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Chinese Immigration in British Columbia, Canada 1858-1923

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CHINESE IMMIGRATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA 1858 — 1923

Stereotypes and discriminatory legislation

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INTRODUCTION

1. A time of mutation

The nineteenth century was a time of construction and formation for what will become Canada. During the very early days, the focal point of economic and political life was in the East, roughly around what is now known as the provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

a. The Canadian Confederation

In October 1864, a proposal was made at the Quebec conference asking for the union of the Maritimes (Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick). During that conference were produced the Quebec Resolutions: seventy-two resolutions that laid the framework for the future Canadian Constitution.[1] This proposal had previously been discussed at the Charlottetown conference in September 1864. The idea was the union of the provinces of British North America in order to form a new country: the Dominion of Canada. This vision was finally realized three years later at the London Conference that saw the birth of the British North America Act. The name of the new country "Canada" was easily adopted while its designation posed more problems. The designation of kingdom was proposed but it was feared that it would be taken as a provocation by the United States. Finally Samuel Leonard Tilley[2] suggested the term "Dominion" lifted from a psalm of the Bible.[3] The BNA Act received Royal Assent on March 29, 1867 and the union was officially proclaimed on July 1st, 1867. However by this date, Canada was far

[1]The Canadian Constitution is also called the British North America Act, 1867

[2]"New Brunswick politician who attended all three Confederation conferences. In addition to two terms as the premier of New Brunswick, Tilley held the posts of minister of customs and minister of finance in the federal government. He also twice served as his province's lieutenant-governor."

[3]"London Conference." Government of Canada; Canadian Heritage; Communications. Accessed February 15, 2016. http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1408373484663/1408373519039.

from being what it is today. Indeed, it was composed of only four provinces: Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The other areas of Canada (the current provinces of Canada) came gradually to join the new country. But the process that led to Confederation was a long and complicated one.

The men that sat at the various conferences and drafted the BNA Act are remembered as the Fathers of Confederation; among them can be found some of the most important political figures of Canada's early history. For example, John A. Macdonald who will later on serve as Canada's first Prime Minister or Sir George-Etienne Cartier. Cartier was one of the most fervent supporters of the Confederation, he took part in all three conferences; he was also instrumental in bringing the Northwest Territories, Manitoba and British Columbia into the fold.

Then progressively more and more provinces and territories joined the Confederation. They all had different reasons and motives to do so, such as economic interest, autonomy to gain or to be provided with certain services (such as the railway as was the case in BC). To summarize this lengthy process: Manitoba and the Northwest Territories entered in 1870; British Columbia in 1871; Prince Edward Island in1873; the Yukon Territory in 1898; Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905.[4] [5]

For the sake of clarity, it is worth noting that until 1866, the appellation 'British Columbia' only referred to the mainland part of what is now the province of British Columbia. It had been created during the Gold Rush by the British government. The colony of Vancouver Island was a distinct entity with its own governor and elected assembly. During the negotiations of the future Canadian Confederation, the two Western

[4] "Timeline - Entry of Provinces and Territories Into Confederation." Government of Canada; Canadian Heritage; Communications. Accessed February 17, 2016. http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1409055284426/1406028736404.

[5] And finally Newfoundland joined in 1949 and Nunavut in 1999.

colonies "were contemplating a union of their own".[6] This union was made official in 1866 under the name of British Columbia.

b. The Industrial Revolution and railroads in Canada

This era was a time of mutations, in North America but not only. One very important aspect of it was the Second Industrial Revolution, also sometimes referred to as the Technological Revolution which came after the First Industrial Revolution that started as early as the 1760s. This denomination encompasses the boom in technological advances made between 1870 and 1914. It was characterized by great improvements in many fields and particularly the increase in steel production that enabled the construction of more rails and thus the development of trains and railroads. In Canada, because of the growing economy, it was soon realized that the use of trains would represent an important gain of time and money. Indeed transporting material and goods via train would represent a great economy of both time (trains are faster than boats and can go cross-country) and money thanks to the principle of the economies of scale (more goods could be delivered and sold thus making a greater profit). This marked the beginning of railroads construction in the country. At first, neighboring towns were connected by rails and then, progressively longer and longer distances were bridged thanks to this same technology which was instrumental in bringing the new country together considering the size of the land and the amount of miles between some of the provinces.

[6]"British Columbia (1871) - Library and Archives Canada." Library and Archives Canada. Accessed February 12, 2016. http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/canadian-confederation/Pages/british-columbia-1871.aspx#b.

c. The construction of the CPR

As a matter of fact, one of the conditions of British Columbia to join the Confederation was the construction of a transcontinental railroad in order to tie the Province with the rest of the country. Indeed, space was one of the issues when considering the union of all the territories (already settled by the British). BC especially was separated from the political and economic heart of the country by thousands of miles of land. It was essential for them to be connected in some way to the rest of the Confederation. To use the word of historian Donald Creighton: "An intercolonial railway was equally necessary for either a regional or a general union. It was the one essential preliminary to the consolidation of British North America."[7] However, the construction of a project of such magnitude was a huge technical endeavor, especially at the time.

The project finally received Royal Assent on February 15, 1881 after "the longest and bitterest parliamentary wrangle of the young Canadian nation."[8] It was notably tainted by the Pacific Scandal that saw the resignation of then Prime Minister John A. MacDonald. He and the members of the Conservative government were accused of taking bribes when making the attribution of the railway contracts. The men who had been chosen to conduct this project met some days later, on the 17th, in Montreal and founded the Canadian Pacific Railway Company (they are sometimes referred to as "the Syndicate", which does not have to same connotation it has today). The Syndicate which was based in Montreal was composed of five official members: George Stephen, James J. Hill, Duncan McIntyre, Richard B. Angus and John Stewart Kennedy. Even after receiving the assent, discussions were held about the route that the new railroad would follow. It was first decided that it would go through North Saskatchewan and Edmonton. However one man believed that it would be much more profitable to cross by the southern prairies that he described as rich

[7]Creighton, Donald Grant, *The Road to Confederation; the Emergence of Canada, 1863-1867* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965.), 9.
[8]Berton, Pierre, *The Last Spike; the Great Railway 1881-1885* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), I, 1.

and suited for agriculture. This was later discovered to be a mistake as his expedition to these territories coincided with unusually heavy rainfall. In the mind of the CPR leaders there was no doubt that this technological advance would allow new settlers to have access to more resources and thus be more connected to the rest of the country.

Indeed, the company – by choosing the path of the railroad – was also choosing the location of future settlements and those choices were not disinterested as the company "arbitrarily determined its [the settlement] location in the interests of real estate profit, and the company totally controlled it."[9] The CPR construction had huge repercussions, besides creating new settlements, it also redesigned Canada by opening the way to new tourist attractions like those that are now known as National Parks (Banff in Alberta for example). It was also instrumental in opening the country to the western territories by enabling settlements in that area.

In the fall of 1881, a new character made his entrance on the CPR stage: William Cornelius Van Horne. He was primarily hired by Hill to look over the construction to the north and west of Lake Superior. But it soon became apparent that the CPR needed a new general manager. The former one, Stickney, was under a cloud of suspicion because of hazardous speculations. Besides, his advancement on the building site was not satisfying. Van Horne took his new office in January 1882. Under the leadership of Van Horne, the CPR took a new momentum. Van Horne was described as a very energetic and knowledgeable man. He met the directors in Montreal and assured them that he could lay "five hundred miles of track during the 1882 season."[10] Thanks to Van Horne's efficient management, by 1883 the construction was progressing rapidly. However the funds were starting to be scarce. To remedy this problem, the government agreed to pass the Railway Relief Bill in January 1884, loaning $22.5 million to the CPR. The partially built railway

[9]Berton, *The Last Spike; the Great Railway 1881-1885*, I,1.
[10]*Ibid.*, 3,2.

was used to aid the government to put down the 1885 North-West Rebellion[11] by transporting troops faster. As thanks, the government loaned $5 more million to the CPR. Finally the construction moved to its last sections, in British Columbia. The last spike of the CPR was driven in Craigellachie, BC on November 7, 1885. However the whole railroad was not yet fully ready to be used. Some shortcuts had been made during the construction and some sections had to be improved in order to be safe to ride. Seven months later, the first passenger train was ready to ride cross-country. It left Montreal, QC on June 28, 1886 and arrived in Port Moody, BC on July 4, 1886.

To achieve such a prowess within the deadline, the managers of the CPR would need an incredible amount of workforce. At the time, the Province of BC was cruelly lacking white able-bodied men that could carry out the task on their own. They would have to find laborers elsewhere.

2. The circumstances of immigration

BC		
Census Year	No.	% in provincial population
1881	4 350	8.8
1891	8 910	9.1
1901	14 885	8.3
1911	19 568	5.0
1921	23 533	4.5

CANADA		
Census Year	No.	% in national population
1881	4 483	0.1
1891	9 129	0.2
1901	17 312	0.3
1911	27 831	0.4
1921	39 587	0.5

[11]The 1885 NW Rebellion was a brief and unsuccessful rebellion led by Métis leader Louis Riel.

Census Year	BC Chinese as % of Canadian Chinese
1881	99.3
1891	97.6
1901	86.0
1911	70.3
1921	59.5

Table 1: Chinese population in BC and Canada (1881-1921)[12]

The charts presented above give an overview of the evolution of the Chinese demographics both in Canada and in BC according to the numbers collected during the Censuses. It shows that during the early days, Chinese immigration was virtually confined to BC – at least until the late nineteenth century. Indeed until the 1890s, the proportion of British Columbians Chinese represented over 90% of the total of Canadian Chinese. As time went by, the Chinese population moved eastward and the repartition of the Chinese communities throughout Canada became more even.

It appears that the Chinese population – while more numerous than anywhere else in the country – still constituted a minority that made up – at the highest point – barely 10% of the overall population of the Province. So these numbers explain why it seems more fruitful to narrow our study to BC when focusing on the early period of Chinese immigration in Canada. Also, it can make us wonder, how did a minority group generate such a strong and antagonistic reaction.

[12]"Censuses - Library and Archives Canada." Library and Archives Canada. Accessed June 04, 2016. http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/pages/census.aspx.

a. Push and pull factors

Push and pull factors were at the roots of these successive waves of immigration. In other words, they are the factors, the reasons that pushed those people out of China and pulled them into Canada. They were often economic or political motivations: lack of money, lack of work, lack of land, political instability, and dangerous living conditions. Concerning push factors, a few elements pertaining to the life in China have been said to be the reasons behind the departure of many people to look for a better life in America. One of the major reasons was the scarcity of viable lands to farm. The majority of early immigrants came from the same area around the southern port of Guangzhou, in China's Guangdong province; an area also known as the Pearl Delta. Parts of this region had rich soil but others were barely cultivable. At the same time, the population of this area grew and the land could not provide enough food for all its inhabitants, the ones that could not possess land, found themselves in dire straits and unable to feed themselves and their family.

The political situation of China was also unstable during that period. Because of those harsh living conditions, China's peasantry entered a rebellion in 1851 called the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864). This led to the death of about 20 million people, and was accompanied by wars in other parts of the country that claimed even more lives. The government was unable to bring order and stability back into its country. Moreover, there was a general trend of impoverishment of the country due to the dire provisions of the peace treaty that China signed with Britain. During the nineteenth century, China entered several wars with Britain, on economic grounds, particularly related to the trade of opium. When China was defeated, the Chinese government was made to sign unfair treaties – the Treaties of Nankin and Pekin – in which they committed to pay Britain expensive war

indemnities. These treaties jeopardized furthermore the already fragile economic state of China.[13]

British North America, on the other hand, seemed like a more hospitable land that had possibilities and opportunities to offer. One of its main appeals in the mid-nineteenth century was gold that was discovered on the West Coast of the United States and then, in Canada as well.

b. The Gold Rush and early immigration

Most of the Chinese immigrants who eventually settled in Canada came directly from their homeland. However, some of them were already immigrants who had already transited through another country. In the 1850s, they mostly came from the United States where they were already mining for gold during the California Gold Rush (1848-1855). In 1858, it was reported that gold had been discovered in the Fraser River area. This led to a huge influx of newcomers, making the move to BC and Vancouver Island in the hope of finding good fortune. Incidentally, the population of the cities in that part of Canada grew exponentially: "between April and September of that year [1858], as many as 30 000 people arrived in the region"[14]. Because of that influx of miners of different ethnic origins in the same space, competition arose and with it, racial tensions. And while the xenophobic response to Chinese miners was less violent than what it had been in the U.S., the situation was nonetheless not ideal.

