ABSTRACT

DIVIDED FRESNO: THE COMMISSION OF IMMIGRATION AND HOUSING OF CALIFORNIA'S ETHNICALLY DIVERSE AMERICANIZATION EFFORTS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, 1913-1929

Fresno, California has been ethnically divided since its inception. The Southern Pacific Railroad tracks initially separated established whites and Scandinavians on the east side of town from ethnic whites and minorities on the west side of town. Fresno’s west side was home to a variety of ethnic groups. This exceptional diversity made Fresno a prime interest of the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California—the commission which led the state’s Americanization efforts.

Current scholarship mentioning the commission focuses on Southern California and its Mexican residents, and does not take into account the commission’s diverse state-wide efforts. This thesis explores the effects of the commission’s work in Fresno. It argues that California’s official Americanization initiative was a state-wide, ethnically diverse, and moderately pluralistic program, which was practically applied in Fresno, California. This thesis will chronologically follow the calculation, application, formalization, and continuity of the CIHC’s moderately pluralistic methodology.

Savonna Greer
August 2017

DIVIDED FRESNO: THE COMMISSION OF IMMIGRATION AND HOUSING OF CALIFORNIA'S ETHNICALLY DIVERSE AMERICANIZATION EFFORTS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, 1913-1929

by

Savonna Greer

A thesis

submitted in partial

fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in History

in the College of Social Sciences

California State University, Fresno

August 2017

APPROVED

For the Department of History:

We, the undersigned, certify that the thesis of the following student meets the required standards of scholarship, format, and style of the university and the student's graduate degree program for the awarding of the master's degree.

Savonna Greer
Thesis Author

Daniel Cady (Chair) History

Romeo Guzman History

Blain Roberts History

For the University Graduate Committee:

Dean, Division of Graduate Studies

AUTHORIZATION FOR REPRODUCTION

OF MASTER'S THESIS

___X___ I grant permission for the reproduction of this thesis in part or in its entirety without further authorization from me, on the condition that the person or agency requesting reproduction absorbs the cost and provides proper acknowledgment of authorship.

_______ Permission to reproduce this thesis in part or in its entirety must be obtained from me.

Signature of thesis author:________________________________

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our research and writing abilities always benefit from interactions with different people and ideas. I could not have completed this thesis without many archivists, academic advisers, friendly conversations, and my family.

First, I would like to thank the various archivists at the San Joaquin Valley Heritage and Genealogy Center, Fresno Historical Society, and the Henry Madden Library. Each provided valuable resources, even on short notice.

Next I would like to thank each of my professors at Fresno State University, who have shared pieces of wisdom with me and expanded my ways of thinking. Special thanks go out to Dr. Dan Cady, my faculty advisor, for his patience and encouragement.

And lastly, I would like to thank close friends and family who have shared many encouraging words and great moral support. I would like to especially thank my parents Bob and Vanessa Greer, who have been my biggest cheerleaders throughout this process. I will be forever grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ... 1

The Immigrant Problem ... 1

The Progressives ... 3

Progressives of the CIHC ... 6

The CIHC and Americanization ... 9

CHAPTER 2: HISTORIOGRAPHY ... 12

Scope of Americanization Studies ... 13

Confined by Location ... 15

Confined by Target Population ... 19

Filling the Research Gap ... 22

CHAPTER 3: CALCULATION, 1913-1918 ... 23

Bureaus of Complaints ... 24

Housing Surveys ... 25

Education Surveys ... 26

Fresno ... 28

1914 Housing Survey ... 32

1917-1918 Educational Survey ... 33

School on the West Side ... 38

Daily Diversity ... 41

CHAPTER 4: APPLICATION, 1914-1918 ... 43

Implementation ... 43

Utilizing Women ... 45

Fresno Commences Americanization ... 47

Page

Americanization and the Parlor Lecture Club 50
Americanization and the School System 54
CHAPTER 5: FORMALIZATION, 1917-1920 57
The Proposal 59
Alliances Formed 65
The "Citizenship Institute" in Fresno 69
CHAPTER 6: CONTINUITY, 1920-1929 74
California Administrative Changes 75
Fresno Consistency 77
Parlor Lecture Club Continues Americanization 79
The School System Continues Americanization 81
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION 86
BIBLIOGRAPHY 89
Primary Sources 89
Secondary Sources 91

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Immigrant Problem

Immigration debates have plagued the United States since its inception. Throughout the nation's history native-born Americans have feared disloyal immigrants and being overtaken by different cultures. These fears have spawned initiatives such as immigration restriction, segregation, and Americanization programs—especially between 1913 and 1929. Amidst the rumblings of World War I, reverberations of the Mexican Revolution, and foresights of increased immigration through the Panama Canal, Americans clamored for an orderly and united citizenry.[1] Nativist sentiments grew, "100 percent American" campaigns were trumpeted, and appeals to fix the immigrant "problem" were constant.[2]

Worries about the immigrant "problem" were specifically prevalent in California. Its ethnic population continued to diversify during WWI, it received a large portion of Mexican refugees after the Revolution, and the Panama Canal was an entry port too close for comfort. Many Californians felt inundated with immigrants of many different countries, languages, and appearances. They felt that this immigration would bring destructive foreign values and threaten their American way of living. Both California citizens and government officials saw a

---

[1] Department of the Interior, "Report of the Commissioner of Education for the year ended June 30, 1918," Washington Government Printing Office, 42; George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1995), 254; Spencer C. Olin Jr., "European Immigrant and Oriental Alien: Acceptance and Rejection by the California Legislature of 1913," *Pacific Historical Review* 35, no. 3 (August 1966): 306.

[2] B.O. Hing, *Defining America: Through Immigration Policy* (New York: Temple University Press, 2012), 61; Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*, 94.

need for a "homogenous society."[3] They believed that unity under American values would be their only saving grace. In contrast with nativist and restrictionist groups who believed that immigrants were inferior beings and incapable of becoming Americans, California progressives saw potential in immigrants. They aspired to achieve national unity through state-wide Americanization programs that would promote order in immigrant communities and instruct residents in "the American language, citizenship, and forms of living."[4]

The body of literature which discusses California Americanization is small, and looks almost exclusively at efforts in Southern California. This focus only reveals a portion of California's Americanization work, concentrating mainly on efforts with Southern California's large Mexican American population. Much of this literature intermingles county and state initiatives, giving an inconsistent picture of state-wide Americanization efforts. It is important to sort out the differences between local and state programs, because even though both contained paternalism and racial bias, those factors existed to different degrees. This difference affected program goals and methodology. Despite the commissioners' biases, the official state Americanization program had more

---

[3] Maria-Isabel Lorenzo, "Race, Gender, and Mexican Americanization: How Mainstream Anglo Assumptions Inspired Mexican Americanization in California, 1914-1939" (MA thesis, California State University, Fresno, 2012): 3.

[4] Desmond S. King, *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 11; Anne Marie Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant: California's Commission of Immigration and Housing and the Domestic Immigration Policy Movement, 1910-1945" (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1999), 6, 136; Department of the Interior, "Report of the Commissioner of Education," 42, 132; James Marten, ed. *Children and Youth during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 2.

liberal approaches and ethnically diverse focuses, than is presented in literature that analyzes local programs throughout Southern California.

Through study of primary documents from the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California (CIHC) and Americanization work done in Fresno, California between 1913 and 1929, it is evident that CIHC commissioners saw themselves as progressive heroes who were going to assess and ameliorate the nation's immigrant problem, based on the plans they devised in California. I argue that California's official Americanization initiative was a state-wide, ethnically diverse, and moderately pluralistic program, which was practically applied in Fresno, California. This thesis will chronologically follow the calculation, application, formalization, and continuity of the CIHC's moderately pluralistic methodology.

The Progressives

The progressives were activists who worked to improve the social and political fabric of the United States, between 1890 and 1920.[5] This group included middle-class Anglo individuals from "American" communities, private groups, political parties, and government agencies.[6] Most progressives focused on at least one of the following causes: cleaning up tenement housing, improving education, fighting big business, developing labor laws, and training immigrants to be citizens.[7] This variety of causes brought an assortment of people into the

[5] Marten, *Children and Youth*, vii; Richard Hofstadter, *The Progressive Movement, 1900-1915* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

[6] Marten, *Children and Youth*, vii; Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States: Immigrant Social Welfare Policy, Citizenship, & National Identity in the United States, 1908-1929* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), 6, 7.

[7] Marten, *Children and Youth*; Hofstadter, *The Progressive Movement*.

progressive circle, each having a range of understandings about the world around them.

Like most people, the progressives' upbringings informed their understandings. Since most progressives came from middle-class Anglo families, they had racial and cultural biases that often impacted their philanthropic endeavors. Some of these biases were subconscious, while others were decided. An example of this bias is linked with progressives' admiration for science. They believed that science was a reliable tool that would streamline their efforts.

Progressive educators regularly utilized scientific intelligence tests to place students in different classrooms and school programs.[8] Although, their cultural biases affected their testing methods and questions, favoring middle-class Anglo children. [9] Immigrants and ethnic minorities usually achieved lower scores, because they had not grown up with either the same culture or language as the test makers. Progressives believed that certain races were better than others, because of these negative test results.[10] Though, it should be noted that progressives accepted these ideas to varying degrees. Some, like Josiah Strong, believed unflinchingly in Anglo-Saxon superiority, while others, like William English Walling, denounced racism.[11] Despite differing ideas on race, both progressive politicians and local citizens worked in concert to make changes in society.

---

[8] Matthew D. Davis, *Exposing a Culture of Neglect: Herschel T. Manuel and Mexican American Schooling* (Connecticut: Information Age Publishing, 2005).

[9] Steven L. Piott, *Daily Life in the Progressive Era* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2011), 179.

[10] Piott, *Daily Life in the Progressive Era,* 178; Miroslava Chávez-García, "Intelligence Testing at Whittier School, 1890-1920," *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 2 (May 2007): 193-228.

[11] Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 192.

The progressive work in California is a significant example of this collaboration. Throughout the Progressive Era, a litany of Republican politicians governed the state. Most progressives associated with the Republican Party and joined the official Progressive Party once it was created in 1912.[12] Up until that point, California and its progressive activists had struggled against the Southern Pacific Railroad's monopoly, and its power within the state.[13] Progressive Governor Hiram Johnson, who led California from 1911-1917, broke the Southern Pacific's monopoly. Johnson was an avid reformer, who was also heavily involved in the national progressive movement. In 1912 Johnson was progressive presidential candidate Theodor Roosevelt's running-mate, and even when the pair lost the ticket Johnson continued to be extremely active in the national Progressive Party.[14]

By 1913 Johnson had accomplished the California progressives' three main reform goals.[15] This relieved many members of the state legislator, although so many reforms in such a short amount of time also wearied them. This, coupled with defeats in the national election, threatened to dampen Johnson's Progressive streak. To appease the legislature, Johnson only put forth two particular measures in 1913.[16] Johnson retained his progressive fervor and continued to promote progressive reform through the particular legislations he supported, such as: the Industrial Welfare Commission, the Industrial Accident

---

[12] Spencer Olin, *California's Prodigal Sons: Hiram Johnson and the Progressives, 1911-1917* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 65.

[13] Ibid., 2.

[14] Olin, European Immigrant and Oriental Alien, 303; Olin, *California's Prodigal Sons,* 119, 120.

[15] Olin, European Immigrant and Oriental Alien, 303.

[16] Ibid., 304.

Commission, and the Commission of Immigration and Housing. Like many progressive politicians, Johnson did not accomplish his numerous reforms single-handedly. There were many commission leaders, county workers, and general citizens who worked to further these reforms.

Progressives of the CIHC

The CIHC stands out as a special case of progressive politician and citizen partnership. After watching a 1912 speech by Jane Addams and Francis Kellor, progressive activist Simon Lubin approached Johnson with the idea for a committee that would Americanize California immigrants and "prevent the dreadful conditions of poverty that prevail[ed] in the great cities" of the east.[17] Johnson accepted Lubin's idea as a temporary committee, but quickly realized its importance and made it a permanent commission. After an initial analysis of the state's immigrant issues, the commission set forth a plan to aid the immigrants, through county committees which would be powered by local community members.

Lubin's Sacramento upbringing, studies at Harvard, and extensive experience in New York and Boston settlement work prepared him to lead the dynamic commission.[18] Lubin was predominantly concerned with immigrant

---

[17] Gayle Gullett, "Women Progressives and the Politics of Americanization in California, 1915-1920," *Pacific Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (Feb., 1995): 79; Olin, European Immigrant and Oriental Alien, 306, 307

[18] Settlement workers were Progressive social workers, social-gospel ministers, charity experts, economists, sociologists, and temperance crusaders who worked together to solve poverty, ignorance, and class-conflict. It was a bold venture. According to Ruth Crocker, settlement workers moved to poor neighborhoods to both better understand the poor and show them a better way of living. Settlement organizers also lobbied for better working conditions in factories and other workplaces. Ruth Crocker, *Social Work and Social Order: The Settlement Movement in Two Industrial Cities, 1889-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992),1-3; Olin, European Immigrant and Oriental Alien, 306.

housing, welfare, labor camp sanitation, and education. Lubin and Johnson chose four individuals to head departments that spoke to these concerns. They chose Dr. James H. McBride to lead the housing department, Reverend Edward J. Hanna to organize the complaints bureau, Paul Scharrenberg to oversee labor camp sanitation, and Mary Gibson to orchestrate immigrant education.[19] Each of the commissioners had unique life experiences that prepared them for their ground-breaking work with California immigrants, through the CIHC. Several had extensive settlement work experience, while others were children of immigrants, or immigrants themselves.

McBride, of Pasadena, California, was immensely involved in his national and local community. He acted as president of the American Academy of Medicine, as well as Pasadena's Board of Education.[20] Hanna was the son of Scottish-Irish immigrants, and grew up in New York.[21] He was well educated in both public and Roman Catholic New York schools, and later studied theology in Rome and became an archbishop.[22] When Hanna returned to New York, he was very active in the community and a proponent of social justice.[23] Scharrenberg immigrated from Germany to San Francisco and became heavily involved in labor lobbying.[24] He almost seemed out of place in the commission, because he held an anti-immigrant labor stance. Johnson, who supported the Alien Land

---

[19] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 43.

[20] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 64; "The 1912 Meeting," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Medicine* 12, no.6 (December, 1911): 343-344.

[21] Richard Gribble, *An Archbishop for the People: The Life of Edward J. Hanna* (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 7, 10.

[22] Ibid., 13.

[23] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 66.

[24] Ibid., 69.

Law and agreed with Scharrenberg's labor ideas and lobbying efforts, appointed him to control labor interests within the commission.[25]

Gibson is one of the most notable CIHC commissioners. She became active in settlement work during the 1890s and was well known for her progressive zeal on both the state and national levels.[26] After living in Los Angeles and working as a teacher for many years, Gibson joined the CIHC and quickly wrote the Home Teacher Act. Throughout her time with the CIHC, she sought to prove the importance of home teachers nation-wide and professionalize the field. As she did this, Gibson recruited other passionate progressive women to work with her on the project.

Ethel Richardson, who later became the Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction in California, was Gibson's main assistant, writing educational surveys and carrying them out. Richardson graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1911, worked at a Pennsylvania settlement house from 1912-1914, and later taught history at an intermediate school.[27] Richardson thrived in her position with the CIHC, because of her past experiences, connections with other progressive women, and her passion for adult education.[28] Gibson also hired Amanda Matthews Chase to be California's first home teacher in Southern

---

[25] Ibid., 71.

[26] I. Heinemann, *Inventing the Modern American Family: Family Values and Social Change in 20th Century United States* (New York: Campus Verlag, 2012), 66; Olin, European Immigrant and Oriental Alien, 305, 306; Gullett, "Women Progressives," 79, 81.

[27] Judith Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise: Politics and Reform in Los Angeles Schools, 1885-1941* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 84; Register 1921-1922, *University of California Bulletin* 16, no. 5 (November, 1922) 34.

[28] Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 110.

California and writer of home teacher instructional manuals.[29] These three progressive women, along with many others, believed that mothers and the home environment were key to solving the immigrant "problem."

Again, these ideas were colored by the women's middle-class Anglo upbringing, but their adult life experiences also influenced their understandings and approaches. Amidst varied understandings of Americanism and Americanization between 1913 and 1929, both progressive men and women of the CIHC worked to enhance immigrant social welfare and breed American ideals in immigrant neighborhoods, through moderately pluralistic methods.

The CIHC and Americanization

The CIHC hoped to create a national template to solve the nation's immigrant "problem." The commission gathered some of their ideas from programs in New York, but the leaders' unconventional perspectives created a distinct program that was recognized as a "pioneer" in Americanization.[30] It took the combined efforts of Governor Johnson, President Lubin, the various commissioners, and many other California progressives to accomplish the CIHC's goals.

