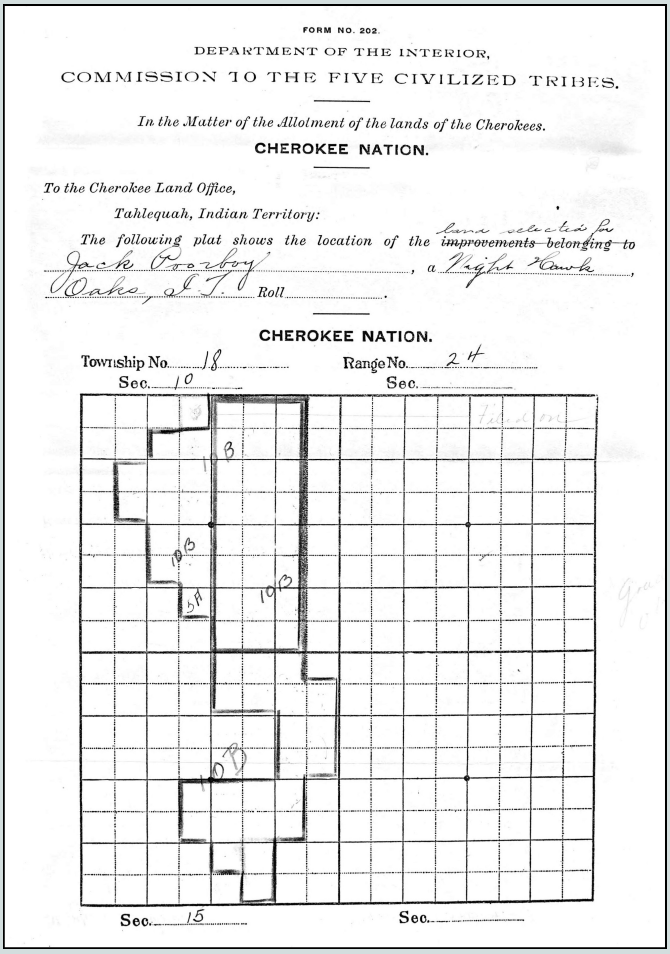
The Ozark Historical Review



FORM NO. 202.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

COMMISSION TO THE FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES.

In the Matter of the Allotment of the lands of the Cherokees.

CHEROKEE NATION.

To the Cherokee Land Office,

Tahlequah, Indian Territory:

The following plat shows the location of the ~~improvements belonging to~~ land selected for Jack Roarboy, a Night Hawk, Oaks, I.T. Roll .

CHEROKEE NATION.

Township No. 18 Range No. 24

Sec. 10 Sec.

Sec. 15 Sec.

Volume 52

Department of History
J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences
University of Arkansas

2025

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Contents

The Varied Response of Cherokees to Land Allotment

JACOB CUMMINGS

One of the most valued possessions that my family holds is my great-great grandfather Jack Poorboy's land allotment deed which was recorded in May 1907. We hold a deep, sentimental connection with the restricted land that we have held for over a century in what is now northeastern Oklahoma. After finding Jack's allotment records within various online archives, a certain line in his allotment jacket, in a combination of typed font and written notes, caught my eye: "the following plat shows the location of the land selected for Jack Poorboy, a Night Hawk."[1] Having known nothing about what a "Night Hawk" was, I began delving further into this time period, following the development of the Dawes Severalty Act and the debate surrounding its creation and implementation. I discovered a historically significant, grassroots movement during the era that I had no knowledge of, despite myself being Cherokee and holding an interest in history. Jack Poorboy, like other Night Hawks, likely opposed allotment and tried to resist its implementation for years.

This paper analyzes Cherokee opposition to allotment, including the diverse issues involved and the dissenting opinions among Cherokees that could be found within the resistance. Allotment was a United States policy, expressed in the 1887 Dawes Act and other U.S. legislation and executive orders, that coerced tribal nations to breakup their communally held lands into private holdings, or allotments. In this paper I argue that the shifting beliefs, political views, and grassroots movements surrounding allotment, and its closely related issues, were both based in and influenced by personal and political interests, as well as from traditional, collective Cherokee values and spirituality. In detailing the assorted tribal administrations, Cherokee statesmen and sociopolitical movements within

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[1] Jack Poorboy Allotment, June 29, 1905, Applications for Allotment, Five Civilized Tribes Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration, Fort Worth.

the Cherokee Nation, the nuances and changes over time that can be found within Cherokee arguments both for and against allotment are shown. As part of an attempt to illuminate a portion of history that has yet to receive attention, I analyze the different voices among Cherokee people and their backgrounds in their response to the allotment of their land.

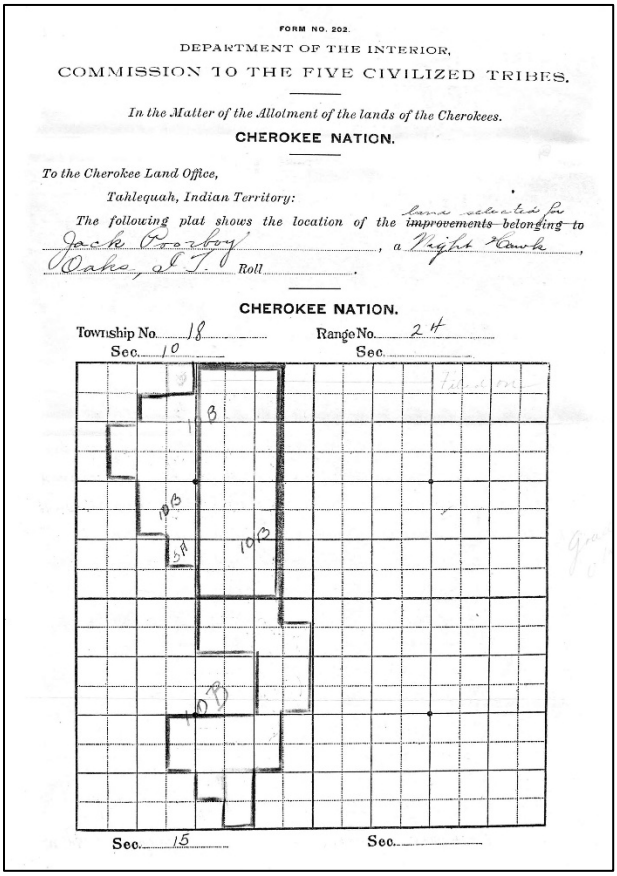

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Figure 1: Jack Poorboy's Allotment, June 29, 1905, Applications for Allotment, Five Civilized Tribes Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration, Fort Worth.

The Cherokee Nation government and many of its constituents were among some of the staunchest opposition forces to the policy of allotment that spawned out of the increasingly assimilationist U.S. Indian policy in the late 1870s and 1880s. They knew that allotting tribal land in severalty would result in massive land loss for tribal nations, which might lead to many negative consequences, including a weakening tribal sovereignty in the eyes of U.S. officials. The Cherokee Nation was one of many tribes that sought to maintain their tribal lands while preserving respect for the treaties that deeded them said lands. The influential Massachusetts Senator Henry L. Dawes referring to Cherokees as, "the most tenacious in holding

to the present system."[2] That "present system" was both the traditional values and cultural practices such as the holding of tribal lands in communion that were and are still rooted in collectivist ideals, as well as the sovereign self-government their political construction afforded themselves.

The politics of the Cherokee Nation over the first two-thirds of the 19th century had been plagued with instances of factionalism, as issues both external and internal created schisms within the internal community of the tribe. There are two points where the creation and entrenchment of these schisms can be identified. The first can be seen in 1830s after the passage of the Indian Removal Act fully set in motion the removal of many Native American tribes east of the Mississippi to lands west of the major waterway. The second occurred in the 1860s in a bout of civil strife that mirrored the accompanying, and well acknowledged, grand war to the Nation's east.

Within the Cherokee Nation during the first of these schisms, which began in the 1830s, multiple factions were formed, with two of the most prominent being the National Party and the Treaty Party. The National Party was a majority party led by the Cherokee Nation's Chief John Ross while the Treaty Party was a minority group led by a group of prominent Cherokees such as Stand Watie, Elias Boudinot, Major Ridge and his son John Ridge.[3] The Treaty Party unilaterally signed the Treaty of New Echota in 1835, a decision that the majority of Cherokees, including Ross' faction, were deeply opposed to following. The Treaty of New Echota gave legal justification to President Jackson and his successor President Van Buren to proceed with the forced removal of the Cherokee people to Indian Territory by the end of the decade. While the Treaty Party members believed they were accepting the inevitable and doing good for the Cherokee people in the long run, tensions flared along these factional lines. Some were targeted for violence because of their role it the treaty's signing. A series of assassinations began on June 22, 1839, in which Boudinot and both Major and John Ridge were killed and others such as Watie.

The second of these noteworthy splits occurred alongside the American Civil War in the 1860s as a conflict within the Cherokee Nation, having its own parallels to the more famous conflict, as the Nation found itself split into two opposing factions, matching the prior split from the 1830s down to the leadership. The split was complex, but John Ross' faction was generally made up by Cherokee "full-bloods" and "traditionalists," while Stand Watie's faction included those of the slave-owning planter class as well as "progressives" who were often "mixed-blood" Cherokees with European ancestry, with each group pushing the tribe to throw its support behind the United States or Confederate governments, respectively.[4]

[2] "Senator Dawes's Views: What He Has to Say in Regard to the Indian Problem," *New York Times*, Apr. 21, 1891.

[3] The National and Treaty Parties could also be referred to as the Ross and Ridge Parties respectively, see Morris L. Wardell, *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), 8-10.

[4] Here I wish to make a note on the usage of terms such as "full-blood," "mixed-blood," as well as any other words which give credence to the concept of race and blood quantum, alongside other outdated concepts. These words perpetuate the provenly false idea of biological differences among human beings and contribute to a generalizing effect that

From the 1870s to the termination of the Cherokee Nation's government in the early 1900s, the trend of a two-party system continued to emerge, with two major parties presiding over this span of Cherokee politics. These parties were known as the National Party and Downing Party. The Downing Party was created as a coalition between leaders in the traditionalist and progressive factions, such as Baptist missionary Evan Jones, who was popular-among-traditionalists, and the ever present Watie, who united behind the moderate, "full-blood" Lewis Downing following John Ross' death.[5] The National Party formed soon after as an opposition party, led by Ross' less popular son, William Potter Ross. Although division along demographic and party lines continued within the Nation, the extreme factionalism ceased on most issues of policy, including the potential allotment of Cherokee lands. For much of the late nineteenth century, of course, both major parties of the Cherokee Nation stood in full opposition to the allotment of Cherokee lands.

The opposition to land allotment from the political representatives of the Cherokee people can be seen through the writings and voices of their chiefs.[6] Four principal chiefs served in office between the years of 1879 and 1899. The first was among the most prominent voices offered by the Cherokee people during the latter quarter of the 19th century: the treasurer and then principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, Dennis Wolfe Bushyhead. Bushyhead was the son of a prominent Cherokee leader, the Baptist reverend Jesse Bushyhead. He spent time as a clerk in the Cherokee Council's Senate chamber before joining in on the California Gold Rush in 1849, eventually returning to Indian Territory after 19 years. He was elected unanimously by the National Council as Treasurer in 1871 before his election as Principal Chief in 1879 on the National Party ticket with his Assistant Chief Rabbit Bunch. Running on his government experience, as well as his financial skills, Bushyhead hoped to reduce the Nation's $210,000 debt.[7]

Although his stance would eventually change, Bushyhead was staunchly against allotment and any threat to the Nation's long-standing tradition of

creates assumptions of individuals. These words can also possess fluidity in their meaning, with "full-blood" being capable of being used as a means of referencing cultural upbringing and identity, rather than its pseudoscientific definition. In writing this paper I used the terms in recognition of their contemporary use and close association with traditionalism, however I want to acknowledge the problematic underpinnings they carry. For further discussion I point to Rose Stremlau's thoughts in the introduction of her study of Cherokee families during the allotment period, which addresses this topic sublimely. See Rose Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family: Kinship and the Allotment of an Indigenous Nation* (University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 13-5; Wardell, 8-18, 118-23; Claudio Saunt, *Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2020), 237-238; Janey B. Hendrix, *Redbird Smith and the Nighthawk Keetoowahs* (Park Hill, Oklahoma: Cross-Cultural Education Center, 1983), 1-10.

[5] Once again, I call attention to the varied use of "-blood" terms, as Wardell states Downing as having been classed as a "full-blood," despite being of mixed-ancestry, likely due to his favorable stance with, or other possible relation to, the traditionalist community, see Wardell, *A Political History*, 210.

[6] Wardell, *A Political History*, 208-11, 336.

[7] Obituary on D.W. Bushyhead, February 12, 1898, Dennis Wolfe Bushyhead Collection B-55 F31, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma. (WHC); *Indian Journal*, July 31, 1879, Dennis Wolfe Bushyhead Collection B-54 F63, WHC.

communal property. Leading the Nation's opposition to the allotment of land prior to the passage of any major allotment legislation, Bushyhead sought to create alliances with other tribes in eastern Indian Territory, as all tribes were facing the same threat of allotment's consequences. In October 1885, for instance, Bushyhead authorized the Cherokee delegate Lucien B. Bell to the Muskogee (Creek) Council during its session to act as a consultant for Cherokee interests, in a move that strengthened the united front against allotment and, in this case, the selling of land for white settlement.[8]

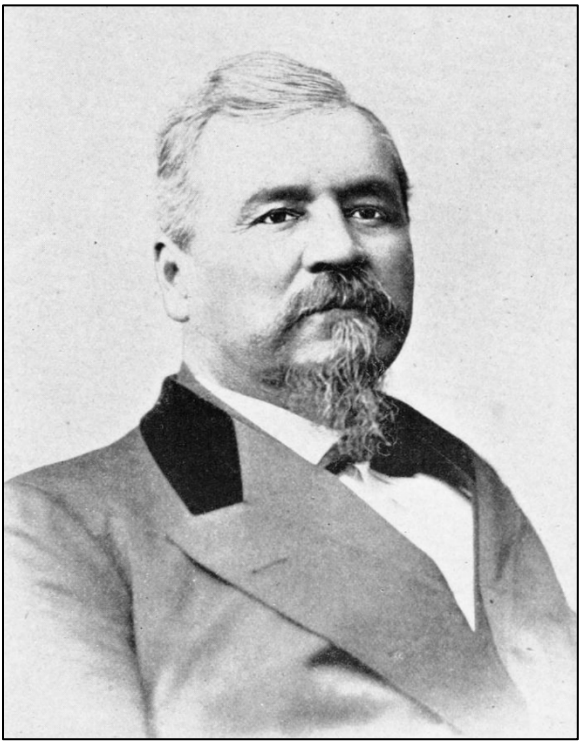

Figure 2: Dennis Bushyhead, undated, photograph from H.F. O'Beirne, ed., *Leaders and leading men of the Indian Territory* (Chicago: American Publishers' Association, 1891), 117.