> White miners had robbed murdered and driven Chinese miners from goldfields in California. The Chinese feared similar violence in British Columbia so they did not compete directly with white miners. Instead, they

[13] Frèches, José, *Il Était Une Fois La Chine: 4500 Ans D'histoire* (Paris: XO Éditions, 2005, 300.
[14] "British Columbia (1871) - Library and Archives Canada." Library and Archives Canada. Accessed February 27, 2016. http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/canadian-confederation/Pages/british-columbia-1871.aspx#b.

> reworked sites that white miners said were worthless. In these deserted claims, they found several dollars worth of gold each day.[15]

This decrease in violence can be explained by the "economic roles ancillary to Occidentals"[16], that the Chinese assumed in Canada in order to avoid direct confrontation and accusations. The Chinese had learnt from the California mines and so, they were more careful in Canada.

And indeed, the experience of the Chinese gold-seekers was often a difficult and dangerous one. There was also a need of workforce to clear trails through the forest. Indeed prospectors found that coarser nuggets were to be found upstream. The whites were not interested in that kind of back-breaking job; they were more interested in the gold search. The Chinese, on the other hand, were willing to accept any kind of job as long as they were getting some money for it. So, for example, in 1858, the government employed many Chinese laborers to build the Douglas-Lilooet trail. An undetermined number of them were killed during the construction, by falling off the cliffs most likely.[17]

In the 1870s, the gold fever faded in the region and most of the miners left to try their luck elsewhere. However the Chinese stayed behind and kept mining and re-mining spots already searched by the whites. Thus, they could avoid confrontations and they still managed to find some gold. They were to make one last big discovery in Lillooet where they found $7 million worth of gold.

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[15]"Chinese Canadians." ARCHIVED. Accessed May 27, 2016. http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/chinese-canadians/021022-1200-e.html.
[16]Ward, W. Peter, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978), 29.
[17]Lai, Chuenyan David, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988), 21.

c. Racial theories: 'scientific racism', 'social Darwinism' and the 'yellow peril'

So, from the onset, it appears that the Chinese were afraid to be the victims of violence and that racial tensions already existed in the gold mines. However, to better understand the race relations and interactions that were taking place in North America, we need to take a wider look at the global situation. Indeed the nineteenth century marked a turning point in the study of race relations as it saw the birth of theories of race and distinction between the races: namely racialism and 'scientific racism'. They are both important when looking at the history of minorities during that period. It is important for the contemporary reader to understand what the racial discourse was at the time and what the general understanding of this discourse by the general audience was.

'Scientific racism' was a theory based on pseudo-scientific hypotheses and unreliable evidence often inspired and badly adapted from the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin. For example, it used anthropological techniques and theories to back up their ideas; however, it has now long been established that their theories were wrong and extremely dangerous as they created a 'scientific' basis on which racist ideas could thrive. They created various scales of measurements to divide people into racial categories. For example, they used the 'science' of craniometry in which the particularities in shape and size of one 'race's skull determined the degree of intelligence and development of that race. One of the most important texts in that matter is Gobineau's[18] essay entitled *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races.* In that essay, he develops his thought which was – to put it simply – to present a hierarchy between the races in which the white race would be the 'master race'. He thus created the myth of the 'Aryan race' that would become a basis for many 'racists' in the future. Racialists develop more or less the same

[18] Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882) was a French novelist. However, he is now mostly remembered for being one of the theorists of the concept of 'scientific racism'.

idea: the existence of races and the hierarchy that exists among them.[19] For Renan[20], there are at the very bottom of the hierarchy indigenous races such as the Australian aboriginal; then come the Black people; then, he places the Asian races (Japanese, Chinese, Mongols) and finally, the superior race, the white race. 'Social Darwinism', was a theory that applied biological concepts – formulated by English naturalist Charles Darwin - to the social and political contexts. It emerged during the 1870s primarily in Europe and the United States. The Social Darwinists – Herbert Spencer, first among them– took Darwin's theory from the animal kingdom and used it to discuss the human race. They were particularly inspired by Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859); they used the ideas of 'survival of the fittest' and 'natural selection'. From there, the social Darwinists took those ideas and used them to explain and justify their belief of a hierarchy between the races. It "enshrined the idea of European superiority as a key feature of natural evolution and selection."[21] In other words, the aim of Social Darwinism – as was the case with 'scientific racism' as a whole – was to 'prove' that the white race was the 'superior race' because it was the most civilized and the most evolved. Such theories were used to justify the colonialism and imperialism of European countries in the rest of the world.

When discussing theories that relate to Asian populations specifically, it is impossible not to evoke the 'yellow peril'. The expression 'yellow peril' refers to a color metaphor for race. In his book – *Yellow Peril: Dr. Fu Manchu and the rise of Chinaphobia* – Michael Frayling reports a vision of the East and of its people as they are imagined by Western people.

> In America, the literary image of the Chinese as alien 'other' – as sinister villain or dragon lady or comic laundryman or threatening heathen

[19] Todorov, Tzvetan, *Nous Et Les Autres: La Réflexion Française Sur La Diversité Humaine* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), 113.
[20] Joseph Ernest Renan (1823-1892) was a French philosopher, historian and writer. He was particularly interested in questions related to national identity and race.
[21] Dennis, Rutledge M, "Social Darwinism, Scientific Racism, and the Metaphysics of Race." (*The Journal of Negro Education* 64, no. 3, 1995), 244.

> or broken blossom or doomed prostitute or member of a brutalized horde – grew out of Bret Harte, mining stories from gold-rush California, railroad and urban myths about bachelor societies […][22]

One of the best representations and embodiments of that sinophobia is perhaps British writer Sax Rohmer's series of books featuring the emblematic Dr Fu-Manchu. He became the stereotype of the Chinese man and paved the way to numerous other characters sharing the same distinctive traits. The character of Fu Manchu is first introduced in the first novel of the Fu Manchu series: *The Mystery of Dr. Fu-Manchu* (sometimes *The Insidious Dr. Fu-Manchu*).[23] He is a criminal mastermind that uses traditional oriental methods to commit his crimes. In the first novel he is described as follows:

> Imagine a person, tall, lean and feline, high-shouldered, with a brow like Shakespeare and a face like Satan ... one giant intellect, with all the resources of science past and present ... Imagine that awful being, and you have a mental picture of Dr. Fu-Manchu, the yellow peril incarnate in one man.[24]

It appears clearly that from the onset, Rohmer based his character on the cliché image of the Chinese man. He also helped to propagate it thanks to the fame of his novels. Later on, the character of Fu Manchu was used as a protagonist in several movies which helped to promote it to a wider audience. However Rohmer, if he is indeed a typical example, was not the only one using the Chinese trope in his literary work. Chinese characters were present – more often than not in a rather unpleasant manner – in the everyday life of European people through books, newspapers articles (*Tit-Bits*[25] was known for its coverage of the topic for instance) or even songs. According to Frayling,

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[22]Frayling Christopher, *The Yellow Peril: Dr. Fu Manchu & the Rise of Chinaphobia* (Thames & Hudson, 2014), 10.

[23] The hyphen that appears in the name of the character in the earlier works was dropped later on and the name became Fu Manchu.

[24]Rohmer, Sax, *The Mystery of Dr. Fu-Manchu* (Methuen Publishing, 1913).

[25] Tit-Bits was a British periodical magazine founded in 1881. It was a mass circulation publication that put the emphasis on human interest stories concentrating on drama and sensation. (Wikipedia)

their influence was quite important and those media – were instrumental in broadcasting a certain image of this population: "Music-hall performers reflected – and maybe shaped – the attitudes of their audience."[26] And while Rohmer's is a work of fiction, it is still an indicator of the mindset of the time. He used the stereotypical vision of the Chinese that was commonly accepted at the time and used it to construct his character in a form that would be familiar to his audience.

To conclude, it is important to be aware of the various theories that existed at the time; the study and the comprehension of 'races' and 'race relations' changed drastically over time and were often presented as scientifically sound in the nineteenth century. Because of their apparent accuracy, they were indeed influential in shaping the opinion that the people would form about race and by extension about Chinese people in general

3. Outline

It has been mentioned above that the Chinese immigrants that came to Canada were not welcomed with open arms. Indeed, they faced a number of types of discriminations that arose from all the strata of society. In this dissertation, I wish to take a closer look at the various characteristics or behaviors that were specific to the Chinese – that they brought with them to Canada from their culture and tradition – and which were used as a means of stereotyping them and as justification of the many injustices they suffered. I also set out to discuss the relationship between those stereotypes and the institutionalization of discrimination in a set of laws that were aimed at regulating immigration and limiting the rights of the Chinese in Canada.

[26] Frayling, *The Yellow Peril: Dr. Fu Manchu & the Rise of Chinaphobia*, 144.

In the common language a stereotype is often understood as the particularity of a given group that is seen through a magnifying glass and emphasized. It can be done to simply be amusing but often there is a form of rejection involved. A positive quality is rarely at the core of a stereotype. In the case of the Chinese in Canada, the process of stereotyping went further than the simple 'cliché'; it shaped the way they were perceived by the rest of the population and it also determined the role they were to play in Canadian society. According to historian W. Peter Ward, there are two types of stereotypes: those which "take their origin from a kernel of truth [and] others [that] persist without any basis in fact, sometimes even in spite of evidence to the contrary."[27] In our study, we will see that both types were at play in BC. Some were based on some particularities the Chinese did bring with them while others were often proved to be based on wild assumptions and misinterpretations.

To address this question we will look at three different instances in which the Chinese population of Canada – and more specifically of British Columbia – faced discrimination and were victims of stereotypes that would impose a certain image of them. To quote Peter Li: "Many allegations were based on stereotypes of China, and the Chinese character was believed to reflect a debased civilization."[28] What we will be particularly interested in is the link that can be made between discriminations and segregation coming from the people of Canada (that is to say, white settlers) and legal discrimination that was implemented by the government. Indeed, in many cases it is apparent that the stereotypes that were formed in society by the inhabitants of Canada became institutionalized in the legal framework.

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[27] Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia*, 4.

[28] Li, Peter S, *The Chinese in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 24.

In a first part, we will look at the labor market and at the way the Chinese living in Canada fit into that space. Firstly, we will take a step back to the construction of the CPR. In the introduction we saw the major events of that huge enterprise, but in this section we will talk about the place and role of the Chinese laborers in this grand scheme. Then we will move onto the later period, after the completion of the CPR and how the Chinese workers found themselves jobless and unwanted. We will study their attempt to find a way of living, caught between a society that does not care for them and a government that tries to suppress them by passing laws specifically drafted to discriminate against them.

In a second part, we will move onto the life of those populations when they tried to settle and fit into their new environment and their new society. We will be particularly interested in examining how they were perceived as incapable to assimilate with the population already living in BC; in other words, why they seemed to be unable to become Canadian citizens. First, we will look at the geographical segregation in which the Chinese lived with the creation of BC's Chinatowns, their sanitary conditions and the implications such a racialized space had on their lives. And finally we will conclude that section with the notion of a bachelor society – that is to say the overwhelming proportion of male immigrants – and the stereotype of the sojourner.

In a final part, we will see that when Chinese immigrants started to settle into Canada, they brought with them their traditions and customs that they kept engaging in while in their host country. However those attitudes were soon perceived as evidence of the Chinese low moral standards. To do so, we will briefly explain the concept of "moral panics" as explained by Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda in *Moral Panics: the Social Construction of Deviance*, and we will see to what extent it can be applied to the situation of the Chinese people of Canada. They were also perceived as a threat to the construction of a Christian society based on the British model. We will study the habits of

gambling; sexual behaviors and opium-smoking. The culture and consumption of opium had been a tradition in China for centuries. It was also the reason behind two wars between Britain, the French Empire and China for the control of the commerce of the same product: the First Opium War (1839-1842) and the Second Opium War (1856-1860). We will discuss how the issue of opium paved the way for Canada's first anti-drugs legislation.

