Cable Act then expanded in 1924 with the passage of the Johnson-Reed Quota Act. In the immigration act, women who married aliens and left the country would likely not be able to re-enter because they no longer have American citizenship and belong to countries with smaller quotas. The processes of repatriating for these women could only be possible at the end of the marriage to their husbands, which forced some women to decided between their citizenship and their husband.

The restrictions of the Cable Act reinforced the division of Asians in America and their ability to culturally and socially become part of the country. The Cable Act legally created the warning for women against racialized others and responded to the racial landscape in California.

¹¹⁰ Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 7.

¹¹¹ An Act Relative to the naturalization of citizenship of married women, 67th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congression Record* 411, daily ed. (September 22, 1922): 1021-1022.

With the influx of Filipinos in California, the Cable Act and surrounding legislation shaped how Filipinos included in the definition of ‘aliens ineligible to citizenship’; the United States government determined Filipinos capabilities within the country.

Not only was the Cable Act a form of anti-miscegenation legislation, but also it strongly affected men, alien men particularly. The Married Women’s Independent Citizenship Act obviously impacted women and, through Section 4 of the Act, the law also affected men. The possibility of losing one’s citizenship due to marrying an alien ineligible to citizenship meant the probability of women marrying a man who came from an immigrant population with very few marriageable women within his own community decreased. Therefore, the Cable Act increased the inability for immigrant men to settle and establish themselves because of difficulties in marrying. This added to the difficulties young Filipino migrants already faced, both prior to and after Filipinos officially became aliens within the United States. The periodization of Filipino migration united with the inability to marry to created a generational issue within the Filipino community as the timeframe of the life cycle of marriage, children, and passing on family values altered on a large scale.

Filipinos became aliens in 1934. Throughout society and daily life, Filipinos could have easily been seen as aliens. The social perspective of Filipinos as aliens occurred through the overall view of an Asian race. There was also the legal aspect of Filipinos becoming aliens ineligible to citizenship through a congressman’s failed attempt at including Filipinos in the Immigration Act of 1924, which will be discussed later.

The term ‘aliens ineligible to citizenship’ mainly pointed towards Japanese, Chinese, and other Asian immigrants. Seen as the third wave of the ‘Asian invasion,’ the public often grouped Filipinos with previous Asian immigrants. Although newspapers specifically pointed out Filipino

in articles, white citizens did not create a distinction between Filipino and Japanese persons, or even a distinction between U.S. nationals and aliens. Through being lumped together with Asian immigrants, the white public viewed and treated Filipinos as aliens ineligible to citizenship, and therefore Section 4 of the Cable Act affected the young migrant men.

Along with the social perspective of Filipinos as aliens, there was a congressman's attempt to turn Filipinos in aliens ineligible to citizenship legally. In 1929, California Congressman Richard Welch proposed his bill, as addition to the Immigration Act of 1924. Welch's bill would include Filipinos in those excluded from entering the United States. These actions disregarded the relationship between the United States and the Philippines, which granted Filipinos certain rights as nationals.¹¹²

The Immigration Act of 1924, also known as the Johnson-Reed Act or the Quota Act, set up quotas for each country on how many persons could enter the United States each year. Roger Daniels declares the 1924 Act as "the greatest triumph of nativism" and the quotas places on various countries back up that claim.¹¹³ The United States gave non-existent quotas for Asian countries, which is what the Philippines would become a part of under the Welch Bill. Filipinos would alter from having free entry to the United States to being highly restricted in their movement despite the government continued involvement in the Philippines. For V.S. McClatchy, prominent California exclusionary figure, the "colonial status was not an issue because Filipinos were racially ineligible to citizenship and therefore excludable under the terms

¹¹² Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 169: "This change was designed to stripe them of their status as U.S. nationals thereby subjecting them to the exclusionary quota system established by the 1924 Immigration Act."

¹¹³ Roger Daniel, *Gurading the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants since 1882* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004), 49.

of the Johnson-Reed Act.”¹¹⁴ McClatchy did not hide the racial status of Filipinos as central concern, which allowed for Filipinos to be included with other excluded persons in his mind.

The racial element of aliens ineligible to citizenship came to the forefront of the argument with the leading figures behind the bill. When discussing the Welch Bill, Mae Ngai includes why Welch disregarded the national status so easily: “Welch argued that while the United States got the Philippines through war, ‘our duty to them is political...[I]mmigration and the mixing of races and the movement of people are entirely a different proposition.”¹¹⁵ Not only was the racial difference of Filipinos a concern for Welch, but also the relationships formed between Filipino men and white women created tensions around the migrant men. McClatchy and Welch presented views of the social and legal citizenship exclusion for Filipinos in the United States because of their racial differences.

The California Joint Immigration Committee [CJIC] brought the negative attitudes towards Filipinos together into one organization, which included the membership of both Welch and McClatchy. Ngai presents the CJIC as, “the most outspoken about the undesirability of Filipinos and made no effort to soft-pedal their allegation of unassimilability, racial instability, and the ‘sex problem.’”¹¹⁶ The male to female ratio of 14:1 for Filipinos in California and the rise of Filipino-white relationships classified ‘the sex problem,’ while the racial difference of Filipinos marked their unassimilability.

The barriers set up from anti-miscegenation laws and the national to alien ineligible to citizenship status change increased the migratory nature of Filipinos in the United States. As Filipinos work opportunities confined the young men to low paying jobs, these jobs required constant movement. Filipinos followed the harvest seasons and crop locations for work. The

¹¹⁴ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 116.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

inability to marry and interact with women without being followed by violence increased the mobility of Filipinos; these young men were unable to build community connections. The inability for Filipinos to settle and establish themselves existed because of the legal boundaries enacted and the altered life path of migration.

Nayan Shah's *Stranger Intimacy* examines South Asian workers in the West Coast and the homosocial spaces they created and moved throughout. These workers followed a migrant life path, as Filipinos did, but theirs also included trips back home on occasion. The similarities of daily life and West Coast work construct a common experience. Shah describes the migratory aspects and effects of their lives:

Conventional accounts of stable, insular, and self-sufficient households are also unable to make sense of the social and intimate experiences of those who migrate and their continuing connection to those who remain behind. Migration creates unanticipated breaks and detours in spatial and temporal cycles and schedules, producing new ways of life. Life schedules are stretched and reimagined via new strategies of circular global migration that timed return visits to village homes...Migration disorganized domestic and social life in places of both origin and transmigration.¹¹⁷

South Asian migrant workers continually moved between the United States and their home countries, but the Filipino migratory life did not include trips back to the Philippines. The conventional life path did not apply to these men as they learned a 'new way of life' with a timetable better matching their experiences. The reference back to the homeland emphasized the larger life decision for families in hopes of betterment.

Through the creation of a new life path, the traditional path excluded these men. For Filipinos without a constant movement back to their homeland, the exclusion meant an inability to become American and the aggression faced by opposing forces. Lowe discusses these tensions in connection to alien land laws and anti-miscegenation legislation: "The disenfranchisement of Asians was also supported by laws against miscegenation that created an environment extremely

¹¹⁷ Shah, *Stranger Intimacy*, 7.

hostile to Asian settlement.”¹¹⁸ Marginalized Filipinos faced hostility through the laws of the time and the surrounding white communities.

After 1934, as aliens ineligible to citizenship, Filipinos became part of the group of aliens unable to buy land. By not being able to buy land, Filipinos and other aliens were unable to settle into their own home, potentially farm their own land, and make a profit outside of working for others. This greatly impacted their life path as Filipinos constantly worked under others and could not change these conditions. Anti-miscegenation legislation against Filipinos and racialized others worked similarly, creating barriers to settling and establishing their own lives.

The alternative life path for Filipinos, South Asian workers, and other aliens resulted because of their racial differences. The economic, social, and legal aspects to their lives were met with hostility of surrounding communities, the same ones enforcing the differences onto these men. The barriers of difference enacted aggression and fear to control and marginalize alien communities.

The push to mark Filipinos legally as aliens ineligible to citizenship was not passed in 1929. The representatives’ presentation of Filipinos as alien persons due to their race and relationships characterized Filipinos in the public’s eye. Viewed as and attempted to be transformed into aliens ineligible to citizenship placed Filipinos with Asian immigrants, despite their national status. Under alien terms, there was a strong deterrent for white women to marry or interact with these men because of the Cable Act. Through the unavailability of relationships, Section 4 of the Cable Act increased Filipinos inability to settle, establish themselves, and become part of American society; this conflicted with the American belonging Filipinos imagined from movement through and dependency on the American empire.

¹¹⁸ Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 13.

The Cable Act determined the citizenship status and marriage possibilities of women within the United States. Once the Immigration Act of 1924 passed, re-entry into the United States and ability to regain one's nationality reduced. The workings of aliens connected to both of these acts to Filipinos. If Filipinos were to be considered aliens ineligible to citizenship, they would be greatly restricted in their ability to enter the United States and in whom they could marry upon entry. How the Cable Act worked as both immigration and marriage legislation increased with passing of the Tydings-McDuffie Act and the Immigration Act of 1924. In these situations, the legislation enacted restrictions around various persons, confining their daily and life path capabilities. The Cable Act affected women and men, while still upholding heteronormativity of gender expectations combined with citizenship means. For Filipinos, this was another piece of legislation obstructing their daily lives.

III. PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE AND FILIPINO INELIGIBILITY

Exclusionist congressmen found their answer to barring Filipinos in 1934 with the Tydings-McDuffie Act. Maryland Senator Millard Tydings and Alabama Representative John McDuffie authored the act, also known as the Philippine Independence Act of 1934. The Tydings-McDuffie Act began the process of granting the Philippines their independence. The process started with a two-year timeline for the Philippines to draft their own constitution, and once the United States approved the constitution, a ten-year transition period of sovereignty followed.¹¹⁹ Despite the decade long change of governance, the status of Filipinos in relation to American immigration laws went into effect immediately. The Tydings-McDuffie Act, specifically Section 8, affected Filipinos' status within the United States, their transpacific

¹¹⁹ Philippine Independence, 73rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1934, H. Doc.

mobility, and expanded other exclusionary treatment legally to Filipinos. The timing of the Act in connection to the proposed Welch Bill and the Cable Act was a part of a federally fueled push against Filipinos and aliens at the time.

Prior to the Tydings-McDuffie Act, congressmen proposed the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act in 1933. Manuel L. Quezon, prominent Philippine Senate figure and first president of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, opposed the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act because of the permanence of American military bases and unequal tariff regulations. Because of Quezon's opposition to and criticisms of the Act, the terms of independences were reassessed, resulting in the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934.¹²⁰

A majority of the Act detailed the role of the United States government in the Philippines throughout and after the independence transition, but Section 8 specifically addressed the role of United States immigration laws on the Philippines and its citizens. The Immigration Acts of 1917 set the foundation for the quota restrictions of the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, both which affected the Filipinos with the passing of Tydings-McDuffie.

The first clause in Section 8 of the Tydings-McDuffie Act reads,

(1) For the purpose of the Immigration Act of 1917, the Immigration Act of 1924 (except section 13 (c)), this section, and all other laws of the United States relating to the immigration, exclusion, or expulsion of aliens, citizens of the Philippine Islands who are not citizens of the United States shall be considered as if they were aliens. For such purposes the Philippine Islands shall be considered as a separate country and shall have for each fiscal year a quota of fifty.¹²¹

Filipinos would no longer be considered U.S. nationals from the approval of the Act forward. As other Asian and Pacific islanders were labeled, Filipinos were classified as aliens. The removal of the national status took away Filipinos' unrestricted entrance to the United States and placed them within the quota system. However, the United States government did not situate Filipinos similarly to other alien persons.