Bushyhead sought to represent Cherokee interest beyond the borders of Indian Territory as well, as shown in his travels to Washington, D.C. In one instance in 1881, Bushyhead, along with Cherokee, Creek, and Choctaw delegates, signed a protest to Texas Senator Richard Coke's bill which resulted in the allotment of Indian lands in severalty, a precursor to the later Dawes Severalty Act of 1887.[9] The

[8] Bushyhead to Lucien B. Bell, October 7, 1885, Dennis Wolfe Bushyhead Collection B-54 F16, WHC; Tom Holm, "Indian Lobbyists: Cherokee Opposition to the Allotment of Tribal Lands," *American Indian Quarterly* 5 (2): 118-9.

[9] Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians* (University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 71.

pan-Indian group appealed that Congress not "violate" their treaty pledges.[10] They argued that allotting the lands of "a single tribe in Indian territory ... would lead to local disturbance and produce great mischief." The protest defended the current land system of tribes, stating that "our own laws regulate a system of land tenure suited to our condition," and that "in this way every one of our citizens is sure of a home." They offered the recently allotted Shawnee, Potawatomi, and Kickapoo tribes as an example on the poor outcome of allotment could induce. Even with guarantees of unalienable land for twenty years in exchange for accepting U.S. citizenship, "before five years every acre had been alienated and these tribes had to be gathered up and sent to the Indian Territory."

In his own personal letter to Assistant Chief Bunch during an 1886 trip to Washington, D.C., Bushyhead described his fight against bills he believed to be pushed forward by the railroad lobby and land speculators. Bushyhead described various bills that pertained to Cherokee rights, legal or in property, such as the Dawes bill (which soon became known as the Severalty Act), jurisdictional bills extending courts from neighboring states, bills to give railroads the right of way, and bills seeking to establish territorial governments in Indian Territory. Bushyhead placed great faith in the fee-simple title Cherokees held in the land, stating that "until the whole land system is revolutionized they cannot dispossess us," illustrating the radical nature of actions which shattered respect towards treaty agreements.[11] He also described the successes of the Cherokee delegation during sessions of Congress, striking down bills while in committee, as well as altering a bill to revert an Arkansas rail line's right of way land back to Cherokee ownership in case of the abandonment of the line.[12]

There were, however, proponents of allotment among Cherokee during Bushyhead's administration. Factionalism within the Cherokee Nation continued to exist outside of the standard political arrangements. This took the form of a demographic split along the geographic marker of the Grand River, the lower portion of the Neosho River, which flows north to south through what is now northeast Oklahoma. According to historian Janey Hendrix, "the mixed-blood Cherokees were concentrated on the flat farmlands west of the Grand River, while the full-bloods were living in tight little communities among the hills in the eastern part of the Nation."[13] Hendrix compares those to the west of the Grand River as becoming, "Americanized," speaking less Cherokee and holding value systems more akin to the white settler families seeking Oklahoma farmland.

One such case of this latter group was Elias Cornelius Boudinot, the son of Elias Boudinot, the infamous signee of the Treaty of New Echota. Elias Cornelius Boudinot was born on August 1, 1835, the same year as the signing of that treaty and was just under four years old when his father was assassinated in Park Hill in 1839. Following the assassination, Elias Cornelius was promptly sent along with other

[10] "January 20, 1881 Vol. 11, Part 1 – Bound Edition," Congress.gov, https://www.congress.gov/bound-congressional-record/1881/01/20/senate-section.

[11] Bushyhead to Rabbit Bunch, Mar. 15, 1886, Bushyhead Collection B-54 F37, WHC.

[12] Bushyhead to Rabbit Bunch, Mar. 15, 1886, Bushyhead Collection B-54 F37, WHC.

[13] Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 50-1.

children by Stand Watie, the only prominent surviving member of the Treaty Party, to be raised among his mother's family. Boudinot's relatives resided far from Indian Territory in New England, and it was there he received much of his education. He headed back to Indian Territory in 1853 after completing his education and having some experience teaching under his belt. However, he soon moved once more, this time into the state of Arkansas, where he engaged in a variety of businesses, including the newspaper business. Settling into the town of Fayetteville, Arkansas, he jointly owned and edited the *Arkansian* in 1859. Elias Cornelius, much like his father who edited the *Cherokee Phoenix* back in the old Cherokee homelands, edited and founded other newspapers, such as the *True Democrat*, located in Little Rock, and Vinita, Oklahoma's *Indian Progress*.[14]

Unfortunately for Boudinot, neither of those journalistic ventures lasted long, but he found another avenue to express his own views in lecture circuits, beginning in 1873. Thomas Colbert, in his work on the Cherokee orator, claims that Boudinot was a "noteworthy professional orator," and "quite possibly … the most influential Indian in the United States during the 1870s and 1880s," with captivating and entertaining lectures.[15] He would "often sing songs and recite poetry," and entertain the likes of General William Tecumseh Sherman. Boudinot began work on lecture circuits as a method of generating revenue, a recurring necessity for the prominent Cherokee.[16]

The subjects of his lectures, his stance on the so-called Indian Question, including allotment, could be traced to the same source that inspired his own desire for financial stability. In 1869, Boudinot owned a tobacco factory in Indian Territory, which according to prior laws, treaties, and apparent consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, was exempt from taxation. The factory, however, was eventually seized by the United States, with a Supreme Court decision in favor of the federal government, leading Elias Cornelius to believe that citizenship, and by extent the allotment of lands in severalty, was the best solution to securing the rights of the Cherokee people. Historian Tom Holm posits that the orator's stance was potentially motivated further from self-interest. Although connections between himself and the railroad lobby were never confirmed, "by the 1880s he had control of a majority of the town lots in Vinita… which later was to become one of the main stops on the Frisco line."[17]

[14] Wardell, *A Political History*, 16; Thomas Burnell Colbert, "Elias Cornelius Boudinot, 'The Indian Orator and Lecturer,'" *American Indian Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (1989): 249-50; John D. Adams, *Elias Cornelius Boudinot.: Born August 1, 1835. Died September 27, 1890.* (Chicago: Rand, McNally & co., 1891), 17-8.

[15] Colbert, "Elias Cornelius Boudinot," 251, 253, 257.

[16] Colbert, "Elias Cornelius Boudinot," 250.

[17] Colbert, "Elias Cornelius Boudinot," 253, 257; Holm, "Indian Lobbyists," 117-8; John D. Adams, *Elias Cornelius Boudinot: Born August 1, 1835. Died September 27, 1890.* (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., 1891), 21-2.

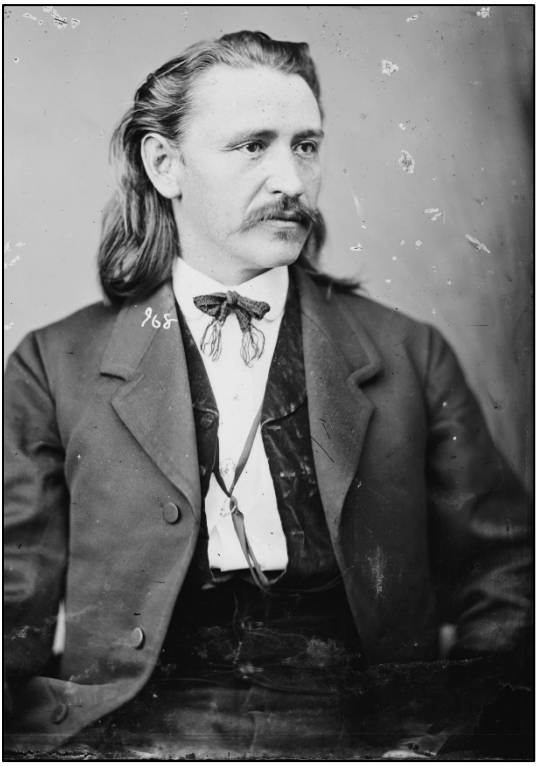

Figure 3: Elias Cornelius Boudinot

Regardless of his motivations, Boudinot continued his work on the lecture circuit until as late as 1885, forming strong connections with congressional members who enjoyed his lectures and were interested in his supportive views on allotment, which included support given towards the territorial organization of Indian Territory. This quickly made the orator a controversial figure in Cherokee circles, finding the certainly familiar label of "traitor" thrown his way by Cherokee statesmen like W. P. Adair. Holm asserts that Boudinot believed that his opinions "placed his life in jeopardy."[18]

However, some reconciliation occurred in the Cherokee political space in the latter half of the 1880s because of Boudinot's pro-lease views of the Cherokee Outlet. This reconciliation was cut short, though, when Boudinot died at the age of fifty-five in September 1890. The pro-allotment sentiment among the Cherokee Nation did not die with him, though. It was continued by other Cherokee statemen, including Boudinot's nephew, the alike-initialed E. C. Boudinot, who held his uncle's allotment and territorial stances. E. C. Boudinot also held official positions in the Cherokee government as a delegate to the U.S. Congress in 1891 and a delegate to the Dawes Commission in 1894, which was formed by the U.S. government to

[18] Colbert, "Elias Cornelius Boudinot," 250, 256; Holm, "Indian Lobbyists," 117-8.

convince the Five Tribes (Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles) that allotment was the best path forward for their citizens.[19]

Cherokee voices were not simply confined to Indian Territory. Cherokees debated amongst the corporate lobbyists, reformers and United States congressional representatives in the halls of Congress, alongside the delegations of other various Native American tribes. Cherokee delegates to the U.S. Congress were sent and renewed year-round, often having a membership that included some of the most prominent politicians within the Cherokee Nation, including chiefs such as Dennis Bushyhead, Colonel Johnson Harris, T. M. Buffington and notable statesmen such as Lucien B. Bell, Richard M. Wolfe, William P. Boudinot, R. B. Ross, and E. C. Boudinot. These delegates were initially made up of a team of two but expanded to three members under Bushyhead's administration. The delegation continued to be expanded and shrunk over the next two decades, sometimes consisting of as many as four delegates.[20]

These Cherokee delegates, alongside the many other anti-allotment efforts among tribal nations, were responsible for placing strong limits on much of the early land allotment legislation. To ease resistance to the bills, policy makers often avoided touching the Five Tribes in the eastern portion of Indian Territory. As shown in the prior delegate protest in 1881, which was presented by Colorado Senator Henry M. Teller, these delegates often made and maintained strong connections and rapport with American congressmen writing objections and distributing anti-allotment writings, often from the Cherokee Nation's own *Cherokee Advocate*. Tom Holm even claims that both the U.S. House and Senate, "were, for the most part susceptible to the arguments of the delegates."[21]

The Cherokee Nation elections in 1887 saw a changing of the guard within the executive office, as the Downing Party's Joel Bryan Mayes won the election over his National Party opponent and Dennis Bushyhead's successor, Rabbit Bunch, who was known as a full-blood, being fluent only in the Cherokee language. A pro-Mayes letter to the editor of *The Indian Chieftain*, a pro-Mayes press in Vinita, was indicative of the support Mayes received, stating their reasoning stemmed from perceived government corruption, the failures of the Cherokee Outlet cattle lease, and the lack of resolution to issues of citizenship claims. Potentially on the back of political issues such as these, Mayes won the election by 135 votes after a delayed count, but it was not without contest. The delayed count of the votes caused tensions to flair, as Mayes, along with an escorting group of around one hundred supporters, broke down the doors of the executive office of the nation with the intention to finish the counting votes. Bushyhead "refused to surrender office" and had locked the

[19] Colbert, "Elias Cornelius Boudinot," 256-7; Holm, "Indian Lobbyists," 117-8; *Indian Journal*, "Meeting of the Five Civilized Tribes," Feb. 22, 1894, C. Johnson Harris Collection Box H-56 F1, WHC.

[20] Bushyhead to Senate, Dec. 12, 1883, Bushyhead Collection B-54 F7, WHC; Bushyhead to Senate and Council, Dec. 14, 1883, Bushyhead Collection B-54 F10, WHC.

[21] Holm, "Indian Lobbyists," 116-7, 121, 123; "January 20, 1881 Vol. 11, Part 1 – Bound Edition," Congress.gov, https://www.congress.gov/bound-congressional-record/1881/01/20/senate-section.

doors.[22] The tally found Mayes victorious and no further conflict arose. This 1887 electoral victory kicked off a series of Downing Party principal chiefs that was interrupted only once during a brief period in late 1905, marking a shift in Cherokee politics. In his first address to the National Council, Mayes warned that there laid potential danger to the rights of Cherokee land and self-governance, an issue relating to what might be described as his primary goal: the utilization of the Cherokee Outlet, a strip of land that stretched across Indian Territory from the western border of the Cherokee reservation.[23]

Unlike the previous administration, the pressing issue of the allotment of tribal lands was not often referenced by Mayes during the election cycle. This absence may be attributed to a major development in the debate on allotment. In February 1887, the Dawes Severalty Act was passed, beginning the process of allotment on many reservations in the West, transforming communally held tribal land into individual familial plots. Tom Holm argues the Cherokee delegates to Washington "became less forceful and lacked a good deal of resolve," as specific orders to oppose allotment and support other tribe's opposition were dropped by the Cherokee National Council.[24] Perhaps this is simply reflective of a resolved position by Mayes to possibly accept the changing reality, or a shift in his focus towards the Cherokee Outlet. Regardless, as pointed out by Holm, instructions opposing allotment and the same strong Pan-Indian support within Congress were not assigned, at least for the Cherokee congressional delegates.

For matters internal to Indian Territory, the Mayes administration did not slouch on maintaining a united stance among tribes. In his annual message delivered on November 7, 1888, Mayes called for a remonstrance with the Creek Nation, with the intent of insuring they would, "not to do anything that will let a foreign race in Indian Territory."[25] He then referenced the developing legislation on the potential organization of the territory of Oklahoma.

In his fourth and final annual message to the National Council, Mayes touched upon the Cherokee Outlet, giving thanks to the support of American senators such as Henry Teller and even Henry Dawes for their recognition of Cherokee claims to title, with an unnamed but apparently distinguished United States senator claiming that American negotiations for the sale of the Cherokee Outlet was done with, "a proposition in, 'one hand and a sword in the other.'"[26] Mayes reaffirmed his belief in the outlet being worth $3 dollars per acre, even stating that it may be worth as much as $10 dollars per acre, certainly an optimistic projection. Mayes' dream of maximizing what value the Cherokee people could receive from the Outlet eventually came to a disappointing end, as he died in December of 1891. Shortly

[22] *Indian Chieftain* (Vinita, I.T.), Dec. 8, 1887, Mayes Collection M-48 F3, WHC.

[23] *Indian* Chieftain, June 23, 1887, Mayes Collection M-48 F2, WHC; *Indian Chieftain*, Dec. 8, 1887, Mayes Collection M-48 F3, WHC; *Cherokee Advocate* (Tahlequah, I.T.) Jan. 4, 1888, Mayes Collection, M-48 F4, WHC; Wardell, *A Political History*, 343-4.

[24] Holm, "Indian Lobbyists," 122-3.

[25] *Cherokee Advocate*, Nov. 7, 1888, Mayes Collection M-48 F33, WHC.