PART I:
WORK STEALERS

We saw briefly in the introduction that the main incentive behind the immigration of Chinese people to Canada was the prospect of finding employment, so that they could earn enough money to be able to support themselves as well as their family back in China. Thus almost all the Chinese men that entered Canada at the end of the nineteenth century were in search of a job. They often had an idealized vision of what North America would be, in fact, "most early Chinese emigrants to North America had little or no knowledge of this new land, except that gold nuggets were easily found, jobs were plentiful, and wages were high in Gim Shan."[29] The name given to North America by the Chinese was 'Gim Shan', an expression that means – Gold Mountains. It is a clear allusion to the presence of gold that was being found in the American West – first, in the U.S. and then in Canada – at the end of the nineteenth century. However, Canada was not exactly the idealized 'Gim Shan' that the Chinese had envisioned whilst they were still in China. When they arrived at their destination, they were often confronted with racism and discrimination. Racism in Canada had two faces; on the one hand there was 'ordinary' racism that came from the white population and was built upon racial prejudice due to cultural and biological differences and on the other hand institutional racism that had more to do with economic concerns. According to Peter S. Li: "[…] the economic positions of the Chinese in Canada prior the Second World War have historically been shaped by certain market conditions; including, for example, the demand for cheap labor and the emergence of institutional racism in the process of capitalist expansion."[30] In other words, the racism that Chinese workers in Canada had to endure had more to do with the capitalist society they worked in than their biological and cultural features.

[29]Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada*, 16.
[30]Li, Peter S, "A Historical Approach to Ethnic Stratification: The Case of the Chinese in Canada, 1858-1930." (*Canadian Review of Sociology*, 16, no. 3, August 1979), 321.

The following table illustrates the repartition of the Chinese workers by occupation as of 1884. It appears very clearly that – at that time – the majority of them were employed on the CPR. The second occupation was gold mining; in the 1880s, the heyday of the Cariboo Gold Rush was over but some miners still worked the mines hoping to find the remnants of gold.

Occupation	Number of persons	% of total
LABORERS		
Railway workers	2 900	27,6
Gold miners	1 709	16,3
Coal miners	727	6,9
Fish hands	700	6,7
Farm laborers	686	6,5
Store employees	302	2,9
Cooks and servants	279	2,7
Sawmill workers	267	2,5
Wood-cutters	230	2,2
Washermen	156	1,5
Ditch diggers	156	1,5
Fuel cutters	147	1,2
Boot-makers	130	1,1
Vegetable-gardener	114	0,8
Other laborers	519	4,9
NON-LABORERS		
Merchants	120	1,1
Restaurant keepers	11	0,1
Doctors	42	0,4
Teachers	8	0,1
OTHERS		
Prostitutes	70	0,7
Married women and girls	88	0,8
Boys under 17	529	5
New arrivals	602	5,7
TOTAL	10 492	100

Table 2: Repartition of occupation of Chinese in BC, 1884[31]

[31] *Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence.* Ottawa: Printed by Order of the Commission, *188.*

1. Shaping the job market: supply and demand

a. Wanted and desirable immigrants during the CPR construction

The construction of the CPR was a technological endeavor of incredible proportions, and as such it required a work force of a size sufficient to achieve the amount of work needed in the allotted time. The question of the delay was indeed an issue and thus the CPR managers had to find as many laborers as they could and as many as they needed.

Andrew Onderdonk was the one in charge of most of the contracts on the CPR, that is to say that he was responsible for the hiring of the majority of the people that would work at the construction of the railway. However, he soon came across an important issue: he could not find enough white laborers to fill out the ranks of workers that such an important enterprise required. Indeed in 1880, the white population of the province added up to about 35,000 people. Onderdonk needed at least 10,000 strong men in order to be able to build the railway. It became clear that he would have to "look elsewhere for much of his labor force."[32]

He began by looking for more white men in the San Francisco area, but soon found their work to be disappointing. It is not that surprising considering that these men were not – for the most part – used to work in that line of work; they came from backgrounds that were sometimes miles away from railroad construction, in short, they did not necessarily have the skills to do that kind of job. Since Onderdonk wanted to hire as many men as he could for the lowest price, it seems natural that he would turn his attention to the cheapest pool of workers available in the province at the time: foreigners and more specifically, the Chinese. By doing so, he reduced the cost of the employment for the CPR by around four million dollars; it is believed that without the hiring of Chinese workers, the CPR would have declared bankruptcy before its completion. Onderdonk seemed to be satisfied with the

[32]Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada*,31.

quality of the work provided by them; he found them more reliable and harder working than the whites.[33]

Those Chinese workers are also sometimes known under the appellation of 'coolies'. A coolie is a nineteenth-twentieth-century word that refers to an unskilled laborer hired by a company above all in the Indian subcontinent or in South China. This term was sometimes used to talk about the numerous Chinese laborers that were working on the CPR. On the other hand, the term 'navvies" was used to refer to white workers. It is a former nautical word referring to the 'navigators' that used to build navigation canals during the eighteenth century.[34] Later on, the word was used to refer to railway workers, those who built the railway (in opposition to the engineers). The 'coolies' were paid between $0.75-$1 per day while white workers were paid between $1.50-$2.50 per day. This difference in wages between white and Chinese labor did not exclusively concern railroad construction, it was common in all industries.

Selected Occupation	Wage period	Wage of Chinese Labor	Wage of white labor
Agricultural laborers	Month	$20 - $25	$30 - $40
Coal miners	Day	$1.25	$3 - $4
Placer miners	Day	$2 - $2.25	$3 - $3.50
Lumber workers	Day	$1.25	$2.25 - $3.75
Shingle workers	Day	$1.67	$2.58
Cannery workers	Month	$40 - $50	$80.91
Sewing Machines operators	Month	$10 - $25	$40
Bootmakers	Day	$1 - $1.35	$2 - $3
Cigar makers	Per 100	$0.50 - $1	$1.10 - $1.90
Brickmakers	Day	$1.60	$2 - $2.50
Railway section men	Day	$1	$1.25 - $1.50

Table 3: Wage of Chinese and White labor by selected Occupations in BC, around 1900[35]

[33]Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada*, 32.
[34]"Navvies."Railway Stories. Accessed February 25, 2016. http://www.nrm.org.uk/RailwayStories/railwayarticles/navvies.aspx.
[35]Li, *"A Historical Approach to Ethnic Stratification: The Case of the Chinese in Canada, 1858-1930"*, 24.

According to Jin Tan, it is a mistake to believe that the Chinese workers were 'willing' to work for such a low income, in the sense that they were content with what they earned. She posits that they, in fact, knew that they were paid a lot less than they ought to be for the amount of work they were doing, but they had very little say in the matter and no means to claim for a raise without losing their position.[36]

Also, more often than not, they were unskilled laborers; in other words, they were at the bottom of the work hierarchy, and as a result were often tasked with the most dangerous parts of the construction. Because of the high risk level of the tasks they were asked to perform, many of them died during the construction. For instance, they cleared and graded the railway's roadbed; they blasted tunnels through the rock for the train to go through. They suffered from accidents, fires, landslides and dynamite blasts to only mention a few of the possible dangers they faced. They either died as a direct result of their work on the railroad or as a result of the poor living conditions they had to live in. They died because of the winter cold, various illness or malnutrition. It is estimated that five to six hundred 'coolies' died while working on the CPR; that is to say about three Chinese workers died for every kilometer of line built.

However, after the CPR was completed on November 7, 1885 – six years before schedule – Chinese laborers found themselves to be no longer welcome and desirable immigrants. They were jobless and in most cases, penniless. Thus after Chinese immigration had been encouraged in the previous decades, it became strongly discouraged and the people already living in the country faced strong discrimination in social context as well as in political context. In 1885, a report was commissioned by Royal Commission to assess the situation of the Chinese population in Canada. The aim of that report was to

[36] Tan, Jin, "Chinese Labor and the Reconstituted Social Order of British Columbia." (*Ethnic Studies* 19, no. 3, January 1987), 77.

prove that restricting Chinese immigration further would be beneficial and in the best interest of the country.

b. Racialization and the ethnically segmented labor market

As previously evoked, the following decades proved to be difficult for the Chinese people of British Columbia and, as a whole, for the Chinese population of Canada. Tensions started to arise between the Chinese and the white workers, notably along the construction line of the railroad. The economic conditions were difficult in BC and the inhabitants of the province lived in economic uncertainty; it is thus not surprising that they would feel the need to find a culprit to blame for their difficulties and that they would use the racist argument. Indeed, by considering the racial makeup of BC at the time, the target was easily found: the Chinese workers.[37] It is common that when in the presence of two distinct ethnic groups – one being the majority and the other the minority – placing the blame on the group constituted of outsiders often constitutes a simple solution that allows the group of the majority to congregate together in opposition to a common 'enemy'. This type of situation could also be described as the majority group finding a convenient 'scapegoat' to blame for the difficulties caused by the tight job market.

The anti-Chinese discrimination had various aspects and was motivated by multiple arguments. Those facets coalesced and can be better understood in light of a concept that is known as intersectionality. Intersectionality – as defined by the *Oxford Dictionary* – means "the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent

[37]Warburton, Rennie. "The Workingmen's Protective Association, Victoria, B.C. 1878: Racism, Intersectionality and Status Politics." (Canadian Committee on Labor History & Athabasca University Press, 1999), 118.

systems of discrimination or disadvantage."[38] This theory has been used in the analysis of the situation of Chinese immigrants in Canada, and especially to examine the status of the Chinese laborers particularly in BC. Historians have been interested in studying the overlapping fields of race and class to study the racialized status that was imposed on them.

BC's labor market can be described as ethnically segmented. Such a configuration is the framework within which racist attitudes can grow. It also had a great influence on the social status of the Chinese workers as well as on their relationship with their white counterparts. Indeed, because of their low status they had no choice but to accept hard and underpaid work and were furthermore resented and devaluated because of it. This kind of hostility is often found in this configuration of split labor market where racialized immigrants compose a large pool of cheap labor.

Ethnic segmentation occurred in three forms:

- Segmentation by job function, with skilled labor and the more desirable unskilled jobs monopolized by Euro-Canadians while Asians performed the most menial of unskilled labors.
- Segmentation within the workplace, with Asians hired as groups under the authority of an Asian labor contractor separated from white workers.
- An ethnically split wage scale, with Asians consistently paid less than Euro-Canadians for similar work.[39]

This type of labor market left no other choice than to comply with it since the minority group composed of Chinese workers was – in all those cases – subjected to the rule of the majority and thus they were unable to compete fairly with them for the same work

[38]"Definition of Intersectionality in English" Intersectionality. Accessed February 29, 2016. http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/intersectionality.
[39]Creese, Gillian, "Organizing Against Racism in the Workplace: Chinese Workers in Vancouver before the Second World War." (*Canadian Ethnic Studies* 19, no. 3, January 1987), 63.

opportunities. Another issue needs to be addressed as well: the role of the government and the State. The labor market is not solely an issue limited to the work sphere, especially in the context of BC at that time, when the construction of the railroad was closely linked with nation building and the future place of the westernmost province of the newly formed Canadian Confederation. In her article, Creese believes that many previous accounts of the labor scene of BC at the time failed to understand "the role of the state in creating this segmented labor market (through various immigration policies, extension of the political franchise, civil rights, and so on)."[40] In other words, she suggests that the State's policies influenced the labor market in a certain capacity. However, as previously argued, the state of the labor market also influenced the policy-making of the province. For example, we saw the importance of trade unions petitioning the government to push them to rule in favor of a particular bill. So, it would seem that there existed a form of mutual influence between the State and the body of workers (here, Euro-Canadians workers only), where the workers pressured the State to rule over questions dealing with the status of the Chinese workers and where the legislation passed in response by the government, also shaped the relationship between the two groups of laborers.

The Chinese workers were assigned a "negatively racialized status" in order, for the dominant group, to justify denying them legal and political rights. The concept of racialization was initially created and used in the field of sociology. It refers to "a process of delineation of group boundaries and of allocation of persons within those boundaries by primary reference to (supposedly) inherent and/or biological (usually phenotypical) characteristics."[41] This phenomenon occurs in a context where two groups, one dominant and one dominated, interact. To phrase it differently, it refers to the action of creating a group based on real or imagined characteristics that would place the people presenting

[40]Creese, "Class, Ethnicity and Conflict: The Case of Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1880-1930.", 60.
[41]Miles, Robert, *Racism and Migrant Labour* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 120.

those characteristics as being part of the same 'racial group'. Then, the dominant group ascribes ethnic or racial features to a specific group of people. The group in question does not, however, identify themselves with the ascribed identity. The dominant group then ascribes identity to purposefully maintain their domination. "Ascribing real or imagined biological characteristics with meaning to define the 'Other' necessarily entails defining 'Self' by the same criteria."[42] Over time, the racialized group then often comes to identify with the ascribed identity and even to embrace it as its own.