¹²⁰ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 119.

¹²¹ Philippine Independence, 73rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1934, H. Doc.

Under the 1924 Immigration Act, the Philippines quota was 50 persons per year, compared to China's or Japan's, which were 100 per year.¹²² The exclusionary attitude towards Filipinos was obvious through, what Baldoz declares as, "the most stringent immigration quota allotted to any country in the world."¹²³ While exclusion of Chinese and Japanese persons still existed, legislation against such persons for decades in the United States had existed for decades. The history of actions against Asian persons pushed forward the idea that these apparent problems were under control; Congressmen did not place that same outlook onto Filipinos. As the third, and newest, wave of Asian migration to the United States, all concerns and fears were placed upon Filipinos. Therefore, Filipinos were seen as a problematic population and a group that needed to be controlled. This was especially a concern with the occurrence of Filipino-white relationships. The strict quota reflected the need of control by the United States and an attempt to solve the problem the government believed existed. Parallels emerge between the concerns seen in the strict quota and the surveillance of taxi-dance halls. In both situations, federal forces attempted to exert control over the Filipino colonial subjects. The role of the American empire expanded to regulating the movement of its persons, stringently restricting it in the case of the Philippines' quota.

The status change to aliens for Filipinos included entry restriction to the United States. Along with this alteration, the Tydings-McDuffie Act also contained the new classification of the Philippines in clause 4 of Section 8: "the Philippine Islands shall be considered to be a foreign country."¹²⁴ As a foreign country, and a foreign country located near China and Japan, restriction of the 1917 and 1924 Immigration Acts automatically applied to the Philippines. Even though

¹²² Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 181.

¹²³ *Ibid*, 158.

¹²⁴ Philippine Independence, 73rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1934, H. Doc.

the status of alien is attached to Filipino through the first clause, Tydings-McDuffie ensured the immigration confines of the Philippines and its citizens through the fourth clause.

The changes previously detailed occurred on on March 24, 1934, while complete independence for the Philippines did not occur until 1946. The quick transition for the status of Filipinos highlights the exclusionary attitudes of the United States, its government, and the people within the government. Representative Richard Welch wrote congratulation for the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act, specifically on the alien status of Filipinos, a fight participated in with his failed amendment to the Immigration Act of 1924.¹²⁵

Filipinos faced regulations within the United States that applied to aliens ineligible to citizenship, along with the entry restrictions. One of these regulations was the Cable Act. Formally being aliens as of 1934, Filipinos officially became part of the group of men in which American-born women would lose their citizenship over through marriage. The Cable Act kept a woman's citizenship tied to that of her husband's ability to naturalize: "If he could not be naturalized for any reason, she could not; and if she was a citizen, she was denationalized for wedding a man ineligible for citizenship and could not seek repatriation until the termination of the marriage."¹²⁶ As aliens ineligible to citizenship, Filipinos could not become citizens and thereby if they married an American woman, she would lose her own citizenship. Prior to the Tydings-McDuffie Act, the government Filipinos only looked at as aliens socially and did not legally deter the men from marriage, aside from the 1933 Civil Code change in California.¹²⁷ The racial differences created violence around the marriages and relationships, but a woman's legal citizenship was not in jeopardy.

¹²⁵ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 181.

¹²⁶ Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*, 98.

¹²⁷ In 1933, California updated Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 to include "Malays" as races of individuals unable to marry whites. These changes and their affects will be examined in Chapter 3.

For two years already filled with transitions, the Cable Act's disapproval of American-born women marrying aliens ineligible to citizenship included Filipinos. The deterrent of lost citizenship increased the already migrant population's legally inability to marry and socially inability to settle. On May 24, 1934, an equalization bill passed across the President's desk, which "marked U.S. abandonment of marital expatriation, although not the full erasure of its effects. Women who had lost their citizenship by marriage were not automatically reinstated as Americans," as Bredbenner explains. Despite these changes, the Cable Act still existed until 1936.¹²⁸ The Cable Act was officially repealed in 1936, formally removing the language of, "any woman citizen who marries an alien ineligible to citizenship shall cease to be a citizen of the United States," from American legislation.¹²⁹ The status of Filipinos and citizenship had both changed by 1936, but the deterrent of interracial marriages remained.¹³⁰

The Tydings-McDuffie Act achieved the goal federal lawmakers chipped away at for years, finally labeling Filipinos as aliens ineligible to citizenship. The reclassification furthered the exclusions for Filipinos in the United States, marriages as a portion of the exclusion. The relief by federal lawmakers of halting mass migration of Filipinos to the United States was then met with the realization of what to do with the Filipinos still within the country. Baldoz explains the transition congressmen began to make: "Consequently, nativist forces shifted tactics and began pressuring Congress to enact legislation aimed at sending the immigrant undesirables back to their homeland, hoping that such a move would finally solve the Filipino problem once and for all."¹³¹ These federal lawmakers then began the work of repatriating Filipinos.

¹²⁸ Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*, 243.

¹²⁹ An Act Relative to the naturalization of citizenship of married women, 67th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congression Record* 411, daily ed. (September 22, 1922): 1021-1022.

¹³⁰ Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*, 243.

¹³¹ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 158.

IV. ATTEMPTS AT FILIPINO REPATRIATION

After the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934, the United States government passed the Filipino Repatriation Act in 1935. This Act coerced Filipinos to return to the Philippines with free transportation, as well as “hospital attention for the ill, food, recreation on the voyage and transportation to their homes on the islands,” being covered by the United States government.¹³² The return to the Philippines was meant as a final return to the islands, as those who participated could only re-enter the United States as part of the nation’s quota of 50 persons a year. Despite the option to return to one’s homeland free of charge, “just 2,190 Filipina/os out of the roughly 45,000 who were eligible took advantage of this offer.”¹³³ The outcome of the Act was not as successful as some would claim, but the intentions of the Act stood.

The Repatriation Act could only happen after the passing of the Tydings-McDuffie Act since the political ties of the United States were too connected to Filipinos prior to Philippine Independence. With Filipinos no longer being U.S. nationals, the United States government could treat them as any other Asian immigrant, which meant finding a way to get rid of immigrants. Rick Baldoz references two key points of the Repatriation Act lawmakers kept in mind with the Great Depression and racial tensions:

Lawmakers also believed that the deportation of large numbers of Filipinos would help to quell the racial antagonism on the West Coast...The mass repatriations carried out during this period were supposed to free up jobs for American citizens by eliminating cheap alien labor from the job market.¹³⁴

Talking points for the passage of the Repatriation Act included creating jobs for American citizens during an economic crisis and lessening the violence around Filipino communities. Mexican-American Repatriation occurred simultaneously under the same discourse of jobs for American, despite Mexican-Americans being American citizens. The federal conversation

¹³² Gene Sherman, “Filipinos Sail for Islands: Many take Advantage of Repatriation Act; Others Will Follow,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Oct 4, 1936.

¹³³ Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power*, 153.

¹³⁴ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 186-7.

around the Filipino Repatriation Act paralleled the entire colonial experience, as “proponents of repatriation expressed benevolent intentions to assist Filipinos who had become jobless and homeless during the Depression.”¹³⁵ Through these talking points, lawmakers talked about Filipinos as public charges and problems that needed to be solved.

While congressmen discussed the trouble of Filipinos and the need to remove the young men, newspapers fought to ensure that repatriation was not presented as deportation. In these accounts, the newspapers highlighted the perks of repatriating and the caution of staying in the United States. The positive light by the *Los Angeles Times* showed support to the United States government and its actions. There was the possibility of the newspapers attempting to sway the small percentage of Filipino readers on the action or getting its general white readers to embrace the Repatriation Act not as deportation.

An article published about a year after the passing of the Repatriation Act read like an advertisement. The July 1936 article’s title encapsulated the benefits of repatriating for Americans and Filipinos alike: “Filipinos Go Back Home: Uncle Sam Pays Expenses, Islanders Return to Manila as Honored Repatriated; New Sailing Monday.” Bluntly, Filipinos returning to the Philippines would have been good news for Californians who viewed Filipinos as the root of violence and economic issues in the United States. On the other side, Filipinos supposedly were welcomed back in the islands with open arms. The inclusion of when the next repatriation was meant as a continued sense of relief for Americans and a knowledge of still having a chance to return to the islands for Filipinos.¹³⁶

The danger for Filipinos staying in the United States instead of taking advantage of the free trip back to the Philippines was stated as: “Those who remain after next December 1 will no

¹³⁵ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 120.

¹³⁶ Obviously there issues with the analysis of a Filipino point of view here but it will be further explained later on.

longer be wards of a friendly, protecting Uncle Sam, but will be aliens in an alien land.”¹³⁷ The friendliness of Uncle Sam toward Filipinos prior to the Tydings-McDuffie Act and the Repatriation Act is arguable, but the courteous threat was present.

Upon arrival to the Philippines, the article assures “They will return to the freedom of their own land, not as deportees, but as repatriates, under the Filipino Repatriation Act, recently adopted by Congress.”¹³⁸ The differentiation between repatriates and deportees meant the difference between the freedom to choose leave the United States and being forced to leave. The distinction of repatriation and deportation commonly appeared throughout the newspaper articles at the time. For Filipinos, it could have been a matter of pride and finding freedoms under a restrictive environment. For Americans, this language helped to promote a guardian persona, similar to the acts of colonialism following the Spanish-American War; Filipinos entered into freedom upon reaching the Philippines, which the United States granted.

While the article promoted movement details and advantages, it also included other bonuses to repatriation trips. Towards the end, the article made the following comment: “He can take his automobile if he has the money to pay the freight. He can even take his blonde wife along if he has money for the extra passage.”¹³⁹ These two sentences provided the article with a marketing tone, advertising the extra perks of the free passage to one’s homeland. The inclusion of “his blonde wife” is particularly striking considering the Civil Code section changes in 1933, which made Filipino-white marriages illegal.¹⁴⁰

With the inclusion of the phrase, the newspaper editors acknowledged the existence of interracial relationships. Despite the law prohibiting such marriages and strong social stigma

¹³⁷ “Filipinos Go Back Home: Uncle Sam Pays Expenses,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Jul 31, 1936.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ A closer examination of the Civil Code will follow in the next chapter.

against the interactions, Filipino-white unions still formed. The comment acknowledged the presence of the relationships and worked to get rid of the couples. As article as a whole promotes, “Filipinos Go Back Home,” and with that, the ‘Filipino problem’ goes home as well. In this instance, for Americans reading the article, that problem included interracial relationships leaving. The language of the article hid the exclusionary tone but ensured it continued.

Three months after the “Filipinos Go Back Home” article, another *Los Angeles Times* article discussed Filipinos repatriating with their wives. In the article, “Filipinos Sail for Islands,” the director of the Los Angeles district of Immigration and Naturalization Services Walter E. Carr was interviewed about Filipino repatriation. Carr commented:

Some difficulties in cases where Filipinos have married white women or have had children born in the United States, making them citizens, presents problems at for our office... We are able to arrange the children’s passage through co-operation of the County Welfare Department, upon which the burden would fall if they were left here. But no provisions have been made for white wives of Filipinos. They must accompany their husbands on regular steamship tickets.¹⁴¹

Compared to the July 1936 article, Carr discussed Filipinos and their white wives as problematic for repatriation purposes. Carr detailed the issue of interracial children who are American citizens since they were born in the states. Carr and other immigration officials feared mothers and their mixed race children becoming public charges but this fear could be placed under the guise of family unification to gain public sympathy of the issue.