[26] *Cherokee Advocate*, Nov. 5, 1890, Mayes Collection B-2 F36, WHC.

thereafter, the Outlet was sold by the Cherokee National Council on January 4, 1892, for an average per acre sale of less than $1.40 dollars.[27]

In the 1891 election, Mayes ran once again on the Downing ticket, this time facing two challengers for the position of principal chief. The National Party ran George W. Benge, a long serving stateman as well as a future Cherokee delegate to the U.S. Congress. The other challenger was from a new party, the Liberal Party, whose candidate was the former principal chief and congressional delegate Dennis W. Bushyhead. The longtime member of the National Party and influential statesman joined the race after disapproving of Mayes' administration, expressing such in a letter to the sheriff of Cooweesoowee District, Jesse Cochran. In his July 30, 1890, letter to Cochran, Bushyhead expressed his interest in nomination under the National Party ticket, stating that, "if I am nominated and elected it will be my aim and effort to remove all causes of disagreement on all questions of public policy and a basis of right and justice to all parties in interest."[28] On the question of the allotment of Cherokee lands, Bushyhead's position remained the same: "the question of allotment is unwise in my judgment in the condition of the country even if it were possible." Bushyhead went on to state that while a process of allotment was legally possible, the potential litigation and confusion among the people would be "endless." Bushyhead took notice of how allotment had occurred among other tribes, which led, in his view, to negative outcomes, referring to them as, "living victims of what allotment has done for the Indians before he was prepared for the change."[29]

But in a surprising move, Bushyhead, the long-time defender of Cherokee lands against allotment, swapped positions before the 1891 election, running on a pro-allotment stance. This flip won the praise of outside observers such as the *Fort Worth Gazette*, who ran the headline, "Hon. Dennis W. Bushyhead Will Probably Win on an Allotment Platform." It is unclear whether Bushyhead joined the Liberal Party or created it upon being passed over for the National Party's nomination. Perhaps this third party hoped to become an alternative to the two major parties, who both still opposed allotment in 1891. The *Fort Worth Gazette* reported that Bushyhead had, "discerned the 'handwriting on the wall,'" believing allotment to be the nation's only salvation.[30] Historian Tom Holm proposes that possibility in his study of those years. Describing the decline in anti-allotment unity among the Cherokee, Holm writes, "it may have been that Cherokee leaders were resolved to the fact that severalty would eventually be forced upon them," a conclusion that mirrors the reasoning given by the Treaty Party in 1835, acting as a historical parallel.[31]

[27] *Cherokee Advocate*, Nov. 5, 1890, Mayes Collection B-2 F36, WHC; Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 45-7.

[28] Bushyhead to Jesse Cochran. July 30, 1890. GLC03098. Gilder Lehrman Institute.

[29] "White Settlement 1891," *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, June 21, 1891.

[30] "White Settlement 1891," *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, June 21, 1891.

[31] Holm, "Indian Lobbyists," 124.

After all, in an 1891 letter explaining his new position, Bushyhead claimed to be doing good for Cherokees, "all of this good might have been accomplished by a fair and intelligent allotment of the common domain of the nation among citizens," arguing that it would secure lands for Cherokees better than the current communal system.[32] In the end, though, Bushyhead decided to retire from politics just prior to the election, withdrawing his candidacy as Mayes won re-election by a wider margin than his initial election, totaling a 350-vote victory.[33]

Mayes' death came a month after his re-election in December 1891. The assistant principal chief, Henry Chambers, also died unexpectedly, leaving the Cherokee Nation without an executive. The Downing-majority National Council soon appointed fellow Downing party member Colonel Johnson Harris to the position. Harris initially served as an assistant secretary under the Mayes administration before being selected as a delegate to Washington, D.C. alongside Dennis Bushyhead in 1889. He was described by *The Purcell Register* as a shrewd and affable diplomat. In a reflective message in late 1892, the Muskogee paper *Brother in Red* reported that on allotment, Harris had taken a "straight anti-allotment ground," and declared, "the land in severalty plan would be the destruction of the nation and of the happiness of its people."[34]

It should be noted however, that Harris was less stalwart in this regard and potentially open to change. For instance, in his annual message to the Cherokee National Council in November of 1893, Harris wrote that Cherokees were, "gradually growing out of the habits of our ancestors and becoming imbued with the ideas of an advanced civilization… Individual rights are superceeding [sic], in the minds of the people the traditional ideas of the common."[35] Harris went on to suggest a potential compromise between, "the less and the more advanced," of the Cherokee on the matter of "advancement," calling attention to and perhaps criticizing the factionalism of the nation. One might also conclude that Harris was not among those letting go of the tradition of communal ownership of land, but instead was acknowledging the changing world in Indian Territory.

On March 30, 1893, Harris continued the trend of collective unity in terms of foreign policy, as he called for an international meeting of tribes in response to two sections of an act making its way through the U.S. Congress. These sections reportedly gave the consent to the United States to allot the lands of the Five Tribes and create commissions with the intent of negotiating with tribes to relinquish their titles to their lands, "with the ultimate view of the creation of a State or States of the union."[36] Requesting the Cherokee National Council send a delegation to the intertribal meeting, Harris urged that it was their "just and highest duty to resist by

[32] Bushyhead to Dr. M. Frazee, June 2, 1891, Bushyhead Collection B-54 F61, WHC.
[33] Wardell, *A Political History*, 345.
[34] Wardell, *A Political History*, 345; Veto message of Mayes of Senate Bill #15, Feb. 1, 1888, Mayes Collection M-48 F6, WHC; *Indian Chieftain*, Mar., 7, 1889, Mayes Collection B-2 F8, WHC; *Brother in Red* (Muskogee, I.T.), Dec. 1, 1892, C. Johnson Harris Collection H-55 F11, WHC; *Purcell Register* (Purcell, I.T.), Feb., 2, 1894, Harris Collection H-55 F49, WHC.
[35] *Cherokee Advocate*, Nov. 11, 1893, Harris Collection H-55, F24, WHC.
[36] *Cherokee Nation,* Apr. 18, 1893, Harris Collection H-55 F18, WHC.

a united effort" this proposed legislation, emphasizing a moral importance of pan-Indian solidarity, not just a practical one. Indeed, even after that forewarned commission was eventually formed in 1893, Harris again called an international council of the Five Tribes, "for the purpose of laying out some definite line of action in regard to treating with the Dawes commission."[37]

It was at this international meeting of tribes in Checotah on February 19, 1894 with what became known as the U.S. government's Dawes Commission, that Harris and the Cherokee delegates, alongside the delegations of other tribes, met with Henry Dawes, the namesake of the Dawes Severalty Act. Dawes, now a retired senator, presented the delegations with an ultimatum: take on the government form of statehood or, "go on and be overwhelmed by the whites."[38] The delegates said that they were already overwhelmed with white intruders. Dawes suggested that they simply give their communally held lands out to individual Indians to ensure they cannot be stolen from the Indian. Allotment would protect their lands, he claimed. Dawes, the experienced statesman, was keenly aware of the leverage either side wielded in this negotiation. E. C. Boudinot, part of the Cherokee delegation, was the first to counter Dawes, believing the processes of allotment to be impossible to conduct until the pressing issues were handled, protesting the United States unfulfilled treaty obligations in keeping intruders out.[39]

Negotiations would not be favorable to the Cherokee Nation. A year later, a seemingly exasperated Harris, who joined delegates on a trip to Washington, reportedly said, "all we ask, is to be let alone; for the Government to respect its treaties … and to keep its promise made when the Cherokee strip was sold – that it would expel the 5,000 white intruders in the Cherokee Nation."[40] At the end of that year, in December of 1895, Harris accompanied the Cherokee delegation, which included recent principal chief candidate George W. Benge, to Washington, D.C. to oppose allotment, territorialization and settler bills. Upon the delegation's return in June 1896, Harris was reported to have said that it was his opinion, "that the only thing left for his people to do is to prepare for allotment as it is bound to come."[41]

An allotment bill presented by Kansas Representative Charles Curtis, who was also a citizen of Kaw Nation, successfully passed through the House during the chamber's first session, and Harris foresaw its eventual signing. This bill came to be known as the Curtis Act of 1898 and supplemented prior allotment legislation such as the 1887 Dawes Act through a series of policies that set up the eventual termination of tribal government among the "Five Tribes" and the forced enrollment of tribal citizens for allotment purposes.[42]

[37] *Cherokee Nation,* Apr. 18, 1893, Harris Collection H-55 F18, WHC; Angie Debo, *And Still the Waters Run: the Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes* (Princeton University Press, 1973), 23.

[38] *Indian Journal* (Eufaula, I.T.), Feb. 22, 1894, Harris Collection H-56 F1, WHC.

[39] *Indian Journal,* Feb. 22, 1894, Harris Collection H-56 F1, WHC.

[40] *Talihina News* (Talihina, I.T.), Jan. 10, 1895, Harris Collection H-56 F27, WHC.

[41] *Vinita Leader*, November 21, 1895, Harris Collection H-56 F49, WHC; *Claremore Progress* (Claremore, I.T.), June 27, 1896, Harris Collection H-56 F51, WHC.

[42] Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 153-4.

Samuel Houston Mayes, the former sheriff of the Cooweescoowee District and brother of Joel Bryan Mayes, succeeded Harris as Principal Chief. Like his brother before him, S. H. Mayes accepted the nomination of the Downing Party as their candidate. As part of his campaign, S. H. Mayes promised to keep in step with the Downing Party's official platform and, although not directly addressing the issue of allotment, S. H. Mayes gave responsibility to the National Council on finding for the public domain of the nation, "a more equal distribution and equalization of its use and benefits."[43] R. B. Ross, one of many former Cherokee delegates to Congress, was the National Party's candidate, but on April 22, 1895, the Downing Party saw many victories, including for the position of principal chief. S. H. Mayes won by a majority of 450 votes, with his home district being a positive total of 556 votes.[44]

Although many Cherokees continued to oppose the allotment of lands through advocacy and legal action, the S. H. Mayes administration was largely one of cooperation with the Dawes Commission. On July 25, 1896, S. H. Mayes issued a proclamation to compile citizenship laws and records and begin steps towards taking a census, which would ease allotment if imposed in the future. This came following a meeting between the Dawes Commission and a Cherokee delegation including former chief C. J. Harris, William P. Boudinot, and his son, Frank J. Boudinot. Harris requested the citizenship rolls and laws of the Cherokee Nation. He also called for a commission to confer on the topic of the abolition of tribal government, which S. H. Mayes resisted. In his annual message to the National Council later that year, S. H. Mayes reported that the National Council would soon receive the rolls from census takers, "both complete and correct."[45] After an evaluation and signatures from the council, census was sent to the Dawes Commission.

United opposition to the Dawes Commission among the Five Tribes was beginning to falter as well. In August of 1896, S. H. Mayes was the only principal chief present among the Five Tribes at an International Council meeting. The Choctaw tribe did not even send a delegation. This did not stop the tradition of pan-Indian cooperation, however. In 1897, S. H. Mayes was joined by former chief Bushyhead along with a host of Cherokee statesmen, including former delegates R. B. Ross, W. P. Boudinot, and the father of the famous Will Rogers, Clement V. Rogers, as the delegates of the Cherokee Nation at an international tribal council in Atoka. Bushyhead's position on allotment had not changed in the time since his reelection bid in 1891, as he believed that the Cherokee must continue to negotiate with the Dawes Commission, but he did not want to leave the future of the Cherokee Nation in the U.S. Congress' hands alone. "In the face of legislation now pending before congress," he stated in a quote given to the *Muskogee Morning Times* in April 1897, "the citizens of Indian Territory must make some positive provisions for the

[43] Mayes to Washington Swimmer, June 6, 1895, S. H. Mayes Collection M-50 F12, WHC.

[44] SMayes to National Council, Dec. 7, 1882, Mayes Collection M-50 F1, WHC; *Wagoner Record* (Wagoner, I.T.), Apr. 26, 1895, Mayes Collection M-50 F5, WHC; *Wagoner Record*, June 21, 1895, Mayes Collection M-50 F17, WHC.

[45] *Claremore Progress*, July 25, 1896, Mayes Collection M-50 F41, WHC; *Indian Chieftain*, Nov. 5, 1896, Mayes Collection M-50 F45, WHC.

future or depend wholly upon the uncertain mercies of congress."[46] Later that year, Bushyhead was appointed by S. H. Mayes to the commission that negotiated with the Dawes Commission on the allotment of lands. That appointment was be short-lived, however, as the experienced statesman died on February 11, 1898.[47]

On August 8, 1898, S. H. Mayes read and delivered a copy of the Curtis Act of 1898 to the Cherokee National Council alongside a recommendation that another Cherokee delegation be created to negotiate once again with the Dawes Commission. As part of his message to the National Council, which included said recommendations, S. H. Mayes provided his own description of the Curtis Act's effects, which included his view of how the law, "practically abolishes our government, allots the surface of our land but does not attempt to give any other title. No nation of people can progress enveloped in such a degree of uncertainty," a reality that contradicted the words of the white, progressive reformers who pushed for such legislation. [48] Despite the Cherokee people's attachment to holding lands in common, S. H. Mayes made the decision that, "if we are certain that a change is inevitable, my judgment dictates that it is the part of wisdom to make effort to assist in making the change in our affairs."

On January 17, 1899, after an appointed Cherokee delegation had come to an agreement with the Dawes Commission on the allotment of Cherokee lands in severalty, S. H. Mayes issued a proclamation calling for a special election in the Cherokee Nation which would act as a referendum by Cherokee citizens on this first attempt at an agreement. The attempt to forge an agreement between the Dawes Commission and Cherokee people was an action that eventually took three tries. The U.S. Congress saw the first of these agreements was seen as "too generous" for the Cherokee people and promptly rejected it.[49] The second, being too stingy, was rejected in turn by the Cherokee people, who were unsatisfied with the size of individual land titles as well as the status of mineral rights. The third agreement, negotiated by S. H. Mayes' successor T. M. Buffington, proved to be just right, being signed and approved of by both sides in 1902. The aptly named Cherokee Agreement of 1902 marked the end of this era of the Cherokee people's government, as the final of the Five Tribes began to commence with the enrollment of its citizens, a process that was required in order to distribute allotments.[50]

There were only three men to hold the office of principal chief following the four who confronted allotment before the Cherokee Nation's termination: Thomas Buffington, William C. Rogers, and Frank J. Boudinot. Of the three, there is one who

[46] *Muskogee Morning Times* (Muskogee, I.T.), Apr. 7, 1897, Bushyhead Collection B-55 F-23, WHC.

[47] *Muskogee Morning Times,* Apr. 7, 1897, Bushyhead Collection B-55 F-23, WHC; *South McAlister Capital* (McAlister, I.T.), Aug. 6, 1896, Mayes Collection M-50 F42, WHC.

[48] *Fort Gibson Post* (Fort Gibson, I.T.), Aug. 18, 1898, Mayes Collection M-51 F5, WHC; Special message of Mayes to National Council, Aug. 18, 1898, Mayes Collection M-51 F6, WHC.

[49] Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 154.