> Racialized statuses, whether formalized in law or not, are cultural constructions and social expressions of entitlement and personhood which are markers for the granting or denial of economic, cultural, legal and political rights and privileges.[43]

To phrase it differently, it is the imposition of a particular status onto a group or population that presents them as being inferior to the dominant group. This justifies – in the eyes of the dominant group – their refusal to give that group the same rights and privileges. Creese makes an important remark when she argues that the dominant group of the working class (in the case of BC, it was Euro-Canadian male) "played an active role in the subordination of Asian workers in the work place and throughout civil society."[44] What is important to notice is that the scalability that occurs in the work place – with the Asian workers being subjected to the Euro-Canada male rule – also seeped into their everyday life. There is a correlation between working classes and social classes. The class conflict that was occurring in the province at the time was an important feature of the work scene of the time; "it was the outcome of developing, but not yet mature, working-class consciousness confronting capitalist social relations that were explicitly racist in form,

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[42]Miles, Robert, *Racism* (London: Routledge, 1989), 101.
[43] *Ibid.*, 108.
[44]Creese, Gillian. "Class, Ethnicity and Conflict: The Case of Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1880-1930." In *Workers, Capital and the State in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988), 59.

producing an ethnically segmented labor market and working class."[45] In other words, because white workers found themselves to be working according to the growing capitalist values of Canadian society such as productivity and process of accumulation mainly – the employers found that a racialized workforce was an efficient way to produce more and more rapidly. Hence, those values and that new demand of production helped to create social relations that were inherently racist. The whites were confronted with issues resulting from those economic stakes: the Chinese workers were preventing them from working, from getting employed. For that reason, the Euro-Canadian workers turned to an exclusionary labor organization, with the deliberate goal to expulse Chinese workers from the labor market so they, Euro-Canadians, could be the only workforce available. On the other hand, the Chinese workers organized themselves in an ethnic community organization in order to "cope with an ethnically segmented labor market and political subordination within civil society as a whole."[46] They did so in order to cope better with the hostile environment many of them faced. By turning to their own community, they hoped to be provided with mutual help, economic and work networks. It is important to remember that this act of 'group solidarity' was not – as often reproached to them – a symbol of their incapacity to assimilate with the local population, but rather an act of solidarity and protection against a hostile dominant group.

The notion of intersectionality is again important to discuss the place of Chinese people in Canadian society in general. Indeed, their position in the labor market greatly influenced the position they assumed in their 'civilian' life (here in the sense of their position once outside of work) and it would be misleading to not take into account both aspects to examine the process of class formation that started to occur in BC in the late nineteenth century. Racist practices frequently coincide, intersect or overlap with class

[45] *Ibid.*, 73.
[46] Creese, "Class, Ethnicity and Conflict: The Case of Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1880-1930", 73.

relations which are based on the distribution of economic resources, and with statuses which are assigned according to norms, significations, and constructions of personhood.[47] In other words, the hierarchy that was forming within the working world also had an impact on the class system that was developing in BC at the time with the Chinese population making up the lowest strata of the social pyramid.

By way of conclusion, it is interesting to also consider the discrepancies in opinions that can be observed between the different social classes of society. In other words, to look at how the opinion on immigration varied from one person to another depending on their social status and on how the Chinese immigration could have an effect on their personal situation and prospect. It is important to remember that the racialized status associated with the Chinese workers was not necessarily negative for everyone. Indeed, the employers and wealthier inhabitants of the province did not have the same image of Chinese workers, for understandable reasons. The Chinese represented no threat to their position or livelihood; on the contrary they were beneficial for their economic well-being. As a matter of fact, they were needed and helpful to the contractors who could employ them for a lot cheaper than white workers. Also, they were always available, allowing employers to have constant and quick access to workers at any given time. They were less likely to strike than the whites, thus causing no delay to the work. Moreover, they were often depicted by their employers as industrious and obedient workers who caused no particular trouble. This is particularly visible in the testimonies given by employers of Chinese given at the occasion of the Royal Commission. For example, Robert Dunsmuir, the proprietor of the Wellington Coal Mines, considered the immigration of Chinese, as well as their employment, as beneficial for the province. He believed that they "materially aided the general development of the country for the fact that

[47]Baureiss, Gunter. "Chinese Immigration, Chinese Stereotypes and Chinese Labor." (Canadian Ethnic Studies, 1987), 107.

they have assisted in pushing to completion the public works undertaken, and could always be depended upon as a labor force."[48] But, it was not only the leaders of large firms employing many Chinese workers that were favorable to them. Wealthy families of British Columbia also employed Chinese in the capacity of maids or housekeepers, finding in them the same qualities as those mentioned above.

Nonetheless, it would be somewhat naive to believe that all employers were unreservedly favorable to unregulated Chinese immigration. And although they did not mind the Chinese when they worked for them because it allowed them to make more profit at a lesser cost for the manpower, they did not automatically accept them as equals and promoted their full integration as Canadian citizen; as summarized by Colonial Governor James Douglas: "they are certainly not a desirable class of people, as permanent population but are for the present useful as laborers, and, as consumers, of a revenue-paying character."[49]

c. Anti-Chinese organizations

During that period, a number of organizations and trade unions were created. Sometimes, they overtly stated their animosity against the Chinese; others did so more covertly. In this section, we will take a look at the main ones, going in chronological order for the sake of consistency.

The Knights of Labor was an organization that strongly supported the Chinese discriminatory laws. It was an organization that counted chapters across all of North America and as such, it was one of the most important American labor unions and counted

[48]*Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence* (Ottawa: Printed by Order of the Commission, 1885), 29.
[49]Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia*, 25.

the most members. It was founded in 1869 and promoted the right of workingmen. They were – in part – responsible for creating agitation and stirring tensions between workers. Outside of Canada, they were known for supporting the massacre of Chinese workers at Rock Spring, Wyoming.[50] They also published Anti-Chinese manifestoes where they explained the negative impact of the Chinese working in Canada.

In 1878, **the Workingmen's Protective Association** was created in Victoria, BC in 1878. It was a short-lived trade union which goal was to protect the workers of BC, but more specifically the white, Euro-Canadian workers. While their front states their trade union nature, their opinions concerning the Chinese workers were clearly stated, in the first act of their *Constitution, By-Laws and Rules of Order:*

> The mutual protection of the working classes of British Columbia against the great influx of Chinese; to use all legitimate means for the suppression of their immigration; to assist each other in the obtaining of employment; and to devise means for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes of this Province in general.[51]

The creation of such an association with such a program can be – in part – explained by the economic situation in BC at the time, which was similar to the overall situation in Canada. Indeed, throughout the country, observers reported that the economy was depressed, the prosperity was declining and the industry was crippled. Concerning the province of British Columbia, the situation was no better, because of the end of the Gold Rush that made the province flourish in previous years. The rest of the manifesto consists for the most part in stating the practical aspects and the manner in which the association is to be ruled. The matter of the Chinese people comes back a few times, each time insisting

[50] In 1885, tensions between white and Chinese miners culminated into violence. It resulted in the death of 25 Chinese workers. The rioters burned down 75 houses where Chinese people lived.
[51] Workingmen's Protective Association, *Constitution, By-Laws and Rules of Order* (Victoria:1878, Act of Creation/Manifesto), Act 1.

on the importance of dealing with the Chinese issue in any legitimate way that the workers could find. Indeed, in their eyes, those workers posed the greatest threat to their livelihood. Partly because of that strong emphasis on this question, it has been argued by some historians that the protection of the working-class was not the actual main concern of the WPA, but rather just a means to address the issue of the influx of Chinese in the province. Even the pledge that one had to make in order to join the society was more focused on Chinese immigration than anything else, as we can see in this excerpt: "I […] solemnly pledge my word as a man to neither aid or abet or patronize Chinaman in any way whatever or patronize those employing them, and I will use all legitimate means for their expulsion from the country."[52] Thus the WPA could rather be defined as a "political pressure group with minor interests in encouraging employment of white men".[53] Their aim then would be to pressure "governments into implementing various exclusionary measures against the Chinese."[54] It was later replaced by the Anti-Chinese Association in the fall of 1879. "Its goals were identical and on its behalf he [Noah Shakespeare] petitioned federal and provincial governments for exclusionary legislation and tried to get Chinese labor barred from work on the proposed transcontinental railway."[55]

Furthermore, in 1882, the American government passed the Chinese Exclusion Act which suspended the admission of Chinese laborers to the US for ten years. The Chinese that were residing in the United States before August 1882 were eligible to be given an identification certificate that would prevent them from being deported out of the country. However, as a result, the numerous Chinese laborers who had previously lived in the US

[52]Workingmen's Protective Association, *Constitution, By-Laws and Rules of Order*, 15th by-laws..
[53]Warburton, "The Workingmen's Protective Association, Victoria, B.C. 1878: Racism, Intersectionality and Status Politics.", 106.
[54]Roy, Patricia, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989), 48.
[55]"Biography – Shakespeare, Noah– Volume XV (1921-1930) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography." Biography – Shakespeare, Noah – Volume XV (1921-1930) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Accessed February 29, 2016. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shakespeare_noah_15E.html.

but had left the country temporarily in order to go and work on the railway in BC were not able to get their American identity certificates. Therefore, when the CPR was finished, they could not go back to the US and had no other choice but to settle in Canada. This was very badly taken by the anti-Chinese advocates of BC who were furious at this unexpected influx of new settlers. Noah Shakespeare[56] notably rallied workers behind his cause to go and parade as a sign of protest. He also sent petitions to the BC provincial legislature and Parliament to complain about Chinese competition in the labor market.

Another important organization was the **Asiatic Exclusion League** (AEL). It was primarily an American organization founded in 1905 in San Francisco under the name the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League. The AEL was created in response to the pressure of the Trades and Labor Council. It was the primary organization that pressed for restrictions of Asian immigration to be implemented. To achieve their goal, they initiated the creation of the British Columbian branch of the AEL in Vancouver in 1907.[57] Its founding meeting took place on August 12, 1907 and would soon spark the Vancouver riots of 1907.

The boycott of Chinese employment was demanded by some of those trade unionists that saw them as disloyal competition and a threat to the employment of the whites. They often petitioned asking for the prohibition of the employment of foreigners altogether. Those organizations that strongly antagonized the Chinese reflected the mounting tensions that occurred at the level of the work place itself between the workers.

[56]Cf. portrait on p. 33
[57]Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 186.

d. Tensions between workers

Tensions were growing stronger between the different bodies composing the labor force of BC. And while racial tensions between workers of different ethnicities were relatively infrequent during the Gold Rush, the situation was quite different on the CPR construction sites as well as in the other trades the Chinese were involved in from the 1880s onwards. There were a few different features that came into play and that explain this tense climate. Firstly, there was, of course, the economic aspect; the white workers were worried about unemployment – for them, as well as for the future generations – and feared the collapsing of the economy.

> The employment of these slaves displaces a like proportion of white labor, and more particularly of rising generations. [...] all the inferior work in our mills, factories, stores, workshops, etc. that is elsewhere done by apprentices is here done by Chinese labor. The consequence is that our boys are but preparing for the State Prison, and a vast number of our girls must, alas, ultimately sink to the lowest depths of degradation.[58]

Indeed, the employment of Chinese laborers was not perceived as beneficial by all parties involved; divergent opinions about this new workforce started to be heard. It appears clearly that two forces were in opposition; on the one side were the government and the class of employers and, on the other, the men composing the workforce, in other words, the white workers. To use the words of a worker, M. Pawson from Nanaimo that answered as follows when interviewed for the Royal Commission:

> Those [workers] competent to perform skilled labor can, but those laborers skilled white who have to depend on unskilled labor are brought directly in competition employment, but with Chinese slaves and have to leave our shores. This is no place for them; while laborers with families

[58] *The Cariboo*, July 31, 1869. (The title of the article was unreadable because of damages on the original copy)

> complain that they can get no occupation for their boys and girls, because the work done by boys in the mines in England and elsewhere have their places filled with Chinamen in this province, while there is no room for the girls in domestic situations without they submit to be employed along with Chinamen, which is repulsive.[59]

Because of that general atmosphere of tension and fear in the province, violence between the different groups of workers escalated, sometimes in individual attacks, as well as into organized eruptions of violence that could take the form of riots. One of the best known early examples of such a display of violence is the Vancouver riots of 1886, also known as the 'Winter riots'. According to Patricia Roy, this riot has not always been enough studied and its significance has not always been fully acknowledged. She describes it as the illustration of the climate of rivalry between the two main cities of BC at the time: Victoria and the young Vancouver and how lawlessness could easily ignite in such a young city. Finally, it illustrates the "determination of the provincial government to maintain an image of peace and order" at any cost.[60] The tensions already existing between the inhabitants of the city were further stirred up by the press, which published articles warning the people of the dangers that the Chinese immigrants brought to their shores. After the fire that destroyed part of the city in 1886, the Vancouverites took it upon themselves to try and push the Chinese out of the city as they were rebuilding it by using intimidation and threats of violence. However, this did not work and in February, as more Chinese came into the city, violence escalated. A group of people went and destroyed the camp where Chinese people lived. The aim of the people participating in the riots was to send back the Chinese to 'where they came from'. Because of that action, the provincial government took action and passed a law to protect its Chinese population: *Act for the*

[59]*Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence (*Ottawa: Printed by Order of the Commission, 1885), 133.
[60]Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 45.