Americanizers throughout the nation had a number of different views on what Americanization looked like and how long the process should be.[31] Many Americanizers followed the melting-pot theory, which called for complete

---

[29] Priscilla Roberts, *The Power of Culture: Encounters between China and the United States* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), 303; Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 72; A.C. Herting, "Citizenship Institute Designed to Americanize Aliens," The Stirring Rod 6, no. 8 (January 1920): 639.

[30] Olin., European Immigrant and Oriental Alien, 305.

[31] Stephanie Lewthwaite, *Race, Place, and Reform in Mexican Los Angeles: A Transnational Perspective, 1890-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009), 99.

conformity.[32] World War I further enflamed Americanizers who maintained such methodologies. Lubin and other CIHC staff did not support the melting-pot concept.[33] In a 1919 CIHC community lecture, John Collier characterized it as a "boiling-down and dull grey veneer theory of Americanism."[34] Even amidst President Woodrow Wilson's WWI anti-hyphenist campaigns, the commission maintained their aversion to the melting-pot theory and fears of diversity, which was very rare.[35] The CIHC wanted to reinvent Americanization.[36]

The commission adhered to the "immigrant gifts" theory, which was championed by settlement house workers sympathetic to immigrant cultures.[37] There was not pressure to eliminate all semblance of the immigrant's home country. The CIHC often spoke out against discrimination and believed that "any alien could become an American by changing his behavior and embracing American civic values such as representative democracy, political equality, and capitalism."[38] The commissioners desired to enact these changes by spreading American ideals throughout the immigrant's home, work, and school environments.[39] The commissioners' inevitable biases affected, but did not drive their efforts.

---

[32] King, *Making Americans*, 27.

[33] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 137.

[34] "Americanizing Program is Renewed," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 16, 1919.

[35] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 497; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 198.

[36] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 151.

[37] Ibid., 479; Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 45; Rivka Shpak Lissak, *Pluralism and Progressives: Hull House and the New Immigrants, 1890-1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 164.

[38] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 52.

[39] Ibid., 66.

CIHC commissioners evaluated the immigrant situation in their respective areas, and then they came together to devise plans that could be applied by local Americanization leaders in each California county. Because the commission was understaffed, they delegated Americanization's practical application to county leaders. These county leaders would hear the commission's suggestions and lead local citizens and agencies to Americanize the immigrants in their midst, as they saw fit. Each county had different dynamics that affected their Americanization programs, so it is valuable to study local Americanization programs (such as in Fresno) individually. This study will lead scholars to better understand the ways Americanization was practiced throughout the state and who it affected.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORIOGRAPHY

The field of Americanization history is small and does not boast a large historiography. Americanization is more likely to be a single chapter in a book or casually mentioned, than the subject of an entire manuscript. Frank Van Nuys, Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson, and Jeffrey Mirel have dedicated entire books to Americanization studies. Several other historians dedicate chapters to Americanization studies, two of the most notable are George J. Sánchez and Gilbert G. Gonzalez. Both include a focus on California Americanization. Natalia Molina also discusses California Americanization, but sprinkles it throughout her work, rather than dedicating specific space to it.

The first three authors studied an assortment of locations around the country and discuss a variety of immigrant subjects, while the latter three focused on Southern California and Americanization efforts toward Mexican Americans. The analyses by Van Nuys, Ziegler-McPherson, and Mirel reveal the uniqueness of Americanization in different states, and even in specific cities. On the other hand, Sánchez, Gonzalez, and Molina's works, which are almost exclusively used to expound on California's Americanization practices, focus on a particular part of California and Americanization amongst a single group of people. Other authors who discuss California Americanization maintain similar focuses. While these studies expound on critical subjects, they have left a wide gap in California Americanization literature. Scholars have not given attention to California's regional and ethnic diversity, resulting in a misunderstanding of the CIHC and Americanization programs throughout the state. It is important to reassess the locations and target populations of Americanization work in

California, to broaden our understanding of these programs and their appropriate historical contexts.

Scope of Americanization Studies

In *Americanizing the West: Race, Immigrants, and Citizenship, 1890-1930*, Frank Van Nuys explores the taming of the West, through Americanization.[40] Van Nuys posits that progressive Americanizers were social engineers of both native- and foreign-born individuals during the formative years of the West. Van Nuys discusses programs in Colorado, Arizona, California, Montana, and several other states. His analysis recognizes the vastness of Americanization ideas and methods, although it does not spend significant amounts of time focusing on the Americanization commissions and committees of these states.

During WW1, nativism was increasing at rapid rates. Even persons who did not have extreme views, began to fear the possibility of being taken over by foreign ideas and cultures. These sentiments were nation-wide. In 1918, the Federal Bureau of Education created an Americanization department, which encouraged states to organize Americanization committees.[41] The department sent out resources and published information, but they did not dictate the state programs.[42] This means that each state had unique aspects to their Americanization programs, validating the importance of studying Americanization beyond the national level.

---

[40] Frank Van Nuys, *Americanizing the West: Race, Immigrants, and Citizenship, 1890-1930* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

[41] This committee was proposed by Ms. Frances Kellor, who had initially inspired Simon Lubin to create the CIHC. King, *Making Americans*, 92-97.

[42] Department of the Interior: Bureau of education, *Training Teachers for Americanization: A Course of Study for Normal Schools and Teacher Institutes*, by John J. Mahoney, Frances K. Wetmore, Helen Winkler, and Elsa Alsberg, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1920.

Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson saw the value in studying Americanization at the state level. In *Americanization in the States: Immigrant Social Welfare Policy, Citizenship, & National Identity in the United States, 1908-1929,* she delves into the California, New York, and Massachusetts Americanization programs.[43] She examined the particulars of each state's Americanization committees, introducing the leaders, their beliefs, contemporary issues, and how those aspects combined to create each state's unique program. Ziegler-McPherson also clearly compares and contrasts the three state programs, further exposing the idiosyncrasies of each one.

Anne Marie Woo-Sam delves deeper into the focus on state-level Americanization work. In *Domesticating the Immigrant: California's Commission of Immigration and Housing and the Domestic Immigration Policy Movement, 1910-1945*, she concentrates on California and gives a thorough analysis of the CIHC and their work with an ethnically diverse group of immigrants across the state. She does this to challenge literature that sees immigration policy only through the federal lens.[44] Woo-Sam proves the importance of studying state immigration policy by demonstrating that the CIHC "made great strides in improving the environment for immigrants and native-born Americans" and noting that it "challenged the nativist attitude of the period by insisting that the state had a duty to protect those immigrants within its borders."[45]

Jeffrey Mirel understood that researching Americanization in specific cities provides important information about historical context. In *Patriotic Pluralism: Americanization Education and European Immigrants*, Mirel investigated

---

[43] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States.*

[44] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 13.

[45] Ibid., 2.

the practical application of state programs in Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit.[46] Mirel used information from public schools and foreign language newspapers to piece together the Americanization efforts within American education between 1890 and the early 1950s. His analysis reveals that Americanization programs were not as monolithic as many historians conclude. Mirel believes that many common interpretations of Americanization "are based on historical accounts that are incomplete."[47]

This is the case with California Americanization literature, which is dominated by studies on one area and with one ethnic group. The limited scope of available studies constrains depictions of California Americanization efforts. The state-wide and multiethnic core of the CIHC is absent in current analyses. The diversity within California's Americanization history is nearly invisible; the historical account is incomplete. To improve this condition, the field of California Americanization history must be expanded to include additional locations and target populations.

Confined by Location

Authors such as Sánchez, Gonzalez, Molina provide beneficial information about Americanization experiences in California, but they glean their understanding from a section of California that does not represent the whole.[48] They use exclusive studies of Southern California to expound on

---

[46] Jeffrey Mirel, *Patriotic Pluralism: Americanization Education and European Immigrants* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[47] Ibid., 3.

[48] Also, see: Doug Sackman, *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Michael E. James, *The Conspiracy of the Good: Civil Rights and the Struggle for Community in Two American Cities, 1875-2000* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005); Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley:

California Americanization in general. These studies have brought many important experiences to light, but California is a unique state with many distinctive areas. It is vital to examine California's Americanization efforts in context with regional differences and demographics, which affected Americanization efforts throughout the state.

In *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles 1900-1945*, Sánchez analyzes the complex variables that created the Mexican American identity in Los Angles.[49] He argues that the Mexican American identity was generated through adaptation, rather than "cultural continuity or gradual acculturation" (two "bipolar models" that stunt our understanding of the Mexican American identity).[50] Sánchez's work is highly revered by academics who study Mexican-Americans, in any capacity.

Sánchez has made many contributions to current scholarship. Even though he wrote *Becoming Mexican American* two decades ago, scholars of Americanization still cite this work frequently. Sánchez's research is based on Americanization work done with Mexican Americans in Los Angeles, California, although he often conflates this work with the CIHC's official state-wide plans and general Americanization done throughout the Southwest.[51]

Sánchez explains that CIHC president Simon Lubin changed the commission's methodological approaches from moderately pluralistic to strict assimilationist in response to Los Angeles businessmen, Los Angeles County's

---

University of California Press, 2005); Ricardo Romo, *East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).

[49] Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*.

[50] Ibid., 13.

[51] Ibid., 99.

"fickle enthusiasm for [Hiram] Johnson's programs," and national fears.[52] He applies his analysis of Los Angeles county changes and experiences to the state-wide program, which had different approaches from the county operators. While the CIHC did meet resistance from some Angelinos, the commission's published plans during and just after World War I do not reveal the changes Sánchez posits. Woo-Sam also opposes the idea, stating that the CIHC emphasized "preserving immigrant cultures in general, following a position…identified as 'cosmopolitan nationalism.'"[53] These conflations distort our understanding of the CIHC's methodology and practical approaches.

Gonzalez also falls into the habit of conflating locations. In *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, Gonzalez explores the educational ideologies that led to discriminatory educational practices targeting Mexican children throughout the Southwestern United States.[54] He uses examples mainly from Southern California, Arizona, and Texas. Gonzalez's analysis of these areas is correct, although he uses this analysis to summarize Americanization work done throughout the Southwest. He makes this assertion without regard to the context of varying state policies and local diversity.[55] This imbalance is especially evident in Gonzalez's study of policies in California.

Gonzalez asserts that state-wide policies for the Americanization of Mexican American children led to a curriculum focused on cultural subtraction and immediate assimilation.[56] He describes this curriculum as an "oppressive"

---

[52] Ibid.,94.

[53] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 116.

[54] G.G. Gonzalez, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation* (Denton: UNT Press, 2013), 4.

[55] Ibid., 14, 21.

[56] Ibid., 32.

means to "acculturate the Mexican community," through school policies.[57] Each of his Southern California examples correctly depict the unjust reality for many Mexican American children, but do not express the CIHC's state policies. The CIHC did not call for "immediate and total cultural transformation of the immigrant community," as Gonzalez asserts from his study of Southern California.[58]

In *Fit to be Citizens?: Public Health in Los Angeles, 1876-1939*, Natalia Molina also attributes characteristics of Southern California Americanization to the CIHC and Americanization in general. Molina looks mainly at the public health efforts among Los Angeles' Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican population, because these were the groups that cohabited in the "rotten spots" of the city.[59] Molina asserts that health reform was a method of Americanizing these groups. Although, she states that because of negative feelings towards Asians, Americanization efforts focused on Mexicans.[60] This was not the policy of the CIHC. Even though at least one of the commissioners supported anti-Japanese legislation, commission records reveal that the CIHC worked with Asian immigrants. This is a different situation from what Molina found in Los Angeles.

It is important to differentiate between Southern California programs and the California state program, so that the state program can be critiqued in its own right. The CIHC's efforts undoubtedly included paternalistic methods, although the commission itself operated on a different methodology from many Southern

---

[57] Ibid., 37.

[58] Ibid., 35.

[59] Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens?: Public Health in Los Angeles, 1876-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 1.

[60] Ibid., 8, 13, 111.

California programs. Both groups desired immigrants to assimilate into the main population, but to different degrees. This affected the CIHC's approaches. The commission cannot be efficiently critiqued by looking at Americanization work done in one area, by a variety of affiliated and unaffiliated activist groups. Neither can it be completely critiqued based on its work with a single immigrant population.

Confined by Target Population

When studying an immigrant program, it is important to understand what types of immigrants were reached. This influences the factors the researcher takes into account. Various historians have written about Americanization efforts around the country with ethnically diverse target populations such as the Finnish, Germans, Russians, Japanese, and Eastern Europeans.[61] Scholars recognize that Americanization on the East coast and several other parts of the country was diverse, but most current literature does not acknowledge that California's Americanization program was also directed at an ethnically diverse population.[62]

It is critical to understand that the CIHC designed their program with a wide variety of ethnicities in mind, to better understand the commission's approaches. Most of the demographic imbalance in California Americanization

---

[61] Dirk Hoerder, ed., *American Labor and Immigration History, 1877-1920s: Recent European Research* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 260; John C. Hennen, *The Americanization of West Virginia: Creating a Modern Industrial State, 1916-1925* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2015); Paul W. Glad, *The History of Wisconsin: Volume V, War, a New Era, and Depression, 1914-1940* (Steven's Point: Warzolla Publishing Company, 2013), 72, 90, 257; Mirel, *Patriotic Pluralism*; Eileen H. Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawaii* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

[62] Robert J. Taggart, *Private Philanthropy and Public Education: Pierre S. Du Pont and the Delaware Schools, 1890-1940* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1988), 60; Hennen, *The Americanization of West Virginia*.

history stems from the previously mentioned issue of location. The majority of scholars who write on California Americanization base their work off of studies in Southern California, where Mexican Americans were one of the largest ethnic groups. In turn, the vast majority of literature covering California Americanization focuses on Americanization efforts among that group.

Progressives did work with Mexican Americans, but they were not the CIHC's only, or main, motivators. California had an extremely diverse immigrant population, and, as Fresno exemplifies, there were different concentrations of ethnic groups across the state. The 1920 census found nearly the same number of Italian and Mexican immigrants in the state, but they were dispersed differently.[63] This varied dispersion has contributed to the invisibility of other ethnic groups in California Americanization literature. CIHC reports account that the commission did a great deal of work with many different ethnic groups, and it is important to analyze the commission in light of this.

California Americanization literature's exclusive focus is problematic for a number of reasons. One of which is that its narrow focus yields a deficient analysis, because most Americanization work done with Mexican Americans in California is attributed to strict Anglo-conformity or melting-pot methodologies. These methodologies are then often attributed to the CIHC, because the commission is almost exclusively mentioned in the context of Americanization efforts among Mexican Americans. Assessments of California Americanization by scholars such as Sánchez, Gonzales, Molina and others demonstrate this pattern, leaving an incomplete picture of California Americanization.

---

[63] 88,502 Italian immigrants and 88,610 Mexican immigrants. U.S. Census Bureau, *Population—California*, 1920, 124.

Mark Wild's *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* contrasts the work of Sánchez, Gonzalez, Molina. Wild recognizes the diversity in the CIHC's work, and he does not attribute each experience in Los Angeles to the state-wide Americanization work.[64] Wild's concentration on the multiethnic residents of Los Angeles broadened his scope. An understanding of who Americanization affected is beneficial to composing a complete historical account of Americanization in California.

It is critical to broaden and diversify research of California Americanization, because the confined picture presented by Sánchez, Gonzales, Molina and others continues to replicate through tertiary material. Sánchez's analysis is either referenced, included, or heavily influential in many works, including each of the following: *The Quest for Tejano Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1913-2000*, *The New Immigrant in American Society: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the New Immigration Vol 3*, and *Americanism and Americanization: A Critical History of Domestic and Global Influence*.[65] The scholars of these works link the CIHC with strict assimilationist ideas and promoters of the 100% American campaigns, ideas which the commission opposed. Studies on the CIHC's work with an ethnically diverse immigrant population across the state, are important because they expand researchers' perspectives and help differentiate Americanization efforts across the state.

---

[64] Wild, *Street Meeting*, 114.

[65] Richard Buitron, *The Quest for Tejano Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1913-2000* (New York: Routledge, 2012) 46; Marcelo M. Suarez-Orozco, Carola Suarez-Orozco, and Desiré Qin-Hilliard, *The New Immigrant in American Society: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the New Immigration Vol 3* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 216; Mel van Elteren, *Americanism and Americanization: A Critical History of Domestic and Global Influence* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company Inc., 2006), 62.