[50] *Vinita Leader,* Jan. 26, 1899, Mayes M-51 F13, WHC; Debo, *And Still the Waters Run*, 32-5; Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 154-5.

stands out from the rest due to the unique circumstances surrounding his election, one which was more abnormal than that of C. J. Harris. That chief was Frank J. Boudinot, son of the former Cherokee delegate William P. Boudinot. Notably, Frank Boudinot was the first member of the National Party to be elected principal chief since Dennis Bushyhead. Frank Boudinot's predecessor, William C. Rogers, was impeached and removed from office in late 1905 for an array of issues related to the allotment process.[51] With a majority in the National Council, the National Party promptly elected their own Frank J. Boudinot to fill the empty chief position.

Unfortunately for Boudinot and his supporters (in both chambers of the Cherokee National Council and elsewhere), his administration did not finish its full term. Rogers' assistant chief, and self-assigned newly acting chief, D. M. Faulker, was unwilling to recognize the impeachment process, refusing to hand over any government documents until either his superior or the courts gave him such orders that would legitimize the newly elected administration. This resistance, along with the freeze placed on the processing of allotment deeds by Secretary of the Interior Alfred Hitchcock, brought government to a halt. To seek the legitimization that Faulker requested, Frank Boudinot traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with the Department of the Interior in November of 1905. After being deferred by President Roosevelt to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Francis Leupp, the specially elected chief was informed that the United States would continue to recognize William C. Rogers as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation.[52]

The motivation behind the impeachment of Rogers in 1905 was not just from a broad disapproval of his handling of allotment. According to both the *Durant Daily News* and the *Muskogee Daily Phoenix*, the support behind impeachment came from those who believed that intermarried white Cherokees should not qualify for allotments for the Cherokee nation, with the latter paper claiming the involvement of the "Catoowahs, who represent the "fullblood" element of the Cherokees."[53] The "Catoowahs," a misspelling of the long existing Cherokee traditional group of Keetoowahs, or the Keetoowah Society. This Keetoowah Society that exists within the Cherokee Nation of Indian Territory first originated in the 1860s as part of the civil strife that engulfed the nation during the American Civil War. Also known as the Pin Indians due to their use of self-identifying crossed pins on their shirts, the Keetoowah Society formed in the increasingly tense environment as a way of promoting the old, traditional values and religious beliefs. Formed in Peavine, a small community located in modern day Adair County, Oklahoma, the traditionalist

[51] Principal Chief William C. Rogers was impeached by the National Council over the body's, "dislike" of the chief's handling of the allotment process, unsettled citizenship cases which could qualify and disqualify individuals for said allotment, and his refusal to hold an election for the National Council in August of that year, see *Muskogee Daily Phoenix*, Nov. 24, 1905, F. J. Boudinot Collection F10, WHC; Wardell, *A Political History*, 348-9; *Tahlequah Arrow* (Tahlequah, I.T.), Nov. 25, 1905, F. J. Boudinot Collection F11, WHC.

[52] Wardell, *A Political History*, 348-9; *Durant Daily News* (Durant, I.T.), Nov. 23, 1905, F. J. Boudinot Collection F9, WHC; *Muskogee Daily Phoenix*, Nov. 24, 1905, F. J. Boudinot Collection F10, WHC; *Tahlequah Arrow*, Nov. 25, 1905, F. J. Boudinot Collection F11, WHC; *Indian Journal*, Mar. 23, 1906, F. J. Boudinot Collection F13, WHC.

[53] *Durant Daily News*, Nov. 23, 1905, F. J. Boudinot Collection F9, WHC; *Muskogee Daily Phoenix*, Nov. 24, 1905, F. J. Boudinot Collection F10, WHC.

group was composed primarily of full-bloods who supported abolition in the Cherokee Nation, in opposition to the progressive Cherokee planters who protected slavery.[54]

The Keetoowah Society continued to exist after the Civil War, but after the death of Principal Chief Lewis Downing, the members of the society splintered into their own bands before being reorganized in 1874 as a potential political force (with some minor cells that were more focused on spirituality). The Keetoowah Society supported Downing's close friend and full-blood Charles Thompson and traditionalist, mixed-blood Dennis Bushyhead in their candidacies for office. The Keetoowah Society also selected Bushyhead's full-blood assistant chief Rabbit Bunch for Head Captaincy of the Keetoowah in 1887, showing their close involvement in politics.

Eventually, there was another split among the Keetoowah Society in 1901 following the debate on allotment. The schism formed in a meeting at Big Tucker's Spring, a common meeting spot for the Keetoowah Society and one that historian Rose Stremlau notes as holding spiritual significance due to its proximity to water, a highly spiritual element among many Native American tribes.[55] At this meeting place, the Keetoowah Society settled into two groups, one a political organization and the other a religious one. The majority were those among the secular side of the divide, the followers of the Head Captain Rabbit Bunch and Frank J. Boudinot, who disliked allotment but decided to make the best of the situation by enrolling and claiming allotments, being sure to ensure a fair distribution and protest through enrollment forms.

The minority group followed Redbird Smith, the Head Captain of the Illinois District and a keeper of spiritual and traditional knowledge who had been raised among a Natchez-influenced Keetoowah group who held ancient beliefs. These Keetoowah, who sought out the old Cherokee ways, were among the strongest resistors to enrollment and allotment. They were known as Nighthawks.[56]

After this split, Rabbit Bunch stepped down from his position, recognizing his own limitations as a leader in the changing environment that allotment (and eventual Oklahoma statehood) presented. In his stead, the former Cherokee delegate Richard M. Wolfe, a Cherokee of mixed ancestry, was selected as his successor, swapping the uneducated and unilingual Bunch with a more experienced statesman.

The Keetoowah Society under Wolfe was incorporated in 1905 with the intention of assisting Cherokees in legal matters pertaining to allotment and land

[54] Keetoowah itself is an old transliteration of the Cherokee word, Kituwa, being the word used by Cherokees as a self-referential endonym, as well as being the name of one of the original mother towns in Cherokee oral tradition.; Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 1-10; Wardell, *A Political History*, 121-2.

[55] Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 145; Wardell, *A Political History*, 210; Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 19-20; *Claremore Progress,* Nov. 17, 1900, F. J. Boudinot Collection F15, WHC; *Wagoner Record*, Aug. 2, 1900, F. J. Boudinot Collection F16, WHC; *Francis Banner* (Francis, I.T.), Nov. 21, 1901, F. J. Boudinot Collection F19, WHC.

[56] Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 145; Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 67-8.

ownership. Frank J. Boudinot, a secretary of the Keetoowah Society, was one such leader within the organization that would seek enrollment, which the *Francis Banner* believed would lead more Keetoowah members to enroll as well. The Keetoowah Society over the rest of the decade went on to form National Party policy, protest the inclusion of intermarried whites in allotment, and make claims on government funds.[57]

Under Redbird Smith, the Nighthawks continued to resist allotment for the remainder of his tenure as leader, a position he held until his death in 1918. The Nighthawks resisted so peacefully, following the core values found within their traditional form of spirituality. There were three key symbols of Redbird Smith's beliefs in particular: the Sacred Fire, the Wampum Belts, and the White Path. The first two of these were religious objects to be cared for and interpreted, whereas the White Path was a spiritual code to follow in life, described by historian Janey Hendrix as, "the Peaceful Way, the way of love and passive resistance."[58] Not striking back in revenge and instead trusting in God's protection was a key tenet in the value system, which, as Rose Stremlau points out, bear resemblance to other peaceful resistance movements in the 20th century.[59]

Despite their collectivist ethos, the Nighthawks broke away from the instances of inter-tribal unity that had occurred in opposition to allotment among Native peoples, as seen in the International Council meetings. Originally a member of the Four Mothers Society, an organization of Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw and Chickasaw traditionalists, the Nighthawks withdrew from the organization for primarily spiritual reasons. Redbird Smith had disagreements with the more militant Creeks who were participating in the Crazy Snake rebellion, an armed resistance to allotment that began in 1901. This was a contradiction to his ideal White Path, and according to Hendrix, lead to Smith's seeking for, "his organization to be more Cherokee and less Natchez in its orientation."[60] Natchez spiritual customs and leaders were a common link between the Five Tribes spiritualists that made up the Four Mothers Society, with Redbird Smith's own teachings having basis in Natchez customs from his Natchez teacher, Creek Sam. In navigating the Nighthawks away from Natchez customs, Redbird Smith shifted elements of ceremonies, such as using the sacred Cherokee number of seven for total amount of arbors at ceremonial grounds rather than the Natchez-Creek tradition of four.[61]

Although many Nighthawks were able to avoid enrollment, some had their information presented to enrollment officials without their consent or knowledge and were assigned lots, as was likely the case for my great-great grandfather Jack Poorboy. His enrollment testimony was made by Rider Hammer, an individual who, as seen in Stremlau's research, supplied information on many families in the

[57] Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 67-8; *Cherokee Advocate*, Mar. 17, 1903, F. J. Boudinot Collection F20, WHC; *Claremore Progress*, July 11, 1903, F. J. Boudinot Collection F21, WHC; *Collinsville News*, September 20, 1906, F. J. Boudinot Collection F22, WHC.

[58] Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 54-5.

[59] Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 177.

[60] Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 64.

[61] Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 64; Debo, 54-7; Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 166-9.

Goingsnake District. Redbird Smith himself was forced to enroll after he and other resistors were arrested and jailed overnight in Muskogee in 1902, with the assumption that resistors, upon hearing of Redbird's enrollment, may enroll themselves. Unfortunately for the Dawes Commission, this turned out to not be the case, and there was no increased rate of enrollment among the Nighthawks.[62]

The processes of enrollment and allotment both came to an end in 1907, the same year that statehood arrived in Indian Territory on November 16, 1907, with the formation of Oklahoma, the 46th state. However, resistance to the policies of land allotment continued well beyond, with some families still refusing to cooperate with government officials as late as 1930. Despite these long-lasting efforts, the communal lands held by the Cherokee people were splintered and resulted in the loss of swaths of promised land, going from approximately 7,000,000 acres prior to allotment to 4,346,145 allotted acres that were assigned across individual, familial plots. This number continued to shrink rapidly over the coming century to just 143,598 acres by 1971, as land became alienable and ripe for purchase soon after their allotment.

By the end of this period, stretching from the 1870s to the early 1910s, the beliefs and views of Cherokee people throughout their national boundaries had changed and shifted to their equally shifting environment. This shift was evident in the stances and policies of the tribe's principal chiefs, the dissidents within the tribe, and the common people. It can also be seen through larger movements such as the Keetoowah Society, which reflected the views of historical unknowns such as men like Jack Poorboy.[63]

[62] Hendrix, *Redbird Smith*, 60-1; Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 124-5; Debo, 45-6; *Applications for Enrollment of the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, 1898–1914*, M1301, NAID: 617283, 650078, and 650147, RBIA, RG 75, NARA, Washington, D.C.

[63] Debo, *And Still the Waters Run*, 51, 88-91; Stremlau, *Sustaining the Cherokee Family*, 5, 178, 239.

Elite Southern Views on Chinese Labor from Reconstruction to Exclusion

SPENCER LIVENGOOD

Southern attitudes toward Chinese immigrants were complicated in the period between the Civil War and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Immediately following the war, those attitudes were generally positive, as southern planters, businessmen, and politicians viewed Chinese contract workers ("coolies") as a promising alternative to the labor power held by the recently freed African American population in the South. Chinese migrants stood to be a replacement for the position of racialized underclass on plantations and burgeoning industrial projects. But, when initial projects to import Chinese laborers failed, southern political leadership grew mostly ambivalent toward the question of Chinese immigration. From roughly 1870 to about 1878, southern ideologues were mostly concerned with Chinese immigrants as a means to criticize northern views on labor. Southern newspapers, reflecting the priorities of the political and business elites who funded them, generally only reported on the escalating tensions in the American West in ways that related to their grievances towards the Republicans and Reconstruction. This was usually to denounce northern industrial labor and the dangers of supposed racial chaos, which they claimed were not major issues in the morally, culturally superior South.

Once Redeemers effectively overthrew the Reconstruction state governments, the South's political class rapidly aligned itself with western anti-Chinese voices in the papers and in Congress. Ultimately, southern attitudes toward the Chinese in the West were informed by their own experiences with imported labor in the 1860s, and gradually morphed as it became politically expedient to align southern nativism with western Sinophobia in opposition to northeastern Republican, pro-business, and usually pro-Chinese policies. Southern observers' views of the Chinese immigration issue were shaped primarily by what perceived benefits the Chinese could bring to the postwar South. Furthermore, once it became clear that any material benefits would be limited, southern writers increasingly only viewed the Chinese as a rhetorical tool to advance their own, mainly anti-Republican, political influence. The nationalization of the Chinese question allowed the South to align with the Far West along white supremacist, regionalist, and nativist ideological lines.

In the wake of the Civil War, the main issue on the minds of southern elites was that of labor. The liquidation of millions of dollars' worth of human property and the emancipation of the freedmen was a disaster for the planter class, which was now deprived of its main labor force. The years immediately following the war saw a rapid deflation in the agricultural labor pool across much of the South as formerly enslaved people moved away from their former plantations to places where work

was easier to find – mainly cities and the deepest parts of the Delta where cotton production was relatively quickly rebuilt. The newfound mobility of freedmen led many southern leaders, now robbed of their strictly controlled workforces, to search for alternative sources of workers to fill the perceived labor shortage. This search for a new population from which to draw cheap labor also led to the characterization of African American workers as idle or lazy.[1] This rhetoric would intensify as schemes to import Chinese laborers began, and the "docile" Chinese worker would for the next few years become a miracle cure to the southern labor question.

Initial southern attempts to replace the slave labor force were characterized by sporadic efforts by planters and state governments to encourage any sort of immigration to the region. The initial desire in much of the South was to encourage European workers to work on plantations and the burgeoning railroad and manufacturing industries. In October 1865, the South Carolina *Daily Phoenix* disagreed with a British commercial contact who recommended the importation of Chinese workers. The author did not think that coolies could ever replace African American slaves as effective laborers, and believed the only replacement for the slave labor pool would be white immigrants sourced from across the Atlantic.[2] The initial preference for white workers was complicated by the reality that most Europeans refused to be worked like slaves, which was the intention of most planters. The South's poor working conditions and economic stagnation did not make it attractive to European (or American) immigrants who had the choice to instead go to either the industrial North, to the Far West, or even to European imperial holdings in the Americas like Cuba or the British West Indies.[3] In the absence of the preferred white labor to fill the labor pool, some southerners turned to alternative options, primarily the Chinese, as the decade went on. Despite the objections of some nativists and ardent white supremacists, some of the more disenchanted southern planters became increasingly convinced of the necessity of labor importation.

The desire to import Chinese laborers to supplement and undercut African American workers emerged quickly as the reality of freedmen's new economic independence set in. Frederick Douglass spoke to this reality in 1867, saying of the southern planters: "They would rather have laborers who will work for nothing; but as they cannot get the negro on these terms, they want Chinamen, who, they hope, will work for next to nothing."[4] As early as the summer of 1865, southern writers contemplated the importation of Chinese agricultural workers, inspired by their

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[1] Jennifer Brooks, "'John Chinaman' in Alabama: Immigration, Race, and Empire in the New South, 1870–1920," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 37, no. 2 (2018): 9.

