



DRIVEN OUT

THE FORGOTTEN WAR AGAINST
CHINESE AMERICANS



JEAN PFAELZER

INTRODUCTION

THE CHINESE CALLED IT *PAI HUA*, OR *THE DRIVEN OUT*

At nine o'clock on the morning of November 3, 1885, steam whistles blew at the foundries and mills across Tacoma, to announce the start of the purge of all the Chinese people from the town. Saloons closed and police stood by as five hundred men, brandishing clubs and pistols, went from house to house in the downtown Chinese quarter and through the Chinese tenements along the city's wharf. Sensing the storm ahead, earlier in the week, about five hundred Chinese people had fled from Tacoma. Now the rest were given four hours to be ready to leave. They desperately stuffed years of life into sacks, shawls, and baskets hung from shoulder poles—bedding, clothing, pots, some food. At midday, the mob began to drag Chinese laborers from their homes, pillage their laundries, and throw their furniture into the streets. Chinese merchants pleaded with the mayor and the sheriff for an extra twenty-four hours to pack up their shops.

Early on that cold Tuesday afternoon, armed vigilantes corralled two hundred Chinese men and women at the docks. The governor of the Washington Territory, Watson C. Squire, ignored telegrams from Chinese across the Pacific Northwest urging him to intervene. The mayor and the sheriff hid out at city hall as the mob marched the Chinese through heavy rain to a

muddy railroad crossing nine miles from town. The merchants' wives, unable to walk on their tiny bound feet, were tossed into wagons.

Lake View Junction was a stop on the Northern Pacific Railroad, which had been built by Chinese laborers. A few of the evicted Chinese found damp shelter in abandoned storage sheds, in stables, or inside the small station house. Most huddled outside. During the cold and rainy night, two or three trains stopped at the station. People with cash paid six dollars to board the overnight train to Portland, Oregon. Others crammed onto a passing freight train. The rest began the hundred-mile trek south to the Chinatown in Portland, where they hoped to find sanctuary in a community that had just refused the town's orders to leave. For days they were seen following the tracks south. Others fled the country for Canada.

Two days later, Tacoma's Chinatown was destroyed by fire.

LUM MAY

Territory of Washington

County of King

June 3, 1886

Lum May being duly sworn on his oath saith:

I was born in Canton, China, and am a subject of the Chinese Empire. I am aged about 51 years. Have been in America about eleven years and have been doing business in Tacoma for ten years. My business there was that of keeping dry goods, provisions, medicines and general merchandize store.

On the third day of November I resided with my family in Tacoma on the corner of Railroad Street some little distance from Chinatown. At that time I would say there were eight hundred or nine hundred Chinese persons in and about Tacoma who . . . were forcibly expelled by the white people of Tacoma. Twenty days previously to the 3rd of November, a committee of white persons waited upon the Chinese at their residences and ordered them to leave the city before the 3rd of November. I do not know the names of [the] white persons but would recognize their faces. The Committee consisted of 15 or 20 persons . . . who notified the Chinese to leave.

I asked General Sprague and other citizens for protection for myself and the Chinese people. The General said he would see and do what he could. All

the Chinese after receiving notice to leave were frightened lest their houses should be blown up and destroyed. A rumour to that effect was in circulation. Many of them shut up their houses and tried to keep on the look out.

About half past 9 o'clock in the morning of November 3, 1885, a large crowd of citizens of Tacoma marched down to Chinatown and told all the Chinese that the whole Chinese population of Tacoma must leave town by half past one o'clock in the afternoon of that day. There must have been in the neighborhood of 1000 people in the crowd of white people though I cannot tell how many. They went to all the Chinese houses and establishments and notified the Chinese to leave. Where the doors were locked they broke forcibly into the houses smashing in doors and breaking in windows. Some of the crowd was armed with pistols, some with clubs. They acted in a rude boisterous and threatening manner, dragging and kicking the Chinese out of their houses.