Filling the Research Gap

Woo-Sam clearly combats mistaken perspectives about CIHC policy, although it was beyond the scope of her work to do a thorough study of Americanization in specific cities. This thesis adds to the conversation on general Americanization, because it, like Mirel, looks at programs in a specific city. It analyzes the CIHC's state-wide plans and the application of those plans in Fresno, California. This thesis adds specifically to the conversation on California Americanization, because it looks at a city that had a differing Americanization experience, which scholars have not explored. Fresno is an appropriate region to study, because it had one of the largest foreign-born populations in the state. The 1920 census states that Fresno even had a slightly larger foreign-born population than Los Angeles.[66]

Not only did Fresno have a large immigrant population, but it had an immense variety of immigrants. In 1918, Fresno boasted 49 different ethnic groups.[67] The CIHC attended to all of these groups, and spoke out most extensively about the city's Volga German community. This type of scenario does not appear in California Americanization literature. Fresno may not present a complete picture of Americanization either, however it does add to its formation. Reassessing location and target population of the Americanization work in California expands our understanding on how and why Americanization programs were designed, gives a more accurate understanding of the diverse people who experienced these programs, and ultimately aids researchers in placing these individuals in their appropriate historical contexts.

---

[66] U.S. Census Bureau, *Population—California*, 1920, 118.

[67] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration Problem: With Particular Reference to Educational Facilities and Requirements* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918).

CHAPTER 3: CALCULATION, 1913-1918

Progressives commonly sought to maintain or create an orderly society.[68] Lubin's desire to avoid the poverty and perils of the immigrant experience in the Eastern United States is an example of this. Before the CIHC could create order, they needed to gather information and plan accordingly. As progressives of their time, the CIHC commissioners valued data and scientific evidence.[69] The commissioners and their assistants spent their first several years conducting surveys throughout the state and collecting data to inform their future plans for a state-wide, ethnically diverse, and moderately pluralistic Americanization program.[70]

The CIHC collected data by opening several Bureaus of Complaints, inspecting labor camps and homes, and surveying educational opportunities. Each of these data collection methods provided the CIHC with information necessary to devise plans for California's ethnically diverse immigrant population. They aimed to: protect immigrants from exploitation, aid them in adaptation to American standards of living, and encourage their education in English and duties as a citizen.[71] This was their vision of order.

---

[68] William B. Meyer, *The Progressive Environmental Prometheans: Left-Wing Heralds of a "Good Anthropocene"* (Hamilton: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 78.

[69] Olin, *California's Prodigal Sons,* 90; Karen Pastorello, *American History Series: Activism and Reform in American Society, 1893-1917* (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2013) 7.

[70] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 9; Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 72.

[71] This is a point that made the CIHC unique. While most Americanization programs across the country focused solely on education, the CIHC favored all-encompassing community organization. Ibid., 97.

Bureaus of Complaints

The commission used the Bureaus of Complaints to both protect the immigrants and collect information on their struggles. The Bureau was overseen by commissioner Hanna, but was operated by local social workers.[72] Social workers at the Bureaus catalogued troubles of the immigrants and attempted to establish justice for them. The Bureau was set up in San Francisco, but because of the inundation of requests the commission had to install branch offices throughout the state.[73] Within the commission's first year, larger offices were established in Los Angeles and Sacramento, while smaller offices were set up in San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo. The following year, a part-time office was opened in Stockton, and the commission suggested more be set up in Fresno, Chico, and Bakersfield.[74]

Bureau employees hung posters throughout each of these cities, directing immigrants to the offices, which dealt with a long list of issues, including business fraud, land fraud, and wage claims.[75] In the 1915 Annual Report, the commission made a point to mention that within the first nine months of the program, the Bureau received 2,224 complaints, that the majority of them were

---

[72] Claudia Roesch, *Macho Men and Modern Women: Mexican Immigration, Social Experts and Changing Family Values in the 20th Century United States* (Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2015), 100.

[73] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 103.

[74] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Second Annual Report* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1916), 103.

[75] It is evident in the Bureau's propaganda materials that they reached out to a diverse immigrant audience. The first posters that advertised the Bureau included ten different languages. Also, the CIHC's various informational pamphlets were typically printed in multiple languages, such as Japanese, Italian, Spanish, and Russian. This was often done in conjunction with leaders of foreign groups. For example, the Japanese Agricultural Association partnered with the Commission and translated the commission's Camp Sanitation pamphlet into Japanese, in 1918. State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Fifth Annual Report* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1919), 59.

valid, and that the commission had achieved great success in aiding the immigrants in these matters.

Housing Surveys

The commission also visited both labor camps and single family homes, because they believed that disorderly living areas contributed to discontent in the community. They inspected rundown neighborhoods to glean information that would help them solve the disarray. The surveys also informed them of California's ethnically diverse immigrant population, and their struggles.

Commissioner McBride hired 22-year-old Caroline Schleef to inspect the quality of these living areas and make suggestions to local authorities.[76] She coordinated extensive housing surveys in San Francisco, Sacramento, Fresno, Bakersfield, and Visalia, and gathered information that would determine the scope of future commission actions. Schleef also dealt with smaller housing issues in Santa Rosa, Eureka, Galt, Isleton, Los Angeles, and San Diego, upon request.[77] She found that the main housing issues in California were lack of a central authority, uniform enforcement of the two existing housing laws, and a law to cover single family homes. The commission intended to survey more cities, but it only had funds for one inspector and an occasional assistant.

Labor camps and housing surveys informed the CIHC of the disorderly sanitary conditions, economic states, sociological patterns, and educational situations of immigrants throughout the state. A 1913 riot at the Durst hop ranch near Wheatland, California inspired the CIHC to spend significant time on labor camp surveys. This ranch had advertised for workers, but did not have housing

---

[76] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 67.

[77] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 88.

for them, other than makeshift tents.[78] The CIHC saw that the appalling living conditions contributed to societal disorder, so they investigated the incident and participated in the trial against the ranch.

These surveys also alerted the CIHC to the variation of the state's ethnic diversity. Ethnicities present in, what came to be known as, the Wheatland case included: Syrians, Mexicans, Italians, Puerto Ricans, Poles, East Indians, Japanese, and "Americans."[79] The CIHC led surveys in 1915 of 663 labor camps, and found 40 different nationalities represented.[80] These camps were 62.7% South European and Mexican, with the rest noted to be from Asian countries such as Japan, China, and India.[81] As CIHC reports on Fresno demonstrate, this diversity was replicated in other areas of California.

Education Surveys

Educational surveys yielded similar information to labor camp and housing surveys, except that they garnered their figures from cooperation with schools. In 1914, commissioner Gibson and her assistant Richardson surveyed the educational opportunities in San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles, and had two additional unnamed cities in the planning stages.[82] The commission did not implement many educational reforms in their first year, because the situation's complexity called for careful planning.

---

[78] Ibid., 15.

[79] Ibid., 18.

[80] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Second Annual Report,* 20, 31

[81] Ibid., 139.

[82] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 76; State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 99.

Gibson and Chase used data from these surveys to inform their English and citizenship lessons. By the CIHC's second year, commissioner Gibson successfully wrote the Home Teacher Act.[83] One of the first areas to experiment with the home teacher program and home teacher surveys was Los Angeles. Even though the city had its own programs to take care of housing and sanitation issues, there was room for the CIHC to help in the realm of education. Gibson was well aware of this, because she had lived in the city for many years, working as a school teacher and heavily involved in charities.[84]

During their second year in action, the commission began a housing and social survey of a large school district in Los Angeles, to show the ill effects of bad housing on "health, character, prosperity, and citizenship of the people."[85] Their specific aim was to promote the need for "a fine neighborhood school" and home teachers that would aid in remedying the poor community situation.[86] This was a school district populated by a variety of immigrants. A review of the city identified more than 37 different ethnicities.[87] The commission was not dealing with one group of people and traditions, they had to gear their plans to fit the diverse communities they encountered throughout the state. The CIHC hoped that the results of their surveys would increase the value placed on neighborhood schools and home teachers all over the state.[88]

---

[83] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 73.

[84] Gullett, "Women Progressives," 79.

[85] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 94.

[86] Ibid., 92-94.

[87] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Second Annual Report*, 125; State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *An Experiment Made in Los Angeles in the Summer of 1917 for the Americanization of Foreign-born Wome*n (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1917).

[88] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 92, 119.

In the 1915 CIHC Annual Report, Chase gave an update on her work in Los Angeles.[89] She wrote that the Amelia Street school district had many blocks that were exclusively Japanese businesses, but that there were also small businesses conducted by many other foreign groups. She noted that the area school recorded half of their enrolled students to be Mexican children, one third Japanese, and the rest Italians, Arabians, Syrians, Poles, Spaniards, and African Americans. Gibson and her assistants were interested in areas with large immigrant populations, and they completed similar surveys in other counties throughout the state.

Secondary literature on California Americanization suggests that Los Angeles was the epicenter and only location of import to the CIHC during the first two decades of the twentieth-century. It also suggests that the CIHC geared their Americanization programs specifically to Mexican Americans.[90] From these plentiful examples, it is clear that the CIHC was not focused on one single city or immigrant group. The CIHC focused on bringing order to all of California's immigrants. This aspiration brought them to Fresno, an area of extreme ethnic diversity.

Fresno

Fresno lies at the center of California, nestled up against the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. It is also one of the largest urban centers in the Central San Joaquin Valley. Although, scholars of Americanization have heretofore overlooked Fresno. It is often eclipsed by larger cities such as Los Angeles and

---

[89] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Second Annual Report*, 139.

[90] George J. Sánchez, *"Go After the Women": Americanization and the Mexican Immigrant Woman, 1915-1929*, No. 6, Stanford Center for Chicano Research, Stanford University, (1984), 156.

San Francisco, even though the 1920 census lists a comparable percentage of immigrants living there. When numbers of foreign-born whites are added to foreign-born non-whites, 22.8% of Fresno's population was foreign-born. If the same categories are added for Los Angeles, the census reveals that 21.9% of Los Angeles' population was foreign-born. San Francisco had the largest foreign-born population in the state, registering 30.4%.[91] These numbers do not include native-born children of immigrants, who certainly lived in the same areas and were treated in ways similar to their parents. If these children are included with the numbers of foreign-born residents, nearly 50% of Fresno's population was either an immigrant or had immigrant parents.

In addition to its central location and large immigrant population, Fresno was—and still is—an agricultural hub. The city is an outgrowth of a small mining town established in Millerton during the 1850s.[92] Fresno's primary draw was its ideal climate for agriculture, that is, when the necessary amount of rain fell. Between 1868 and 1873, migrants from Alabama and immigrants from Germany were drawn to the agricultural opportunities in the Valley and attempted to colonize the area through various agricultural ventures.[93] Due to the inconsistent rain fall, their yield varied. This kept the population of Fresno small, until an adequate irrigation system was constructed.

---

[91] U.S. Census Bureau, *Population—California*, 1920, 118.

[92] Paul E. Vandor, *History of Fresno County California with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present* (Los Angeles, California: Historic Record Company, 1919), 95.

[93] John Panter, "Central California Colony: 'Marvel of the Desert'." *Fresno Past & Present* 32, no. 2 (1994): 2.

In 1871, the director of the Central Pacific Railroad Company saw value in the area as a railroad station.[94] By 1872 the station was successfully in place and the Fresno Canal and Irrigation Company had made promising strides.[95] Soon after, in 1874, the county seat moved from Millerton to Fresno.[96] All of these elements combined to make Fresno an agricultural powerhouse, which drew immigrants from all over the world and accustomed to agriculture and related industrial work.[97]

Although, these immigrants typically did not live in the same areas as native-born white "Americans." The railroad tracks facilitated this division. As the impetus of Fresno's growth, city planners did not leave the railroad's surrounding landscape to chance. Some of Fresno's first colonists were from Alabama, and were staunch Southern sympathizers imbued with ideas of white supremacy. Turn of the century historian Paul E. Vandor wrote that Millerton, the first county seat, had several pro-Confederacy societies. According to Danielle Griffiths, it "is indisputable" that during the 1920s and 1930s the Ku Klux Klan was also operating in the nearby city of Visalia.[98] As both white farming families and Chinese laborers moved to Fresno, there was a clear dividing line in place. City leaders actively relegated the Chinese and other

---

[94] "History of Fresno," Development and Resource Management Administration, last modified 2016, accessed March 2016. https://www.fresno.gov/darm/historic-preservation/history-of-fresno/

[95] Vandor, *History of Fresno County*, 182.

[96] D. Kyle, H. Rensch, M. Hoover, E. Rensch, and W. Abeloe, *Historic Spots in California* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 88.

[97] Panter, "Central California Colony," 2.

[98] Visalia is about 43 miles south of Fresno. Danielle Christine Griffiths, "A Community Divided: Visalia, California 1852-1940" (Masters Thesis, California State University, Fresno, 2009), 31.

minority workers to the west side of the railroad tracks, while the "American" residents kept to the east side.

As the city continued to organize, the railroad line and other city landmarks became official separators between the two populations. Citizens and neighborhoods such as Fig Garden and Sunnyside included restrictive housing covenants in property deeds, which prevented different ethnic groups from purchasing properties. One 1944 deed states that "anyone not of the white or Caucasian race" could not buy certain properties, even going as far as to exclude Armenians. [99] These covenants are still in many old housing deeds, but in 1948 the Supreme Court ruled their enforcement unconstitutional.[100] Visual evidence of Fresno's long history of divisions is also evident in redlining maps from the 1930s, which were residential "safety maps" that classified neighborhoods into four categories, from most to least desirable.[101]

In Fresno, the residential and social separation between established whites (including Scandinavians) and minorities (including ethnic whites) was deeply rooted. Fresno's west side became known as the foreign district, and was home to dozens of different ethnic groups. This large and incredibly diverse population of immigrants and their families drew the CIHC to Fresno.

---

[99] Andrea Castillo, "Fresno's long history of substandard housing: poverty, sprawl, racism, neglect," *The Fresno Bee*, May 8, 2016, http://www.fresnobee.com/news/special-reports/housing-blight/article75581792.html

[100] Diana Aguilera, "Diversity in Fresno: How Racial Covenants Once Ruled Prestigious Neighborhoods," *Valley Public Radio*, December 8, 2015, http://kvpr.org/post/diversity-fresno-how-racial-covenants-once-ruled-prestigious-neighborhoods#stream/0

[101] Diana Aguilera, "Rare Maps Reveal Fresno's Overlooked History of Segregation," *Valley Public Radio*, October 27, 2015, http://kvpr.org/post/rare-maps-reveal-fresnos-overlooked-history-segregation

1914 Housing Survey

The commission conducted three main housing surveys in its first year of work: San Francisco, Sacramento, and Fresno.[102] The CIHC had limited staff, so they only put efforts into cities with urgent needs. The fact that the CIHC chose to survey Fresno, demonstrates that the city possessed elements that caught the CIHC's attention, more so than other areas of the state.

In July and August of 1914, Schleef visited Fresno and surveyed one hundred single family dwellings and ten low-cost lodging houses. It was evident to Schleef that the city was separated. She found a great difference between "American" neighborhoods and "the foreign colony section," where the single-family dwellings were more akin to shacks. She reported that Germans, Russians, Armenians, Italians, and Mexicans largely inhabited this area. An immense problem in this area was a lack of suitable sanitation facilities. The CIHC discussed this with the local health authorities, and found them to be "unusually eager to cooperate in improving conditions."[103] The commission then worked to create ordinances to fit the local situation, which they then submitted to the city. At the end of the brief Fresno report, Schleef noted that the *Fresno Morning Republican* newspaper had given "full publicity to the report" and also "endorsed the proposed ordinances." Despite the city's culture of separation, the CIHC report presents that there were progressive leaders in Fresno who were invested in cleaning up portions of the community and aiding in the state-wide Americanization work.

---

[102] Even though Los Angeles had a large immigrant population, the CIHC did not conduct a housing survey there its first year, because the county had its own health committee that did housing inspections. State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 86; Molina, *Fit to be Citizens*.

[103] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 88.

After Schleef left Fresno, the conversation on Americanization continued. The seed had been planted. As the CIHC continued to visit Fresno for re-inspections and further surveys the county's investment in Americanization work grew.[104] A 1916 article in the *FMR* exclaimed that at this time there was a "cry of Americanization so much in the mouths of everyone."[105] Once commission reports alerted east side residents to the west side's exceeding disorder, city agencies and social clubs became more apt to collaborate and find what they believed to be a solution.

These groups were not looking to integrate both sides of town, but they were interested in cleaning up the "un-American" disorder they saw. One newspaper article declared, "we must promote all agencies of Americanization. We can permit no divided allegiance."[106] The article urged native-born white Fresno residents to safeguard national unity by maintaining order and ensuring the immigrant's political loyalty only to the United States. Many Fresno citizens followed this stricter line of reasoning, although there were several progressive leaders and community members who connected with the CIHC to implement the commission's more liberal policies.