The *Los Angeles Times* coverage of the Filipino Repatriation Act differed from the attitudes of lawmakers who authored and passed the restrictive legislation. The non-stigmatized presentation of Filipino-white marriages worked against the views of the legislation passed. However, the *Los Angeles Times* did not completely condemn these relationships in order to encourage the repatriation of Filipinos and their white wives, and therefore rid the country of the believed racial problem.

¹⁴¹ Sherman, “Filipinos Sail for Islands,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1936.

The *Los Angeles Times* also included other talking points for the encouragement of repatriation. The public discussion and encouragement of repatriating to the Philippines can be placed within the framework Lisa Lowe builds around hegemony and Asian Americans in her book *Immigrant Acts*:

The understanding that the general cultural terrain is one social site in which ‘hegemony’ is continually being both established and contested permits us to theorize about the roles that racialized immigrant groups play in the making and unmaking of culture and to explore the ways that cross-race and cross-national projects may work to change the existing structure power, the current hegemony.¹⁴²

Lowe’s reading of hegemony places it within the context of constant culture formation. As hegemony is being executed and opposed, it affects the situation of cultural groups and the power is then altered to continue to attempt dominance in society.

In a different comment by Carr, hegemony is exercised through infiltration and collaboration.

Filipino leaders in Los Angeles, many of them learned professional men, were antagonistic toward the repatriation movement at first because they believed it was virtually a form of deportation, Carr said. They have now changed and are offering the government every cooperation in advising their fellow-countrymen of the advantages of returning to their homeland.¹⁴³

Carr spoke of how respected Filipino men learned of the goodness of repatriation. By discussing the views and attitudes of community leaders, Carr attempted to encourage other Filipinos to follow suit; it is not Carr and another white government official telling Filipinos to go back to their country, but rather trusted community figures. The direct statement of repatriation not being deportation was the conversation everyone else had, and Carr frankly worked against that with the collaboration of supposed Filipino community leaders. Whether or not these Filipino leaders spoke of repatriation in this context is unknown, but Carr’s use of Filipino members and their government support were attempts to sway the Filipino population.

¹⁴² Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 68.

¹⁴³ “Filipinos Go Back Home,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1936.

Through Carr's mention of dependable Filipino men encouraging repatriation, he attempted to alter the cultural standing of Filipinos. The infiltration of Filipino communities implemented hegemonic tactics to control and persuade the Filipino community. A different *Los Angeles Times* article used less concealed means to dominate Filipino decision-making. A 1935 article simply titled "Repatriating Filipinos," includes the following comment: "It would be a good thing for all concerned for them to go back, but so long as it is voluntary there is not likely to be any great scramble for free passage."¹⁴⁴ This statement urged repatriation through the suggestion of what could occur if that suggestion is not followed.

United States hegemony falls under local terms in the 1935 article as 'all concerned' reflected the communities of violence surrounding Filipino. This subtle threat is meant to control Filipinos into submission. The public language tried to persuade Filipinos into taking advantage of the Repatriation Act, in order to not impose deportations. The number of times deportation is compared to repatriation in *Los Angeles Times* articles in the period of repatriation highlights the concern and controversy of the Act. The reassurance of freedom to repatriate boosts the hegemonic nature of the United States' relationship with Filipinos, and also the 'cross-national' relationship with the Philippines.

These newspaper articles differ from the legislation discussed previously. I believe these articles include a non-stigmatized view of Filipino-white marriages because of the United States' strong desire to remove Filipinos. Newspapers attempt to reach the largest audience in the least offensive way possible, while also trying to sway public opinion. The firm discussion of the Filipino Repatriation Act not being a form of deportation and the non-judgmental perspective on Filipino-white marriages in newspaper articles attempted to ease the tension created by the aforementioned legislation. The *Los Angeles Times* sought to encourage Filipinos repatriation

¹⁴⁴ "Repatriating Filipinos," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Jul 26, 1935.

through acceptance, not contentious division, under hegemonic intentions. The language of newspaper articles about the Filipino Repatriation Act and the aforementioned legislative acts worked to restrict, control, and harm Filipinos in the United States at this time.

V. CONCLUSION

The language and effects of the Cable Act, Tydings-McDuffie Act, and Filipino Repatriation Act define the legislation as acts of racial violence. The motivation of barriers, removal, and disconnection were directed at Filipinos. As racialized others, the legislation acts against Filipinos and other aliens ineligible to citizenship were racially motivated. The results of the acts required Filipinos to alter their already divergent lives. The outcomes and intentions of the legislation by the lawmakers placed the work as racial violence against Filipinos.

The Cable Act's deterrent of American-born women losing their citizenship through marriage with an alien ineligible to citizenship displayed the concern of interracial relationships. 'Alien ineligible to citizenship' was a racialized term directed at Asian immigrants, including Filipino starting in 1934. The distinct mention and consequence of aliens within the Cable Act worked as a barrier between white women and Asian men. The physical violence aliens encountered in these situations and the social stigmatization added to the alter life path Filipinos followed.

The Philippine Independence Act, or the Tydings-McDuffie Act, started the process of the United States leaving the Philippines and granting the island nation its independence. However, within the act, the treatment of Filipinos revealed to be harsher than that of other Asian immigrants. The quota given to the Philippines for yearly immigration to the United States as lower than any other countries. This quota and the status change from nationals to aliens placed

Filipinos at an even more marginalized position than they were at previously. The strict restrictions placed on Filipinos were a result of their race and the concerns of a problematic population by government officials. These concerns led to the Filipino Repatriation Act.

In an attempt to remove Filipinos from the United States, the Filipino Repatriation Act provided free transportation back to the Philippines, with no re-entry to the United States. The act was passed in lieu of deportations in hopes of Filipino voluntarily exiting the United States. Government officials placed poverty and violence as a Filipino problem, and believed these issues would go away once Filipinos did too.

The legislative acts were directed at Filipinos because of their race. These actions tied together exclusion with Filipinos and created more obstacles for Filipinos to be watchful of as they lived their day-to-day lives. These obstacles worked as violence against Filipinos because of the force against Filipinos and the experiences the young men then endured.

Chandan Reddy's *Freedom with Violence: Race, Sexuality, and the US State* creates a new model for understanding citizenship, race, and sexuality, and the cross-sections of them, within the United States. When discussing how violence works into this understanding, Reddy utilizes the W.E.B. Du Bois' work:

For Du Bois, the twentieth century forces the recognition of race as irreducible to its functionalist representation as an object of and means for violence, an emergent liberal-juridical thesis of the time. Rather, the text offers an understanding of race, as in the case of black citizenship, as the production of the bodily subject as an experience of freedom and violence.¹⁴⁵

The framework of race incorporating violence creates a paradigm to be used with Filipinos and the legislation passed against them. For Filipinos, the legislation enacted by the United States was done so because of the racial differences of Filipinos. Violence, physical and legislative, followed these acts against Filipinos and their migratory lives.

¹⁴⁵ Chandan Reddy, *Freedom with Violence: Race, Sexuality, and the US State* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 56.

The aforementioned pieces of legislation passed by federal lawmakers between 1922 and 1935 further restricted the migratory lives of Filipinos in the United States. The Cable Act, although aimed at the rights of women, did create barriers for men, specifically men who were aliens ineligible to citizenship. Each of these pieces of legislation constructed racial violence against Filipinos, impacting their migratory lives in the United States, with the anti-miscegenation legislation specifically restricting their ability to settle within the country. Within California, the anti-miscegenation legislation was especially poignant towards Filipinos.

CHAPTER 3: CALIFORNIA'S ANTI-MISCEGENATION LEGISLATION

Federal legislation passed in the 1930s addressed government and public concerns around the increasing Filipino population in the United States. The federal laws lessened the ties between the United States and the Philippines. But state legislation in California and other Western states took a different approach to tackling Filipinos in their states. State lawmakers and community members saw the 'Filipino problem' in California as closely tied to the young men's interactions with white women. As the population of young Filipino men grew in California, so did the attempted marriages between Filipino men and white women. The tensions around Filipino-white relationships and the racial thinking of the time led to an amendment to California's anti-miscegenation legislation, further restricting the settlement of Filipinos.

The chapter starts with a broad look at the history of anti-miscegenation in the United States, leading to the complex structure of the laws in Western states. The intricate nature of California's anti-miscegenation legislation reflects the ideal frontier mentality of the state. The anti-miscegenation law within California did not specifically mention Filipinos prior to 1933, which created an inconsistent stance on granting marriage licenses to Filipino-white couples. The uncertainty of California's marriage laws' restrictions on Filipinos and the inconsistency of Filipino-white marriages approved led to an amendment to California's Civil Code, officially barring Filipinos from marrying whites. The opposition to Filipino-white marriages was actually an opposition to Filipino permanence in the United States.

Racial thinking of the time led the charge in determining the validity of Filipinos right to marry. Eugenic thinking influenced California's laws and lawmakers, and set up boundaries for Filipinos and others. Racial tensions did not only surround Filipino and white relationships; I

explore a boycott resulting from a Filipino-Japanese marriage to show the complexity of racial tensions in California. The chapter ends with an examination of anti-miscegenation laws in surrounding Western states. California was not the only state to pass laws against Filipinos, but the lawmakers in the state worked vigorously to prevent Filipinos from settling on the West Coast.

I. ANTI-MISCEGENATION

Throughout the country's history, thirty-eight states passed laws addressing and restricting interracial marriage. As Rachel Moran explained: "All of these laws banned black-white relationships, but fourteen states also prohibited Asian-white marriages and another seven barred Native American-white unions."¹⁴⁶ Latino-white marriages were never legally restricted, mostly due to the Spanish ancestry of Latinos allowing them a white status. However, despite this one exception, interracial intimate interactions and relationships were closely watched and regulated throughout the United States.¹⁴⁷

Maryland passed the first anti-miscegenation law in 1661 and a year later, Virginia enacted a similar law.¹⁴⁸ Both of these laws restricted marriages and sex between whites and blacks. In the Chesapeake area, interracial relationships existed because most settlers came to the colonies alone and became indentured servants in order to pay off travel debts. This situation differed from that in New England where families saved up money for the travel fees and arrived together. As indentured servants, white men and women interacted with black slaves regularly, and it was not unheard of for a relationship to arise in that situation. The strong Puritan lifestyle in New England engrained the impossibility of interracial unions while life further south was not

¹⁴⁶ Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*, 17.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

as concrete. In these situations, New England areas did not have relationships the leaders pushed back against, while in the Chesapeake colonies, the interracial interactions grew and mixed race children started to be a topic of concern for legal reasons.¹⁴⁹

Leaders of the colonies responded to these troubling situations with the laws in Maryland and Virginia. The leaders' and the public's acceptance of the laws showed a reaction to social anxieties, a push to stop such interactions, and a defining of the color line. Through the anti-miscegenation laws, the legal divide between whites and blacks was further solidified and also reinforced a racial hierarchy.

Once the laws in Maryland and Virginia came into play, more colonies and then states followed. Although these laws solidified the color line, they also placed punishment on the whites who attempted to cross it. The laws in Maryland and Virginia were designed to "simply degrade Whites" through jail time, colony banishments, or being forced to serve your husband's master.¹⁵⁰ This punishment worked to ensure whites stayed within their own race by taking away the societal privileges of being white if they acted outside these barriers.

The punishment of whites participating in the interracial relationships also reached blacks in relationships. Moving into the mid-1800s, as these laws persisted, "the slavocracy used these laws to oppress white women and to punish black men who entered into sexual relationships with them."¹⁵¹ Anti-miscegenation laws confined the marrying practices of a state's population. The laws built barriers for how lives were suppose to be lived. Peggy Pascoe remarks, "Although most northern states repealed their prohibitions after the Civil War, in the South and the West,

¹⁴⁹ Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*, 17-41.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 19-20.