My wife refused to go and some of the white persons dragged her out of the house. From the excitement, the fright and the losses we sustained through the riot she lost her reason, and has ever since been hopelessly insane. She threatens to kill people with a hatchet or any other weapon she can get hold of. The outrages I and my family suffered at the hands of the mob has utterly ruined me. I make no claim, however, for my wife's insanity or the anguish I have suffered. My wife was perfectly sane before the riot.

I saw my countrymen marched out of Tacoma on November 3rd. They presented a sad spectacle. Some had lost their trunks, some their blankets, some were crying for their things.

Armed white men were behind the Chinese, on horseback sternly urging them on. It was raining and blowing hard. On the 5th of November all the Chinese houses situated on the wharf were burnt down by incendiaries.

I sustained the following losses through the riot, to wit: 2 pieces silk crape trowsers female, 2 pieces black silk, 6 silk handkerchiefs, 2 crape jackets, 10 blue cotton shirts, 8 pieces black cotton trowsers, 12 Pairs Chinese Cotton Stockings, 2 Leather trunks (Chinese), wool great dress female, 4 flannel jackets, 3 pairs embroidered shoes, 1 dressing case, 6 white cotton shirts, 1 carpet bag, 2 white woolen blankets, 2 red woolen bed covers, 1 feather mattress, 1 spring bed, 2 tables, 6 chairs, 2 stoves, 4 pictures and frames, 1 large mirror, 2 woolen trowsers (male) and solvent debtors (Chinaman), 1 business and good will, loss of perishable goods, total \$45,532.

A few of the Chinese merchants I among them were suffered to remain

in Tacoma for two days in order to pack up our goods or what was left of them. On the 5th of November, after the burning of the Chinese houses on the wharf I left Tacoma for Victoria where I have since resided. . . . No Chinaman has been allowed to reside in Tacoma since November 3rd.

Mayor Weisbach appeared to be one of the leaders of the mob on the 3rd of November. I spoke to him and told him that Mr. Sprague had said the Chinese had a right to stay and would be protected. He answered me: "General Sprague has nothing to say. If he says anything we will hang him or kick him. You get out of here." I cried. He said I was a baby because I cried over the loss of my property. He said, "I told you before you must go, and I mean my word shall be kept good."

I desire to add to this that . . . it is ten years since we began business there.

Lum May¹

Tacoma's Chinese residents did not go quietly. On November 5, 1885, aided by China's consul in San Francisco, they compelled the U.S. attorney to arrest the mayor of Tacoma, the chief of police, two councilmen, a probate court judge, and the president of the YMCA. Then they filed seventeen civil claims against the U.S. government, for a total of \$103,365.

The Tacoma roundup was one of a hundred Chinese pogroms that raged across the Pacific Northwest in the late nineteenth century. In the winter of 1885–86, the raids and arson in Chinatowns reached Portland, and the Chinese refugees from Tacoma fled again—some to San Francisco, some back to rural hamlets in the Washington Territory closer to their old homes, some to the East Coast, and some to work on plantations in the South.

Word of the raids resounded in newspapers, in state capitals, in the boardrooms of railroad companies and lumber mills, in Congress, and across the Pacific Ocean. Defying protests from both Republicans and Democrats, President Grover Cleveland decided to accede to the refugees' demands for reparation, with the hope that this might cause China to revive trade talks with the United States. China's population of four hundred million people, he believed, could purchase America out of its deep economic depression, and China's government might open trade routes for a nation come lately to foreign expansion.

Congress was ambivalent. It understood that whichever party controlled California would likely control the House of Representatives, the

Senate, and the next presidency. The firestorm of roundups in California was compelling evidence of the sentiments in the golden state.

The violent raids were bannered in the press—in the local *Tacoma Register* and the *Eureka Times-Telephone*, and nationwide in *The New York Times* and *Harper's Weekly*. Most Americans knew of the Chinese purges in California, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, Nevada, and Colorado. But before Congress complied with Cleveland's request, it wanted to know the economic value of a Chinese life.