Preservation of Peace within the Municipal Limits of the City of Vancouver. This Act was designed to strip the municipality of its power, and putting Victoria (hence the provincial power in charge).[61] Also, it provided a protection for the Chinese against the violence committed by the white mobs. This is interesting because it goes against the pattern of laws passed around the same time and that were designed to prevent Chinese to come and settle. This law seems to have been passed to fill out another important aspect of the province's life at the time, the desire to maintain the reputation of law and order of the province. This reputation was very important for the provincial government in order to present a welcoming image, in the hope that it would attract more white settlers.

In 1907, another expression of violence caused by racial tensions between the whites and the Asian population of BC occurred: the Vancouver riots. Even though those particular riots were primarily directed towards the Japanese populations, it does reflect the general anti-Asian feeling that existed in Vancouver at the time and the Chinese population suffered, albeit collaterally, from the outburst of violence. The AEL was pressuring for the restriction of the entry of Japanese people, mostly workers. Indeed, the early twentieth century saw an increase in Japanese immigration; they notably came to work on railroad construction on the Grand Trunk and the Pacific railway. As was the case with the Chinese workers on the CPR, the white workers were afraid of the competition in the labor market. The fear created by the influx in Asian immigration was used by the politicians of the province, using the partisan argument to gain votes. To remedy this issue, it was proposed to introduce a $25 tax that would be paid by each Japanese person that wished to enter the country. Yet it soon became apparent that this measure was inefficient as proved by the arrival of a ship – the Kumeric – with at its board 1,190 Japanese that had transited via Hawaii in order to go around the restriction provisioned by the law. At the time, many

[61]McDonald, Robert A. J. *Making Vancouver: Class, Status, and Social Boundaries, 1863-1913* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1996), 52.

ships coming from Japan to Canada transited via Hawaii. Indeed, Japan had previously agreed to reduce its immigration to Canada, but to bypass this agreement, the ships went to Hawaii, and then the people boarded again and headed to Canada. Thus they could argue that they did not come from Japan but from Hawaii. The AEL hoped for a widespread support from the people of BC. However, the British Columbians were not as involved as the AEL hoped. They wished to "to awaken slumbering Vancouver to the seriousness of the Japanese question."[62] In September, they organized a mass meeting at the City Hall. They tried to bring attention to it by having the fifty-eight unions parade through towns accompanied by a brass band. They did not anticipate any sort of violence even though such events took place only a few days prior in Bellingham (Washington state) – only twenty-two miles south of the Canadian border – where the inhabitants took it upon themselves to drive the Asian population out of town. The aim of the Vancouver protesters was to organize the biggest protest the province had ever held. On September 7th, the protest started, a lot of people attended the meeting in the City Hall and many more joined in the demonstration in the streets. They marched through town while singing patriotic songs such as *The Maple Leaf forever* or *Rule Britannia*. They walked towards Chinatown and the Chinese houses and shops were degraded: windows were smashed; the crowd threw stones and bricks at Chinese housings and shops. However, it has to be said that the riot was more directed towards Japanese and so the crowd soon left Chinatown for Japtown where similar degradations were committed. The Japanese and – to an extent the Chinese – answered by taking up weapons and went into the streets to fight back. The press gave reports of Chinese people armed with revolvers and rifles that they had bought to defend themselves.

[62]Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 191.

As a response, the Chinese employed as domestic servants, hotel, laundry and restaurant workers stopped their activity during the subsequent days. By doing so, they made their unhappiness with the events known and by withdrawing their services, they also showed the importance of their presence as workers in the city and the reliance of the city on their labor.

2. The government's answer

a. The regulation of immigration

> Of course, as other chapters show, the same legal system which 'protected' Asians, effectively limited their employment opportunities and civil rights in order to assist in preserving British Columbia as 'a white man's province.'"[63]

From the 1870s onwards, many laws were enacted with all the same purpose: to regulate the Chinese immigration to Canada and more specifically to the province of BC where most of the immigrants landed. Those laws were often tax-law that sought to install a fee that immigrants had to pay if they wanted to enter the country. The first of these laws was passed by the provincial legislature of BC; it was the *Chinese Tax Act* of 1878. It stipulated that every Chinese person over the age of 12 should pay a $10 license fee every three months. This law was disallowed by the federal government but in 1884 the *Chinese Regulation Act* was proposed in response to the Royal Commission appointed by then Prime Minister John A. Macdonald to investigate whether or not restricting Chinese immigration was in the best interest of the country. The report was put together by commissioners Chapleau and Gray. They gathered testimonies from a number of people at

[63] Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 13.

public hearings held across BC during the summer of 1884. They compiled those testimonies along with their conclusions in a final report. This report stated there was little evidence to support the claims made against the Chinese. According to the report, the Chinese population was judged harshly with unfair standards and subjected to prejudices. Despite this conclusion, the Commission recommended that a $10 tax should be imposed on the Chinese newcomers.

An important figure of the anti-Chinese movement was English-born politician Noah Shakespeare. Born in England, he immigrated to Canada in 1863; attracted by the Cariboo Gold Rush, he chose to settle British Columbia and more precisely Victoria. There he worked as a laborer for the Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company. He then worked as a photographer for some time before turning to politics. In January 1875, he was acclaimed as city councilor. He progressively developed anti-Chinese feelings and ideas and started to incorporate them into his politics. For example, in 1875, he proposed a motion to prohibit Chinese-run brothels. Shakespeare thought of himself as a defendant of the workingmen and as such he saw it as his duty to 'protect' them from the disloyal Chinese competition. He naturally took the leadership of the Workingmen's Protective Association in 1878, and when he stepped down from this position – due to the decline of the union – he helped creating its successor: the Anti-Chinese Association (ACA). In 1882, he rose to a higher position within the province when he was elected Mayor of Victoria. Finally, in 1884, he reached the peak of his political career when "he tabled a motion in the commons for a law to prohibit Chinese immigration[…]".His motion was amended and

became law in 1885 as *the Chinese Immigration Act*, introducing the infamous $50 head tax on each Chinese arrival and limiting the number of immigrants per vessel."[64]

> […] every person of Chinese origin shall pay into the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Canada, on entering Canada, at the port or other place of entry, the sum of fifty dollars, except the following persons who shall be exempt from such payment, that is to say, first: the members of the Diplomatic Corps, or other Government representatives and their suite and their servants, consuls and consular agents; and second: tourists [emphasis added], merchants, men of science and students […][65]

This Act was amended several times over the years with an increased fee every time.[66] It reached its maximum in 1904, and then the tax was $500 per person. It is worth noting that some provisions had been made to allow people belonging to some specific categories to be exempted of paying the tax because of their 'more desirable' status. Indeed, the law was designed to prevent "undesirable" immigrants to enter, that is to say, unskilled workers. However, immigrants who had a status and social position that were deemed 'desirable' were still welcome because they would bring money or knowledge to their host country. For example, students, merchants or diplomats could still enter Canada freely. They were not perceived as a threat for two main reasons: first of all, they were either rich or educated and as such they were bringing something valuable with them, that their future host country could benefit from; second of all, they were, by no means, as numerous as the laborers and thus they were not regarded as being part of the 'Oriental hordes' invading Canada. They were the minority of the minority and, on that score, they were less visible and less menacing. This Act did have very noticeable effects on the

[64]"Biography – Shakespeare, Noah – Volume XV (1921-1930) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography." Biography – Shakespeare, Noah– Volume XV (1921-1930) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Accessed February 29, 2016. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shakespeare_noah_15E.html.
[65]*An Act Respecting and Restricting Chinese Immigration: (cited as Chinese Immigration Act. 3 E. VII., C.8, S.1*, 1885), section 4.
[66] "The Chinese Question", *The Daily Colonist* (Victoria), January 28, 1891.

influx of Chinese immigrants into Canada. For example, in 1886, during the period that should have been the peak season for Chinese immigration, no Chinese immigrants entered Canada at all.[67] However by 1891, it appeared that the Act as it was then was not a strong enough deterrent anymore, it was not seen as efficient enough in barring large-scale immigration. A raise of the head tax to a $200 tax was asked by various Members of the Legislative Assembly but their claims did not come to pass into the legislature. Again the tension between those who saw Chinese as unnecessary members of the work force and those who needed them in order to fill the ranks of their employee was felt. An agreement was reached, and it was promised to those in favor of a raise that the future tax would – at least – be $100. However, those new provisions did nothing to deter newcomers to enter Canada, and Chinese immigrants continue to come at a steady rate.

There is an interesting pattern to notice, however, regarding the Acts that touched on the topic of Asian migration and the response they prompted from the federal government. On several occasions, the laws concerning the Asian population of BC passed at the provincial level were then disallowed at the federal level. It does not mean that the federal government was favorable to Chinese immigration and settlement either since – as was previously seen – they also passed the same legislation that implemented similar measures. Between 1872 and 1922, over one hundred acts or bills that contained specific provisions concerning persons of Asian origin were passed by the BC legislature. They generally ruled over an array of matters such as labor, franchise and cultural policy. The federal government challenged many of them, and invoked its disallowance power on twenty-two occasions. It would be a mistake to consider this pattern of disallowance as an expression of disapproval of the federal government towards BC discriminatory laws. The truth is not so much that they disapproved of the discrimination against the Asian

[67]Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 66.

population but rather that it felt that some of these laws would be unprofitable to them. To quote Ryder: "[…] it becomes apparent that the Dominion vetoed BC anti-Asian legislation only when it felt it necessary to protect its conception of Dominion or Imperial economic or strategic interests."[68] And indeed, the laws that were disallowed by the federal government are all relating to the prohibition of Asian immigration altogether. The laws pertaining to the limitation and the restriction of the rights of Chinese people of BC were not vetoed by the federal government because they were not harmful to their policy; on the contrary it rendered Asian workers "a relatively powerless and vulnerable minority in the BC labor force."[69] Furthermore, the willingness of the BC legislature to pass restrictive laws can be understood in geographical terms. By its position as the sole province in the West at the time, BC was "the port of entry for almost all Asian immigrants"[70] and as such, the province had the highest rate of Asian inhabitants. So it appears understandable that they would feel the need – more than the Eastern provinces – to regulate the Asian immigration. Likewise, the government of BC faced the anger and the complaints of the white workers that were in competition with Asian workers for jobs. At the federal level, the government had a more global vision of the problem; their aim was to complete the constructions that would help the Dominion grow. And since they needed a large pool of workers to do so, it is obvious that they would prevent any law prohibiting their immigration into the country. As a matter of fact, by 1908, when the supply for unskilled labor was steadier, the conflict between Ottawa and Victoria over the Asian question was resolved.

[68] Ryder, Bruce "Racism and the Constitution: The Constitutional Fate of British Columbia Anti-Asian Immigration Legislation, 1884-1909." (*Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, 1991), 621.
[69] Ryder, "Racism and the Constitution: The Constitutional Fate of British Columbia Anti-Asian Immigration Legislation, 1884-1909.", 623.
[70] *Ibid.*, 625.