¹⁵¹ Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," 26-27.

laws against miscegenation remained in force through much of the twentieth century.”¹⁵² Anti-miscegenation legislation included more persons in who could not marry whites around this time. No longer were black-white relationships the only ones regulated, but various Asian-white relationships began to be mentioned as well. As a response to the wave of non-European immigrants entering the United States, anti-miscegenation laws included other non-white partners. Just as the first anti-miscegenation laws came about after multiple mixed race relationships formed, the inclusion of “Mongolians” to the laws was a reaction to the increased immigrant population.

The inclusion of Asians and other non-white races in anti-miscegenation legislation took place mostly in the West. Not only did these laws stick around after the Civil War, but Pascoe also points out how the laws became much more elaborate.¹⁵³ Growth in population, immigration, and migration made the possibility of interracial relationships greater, and caused society’s anxieties around this possibility to grow.

Western states became the epicenter of these laws, regulations, anxieties, and relationships. Western states were the frontier, the land that had yet to be settled and held possibilities for the future. While being unsettled, the frontier allowed for less strict social standards, the opportunity to not be stigmatized for actions and take advantage of differing methods of success. However, once more people moved west and the area became more settled, the once lax attitudes changed.

In California, leading settlers took the state as an opportunity to add greatness to the country. What that greatness meant, though, was purity. So although California was the frontier, it was the frontier that could be molded to fit the ideal frontier. Eugenic thinkers and leaders,

¹⁵² Pascoe, “Race, Gender, and the Privileges of Property: On the Significance of Miscegenation Law in the U.S. West,” 6.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

influenced by the ideology of the racial and societal ideal, began to structure the state to their liking, which led to how “California possessed a dense and multilayered matrix of educational organizations, civic groups, business associations, medical societies, and philanthropies that subscribed to eugenic philosophies.”¹⁵⁴ The hope for the purity and greatness of the frontier filled California, which created strong beliefs and restrictions around non-white individuals.

California passed its first anti-miscegenation law in 1850, the same year it became a state. The racial thinking and segregation of the emerging state was a cornerstone to the state’s founding. The first law restricted the marriages between whites and blacks, a standard marriage restriction at the time. As the racial landscape of California shifted, so did the anti-miscegenation laws. These laws reflected the concerns of interracial mixing and the belief in the dangers those relationships could bring to the state. Just as immigration laws restricted peoples whom the government thought would become ‘public charges,’ California wanted to ensure it would not become a public charge as a state. Cementing the civilized nature of California motivated the legislation’s passing.

The concerns of Chinese in California fueled the changes made to California’s Civil Code in 1880. The Civil Code sections 60 and 69 determined the legality of marriages racially in California at the time. The amendment in 1880 added “Mongolian” to the list of “negro, mulatto” of who could not marry whites.¹⁵⁵ The concerns around Chinese were both of male and female promiscuity, with the women as prostitutes and the men as dangers. The changes to the Civil Code coincided with the Page Act of 1875 and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, adding to legislation against Chinese. The Page Act determined two groups of illegal immigrants, criminals and women engaged in prostitution. Despite the classification for criminals, Roger Daniels

¹⁵⁴ Stern, *Eugenic Nation*, 86.

¹⁵⁵ Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*, 31.

claims the “rhetorical sections of the statue and the remarks made during the congressional debate made it clear that the bill was really aimed at Chinese women.”¹⁵⁶ The Chinese Exclusion Act expanded the bracket of illegal immigrants to include skilled and unskilled laborers.

The inclusion of ‘Mongolian’ in the California Civil Code was in line with the acts of exclusion against Chinese in the late 1800s. The concerns and fears of Chinese infiltration into white American life appeared with the legislation. The decision to use the term ‘Mongolian’ allowed for the illegality of all Asian persons, not just Chinese residents. Moving into the early 1900s, this became important with the presence of more Japanese immigrants in the state and country, who filled the necessary work positions. However, Japanese immigrants soon faced the same restrictive attitudes and actions as the Chinese. Moran describes the transference of the white stances of Asian immigrants,

As with the Chinese, Americans feared what they presumed to be Japanese immigrants’ aliens racial identity and unbridled sexual impulses. When the Japanese government successfully lobbied for its nationals to be exempted from laws that segregated Chinese, political leaders warned of the dangers...¹⁵⁷

The racial status of Japanese immigrants combined with public beliefs of sexual urges to create an identity of difference projected on Japanese persons. For the white population in California, these differences meant resistance and fueled the need to exclusionary actions. The belief of ‘unbridled sexual impulses’ further established the division between whites and Asian persons and further solidified the white perspective on all Asian immigrants.

The fear of sexual wantonness built the barriers of the California Civil Code and reflected the attitudes around the first anti-miscegenation laws passed. As the racial diversity of California changed, so did the language of the state’s legislation. The third wave of the ‘Asian invasion’ challenged the language of the Civil Code. Male Filipino migrants filled agricultural and

¹⁵⁶ Daniel, *Gurading the Golden Door*, 17.

¹⁵⁷ Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*, 31.

industrial jobs in California, while their recreational time largely took place in taxi-dance halls where they danced with white women. The same attitudes around uncontrollable sexual desires of Chinese men were projected onto Filipinos. Carlos Bulosan recounts a conversation he overheard in a home he once worked at,

“And I won’t have a Filipino in my house, when my daughter is around,” said one of the women.
“Is it true that they are sex-crazy?” the man next to her asked. “I understand that they go crazy when they see a white woman.”
“Same as the niggers,” said the man who did not like Filipino servants. “Same as the Chinamen, with their opium.”
“They are all sex starved,” said the man of the house with finality.¹⁵⁸

The concerns of Filipino men dancing with white women harkened to the ‘sexual impulses’ of Chinese and Japanese immigrants before them, placing the same characteristics, fears, and exclusionary practices on to the young migrant men. The inclusion of “Mongolian” to the Civil Code complicated the social and legal status of Filipino marriages.

II. ATTEMPTS AT FILIPINO-WHITE MARRIAGES

The migratory circumstances of Filipinos into California created social boundaries in white communities. Sexually aggressive characteristics previously placed on Chinese and Japanese immigrants transferred on to Filipinos, which only increased when Filipinos interacted with white women. The already established white concerns of racial mixing and the Filipino situation combined to create the tense attitudes around Filipino-white relationships and marriages in California. The murky racial status of Filipinos being Mongolians or not in the pseudo-scientific racial thinking at the time also caused controversy in California, ultimately leading to another amendment to the Civil Code.

As detailed in Chapter 1, Filipino migrants into the West Coast were largely male and between the ages of 16 and 30. With such a large population of Filipino men compared to

¹⁵⁸ Bulosan, *America in in the Heart*, 141.

Filipina women, the uneven ratio altered the socialization of the young men. The strict racial segregation made it difficult for Filipinos to interact with women, a common activity for all young persons. Filipina Dorothy Laigo Cordova remembers this uneven ratio in California and the role of Filipina women for the young Filipino men,

There were very, very few women all over the continental United States, I think the ratio, depending on where you were, was from 1-to-16, 1 woman to 16 men, 1-to-32. One woman tells stories about going to the movies with 10 or 15 men. I mean, just to be near a Filipino woman was something...they represented for the families they either left in the Philippines or didn't have and probably never would have.¹⁵⁹

The intensity of the uneven gender ratio depended on the location, but the closest the ratio ever got was still above 10 men to one woman. To the young Filipino men, the Filipina women were a comfort they did not frequently have access to within the United States. The young men received comfort from the women as a sense of home. Marriage within the United States to a woman, despite her race, would be a step to achieving a home life.

Marriage also acted as a way to assert ones permanence in a new location. Filipinos marrying white women from California meant these Filipino men would be in California with their new wives, not moving back to the Philippines. Marriage as permanence became an issue in the eyes of state lawmakers, further encouraging their amendments to the limitations of Filipinos. Despite the attempts by state officials and community members to disrupt Filipino-white unions, these relationships still formed. Baldoz comments how “gatekeepers hoped that the relentless legal harassment and institutional exclusion of Filipinos would discourage them from settling permanently in the United States.”¹⁶⁰ Filipinos established their own lives by marrying American citizens, and they hoped to Marriage to further exist in California. The racial segregation, community backlash, and migratory status of Filipinos made achieving such a home life difficult, but it was definitely attempted by many couples.

¹⁵⁹ *Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance*, Schwartz and Dunn, 1984.

¹⁶⁰ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 102.

When Filipinos started entering the United States in large numbers, the California Civil Code included “Mongolians” in language of those unable to marry whites, but the classification of Filipinos as Mongolians was unclear. Lawmakers generally agreed on the racial classification of Filipinos as Malays, but the sub-classification of Malays as Mongolians was debatable.¹⁶¹ The uncertainty of the legality of Filipinos and white marriages lead to a window of possibility of Filipino-white marriages and the battle of the right to marry.

Between 1929 and 1932, the *Los Angeles Times* consistently documented Filipino-white marriage attempts. These years marked the height of Filipino migration into California, which led to the anxieties of interracial marriages and the collaborative efforts of state lawmakers and local community members against Filipinos. As debates of Filipinos as Mongolians continued throughout California, county clerks held the power to allow or deny Filipino-whites marriages. At this time, California considered Mexicans and Mexican-Americans white because of their Spanish ancestry; California did not connect a white-Spanish classification of Filipinos though, despite their centuries of Spanish colonial rule. The *Los Angeles Times* reported the following three instances of denied Filipino-white marriages, where the Mongolian race question and the role of parental control were each brought up.

In December of 1929, Joe Navarro and Elizabeth Jimenez attempted to marry near Madera, California, an agricultural town north of Fresno. Navarro, 34 at the time, grew up in and graduated from a university in the Philippines, and then migrated to California to enroll at the University of California. As Jimenez was only 15 at the time, the “marriage is not possible unless her parents consent [and] Mrs. Jimenez does not approve of her daughter’s choice.”¹⁶² The mother’s inquiry into the marriage resulted in not only a failed wedding license but an arrest of

¹⁶¹ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 90-91.

¹⁶² “Girl’s Mother Halts Plan to Wed Filipino,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Apr 21, 1929.

Navarro as well for “child stealing,” due to Jimenez’s age.¹⁶³ Although Navarro was Filipino, that was not explicitly stated as Mrs. Jimenez’s reasoning against the marriage; the youth standing of her daughter drove the mother’s appeal against the wedding plans. However, the *Los Angeles Times* reporter still made notice of Navarro as a Filipino in three different occasions, one of them clearly stated in the headline. The understated concern of marriage to Filipinos became clearer in the following year.

In another instance of a mother stepping between the marriage of her white daughter and a Filipino man, the concerns were backed up by the county clerk’s interpretation of the Civil Code. In February of 1930, Mrs. Stella Robinson’s daughter Ruby, 22-years old, and her partner, 24-year old Tony V. Moreno, applied for a marriage license. Ruby Robinson met Moreno in a “Filipino dance hall” where she used to be a “commission girl.”¹⁶⁴ As a “native of the Philippine Islands,” Moreno was believed to be part of the Mongolian racial family, to some interpreters of the California Civil Code Section 69. County Clerk Lampton did not interpret Moreno’s race as Mongolian, though, and was prepared to give the couple a marriage license had it not been for Mrs. Robinson’s assertion into the case. The differing opinions of County Clerk Lampton and Mrs. Robinson led to court action determining the validity of the marriage, one of many prior to 1933.