In 1886, at the order of Congress, Governor Watson Squire desperately sought to track down the two hundred Chinese men and women who had been driven out of Tacoma so that they could bear witness to the public violence done against them in his name. Ultimately, he could locate only a few. Most were unable or unwilling to be found.

Lum May had fled to Victoria, Canada. He and his wife had legally entered the United States in 1874, before the Page Act of 1875 banned the entry of almost all Chinese women and before the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882—the first immigration law to exclude people based on their race—banned the thousands of immigrants who crisscrossed the Pacific each year from entering and reentering the United States. It was not overturned until 1943.

Governor Squire found Lum May, but as a subject of the Chinese Empire, he was barred from testifying in a U.S. court. Through his written affidavit, Lum's is one of the Chinese voices that speaks across the silent years since being Driven Out.

TUCK NAN

Governor Squire also located Lum May's close friend and business partner, Tuck Nan. On the night of the purge, Tuck Nan had fled to Portland, where he had decided to remain despite the ongoing anti-Chinese violence in the area. It was there that Squire was compelled to listen to and record Tuck Nan's story.

Now fifty years old, Tuck Nan had come to the United States at age sixteen, arriving in San Francisco with the first wave of Chinese immigrants who came in the gold rush. Within two years of the discovery of gold on January 24, 1848, at a sawmill on the American River in California, more than 150,000 men—from the eastern United States and across the globe—

poured into San Francisco. Driven from their homelands by poverty and political repression, and now dreaming of gold, they quickly made their way to the creek beds of the Sierra Nevada. Arriving in 1852, Tuck Nan was one of seven hundred Chinese émigrés.² Within the next eighteen months, twenty thousand more Chinese miners entered California. And thousands more were waiting in China's port cities to board ships bound for San Francisco.³

Ten of the early Chinese immigrants were women, kidnapped to work as enslaved prostitutes in California. Soon the ships would also carry baby girls, seized in China for the same fate. Most did not survive. Some Chinese prostitutes, however, escaped from the locked "cribs" and brothels in San Francisco, only to be forced to return to their owners after the purges in Tacoma, Eureka, Antioch, and Truckee.

White Americans, many unemployed, spread onto lands stolen from indigenous Americans, "inherited" from Spain by Mexico in 1821, governed by "joint occupancy" with Britain, which had handed over its rights to the United States in 1846, and seized by the United States in the Mexican War in 1848. These white miners led the first purges of the Chinese, sparking a wave of violence that raged over the next four decades—north to Tacoma, south to Los Angeles, east to Wyoming and Colorado. After the Civil War, the new trade-union movement took up the anti-Chinese cause and the Knights of Labor spread the racist message through the Workingmen's Party. White boot makers, cigar rollers, cooks, and woodcutters who were competing with lower-paid Chinese workers joined in the brutality.

The Driven Out was spurred on by Irish and German immigrants fearful of job competition and by destitute, unemployed white migrants from the East Coast who felt betrayed by the false promises of new industry in eastern cities. When these men came to the American West, they were enraged to discover that the railroads and new land barons, such as Miller and Lux Co., which owned an empire in California as large as Belgium, had a stranglehold on land and timber along the Pacific coast.⁴ West Coast Jews, too, participated in the anti-Chinese violence: in San Francisco in the 1880s, the Anti-Coolie League met at B'nai B'rith on Friday nights, at the start of the Jewish Sabbath.

The roundups were also led by mayors and governors, judges and newspaper editors, wealthy timbermen and ranchers willing to betray their need for cheap labor in order to mark their common whiteness and stitch to-

gether the raw communities that were quickly emerging in the fields, at river junctions, in fishing ports and lumber towns.