The year 1923 marked the beginning of what is known as 'the period of exclusion'. During that year was passed the *Chinese immigration Act* also known as *The Chinese Exclusion Act.* That Act banned all Chinese immigration into Canada; no new Chinese person could enter Canada in order to settle there with the exception of diplomats and foreign students. Another provision was made that stated that under 'special circumstances' granted by the Minister of Immigration a Chinese person could enter Canada. This 'selection' shows clearly that not all Chinese people were unwelcome; the ones that were more educated were still seen as desirable because they were less numerous and did not pose the same threat as the unskilled workers.

b. Disenfranchisement and limitations of rights

> It was during these depression years that the initial signs were seen of sympathy for discriminatory legislation. The first formal anti-Chinese measure –the cancellation of all votes cast by Chinese in the Cariboo during the election of 1863 was merely the whimsical act of a returning officer.[71]

This trend of disenfranchisement of the racialized population began as early as 1872 when BC passed an Act amending the Qualification and Registration of Voters Act. This amendment, which was the first step, disqualified both Chinese and Native people from voting for provincial representation. This first piece of legislation was then amended twice in 1874 and 1875 with an *Act to make better provisions for the Qualification and Registration of Voters* and the *Act relating to an Act to make better provision for the Qualification and Registration of Voters*. This last law had for goal the removal of the Chinese and Native people's names from the registers and also to prevent the people in charge of those records from registering them nonetheless by threatening them with a fine

[71]Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia, 30.*

in case they did not respect the law. In 1876, the Chinese people were also denied the right to run for election in a provincial legislature. What appears clearly when reading all these acts is the strong desire that the province had to prevent their Chinese inhabitants to seek any kind of official position that would allow them to be better represented. They cannot vote for a candidate that would potentially better their living conditions and grant them more rights; nor can they run for office in order to represent themselves and their community.

It is interesting to observe that once again, there was a form of ambivalence from the official institutions. They appeared to be creating some of the conditions that imposed the behavior they later reproached to the Chinese population. We know that one of the biggest reproaches that was made to the Chinese community was that they did not assimilate to white society, either because they did not want to or could not. However, here we can see that – by passing such discriminatory laws – the provincial government (but also the federal one) seemed to limit their capacity to mix with the whites by not enabling them to fully take part in the society.

A number of hiring-related laws were also passed during the 1880s and the 1890s. They all aimed to prohibit the employment of Chinese people in certain fields of work. To only mention a few among many others, Chinese-related provisions can be found in the following texts of law:

> No license shall be granted to any Chinese, and if any license employs any Chinese in cutting or tearing away timber or bark his license shall be void.[72]

> No Chinese, either directly or indirectly, shall be employed in or about, or concerning any work or services authorized by this Act, or required by the Company to be done or performed.[73]

[72]Statute of British Columbia, *An Act to amend the "Timber Act*, *1884* (1886).

> No Chinaman or person unable to speak English shall be appointed to or shall occupy any position of trust or responsibility in or about a mine subject to this Act, whereby through his ignorance, carelessness, or negligence, he might endanger the life or limb of any person employed in or about a mine […][74]

> This Act is passed upon the express understanding that no Chinese shall be employed in or about or concerning any works or services authorized by this Act, or required by the Company to be done or performed. In the event of any Chinese been employed by the company, the company shall be liable, upon the summary conviction before any two Justices of the Peace...to a penalty not exceeding twenty-five dollars, nor less than ten dollars, for every Chinese employed […][75]

And these are only a few examples taken from a sample of laws that were passed during that time and that were all drafted to further the same purpose: preventing the Chinese people from finding employment in many different fields.

3. New ways of working: laundries and restaurants

a. Resisting the government's attempt to control and remove their rights

Despite their position at the bottom of the social pyramid, the Chinese did not accept all those repressive acts as a fatality. They protested and contested the unfairness of their treatment in Canadian society. They tried to do so – albeit in a relatively quiet and always respectable manner; in part because they did not want to create more conflict with the dominant class – that would inevitably lead to more repression – but also because they

[73]Statute of British Columbia, *An Act to Incorporate the Vancouver Gas Company, and for other purposes* (1886).
[74]Statute of British Columbia, *Coal Mines Regulation Act* (1888).
[75]Statute of British Columbia, *An Act to Incorporate the Nanaimo Electric Tramway Company, Limited* (1891).

did not have the means and power necessary to act efficiently. For example, they did not have any official representations in the institutions that could have pleaded their cause. They organized and took part in public and open protests, but only as a last resort. They wanted to avoid being perceived as disruptive elements of society which would give even more arguments for the white society to single them out as 'the Other' coming to their shores to only cause turmoil and mayhem.

One of the most significant outcomes of that pacific movement was the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association created in 1884, in Victoria. While such a type of organization already existed in the United States, the CCBA was the first of its kind in Canada.

Its main objectives were:

- To inform Chinese residents about Canadian laws;
- To protect Chinese residents from discrimination through legal means;
- To deal internally with crimes in Chinatowns through arbitration between members;
- To assist the weak and the sick.[76]

The CCBA was originally constituted by the assembly of thirty-one local groups that came together under a single appellation. Indeed, before the creation of the association, the Chinatowns did have a number of small clans and country associations. However, because they were all separate and independent from one another, they did not have the power, nor the scope to protect the interests of the Chinese residents. On the other hand, this umbrella organization had the influence and the resources to act as a Chinese consulate in Canada. This is particularly apparent in the by-laws (rules 10 to 19) of *The Rules and By-laws of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.* Indeed, they highlight the status of the

[76]"Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association." Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Accessed February 16, 2016. http://www.ccbanyc.org/eindex.html.

association as a *de facto* Chinese government within Canada with the ability to make legislation, exercise jurisdiction and enforce regulations and orders.[77] Concerning the functions and activities of the CCBA, they can be divided into four main categories:

- The organization of protests against discriminatory laws and taxes, and fund-raising campaigns in fighting for their abolition in Court. This is an important notion because it defeats the widely spread stereotype that Chinese people were docile. However, this meant to show that they could protest the harsh measures that they were victim of. They protested and tried to abolish the discriminatory laws that were passed to reduce their rights.
- The arbitration and maintenance of peace and order in Chinatown. The aim was to resolve some conflicts internally in order to avoid giving the government and the judicial system more reasons to depict them in negative terms. It was also a way to not give more weight to some stereotypes.
- The raising of funds to help, not only the cities in Canada, but also in China and Chinese communities in other parts of the world. The CCBA had this goal to keep ties with China by doing charity work for Chinese people in China but also Chinese immigrants outside of Canada.
- The administration of a hospital, a cemetery and a school.

[77]Lai, Chuen-Yan, "The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association in Victoria: Its Origins and Functions." *(BC Studies1 15*, 1972), 57.

b. A shift in occupations

The following chart illustrates the shift that occurred during the period we are interested in (1858-1923), in terms of occupation of the Chinese in Canada.

Occupation	**1885**	**1901**	**1921**
	%	%	%
Professional occupations	0.5	-	0.4
Store owners and merchants	1.3	9.2	4.6
Restaurant-keepers	0.1	0.3	6.2
Laundry owners and managers	-	-	9.6
Farmers and gardeners	1.3	6.5	3.2
Miners	15.8	-	0.4
Food canners	7.6	29.1	0.2
Lumbermen and sawmill workers	7.6	1.6	3.2
Railroad workers	31.3	-	0.8
Store employees	3.3	-	2.2
Servants, cooks, and waiters	3.0	17.4	23.3
Laundry workers	1.7	6.5	9.0
Farm laborers	17.4	-	6.5
Other laborers	3.3	26.7	24.4
Other occupations	5.9	2.8	6.0
(Total number of Chinese in labor force)	(9,272)	(3,042)	(34,042)

Table 4: Occupations of Chinese in British Columbia (1885), Victoria (1901), and Canada (1921)[78]

It clearly shows that the number of industries the Chinese workers were involved in was limited. In this handful of fields, it appears that they make up an important percentage of the overall number of workers. Thus we see that during the 1880s the main employment fields were railroad workers, farm laborers and miners coincide with the main fields of employment of the province at the time: the Gold Rush and the CPR construction. Then, with the end of the Gold Rush and the completion of the CPR, it appears that the Chinese

[78]Li, *The Chinese in Canada*, 52.

men had to find new occupations such as food canners, servants, waiters, cooks and other various types of labor works.

Salmon fishing was an activity that had taken place in British Columbia for a very long time. In fact, it was primarily performed by the Native people, and then by the white settlers upon their arrival in North America. From the 1880s onwards, the industry underwent mechanical improvements with new machinery to increase production rates. At the end of the nineteenth century, salmon canning took on a greater scale of production. The first attempt at a commercial scale canning business was made by James Symes (1832-1881), a Scottish man who arrived in Canada – from San Francisco – in 1862, attracted by the Cariboo Gold Rush. With the decline of the gold fields, Symes – along with many other gold seekers – had to find another way to work and gain income. That is why in 1867, he undertook the first "substantial attempt at salmon-canning in British Columbia."[79] He managed to keep his business afloat for a few seasons, but because of the general recession in the province, he found himself unable to maintain his business. The fishing industry was an ethnically very diverse industry. Indeed, the people working in that field were from many different origins: Europeans from various countries, Asians (Chinese, Japanese and East-Indians) as well as First Nation people. Many women and children were then employed in the canneries as well. According to Muszynski, the employment of Native people was quite beneficial because they could rely on other means to subsist and thus the employers could pay them less. Since the Native people lived traditionally in a pre-capitalist society, they had means to produce and provide food, clothing, and housing by relying on means of production outside of the capitalist system. The employers of the canneries were then "paying wages according to the ability of each group to sustain itself

[79]"Biography – Syme, James – Volume XI (1881-1890) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography." Biography – Syme, James – Volume XI (1881-1890) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Accessed February 19, 2016. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/syme_james_11E.html.

both within the capitalist economy, as well as outside."[80] However, the Chinese workers presented one more advantage than the Native women, their subordination. Indeed, the Natives were living scattered across the province, and were not as easily controlled as the Chinese. Also, as we mentioned, they had their own means of subsistence, meaning that they did not rely as heavily on their income from the cannery to survive, making them less reliable as a workforce. Moreover, the Chinese were employed through a contractor (a middleman) that "supplied, supervised, and provisioned the bulk of the labor force for each cannery."[81] They were hired for an entire season – while the Native women were only employed when needed – and the Chinese contractor set the price (per case of salmon packed usually) for the work of the labor force he provided before the season began.

Because of that diversity and the tense climate of the province at the time, "all the racial biases and conflicts were exhibited themselves in the cannery villages. The Anti-Asian bias was the most virulent and was strongest among the white and Indian fishermen."[82] Chinese men were the backbone of the cannery labor force. They were known to be good workers who could be depended on for the long and uncertain hours of canning salmon and thus, each cannery had its Chinese crew. In its early days, BC often had a shortage of laborers and the Chinese represented a usually reliable, usually trouble-free pool."[83] However, it seems that those tensions were managed rather well in the canneries, notably by segregated living spaces. The cannery was divided into various spaces, including living spaces. For example, there was the 'Bunkhouse' which was housings designed for the single men to live in; except that the Chinese – as well as the Natives – did not live into those rooms. Indeed, they had a separate living space for their community, called the China House. It was managed by a Chinese foreman and was built

[80]Muszynski, Alicja, "Race and Gender: Structural Determinants in the Formation of British Columbia's Salmon Cannery Labour Forces." (*The Canadian Journal of Sociology* 13, no. ½ Winter 1988), 104.
[81] *Ibid.*, 113.
[82]Campbell, K. Mack, *Cannery Village, Company Town* (Victoria, BC: Trafford, 2004), 7.
[83] *Ibid.*, 22.

to the specifications of the Chinese contractor. If not all the China Houses of all the canneries of BC were exactly the same, they did share some common amenities such as wooden bunk beds which were closed to provide some privacy. There was also a common room and a games room where the workers could meet and have social interactions like playing mahjongg or other gambling games.[84] This separation of living quarters was in part cultural with workers with similar ethnic background grouped together, but also hierarchical and a clear racial division between the different groups of workers.

Another trade that is associated with the Chinese people in Canada is the laundry business. From the turn of the century onwards, "Chinese laundries began to dot the landscape in numerous cities and towns from the Rockies to the Atlantic Provinces, and became an essential means of livelihood for Chinese workers."[85] Why the Chinese entered one specific trade so massively is easily explained. Because of the policies preventing them from entering any occupation of their choosing, the Chinese found a niche for themselves, where they could thrive professionally. Of course, laundries owned and staffed by white Canadians existed; however, Chinese laundries put up serious competition by providing quality services at a low cost. The choice of laundry work over any other trade is not innocent. Taking in laundry was considered – at the time – as a woman's job that very few white men were willing to partake in. Considering that BC's proportion of women was rather low, the laundry business was a perfect opportunity for the Chinese workers since the men were willing to carry out that task. Chinese laundries were often a business that was done among friends or family; for example, if a launderer needed a staff member, he would usually turn to someone he knew to fill out the position. Owning a laundry business was harsh and exhausting work. The shop was open every day for up to 18 hours a day. On

[84]Campbell, *Cannery Village, Company Town*, 15.
[85]Hoe, Ban Seng, *Enduring Hardship: The Chinese Laundry in Canada* (Gatineau, Québec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2003), 6.