The inconsistency of determining the validity of Filipino-white marriages can be seen through the Navarro-Jimenez and Moreno-Robinson attempted unions, along with two other applied marriage licenses covered by the *Los Angeles Times*. In November of 1930, “County Clerk Clayton announced today he will refuse to issue a marriage license to Roxielee Wright, 20-

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ “Filipino Marriage Balked: Mother of White Girls Gets Temporary Injunction Restraining County Clerk on License,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Feb 11, 1930.

year old Venice girl, and Santiago Serrano, 27.”¹⁶⁵ Clayton denied the license because he believed the marriage went against the interracial marriage laws in California, limiting white-Mongolian unions. Less than a year later in September of 1931, Superior Judge Westover “refused to annul the marriage of Estanislao P. Laddaran, a Filipino, to Emma P. Laddaran, Caucasian,” because Westover did not find any evidence of Filipinos being Mongolians.¹⁶⁶ Westover also declared that, “insomuch as the higher courts have not determined the issue, he felt obliged to so hold.”¹⁶⁷ The debate over Filipinos as Mongolians created the inconsistency of legally granting marriage licenses to Filipino-white couples, a fact Superior Judge Westover pointed out.

The granting and denying of marriage licenses led to various court cases filed throughout California counties. Baldoz discusses how these cases represent the larger opposition to Filipinos and the power Filipinos exerted,

...to a series of legal battles during the early decades of the twentieth century. On one side of this conflict were the gatekeepers: judges, state officials, and local bureaucrats who served as the first line of defense against the latest wave of Asian “invaders” flooding across the Pacific border. On the other side were Filipinos who contested their assignment into disadvantaged social categories, often using the federal government’s own bureaucratic machinery against itself. They appropriated American rhetoric of imperial allegiance and republican beneficence to protest discriminatory legislation and to put forward alternative definitions of civic belonging.¹⁶⁸

County clerks, superior judges, state lawmakers, and vocal white community members led the charge against Filipinos marrying whites, and therefore created a permanent tie for themselves in California. Filipinos pushed back against these claims of otherness to ensure their rights of marriage and their rights to American ways. As nationals, Filipinos owed allegiance to the United States, and American businesses used this status to their advantage. In return, Filipinos expected an equal relationship, partially in the form of legal rights.

¹⁶⁵ “License to Wed Denied to Filipino,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1930.

¹⁶⁶ “Filipino Vows Ruled Binding: Marriage Annulment Plea Turned Down,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Sep 6, 1931.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 71.

Increased anxieties around the marriages came from racial classifications, youth partnerships, and the possibility of a union leading to the permanence of Filipinos within the United States. Marriages were racial concerns as well as citizenship concerns. With Filipinos making strides towards establishing themselves further in the California, the push to get rid of the population would only become harder. California lawmakers saw these events happening and made significant changes in 1933 to halt any other steps towards Filipinos planting their own roots in the state.

III. *ROLDAN V. LOS ANGELES COUNTY* AND THE CALIFORNIA CIVIL CODE

In August of 1931, Filipino Salvador Roldan and his white fiancé, Marjorie Rogers, applied for a marriage license in Los Angeles County. A country clerk denied the marriage in the same format of opposition the aforementioned men and their hopeful wives faced. However, when Roldan and Rogers petitioned this decision, the cases ended up in the California Court of Appeals. *Roldan V. Los Angeles County* was a case of a Filipino-white couple attempting to obtain a marriage license decided the legality of Filipino intermarriage in California. The case cleared up the inconsistencies county clerks previously faced and led to amendments to California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69.

The *Roldan V. Los Angeles County* case began January 27, 1933, over a year after Roldan and Roger's attempt at a marriage license. Baldoz declares the *Roldan* case "centered on two interrelated issues: the contested racial status of Filipinos and the statutory intent of the California legislature regarding Sections 60 and 69 of the state civil code."¹⁶⁹ Ultimately, the *Roldan* case determined if Filipinos were considered Mongolians, and if so, they would be prohibited from marrying whites due to the Civil Code. California Justice Archbald wrote the

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 99.

opinion of the court, stating, “The sole question involved in this appeal is whether or not the legislature in 1880 and 1905 meant to include Filipinos in its use of the word ‘Mongolian.’”¹⁷⁰

The racial thinking of the time and classification of various races led how the case unfolded.

The differing opinions of Filipinos as Malays being a branch of Mongolians, or not, impacted the court’s direction of the case. The court did not feel equipped to determine the racial status of Filipinos so the men decided to base it off of the “common understanding” of the Civil Code language when the law passed in 1880, or as Justice Archbald wrote: “We are not, however, interested in what the best scientific thought of the day was, but in what was the common use of the word “Mongolian” in California at the time of the enactment of the legislation above mentioned.”¹⁷¹ The California Court of Appeals then proceeded to trace the anxieties of the 1880s reflected in the legislation. As the opinion of the court reads, “From 1862 to 1885 the history of California is replete with legislation to curb the so-called ‘Chinese invasion’, and as we read we are impressed with the fact that the terms ‘Asiatics’, ‘Coolies’ and ‘Mongolians’ meant ‘Chinese.’”¹⁷² Therefore, the court determined that Malay or Filipino are not under the term of Mongolian.

With the ruling of Filipinos not being Mongolians, the California Civil Code marriage limitations did not affect Filipinos. Roldan won his case and his right to apply for a marriage license. However, “the justices in the *Roldan* case were quick to point out that their ruling was in no way an endorsement of interracial unions between Filipinos and whites.”¹⁷³ The clarification of Filipinos not being Mongolians only meant further restrictions against Filipinos, which came

¹⁷⁰ *Roldan v. Los Angeles County* 129 Cal. App. 267 (Cal. Ct. App. 1933).1.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, 1.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, 2.

¹⁷³ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 100.

in the form of “Malays” added to California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 as persons who are unable to marry whites.

The brief victory of the *Roldan* case did not last long. Baldoz explains, “Although the verdict in the *Roldan* appeal signaled a legal victory for California’s Filipino community, only a few individuals got to take advantage of the ruling.”¹⁷⁴ During the processions of the case, lawmakers drafted amendments to include Filipinos into the Civil Code, regardless of the case’s outcome. These drafts allowed for another barrier against Filipinos to be quickly built. The amendments to California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 with the inclusion of “Malay” were passed and signed into affect on April 5, 1933. This approval was only two days after Roldan and Rogers were back at the county court house, once again applying for their marriage license. At the time, the county clerks spent two days decided to grant or deny a marriage license. When Roldan and Rogers reapplied, the Civil Code changes went into affect the same day their license could had been approved. A week after the ruling of *Roldan V. Los Angeles County* on March 27, 1933, the law changed to uniformly deny Filipinos and whites the right to marry.¹⁷⁵

The amendments to Sections 60 and 69 of the Civil Code addressed the validity of marriages and the ability to obtain a marriage license. Section 60 reads: “All marriages of white persons with negroes, Mongolians, members of the Malay race, or mulattoes are illegal and void.”¹⁷⁶ As ‘illegal and void,’ state lawmakers ensured that persons could be punished and held accountable for entering into the union. To be void is to be invalid in the eyes of the law, but the term ‘illegal’ added a criminal component to attempts at marriage. Filipinos joined other excluded persons whose marriages were not recognized by the state in any form if their partner was considered white.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 101.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ *The Civil Code of the State of California*, 50th Cong. (1933), § 60.

The uncertainty of county clerks granting marriage licenses to Filipino-white couples built up the history of inconsistent marriage licenses, which led to the *Roldan* case. Section 69 of the Civil Code included “Malay” in the language of couples county clerks prohibited marriage licenses to: “no license may be issued authorizing the marriage of a white person with a Negro, mulatto, Mongolian or member of the Malay race.”¹⁷⁷ The racial classification of each person was part of the identification needed for a marriage license, along with the name, age, and residence of party. The Civil Code’s anti-miscegenation section reached Filipinos in the 1933 amendments and became another piece of legislation against the U.S. nationals.

An article in the *California Law Review* gave a candid response to the Civil Code amendments. In regards to anti-miscegenation legislation in general, the author comments: “The reasons advanced for the prohibitory legislation are for the most part mythical so far as scientific basis is concerned, and are largely due to popular prejudice.”¹⁷⁸ Legal analysis of the changed Civil Code addressed the unscientific and unstable evidence used for anti-miscegenation. The unlikely possibility of feeble offspring due to racial mixing was discredited in the article, which emphasized the existence of the legislation for sake of unscientific popular beliefs.¹⁷⁹ The author included how the California anti-miscegenation “statues are particularly obnoxious,” especially in comparison to surrounding states, which may not have the same limitations. The legal opposition to the Civil Code additions provided a differing insight than newspapers and general public opinion at the time.

¹⁷⁷ *The Civil Code of the State of California*, 50th Cong. (1933), § 69. The document also reads: “All persons about to be joined in marriage must first obtain a license therefor, from the county clerk of the county in which the marriage is to be celebrated, which license must show: The identity of the parties. Their real and full names, and places of residence. Their ages; and Whether white, Mongolian, Negro, Malay or mulatto...”

¹⁷⁸ W.I.C. “Recent Decisions: Marriage: Miscegenation: CAL. CIV. CODE 60, 69.” *California Law Review* 22, no. 1 (Nov 1933): 116-117.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 117: “The claims of judicial proponents of these prohibitory statues that miscegenation results in ‘unnatural amalgamations productive of sickly and effeminate offspring’ have been largely discredited.”

The amendments to California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 were the result of the victory of the *Roldan V Los Angeles County*. Once California justices identified Filipinos to not be Mongolians, the state lawmakers quickly worked to include the language necessary to exclude Filipinos. The role of racial thinking highly impacted how the general public and state officials viewed Filipinos, resulting in the expansion of California anti-miscegenation legislation.

IV. RACIAL THINKING

The interpretation of racial classifications grounded the *Roldan* case and the status of Filipinos within the United States. The debate around Filipinos as Mongolians or a separate race was a larger argument of three or five races in the world. The pseudo-scientific thinking that led the organization of race was similar to the organization that attached values to each race. Eugenic thinking influenced the public's and lawmakers' thoughts, which were reflected in the restrictions and concerns placed upon Filipinos.

As described with the youth identification previously, Filipinos did not have access to a traditional life path. Eugenic thinking also denied Filipinos the ability to travel the proscribed American life path through the characteristics given to Filipinos. Eugenic thinkers and state officials used the popularity of taxi-dance halls for Filipinos as evidence of Filipino promiscuity. Because the dance halls employed white women, the interracial interactions fueled the concerns of sexual aggressiveness as well, similar to the Asian immigrants who came before Filipinos. These conversations then influenced the larger perception of Filipinos and the decision to include "Malay" in the Civil Code language.

Natural scientists during the early decades of the 20th century generally classified races into either five races or three races. The disagreement between the correct number of races was

the same disagreement of Filipinos being Mongolians or not. When Mrs. Robinson interrupted her daughter's marriage to a Filipino man, the lawyers used the classification of races to stall the license: "modern ethnological research has upset the old idea as to five separate races, and there are in reality only three races, one of which, the Mongolians, includes the Malays, and hence the Filipinos."¹⁸⁰ However, the opinion of the court on the *Roldan* case claims five races, as Johann Blumenbach established: "(1) the Caucasian, or white race...(2) the Mongolian, or yellow race...(3) the Ethiopian or negro (black) race...(4) the American, or red race...(5) the Malay, or brown race, occupying the Indian Archipelago."¹⁸¹ No matter the number of races, the efforts to follow the pseudo-scientific classifications, and characteristics in some cases, were displayed with the centrality of the concerns of Filipinos as Mongolians and the lawmaking surrounding racial identifications.