[2] "The Labor Question and Immigration," *The Daily Phoenix* (Columbia, SC), Oct. 3, 1865.

[3] Brooks, "'John Chinaman'," 13.

[4] Frederick Douglass, "Composite Nation" (Lecture, Boston, MA, 1867), Frederick Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

successful employment in the West Indies. The Chinese were seen as a docile, hard workers, whose only drawback was the impermanence of their presence (as opposed to slaves). These positive qualities were contrasted to the native African American workers of the South, whom the Chinese would be able to replace.[5] In 1865 and 1866, under the protective indifference of Andrew Johnson's administration and on the initiative of southerners with preexisting Caribbean connections, schemes to import Chinese workers from Cuba to both supplement and undercut the freedmen (many of whom were already increasingly bound to their former masters' lands by the Black Codes) were pursued by planters in Louisiana. Southern newspapers sang the praises of their potential new workers, lauding the obedience, diligence, and intelligence of the Chinese, especially in comparison to the African American workers they were meant to supersede.[6]

Fig. 1: "What Shall We Do with John Chinaman?" *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, Sept. 25, 1869

Throughout the late 1860s, southern newspapers were champions for Chinese workers as a new pillar of the region's economy. Much of this was framed as an economic necessity in a time of labor shortage, following the lack of white immigration and the perceived economic invalidity of the African American population. In 1867, a Mississippi writer spoke to the prevailing spirit among many

[5] Lucy M. Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: A People Without a History* (Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 46.

[6] Moon-Ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor, and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 76-8.

planters, writing, "The negro unreliable and it being next to impossible to obtain to any appreciable extent laborers from Europe…there is but one resort left to us – and that is to make an effort to import coolies."[7] A similar sentiment was echoed by the editors of the *Memphis Daily Appeal*, who proclaimed that the "indifference and laziness of the negro" required the importation of Chinese workers to alleviate the labor shortage. The editors also thought that Chinese labor would theoretically allow the South to resist the perceived economic and political exploitation of the region by Radical Republicans.[8] Southern attitudes toward the Chinese, in general, largely correlated to the potential material benefit they believed the Chinese could bring to the southern economy. The completion of the transcontinental railroad freed up thousands of Chinese contract workers for potential relocation from California to the South, and growing European investments in the emerging New South provided more capital for contract labor. Southern attitudes towards the Chinese in newspapers reflected the growing optimism for labor experimentation by painting their potential new workers in a positive light.[9]

While newspaper editors and small-scale businessmen pondered the viability and necessity of Chinese labor, in 1869 large-scale commercial conventions consisting of planters and New South industrialists gathered throughout the South to seriously consider a collective effort for coolie labor importation. May 1869 saw two large conventions in Memphis and New Orleans in which planters agreed that importation of Chinese workers should be an immediate and collective goal throughout the South. A convention to bring on experienced Chinese labor contractors was held that July. Throughout 1869 and 1870, real attempts were made by planters and their contacts in San Francisco and New York to import Chinese workers to work on southern railroads and plantations.[10] As importation became a reality, rhetorical justifications for the introduction of a foreign people to the South increased. The *Memphis Daily Appeal* brushed aside nativist criticism of importation, asserting that the necessity of solving the labor shortage should override any racial arguments against importing Chinese to the South, and that private interests would take any labor they could – despite race or religion – due to the economic crisis caused by the lack of workers.[11]

Advocacy for the Chinese continued to be paired with denigration of the African American labor force. An article in *The Charleston Daily News* justified the use of Chinese migrant labor by describing their supposed superiority to the African American population. The author wrote: "The difference between the two races is as the difference between an intensely ignorant but docile child, plastic and pliant as clay in the hands of the potter – and a grown man, sharp but very narrow-minded, opinionated and fixed in character."[12] The author created a palatable but

[7] "What Shall We Do For Labor?," *American Citizen* (Canton, MS), Sept. 7, 1867.
[8] *Memphis Daily Appeal,* June 26, 1869.
[9] Brooks, "'John Chinaman'," 15-16.
[10] Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South*, 63-67.
[11] "Chinese Labor," *Memphis Daily Appeal*, July 25, 1869.
[12] "The Chinese in America," *Charleston Daily News*, July 24, 1869.

oxymoronic image which both appealed to desires for a new racialized working class while also allaying fears of racial degeneration. He claimed that the Chinese were docile and obedient, but also proud and opinionated, unable to be assimilated or otherwise integrated into southern society. Southerners could put aside fears of miscegenation while also taking solace in the fact that a "superior" race would be able to replace their former African American underclass. As Chinese labor failed to prove viable in the South, conflicting and contrary views of the Chinese as a less immediately beneficial and increasingly foreign group would become more common. As this process of detachment continued, southern observers began to write more about the Chinese in reference to their presence in the West.

The initial contact between real Chinese laborers and southern planters in 1869 and 1870 quickly ended the glowing period of hope for a new system of labor control. The cost of Chinese labor was not as cheap as expected. Furthermore, failure by employers to meet the agreed upon terms of their contracts with the workers, as well as the fact that wages were higher in the North and the West (where many workers had been brought in from) sabotaged the Chinese labor experiment in the South. Chinese workers constantly revolted against abuses by their overseers, and planters increasingly turned toward the sharecropping system as a more stable and familiar form of controlled labor.[13] 1871 saw a marked shift in the views of the miraculous Chinese cure to the labor question, as Chinese workers fled from their plantations and railroad jobs. They were increasingly viewed as "lazy" and "turbulent and unmanageable," with planters beginning to express "great dissatisfaction" at their performance.[14]

Perhaps more important was the parallel rise of convict labor leasing and the entrenchment of the new sharecropping system, which slowed planter interest in the experiment to establish Chinese labor as a fixture of the southern economy.[15] As the Chinese ceased to be the solution to southern labor questions in 1870 and 1871, most observers grew increasingly ambivalent toward the previously vaunted Chinese worker, and mentions of coolie labor and the Chinese in general grew more detached. The failure of the Chinese experiment, as well as growing tensions between the South and the federal government over Reconstruction, meant that most southern interest in the Chinese in the United States was increasingly indirect, and in newspapers almost always made in reference to the Chinese in Far West. The Chinese were no longer a direct economic tool to be used in the Reconstruction battle and so references to them became ever more abstract and ideological. Once it had become clear the Chinese would bring no direct material benefit to the South, southern writers mainly referenced them as rhetorical evidence to be used in the escalating political debate over Reconstruction. Chinese migrants were at once poor, mistreated workers under a Republican system of wage slavery, and an "other" to be feared and controlled. The Chinese, especially those who remained in the Far West, became a nebulous, pliable piece of evidence that could be levied against the

[13] Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South*, 106-107.
[14] Brooks, "'John Chinaman'," 21.
[15] Brooks, "'John Chinaman'," 24.

Republicans by southern Redeemers depending on what arguments needed to be made at any given time.

By 1872, most references to the Chinese by southern writers increasingly viewed the issue of Chinese labor as a western one and would only engage with it when it was rhetorically convenient. The grand push by the planters to create a coolie labor system in the South had failed, and this was in no small part due to the chaotic political context in which it was attempted. While the impetus for Chinese importation had been mainly economic, it had the welcome effect of seeming to provide a way to undermine both the southern freedmen and the Republican radicals who had gained power by 1866. The main way in which the southern planters and newspapers employed the Chinese in this period was to denigrate and rhetorically attack the African American population of the South. Though the Chinese had ceased to be a potential material threat to southern African Americans, they were still readily employed as a tool to further Jim Crow ideology.

In addition, the situation of the Chinese population in California provided a way for southern writers to criticize northern industrial capitalism from two angles. First, from a growing nativist ideology, as the Chinese posed a threat to the jobs of white workers and to racial harmony, and secondly, from the point of view that the Republican administration, at least the New England, Radical faction, condoned the importation of Chinese workers despite their ostensible commitment to ending forced servitude. The South could at once take up the nativist mantle, and criticize the Republicans for hypocrisy, all while reinforcing their own Jim Crow system. The southern elite were able to utilize the Chinese as a talking point from any angle to try and further their own goal of political redemption.

Southern writers acquired a distaste for Chinese immigration as Republican leaders had grown to accept it. Earlier radical Republicans had criticized southern importation attempts as tantamount to a restoration of the slave trade, but this criticism had been muffled by successful planter defense of the practice in the courts.[16] By the mid-1870s, Republicans had largely accepted Chinese contract workers as a legitimate form of labor, but southern writers began to grow increasingly critical of the Chinese (in the West) as a Republican project. Writing about Chinese immigration to California, one article read: "The Republican party have, by treaty, encouraged them [the Chinese] to come to this country, and they have openly told Californians that they will have to outstrip the Chinese or suffer them to overrun their state; and as they have given a more ignorant and degraded people than the Chinese all the rights and privileges of citizens in order to catch their votes, might not the same means be used with the Chinese in order to uphold this sinking power of their party?"[17] The point was clear: the Republicans were obviously seeking to replace Democratic, white voters with degraded and uncivilized peoples to maintain their administration; they would empower the Chinese like they empowered the southern African American population to stay in power. The writer

[16] Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South*, 59-62.

[17] "The Mongolian Element," *Montgomery County Sentinel* (Rockville, MD), Sept. 15, 1876.

also made a point of taking a shot at African Americans, still placing them lower than the Chinese. This idea that Republicans were selling out and abusing white American workers would develop into a current of thought within the Democratic Party as it began to affix nativism to its national platform.

Growing disaffection with the Chinese in the West is shown in an article from a Mississippi paper in 1877 covering mob violence against Chinese workers, in which the author declared that "race distinctions will always be drawn, where there is as much difference between races as there is between the whites and the Chinese." The author continued that if the people of the West were forced to bring the Chinese into their governments, then "the Californians would gain some idea of the dose the Radicals made the South swallow in the shape of negro rule. They would only gain a partial idea of it then, for the Chinese are far superior as a race to the ex-slaves of the South."[18] Again, the article demonstrates that the Chinese continued to be a foreign threat, one that could not be assimilated into American society, but while California's racial issues are comparable to the South's, the latter was clearly the greater victim since it was forced by the Republicans to endure "negro rule." The Chinese were a racial threat that the South could ally with the West to oppose, but also a way to rhetorically attack the African American population and Reconstruction.

In stark contrast to the glowing, if paternalistic, appraisals the Chinese had received from southern writers in the past, the mood among many writers had soured significantly by the later 1870s. Southern elites increasingly viewed the Chinese question in the Far West as a parallel to their own ongoing suppression of African Americans, and they saw the Chinese as another threat to the new racialized society they sought to establish in the ashes of Reconstruction. "This question [the Chinese Question] is becoming as troublesome and threatening to the people of the Pacific Slope as the negro is to us" observed one writer. He ominously warned, "prompt action by Congress alone will prevent the appearance of Ku-klux beyond the Rocky Mountains. Evils at home equally as great threaten the people of the State, and call for like energetic measures."[19] The idea that Republicans were failing to maintain racial harmony or effectively address the Chinese immigration issue emerged as a way for southern writers to criticize the North and the Republicans as the decade came to a close.

By 1876, southern writers had also begun to link the western "Chinese Question" to their own fight to reassert control of the South against the Republican-led federal government. One writer lambasted the northern "radicals" for appealing to the African American voters of the South to maintain political power but refusing to consider Chinese suffrage because the Chinese population was not large enough to win the Republicans the western states. The author criticized the Republicans for daring to politically empower African American Americans, but at the same time criticized them for hypocrisy regarding the Chinese.[20] This southern framing of the Republicans as electorally corrupt and hypocritically indifferent to the poor Chinese

[18] *Vicksburg Weekly Herald* (Vicksburg, MS), Sept. 21, 1877.
[19] "The Chinese Question," *Abbeville Press and Banner* (Abbeville, SC), May 17, 1876.
[20] "A Change of Administration," *Daily Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), June 29, 1876.

coolies was another way in which Redeemer ideologues commonly used the Chinese as rhetorical ammunition in their battle against Reconstruction.

The Democratic platform of 1876, appearing in most Democratic papers, reflected a growing racial-nativist criticism levied at the Republicans. The Democrats denounced "the policy which thus discards the liberty-loving German, and tolerates the renewal of the Coolie trade in Mongolian women imported for immoral purposes, and Mongolian men, held to perform servile labor contracts." The Democrats and the South had already taken a nativist turn by 1876, but they were able to criticize Republican immigration policy because it allowed inferior peoples into the country as virtual slaves. In a battle to secure nativist voters, the Democrats could claim superiority due to their willingness to criticize Chinese immigration – an issue that divided the Republicans between eastern and western factions.[21]

Far removed from the previous decade when coolie labor seemed to be the ideal replacement for the slave system in the South, Democratic voices in both the South and West railed against the Chinese as an inferior race that threatened white America, but the South also paternalistically championed them as hapless victims of Republican misrule. Ironically, many southern writers now began using earlier Radical arguments denouncing planters' Chinese importation schemes against the now (generally) pro-Chinese northern Republicans. One South Carolina newspaper rebuked the "iniquitous coolie trade" which only benefitted wealthy companies and resulted in a system of virtual slavery.[22] Wealthy companies were associated with the industrial capitalist North and the pro-business Republicans, and this denouncement served as an attack against both. Similarly, one writer asserted that "these coolies are more absolute slaves than ever the negroes of the South were."[23] Chinese labor, according to the writer, now represented the hypocritical evils of northern industrial slavery, while disingenuously representing chattel slavery as a more benevolent system. This type of criticism was echoed in another article which, in informing its readers of the situation in California, read: "the chief objectionable features of this country seem to be the real estate owned by land grabbers… and the abominable Chinese," and "this is withal a good place for men of capital… but for poor, uneducated laboring men it is a hard place, since farm hands are treated with an indignity never shown slaves by southern planters."[24]

For southern observers, California represented the dangers of the Republican industrial project, and its failure to ensure racial harmony within the economy and society. California was a land exploited by corporate carpetbaggers in much the same way as the South, and white workingmen were disempowered. The Chinese were a symptom of Republican "misrule," threatening the racial purity of the country and allowing the devaluation of white workers due to their cheap labor.

[21] "The National Democratic Platform," *Public Ledger* (Memphis, TN), June 29, 1876.
[22] *Anderson Intelligencer* (Anderson Court House, SC), Aug. 17, 1876.
[23] "Interesting Statements about China and the Chinese," *Charlotte Democrat* (Charlotte, NC), April 24, 1876.
[24] *Whig and Tribune,* (Jackson, TN), June 10, 1876.