Sundays, even though the shop was closed to customers, the launderer was busy doing other tasks such as sorting and marking the clothes. The conditions inside the laundry were also very unpleasant with hot and humid air and many launderers not only worked there, but they also lived there in order to save money on rent. Many of them developed diseases and ulcers as a result of those conditions. Feeling threatened by the competition, the white laundry owners aimed to limit the expansion of the Chinese laundry, notably by having them pay the same $50 license fee that the much larger steam laundries. In 1893 and 1911, the city councilors of Vancouver enforced by-laws that intended to limit the implantation of Chinese laundries to the profit of the Euro-Canadian owned ones.

To conclude on that section that dealt with the situation of the Chinese workers in British Columbia. It appears that firstly, the situation was not homogenous throughout the course of the period we are looking at. For example, we saw that times of high demand in terms of employment were succeeded by times of unemployment depending on the fluctuation of the need for cheap labor. Secondly, that racial tensions were always present but did not always run as high nor were they always expressed in the same manner. Sometimes they were demonstrated rather covertly, and sometimes this sentiment was expressed overtly by discriminatory laws or expressions of violence. Often, at the basis of those manifestations of racism laid stereotypes and prejudice. Indeed, Chinese people had a reputation imposed on them that did not necessarily conform to the reality. Finally, as we mentioned earlier when discussing the concept of intersectionality, discrimination and stereotypes did not stop at the workplace. They seeped into and affected many aspects of the Chinese people's life in Canada.

PART II: ASSIMILATION ISSUES

One of the major reproaches made to the Chinese immigrants in Canada, was that they were not assimilable to the 'local' (here meaning Euro-Canadian) population. They could not "be absorb[ed] and integrate[ed] into a wider society or culture."[86] In other words they could not adapt and become 'full members' of the Canadian society. They were bound to remain at the margins of it, to live within their own community. The question that can be asked is why the Chinese were actually unable to fully assimilate within their new country's social order or rather why they were believed to be unable to fully assimilate. To use the words of F.J. Barnard – interviewed as part of the Royal Commission of 1885:

> They are a class of people with whom we cannot associate; we cannot amalgamate with them. They are a class of people that have no interest in common with us [...] they take no part whatever in your political advancement, or in your social or moral condition. They are aside altogether from us – just as much as a steam-engine is aside from a human being.[87]

What were the elements that set them apart so much that those differences could not be overcome? Where did the problem originate from? Did the Chinese have no desire to be a part of society and to contribute their share, to participate in its growth and evolution? Or were they made unable to participate fully in the life of the province by the people already living there and that were holding the political power? In this part we will take a closer look at the relationship between Chinese people and the rest of the population, including the way they cohabited in the same space. By doing so, we will highlight the way in which the white community and the government reproached their lack of integration and assimilation to the Chinese, while at the same time not allowing them to assimilate fully.

[86] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/fr/definition/anglais_americain/assimilate
[87] *Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence*, XXXII.

1. A city within the city: Chinatown

"Racism, hatred, and violence had resulted in residential segregation"[88]

A Chinatown is defined as "a district of any non-Chinese town, especially a city or seaport, in which the population is predominantly of Chinese origin."[89] And indeed, at the basic level, a Chinatown is just that, a part of a town located outside of China where a population which is principally from Chinese descent lives. However, at the time of their creation, the Chinatowns held a greater significance, especially concerning race and assimilation issues that the Chinese immigrants were facing. Chinatowns existed in many of the biggest cities of British Columbia between 1858 and 1923 (and still exist today in many towns of Canada). The early Chinatowns were set up in the booming mining towns, notably during the 1870-80s. For example, Bakerville was an important mining town and its Chinatown was, for a time, an important one. However, as mining declined so did the towns and including, of course, the Chinatowns.

In this section we are more interested in the post-CPR period (that is to say after 1885) and the time of settlement and incorporation of Chinese people into civil society, and not only in the labor world (as was the case in the mining towns that were mostly temporary settlements created to fill the need for housings caused by the gold fever and later the tent settlements along the CPR lines).

[88] Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada*, 34.
[89] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/fr/definition/anglais_americain/chinatown?q=Chinatown

a. Creation and description of British Columbia's Chinatowns

Chinatowns in British Columbia started to emerge almost as early as the arrival of the first immigrants, that is to say, as early as the 1860s. Indeed, the first occurrences of such settlements appeared with the Gold Rush and the establishment of mining towns along the gold mining fields on the mainland and in coal-mining towns on the Island of Vancouver. It shows that, from the onset, the Chinese lived in a place set apart from the rest of the white community; a space that was almost exclusively theirs. This type of settlement is referred to as an 'instant Chinatown'. Those settlements were located throughout the Cariboo district. They were not 'settled' towns in the sense that they did not have permanent stores or official institutions; rather they were mere clusters of wooden shacks that housed the Chinese miners. They had not been built with the idea that they would last and create an actual town in the future. They had mostly been designed to shelter the Chinese workers for the duration of their work in that particular spot. Because they were occupied by a highly transient population, as soon as the lode they were extracting gold from was dried up, most of them fell in ruins.

Simultaneously, Chinatowns were created in the major cities of the Island of Vancouver and on the Mainland: namely, Victoria, Nanaimo, New Westminster, and Vancouver. The following map shows the distribution of the Chinese population in British Columbia in 1884. It illustrates the concentration of population in the Cariboo district from the mining settlements of the gold-seekers, as well as clear clusters evenly distributed along the CPR line. It also marks the main urban centers of Nanaimo, Victoria and New Westminster:

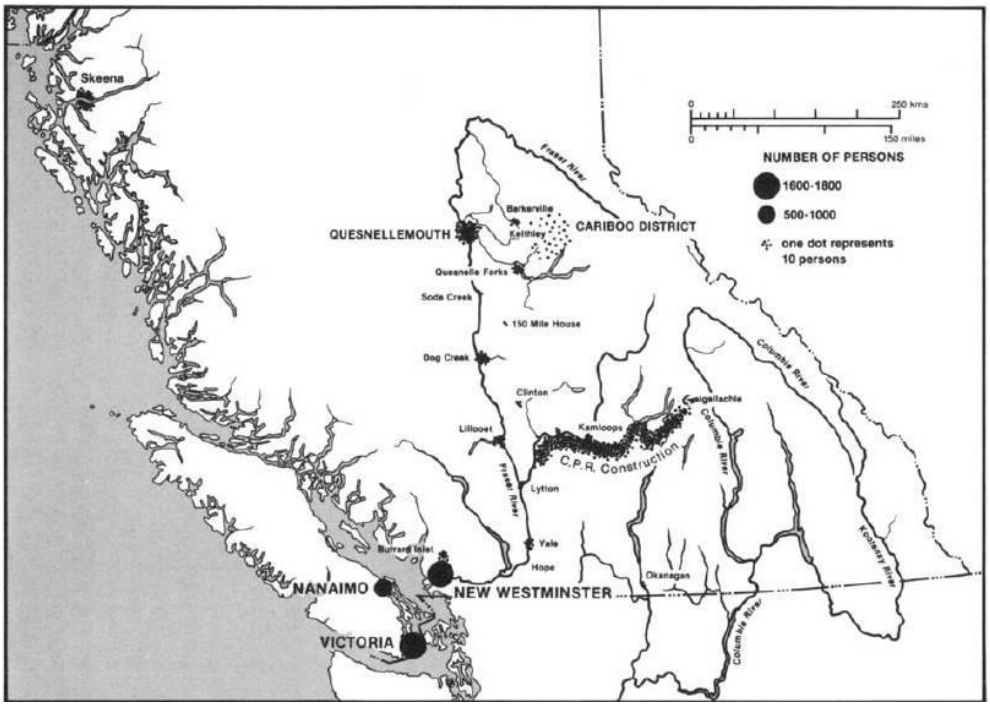

Table 5: Distribution of Chinese in British Columbia, 1884[90]

The 1880s were a period of transition for the Chinese population and incidentally for the Chinatowns as well. On the island, the two main Chinatowns of Vancouver Island were Victoria followed by Nanaimo. They grew into thriving towns acting as regional centers for the surrounding towns and were hosting several businesses. Despite its blooming state, Nanaimo's Chinatown entered the stage of extinction when its population was evicted from the land they occupied and were relocated to another undeveloped land. It is believed that the reason behind that decision was either that the land had become too valuable to host a Chinatown and that the city wanted it back to expand; there had been racial tensions in the mining fields and that could also explain why the city would have wanted to remove the Chinese further away from the white population.

Victoria is the oldest Chinatown in Canada and the second oldest Chinatown in North America, only preceded by San Francisco's. It was founded as early as the 1860s

[90] Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada*, 42.

following the influx of Chinese immigrants after the discovery of gold in the Fraser River and the Cariboo region. In 1862, there were 300 Chinese in Victoria; this number could vary depending on the arrival and departure of ships that took immigrants from China to BC and then from Victoria to the mainland. During the construction of the CPR, Victoria thrived despite not being located on the CPR line itself. Actually, the recruiting companies that hired workers in China and brought them to Canada operated from Victoria. Some immigrants did not go to the mainland but rather found occupation in Victoria: they worked there as boot makers or vegetable farmers mostly.

On the mainland, many of the gold mining towns had started to wither and disappear. Indeed, with the end of the Gold Rush, the Chinese had no reason to stay in the Cariboo district that was located quite far away from the new economic centers of the province: Victoria and the booming city of Vancouver. There were no more jobs to be found. Most of them left those cities to move southward where they hoped; they would find more work opportunities. For example, on the mainland, Barkerville was an important Chinatown during the Gold Rush period; at its heyday, it had a population of about 5,000 and had large store catering to the Chinese population.[91] Even so, it had a short-lived existence; in 1868, a fire ravaged the whole town including the Chinatown. A new Chinatown was rebuilt soon after but many miners had already left to work and settle somewhere else. In 1879, its Chinese population was reduced to a mere 159 residents.

Historically, New Westminster was a very important city for the province of British Columbia. It was originally founded in 1859 as its capital. The city went through two waves of immigration: the first one in the 1860s with the Gold Rush and the second one with the CPR construction. At first, only a few people settled in New Westminster but the settlement grew largely with newcomers that arrived to work on the CPR. However, in

[91]Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada*, 40.

1898, a fire destroyed most of New Westminster Chinatown. Despite its rebuilding, it did not grow back to the size it was prior to the incident.[92] On the mainland, it was replaced by the Chinatown of Vancouver that grew exponentially, following the boom of the city itself.

Vancouver's Chinatown started in the 1880s and was located in the neighborhood of Carrall and Dupont Street (now Pender Street). It was originally composed of 90 residents that came mostly for work opportunities. By the 1890s, its population had increased to reach a 1,000 people. Throughout the early twentieth century, the area grew and expanded with new tenements being added to accommodate the growing population, as well as grocery shops, restaurants and other businesses. Despite the attacks it was victim of in 1907, Vancouver Chinatown continued to thrive to eventually surpass Victoria both in size and in population.[93]

b. Sanitary concern

> The western image of a Chinatown was shaped by its own stereotypes. Whites perceived Chinatown as a filthy, unsanitary, overcrowded, sinister, and insidious slum. All its residents were downtrodden slaves and victims of gambling, opium-smoking, and prostitution. Chinatown was conceived as a godforsaken place to be kept as far away as possible from the white community.[94]

Such a concentration of Chinese people in the same area raised a lot of questions and close observation from outsiders. Part of that attention was harmless and came from a place of curiosity but the other part was less benevolent. One of the main concerns was the

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[92]Spitale Lisa, *Chinese Reconciliation Process Update Report* (Report. New Westminster: Development Services Department, 2010), 2.
[93] http://www.sfu.ca/chinese-canadian-history/vancouver_chinatown_en.html
[94]Yee, Paul, *Chinatown: An Illustrated History of the Chinese Communities of Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montréal, and Halifax* (Toronto: James Lorimer &, 2005), 42.

question of the sanitation of this part of town as well as the potential diseases that could spread from the Chinatowns to the rest of the city.