Lawmakers meant for anti-miscegenation laws to be limitations in Filipinos lives. With enough restrictions against Filipinos in place, white Californians hoped Filipinos would return to the Philippines, therefore ridding the state of the believed problem. The restrictions against Filipinos and the attempt to control their ability to settle would be disrupted with marriage to and children with white women. Both of these events would be a form of permanence within the United States; the new couple would be much more likely to stay in the land of opportunities the Filipinos migrated to, than for the husband to take his new wife and possible child back to the Philippines. The interracial couples and the permanence in the United States concerned eugenic thinkers for the future of the white race, American society, and the frontier of California.

Eugenic thinking influenced white superiority over interracial children since one of the main focuses of eugenics encouraged "better breeding that straddled many social, spatial, and

¹⁸⁰ "Filipino Marriage Balked," *Los Angeles Times*, 1930.

¹⁸¹ *Roldan v. Los Angeles County* 129 Cal. App. 267 (Cal. Ct. App. 1933).

temporal divides.”¹⁸² The racial hierarchy existing in eugenicists’ minds negatively affected interracial children. The purity of a white race was essential to the future eugenic thinkers imagined - an intelligent and healthy white race of the future. From the emphasis on ‘better breeding,’ eugenic discussions greatly involved sterilization. However, sterilization was not framed as a form of punishment, rather seen as protection for society and its future. California sterilization advocate Paul Popenoe promoted the idea of the procedure “as a surgical solution for the serious troubles facing the nation.”¹⁸³

Although the concern of interracial children is not directly discussed in eugenic works, the implications can be seen through the discussed concerns. Similarly, little is said about Filipinos by eugenicists, but what is said connects to the family centrality and ‘breeding’ aspects of the thinking. The focus of family and heredity will be applied to the article around Filipinos for the time period, displaying how the Eugenic thinking and belief of youth holding a hope for the future influenced the views and treatment of Filipinos.

The 18th volume of the *Journal of Social Hygiene* in 1932 included director of the Delinquency Unit of the U.S. Children’s Bureau Alida Bowler’s article “Social Hygiene in Racial Problems – the Filipino.” In the article, the problematic aspects of Filipinos through the lens of eugenic thought is discussed, primarily the concern around the unequal ratio of male to female Filipino migrants in the United States, calling it “an excess of males.”¹⁸⁴ This ‘excess’ was found problematic in various areas, most prominently in family life. The family aspect unfolded throughout the article as the Filipino men attempt to interact with white women, who these women are, and what these interactions can lead to.

¹⁸² Stern, *Eugenic Nation*, 18.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, 107

¹⁸⁴ Alida Bowler, “Social Hygiene in Racial Problems – The Filipino.” *Journal of Social Hygiene* 18, no. 8 (Nov 1932): 452.

Bowler defines sociality actions of Filipinos as a “fiery pride” – a part of their race and the cultural influence of Spain.¹⁸⁵ The cultural divisions are clearly defined by Bowler in this way, tying it to blood and practice. These social characteristics are then brought into the taxi-dance halls, with how the Filipino’s “nature demands some measure of colorful social intercourse...[and] the dance hall that is designed to cater to the young Filipino’s thirst for evening of gaiety, of music and the dance, of feminine companionship.”¹⁸⁶ The taxi-dance hall became the space of outgoing characteristics of many Filipino young men to be declared as a sign of their racial otherness. The space and actions are then looked down upon because of Filipino characteristics these thinkers are placing upon them and the interactions of the women and men.

Within the taxi-dance halls, Bowler and others are not only examining that relationship, but are considering the qualities of the taxi-dancer women also. It was a common belief at the time, especially among California eugenicists, of taxi-dancers actively performing acts of prostitution. These actions then combined with interracial relationships for a further negative view of the women: “Because community disapproval of social intermingling of races is so strong it is obvious that it is likely to be only the less respectable, more hardened type of taxi-dancer that signs up for work in a hall catering to men of another race.”¹⁸⁷ The media saw the work of a taxi-dancer negatively because of the interracial interactions. It was more than the women performing in such a space, it was whom they were to be associated with as well.

This is where the connection back to the eugenic spotlight on offspring and the belief of children holding the future comes into play. The interactions between Filipino men and white

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 453. This language was also frequently in journalism reports of Filipino boxers at this time, a social space Espana-Maram explores as well.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 453.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 454.

women in the dance halls sometimes led to relationships outside of the hall, “lasting over a considerable period, with children springing from their matings,” as Bowler explained.¹⁸⁸ These potential interracial children were not permitted to hold hope for the future because of their interracial status, along with the promiscuous view of their mother.

The larger issue of Bowler and other eugenicists was then presented as white women were being put in situation in which they could enter prostitution and interracial relationships. If there were not an “excess of males,” the concern around Filipino actions and interactions would not have been so prominent, as some lawmakers and newspapers allude to. Problem-solving language existed throughout conversations of the unequal Filipino gender ratio in the United States. White public opinion believed an equal gender ratio would lessen the sexual promiscuity of young Filipino men, and therefore lessen the troublesome taxi-dance halls.

The lack of Filipina women was also an overwhelming issues state leaders pointed to as the reason behind white-Filipino marriages occurring. The racial barriers set-up in Western states impacted Filipinos inability to settle, because the lack of Filipinas and the barriers meant Filipinos had difficulties finding relationships. This lack of Filipinas was placed as an issue that if solved, would solve the menace of Filipinos on the West Coast. However, stating that the lack of Filipinas was a problem and arguing an even gender ratio would solve the problem for Filipinos on the West Coast is an issue in itself. These statements stand with the changes to California Civil Code 60 and 69 and the beliefs in anti-miscegenation by not allowing or fighting for interracial unions.

A large portion of newspaper accounts of Filipinos in the 1930’s connect Filipinos to taxi-dance halls, because of the popularity of the recreation spaces for Filipinos. Within the discussion of dance halls, the reasons of Filipinos frequenting the space incorporated the popular

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 454.

problematic language. One article from 1930, titled “Taxi-Dance Girls Start Filipinos on Wrong Foot” presented the Filipino population as such: “FEW FEMALES OF OWN RACE: Among these thousands of insulars the ratio of Filipino women and girls is so small as to be almost negligible – perhaps five or ten women to each thousand men – and therein lies the principal social difficulty of the islander.”¹⁸⁹ The ‘social difficulty’ of Filipinos being able to adjust to western American life was the lack of Filipina women. The difficulty is not framed as the restrictions placed upon Filipinos and the social stigmas of interracial relationships, but rather how Filipinos are “denied the companionship of women of his own race.”¹⁹⁰

The same article goes on to mention the social situation as a “handicap” for young Filipino men.¹⁹¹ The disproportionate sex ratio is positioned as an obstacle for Filipinos, and as a leading factor for the issues arising around Filipinos. Taxi-dance halls were placed as the crux of Filipino interactions to replace those with Filipina women. The halls were commonly a place of contention in communities, yet closing them down did not necessarily solve any of the problems communities found. Bowler concluded her article with being “unable to propose any feasible recreation plan to take its [taxi-dance halls] place” and the larger implications of the interracial interactions taking place in the taxi-dance halls,

It holds a special challenge for the social hygiene engineer because it particularly threatens those things that most concern him, - namely, wholesome relationships between the sexes in youth, the establishment and maintenance of normal family life, physical and mental health and general civic well-being.¹⁹²

The complexity of the issue social hygiene engineers viewed affected the participants in the interactions and the health of society; the increase in Filipino-white relationships led to an increase in interracial children which means a decrease in the number of children the general

¹⁸⁹ Jackson Berger, “Taxi-Dance Girls Start Filipinos on Wrong Foot: Lonely Islanders’ Quest for Woman Companionship Brings Problems of Grave National Moment,” *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Feb 2, 1930.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Bowler, “Social Hygiene in Racial Problems – The Filipino,” 455.

public can place their hope for a utopian future on to. The normalcy of families Bowler advocated for is along the racial boundaries within the United States, ones that cannot be crossed.

Bowler's piece laid out the dialogue surrounding Filipinos in dance halls and the fears of what their interactions with white taxi-dancer women may mean. The article was read among a certain circle of people, but the general public may not have been able to articulate these concerns as Bowler did. However, a similar type of discourse is seen in a 1947 *Los Angeles Times* article on the topic of "Marriage of Filipinos." The newspaper article does not touch upon taxi-dance halls, but focuses on laws surrounding Filipinos and marriage in California and the changes that have taken place. Importantly, the article ends with, "There are now hundreds of children born of Filipino-Caucasian parenthood in California who are stigmatized, necessarily, by the California statute which indirectly brands them as 'illicit.'"¹⁹³ At the time, California anti-miscegenation statutes still stood. If Filipino-white marriages were "illegal and void," the offsprings from such relationships would be viewed in a similar fashion.

The general white public, being influenced by eugenics and progressive thinking, directly ostracized the children of Filipino-white parents and advocated for the children to continue to be treated this way. The social hygiene thinking of the time highly influenced this thought, which was then further projected to the public. The similarities of beliefs in the social hygiene articles and the *Los Angeles Times* articles present the influence of eugenic thinking in everyday life. The general public then took these racial hierarchy thoughts and placed them under progressivism.

Miroslava Chavez-Garcia clearly traces the connection between eugenicists and California justice organizations in her book *States of Delinquency*. Fred C. Nelles became the superintendent of the Whittier State School, a California juvenile justice reform school, in 1912.

¹⁹³ D. F. Gonzalo, "Marriage of Filipinos," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA): Apr 21, 1947.

Nelles, a Progressive and eugenic man, wanted to reform the school as a way to “humanize the institution,” bringing civility back to the cruel state he walked into.¹⁹⁴ Part of this reform was done under scientific racism and the belief in a racial hierarchy where certain races had certain capabilities, some better than others; a belief most eugenic thought held onto. Taking the varying abilities into account, Americanization, “or the whitening of ethnic and racial minorities,” became a key tenant of the work Nelles, and other reformers did, influencing certain races to partake in trade school training, over other forms of education and reducing the threat non-whites posed through means of control.¹⁹⁵ The Progressive and eugenic ties of the institutions and others throughout the state reference back to the importance of California as the frontier, and the strict hopes the frontier brought to the country.

The connection of Progressive reform to eugenic thinking came from both using ‘science’ and education as evidence of necessary reform and the methods to do so, as well as the aims of incorporating a sense of humanity into juvenile justice and other systems. Therefore, the popularity of the Progressive Party meant the popularity of eugenic thinking. Another aspect of the widespread nature of eugenic beliefs comes with the high quantity of people in power following eugenic thought. Nelles led the Whittier State School and was appointed by a prominent Progressive Party governor. J. Harold Williams, a racial and intelligence researcher at the Whittier State School became the director of the California Bureau of Juvenile Research. Alida Bowler, author of “Social Hygiene in Racial Problems – the Filipino,” directed the Delinquency Unit of the Children’s Bureau, as other *Journal of Social Hygiene* contributors held similar positions. Highly impactful decisions were made in these and other positions that affected young men and women and persons of various races under the influence of eugenic thinking,

¹⁹⁴ Chavez-Garcia, *States of Delinquency*, 50.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 51.

emphasizing the connections made through the previously mentioned newspaper articles.

Although young Filipino men were not specifically dealt with at the Whittier State School or similar institutions, the racial hierarchical look of eugenics influenced how the general public saw Filipinos. A 1947 *Los Angeles Times* article encouraging the stigmatization of interracial children did not come out of nowhere; it came from this eugenic thinking and fear of interracial mixing producing a less hopeful future. Ultimately, through forms of assimilation and classification of a racial hierarchy, public figures like Nelles wanted to ensure non-whites became “productive citizens and workers who would accommodate themselves to industrial and agricultural capitalism’s insatiable demand for labor”¹⁹⁶; a division of races and everyone staying in their place. However, when people did not stay under this control of eugenic thinking, by dancing with white women in rundown parts of town, the negative views, legal changes, and violence against that group of people emerged.