The purges of the Chinese followed two other paths toward racial purity converging in the West. First, along the Pacific coast, the American military and armed irregulars were murdering Native Americans or forcing them off their traditional lands, making way for white settlement, agriculture, mining, and logging. In Northern California, native people were driven onto reservations, along the Klamath River, at Nome Lackee, at Round Valley, and at Hupa (now known as Hoopa). African Americans, too, were being dispossessed of the land on which they had worked. Both before and after the Civil War, ideas of racial inferiority and white purity moved West. By the 1880s, the southern Democrats had taken over California's governor's mansion, state legislature, and many county boards, and were eagerly implementing versions of the southern Black Codes, passed after the Civil War in order to restrict the new political freedom of emancipated slaves. Now the southerners were targeting the Chinese by implementing special taxes, "cubic air" ordinances limiting how many Chinese could inhabit one room, and city ordinances banned laundries built of wood.

Tuck Nan was a link in a global migratory chain of immigrants who came to California for gold yet remained tied to family, foods, tools, clothes, and ideas from their homeland. He had faced tremendous obstacles in leaving China. Indeed, for centuries Chinese émigrés who tried to return were punished as deserters by the Qing emperors.⁵ Political turbulence and famine were stretching China's cords of loyalty, but Tuck Nan's early emigration still betrayed affiliation and authority—to family, clan, and village.

Tuck Nan left his homeland amid the chaos of war and starvation. In the mid-nineteenth century, China, burdened with a population of four hundred million, faced waves of insurrections, invasions, and internal ethnic wars. In 1839, sensing this moment of vulnerability, Britain launched the Opium Wars, which sought to balance its compulsive purchase of Chinese tea and silk by forcing China to buy opium, grown in India but brokered and transported by England. In the Treaty of Nanking, which ended the war, Britain opened China's doors to the addictive drug and to the economic, military, shipping, and missionary presence of the West.

China's first treaty with the United States, the Treaty of Wanghsia, followed in 1844, and the British and Americans sailed in force into the southern ports of Canton, Shanghai, Ningbo, Amoy, and Foochow.⁶ By the early

1850s, Russia's army had invaded China's eastern border and seized Manchuria, leading the foreign efforts to carve up the Chinese Empire.

Many Chinese chose to sail to the United States; thousands of others fled or were kidnapped to work on plantations in Cuba or Mexico or in the deadly guano pits of Peru.

Tuck Nan never made it into the mines of the Sierra Nevada. He remained in San Francisco, where he watched his countrymen return from the gold fields and new mountain towns, quickly forced onto barges heading down the rushing western rivers. He stayed in San Francisco for thirteen years, likely working as a launderer, a waiter, a house servant, or a peddler, sending some of his small earnings back to China. In 1865, he moved north to Portland, where he opened a supply shop for miners leaving for the new gold fields. But violence followed him.

In 1876, Tuck Nan "removed" farther north to Tacoma, in the Washington Territory. There he went into partnership with Lum May. Nine years later he became one of the Driven Out when several hundred "angry and excited white persons" broke into his store and shoved his friends out the door. The mob told him, "Oh the Chinese you must go—every one." Tuck Nan recounted that he "begged them to leave me remain a few days to settle our business," but the vigilantes said, "Take your goods and go. You had notice on the 9th October to leave before 1st of November—and the time is up. You've had time enough to get ready." Tuck Nan added, "They would listen to nothing but told us to be ready at 2 o'clock in the afternoon when they would carry away our goods." And just at two the mob returned, armed with weapons and clubs. "Some had poles and they used these to drive us like so many hogs, if any of us went slow or stopped. I was very much afraid."