1917-1918 Educational Survey

In 1917, the CIHC set up a branch office in Fresno, one of only five in the entire state, and sent Ethel Richardson (director of the CIHC's bureau of

---

[104] In 1915, the CIHC conducted another housing survey in Fresno. They surveyed 18 tenement houses and found 859 violations. State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Second Annual Report*, 205.

[105] Sanford Griffith, "Hyphenated Neutrals," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 11, 1916.

[106] "Hughes is Flatly Against All Hyphenism," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 25, 1916.

education) to help organize community Americanization efforts.[107] Before organizing could occur, Richardson visited Fresno and conducted an educational survey. She spent six weeks visiting homes in west Fresno, and meeting with families. Her goal was to survey the city, inform the commission, and advise local community organizations on how they could be helpful in the Americanization work.

Richardson found the agencies and government leaders in Fresno to be especially generous and enthusiastic.[108] In the CIHC's *Report on Fresno's immigration problem: With Particular Reference to Educational Facilities and Requirements*, she wrote that "all of the established social agencies as well as the clubs [were] particularly progressive and willing to co-operate in any constructive plan for the welfare of the community and [were] constantly readjusting themselves to meet new emergencies."[109] The level of cooperation with CIHC suggestions, and potential for order, pleased Richardson.

Richardson's full report and list of suggestions was published in 1918.[110] The report begins with an overview of the foreign-born population of Fresno, shedding light on the city's needs and astounding diversity. Richardson wrote of the immigrant in Fresno, "numerically he is so important that he cannot be overlooked."[111] She noted that this mass of people lived in the "foreign district," which was how she referred to the community on the west side of the tracks. Although, the report notes that the Northern Europeans, Danes, Swedes, and

---

[107] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 191.

[108] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 17.

[109] Ibid., 18.

[110] Ibid., 3.

[111] Ibid., 7.

Norwegians lived on the east side of the tracks, in the "American neighborhood." The report mentions that the Danish and Scandinavian peoples continued to use their native languages, but they were not "the group claiming immediate interest." Richardson reasoned that they assimilated easily and were "already fairly well Americanized."[112] Along a similar line, Richardson wrote that the Armenians were moving in increasing numbers from the west side to the east, because they were becoming more prosperous and "able to take care of themselves."

Most of the 1918 report focuses on those who typically lived in the foreign district, particularly the Italians, Armenians, Japanese, Mexicans, and Volga Germans. Richardson explains the issues with each immigrant group and their aptitudes for assimilation.[113] She reported that Armenians were the largest immigrant group in Fresno, with around 12,000 people before the war. She praised them for their agriculture, business practices, and commitment to schooling. Although, she mentions that certain "antisocial traits" hindered their assimilation. A list provided to Richardson by attorney Mr. George O'Hannesian, shows very few crimes committed by Armenians, prompting Richardson to state that "our civilization has nothing to fear from these people."[114] Despite several large churches providing services in the native language, the report assures the reader that "their Americanization [was] going forward rapidly," because the

---

[112] Ibid.

[113] The CIHC was very interested in assimilating the immigrant, but their view of assimilation was unique. According to Lubin, "by [assimilation], we do not mean that we should strive to eradicate from his make-up all the traditions, habits, and customs he brings with him, and then substitute in their place a few doses of Americanism, whatever that may mean. Such a chauvinistic attitude does not win our sympathy." Simon J. Lubin, "Why it is Immigration and Housing," *Housing Betterment* 3, no. 3 (November, 1914): 13.

[114] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 8.

Armenians' ambition opened them to "American contact."[115] Richardson called for the destruction of "prejudice which is founded on national antagonisms," so that "American" residents could take advantage of this contact and help immigrants adjust through interaction.[116]

The next two groups described were the Italians and Mexicans, who lived in the same neighborhoods. The report states that the Italians were "of an unusually high class," and occupied the better houses in these neighborhoods, while the Mexicans lived in the poorer houses and often had inadequate clothing and food. Richardson appreciated the high value the Italians placed on music and home life, which was considered to be "superior to that of many native-born Americans." Although, it was also acknowledged that many Italian men were registered for local crimes.[117]

The report notes that most Japanese residents lived behind the Chinatown section of the foreign district and ran the rooming houses where migrant laborers stayed. The rest of the Japanese lived in rural areas as farmers. Chinatown in Fresno was reported to be similar in character to most other Chinatowns around the state, "a menace to morality."[118] Native-born white Americans typically saw Chinatowns across the state as menacing, because they had opium shops, gambling halls, and inadequate housing.[119] City housing covenants and low

---

[115] Ibid, 8.

[116] Ibid.

[117] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 9.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Wendy Rouse Jorae, *The Children of Chinatown: Growing Up Chinese American in San Francisco, 1850-1920* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 162.

wages caused much of this, but many people attributed it to the Chinese as an ethnic group.

Interestingly, Richardson reported that the "Russian-German" immigrants were "the unique and most difficult of all Fresno's immigration problems."[120] The Russian-Germans, more accurately Volga Germans, descended from a group of Germans who moved to Russia in the early nineteenth-century, to practice agriculture. There they lived apart from the Russians and retained their German language and traditions for 150 years. In 1887, a group of ten families arrived in New York and headed west.[121] They originally planned to settle in Lincoln Nebraska, but a man aboard their initial ship convinced them of the agricultural potential in the San Joaquin Valley. In the following decades, thousands of Volga Germans immigrated to Fresno, making it one of the two largest immigrant groups during the time of Richardson's surveying.

The CIHC's focus on Volga Germans is a surprising departure from current California Americanization literature, which points to Mexican Americans as the commission's main focus. Richardson worried about the Volga Germans, because she felt that they were following the pattern of isolation they had kept in Russia. She criticized their isolation, because she felt that it left them "static," not advancing in living habits or manner of thinking.[122] Additionally, she lamented that the Volga Germans had lost most of their beneficial German traditions, because of their separation from their motherland, but had

---

[120] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 9.

[121] Darrel Philip Kaiser, *Emigration to and from the German-Russian Volga Colonies* (Lulu.com, 2008), 37.

[122] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 10.

maintained this most negative habit of isolation. Outside of attending church and going to work, she noted that this group had no social life. She added to this that the youth did not even seem interested in church, leaving an even wider deficit in social interaction. Although, Richardson believed the Volga Germans had another habit that was more destructive.

Richardson considered their blessing and curse to be their industriousness. She noted that both parents typically worked and were able to provide for their families. But, she complained that the absence of the mother left the children running through the streets unattended. This was a great concern to white Protestant women like Richardson and Gibson, who believed that the mother's place in the home preserved order.[123] Additionally, Richardson felt that the children had obvious resentment toward their parents, because they were different from other people, in custom and dress. Richardson ended her lengthy commentary on the Volga Germans with a paragraph about her perception of the group's low moral standard.[124] She saw a need for more American values, and she hoped that the city's developing education system could provide that.

School on the West Side

In a *Fresno Morning Republican* (*FMR*) newspaper article, the city superintendent of schools explained the importance of schools in spreading

---

[123] Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 58; Roesch, *Macho Men and Modern Women*, 87.

[124] Volga German Peter Winter moved to the Central Valley in 1898. Historian Paul Vandor notes that Winter was kind, industrious, and donated liberally to the church. Paul E. Vandor, *History of Fresno County, California: With Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present, Volume 2* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1919), 2087, 2088.

American values.[125] He believed that diffusing these values to the diverse group of immigrants on Fresno's west side was critical. Joel M. Roitman states that in 1914 immigrant education throughout the United States was inconsistent and chaotic.[126] Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and California, however, had higher immigrant populations that motivated them to appropriate funds and organize more effective immigrant education.[127]

Their efforts in immigrant education typically culminated in "neighborhood schools." The neighborhood school was often seen as a substitute home for children of immigrants.[128] They did not live at the school, but these schools offered lessons on subjects commonly demonstrated in native-born American homes, in addition to typical academics. The most prominent of these lessons were health, hygiene, morals, and English. [129]

Richardson only discussed the main immigrant groups in her report, but the city boasted a vast array. The high concentration of these immigrants on the west side of Fresno is evident in elementary school statistics published in the report. There were five elementary schools on the west side of Fresno, and they almost exclusively served children of "foreign born parentage." These schools were: Kirk (97%), Edison (93%), Lincoln (95%), Columbia (89%), and Emerson (71%).[130] They were deemed "neighborhood schools," because they served a high

---

[125] Jerome O. Cross addresses W.O.W.," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 25, 1918.

[126] Joel M. Roitman, "The Progressive Movement: Education and Americanization," (PhD Dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1981), 28.

[127] Ibid., 30.

[128] Lewthwaite, *Race, Place, and Reform,* 99.

[129] Wild, *Street Meeting*, 112.

[130] These are the percentages of students per school who had foreign born parents. State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration*, 13.

percentage of immigrant families. Although, Richardson reported that none of these schools had the programs that neighborhood schools typically offered.[131] They did not provide the standard day nurseries, reduced price lunches, special classes, and teacher home visits. On the other hand, Richardson stated that the children in these "foreign schools" received English instruction that was "unexcelled anywhere in California."[132] Developing neighborhood school programs interested a number of Fresno's teachers, and they eventually succeeded in adding several of the programs that were lacking.[133]

Even though the standard neighborhood school programs were not operating yet, the neighborhood school demographic statistics help demonstrate the ethnic diversity Fresno students experienced. The Kirk School had 402 students, 92% of which were Volga Germans. Edison had 278 students. It served a wider variety of ethnicities, but was still 47% Volga Germans. Lincoln School had 826 students, serving mostly Volga Germans, but also 69% of the city's Japanese students, and 19 other ethnic groups including: Armenians, Mexicans, and Chinese. The Columbia School had 700 students, half being Italian. The rest of the school's population contained most of Fresno's Mexican students and 23 other ethnicities. The Emerson School had 602 students, which were overwhelmingly Armenian—58% of Fresno's Armenian elementary student population. Each of these schools had a sprinkling of "American" students.

---

[131] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 14.

[132] Ibid.

[133] The City of Fresno, Fresno Unified School District, *Directory of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno California* (Fresno, CA: Fresno County Printing Office, 1921), 11.

These students made up less than .06% at three schools, while they made up 10% and 27% at the other two schools.[134]

Out of 6,465 registered elementary students in Fresno, 43% were taught in neighborhood schools. Additionally, 51% of Fresno's entire elementary student population had at least one immigrant parent. Even though certain schools had large amounts of specific immigrant groups, there was still a variety of students. The CIHC report indicates 49 different ethnic groups represented in all of Fresno's elementary schools.

Daily Diversity

When immigrants arrive in a new country, they typically live in areas with people who speak their native language and adhere to their native customs. Many immigrants in Fresno practiced this, but west Fresno's geography promoted intermingling. According to Judy Young this produced a cosmopolitan atmosphere.[135] In an oral history interview, Andrea Perez acknowledged that many ethnic groups tended to live in the same vicinity, but her family experienced Fresno's diversity first-hand. The Perez family had Portuguese, black, Danish, Mexican, and Italian neighbors.[136] Perez explained that the Portuguese and Italians were very friendly, inviting everyone in the neighborhood to their celebrations.

Ten years later, Emilio Canales and his family experienced this ethnic diversity on a larger scale. In 1928, he and his family moved from Colton,

---

[134] "American" students in west side schools: 10% at Columbia, .06% at Edison, 27% at Emerson, .02% at Kirk, and .04% at Lincoln.

[135] Judy Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 150.

[136] Andrea Perez, interview by Dr. Lea Ybarra-Soriano, July 15, 1980, Hispanic Oral History Project, Fresno, California, p.2.

California to Fresno, California.[137] In 1930 Emilio was a nine-year-old boy living at 1233 F. Street with his parents, two brothers, and two sisters.[138] His parents immigrated from Mexico in 1902 and 1912, but his siblings and himself were all born in California. The Canales family lived in a diverse neighborhood, sharing F. Street with neighbors from Italy, France, Greece, Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado. Emilio attended Columbia school with his sister May, brother Louis, and several other children from their street.

It is important to note the ethnic diversity in Fresno between 1913 and 1929, because the large and diverse immigrant population is what attracted the CIHC. The commission's interest in surveying counties throughout the state, particularly diverse areas like Fresno, demonstrates their focus on a variety of ethnic groups. At the end of her report, Richardson gave recommendations to Fresno Americanization leaders and helped them formulate a plan to ameliorate what she deemed to be an immigrant "problem." The CIHC created similar plans and policies that they hoped to apply throughout the state, and eventually throughout the nation.

---

[137] Emilio Canales, interview by Alex Saragoza, August 1980, Hispanic Oral History Project, Huntington, Fresno, California, p.2.

[138] 1930 U.S. Census, Fresno County, California, population schedule, p. 25A, dwelling 328, family 324, Emilo Canales; digital image, Ancestry.com, accessed February 2017, http://Ancestry.com.

CHAPTER 4: APPLICATION, 1914-1918

California was one of the earliest states to begin Americanization programs. Of the states that organized early programs, California's innovation and application stood out. Between 1914 and 1916 the CIHC had concentrated on surveying cities and convincing local authorities that they had housing problems and deficiencies in their education systems.[139] Each city they surveyed opened the door for improvements, by implementing the commission's suggestions. The CIHC sought to ameliorate the immigrant situation and create order through enhancing labor camp sanitation, creating housing regulations, galvanizing women's clubs, hiring home teachers, and opening citizenship training centers.

Each of the CIHC's suggestions were elements of their state-wide, ethnically diverse, and moderately pluralistic program. The commission suggested and heavily influenced the implementation of this plan in Fresno. The CIHC's constant work in and continued effect on Fresno indicates that the city had a population the CIHC desired to work with and had leaders who were eager to aid in Americanization work. After the CIHC surveyed Fresno, city leaders saw the CIHC's vision for order and became active participants in Americanization efforts.

Implementation

The CIHC began by applying their plans in labor camps. The camp inspector surveyed 308 camps in the commission's first year of operation.[140] Most of these reports noted that rural labor camps were unsanitary and neglected.

---

[139] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States*, 72.

[140] Gribble, *An Archbishop for the People*, 160-161.

Most camp owners only provided insufficient temporary housing, such as ramshackle tents.[141] These surveys led California to pass the 1913 Labor Camp Sanitation Act, which was enhanced in 1915, 1919, and 1921 to better serve the laborers. At the outset, the CIHC produced pamphlets on labor camp sanitation, for camp operators.[142] These pamphlets discussed building plans for acceptable and inexpensive facilities. This included guidance for camp layouts, water supplies, kitchens, garbage disposal, toilets, mosquitos, and malaria.[143] After distributing these pamphlets the CIHC gave camps time to improve, and then they organized follow-up visits. By January 1915, the CIHC reinspected 228 camps.[144] Most of the camps had improved greatly, and those that had not were given a warning. If they did not reform before the commissioner's next visit, they would be prosecuted.

In the area of housing, the CIHC created a plan to "arouse the public to demand the enforcement of existing housing laws, to support new laws, and to require safeguards for the future."[145] The commission also planned a "Housing Institute," where representatives from cities across the state would come together to draft a state housing law.[146] Other than this, the Housing Department focused on making recommendations to local housing and health agencies who they tasked with enforcing laws.[147]

---

[141] Lewthwaite, *Race, Place, and Reform,* 139.

[142] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 22.

[143] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Second Annual Report*, 41.

[144] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *First Annual Report*, 50.

[145] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Second Annual Report*, 198.

[146] Ibid., 201.

[147] Ibid., 207.

Housing is an area where commissioners were only helpful to a certain extent. They aimed to help immigrants adapt to American living standards, because they believed it would foster appreciation and loyalty to America. But they did not focus on combating the root problems of these poor living conditions, such as low wages and restrictive housing covenants.[148]

After education surveys, the CIHC generally advised counties to increase their evening school and citizenship training center work. While neighborhood schools reached children by adding Americanization classes to the curriculum, evening schools offered classes to Americanize immigrant parents.[149] These classes often focused heavily on English, U.S. history, principles of U.S. government, and the appeal of democracy.[150] Immigrant mothers were regularly unable to attend evening classes, so the CIHC would also suggest that counties hire home teachers and galvanize local women's clubs to reach them.

Utilizing Women

Many historians credit commissioner Gibson and other women with driving the bulk of the Americanization movement.[151] After California women won the right to vote in 1911, they had opportunities to work in official capacities.[152] Gayle Gullett writes that these progressive women were enthusiastic about being politically active and defining what constituted citizenship.[153] By 1915, the California Daughters of the American Revolution

---

148 Wild, *Street Meeting*, 21, 22.

149 Mirel, *Patriotic Pluralism*, 49.

150 Ibid., 182.

151 Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 85; Gullett, "Women Progressives," 72.