V. TAPIA-SAIKI INCIDENT

Tensions around Filipino-white relationships filled newspapers and community concerns. State lawmakers altered legislation to respond to the interracial relationships and to the fear of Filipinos as a whole. Not considered illegal like white and non-white marriages, unions between non-white persons highlighted the tensions of interethnic conflicts between communities which prevented interethnic relationships from forming. Japanese immigrants were particularly nationalistic, compared to other Asian immigrants, and when Filipino Felisberto Suarez Tapia and second-generation Japanese American Alice Chiyoko Saiki applied for a marriage license, a boycott between Filipinos and Japanese community members resulted.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 51.

The young Filipino man, Tapia, met the second generation Japanese American woman, Saiki, in a pool hall run by Saiki's father. At the time, Tapia worked in a factory near Stockton. The couple decided to marry on February 3rd, 1930. The marriage license took two days to become official and following the prescribed time, Tapia went to Saiki's home to retrieve his wife to allow the two of them to start their life. However, Saiki's family prevented Tapia from seeing his bride, claiming she had decided to travel back to Japan.

Tapia felt forced to turn to local Filipino community leaders for help when Saiki's family denied him access to his wife. The leaders decided to start a boycott of local Japanese-owned businesses in retaliation. With Filipinos being a large portion of patrons in the Japanese-owned businesses, the impact of the boycott was sudden. The Filipino community claimed, "that Japanese contractors coerced Filipinos to buy supplies" from only their stores.¹⁹⁷ The monopoly power of Japanese-owned businesses in Stockton meant they could easily be affected with the boycotts and within three days of the boycott starting, there were reports of how "several restaurants and pool halls had closed."¹⁹⁸ The boycott became instantly successful because of the economic relationship between the Filipino and Japanese communities.

The Japanese families in the area who were not business owners were most likely labor contractors. In response to the boycott, Japanese labor contractors threatened to not hire Filipino workers for the upcoming asparagus season, a season known for Filipino workers. Along with not hiring Filipino laborers, the Japanese contractors talked openly about bringing in Mexican laborers to replace the Filipinos.¹⁹⁹ Although Japanese business owners relied on Filipinos for a

¹⁹⁷ Arleen De Vera, "The Tapia-Saiki Incident: Interethnic Conflict and Filipino Responses to the Anti-Filipino Exclusion Movement," in *Over the Edge: Remapping the American West*, ed. Valerie J. Matsumoto and Blake Allmeninger (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 207.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Eiichio Azuma, "Racial Struggle, Immigrant Nationalism, and Ethnic Identity: Japanese and Filipino in the California Delta," *Pacific Historical Review* 67, no. 2, 1998: 164.

profit, Filipino laborers relied on Japanese contractors for work. The economic relationships between the two caused a growing tension, which could be exploited through the marriage incident of Tapia and Saiki.²⁰⁰

After weeks of boycotting, the Filipinos ended their strike against the Japanese-owned businesses and the court denied Tapia's appeal to rightfully be married to his wife. The denied Tapia-Saiki marriage reflected the tension and divide between Japanese and Filipino communities in Stockton. The dispute further reflected the larger Japanese nationalism against communities in the United States and widespread social, economic, and legal restrictions placed on Filipinos in California. Legally, even though Tapia and Saiki went through the proper channels to get married, the marriage between the two was denied in court. The social divide between the communities and the restrictions further placed on Filipinos throughout California could be clearly seen in the instance. The boycott, contract threats, and eventual end of the dispute were all constituted in the economic limitations and capabilities of the Filipino community.

The racial conflict between the Japanese and Filipinos in California weaved its way throughout these tensions; further highlighting the interethnic clashes between the two communities. Eiichiro Azuma argues that the Issei in California built a form of nationalism around their racial and economic experiences in the state along with the actions of Imperial Japan.²⁰¹ Japanese immigrants in California viewed their movement into the states as an early expansion of the Japanese empire:

Juxtaposing their own struggles against racial exclusion with the rise of Imperial Japan in a world dominated by the West, Issei considered themselves the "forerunners" or "pioneers" (*senkusha*) of Japan's overseas expansion, preceding other Japanese migrations to the Asian continent, Micronesia, and South America. In

²⁰⁰ De Vera, "The Tapia-Saiki Incident," 205.

²⁰¹ Azuma, "Racial Struggle, Immigrant Nationalism, and Ethnic Identity," 165.

short, Issei saw their immigrant community and their homeland state as partners in the grand expansionist project.²⁰²

This view automatically connected the Issei's identity to Imperial Japan. These Japanese immigrants saw themselves separate from all other Asian immigrants and migrants, thus creating an ethnic and racial divide and hierarchy.

The Japanese business owners and labor contractors in Stockton saw themselves as superior to Filipinos; the Japanese considered Filipinos an Asian 'backward race,' persons who needed to be civilized by their Empire.²⁰³ With this divide, the tension between the two communities already existed when Tapia knocked on the Saiki's household door to reclaim his bride. The Japanese saw themselves racially above the Filipinos, and holding a steady economic base. Similar tensions could have arisen in Hawaii as Filipinos were imported for labor to disrupt the organizing gains Japanese workers made.

The racial superiority felt by Japanese immigrants translated to nationalism of the Issei. The Japanese immigrants in California kept their communities close, attempting to honor Imperial Japan and further their success. Along with these feelings were the Japanese beliefs around interracial marriage: "Japanese immigrants worried about intermarriage because it signified 'contamination' of their 'pure' bloodline."²⁰⁴ Japanese nationalism impacted the everyday life of the Issei in California, and therefore affected the non-Japanese communities around them. When Tapia and Saiki married, the Saiki bloodline would be tarnished by the Filipino relationship. Due to the strong racial and nationalistic tensions, the marriage had to be stopped, as it was.

²⁰² Ibid, 167.

²⁰³ Ibid, 171.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

What this comes down to is proving anti-miscegenation legislation and beliefs were not a singular phenomenon to white Americans. Japanese nationalistic beliefs fueled the separation of races for marriage. American eugenicists and Isseis shared a hope of purity in their races. Although the California Civil Code sections 60 and 69 were in specific relation to white and non-white marriages, the same restrictions of sociality were apparent in smaller communities. The interethnic conflict existed prior to an attempted Filipino-Japanese marriage and continued after the end the resulting boycott.

VI. LAWS IN SURROUNDING STATES

When California altered its Civil Code to match the changing racial make-up of the state and ensure widespread restrictions, other Western states followed suit. Western states other than California worked to ensure the racial segregation of marriages while some states became havens for such marriages to occur.

Following the 1933 California amendments of the illegality of Filipino-white marriages, “Oregon, Wyoming, Nevada, Idaho, South Dakota, and Arizona amended their antimiscegenation laws to target ‘Malays,’ but Filipino-white intermarriage remained legal in adjacent jurisdictions, such as New Mexico and Washington (and in Tijuana, Mexico).”²⁰⁵ The widespread reaction to Filipino-white marriages in states with low Filipino populations display the high fear of racial others. States like Wyoming, Idaho, and South Dakota would have had particularly low Filipino populations even in the harvest seasons, yet these states still restricted the possibility of such marriages taking place.

Oregon’s addition did not follow directly after California’s inclusion of “Malay” as one woman remembers traveling up to Oregon in order to marry her Filipino husband. As a Mexican

²⁰⁵ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 101.

woman, California statutes and racial thinking of the time saw Anna Agbalay as white. Agbalay recalls, “And then we decided to get married and we couldn’t get married here so we had to go to Salem, Oregon. He almost got killed because they were with us white people, white women.”²⁰⁶

Despite the ability to get married in Oregon at the time, the community tensions of Filipino-white relationships resulted in violence, similar to the actions in California. The legislative changes reflected the community fears and anxieties of the time.

Jacinto Sequig, a Filipino man who migrated to California in the 1930s, remembers traveling to New Mexico to marry his wife.

There was an existing law in California at that time, which they call it anti-miscegenation law, where by a Filipino cannot marry into the white ways and at that time, I think, the Mexican, because my wife is from Mexican ancestry, they were considered as whites so we could not get married here so we went as far as New Mexico to get married.²⁰⁷

New Mexico’s only anti-miscegenation restricted the marriage of blacks and whites but was repealed in order to become a state. The border state provided a place for mixed-race couples to officiate their relationships, as Sequig and his wife did when being fully aware of the anti-miscegenation legislation in California. The recognition of the marriage law against Filipinos in California by both Sequig and Agbalay reflect the common knowledge of the legislative actions, not just community hostility. Knowing the anti-miscegenation legislation and the illegality of the marriages yet still deciding to marry could be seen as an act of resistance. The young Filipino men fought the restrictions of the legislation against them to establish their own lives in the United States.

Utah managed to keep its anti-miscegenation laws separate from those in its surrounding states. A *Los Angeles Time* article from 1937 details the state’s decision to allow Filipino-white marriages:

²⁰⁶ *Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance*, Schwartz and Dunn, 1984.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Utah's doors were ruled open today to Filipino-white marriages, illegal in Southwestern States – California, Arizona and Nevada. State Attorney General Joseph Chez ruled, after weeks of delving into history books and ethnologists' findings, that Filipinos are Malaysians – not Mongolians.²⁰⁸

Utah's decision to allow Filipino-white marriages was on the basis of the same scientific rationality of California's. Through the determination of Filipinos as Malays and not Mongolians, the state removed Filipinos from the restrictions placed on Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian persons. Once California came to this decision, the state legislature instantly included "Malay" in its marriage restrictions. Utah did not follow suit, even after California specifically sent the state a copy of the newly amended Civil Code.²⁰⁹

As California and these surrounding state specifically pointed out Filipinos as a troubling population and pushed for the inclusion of them in each state's anti-miscegenation legislation, other non-white persons were also chosen. Pascoe provides three examples of other marital exclusions at the time: "Oregon prohibited whites from marrying "Kanakas" (or native Hawaiians); South Dakota proscribed "Coreans"; Arizona singled out Hindus."²¹⁰ The inclusion of native Hawaiians in Oregon drew parallels to Filipinos since both populations were part of the larger American empire, yet restricted from American life.

The exclusion of migrating non-whites from marrying practices occurred throughout Western states. Into the 1930s, Filipinos were the focal point of anti-miscegenation tensions, but the social and legislative unrest took place outside of California as well. The strong presence of the anxieties against Filipinos reflected the history of fears against Chinese and Japanese immigrants mixing with white residents. While California and these other Western states made up the American frontier, it was a frontier that was expected to fulfill the white American ideal.

²⁰⁸ "Filipinos-and-white Marriages Ruled Legal in Utah," *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA), Jun 11, 1937.

²⁰⁹ Baldoz, *The Third Asiatic Invasion*, 101.

²¹⁰ Pascoe, "Race, Gender, and the Privileges of Property: On the Significance of Miscegenation Law in the U.S. West," 217.

VII. CONCLUSION

The victory of the *Roldan* case did not last long for Filipinos. Although Roldan and his fiancé won the right to apply for a marriage license, the ruling allowed California lawmakers to impose further restrictions on Filipinos. To lawmakers and the concerned white public, the inclusion of “Malay” into the California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 was the victory of the *Roldan* case. These concerns and fears around Filipinos by state officials and white community members resulted in the anti-miscegenation changes of the 1930s. However, through the continued attempts at marriage and traveling to other states, Filipinos resisted the imposed restrictions the best they could.