In June 1886, Tuck Nan demanded fifteen thousand dollars in reparations from the U.S. government and signed his own affidavit in English.⁷

YOKE LEEN

Despite the roundups and the fears of enslaved prostitution, many Chinese women in America insisted that the local government protect their right to live where they chose. One Chinese woman refused to submit to sexual slavery. In 1910, Yoke Leen marched into the courthouse in Sonora and demanded that her deposition be taken and preserved in the county records:



Yoke Leen from Sonora

*State of California
Sonora, County of Tuolumne
21 day of February, 1910*

YOKE LEEN, being first duly sworn, deposes and says:

I reside in the city of Sonora, State of California, and am the age of 36 years. That I am a native of the State of California, having been born in San Francisco, California. That I am about five feet tall and weigh about 110 pounds. That I have a scar on my face on the right side of the nose near the right eye and also a large scar on the right side of the mouth, also a small raised scar at the base of the index finger of the right hand and a small scar

on the right hand about an inch below the wrist at the base of the thumb. That the annexed photograph is a photograph of myself taken by William Harrington, Photographer, at Sonora, California, in January, 1910.

That this affidavit with the annexed photograph is made for the purpose of identifying me in case I should be kidnapped or in case any criminal charge should be brought against me and by reason of the fact that my husband, Charlie Jones, is now in jail charged with a criminal offense and I fear that his enemies may try to do away with me either by bringing some fictitious charge against me or by kidnapping and imprisoning me. The annexed signature is my name written in English and also in Chinese.

Yoke Leen⁸



SPEAK, MEMORY

In August 1974, I moved with my six-year-old daughter into a cabin in the woods of remote Humboldt County to begin my career as a professor of American studies. Each morning I would drive south from Big Lagoon, a little community of beach cottages, damp and empty in the chilled fog and gray light of the north coast, past the jagged rocks at Patrick's Point, through the redwood forest above the fishing village of Trinidad, past sober white egrets guarding the green fern prairies (oblivious to the sixty-five inches of rain that fall each year in the county), and finally cross the Mad River to climb the hill to Humboldt State University in Arcata. Nestled in the redwoods between Oregon and the lumber and fishing town of Eureka, California, Arcata borders the marshes and dunes that fade into Humboldt Bay.

The week that we moved to this isolated corner of the Pacific Northwest, President Nixon resigned. The following spring, the last American soldier was killed in Vietnam. That April the last Americans were evacuated by helicopter from the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. The Vietnam War was ending, and I danced with my students around the statue of President McKinley in Arcata's town square. Our spirits were hopeful.

Humboldt State University had an unusual mix of white and tribal students. But in my classes, in the corridors of Founders Hall, at meetings

demanding that Native American myths and history be included in a sequence called "The American Frontier," and at the nightly peace rallies, I noticed the complete absence of Asian American students.

When I asked around about this, I was told by a local poet that Chinese parents would not send their kids to HSU because ninety years earlier all the Chinese had been driven from Eureka. Her answer came from Humboldt lore and collective memory. Troubled, I went to the library, where I found one brief article, written more than fifty years ago, that verified the fact that Eureka, Humboldt's county seat, had indeed expelled all its Chinese residents in 1885.

A year later I left Humboldt State University to take a job at the University of California, San Diego. But with a few friends, I bought a tiny cabin in Big Lagoon, twenty miles north of Arcata. For hundreds of years before the lumber companies arrived, the Yuroks had lived in small clans along the lagoon and called the place Oketo, or "there where it is calm." Some translate it "there where we dance." Then, as now, I was haunted by the power of the redwoods, the storms that blow across the ocean, the fern forests, the Roosevelt elk foraging in the placid lagoons, the light slicing under the fog banks over the Pacific. But the image of the Chinese roundup remained in me. As I returned each year to Big Lagoon, where the redwood forests meet the harsh surf of the Pacific coast in a scene of great beauty, I was disturbed by the history of violence embedded in the landscape, by the dissonance between the land and its history.