152 Gullett, "Women Progressives," 71.

153 Ibid., 209.

(DAR), the national DAR, the California Federation of Women's Clubs, and the national General Federation of Women's Clubs banded together to support the California Americanization movement.[154]

These women made strides in California Americanization that were recognized across the nation. Gibson wrote the celebrated Home Teacher Act, which led to the greatest recognition.[155] This act stepped away from both conservative and progressive views on immigrant education by focusing on assimilating immigrant mothers rather than their children.[156] The Home Teacher Act was created because neighborhood schools were limited in what they could accomplish.[157] Historian Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson writes that "home teachers were to occupy a special place between the neighborhood school and the immigrant home, serving as a link between the two institutions."[158] For women who were unable to attend evening schools, or were not motivated to, home teachers provided Americanization courses. Gibson desired to teach immigrant women the English language and American culture, so that they could maintain authority in their homes as their children became Americanized at school.[159]

Home teachers would either visit women directly in their homes or lead out English classes for groups of immigrant mothers. When visiting homes, these women would typically assess the conditions of the home, ask about the

---

[154] Ibid., 73.

[155] Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 82; Gullett, "Women Progressives," 79; Roitman, "The Progressive Movement," 30.

[156] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 74.

[157] Lewthwaite, *Race, Place, and Reform,*), 103.

[158] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 77.

[159] Ibid., 75; Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 72.

children's education, teach homemaking skills, instruct immigrants in health practices, and teach patriotism.[160] When home teachers taught groups, they often used common domestic activities to teach English and patriotic ideas.

In 1917 Gibson organized a home teacher experiment in Los Angeles that focused on coordinating these groups.[161] During this experiment, students from the Los Angeles Normal School facilitated English classes with the Russian Jewish women, sewing with the Italian women, preserving with Armenian women, cooking with the Molokan Russian women, English parties with Mexican women, and United States culture lessons with Japanese women. There were also mixed classes, such as one frequented by Japanese, Mexican, Armenian, and Italian women. The report states, "no nationality was overlooked."[162] The CIHC hoped for similar success in Fresno.

Fresno Commences Americanization

The visits from Schleef and Richardson spurred Fresno into action. Newspaper articles, school materials, and women's club notes demonstrate that despite the city's racial climate there were citizens and leaders in Fresno who subscribed to the CIHC's moderately pluralistic ideas. Two of these people were Mr. Jerome O. Cross and his wife.

One CIHC publication notes that Fresno was very active in health and housing reform after Schleef's visit.[163] In Richardson's 1918 report on Fresno, she

---

[160] Lewthwaite, *Race, Place, and Reform,* 104.

[161] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 77.

[162] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on an Experiment,* 18.

[163] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: California's Answer* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1920), 7, 9.

made special mention of the Vice State Chairman of Americanization of the Woman's Committee for National and State Councils of Defense, Mrs. Jerome Cross, who had just begun coordinating work in Fresno.[164] Richardson also boasted of the "progressive spirit of the school superintendent," Mr. Jerome Cross.[165] Both were enthusiastic about Americanization, and began arranging efforts to enhance it in Fresno by adding: a Health Officer, Sanitary Inspector, Housing Inspector, Clinic, Playground Commission, County Probation Office, Welfare Commission, YMCA, and YWCA.

Before Richardson left Fresno in 1917, she called together local Americanization leaders and representatives from social agencies.[166] She recognized the work that the Cross' began and offered several recommendations. These included: a day nursery at Kirk or Lincoln school, having the playground commission extend the use of the Kirk playground to the community, asking the DAR to plan evening programs in the Edison auditorium, starting a band for Italian boys at the Columbia school, hiring a home teacher for Kirk and Lincoln schools, using students from the Normal School to help as home teachers, making extra home visits, and promoting night schools.[167]

About the Fresno residents, Richardson wrote:

> None of this above program can be effective in a community unless all the conditions are as favorable as they are in Fresno, but all groups of people

---

[164] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 15.

[165] "Fresno Woman is State Appointee," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 14, 1917; "Jerome O. Cross addresses W.O.W.," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 25, 1918.

[166] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 15.

[167] Ibid., 18.

> there are eager for a right understanding of their own problems and more than willing to devote their efforts to any constructive plan in which they are asked to co-operate…all of the established social agencies as well as the clubs are particularly progressive and willing to co-operate in any constructive plan for the welfare of the community and are constantly readjusting themselves to meet new emergencies.[168]

With such a rousing opinion of Fresno's native-born residents, Richardson eagerly helped them draw up a plan to Americanize the large population of immigrants in Fresno. Those present created the Americanization Committee of the Community Welfare League. This group had an executive committee of seven people, one of which was the Americanization chairman from the Women's Committee. Each member took on one of the following tasks: Finance, Edison School, Kirk School, Columbia School, Day Nurseries, home teacher, and Emerson School. The committee's goal was "homogeneity of the community."[169] They desired to add American political loyalty, the English language, and orderliness to the diverse community living in west Fresno.

In addition to the new committee, several other groups began Americanization work after Richardson's visit. The Child Welfare Department and District Federation of Women's Clubs decided to feed kindergarteners at the Columbia school, in efforts to increase welfare of the child and education of the mother. Dr. Flora Smith also agreed to work with them, doing physical exams on the children to see if their health improved throughout the project. The playground commission agreed to open certain playgrounds at night, begin an orchestra for Italian boys, and procure a social worker for the Volga Germans. The Sun-Maid Welfare League, of the California Associated Raisin Company,

---

[168] Ibid.

[169] Ibid., 16.

agreed to plant a medical clinic, create a system of social health insurance, and plan to offer Americanization courses within a year.

These agencies and committees saw Americanization as a patriotic duty, and they greatly increased Fresno's Americanization efforts. Because of Mr. and Mrs. Cross' positions and connections throughout the state, women's activism and education reforms became some of the most substantial ways Fresno endeavored to ameliorate their immigrant situation. Women's clubs promoted lay Americanization through both events and everyday interactions, while the schools practiced on a professional level. This was applied practically by utilizing the Parlor Lecture Club to aid county Americanization efforts and opening citizenship training centers on the west side of town.

Americanization and the Parlor Lecture Club

On September 27, 1916, the *FMR* published an article discussing the patriotic duty of American women to reach immigrant women and complete the Americanization of immigrant families.[170] The article entitled "Is Mother an American?" was written by Helen Varick Boswell, chairman of education of the General Federation of Women's clubs. Boswell explained that immigrant fathers encountered American ideals at work, their children encountered them at school, but the mother had no contact with them. Sequestered at home, Boswell said these immigrant women did not learn English, adopt American dress, or have opportunities to become citizens. Boswell called club women to organize convenient afternoon classes and teach the mothers English. Fusing aspects of

---

[170] Helen Varick Boswell, "Is Mother an American?" *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 27, 1916.

the mother's "daily life and work," such as cooking and cleaning, with English, Boswell wrote:

> Make immigrant women good citizens. Help them make the homes they care for American homes…make American standards of living prevail throughout the community, not merely in the 'American sections.' Above all show the rest of the community that this work of Americanizing immigrant mothers and immigrant homes is in the highest sense a work of citizenship, a part of a national patriotic ideal.

This was a strong call to all "American" women, to shoulder the Americanization work as their patriotic duty.

Fresno women began to resonate with this type of patriotic call as early as 1911.[171] This attitude within women's clubs primed them for calls like Boswell's, and by 1916 they were ready to "produce American homes." Just a year after Boswell's article was published, the *FMR* published the article celebrating Mrs. Jerome Cross, for being appointed chairman of the Americanization committee of the Women's Council of Defense.[172] The article mentions that her job would be to aid the CIHC and "promote the purposes of the Women's Council." Mrs. Cross was also a member of Fresno's Parlor Lecture Club (PLC), where a year later she became the chairman of its special Americanization committee.

The PLC was a very active women's club in Fresno. It was organized in 1894, became affiliated with the State Federation of Women's Clubs in 1900, and

---

[171] The first page of the 1911-1912 Parlor Lecture Club yearbook quotes John A. Butler, who said, "American women are the conservation of the ethical and intellectual life and culture of this country, and their clubs are a national crown of glory…They are the nestles of the temple of liberty, and their ability to elevate the standards of life and citizenship, are beyond the possibility of measurement." This exemplifies how these women saw their role as an American woman. Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1911-1912* (Fresno, California, 1912), 1.

[172] "Fresno Woman is State Appointee," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 14, 1917.

then with the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1910.[173] Several Fresno women, including Mrs. J. E. Hughes, started the club, because they wanted to have lectures and offer sewing lessons to poor girls.[174] The club's constitution and bylaws state that their official aim was "to encourage social intercourse among its members and mutual helpfulness in the study of literature, science, art and questions of the day; and to promote whatever may be for the general welfare of the community."[175] The club had three main departments: home, civic, and art.[176] The women would meet each Thursday at 2:30 P.M. October-May for meetings and events put on by each department.[177]

Over the years, the club had typical lectures on literature, science, and art, but also included lectures on American ideals, loyalty, and issues with immigration.[178] These lectures, in addition to global political changes, sparked the women to action. In 1917, the PLC began to help at the Edison school, where the majority of children had foreign born parents.[179] The 1917 Annual report of the PLC Civic Department noted that the club was "being considered one of the big semi-civic forces of the city."[180]

---

[173] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1919-1920* (Fresno, California, 1920), 2.

[174] The club was named Parlor Lecture Club because of the frequent lectures and the fact that they met in the Hughes' hotel parlor for the first five years. Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1922-1923* (Fresno, California, 1923), 6, 7.

[175] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1923-1924* (Fresno, California, 1924), 25.

[176] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1915-1916* (Fresno, California, 1916), 9.

[177] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1920-1921* (Fresno, California, 1921), 3.

[178] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1912-1913* (Fresno, California, 1913); Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1917-1918* (Fresno, California, 1918), 2; Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1914-1915* (Fresno, California, 1915), 12, 14; State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 13.

[179] Ina Wilson, *Parlor Lecture Club President's Annual report, 1917-1918* (Fresno, California, 1918), 15.

[180] Parlor Lecture Club Civic Department, *Annual report, 1917* (Fresno, California, 1917),

The PLC was one of the most active Fresno women's clubs in the city's Americanization effort. In addition to the club's three main departments, they also had committees for event planning and special committees for pressing social concerns of the time. In 1918 the PLC was urged by the county and the Women's Federation to form a special Americanization committee.[181] This committee was led by none other than Mrs. Jerome Cross, chairman of the Americanization committee of the Women's Council of Defense and wife of the city's schools superintendent.[182] Her committee consisted of fourteen members, including: Mrs. J. E. Hughes and Mrs. Chester Rowell.[183] Throughout the year, these women would host various meetings and events that spoke to their Americanization cause.[184] Often times these meetings would be advertised on the Society page of the *FMR*.[185]

---

[181] Ursula Rielly, *Parlor Lecture Club President's Annual report, 1918-1919* (Fresno, California, 1919), 7.

[182] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1918-1919* (Fresno, California, 1919); "Fresno Woman is State Appointee," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 14, 1917.

[183] The fourteen women were: Mrs. J. E. Hughes, Mrs. W. J. Eilert, Mrs. Ernest Klette, Mrs. M. L. Woy, Mrs. Edith McClellan, Mrs. H.H. Welsh, Mrs. Chester Rowell, Mrs. H.O. Breeden, Mrs. W.A. Fisher, Mrs. L.N. Petra, Mrs. A.J. Elmore, Mrs. Julia Sayre, Mrs. F.C. Heubner, and Mrs. W. A. Conn. After its first year, the Americanization committee chairman position was passed along to several different women. In 1919, the PLC Americanization committee was handed to Miss Frances E. Dean. And she was assisted by: Mrs. E. A. Williams, Mrs. Thos. Denham, Mrs. W.F. Chanfler, Mrs. D. L. Zimmerman. Mrs. Chester Rowell is significant, because she was married to the owner of the *Fresno Morning Republican* newspaper. Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1919-1920* (Fresno, California, 1920), 10; George E. Mowry, "The California Progressive and His Rationale: A Study in Middle Class Politics," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 36, no. 2 (September, 1949), 244.

[184] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1920-1921* (Fresno, California, 1921), 29.

[185] "Society," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 6, 1918.

Americanization and the School System

Mr. Jerome Cross, Superintendent of Fresno city schools, was just as interested in Americanization as his wife, and made a number of statements identifying with the CIHC's ideas on Americanization.[186] Mr. Cross was elected as superintendent in 1917, around the same time that Richardson administered the CIHC educational survey of Fresno. In her report, Richardson noted that "Fresno is fortunate in having a superintendent of schools and a Board of Education that are interested in increasing the educational scope of the schools and making them as effectual [for Americanization] as possible in the community."[187] In 1918 the *FMR* published an address by Mr. Cross, where he stated that "the schools were the most potent force for inculcating American principles." [188]

Cross was committed to increasing Americanization efforts in Fresno schools. He desired to dismantle racial prejudices and discrimination, so that immigrants could see the "value of American ideals and institutions." [189] Cross believed these ideals and institutions were: a "common language for the entire nation and the development of a desire of the people to unite in common citizenship under one flag: the combatting of anti-America propaganda, and the stamping out of sedition and disloyalty." [190] Cross's comments do not suggest strict subtractive Americanization, but additive. Like CIHC commissioners,

---

[186] "Jerome O. Cross addresses W.O.W.," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 25, 1918.

[187] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration*, 15.

[188] "Jerome O. Cross addresses W.O.W.," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 25, 1918.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid.

Cross desired order and political stability that did not require immigrants to completely abandon their native culture.[191]

Fresno schools began putting forth considerable Americanization efforts after the CIHC visited Fresno for the first time. In 1915, Fresno began holding special classes at the Lincoln school for learning English. The district also maintained evening schools at Hawthorne and Edison schools for work permit students.[192] It seems that Mr. Cross was also inspired by the CIHC's second visit.[193] He mentioned in his address that these earlier evening classes were ill-attended, and he was committed to bolster the city's school Americanization programs.[194]

The month after Mr. Cross's address, Harold Hughes wrote an article for the *FMR* about night school education in Fresno.[195] These night schools had classes for three groups: teenagers who could not be in school because of work responsibilities, adults who wanted more education, and "people from foreign nations who want a better understanding of the language of their adopted country that they may better appreciate the nation in which they live." Hughes also wrote, "the public schools, the centers of training, were the logical places for the making of citizens." The Fresno night schools offered citizenship classes to prepare immigrants to take a naturalization declaration oath. These classes

---

[191] Simon J. Lubin, "Why it is Immigration and Housing," *Housing Betterment* 3, no.3 (November, 1914): 13.

[192] Board of Education, Annual report of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno, 1915-1916 (Fresno: Board of Education, 1916), 22-23; State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Report on Fresno's Immigration,* 15.

[193] Ibid., 15, 18.

[194] "Jerome O. Cross addresses W.O.W.," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 25, 1918.

[195] Harold Hughes, "Night School Education," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 13, 1918.

taught English, information about the U.S. government, history of the country, and democracy.[196]

These articles evidence how the district had increased its focus on Americanization efforts in schools over a three-year period, after hearing suggestions from the CIHC. This also affirms that the CIHC gave direction but not dictation. Both Fresno women's activism and school system are examples of Americanization efforts focused on and planned around a variety of immigrants, in locations other than Los Angeles.

---

[196] Ibid.

CHAPTER 5: FORMALIZATION, 1917-1920

The 1918 CIHC Annual Report describes the foresight in the commission's state-wide plans.[197] As World War I came to a close, the rest of the country was "frantically organizing" Americanization efforts, and California "found herself a Prophet and a Pioneer."[198] The commission was created nearly five years before the United States entered the war, and had plenty of time to research, plan, and improve on any flaws in their program.[199] Nonetheless, national war aims prompted the commission to increase the effectiveness of their program and formalize their efforts.[200] The CIHC did this by publishing an official plan for California's Americanization, establishing alliances with state and community agencies, and opening educational opportunities through the University of California Extension Division. The CIHC's wide-spread work to enhance their program and their constant work with Fresno during this time, continues to demonstrate the commission's interest in ethnically diverse immigrant populations.

In September of 1917 Dr. Earnest C. Moore, President of the State Normal School at Los Angeles, wrote a letter to the CIHC about the "Education of Adult Immigrants."[201] In his letter, Moore wrote that "the war has roused us from our

---

[197] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Fifth Annual Report*, 8, 11.