California was not the only state to imposed further limitations on Filipinos as other Western states followed. The Western frontier wanted to ensure the purity of their states, therefore creating complex anti-miscegenation laws influenced by eugenic thinking. As Filipinos moved throughout these spaces, they also moved throughout established communities. However, not all otherized communities accepted Filipinos as displayed with the Tapia-Saiki attempted marriage. Throughout the 1930s, the young Filipinos who entered the West Coast grew up and wanted to establish lives of their own. Marriage was part of these new lives and Filipino men continued to find ways to ensure their marriages happened and their lives continued.

The limitations of the Civil Code stayed in place until 1948. The California Supreme Court case of *Perez V. Sharp* struck down the state’s anti-miscegenation laws when Andrea Perez, white, and Sylvester Davis, black, were granted the right to marry. The role of the equal protection of the laws clause was used as focal point in determining one’s right to marry. In regards to an individual’s right to marry, the opinion of the court reads:

Since the right to marry is the right to join in marriage with a person one's choice, a statute that prohibits an individual from marrying a member of a race other than his own restricts the scope of his choice and thereby restricts his right to marry.²¹¹

The restrictions of an individual's right to marry were closely examined and expanded through the *Perez V. Sharp* ruling. No longer were people of color restricted in their marriage rights by the state of California as the almost century-old anti-miscegenation legislation was overturned.

²¹¹ *Perez v. Sharp*, 32 Cal. 2d 711 (Cal. 1948).

CONCLUSION

A history of Asian exclusion exists within the United States, particularly on the West Coast. Asian migrant workers entered the United States based on the labor needs of the country, but as the populations increased and became involved in non-work activities, the United State saw the immigrants and migrants as individuals. Once the American government and public no longer saw immigrants as only laborers, the vision of problematic populations arose.

Filipinos fit into the longer history of migration to the United States, but with a unique experience. Filipino migration to the United States occurred because of American colonial involvement into the island nation. The increased movement throughout the West Coast and other American territories happened because of the exclusion of immigrants from the passing of the Quota Act. The large migration to the United States was then capped with declaring Filipinos as aliens ineligible to citizenship and setting the Philippines' quota at 50 persons per year. The full granting of independence to the Philippines in 1946 officially removed the United States from involvement with the island nation. The crossover of Filipino migration, economic turmoil with the Great Depression, and exclusionary racial thinking of the 1920s, 30s, and 40s characterized the Filipino migrant experience.

With the exclusion of Chinese and Japanese laborers, West Coast corporations hired Mexican workers to fill jobs needed in agricultural fields and industrial complexes. The businesses also turned to Filipinos, as the islanders began to migrate to the United States in the 1920s, becoming more appealing for cheap labor after the passage of the Johnson-Reed Act in 1924. Over 30,000 Filipinos worked in California in 1930. White community members and state and federal lawmakers noticed the large influx of young Filipino men. The public placed the

previous characteristics of Asian immigrants on Filipinos, vilifying the migrant population as sexually promiscuous, taking American jobs, and inciting violence. Despite being nationals, the public still viewed Filipinos as aliens and racialized others. The alien status transferred to Filipinos with the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934, starting the process of Philippine independence. Filipinos faced exclusionary practices as Asian immigrants who had come before them. The history of Asian exclusion was not the only reason behind opposition to Filipinos; the resulting exclusion grew from effects of the American empire and the periodization of Filipino migration.

The central findings of the thesis expose the effects of anti-miscegenation legislation on Filipinos, the state violence on the population, and the inability to settle. The first chapter traced Filipinos' migratory pattern. The nature of migration highlighted the denial of the ability to settle, American citizenship, and economic success Filipinos faced. Surveillance and regulation infiltrated the Filipino filled spaces of work and recreation, paralleling the watchfulness of youth and colonial subjects. The history of Asian immigration on the West Coast attached sexually aggressive characteristics onto Filipinos, as the white public and state officials continued a pattern of exclusionary attitudes on the young men.

The treatment and travel of the young Filipino men displayed the arms of the American empire. The ability to move because of American involvement in the Philippines led to the inability to settle for Filipinos once they reached the continental United States. Despite the exclusionary attitudes and practices Filipinos faced, Filipinos continued to relate themselves to Americans. The periodization of Filipino migration captured the timeframe in which the young Filipino migrants grew up under American governance from the Philippines to Hawaii, Alaska, and then into the continental United States.

The connections between the Cable Act, the Tydings-McDuffie Act, and the Filipino Repatriation Act are examined in the section chapter through the focus of ‘aliens ineligible to citizenship.’ The timing of the mentioned legislation extended the exclusionary attitudes towards Filipino migrants to federal actions. The Cable Act worked as a form of anti-miscegenation because its consequences of American women marrying aliens ineligible to citizenship built barriers preventing such unions. The Cable Act affected Filipinos when their status went from nationals to aliens with the passing of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934. The legislative acts created obstacles that increased the inability of Filipinos establishing non-migratory lives in the United States. Concerns and fears around Filipinos led to the Filipino Repatriation Act, in which the American government attempted to get rid of the ‘Filipino problem’ with free travel back to the Philippines. The violence of the laws came through with how the federal legislation impacted and altered the life paths of Filipinos, especially in their inability to settle and establish relationships. The laws focused on excluding and removing Filipinos from the United States despite the colonial dependency Filipinos had on the American empire.

Anti-miscegenation legislation specifically in California follows in the third chapter. California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 were amended in 1933 to include “Malays” in the list of persons prohibited from marrying whites. The passage of the amendments following the *Roldan V Los Angeles County Case* showed the concerns of racial mixing and permanent Filipino occupation in California. Overall, the role of anti-miscegenation legislation against Filipinos displayed the exclusionary attitudes towards Filipinos while increasing the migratory pattern of their lives.

The overlapping of marriage, immigration, and Filipino specific legislation highlight the periodization of Filipino migration and their migratory experience. Two years after the passage

of the Cable Act, the Johnson-Reed Act passed. The Quota Act further restricted the entrance of aliens into the United States, and therefore increased disdain toward aliens. Despite being nationals and a small population at the time, the public treated Filipinos as an excluded alien group. Congress only officially repealed the Cable Act after the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act, when Filipinos were then considered aliens ineligible to citizenship. California Civil Code Sections 60 and 69 complicated and further confined the lives of Filipinos through prohibiting the young men from marrying white women. The state legislation paired with the federal steps towards Philippine independence, altering the American capabilities of Filipinos as a whole. The Filipino Repatriation Act followed Tydings-McDuffie as a final act of ridding the country of the believed “Filipino problem.” The previous pieces of legislation worked to limit the actions and possibilities of Filipinos, but once the young men were no longer U.S. nationals, the government could work towards actually removing the population from the United States.

Throughout the passed legislation, Filipinos continued to find avenues for resistance to the legislative violence. Although the Repatriation Act provided free transportation back to the Philippines, only 2,064 Filipinos took advantage of the travel between 1936 and 1941.²¹² When California expanded its anti-miscegenation laws to include “Malays,” Filipino-white couples traveled to neighboring states to legally marry. The law did not create unbreakable barriers for Filipinos. While the American government tried to remove the ‘Filipino problem,’ Filipinos fought to establish themselves, especially since it was the American empire that brought the young men to the continental United States.

American relations with Mexico in the 20th century parallel the experience of Filipinos and broaden America’s empire. Mexicans frequently moved across the border for agricultural work in the southwest. As the movement of people and labor grew across the border, the number

²¹² Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 122.

of Mexicans settling within the United States also grew, specifically California and Texas.²¹³ A permanent presence of Mexicans in the United States resulted in an increased opposition to Mexicans, similar to that of Filipinos. In the 1930s, large-scale Mexican and Mexican-American repatriation acts took place. This timeline matches that of labor unrest of Mexican and Mexican-American workers in California.²¹⁴ Dorothy Fujita-Rony connects the Mexican and Filipino repatriation movements to large racial issues in California,

While discussions of repatriation should properly concentrate on what was happening in the Mexican American community because of the virulence of repatriation there, and while Filipina/o Americans were affected on a far smaller scale, the fact that repatriation legislation was enacted against Filipina/o Americans is an indication of the extreme racism of the times. Only seven years later, Japanese Americans, including both immigrants and American-born children, would be targeted for forcible removal either to concentration camps in remote parts of the American West or to Japan.²¹⁵

Mexicans were heavily involved in the production of American goods. The transnational movement for producing and harvesting American goods expanded the borders of the American empire to Mexican laborers. The racial motivation of removal and opposition to Filipinos, Mexicans, Mexican-Americans, and Japanese-Americans, represents the violence these persons faced. The restrictive and removal legislation affected and redirected the life path of racialized others in California, Western states, and the entirety of the United States.

The Philippines, Hawaii, Alaska, and other American territories comprised the larger American empire. People, labor, and goods moved throughout American states and territories creating the empire. Business and government connections built the structure of the empire, as seen in the treaty agreements in Hawaii and the labor agreements in the Philippines.²¹⁶ Filipino migration was a result of the empire structure, moving as laborers from the Philippines to Hawaii, Alaska, and the West Coast, producing goods for America. The transnational

²¹³ Ibid, 129-130.

²¹⁴ Ibid, 135.

²¹⁵ Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power*, 153.

²¹⁶ The Reciprocity Treaty of 1876 and the 1906 HSPA-Philippines agreements discussed in Chapter 1 explain the government-business connections.

relationships created the American citizen mentality within Filipinos; Filipinos saw themselves as Americans because of their movements, locations, and work were tied to American government and businesses. The colonial structure set up by the United States in the Philippines placed Filipinos under American rule. Filipinos continued to move throughout other American territories and the continental United States; as the young men grew up, they grew into an American identity because of their surroundings. However, the United State did not reciprocate the feelings of belonging.

In this colonial structure, the migrating Filipinos were dependents of the American empire. The young men were dependent on the government structure for work and the ability to move. This does not take away the independent actions and ability to choose of Filipinos, but alters the understanding of the colonial role America placed itself in. This view heightens when combined with how the American empire then created the “Filipino problem.” Filipinos entered the West Coast in mass migratory waves because of the labor and goods system established. Yet, when the United States saw Filipinos as a population of people instead of as an importation of labor, the problem arose and the exclusionary pattern was placed on Filipinos.

While newspaper and public lawmakers blame immigrants for taking jobs away from American citizens through America’s past and present, it is actually the American businesses that increased their profits through hiring immigrant migrant workers for cheap labor. The American empire transported the product goods and laborers throughout the sugar, canning, agriculture, and other industries. Young Filipino men became transnational people through their work in each of these industries and locations; Mexican workers traveled a similar path.

Filipinos tried to better their lives in their transnational work, their constant movement, and it attempts at permanent American settlement. Despite the opposition of exclusionary

attitudes and practices, Filipinos continued to stay, work, and make their lives in the United States, as seen in the repatriation numbers. As the young men interacted with white women in taxi-dance halls and moved their relationships out of the spaces, white community members and state and federal officials created laws in opposition. Anti-miscegenation laws enacted barriers and limitations against interracial relationships and children, and of Filipinos and aliens ineligible to citizenship settling in the United States. The closer Filipinos moved to permanence in the United States, the stricter the legislation fought back.

Filipinos followed a dream when the young men left the Philippines. America advertised itself as a place of hope and possibility, which meant these Filipino men planned on establishing themselves in the United States. Daughter of a Filipino migrant, Diana Pacleb-Murray, explains, “In the Filipino culture the dream, the big hope, the pot of gold is real big and either you’re going to win big or lose big.”²¹⁷ Filipinos fought against state and federal legislation in order to continue to have the dream framed by the American empire.

²¹⁷ *Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance*, Schwartz and Dunn, 1984.

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