The elites of the South, especially planters, took significant enjoyment from poking and prodding the federal government and northern industrial society. No year gave the South more rhetorical ammunition in this period than 1877, following the Great Railroad Strike. Reconstruction may have been gasping its last breaths, but sectional conflict still saturated southern discourse when discussing the national labor revolt. In general, southern observers and newspapers reported on the relative peace which reigned in the South (mostly due to concessions made to white workers and rapid suppression of African American ones) when compared to what they presented as the understandable uprising of oppressed, white workers against corrupt northern elites. The superiority of the South's civilization and their own (racialized) labor relations were on full display, according to southern writers.[25]

It is this sectional attitude toward national affairs, which continued well into the 1880s, that would inform southern alignment with western anti-Chinese ideologues against the federal government and New England Republicans. The *Vicksburg Weekly Herald*, discussing the Chinese question, sympathized with anti-Chinese attitudes in the aftermath of mob violence against them in California. "We cannot blame the people of California for wishing to be relieved of this great evil," the paper said, and went on to hope that the federal government would be more susceptible to southern views on similar racial issues, seeing as how "Southern white people…like the Californians, have an inferior race of beings to deal with."[26] The concept of a South-West political axis based on racialist politics had begun to solidify in the minds of many southerners and westerners, especially within the Democratic Party.

As Reconstruction came to a semi-official end in 1877, southern writers who observed the racial disorder in the Pacific states were increasingly sympathetic to the complaints of anti-Chinese populists and politicians. By the late 1870s, newspapers in the South frequently ran anti-Chinese editorials reprinted from anti-immigrant papers in the West. Reprinting of western invectives became more common in 1878-1879, in parallel to the growth of the Chinese immigration question as a national issue. The Memphis *Public Ledger* ran an article originally written for the *San Francisco Call* which rejected a Philadelphian observer's assertion that western objections to Chinese labor came from a position of laziness.[27] Similar reprinted articles from California newspapers appeared in southern papers as Dixie Democrats began to push Chinese immigration a national issue on which a South-West coalition could be built.[28] The growing nationalization of the Chinese immigration issue meant that southern rhetoric had gradually come into line with anti-Chinese activists' in the West, and a South-West political alliance based on

[25] Steven J. Hoffman, "Looking North: A Mid-South Perspective on the Great Strike," in David Stowell, ed., *The Great Strikes of 1877* (University of Illinois Press, 2008), 107-108.

[26] "The Chinese Immigration Question," *Vicksburg Weekly Herald* (Vicksburg, MS), Nov. 16, 1877.

[27] *Public Ledger* (Memphis, TN), Nov 05, 1877.

[28] A couple of examples: *Memphis Daily Appeal*, Jan. 08, 1879; "New China," *Opelousas Courier* (Opelousas, LA), May 10, 1879; "New China," *Milan Exchange* (Milan, TN), Apr. 17, 1879.

opposition to New England Republicanism and rooted in nativism began to solidify by as the turn of the decade approached.[29]

The ideological alignment which had emerged between South and West by 1882 over the issue of Chinese exclusion had deep roots in both regions' political traditions. Californian racial exclusion emerged as early as the 1850s, when the new state government adopted modified southern slave codes into its own racial regulations imposed on Native Americans, Mexicans, and Chinese.[30] Despite California's strong Unionist tendency during the Civil War, the prewar Democratic loyalties of many of the immigrants in the West began to reemerge as the Republican politicians there turned away from free labor ideology toward big business. Within the minds of many westerners, the Chinese became the designated racialized minority to be excluded within the Jacksonian framework of a Democratic, white republic. Republican nativism was also rooted in an understanding of free labor based on freedom from competition with enslaved laborers, which naturally (in their eyes) would include the virtually enslaved Chinese.[31]

The intricacies of these ideological traditions aside, by the late 1870s, the Democratic Party had reasserted control over much of the political discourse in the West, much as it had in the aftermath of the war in the South, with both regions' Democrats utilizing racial conflict as a key political tool to regain power. The Democratic platform increasingly focused on creating a formal bloc of South and West to oppose northern "radicalism" and reassert white supremacy as a truly national ideology.[32] Regional differences and wartime divisions were replaced by a coalition based on white supremacy and nativism as Chinese exclusion began to be debated at the congressional and national level. While the Democratic Party ultimately employed exclusion most successfully to contest Republican control of the country, there was a significant divide within the Republican camp which allowed this development. Western Republicans (and to a lesser extent those of the Midwest) had split with northeastern Republicans over the issue of exclusion. New England Republicans valued economic development and expanded trade with China, while the western party committed fully to exclusion as a political necessity to contest Democratic success in the region.[33] Southern writers' shifting opinions towards the "Chinese Question" thus can be understood in this context of evolving political motivations and the emergence of the Democratic South-West political alliance, as well as the growth of anti-northern, anti-Radical (Republican) nativism.

[29] Rowland T. Berthoff, "Southern Attitudes Toward Immigration, 1865-1914," *Journal of Southern History* 17, no. 3 (1951): 359.

[30] Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton University Press, 2002), 90-91.

[31] Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (University of California Press, 1971), 259-260; also 19-45 for early Democratic and Republican/Whig traditions in California.

[32] Tichenor, *Dividing Lines*, 104.

[33] Jungkun Seo, "Wedge-issue Dynamics and Party Position Shifts: Chinese Exclusion Debates in the Post-Reconstruction US Congress, 1879–1882," *Party Politics* 17, no. 6 (2010): 842-843.

Southern arguments in the Chinese exclusion debate were mostly repetitions of the Democratic Party (primarily the western faction's) platform, which was decidedly pro-exclusion, and also aligned with western Republican exclusionists' arguments. During the Congressional investigation into Chinese immigration that concluded in early 1877, Tennessee Democratic senator Henry Cooper largely remained silent while the Californian delegates led a rather one-sided inquiry into Chinese immigration. Whenever Cooper interceded to ask questions, the ones he asked were noticeably influenced by his position as a southerner, and, unlike the Californians, who asked questions related to labor competition, economics, the nature of the contracting of laborers, etc., Cooper's questions mainly focused on racial dynamics and the potential (or impossibility) of assimilating the Chinese into American society. Despite his relative detachment from the proceedings of the committee as compared to the western investigators, Cooper's chosen topics of inquiry generally reflect the focuses of the South regarding the Chinese as had developed by the mid/late 1870s – mainly the West-South alignment on exclusion and the southern tendency to focus more on racial concerns regarding assimilability, political or otherwise.[34]

There were a few key examples of Cooper engaging with the Chinese immigration question from a notably southern angle during the committee's investigation. One line of inquiry led to a discussion comparing Chinese labor with old, prewar southern slave labor, in which Cooper debated with an interviewee over the impact of slavery on "free white labor." In a roundabout series of questions, Cooper implied that it is not the mode of labor which has denigrated the white workers of the West, as the interviewee initially claimed, but the fact that a substantially different race of people has been introduced to the population. He deflected assertions that white workers were opposed to slavery but implied that they were instead unlikely to work with a completely foreign group, whether they were free or not. He ended by pointing out the success of assimilating the African American population (via slavery), drawing a comparison between them and the Chinese in California, and repeatedly asked if the Chinese could eventually be assimilated, to which he received the answer that it would eventually be achieved after a few *centuries*.[35] This long line of questioning does several things; it established the racial incompatibility of the Chinese in the minds of the Californians, asserted the superiority of the South in handling similar racial problems, and poked holes in the Republican "free labor" argument against Chinese labor by pointing out how racial concerns are more important than the status of the Chinese workers as virtual slaves. Cooper expressed the southern talking points of the southern press that framed the "Chinese question" as both comparable to their own racial history and as an issue of ethnic, rather than economic, importance.

Cooper's questioning during the committee investigation was usually brief, but mostly revolved around the assimilability of the Chinese. When he chimed in during the investigation, it was usually to ask if the Chinese's presence in white civilization

[34] *Report of the Joint Special Committee to Investigate Chinese Immigration*, 1877 (Washington: U.S. Govt. Printing Office)

[35] *Report of the Joint Special Committee,*1131-1135.

improved or impaired them as a race, and what impact their presence or naturalization would have on American society.[36] In many of these cases, the Chinese were compared to the African American workers of the South by the interviewers and interviewees, though Cooper himself only sometimes participated in that rhetorical exercise. However, the fact that even the Californians drew comparisons to the African American population of the South in terms of "amalgamation" and comparative slavery shows the gradual alignment of western and southern rhetoric when it came to the issue of racialized society and white control of society and the economy.

Cooper again brought the race question to the proceedings when he asked an interviewee if race was the main barrier to the Chinese's assimilability and directly asked if giving political equality would not make them equal to white Americans, comparing the issue to that of African Americans in the South (whom he called "the inferior race, in the Southern States"). Cooper implied that the Chinese were another example of an incompatible race that could not be trusted with the rights of American citizenship and used the African American population of the South as an example and a warning, echoing the rhetoric that the newspapers of the South had begun espousing by the mid-1870s.[37] In another reference to Reconstruction politics, Cooper asked someone if they believed naturalizing the Chinese would increase antagonism towards them, to which he received the response that the first Chinese man to try and vote would probably be lynched.[38] Cooper likely agreed with this assessment, since he quickly stopped that line of questioning once the concept had been established, and he probably meant to draw that comparison between anti-African American violence and potential violence against the Chinese should there be an attempt to politically empower them. Ultimately, Cooper's participation in the committee mostly resulted in him drawing comparisons between the African American population of the South and the western Chinese, and roundaboutly asserting the idea that the Chinese were unassimilable politically and racially, and that any attempts to naturalize them would result in social strife in California as had occurred in the South during Reconstruction.

By the end of the decade, southern writers had mostly turned against the Chinese in alignment with their western allies. Newspapers that may have once defended the Chinese as pliable, docile workers now denounced eastern writers for defending a race of people they painted as polygamists, prostitutes, gamblers, and thieves. The rhetoric of the decade before, in which the planters championed the innocent Chinese, had been reversed. The South now attacked the Chinese as inferiors that threatened American society.[39] Southern writers wrote dispassionately about their former miracle laborers. One paper simply reported on the western anger at Chester Arthur's vetoing of the Chinese Exclusion Act,

[36] *Report of the Joint Special Committee*, 156; similar questions at 179, 188.
[37] *Report of the Joint Special Committee*, 934-935.
[38] *Report of the Joint Special Committee*, 954.
[39] "The Curse of California," *Anderson Intelligencer* (Anderson Court House, SC), Apr. 27, 1882.

mentioning that he was allegedly burned in effigy, and pointing out how the Republicans were apparently withdrawing efforts to win support in California.[40] In general, southern newspapers reported on the Chinese exclusion debate in the 1880s by printing speeches made in Congress, or reprinting anti-Chinese tracts from western papers. A few writers still viewed the issue from a sectional perspective, such as one who lambasted the "Yankees" for excluding the industrious Chinese (not really acknowledging the South's role in exclusion) while empowering the allegedly inferior African Americans of the South as a "punishment" for the Civil War and southern secession.[41] However, arguments like this were rare, and most politically savvy southerners fell into the camp of supporting exclusion as a way to rattle eastern Republican control of the government, and to cement the nativist South-West political bloc.

Southern elites' attitudes towards the Chinese and their ultimate exclusion from the United States evolved dramatically over the decades between the Civil War and the passage of the 1882 Exclusion Act. Throughout this period, the main factor which remained constant in southern rhetoric was the usage of the Chinese question to undermine or otherwise denigrate the African American population. Arguments involved replacing African American labor which had slipped from planter control, comparisons between the industrious Chinese and the "lazy" African American worker, or the use of the African American population as an example of southern racialized society as a model for the rest of the country. Southern writers always took the opportunity to assert white supremacy as a southern virtue and sought to constantly employ the Chinese as a weapon (economically and rhetorically) to undermine Republican control and Reconstruction. Southern views on the Chinese question reflected whatever sectional and partisan issue needed to be debated at any given time, as southern whites viewed the Chinese paradoxically as both curious oddities to be investigated and protected from Republican misrule, while also being loathed and feared as threats to the racial society that the South was meant to embody.

[40] *Charlotte Home and Democrat* (Charlotte, NC), Apr. 14, 1882.
[41] "The Chinese and Our Spread Eagle Oratory," *Atlanta Sunny South*, May 27, 1882.

Turkish Eyes for America: How Turkey Embraced the United States in the Interwar Period

JACK GOODWIN

Since the beginning of the Cold War, Turkey has been a steadfast United States ally. Turkish and American concerns over the Russian menace and the rise of various destabilizing actors in the Middle East have only strengthened the practicality of their special friendship. That is not to say that this relationship has never shaken. The 1974 Cypriot War with Greece and Turkey threatened to tear the very fabric of NATO apart. More recently, questions surrounding Kurdish and Armenian self-determination have caused significant strain in Eastern Anatolia. The battle of nationalism vs. self-determination has been a constant thorn in the side of American-Turkish relations due to the differing nations' goals. Yet, despite these struggles, it is hard to find an Islamic country in the Middle East that has had as much of a special relationship as Turkey has had with the United States.

For this research, I define a special relationship as being a diplomatic relationship that expands further than one built out of diplomacy. It encompasses a multifaceted exchange between two nations and fosters a sense of fondness. It also includes neglectful ignorance, as the United States frequently refrains from condemning its partner's actions. This dynamic can be observed in other special relationships in the Middle East, like Saudi Arabia, which is valued for its oil resources and strategic location, and Israel, which shares a strong religious/cultural relationship with the United States. To fully understand a special relationship, however, one must consider how such a relationship is formed. One popular argument amongst historians is that the beginning of this relationship occurred during the creation of the Cold War, specifically with the establishment of NATO and the Marshall Plan. Others argue that it can be traced back to the very beginning of American-Turkish relations, with early U.S. penetration into the Mediterranean world and their interaction with the late Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, both arguments fall short of identifying when the relationship between Americans and Turks took became more than standard diplomatic exchange. Looking at the complicated history that the United States and Turkey have had together, the years between the first and second World Wars are the most defining period of their relationship.

The interwar period was not significant due to the establishment of more intimate relations, as seen in the nineteenth century, nor did it create a crucial mutual defense alliance in the creation of the Cold War. Instead, the remarkable rise of American soft power defined American-Turkish relations during the interwar period and was the key factor highlighting the emergence of this extraordinary

relationship. Soft power is best understood as the exchange and relations between two countries that does not (or hardly) involves an aspect of military force. To co-opt a country rather than to coerce it through protection or threats with military might. During this period, Turkey underwent a significant wave of Americanization as part of its path toward Westernization. Through Turkey's path towards Westernization, Turkey not only continued to interact and cooperate with American institutions but also allowed itself to embrace Americanization. This is especially surprising given the tumultuous relationship between the two nations after the First World War. Not only had relations stabilized (and eventually grew even stronger) during the early years of the Turkish Republic, but Americanization also seemingly exploded during this period.[1]

Despite its importance in defining American-Turkish relations, the period is too often overshadowed in the historiography by the post-World War II period. It is lost between the influences of Orientalism and Cold War politics. It is even rarer for our modern historical text not to partition the various elements of Americanization into pieces rather than looking at it as a whole. Based on this historical trend, it is my contention that this period was pivotal in fostering a distinct relationship between Turkey and the United States. Additionally, it is essential to consider this era in its entirety for a comprehensive understanding of its significance, rather than just focusing on singular aspects of the interwar period. My aim is to emphasize how Americanization affected the new Turkish nation and how the various elements of American soft power impacted Turkey.