[198] In a 1920 bulletin, the Department of the Interior Bureau of Education expressed that the general public was "aroused by the war." Department of the Interior Bureau of Education, "Training Teachers for Americanization," (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 50; Roesch, *Macho Men and Modern Women*, 45; State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Fifth Annual Report*, 1.

[199] Roesch, *Macho Men and Modern Women*, 44.

[200] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 102.

[201] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *A Discussion of Methods of Teaching English to Adult Foreigners with a Report on Los Angeles County* (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1917), 33.

indifference and aimlessness, it is certain that the Americanization of the foreigner is to be henceforth a permanent interest in the life of every community in which the foreigner is to be found." Two factors likely sparked Dr. Moore's sentiments. First, the country's diverse make up, and second, the thought of the diverse immigrant population joining the U.S. armed forces.[202] Moor and many other Americans feared that disloyal immigrants would hamper the nation's military efforts in the war. The CIHC also felt that political loyalty was important. In a 1918 pamphlet they wrote that World War I had caused the commission to realize "the seriousness of the situation," that "a nation made up, as is America, of diverse elements must be unified to be safe."[203] Their 1918 plan strove to engender "cooperation and friendliness" with immigrants, allowing the commission to successfully promote patriotic programs, democracy, the draft, and other unifying factors.[204]

In September of 1920, the CIHC published the first installment of the *California Immigration and Housing Bulletin*.[205] The CIHC opened this publication by describing the latest immigration information, stating, "Americanization workers have every need to clarify and unify their policies and to redouble their efforts, for once again their problem is increasing faster than they can handle it."[206] The very next sentence begins with a complaint about the soaring European immigration into the country, noting the astounding number of

---

[202] Mirel, *Patriotic Pluralism*, 119.

[203] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: The California Program* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918), 5.

[204] Ibid., 7, 10.

[205] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, "Some Principles of Immigrant Work," *The California Immigration and Housing Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (September, 1920): 3.

[206] Ibid.

Southern Italians, Greeks, Jugo-Slavs, Czechoslovaks, and Poles that were entering New York Harbors. During WWI, there was a lull in the immigration of these peoples, but after the war they began to immigrate again. The CIHC did not fear immigrant traditions, as much as they did immigrants' possible political disloyalties. The article then turns to the Western United States, pointing out that while nation-wide immigration of Europeans slowed during WWI, the west coast continued to receive immigrants.[207]

Before the war, California took in a wide variety of immigrants and the CIHC catered their Americanization programs to this diverse group. During the war, California saw an influx of Japanese and Mexican immigrants. After the war, there were rumors that the transcontinental railroad was "preparing to bring the newcomers from Europe west by the trainload."[208] The hysteria over continuous immigration into California, trepidation over European war refugees, and the prospects of the Panama Canal, increased national and state pressures on the CIHC.[209] These sentiments express the frenzy that the United States was in, and explain the CIHC's increased and streamlined actions during the war years.

The Proposal

Worries across the nation, kindled by WWI, motivated the CIHC to submit a document entitled "Americanization: The California Program," to Governor William D. Stephens, in 1918.[210] The CIHC gathered information for the

---

[207] Olin, European Immigrant and Oriental Alien, 304.

[208] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, "Some Principles of Immigrant Work," 3.

[209] Wild, *Street Meeting*, 48.

[210] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: The California Program*, 3.

proposed program from an accumulation of five years of Americanization experience. The commission believed that Americanization was "more than teaching English to foreigners," but was the fostering of "true democracy."[211] The United States was not the first country to experiment with democracy, but they desired to create a plan under their version of democracy, that would include both native-born and foreign-born leaders, to encourage national unity.[212] The commission insisted that "national unity cannot be secured while race prejudice exists," and that cooperation or appreciation were fundamental.[213] This plan was submitted for use in California, but the commission hoped that it would eventually be adopted by a federal agency and implemented throughout the nation.[214]

The commission was deeply convicted that their Americanization program would only be successful if it was "built on the needs of the people, which they themselves best understand."[215] Their method is clear, the program outline states, "the foreign born and the native born should share the responsibility of choice as to what is for the good of all."[216] The commission proposal claims that "leaders in the foreign-born groups [were] ready and eager

---

[211] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: The California Program,* 5, 7; Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 97.

[212] James E. Sanders, *The Vanguard of the Atlantic World: Creating Modernity, Nation, and Democracy in Nineteenth-Century Latin America* (Duke University Press, 2014); Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 98.

[213] The commission did not give their exact definition of race prejudice, but they did explain that this prejudice built barriers that inhibited cooperation and national unity. State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: The California Program,* 10.

[214] Ibid., 5.

[215] Ibid., 7.

[216] Ibid.

to enter upon this work, and to co-operate cordially with their American neighbors." [217] While the commission did inspire collaboration between native-born and immigrant societies the CIHC did not fully embrace the idea of immigrants having complete democratic roles in society. Christina Zieglar-McPhearson points out that the CIHC "did not organize immigrants into lobbying groups to pressure municipal and state agencies or other power brokers to improve housing conditions or to reduce or stabilize rents."[218] While the CIHC desired to help immigrants, they did so according to their own assessment of the immigrant's problem. This outlook is what resulted in a moderately pluralistic methodology, rather than one that was truly pluralistic.

The CIHC's proposed plan was reminiscent of the work they had already completed in Fresno. The plan included representatives on the state and county level. The CIHC would be the state representative, and then they would appoint a chairman of Americanization in each county. This chairman could be either a man or a woman, but they had to be American-born.[219] Then it was the county chairman's job to look for leaders from the foreign groups to work with. Once the chairman collected a group of both foreign and native born Americans, they were to meet and assign the following sub-committees: foreign born, labor, employers, Americanization organizations, and Education Authorities.[220] They were also to use local agencies as resources to conduct their local Americanization program.

---

[217] Ibid.

[218] Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States,* 71.

[219] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: The California Program,* 8.

[220] Ibid.

The CIHC's proposed plan charged the county Americanization chairman with orchestrating the general Americanization plan in their locality, by galvanizing key agencies: speakers, schools, industry, and churches. The proposal included 17 tactics for accomplishing local Americanization. Each tactic engaged a segment of the local community and ranged from community singing and patriotic films to evening schools and a special library service. In addition to the listed strategies, the CIHC provided information on orchestrating the four key agencies.

The county chairman was supposed to organize trainings for agents who spoke both English and foreign languages to spread unifying messages. The CIHC tasked English speakers with expressing: obligations to and importance of democracy, the part of foreigners in military, the contribution of foreigners to American history, "the absolute democracy of the draft," and the destruction of race prejudice.[221] The commission assigned foreign speakers to emphasize: American aims, the advantages of democracy, obligation of the foreign born and their children to America, democracy of the draft, becoming an "effective unit," the contribution of the foreign born to the world and America, and the "necessity for all to learn English—the language of America."[222] The ideals expressed by the agents, were also to be promulgated by the other three agencies, who had additional specific tasks.

The first agency was the local school. Its job was to create programs and train adults and students alike in the ways of Americanization. The proposal initially suggested three specific duties. First, the school was expected to form

---

[221] Ibid., 10.

[222] Ibid.

programs that would train individuals to teach English to the foreign born. These programs were to occur in normal schools and through institutes. Next, it was supposed to have "community centers" in each district.[223] And finally, it was to regularly set aside time in all schools, both public and private, "for the consideration of Americanization." The purpose of this time was to impart lessons of "courtesy to the foreign born and their children" and "obligation of the pupils to parents, to the schools, to the state, to the nation."[224] All of this was to enhance American loyalty and foster cooperation.

The second agency included employers and employees involved in industry. They were supposed to advocate a "spirit of American unity and democracy…in everyday work." Within the workplace, employers were to treat all employees fairly and not to "exploit the ignorance of the foreign-born."[225] They were also supposed to urge foreigners to learn English, as well as help them understand the importance of industry to military efforts. Then, the two were to "co-operate in improving industrial conditions and in raising them to American standards."[226]

Churches were the third agency. They were asked to "stress particularly those parts of their work bearing upon Americanization."[227] The county chairman was supposed to meet with church leaders and instruct them on ways their churches could be most effective in "patriotic work for the immigrant."[228] Their

---

[223] Ibid., 11.

[224] Ibid.

[225] Ibid.

[226] Ibid.

[227] Ibid., 12.

[228] Ibid.

three focuses were to: meet their moral "obligation to the immigrant," "help to destroy race prejudice," and to "advance national unity." The CIHC enlisted churches, because they had special influence over communities.

The CIHC believed that if the county chairman could mobilize the local citizens to do their part, they would be successful. The proposal stated, "upon them depends the making of local plans which shall be in harmony with, as well as a part of, the state plan." Even though the CIHC left most of the ground work to local citizens, they offered suggestions for county committees before enacting the local plan. The suggestions fell in line with what the CIHC had been doing for the past five years in various cities throughout the state.

Before creating a county committee, county leaders needed to invite representatives of the foreign born, labor, employers, Americanization organizations, and educational authorities to meet. This group would decide what their Americanization efforts should focus on; for some cities, it was health and others it was English. To determine the efforts they would focus on, they were advised to create temporary committees on: nationality, education, and social agencies, which would determine "definite information as to the foreign population. The CIHC noted their willingness to share questionnaire forms with counties, to ease the investigation process.

The Committee on Nationality was the most imperative, tasked with securing "careful estimates on the number, the nationality, the location, of the foreign-born people of the county."[229] They were encouraged to reach out to the schools, libraries, churches, settlements, industries, county supervisors, and foreign leaders to gather this information. They were also asked to investigate

---

[229] Ibid., 13.

how foreign population lived, if they read foreign newspapers, if they went to church, and if they had "American standards of living and contact with wholesome American living."

The Education Committee was supposed to find the availability for "adult immigrant education in evening classes, day classes, factory classes, citizenship classes, home teachers, and home economics." They were also supposed to figure out available finances and budget information. And since the county committee was so dependent on its work with community members, there was a Committee on Social Agencies, which was to assemble a comprehensive list of the agencies, as well as invite them to be a part of the local Americanization efforts. Schools, churches, playgrounds, city county departments, women's organizations, chamber of commerce, labor unions, etc. were all considered to be vital agencies.

Once each temporary committee brought its information back to the county committee, it would be informed enough to know "what its problem [was], where it [was] and the agencies upon which it [could] depend." Detailed action plans and the fostering of team work followed. We do not have Governor Stephens' response to this proposal, but we do know that the ideas in this program continued to be developed and implemented.

Alliances Formed

Sustained worries about immigrants led to further legislation from California's state education department. In 1919 California passed a law stating that "any person between 18 and 21 years of age who [could not] read, speak or write English as well as [was] required for the completion of the sixth grade of the elementary schools of California, [was] required" to attend special evening

courses on English and citizenship.[230] This decree called for a more concrete proclamation and implementation of the Americanization plan the CIHC presented to the governor in 1918 and had already enacted in several cities such as Fresno.

In 1920, the CIHC published a document entitled "Americanization: California's Answer." This pamphlet called California's immigrant situation an "emergency," because of the large population of immigrants unable to speak and write in English.[231] The commission saw common language as a basic tool for cooperation and national unity. The commission had organized the implementation of various evening English and citizenship courses around the state, but there was a shortage of these courses and qualified persons to effectively lead such courses. This "emergency" formed a bond between the CIHC and the State Board of Education (SBE).

Together, both agencies approached the University of California (UC) with a request to have extension courses created, to train Americanization leaders.[232] Realizing the gravity of the situation, the UC swiftly accepted, and created the "Citizenship Institute." Through this five-week program, the SBE would offer a new certificate titled "Teacher of Americanization." The courses were initially offered in Los Angeles, Fresno, and San Francisco, in that order.[233]

---

[230] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Bulletin of Information for Immigrants, Revised* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1924), 21; California State Board of Education, *Fourth Biennial Report* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921), 27.

[231] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: California's Answer*, 5

[232] Ibid; Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 84.

[233] "Lecture Course to be Given in Fresno," *Fresno Morning Republican (Fresno)*, November 30, 1919.

John Collier, a well-known instructor of community workers, and Ethel Richardson organized the courses.

In 1919, Mary Gibson invited Collier to leave his job as a social worker in New York and work with the CIHC. Collier grew up in Atlanta, but moved to New York in 1908 to aid immigrants becoming accustomed to urban life.[234] He did not employ strict assimilationist tactics, but scheduled activities to help preserve immigrant traditions. He was widely known to encourage cultural pluralism.[235] Gibson hired Collier to "develop a system of adult education across the state on matters of immigrant assimilation, citizenship, Americanization, and community center development."[236] Gibson planned for him to remain on the CIHC staff, but the commission ran out of funding for his position.[237]

The State Committee for Americanization (SCA) emerged out of the new alliance between the CIHC, SBE, and UC. This committee included: Simon Lubin, President of the CIHC; Mary Gibson, CIHC and Americanization chairman of the California and the General Federation of Women's Clubs; Will C. Wood, State Superintendent of Public instruction; E.P. Clarke, President of the SBE; Professor Leon J. Richardson, Extension Director; and Professor Frederic C. Blanchard, Assistant Extension Director. This committee of six, came together "to prevent

---

[234] Donald Lee Parman, *Indians and the American West in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 76.

[235] Ibid.

[236] Karin L. Huebner, "An Unexpected Alliance: Stella Atwood, the California Clubwomen, John Collier, and the Indians of the Southwest, 1917–1934," *Pacific Historical Review* 78, no. 3 (August, 2009): 353.

[237] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Seventh Annual Report* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921), 22.

overlapping and duplication of effort," and to form a cohesive plan to Americanize the foreigners residing in California.[238]

From here, the SCA decided on an efficient strategy. They knew that as a small group, they could not effectively train enough Americanization leaders to blanket the entire state. They created a three-pronged plan that was an adaptation of the 1918 proposal, marketing the idea of community organization. They believed that "local community organizations [were] the true mainsprings of citizenship work."[239] The SCA aimed to train leadership that would galvanize local women's clubs, schools, and public and private agencies to work together to Americanize their city's "alien" residents.

As a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, it was natural for Gibson to suggest women's clubs as an ally in Americanization. The SCA was convinced that the weekly meetings that women's clubs held, were perfect for educating them to be active Americanizers in their community. California Americanization programs were also uniquely focused on mothers in immigrant homes, and the SCA was confident that the club women would be efficient in this respect. The SCA also counted on the "motherly instincts" of the club women, to connect with immigrant children and their schools.[240]

The SCA placed a majority of the Americanization burden on the schools, because this is where education most naturally took place. To facilitate expanded Americanization efforts in schools, the SBE appointed an extension director at each of the eight California Normal Schools, to coordinate teacher qualification to

---

[238] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: California's Answer*, 6.

[239] Ibid., 4.

[240] Helen Varick Boswell, "Is Mother an American?," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 27, 1916.

instruct and organize Americanization. The SBE also sent groups of state workers to schools which served students of immigrant parentage, to assist the teachers in creating lessons more akin to Americanization efforts.[241] Additionally, Assistant Superintendent Richardson communicated with the principals of these schools to encourage school budgets for Americanization classes, the appointment of Americanization directors, and the development of more part-time classes.

The third prong of the SCA plan was cooperation with other general agencies. The SCA realized that each city had its own strengths and weaknesses, so the commission allowed the city to target those areas and utilize the local public and private agencies to improve their situation. Some of these agencies included: city and county departments, churches, libraries, playgrounds, Y.M.C.A/Y.W.C.A., and labor unions. Ultimately, the SCA desired leaders from these agencies, women's clubs, and school Americanization programs to meet with leaders of the foreign groups in town, to collaborate and create a "democratic organization of the citizens by neighborhoods."[242]

The "Citizenship Institute" in Fresno

Five years after the CIHC's first visit to Fresno, the city still held the commission's attention. And CIHC commissioners continued to stir Americanization fervor in Fresno residents. During and just after the war years, Americanization was a continued topic in the *FMR*. The Society page often

---

[241] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Americanization: California's Answer*, 11.

[242] Ibid., 3.

announced Americanization events and meetings for club women.[243] Other pages discussed Americanization programs throughout the country, calls for creation of more Americanization committees throughout the state to stave off radicalism, and conservatives encouraging Americanization to save democracy.[244] This continued discussion motivated Fresno residents to embrace the new Citizenship Institute.