Thirty years later, I decided to find the story of the missing Asian students. But on the first day of my quest, sitting at a cloudy microfilm reader in the Bancroft Library on the UC Berkeley campus reading the *Daily Alta California*, I discovered that the story was much larger. I began to follow the footsteps of thousands of Chinese people who were violently herded onto railroad cars, steamers, or logging rafts, marched out of town, or killed. They were expelled from towns from the Pacific coast to the Rocky Mountains, from Seattle and Portland, from hamlets along the Klamath River and up into the Siskiyou Mountains, down through the arid Central Valley to "Nigger Alley" in Los Angeles. Between 1850 and 1906 there were close to two hundred roundups, all designed to rid the United States of the Chinese.

During the past five years I have traveled to most of these cities and towns. I have talked with librarians, local historians, archivists, collectors,

police officers, and tribal leaders. Some people seemed eager, even relieved, to tell their town's story; librarians, county clerks, and researchers for county museums and historical societies delved into archives, maps, court records, clipping files, leather wallets, private photo collections, scrapbooks, and old safes to expose the purges that had occurred in their counties. Others denied the story I already knew. I was discovering firsthand how the preservation, cataloguing, and even the filing of historical documents work toward exposure or erasure, revelation or repression.

One day, nearing the end of my research, I visited historian Connie Young Yu at her home in Los Altos Hills, near San Jose. We'd never met before, and I walked into a living room cluttered with piles of loose white tissue paper and cardboard boxes and silken robes. Connie dressed me in the clothes of her ancestors, merchants in San Jose, to help me understand the emotional path of my discoveries. I had brought her a copy of a lawsuit filed in 1891 by the Chinese residents against the mayor of San Jose, who had hired thugs to pose as policemen and drive the Chinese from town. There, in this early lawsuit, Connie found her grandfather's firm, Kwong Wo Chan, listed as a plaintiff.

Connie's grandfather, Young Soong Quong, and the other parties to the suit were some of the Chinese voices from the nineteenth century who spoke this story. From the writings, legal pleadings, photographs, and clothing of the nineteenth-century Chinese, I learned of the pogroms and of massive and diverse resistance. The Chinese fought every effort to expel them, first from the gold diggings, then from rural towns, and finally from the orchards and vineyards of the Central Valley. In *Wing Hing v. the City of Eureka* (1885), they filed the first lawsuit for reparations in the United States. In San Jose they used trespass law to design an early suit against police harassment. In Truckee they ordered muskets from China to defend their Chinatown. The "overseas Chinese" pressured the government of China to intervene with governors, legislators, and the president of the United States on their behalf.

In many hostile towns, the Chinese refused to sell their vegetables, starving white households and hotels of fresh food. In the summer of 1883, Chinese workers in Shasta County declared a general strike. In Truckee they formed their own fire brigades. In Amador County they organized an armed militia of more than fifty members to protect themselves. They mutinied on the American slave ship the *Norway*. In Monterey and San Jose,

they flatly refused to leave. Elsewhere they returned laundry, neatly folded but still dirty. In 1893, answering the call of red posters that were pasted on walls, gates, and barns from California to New York, 110,000 Chinese people refused to wear photo-identity cards required by the U.S. government to verify their immigration status. They paid for this mass civil disobedience with lynchings, night raids, and deportation.

The Chinese fiercely and tenaciously fought for their right to live and work in the United States, to travel back and forth between China and the United States, to testify in court, to own property, to marry, and to have their children receive public education.

Historians, librarians, archivists, filmmakers, and fiction writers have repressed a story whose evidence is in fact not hard to find. Photographs, advertisements, placards, local newspapers, court records and testimony, campaign documents, songs, business cards, and diaries fabricate a history of docile but wily Chinese invaders—dirty, diseased, and exotically enticing—even as they record the expulsions and reveal how Chinese immigrants fought back.