Turkey's embrace of Americanization can be seen in various ways. There were attempts on both sides to Embrace in friendly political goodwill and remove the stigmas that the nations had for each other. There were the challenges in trading and the rise of American expert advisors. American philanthropic investments and the modernization efforts in Turkey had major ramifications on the young nation. There was also the rise of American cultural penetration through American film and media. These were the factors that helped the relationship between the United States and Turkey flourish. This essay can only address some of the complexities of Americanization that Turkey received during this period. Still, my hope with this research is to piece the various puzzle pieces of Americanization together to understand the magnitude of the United States role in defining Turkey.

To best understand this topic, it is important to identify how the United States and Turkey (still the Ottoman Empire during the interwar years) began their

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[1] For this article, I will refer to Turkey as the "Turkish Republic" to simplify terms and not create further divisions in this era. It is important to note that two-party republicanism only came during the Cold War era, and this period was far more dictatorial than the name Turkish Republic makes it out to be. Nevertheless, I find it redundant to create a distinction in this era, especially since many Turkish ideologies and hopes did come with a dream of democracy and republicanism.

engagement. During the turn of the nineteenth century, U.S. diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire was defined by predatory commercial relations and missionary advancement. Beginning with the Barbary pirates of North Africa and the official establishment of diplomacy in the mid-nineteenth century, the United States grew interested in Turkey throughout the nineteenth century. While diplomacy with the Ottomans remained minimal (except for the two World Wars) until the beginning of the Cold War, one could not say that the U.S. was inactive in Turkey. On the commercial side, establishing diplomatic relations allowed for more manageable American investment and greater interest in the region, which quickly grew as American industries and capitalists were hungry for Turkey's natural resources and new markets (though the various Ottoman wars did make it fluctuate).[2] These early economic practices were more "predatory" in that they utilize unbalanced treaties and were far more exploitative than they were during the early republican years. However, there were still some semblances of the more positive Americanization during this period. During one of President William H. Taft's addresses to Congress, he endorsed further economic cooperation into the Ottoman Empire based upon the success of previous endeavors and the liberalization of the country.[3]

Missionary institutions were another important factor in early Americanization. Entities like the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions were major proponents of the expansion, and the Ottoman Empire served as a primary target. Not only did the Ottomans have the appeal of the "Orient," but there were also major Christian minority groups in the region, mainly Catholic and Orthodox, allowing for more straightforward conversion. These missionary groups were not solely religious focused. They also often held philanthropic goals in their missions and contributed to various institutions like schools and hospitals. [4]

These groups grew in strength during the early twentieth century.[5] It was only the advent of World War I and the Turkish War for Independence that stunted this growth.[6] However, many missionaries and interest groups in Anatolia managed to survive after the conclusion of World War I. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the father and first president of Turkey (1923-38), was not directly against these groups, yet he did aim to secularize Turkey, so many such organizations came under fire to adapt and change during the early republican years. Many ceased to exist, and those still open had to regulate their schools along the lines of Atatürk's secularization. Nevertheless, the attack upon missionary schools was not directed at them, only their religious ties, and many who did shut down were able to reopen with American and Turkish support. Admiral Mark L. Bristol, the High Commissioner in Turkey during the severance of diplomatic relations (1919-1927), served as the unofficial

[2] Leland J. Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey, 1830-1930: An Economic Interpretation* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1932), 46-47.

[3] Gordon, *American Relations with Turkey*, 58.

[4] Idris Yücel, "A Missionary Society at the Crossroads: American Missionaries on the Eve of the Turkish Republic," *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Arastirmalari Dergisi* 8, no. 15 (2012): 53-55.

[5] Çağrı Erhan, "Ottoman Official Attitudes Towards American Missionaries," *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations* 30 (2000): 317.

[6] Yücel, "A Missionary Society," 55.

ambassador to Turkey and worked heavily alongside the Turkish government to restore the various missionary institutes.[7] Missionary institutes were also adaptable, being able to secularize, while keeping the "Spirit of Crist" in their classrooms.[8]

One reason this period of exchange is so fascinating is how powerful the Armenian movement was in the minds of the United States government. President Woodrow Wilson, being a major supporter of the Armenian question during the later part of his presidency, became the most prominent case of U.S. leadership opposing Ottoman power in favor of a free Armenia.[9] Armenia was a crucial element in defining American interest in Turkey, especially during the post-WW1 period. This caused significant rifts between the U.S. and Ottoman governments. It was only when the tensions over Armenia decreased, and strong ambassadors to Turkey pushed for normalization that these two nations formally re-established relations in 1927.[10]

The new Turkish Republic, founded in 1923 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, also had its concerns about the United States. Many Turks hoped that America would be the power best suited to help Turkey establish itself during the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic (1918-1923) and its early years. They saw the U.S. not as a part of the 'old West,' not having territorial ambitions in Turkey, and Wilson's views on self-determination had found an audience in the changing nation.[11] However, many Turks remained skeptical of Wilson's ideals. Atatürk was not amused by Wilson's Fourteen Points, and even mocked him as "Poor Wilson."[12] Halide Edib, a close advisor to Atatürk and Turkey's most prolific women's right champion, described the tensions over American involvement," America, whose sympathies seemed to be entirely on the side of the Armenians, having heard only of Armenian massacres and sufferings, appeared dangerous rather than helpful."[13] While Wilson's perspectives did gain some admirers in Turkey, the increasingly popular feeling felt across Turkey was that they must defend the "Turkish parts of their empire."[14] This only stoked the flames of Turkish nationalism while the nation's borders were still fluid.

[7] Delavan L. Pierson, ed., *The Missionary Review of the World: 47* (New York: Missionary Review Publishing, 1924), 224-225.

[8] John A. DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East, 1900-1939* (University of Minnesota Press 1963), 257.

[9] Woodrow Wilson, "Special Message to Congress Asking Permission to Assume Mandate for Armenia Under the League of Nations," May 24, 1920, The American Presidency Project, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/special-message-congress-asking-permission-assume-mandate-for-armenia-under-the-league.

[10] Robert L. Daniel, "*The Armenian Question and American-Turkish Relations, 1914–1927," Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 46, no. 2 (1959): 275.

[11] Halide Edib, *Turkey Faces West; a Turkish View of Recent Changes and Their Origin* (Yale University Press, 1930), 174.

[12] Hugh Evelyn Wortham, *Mustapha Kemal of Turkey* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1931), 80.

[13] Halide Edib, *The Turkish Ordeal; Being the Further Memoirs of Halidé Edib* (New York: The Century Company, 1928), 15-16.

[14] Carter V. Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity: A History, 1789-2007* (Yale University Press, 2010), 221.

Despite this, the United States and the Republic of Turkey quickly rebuilt amicable relations, eventually leading to the re-establishment of diplomacy in 1927. Relations continued to improve through the interwar period, as the United States became less threatened by the "Terrible Turk," and Turkey seemingly embraced Americanization during this period.[15] Yet, there was no one event, one factor that explained how the special relationship was created. An intersection of various forms of soft power and cultural shifts founded the structure of our modern friendship. Even when the United States government seemed distrustful, many still appreciated American liberal values and thought that the U.S. could help bring that to Turkey.[16] In the end, the United States and Turkey would stand united together to fight in the Second World War.

This research is not an investigation into the diplomatic history of the United States and Turkey. However, I still find it significant to address diplomacy's various roles in the Americanization of Turkey. Undoubtedly, on both sides of the Atlantic, various stereotypes prevailed. Wilson's transformational Fourteen Points and a fear of being colonized were concerns shared by a majority of Turkish minds.[17] In the U.S., Armenian Americans and other groups helped to propagandize the idea of the "Terrible Turk," similar to how the U.S. would describe the Japanese during World War II. It would take many years to shake off the ideas of the Orient combined with Armenian travesties.

In Turkey, however, the American reputation recovered remarkably quickly. Joseph C. Grew and Charles H. Sherrill, the first two ambassadors to the Republic of Turkey (and the unofficial ambassador, Admiral Bristol, during the period that diplomatic relations were cut off) had remarkable reverence towards the nation and often held opposing views from their domestic counterparts. They served as important envoys to strengthen the U.S. image (frequently having personal relationships with Atatürk) and as people front and center to see Americanism in Turkey. Joseph Grew (1927-1932) reported that "American institutions were more welcome in Turkey than the institutions of any other foreign power."[18] U.S. ambassadors also played key roles in the history of Turkey. Charles Sherrill (1932-1933) wrote a biography of Atatürk, *A Year's Embassy to Mustafa Kemal*. Atatürk played a major role in the biography's creation and spent much time being interviewed by Sherrill. This book is one of the earliest pro-Turkish texts from the interwar period and played a significant role in connecting Atatürk with key Western figures. Sherrill primarily draws a comparison between Atatürk and George Washington, stating that Atatürk is both militarily and spiritually comparable to

[15] Thomas A. Bryson, *American Diplomatic Relations with the Middle East, 1784-1975: A Survey* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1977), 83-84.

[16] Wortham, *Mustapha Kemal of Turkey*, 104.

[17] Morton Abramowitz, *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy* (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2000), 123-124.

[18] Bilge Criss, *American Turkish Encounters: Politics and Culture, 1830-1989* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 116.

Washington.[19] According to popular Turkish journalist Ahmed Emin Yalman, Admiral Bristol, who was staunchly against the Armenian project, was projected as the architect of an "almost informal alliance between Turkey and the United States."[20]

The Americans were not the only ones pushing this dual agenda. Atatürk was a leading proponent of creating a positive image of Turkey among Americans. Earlier in his reign, mainly due to the worry surrounding potential U.S. entry into the Turkish War of Independence, he held an uneasy opinion of the United States. This view, however, never bordered on anti-Americanism and was primarily an anti-Wilson view (which explains why Atatürk was so forward with gaining favor from America). His opinion, although mixed, was that the United States was the lesser of evils (compared to Britian and France).[21] Even during the years moving from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic, Atatürk, while never fully saying "the United States," amusingly (in Halide Edib's own account) danced around stating that a great power with no territorial ambition was the best choice to seek aid for the burgeoning Turkish Republic, despite it being abundantly obvious that he was referring to the U.S..[22] For this reason, the U.S. emerged as one of the most influential nations for the young Turkish nation, and it never sent direct military boots on the ground to any Turkish land. While British and French troops fought through Arabia and the shores of Gallipoli, the United States never formally declared war on the Ottoman Empire.[23] The enemies that the Turks fought in their War of Independence were only tacitly supported by the Americans, a far cry from the long history of French and British support for enemies of Turkey.

Beyond that, President Atatürk was passionate about getting through to the American people and informing them about the new Turkish government. Reimagining Turkey as a friend to the United States was an important goal for Atatürk, who tried desperately to publish his 1,000-page speech about Turkey's future in the United States. When it was finally published in Western markets, the Turkish government often sent it to inquiring publics.[24] Moreover, Atatürk was not content to signal a new Turkey to his American audience; he also took great care to foster the image of Turkey and the United States as being sister nations. In an interview with Isaac Marcosson, a journalist in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Atatürk chose to unite the U.S. and Turkey under a shared historical umbrella. In Atatürk's perspective, the two nations had both thrown off imperial and meddling powers, and he defined the Grand National Assembly of 1920 (the establishment of Turkey and its parliament) as being, "precisely like your Declaration of Independence."[25]

[19] Charles H. Sherrill, *A Year's Embassy to Mustafa Kemal* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1934), 87-89.

[20] Criss, *Turkish Encounters*, 115.

[21] Elaine D. Smith, *Turkey: Origins of the Kemalist Movement and the Government of the Grand National Assembly 1919-1923* (Washington DC: Judd and Detweiler, 1959), 19.

[22] Edib, *The Turkish Ordeal,* 15-16.

[23] Turgay Akbab, "From the Terrible Turk to the Incredible Turk: Reimagining Turkey as an American Ally, 1919-1960," (PhD diss., University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 60.

[24] Akbab, *Incredible Turk*, 47-57.

[25] Isaac Marcosson, "Kemal Pasha.," *Saturday Evening Post,* Oct. 20, 1923, 144-145.

During the interview, Atatürk brought up his admiration for George Washington and Abraham Lincoln as, "They worked solely for the glory and emancipation of the United States, while most other Presidents seemed to have worked for their own deification. The highest form of public service is unselfish effort." Atatürk also actively supported for American aid in agriculture schools and machinery, developing railroads, and hygiene (mainly to prevent widespread infant mortality), viewing these issues as paramount for the advancement of the Turkish nation. Atatürk, who had already begun modernization efforts (like the establishment of a Ministry of Sanitation), envisioned the United States as a cooperative friend, rather than a dominating superior. Both nations shared a similar history, had the technology/expertise needed, and American money was "free from the political intrigue that animates the dealings of European nations with us."[26]

While much of this can be attributed to Atatürk wishing for further American investment and aid, one must also consider the other aspect of Atatürk's appeals. By using American heroes and experiences to describe the new Turkish Republic, Atatürk actively and passively ingrained Americanism into the origins of Turkey. While there were various reasons why Turkey embraced the United States during the interwar period, there is no doubt that Atatürk's vocation for the "American spirit" helped spread Americanization throughout Turkey.

Yet, Atatürk was hardly the only driving force. When understanding the aspect of soft power in Turkey during the interwar period, it is imperative to understand the role philanthropy and missionary groups. In the late Ottoman Empire, missionary societies took on the heavy lifting of supporting philanthropy missions. Often, opening schools, hospitals, or other local services came along with attempting to proselytize the locals, mainly non-Muslim targets like the Armenians and Greeks.[27] The dynamic shift due to the displacement of the Armenians and the Greco-Turkish population exchange rapidly changed how these missionaries maneuvered in Turkey. Atatürk's secularizing legislation also directly impacted not only the religious Muslim society but also the Christian society in Turkey. For an organization to function in the new Turkish society, it had to embrace the secularization wave spreading throughout Anatolia. Some organizations left or dissolved, whether due to a lack of funding, conflicts between trustees and the new regulations, or just fizzled out. However, many missionary institutions continued to exist and adapt under Atatürk's reign.[28]

Despite the often racist remarks that these missionary groups would paint onto the backs of the Turks (the "Terrible Turk" myth), there is no doubt that missionary societies had an immense impact on the Turkish world. Indeed, the combined funding and resources spent by American missions during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries amounted to approximately 80 million dollars.[29] It is also important to understand that various philanthropic individuals or groups tied

[26] Marcosson, "Kemal Pasha," 144-145.
[27] Yücel, "A Missionary Society," 52-55.
[28] DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies*, 254-257.
[29] Bryson, *American Diplomatic Relations with the Middle East*, 77.

themselves to these missionary groups. Groups like the Rockefeller Foundation had a presence in these missionary societies during the last two decade of the Ottoman Empire. Still, once the shift in governance in Turkey occurred, many of these benefactors moved toward a more pro-Turkish philanthropy. Many of the smaller missionary groups faded into the background. In contrast, many more prominent, organized groups became secular institutions like Robert College (college in this context means high school).