City residents, both professional and lay, were inspired and taught how to be active in Americanization, at the Citizenship Institute. The CIHC scheduled classes to begin in Fresno December 8, 1919.[245] During the week leading up to the event, the *FMR* and course lecturers connected with the community and gave them information about the institute. These representatives advertised the program as "patriotic and practical courses in Americanization."[246] Reporters stressed the importance of attending the program, because they believed that "assimilation of the foreigners [was] the most vital American problem."[247]

Articles in the *FMR* stated that "the course in Americanization aim[ed] to train men and women in meeting the manifold problems arising in the assimilation of the alien into the freehold of good American citizenship," calling for teachers of the "foreign born," but also for the general public who came in

---

[243] "Clubs Calendar," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), November 20, 1919; "Clubs Calendar," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), November 23, 1919.

[244] "American Conservative," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), November 23, 1919; "To fight Reds," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), November 30, 1919; "New York City Training School for Americanization," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 13, 1919.

[245] "Class schedule for Lectures to Be given today," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 8, 1919.

[246] "Americanization Courses Popular," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 3, 1919.

[247] Ibid.

contact with the "foreign born" to attend.[248] These courses were meant for both professional Americanizers and persons who wished to understand immigrants better.[249] Based on the community's attitude, the newspaper predicted that there would be a "large attendance" at the Fresno program.[250]

A San Francisco article about the upcoming San Francisco courses also mentioned that the aim of the Citizenship Institute was to "train teachers and social service workers how best to meet the alien and hasten his assimilation into American life, and to give the business men and the employer of labor a fuller understanding of how best to deal with the immigrant and how to arrange factory community work so as to bring about more quickly the Americanization of his alien employees."[251] Fresno's inclusion in this esteemed program is telling of the city's prominence in the California Americanization movement.

The Citizenship Institute lecturers were Mr. John Collier, director of the training school for community workers in New York City; Dr. Roy Kelly, former director of the bureau of vocational guidance; Dr. Carol Aronovici, director of housing for the CIHC; Hulda Youngberg, English instruction instructor in Oakland; and Ethel Swain, from the Americanization department in the Oakland public school system.[252] Each of these people were experts in the field of

---

[248] "Americanization Courses Popular," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 3, 1919.

[249] "Americanization Courses Popular," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 7, 1919.

[250] "Americanization Courses Popular," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 3, 1919.

[251] Herting, "Citizenship Institute Designed to Americanize Aliens," 639.

[252] "Lecture Course to be Given in Fresno," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), November 30, 1919.

Americanization, and several of them were influential leaders in the California movement.

On December 4, the *FMR* printed an article listing the lecture subjects for the Fresno institute.[253] These courses were also promoted throughout the city by John Collier and Richardson.[254] Collier met with the local Rotary club, while Richardson spoke to the women's Query club.[255] Through these interactions the Citizen Institute garnered the interest and monetary support of lay community members.

On December 9, the day after the first classes, the *FMR* shared that the classes had indeed been well attended.[256] And as the courses progressed, the newspaper continued to give daily updates and overviews.[257] On December 16, the newspaper stated that "the attendance was greater than any night before."[258] The article also shared that evening's topics, noting that "Miss Youngberg [was] instructing on improved methods of teaching English, and Dr. Aronovici's course [was] on housing and immigration."[259] The speakers also addressed the issue of differing ideas of Americanization. They spoke against the melting-pot idea, explaining that "variety and a decent privacy are not inimical to

---

[253] "Americanization Courses Popular," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 3, 1919.

[254] Ethel Richardson was not a speaker for the Fresno Citizenship Institute, but she did speak for the San Francisco institute. "Collier Addresses the Rotary Club Today," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 8, 1919.

[255] "Clubs Calendar Entry," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 4, 1919; "Club News," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 9, 1919.

[256] "Americanization Instructors Start Well Attended Classes," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 9, 1919.

[257] Ibid.

[258] "Americanizing Program is Renewed," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), December 16, 1919.

[259] Ibid.

democracy."[260] They agreed with Lubin, who did not see harm in allowing immigrants to retain traditions, habits, and customs. These courses and continued discussions inspired attendees to apply the skills they learned during the Citizenship Institute and enhance their Americanization efforts in Fresno.

It is clear that from the beginning of California's Americanization initiative, that the CIHC was focused on serving cities big and small all over the state, not just Los Angeles. It is also evident that the commission was not only dedicated to working with many different cities, but that it was dedicated to working with a vast array of immigrants. Part of that dedication is seen in their continued work in Fresno, inspiring Fresno residents to expand their Americanization programs.

---

[260] Ibid.

CHAPTER 6: CONTINUITY, 1920-1929

Amidst changes in national immigration law and state administration, Americanization efforts in Fresno moved forward, with a consistent methodology. Fresno's Americanization efforts grew steadily and were maintained throughout the 1920s by the Parlor Lecture club and the school system. Numerous scholars assert that California Americanization efforts radicalized after World War I and that the CIHC's Americanization work slowed nearly to a halt during the 1920s, but that is not the case.[261] Even though the commission saw push from external entities, they continued to move forward with their diverse Americanization work.

In 1917 Congress passed the Immigration Act.[262] This act posed a required literacy test, excluded infirm and immoral people, and blocked anyone from countries such as India, Burma, and Arabia. Combined with the restrictions of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement, the 1917 Immigration Act blocked residents from almost all of Asia.

In 1921, the United States government passed the Emergency Quota Act, which is most often called the National Origins Act.[263] Congress devised the act to keep immigrants from Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe from entering the country, in light of World War I results. Legislators initially planned this as a temporary regulation, but it was maintained. Not only did this legislation continue, but it evolved and was reinforced in 1924.

---

[261] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 230.

[262] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 18.

[263] Ibid., 20.

The United States further excluded immigrants through the Johnson-Reed Act, in 1924.[264] This act limited the number of immigrants entering the United States, and established a quota system for European immigrants. The act gave Germany 51,227 immigration spaces, while it limited countries like Romania to only 603. Countries like Greece and Turkey were confined to 100 spaces. In contrast to this limitation, people from Mexico, Canada, and the Caribbean were able to immigrate with little restriction.[265] Lawmakers decided this differentiation based on labor interests. Despite national immigration changes, the CIHC and the counties it had inspired, continued their work. The ethnic demographics of immigrants to California began to change, but the CIHC maintained its original aims.[266] The commission also maintained its goals despite many trying changes in the California government.

California Administrative Changes

In 1917, California elected William Stephens to be the governor. As Governor, Stephens reorganized finances and arranged for the CIHC to have a larger budget.[267] The enhanced budget helped the commission, but it upset external groups such as agribusinesses and real estate companies whose interests were undermined by the commission.[268] In 1920, Richardson's role as head of the CIHC Department of Education was moved to the state Department of Education.[269] Despite surmounting political odds during the 1920s, Richardson

---

[264] Ibid., 17, 21-25; Greg Roza, *Immigration and Migration* (New York: Gareth Stevens, 2011), 27.

[265] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects,* 23.

[266] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 85.

[267] Ibid., 73-74.

[268] Ibid., 66, 74.

[269] Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 84.

maintained the original progressive education reform spirit through her position in the state Department of Education.[270] She continued to support Americanization and immigrant education in both women's clubs and public schools.[271] When, in 1922, commissioner Gibson stepped down from her position with the CIHC, there was a shift in state immigrant education, but not the eradication of it or CIHC Americanization work.[272]

Governor Stephens protected the CIHC from 1917-1923, but the election of conservative Governor Friend Richardson ushered in a new era of struggle.[273] Governor Richardson called for the dissolution of the CIHC, although commissioner Hanna convinced him to decelerate his censure.[274] The Better American Federation then organized campaigns to ruin progressive achievements in the state, and Governor Richardson ended up firing commissioner Scharrenberg after budget disputes and false accusations.[275] Following Scharrenberg's unjust treatment, President Lubin left the commission in solidarity.[276] Governor Richardson chose replacement commissioners, leaving McBride and Hanna as the only original members. Hanna, who had managed the

---

270 Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 128, 160.

271 Governor Richardson allotted extra money for education in his 1925 budget. Ibid., 86.

272 State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Ninth Annual Report (*Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1923), 2.

273 Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 73, 79.

274 Ibid., 81-82.

275 The Better American Federation worked almost exclusively in California. The federation was created in Los Angeles in 1920. They had "superpatriotic" goals to campaign against anything they defined as un-American. Edwin Layton, "The Better America Federation: A Case Study of Superpatriotism," *Pacific Historical Review* 30, no. 2 (May, 1961): 137; Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 76-77.

276 Ibid., 76.

CIHC Bureau of Complaints, became president in Lubin's stead.[277] Anne Marie Woo-Sam states that the CIHC mission was "not perverted," despite the change in CIHC leadership.[278] The commission continued its work with immigrant complaints, housing, labor camps, and supporting immigrant education, throughout the 1920s.[279]

In 1926 California voters elected the well-known progressive C. C. Young to be Governor. Young believed in the CIHC principles, but felt that they would serve better as an advisory board for the new state Department of Industrial Relations. Governor Young renamed the commission the Division of Housing and Sanitation (DHS).[280] Throughout these transitions, Hanna maintained his position and the original progressive spirit. In 1931, the commission was renamed the Division of Immigration and Housing, because the DHS name had confused immigrants.[281] Hanna finished his stint with the commission in 1935, but the commission continued in various forms through the mid 1940s.[282]

Fresno Consistency

In researching the Americanization efforts of Fresno, it is obvious that Americanization and education of immigrants continued throughout the 1920s, along similar methodological lines. Even though the CIHC did not have the same influence it relished in 1913 or 1919, the commission's surveys and plans for

---

[277] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Eleventh Annual Report* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1925), 2.

[278] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 85.

[279] State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, *Eleventh Annual Report*, 3.

[280] Woo-Sam, "Domesticating the Immigrant," 87.

[281] Ibid., 88.

[282] Gribble, *An Archbishop for the People*, 5.

county committees had made a mark. Fresno had leaders and citizens who embodied the CIHC's Americanization plan and continued to expand the commission's efforts. Wilson D. Wallace's *FMR* series on nationalities and Americanization in Fresno represents this consistency among some Fresno residents.

Wallace believed that, in general, Americanization was "confused in the public mind."[283] In his series, Wallace held that Americanization should promote patriotism, not cultural destruction. He wrote, "any honest seeker who accepts as fundamentals justice and the purpose to abide by the constitutional methods for effecting such reforms as are desirable is within the purview of ideal Americanism." He did not believe that traditions in line with these political views should be abolished. He stated that "national cultures of the foreigners should not be discouraged…to have a sentimental attachment for one's native land is not to be handicapped in the process of Americanization." Several of Wallace's other articles also discuss the need to retain aspects of immigrant culture.

After being organized by CIHC workers and trained by the Citizenship Institute, Fresno maintained and grew its Americanization efforts. After the institute, there was notable growth in the Parlor Lecture Club and school district efforts. According to a 1924 article in the *Fresno Morning Republican*, Fresno continued to be very active in the Americanization effort. The article states, "educators throughout the nation are carefully watching the progress of work in Fresno County…[it] is taking care of the immigrant problem by turning aliens

---

[283] Wilson D. Wallace, "Study of Fresno Nationalities: Nationalities and Americanization," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), October 17, 1920.

into American citizens."[284] The Fresno teaching college was even recognized as one of only five teacher colleges in the state that offered instruction on how to teach immigrant children.[285]

Parlor Lecture Club Continues Americanization

One of the ways Fresno continued to bolster its Americanization program was through woman of the Parlor Lecture Club. As the club's special committees fluctuated each year, the club remained interested in Americanization work. Although, they did make changes in the way they expressed their interest. The Americanization special committee had been established in 1918 and was chaired by Mrs. Cross. For a reason currently unknown, she did not lead the committee the following year. That job was given to Miss Frances E. Dean.[286] The following year, Miss Dean remained on the committee, but Miss Susan Rabourne was the chairman.[287] In 1921, the club made an interesting change to the committee. They changed its name to the "Citizenship Committee" and placed Miss Francis E. Dean back in the position of chairman.[288] The following year, the name remained the same, but Mrs. A. Bernhauer was the chairman.[289]

By Fall of 1923 the club had disbanded the special committee, but not for lack of interest.[290] There was no longer "Americanization day" or "Citizenship

---

[284]Lorenzo, "Race, Gender, and Mexican Americanization," 50-51.

[285] Mary C. Biffer, "Desirable Curriculum Modifications in English and Civics for a Neighborhood School (Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, 1924), 14.

[286] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1919-1920* (Fresno, California, 1920).

[287] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1920-1921* (Fresno, California, 1921), 9.

[288] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1921-1922* (Fresno, California, 1922), 9.

[289] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1922-1923* (Fresno, California, 1923), 15.

[290] Ibid., 15.

day," but the work of Americanization and citizenship lectures was adopted by the club's "Civic Philanthropic Department." For example, the following year guests gave presentations such as "Citizenship" by Frank W. Thomas and "America Land of My Adoption," by Mrs. D.L. Zimmerman.[291] In October of 1925 the department even invited Ethel Richardson to lecture the group on adult education.[292]

In 1926, the club resurrected their Americanization special committee.[293] This time, the committee was chaired by Mrs. Harriet Merrill, who had also been part of the Civic Philanthropic Department. In addition to being involved in the club's Americanization efforts, Mrs. Merrill had also been a lecturer at the 1923 Annual California Teachers Association meeting, for the leaders of Americanization Departments across the Valley.[294] And in 1924, she was listed as the Americanization Supervisor for all of Fresno County.[295] In 1926, the San Francisco periodical *Wester Journal of Education* dedicated a number of pages to reviewing Fresno County schools.[296] The article discussed many facets of the Fresno educational programs, including the work of Mrs. Merrill as supervisor of Americanization. The article explains that she was doing an excellent work, creating Americanization classes for adults in most of the local high schools. The

---

[291] Ibid., 19; Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1924-1925* (Fresno, California, 1925), 9, 17.

[292] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1925-1926* (Fresno, California, 1926).

[293] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1926-1927* (Fresno, California, 1927), 10.

[294] *Program, Annual Meeting of California Teachers' Association Central Section and Annual County Institutes of Fresno, and Madera Counties and Fresno City*, (Fresno: 1923), 13.

[295] "Topics and Persons of the Race Relations Investigation being Carried on in the Los Angeles District," June 14, 1924, 4.

[296] W. M. Culp, "Fresno," *The Western Journal of Education* 32, (1926): 2.

reporter boasted that in classes throughout the county, but outside of the city, "around sixteen hundred" were enrolled. Mrs. Merrill led the PLC Americanization committee until 1929, when she passed the baton to Mrs. J.H. Clark.[297] The Americanization special committee continued for several years after this, undeterred by national and state-level changes.[298]

The School System Continues Americanization

During the years when the PLC did not have a special committee for Americanization, Fresno was still active in Americanization work. The city continued to build the programs that Mrs. Merrill later directed. To do this, they expanded their evening schools, included Americanization into school curriculum and practice, and offered special programs for Americanization teachers.

In a 1920 article, F.H. Sutton opened a window to the options Fresno had developed for evening schools. In his article, Sutton made "a very strong plea for every non-English speaking man and woman to get in and learn the language of the country of its adoption."[299] He goes on to explain the local Fresno opportunities. He notes that "the department of Americanization in the Fresno Evening Schools has established many classes…to carry on this work for the new Americans."[300] He wrote that there were "classes for them in the evening in the high school, the Columbia school, the Kirk school, and the day nursery." There

---

[297] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1929-1930* (Fresno, California, 1930).

[298] Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1930-1931* (Fresno, California, 1931); Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1931-1932* (Fresno, California, 1932); Parlor Lecture Club, *Parlor Lecture Club Yearbook 1932-1933* (Fresno, California, 1933).

[299] F. H. Sutton, "Vocational Education," *Fresno Morning Republican* (Fresno), September 26, 1920.

[300] Ibid.

were also evening English classes for Italian and Mexican women at the Columbia school, Monday through Thursday, as well as classes at the Fresno Evening High School to prepare for naturalization.

The following year, Fresno increased its class offering by adding several new citizenship training centers. In 1921, the district held Americanization classes at: the Fresno Evening High School, Kirk, Hawthorne, Emerson, and Columbia.[301] The district also employed Elizabeth Wagner as a home teacher, who was based at the Kirk school.[302] Wagner visited homes of the "foreign-born" and conducted Americanization classes. Additionally, the district hired Mary Blanche Cummings as "Director of Research."[303] In this position, Cummings developed courses for all of the city's special and industrial schools. She also conducted and organized the results of student psychological and intelligence tests. In addition, she trained other teachers to do the same.

According to the 1923-1924 school directory, Fresno Evening High School increased its focus on citizenship by moving from four Americanization teachers to an entire Americanization department.[304] Over the next five years, Fresno added another evening school, while locations of other citizenship training centers fluctuated.[305] These documents demonstrate that the Fresno education

---

[301] The City of Fresno, Fresno Unified School District, *Directory of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno California*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno County Printing Office, 1921), 11.