Different countries have disclosed lost historical memories to different effect. In the former Yugoslavia, memories of ethnic violence coexist with memories of shared neighborhoods and interethnic marriages. The historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall reminds us that in Rwanda and in the Balkan countries the history of community was repressed when ethnic violence was unleashed, inciting ongoing hatred. In Ireland, the telling of ancient grievances provoked even more brutality. The "tellings" knit people together in imagined communities of pain, communities that could exclude and kill, again and again.⁹ The people of South Africa have staked their hope for reconciliation on the conviction that their history of atrocities must be released; if the perpetrators are forced to hear the victims' testimony, they will admit what they have done and national healing can begin.

The roundups in the Pacific Northwest occurred from 1850 to 1906. The actors have passed away, and their living imaginations and memories are no longer with us. With most Chinese women then barred from entering the country, descendants from the generations who endured the roundups are few. I thought that the existential memory must be lost. And, indeed, it was hard to find the Chinese voices from the nineteenth century. A people on the run did not stop to record violence as it happened. Chinese newspapers burned in the fires following the 1906 San Francisco earth-

quake. Because the Chinese were barred from testifying in court, there is no record of their side of many conflicts. Thousands of Chinese letters home, letters sometimes hand-carried by *shuikes*—"water guests" or returning émigrés—have been lost in the waves of war, famine, and the Cultural Revolution.¹⁰

At first I had no idea how to solve the mystery of the missing students. Yet quickly I found that county libraries, private collections, local historical societies, and state archives are bursting with all sorts of uncatalogued evidence of the violence and the resistance. An institutional internment of documents, it seems, was part of the expulsion, part of the Driven Out, and it has sustained images of the Chinese as a disempowered people.

Yet the fact is that Chinese families still rarely send their sons and daughters to Humboldt State University. Collective memory reaffirms the reality of the past."

But I was still seeking Chinese voices that tell of the Driven Out. There were a few Chinese letters to newspapers and to state and local legislators protesting the vigilante violence. In desperate telegraphs Chinese men search for one another and for the women who have run away. Passionate letters and diplomatic correspondence, songs and poems about the roundups, slowly surfaced. The lawsuits give voice to entitlement and assertion.

Some Chinese people have found their ancestors in this project. When I talked publicly about the roundups, white or Chinese descendants came forward, and their family histories have helped me reconstruct a past in which memory and documents cohere. Hanging out is good historical methodology.

Finally, again sitting at a microfilm reader, this time at the National Archives, where I was reading the correspondence from the Chinese legation to the Department of State, I suddenly heard the voices of "expulsed" Chinese men. Lum May, Tuck Nán, and others describe the brutal roundup in Tacoma to Governor Squire. They tell of the long trek in the mud and rain to the railroad crossing, and they demand money, reparations—justice that repairs.

The purges of the Chinese in the American West bring to my mind *Kristallnacht*, the night in 1938 when Nazi Germany violently exposed its intention to remove the Jews. That night became embedded in historical memory as the shattering of glass and windows—the German *kristall*—of Jewish homes and stores, images of my own family's diaspora. The expul-

sions of the Chinese from California towns in the nineteenth century anticipated the history of Poland and Greece in the 1930s and 1940s and, more recently, of Rwanda, Indonesia, and Bosnia. Now, as I write, millions of refugees in Nigeria, Eritrea, Iraq, and Darfur are being driven out of their homes and villages.

Today thousands of women and young girls are being unloaded from the holds of ships, from packing crates and container cars, to work in San Francisco and Silver Spring and Kansas City as enslaved prostitutes, while communities such as Herndon, Virginia, pass housing codes and loitering laws to drive them out. Today thousands of immigrants, thousands of people born in the United States to parents born abroad, and thousands of others are marching through the streets of Los Angeles, Houston, and New York, refusing to be temporary people, transients, *braceros*, guests, or sojourners.

Surely the term *expulsion* doesn't fully represent the rage and violence of these purges. What occurred along the Pacific coast, from the gold rush through the turn of the century, was ethnic cleansing. The Chinese called the roundups in the Pacific Northwest *pai hua*—the Driven Out.

Jean Pfaelzer

Big Lagoon, Trinidad, Humboldt County

January 2007