The Rockefeller Foundation, in particular, were instrumental in fighting disease and illness in the new Turkish Republic. In Ankara, the foundation established the Central Institute for Hygiene in 1933, which served to fight disease and sickness and as an institute for learning and knowledge. Much of the strength created out of these American institutes was that these institutions helped train the local Turkish doctors and nurses with the best medical knowledge.[30] During the interwar period, the Rockefeller Foundation primarily focused on malaria, while also emphasizing the importance of spreading medical awareness and providing information to doctors across the country. Dr. Ralph K. Collins, an International Health Division officer, became one of these pivotal people in combating disease in Turkey. Compiling a wealth of data from his travels around the country helped Collins understand where Turkey was in its domestic health crisis.

These organizations significantly impacted the lives of thousands, if not millions, of Turks in the country. Such institutes, founded by people like Carnegie and Rockefeller, helped pioneer the foundation of modern medicine in Turkey. Yet, I find how the Rockefeller Foundation and Collins approached teaching the Turks most indicative of Americanization. They did not just build hospitals and put in doctors from America. The Rockefeller Foundation sent Turkish nurses and doctors to the United States to study and train in American institutes. The foundation also set up local Turkish training programs to teach the nurses and doctors who couldn't travel to the United States.[31] The willingness to provide education to those often referred to in the United States as the "Terrible Turks" and their proactive approach to fostering cooperation became a powerful entity in spreading American medical knowledge throughout the Turkish Republic.[32] It was not only hugely successful in strengthening the medical abilities of the modernizing country but also won over the hearts and minds of many Turks like Zeki Nasır, Turkey's Director of Health, Propaganda and Medical Statistics.[33]

There were also American philanthropic efforts to build institutions of education in Turkey, contributing to American-Turkish relations. Robert College stood as a testament to how a missionary-created college could become an important school for modernizing the Turkish youth. Though the college suffered due to the country's secularization, it soon found new opportunities with the government's growing need for educated individuals. President Caleb Gates, though

[30] Hrustan Šišić, "Seeds of Modern Education: American Influence in Turkey," *MAP Education and Humanities* 5 (2024): 56.

[31] Ali Erken, *America and the Making of Modern Turkey: Science, Culture and Political Alliances* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 37.

[32] Erken, *America and the Making of Modern Turkey*, 48-49,

[33] Erken, *America and the Making of Modern Turkey*, 40.

often skeptical, found that "there is in Turkey freedom of thought and inquiry such as has never been known before."[34] In the 1930s, Turkey, seeking a skilled workforce to help with the financial troubles of that decade, relied on Robert College to take on the responsibility of training many Turks in science and engineering (with English also incorporated).[35] Even Grace Ellison, who was a staunchly pro-Turk Englishwoman in Angora (Ankara), could not help but admire the American education institutions in Turkey, even if they did reek of the missionaries.[36]

Despite losing much of its missionary identity with the rise of the Republic, it still held on to its American identity, which soon became popular in the republican state in the late 1920s through the 1930s. A teacher of Robert College, Elizabeth Dodge Huntington, noticed these changes in the late 1920s with how the elite of Ankara positioned themselves—mainly Western enjoyers of American culture and non-traditional Islamists.[37] The teachers at Robert College were even incentivized to return to the United States to see what new technologies or methods had been introduced. Various teachers, including Lynn Scipio, who wrote an English Turkish Technical Dictionary for his engineering students, took up this task and found great success.[38] Robert College also had an impressive list of alumni, two Prime ministers (Bülent Ecevit and Tansu Çiller) and Turkey's most prolific women's right champion Halide Edib Adıvar.[39] Robert College and other educational institutions founded by missionary or philanthropic groups distinctly embody a different approach to Americanization in Turkey than that of the Rockefeller Foundation. While the Rockefeller Foundation sought to support and build Turkish doctors and nurses, Robert College sought to bring American culture and educational practices to the heart of the Turkish youth. However, they both strived for the modernization and growth of Turkey through the lens of Americanization.

Americanization penetrated Turkey during the interwar period in other ways. J. P. Morgan and other philanthropists helped to sponsor a positive image in Turkey to business elites and sometimes gave direct funding to various institutions around Turkey like hospitals and schools.[40] Institutions like the American Red Cross, the YMCA, and the American Friends of Turkey developed deep roots in the Turkish society. Asa Jenning, the hero of Smyrna, founded the American Friends of Turkey (1930), an organization that sought to promote positive exchange and public relations between the two countries.[41] They focused on philanthropy in Turkey like orphanages and educational programs. Similarly to the Rockefeller Foundation,

[34] Ali Erken, "From Missionary Tradition to Liberal Leadership: Robert College, 1918-1970," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 71, no. 4 (2023): 444.

[35] Erken, *America and the Making of Modern Turkey,* 57-58.

[36] Grace Ellison, *An Englishwoman in Angora* (Cambridge University Press, 1923), 203-204.

[37] Erken, "From Missionary Tradition," 445.

[38] Erken, *America and the Making of Modern Turkey*, 57-58.

[39] Tansu Çiller was Turkey's first female Prime Minister.

[40] Suhnaz Yilmaz, "Challenging the Stereotypes: Turkish-American Relations in the Inter-War Era," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2006): 228-229.

[41] DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies*, 269-272.

they also brought Turks to America for higher education, for which the Turkish government financially endorsed.

U.S. economic influence was another factor of Americanization in the new Turkish Republic. During the 1920s, Turkey had a difficult time defining its economic prowess, as the majority of its exports were from raw materials, mainly agriculture like cotton.[42] The 1920s, while not weak, provided little growth in American trade interest in the Turkish economic world.[43] The United States enjoyed the new open Turkish markets and the Turkey was interested in American goods. Yet, the new government lacked the capital to fully exploit American goods and the goods being exported from Turkey did not provide a surplus of cash. The U.S. government also was limited in this time due to the efforts of the State Department, as they were often the gatekeepers to American investment in Turkey. This was only worsened by the Great Depression, which halted various forms of trade and raised tariffs. American exporters also ran into trouble, not only because of the Turkish government's protectionist policies and tariffs but also because of a higher degree of competing European trade.

However, this did not extend to American investment in the new Turkish government. The cheap cars coming off the Ford Motor Company assembly line quickly dominated Turkey leading into the 1930s. Not only were cars becoming less of a luxury and more a convenient utility, but they also inspired change in the country's infrastructure. With the installation of a Ford factory in Istanbul, a proper roadway for the country became a significant priority. Healthy men were forced to help build the thousands of new roadways that the Ankara government decided were necessary, and it became a central focus to build up the country's infrastructure to meet the demands of the growing car presence in the country.[44]

The establishment of American corporations in Turkey during the later interwar period was a common strategy to circumvent tariffs or other regulations related to imports and exports. In *Allah Dethroned*, a book by Lilo Linke about her travels in Turkey in 1935, we see that it was common for Turks to work in American factories in Turkey's heartland, primarily in the Gary Tobacco Company.[45] The factories were often viewed with support by the locals, especially since there was a merchant drain after the population transfer with the Greeks and the various conflicts with the Armenians. Americanization of industries in Turkey was not only an example of a growing American culture in the country, but it was also seen as an equalizing force—one that paved roads and gave better economic opportunity than in previous years.

Due to the Great Depression, it was exceptionally tough for the U.S. State Department and Turkish ambassadors to reach an agreement on trade (since most American investors had to get the permission of the State Department and Turkish governments approval to proceed in foreign investment). It was primarily either the

[42] Gordon, *An Economic Interpretation*, 74.
[43] DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies*, 263-266.
[44] Gordon, *An Economic Interpretation*, 105-106
[45] Lilo Linke, *Allah Dethroned, A Journey through Modern Turkey* (London: Constable & Co., 1937), 160.

Turkish government restricting or taxing certain areas of investment or the U.S. State Department being hesitant to invest in Turkey. This became a significant issue during the years before World War II, as the United States leaned hard into isolationism. This caused immense difficulty for Turkey, as they desperately wanted American manufactured weapons, fearing an invasion by one of the more belligerent nations of Europe. Despite Ambassador Robert Skinner's efforts to promote increased trade with U.S. military industries, the State Department opposed this initiative until the 1940s. This was primarily due to pressure from anti-war groups and a belief that these military industrialists were the reason why the United States went into the First World War.[46]

The complexities of trade and direct investment may not fully capture the remarkable nature of United States involvement in Turkey in the interwar period. Instead, the contributions of American technical advisors, appointed to support Turkey's development, that truly reflect this exceptional relationship. The 1930s marked a crucial era for American advisors, who played pivotal roles in government agencies and private enterprises, helping shape the significant change that Turkey was undergoing.

American advisors offered their expertise to significantly enhance agricultural practices, introducing innovative techniques and sustainable methods that improved crop yields and farming efficiency. As Linke accounts in *Allah Dethroned*, American experts had drastically overhauled much of the cotton production in southern Turkey. American Cleveland cotton seeds were regulated to be the only open-ball cotton allowed to be produced in the region (which would eventually span across the country). American experts worked closely with the Turkish government to find the most suitable land for cultivation and acquire/purify first-class seeds.[47]

Robert H. Vorfeld, from the U.S. Tariff Commission, played a key role as a railway advisor, enhancing the perception of American aptitude and investment in Turkey.[48] One of the most famous examples of American advisors' impact was the Hines-Kemmerer Mission in 1933-34, which surveyed the whole of Turkey and the various economic factors and sectors in the nation. The result of the 1,800-page report was that Turkey needed to focus upon its infrastructure and modernizing its agricultural scene. It was pessimistic towards rapid industrialization and determined that the nation needed time to adapt.[49] Although the effectiveness of the report is still contested, the overall perspective by the Turkish officials was that it was useful and there was an immense appreciation for its creation.[50]

While the significant economic changes in trade with the United States would occur in the 1940s, it is nevertheless important to view how Americanism affected the burgeoning Turkish Republic. It is essential to recognize the importance of

[46] Roger R. Trask, *The United States Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform, 1914-1939* (University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 100-102.

[47] Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, 273-274.

[48] Roger R Trask, "The United States and Turkish Nationalism: Investments and Technical Aid during the Atatürk Era," *Business History Review* 38, no. 1 (1964): 72.

[49] J.W. Kernick, "Turkey Grateful for American Aid," *New York Times*, July 15, 1934.

[50] Trask, "The United States and Turkish Nationalism," 75.

economic advisors not only in Turkish high society but also in local factories and agriculture.

Political, economic, and social-philanthropic Americanization are all important elements for establishing the United States impact on Turkey during the interwar period. Yet, it does not encapsulate the whole picture. Linke, for instance, described not only a vast world and the story of Turkey during this changing period but also a Turkey that has at least partially embraced Americanism. In the opening of the account, Linke met a young Turk who asked her about America, and when she asked him where he learned English, he replied that he was from an American missionary school.[51] Not only could he speak English, but he was also an engineer and a soldier. Linke described the young Turk as "very young." As the beginning year is 1935, before Atatürk's major illiteracy campaigns, we can draw that these American missionary schools (even with secularization) continued to play a role in educating the youth of Turkey. From this, we can also gather that, in part, these schools created a greater interest in America. We need to look no further than the text itself, as on the same boat that she met the young Turk, she found photos of American film stars on the walls.[52]

Indeed, films played an important role in Americanization, especially in Turkish youth culture. Though American films would not skyrocket until the post-World War II era, American films did start to make an appearance in the 1920s and would eventually make it countrywide in the 1930s.[53] Film not only played an important role in spreading American culture but also as an element of exchange. Wanting to dispel the myth of the "Terrible Turk," Atatürk worked with American film studios to create a film encapsulating how Turkey was modernizing and Westernizing. While not successful at first, in 1937, Turkey succeeded in creating its first propaganda film, *The March of Time Series: Turkey Reborn and Father of All Turks*.[54] American magazines also showed the changing dynamics of the period, even though they were not as widespread as movie theaters (144 nationwide).[55] However, magazines still played an important role in understanding how Americanism was played in the popular imagination of the Turks. Linke also makes an interesting statement about the magazines, calling finding them "other signs of modernism."[56] While this is not an entirely fair assessment, since Linke is German and does not have a native Turkish interpretation, she mostly avoids using "modernized" to describe her experience in Turkey. This seems to indicate that this is not a German interpretation of what is modern and the absence of it but a Turkish societal understanding of seeing American magazines in a non-modernized area.

The United States' industrial imprint also appears in Linke's travels. When traveling around the more rural East Anatolia, Lemkin described being driven in a

[51] Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, 6.
[52] Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, 11.
[53] Deniz Kandiyot and Saktanber Ayşe, *Fragments of Culture: The Everyday of Modern Turkey* (Rutgers University Press, 2002), 153-154.
[54] Akbab, *Incredible Turk*, 74-79.
[55] Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, 222-223.
[56] Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, 256.

"comparatively new Ford."[57] The newer Ford not only represented Turkish ability to have individual motor transport (as Ford vehicles make several appearances in travel) but also the ability to purchase and own new models of cars (in a relatively rural region). Even later in her travels, she meets a family member who owns a Ford tractor.[58] Americanization had spread throughout not only the urban and rural areas of Turkey, but also through the different class structures. The new cars represented the extravagance and luxury that the United States provides. Both large-scale industry owners and independent farmers benefited from advancements in American technology. Americanization penetrated all levels of Turkish society as it was not simply an elite/intellectual movement.

It is important to point out the aspects of "anti-Americanism" that Linke experienced. I hesitate to call it anti-Americanism because the two primary references were a grievance against American tourists (mainly due to their passion for pre-Turkish history in Turkey) and a disgruntled older man who is annoyed by his descendants enjoying Westernization. It is important to touch on these instances since they do grant proof that a rejection of Americanization existed during this period that existed outside the previous framework of American support for the Armenians.

While the interwar period in Turkey is often neglected in the eyes of American historians, there is no doubt that it possessed an enormously complex world of Americanization and Americanism. Even before the establishment of NATO and the implementation of the Marshall Plan, the United States played a role in Turkish life during the 1920s and 1930s. The formal relationship established during the late 1940s was not one solely of mutual defense and a new shared common goal. It is a relationship that had been building since the days of the Sultans but was evermore reinforced with the age of Americanization in Turkey during the interwar period. The United States played a critical role in the modernization and identity of the new Turkish Republic far before the Russians entered Berlin and the United States dropped two atomic bombs.

There is no single reason or specific event that explains Turkey's embrace of American ideals. Instead, it is a complex expression of culture that intertwines politics, economics, charity, modernization, and daily life. Many authors tend to focus on only one aspect of Americanization in Turkey. However, I believe this perspective is inadequate. To fully understand the role that the United States has played in shaping Turkey, we must consider these various elements as a whole.

The British, French, German, and other European nations have each occupied a prominent role in defining Turkey (especially with its governmental structure); however, it was often the United States that most seeped into significant facets of Turkish life. Science, schooling, culture, international politics, and the economy all had major aspects of American identity connected to them. While soft power is not a term often applied to this period, it fits the mold that the United States played to

[57] Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, 177.
[58] Linke, *Allah Dethroned*, 256.

a tee. Due to approach, and whether intentional or unconsciously, Turkey became more aligned with American values than it ever might have been through direct U.S. hard power. This research invites us to reconsider the popular understanding of the United States' place in Turkey and questions the ways American officials believed were the most effective at spreading their national ideals and culture.