[302] Ibid.

[303] Fresno Board of Education, minutes, 14 July 1921, p. 1468.

[304] The City of Fresno, Fresno Unified School District, *Directory of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno California, 1923-1924*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno County Printing Office, 1923), 11.

[305] The City of Fresno, Fresno Unified School District, *Directory of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno California, 1924-1925*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno County Printing Office, 1924); The City of Fresno, Fresno Unified School District, *Directory of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno California*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno County Printing Office, 1927), 15.

department was enthusiastic about Americanization and applying the latest strategies.

The Fresno school district also added Americanization into the mandatory day-school curriculum. The 1924 Fresno County public school manual included standards for all of the classes offered at each school. Among the typical classes such as: History, Art, Reading, Penmanship, Arithmetic, and Sewing, was a listing for Americanization class.[306] The page containing the class aims and standards reads, "America is no longer assimilating the foreign born without a conscious effort."[307] Fresno's education department saw themselves as part of that conscious effort.

The page continues, stating that Americanization is just as much for the foreign born as for "the community."[308] Although, the list that followed was focused on the foreign born. The education department was most interested in inculcating the English language and "American democracy."[309] These values were to be "especially emphasized" in the elementary school, but also passed on through evening classes and community gatherings.[310]

The district also valued continuing education for their Americanization teachers. It is unknown how many times the Central District of the California Teacher Association met, but there are records of annual meetings in 1923 and 1924. In those years, California's Teacher Association, Central District, met in Fresno California for three days of workshops, meetings, dinners, and

---

[306] Fresno County, Fresno Unified School District, *Manual Public Schools Fresno County California*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno County Printing Office, 1924), 2.

[307] Ibid., 7.

[308] Ibid.

[309] Ibid.

[310] Ibid.

entertainment. At this conference teachers and administrators discussed their subject areas and departments, school programs, and business.[311] Both years, there was a specific program for those who worked in the Americanization departments at each Fresno County school. At these meetings, teachers continued to discuss Americanization and how to be more effective disseminators of it.

During the 1923 meetings, there was a luncheon for Americanization directors and a dinner for Citizenship teachers, which Americanization faculty were also invited to.[312] Mrs. Clara Caldwell presided over the Citizenship and Americanization workshops, which discussed paths to citizenship, language "handicaps" of children with "foreign born" parents, and general addresses by experts in their fields.[313] There were seven presenters, two of which were Ethel Swain and Ethel Richardson, who had been instructors at the UC Citizenship Institute.[314]

During the 1924 meetings, the program listed Citizenship workshops again. This conference had workshops that dealt with immigrants from central Europe, the importance of club activities in Americanization, "the international mind," and adult education.[315] This year's conference only had five presenters, one of which was the returning Ethel Richardson. She gave a special presentation on European immigrants, because she had just returned from doing research

---

[311] It is unknown whether these meetings were held in previous or following years. Program, Annual Meeting of California Teachers' Association Central Section and Annual County Institutes of Fresno, and Madera Counties and Fresno City, (Fresno: 1923), 10, 24, 28, 29.

[312] Ibid., 6, 7.

[313] Ibid., 12.

[314] Ibid., 12, 13.

[315] *Program, Annual Meeting of California Teachers' Association Central Section and Annual County Institutes of Fresno, and Madera Counties and Fresno City*, (Fresno: 1924), 16, 17.

there. This reveals that influential California Americanizers maintained their interest in working with ethnically diverse immigrant population, even after the United States passed restrictive national immigration laws.

From the various meetings, lectures, and classes, throughout the 1920s, it is evident that Fresno leaders and residents continued to discuss and implement Americanization in accordance with the CIHC's moderately pluralistic methodology. It is also evident that Fresno was adamant about making connections between state officials, local officials, local schools, and local residents, to create a web of Americanization that would influence all of the city's immigrants. Fresno is an example that shows not only variety in the CIHC program, but also that the commission's focus was on an ethnically diverse group of immigrants

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued that the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California had state-wide and multiethnic objectives, which led commissioners to organize moderately pluralistic Americanization efforts in Fresno, California. Studies on California Americanization typically center on Southern California and Mexican Americans. This study looks at national viewpoints of the immigrant problem, the CIHC's assessment of the perceived problem, the commission's efforts to ameliorate the problem throughout the state and in Fresno, the nation-wide call to enhance Americanization efforts during WWI that formalized the CIHC's Americanization mobilization, and the growth and continuity of Americanization efforts in Fresno. The study recognizes that the CIHC worked throughout the state, and also points out that the CIHC was especially interested in Fresno, because it had a large and ethnically diverse immigrant population.

This information is consequential, because it reveals the CIHC's ethnically diverse work and opens doors for many new studies. Numerous scholars of California Americanization argue about the beliefs and motives of California Americanizers, and the CIHC in specific. Based on their limited location and population scopes, these scholars argue that California Americanizers did not gear their programs for a diverse population and that the commission was heavily influenced by strict assimilationist groups. This thesis presents research on the CIHC and Fresno that broaden our understanding of California Americanization efforts.

This study looks primarily at CIHC surveys done in Fresno, as well as Americanization work done through the school district and the Parlor Lecture

club. Each of these subjects present salient information, but there is more to be gleaned from Fresno's Americanization programs. This study did not look deeply into Americanization work done by employers, housing officials, the playground committee, or other women's clubs in the area. Research on these entities will yield an enhanced understanding of Fresno's Americanization efforts.

The CIHC did not control the Americanization programs throughout the state. It focused on training and equipping Americanization leaders and giving advice. Each county had different immigrants, issues, and resources. Some prominent cities that researchers of the CIHC may reap significant information from are: San Francisco, Sacramento, Oakland, and Bakersfield. Research on other areas besides Fresno and Los Angeles will lead academics to better understand the actual effect that the CIHC had on communities throughout California.

Studies of these specific communities may find information comparable to Fresno or Los Angeles, but it also may unlock new information and perspectives. Researching Americanization work in the smaller cities surrounding Fresno is also important, because they had active Americanization programs, despite their small size. Looking at these cities will present a more rounded view of California Americanization. A compilation of studies on cities and counties throughout the state, may reveal that Americanizers across the state had a gradient of views on strict assimilation versus pluralism. The study of Fresno revealed that the county had an ethnically diverse population, and that its Americanization leaders followed closely to the CIHC's methodology, which was based on moderately pluralistic ideas.

Studies on Americanization are consequential, because they inform our understanding and definition of Americanism. These studies also prompt us to analyze our approaches to contemporary immigrant policy and programs. Contemporary initiatives cannot be critiqued completely unless the approaches of the parent programs are better understood.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Biffer, Mary C. “Desirable Curriculum Modifications in English and Civics for a Neighborhood School.” Master’s Thesis, University of Southern California, 1924.

Board of Education. Annual report of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno, 1915-1916. Fresno: Board of Education, 1916.

California State Board of Education. *Fourth Biennial Report*. Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921.

Culp, W. M. “Fresno.” *The Western Journal of Education* 32, (1926).

Department of the Interior. “Report of the Commissioner of Education for the year ended June 30, 1918.” Washington Government Printing Office.

———. *Training Teachers for Americanization: A Course of Study for Normal Schools and Teacher Institutes*. by John J. Mahoney, Frances K. Wetmore, Helen Winkler, and Elsa Alsberg. Washington, D.C.: GPO.

Herting, A.C. “Citizenship Institute Designed to Americanize Aliens.” *The Stirring Rod* 6, no. 8 (January 1920).

Lubin, Simon J. "Why it is Immigration and Housing,” *Housing Betterment* 3, no.3 (November, 1914).

“The 1912 Meeting.” *Bulletin of the American Academy of Medicine* 12, no.6 (December, 1911): 343-344.

Program. Annual Meeting of California Teachers’ Association Central Section and Annual County Institutes of Fresno, and Madera Counties and Fresno City. Fresno: 1923.

Program. Annual Meeting of California Teachers’ Association Central Section and Annual County Institutes of Fresno, and Madera Counties and Fresno City. Fresno: 1924.

Register 1921-1922. *University of California Bulletin* 16, no. 5 (November, 1922).

Rielly, Ursula. *Parlor Lecture Club President's Annual report, 1918-1919*. Fresno, California, 1919.

State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California. *Americanization: California's Answer.* Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1920.

———. *Americanization: The California Program.* Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918.

———. *Bulletin of Information for Immigrants, Revised*. Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1924.

———. *A Discussion of Methods of Teaching English to Adult Foreigners with a Report on Los Angeles County.* Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1917.

———. *Report on an Experiment Made in Los Angeles in the Summer of 1917 for the Americanization of the Foreign-Born Women*. Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1917.

———. *Report on Fresno's Immigration Problem: With Particular Reference to Educational Facilities and Requirements*. Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918.

———. "Some Principles of Immigrant Work." *The California Immigration and Housing Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (September, 1920).

"Topics and Persons of the Race Relations Investigation being Carried on in the Los Angeles District." June 14, 1924, 4.

Wilson, Ina. *Parlor Lecture Club President's Annual report, 1917-1918*. Fresno, California, 1918.

Newspapers

Fresno Bee

Fresno Morning Republican

Collections

Ben Walker

Directory of the Public Schools of the City of Fresno California 1921, 1923, 1924, 1927

Ethnic Oral History Project 1977-1988

Fresno Unified School District Board of Education Minutes

Hispanic Oral History Project

June English

Parlor Lecture Club Reports and Yearbooks 1911-1933

State Commission of Immigration and Housing of California Annual Reports 1915, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1921, 1923, 1925

United States Census 1920 and 1930

Secondary Sources

Aguilera, Diana. "Diversity in Fresno: How Racial Covenants Once Ruled Prestigious Neighborhoods." *Valley Public Radio*, December 8, 2015. Accessed May 2017. http://kvpr.org/post/diversity-fresno-how-racial-covenants-once-ruled-prestigious-neighborhoods#stream/0

————. "Rare Maps Reveal Fresno's Overlooked History of Segregation." *Valley Public Radio*, October 27, 2015. Accessed September 2016. http://kvpr.org/post/rare-maps-reveal-fresnos-overlooked-history-segregation

Buitron, Richard. *The Quest for Tejano Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1913-2000*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Crocker, Ruth. Social Work and Social Order: The Settlement Movement in Two Industrial Cities, 1889-1930. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992.

Chávez-García, Miroslava. "Intelligence Testing at Whittier School, 1890-1920." *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 2 (May 2007): 193-228.

Davis, Matthew D. *Exposing a Culture of Neglect: Herschel T. Manuel and Mexican American Schooling.* Connecticut: Information Age Publishing, 2005.

Garcia, Matt. *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

Glad, Paul W. T*he History of Wisconsin: Volume V, War, a New Era, and Depression, 1914-1940.* Steven's Point: Warzolla Publishing Company, 2013.

Gonzalez, Gilbert G. *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation.* Denton: UNT Press, 2013.

Gribble, Richard. *An Archbishop for the People: The Life of Edward J. Hanna.* New York: Paulist Press, 2006.

Griffiths, Danielle Christine. "A Community Divided: Visalia, California 1852-1940." Master's Thesis, California State University, Fresno, 2009.

Gullett, Gayle. "Women Progressives and the Politics of Americanization in California, 1915-1920." *Pacific Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (Feb., 1995): 71-94.

Heinemann, I. *Inventing the Modern American Family: Family Values and Social Change in 20th Century United States*. New York: Campus Verlag, 2012.

Hennen, John C. *The Americanization of West Virginia: Creating a Modern Industrial State, 1916-1925.* Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2015.

Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

Hing, B.O. *Defining America: Through Immigration Policy*. New York: Temple University Press, 2012.

"History of Fresno." Development and Resource Management Administration, last modified 2016, accessed March 2016. https://www.fresno.gov/darm/historic-preservation/history-of-fresno/

Hoerder, Dirk. *American Labor and Immigration History, 1877-1920s: Recent European Research*. Edited by Dirk Hoerder. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983.

Hofstadter, Richard. *The Progressive Movement, 1900-1915*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

Huebner, Karin L. "An Unexpected Alliance: Stella Atwood, the California Clubwomen, John Collier, and the Indians of the Southwest, 1917–1934." *Pacific Historical Review* 78, no. 3 (August, 2009): 337-366.

James, Michael E. *The Conspiracy of the Good: Civil Rights and the Struggle for Community in Two American Cities, 1875-2000.* New York: Peter Lang, 2005.

Jorae, Wendy Rouse. *The Children of Chinatown: Growing Up Chinese American in San Francisco, 1850-1920.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

Parman, Donald Lee. *Indians and the American West in the Twentieth Century*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Kaiser, Darrel Philip. *Emigration to and from the German-Russian Volga Colonies.* Lulu.com, 2008.

King, Desmond S. *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse Democracy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Kyle, D., H. Rensch, M. Hoover, E. Rensch, and W. Abeloe. *Historic Spots in California.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.

Edwin Layton, Edwin. "The Better America Federation: A Case Study of Superpatriotism." *Pacific Historical Review* 30, no. 2 (May, 1961): 137-147.

Lewthwaite, Stephanie. *Race, Place, and Reform in Mexican Los Angeles: A Transnational Perspective, 1890-1940*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009.

Lissak, Rivka Shpak. *Pluralism and Progressives: Hull House and the New Immigrants, 1890-1919*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

Lorenzo, Maria-Isabel. "Race, Gender, and Mexican Americanization: How Mainstream Anglo Assumptions Inspired Mexican Americanization in California, 1914-1939." MA thesis, California State University, Fresno, 2012.

Marten, James. *Children and Youth during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.* Edited by James Marten. New York: New York University Press, 2014.

McGerr, Michael. *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920*. New York: Free Press, 2003.

Meyer, William B. *The Progressive Environmental Prometheans: Left-Wing Heralds of a "Good Anthropocene."* Hamilton: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Mowry, George E. "The California Progressive and His Rationale: A Study in Middle Class Politics." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 36, no. 2 (September, 1949): 239-250.

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

Pascoe, Peggy. *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Mirel, Jeffrey. *Patriotic Pluralism: Americanization Education and European Immigrants*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Molina, Natalia. *Fit to be Citizens?: Public Health in Los Angeles, 1876-1939*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

Olin Jr., Spencer C. *California's Prodigal Sons: Hiram Johnson and the Progressives, 1911-1917.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

————. "European Immigrant and Oriental Alien: Acceptance and Rejection by the California Legislature of 1913." *Pacific Historical Review* 35, no. 3 (August 1966): 303-315.

Panter, John. "Central California Colony: 'Marvel of the Desert'." *Fresno Past & Present* 32, no. 2 (1994): 1-11.

Pastorello, Karen. *American History Series: Activism and Reform in American Society, 1893-1917*. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

Piott, Steven L. *Daily Life in the Progressive Era*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2011.

Raftery, Judith Rosenberg. *Land of Fair Promise: Politics and Reform in Los Angeles Schools, 1885-1941*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

Roberts, Priscilla. *The Power of Culture: Encounters between China and the United States*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Roesch, Claudia. *Macho Men and Modern Women: Mexican Immigration, Social Experts and Changing Family Values in the 20th Century United States*. Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2015.

Roitman, Joel M. "The Progressive Movement: Education and Americanization." PhD Dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1981.

Romo, Ricardo. *East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Roza, Greg. *Immigration and Migration.* New York: Gareth Stevens, 2011.

Sackman, Doug. *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Sánchez, George J. *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

————.*"Go After the Women": Americanization and the Mexican Immigrant Woman, 1915-1929*. No. 6. Stanford Center for Chicano Research, Stanford University, 1984.

Suarez-Orozco, Marcelo M., Carola Suarez-Orozco, and Desiré. Qin-Hilliard, *The New Immigrant in American Society: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the New Immigration Vol 3*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Taggart, Robert J. *Private Philanthropy and Public Education: Pierre S. Du Pont and the Delaware Schools, 1890-1940*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1988.

Tamura, Eileen H. *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawaii.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994.

Van Elteren, Mel. *Americanism and Americanization: A Critical History of Domestic and Global Influence*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company Inc., 2006.

Van Nuys, Frank. *Americanizing the West: Race, Immigrants, and Citizenship, 1890-1930*. Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2002.

Vandor, Paul E. *History of Fresno County California with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present*. Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1919.

Wild, Mark. *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Woo-Sam, Anne Marie. "Domesticating the Immigrant: California's Commission of Immigration and Housing and the Domestic Immigration Policy Movement, 1910-1945." PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1999.

Yung, Judy. *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Ziegler-McPherson, Christina A. *Americanization in the States: Immigrant Social Welfare Policy, Citizenship, & National Identity in the United States, 1908-1929*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009.