Chinatowns were located on lands that were deemed to be the least desirable in the eyes of the white landlords. Land and property owners had no interest to sell their well-located properties – that is to say situated in the center of towns – to Chinese people. This explains why the early Chinatowns often sprung up at the outskirts of the cities, on land that was sometimes dangerous or not proper for construction such as swamps. Many of the early buildings were made out of wood. Chinatowns could be described as clusters of wooden buildings next to each other. At that period, fire was used within the household to accomplish daily tasks such as cooking or warming up the house. Because of these parameters, fires were quite common and they propagated very quickly from one building to another.[95] Some BC Chinatowns that were once booming – thus declined or disappeared. For instance, Barkerville was destroyed by a fire, as well as Yale in 1882 and New Westminster later on. Even if – in some cases – the town was rebuilt, it never went back to the way it was before. Either the people had moved to a different town, or the fear of a new fire deterred them from settling back in their former dwellings. Vancouver was also victim of fires: in 1886 occurred what is known as the Great Vancouver Fire. It destroyed most of the city including the Chinese quarters. Again in 1887, during the first Vancouver riots, the Chinese quarter endured fire when housings and shops were burnt down by rioters and had to be rebuilt from the ground up.[96]

They were also ill-equipped with the basic amenities such as a sewage system or a lack of refuse collection that could lead to the waste stacking up in the streets becoming a

[95] "Action on the Grand Jury Recommendations – Chinatown still Clamoring for Fire Protection", *The Nanaimo Mail*, (Victoria), May 16, 1895.
[96]Roy, Patricia E, "The Preservation of the Peace in Vancouver: The Aftermath of the Anti-Chinese Riot of 1887." (*BC Studies* 31, 1976), 47.

sanitation hazard. Those conditions were reported by journalists who often accompanied civic officials who were visiting Chinatown to assess the sanitary conditions and often testified that they saw inadequate amenities, such as sewage and drainage that led to vile odors. Thus it explains why this is the vision of Chinatown that was transmitted via the press to the rest of the province. Newspapers were an important way which allowed people to have an insight within the Chinatowns without needing to actually go there themselves. "Blaming the Chinese for introducing 'loathsome diseases' as well as 'demoralizing habits' became an effective means of evoking sympathy elsewhere in Canada for restrictions on Chinese immigration."[97] Indeed, as we saw in the first part, the rest of Canada was not faced with the same amount of Chinese immigration than BC, mostly because of their geographical location. Those lurid accounts of the life in the Chinatowns served them well to express their discontent with the situation and to prompt a reaction at the federal level to rule on that matter.

Overcrowding was another problem that was often pointed out when discussing the unsafe state of the Chinatowns. The Chinese were also known to live frugally. Indeed, they did not have much to live and they did not seem to need much. First of all, they lived numerously in one house. It was the same argument that was used against them by the workers that saw them as competition; since many of them could live under the same roof, they did not require much space and thus did not have to pay for much space to rent. So they could spare their money. They did not have much to spend on and they only had to take care of their own person since they were often living without family members. To

[97]Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 30.

give an estimate, in 1900, in the Vancouver Chinatown, the density per house was of about 14 people.[98]

The drawing below, by Austrian-born American cartoonist Joseph Keppler, illustrates perfectly that idea. Although, it was published to describe the situation of the American-Chinese, it is absolutely relevant to the plight of the Canadian-Chinese during this time (1878). The caption reads: 'A picture for employer' and underneath both pictures: *Why they can live on 40 cents a day / And they can't*. It represents a widespread idea that the white workers had about the Chinese laborers. Because they considered them as men without a family to take care of, they figured that they were able to accept very low wages because they did not need much to live on. However, in this representation the white worker had a wife and children that relied on him for sustenance. Hence, he had to earn better wages so he could support his relatives. He felt cheated by his family man status, a status that was considered as befitting in the imagery of 'the traditional Christian family'. Of course, this vision is biased and not entirely true. Many Chinese men also had a family abroad and they took a portion out of their earnings to send to China to help their family live decently.

[98] Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 74.

Illustration 6: A picture for employers. Why they can live on 40 cents a day, and they can't by Joseph Keppler (1878)[99]

Because of all those particular features, the Chinatowns were often depicted as being a hotbed and a starting point for epidemics. It was believed that because of their precarious living conditions, the Chinese were carriers of diseases such as cholera or leprosy. The Chinese were also perceived as a threat to public health. And while it was proven that they were no more prone to be sick and to transmit disease than the whites, "nevertheless, continued press reports maintained the Chinatowns' reputations for unsanitary conditions and sometimes aroused fears that cholera, smallpox, and even leprosy brought by new arrivals might spread rapidly through the cities."[100] The Chinese are often described by the white men interviewed for the Royal Commission (notably in 1885) as clean people; they often wash themselves and change clothes frequently. On the

[99]Keppler, Joseph. "A Picture for Employers. Why They Can Live on 40 Cents a Day, and They Can't." Prints and Photographs Online Catalog - Library of Congress. Accessed June 05, 2016. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002720432/.
[100] Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*, 30.

other hand, the quarters in which they live are always depicted as filthy and the living conditions as quite precarious. In 1902, at the time the *Royal Commission* was being carried out, the question about Chinese and public health was again brought forward. And, contrary to the 1885 RC, to the question "Are they [the Chinese] a menace to health?" the answer provided unanimously by the doctors consulted for the report was that they were. Although, they did concede that the conditions in Chinatown indeed had improved over the last year, this area still remained dirty and unsanitary in their opinions.[101] But it was proven that the Chinese were no more prone to be infected with leprosy than the whites, and that this idea was created by linking together dirtiness and disease. For instance, a leprosy panic took place in Victoria, in 1891, when five Chinese lepers were discovered in a shack in Chinatown by City health officers. The disease, because of its impressive and visible symptoms, was very much feared by the people of the nineteenth century. The city officers had to act quickly to avoid a panic to spread. So, they decided to acquire an island where they could create a lepers' colony also called a lazaretto. The five men – and then, other people that presented the disease coming from various cities of BC – were sent on d'Arcy Island as a form of quarantine, in complete isolation from the rest of the world.[102] The colony was almost only used for lepers of Chinese origin. The only non-Chinese to be sent there was a German-Russian man. However, he had contracted the disease from a Chinese woman that he had met in Chinatown. Overall, it can be said that the treatment of the lepers on d'Arcy Island was particularly harsh. Besides the awful living conditions and the complete isolation with little to no medical care (a doctor came every three months to do a check-up), the lepers were told by a doctor that they could be sent home, to China, if they were deemed healthy enough. Little did they know that they would never be able to go

[101]*Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration* (Ottawa, 1902), 14.
[102]Bondoreff, Andrei. "Victoria Banished Chinese Lepers to Island Colony." *Times Colonist*, June 21, 2009. Accessed May 23, 2016. http://www.timescolonist.com/life/victoria-banished-chinese-lepers-to-island-colony-1.7584.

anywhere, partly because of their failing health but also because no ship company would take the risk to transport them. What is particularly striking is that hospitals dedicated for the treatment of lepers existed in Canada, in the 1890s; there was one in New Brunswick, where the patients were treated well within the walls of the hospitals.[103] So, why didn't BC take example and build the same kind of structure? The answer is simple: the lepers of NB were all Caucasians while those of BC were almost all Chinese and the non-Chinese leper was linked to Chinatown. Later on, in 1918, a flu spread through Kelowna – a city in central British Columbia – and it was reported that four Chinese men had died from the disease, notably because of the "conditions there with the over-crowding, lack of ventilation, and lack of sanitary arrangements generally are highly favorable to the spread of a disease like the 'flu'."[104]

Throughout the years, measures were taken to try and improve the living conditions of the Chinatowns of British Columbia. Health inspectors often made visits to assess the situation and find remedies to it if needed be. In 1896, a sewer was finally built at Dupont Street in Vancouver and four rows of wooden shacks that had been built over swamped land were destroyed. The promises of various Health Inspectors to render Chinatown cleaner and healthier were also often published in the news. The obvious purpose was, of course, to inform the fellow citizens of the city that they were being heard and that measures were being taken to remedy the situation that caused them so much alarm. In a column from a 1893 issue, the City Health Inspector was said to be "doing what he [could] to put Chinatown in a good sanitary condition."[105] However, the extent to which those actions were sustainable in time can be questioned. Indeed, in the same newspaper, in 1911, another official was presented as making rapid progress in sanitizing the area. He

[103]Ruttan, Stephen. "The Lepers of D'Arcy Island." *Times Colonist*, November 4, 2012. Accessed May 23, 2016. http://www.timescolonist.com/life/the-lepers-of-d-arcy-island-1.10120.
[104]"Note of the editor" *Kelowna Records* (Kelowna), November 07, 1918.
[105]"More Power to Him" *The Daily Colonist* (Victoria), March 8, 1893.

hired men to clean premises and even demolish buildings that were judged not salvageable.[106] So one may wonder whether the efforts made previously were unsuccessful in the long term to keep Chinatown to the same sanitary standards as the rest of the town or whether it was merely natural degradation that led, for example, to the demolition of some of the building that were in the worst shape.

To conclude, while it is true that the sanitary conditions in the Chinatowns of British Columbia were not optimal, it is also important to remember that this aspect was often used and blown out of proportion to serve racist and exclusionist purposes. Indeed, "while exhumation, leprosy, smallpox, and unhealthy living conditions undoubtedly created problems, all of them were used by the anti-Chinese movement to fan exclusionist sentiment and they, therefore, assumed unrealistic proportions for the non-Chinese Canadians in the West."[107]

c. Racialization of space

> Foreign tongues, dress, "looks", sounds and smells became the new shibboleths of ethnic enclaves. The ethnic group's lack of power in the political process, and perhaps more important still, the perception that a group was somehow "less" and therefore lacking in power, helped define who would really qualify as outsiders and therefore inhabitants of the ethnic neighborhoods.[108]

"Geographers have taught us that there is a strong connection between race and place and that the two help to define each other."[109] And, in fact, the creation of an ethnic enclave – such as a Chinatown – in a city is prompted by the interaction of those two

[106]"Cleaning Up Chinatown" *The Daily Colonist* (Victoria), September 28, 1911.
[107]Con and Wickberg, *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*, 67.
[108]Zucchi, John, A *History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 2007), 4.
[109] Zucchi, A *History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada*, 1.

notions. This concept can be applied to Canada and its Chinatown. Indeed, we are looking at the same configuration that was just described: two groups (the white Euro-Canadians and the Chinese immigrants) interacting in the same cities. The Euro-Canadians were clearly the dominant group and they did ascribe a certain identity onto the Chinese. The Chinatown is a good example of that. It was primarily a white construct that the Chinese slowly came to see as a way for them to live safely and peacefully. To quote Anderson, "this separation reduced opportunities for conflict and competition, but it also suggested that the Chinese were sojourners who did not want to mingle with the whites."[110]

The creation of a Chinatown was not, *per se*, a decision of the government nor was it imposed by a law on the Chinese. However, it was the result of a racializing process aimed at the Chinese population. Indeed, because of their negative reputation and status, the Chinese often found themselves at the margins of society, unable to partake in it at the same level as their white counterparts. The unification of the Chinese people was important in that regard; the phrase 'all the same' helped the whites to put all the Chinese in the same category, to erase their individuality. They were not a group composed of many individuals with each their distinct features, set of skills, but rather a group of 'Others' that formed a threatening mass. They were all ascribed the same features and the same characteristics that were inherent to the 'Chinese race' in the mind of the white Euro-Canadian population. The expression 'a horde of Orientals' is also revealing of that idea; that the Chinese are a mass of indistinct people swamping the 'white race' of BC. The very word Chinatown belongs to the vocabulary of the whites, in fact, there was no 'Anglotown' that would designate the place of residence of the people of European descent: "when BC became a colony, the architects of the province's nascent political culture quickly assumed

[110]Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*, 4.

responsibility for defining a society in the image of their own European profile."[111] Thus it appears clearly that the Chinese were set apart, into a separate category by the Euro-Canadian inhabitants. They were not citizens at the same-level, even when they were still protected by the same laws before the government started to pass discriminatory laws aimed at them.

As such, while Chinatown was in fact a physical entity that had a real existence, it was also a social construct. It was a representation of the discrimination that the Chinese community faced in Canada. Those discriminations had such a bearing on those people's lives that they were 'pushed' to live within the walls of a quarter that was separated from the space inhabited by the white community. Chinatowns were thus a distinct part of a city, a form of ethnic enclave that was visibly set apart by its racial makeup as well as by its appearance. Indeed, a person walking through Victoria or Vancouver at the end of the nineteenth century would have been aware when they entered Chinatown. The signs and the storefront were unmistakably Chinese. This enclave has often been presented as closed in, a hermetic space or to use a Chinese metaphor, "a Forbidden City". This vision can make us ponder on the actual state of Chinatowns: were they forbidding places where the members of the white community did not dare enter; were they open spaces, where people from both communities could freely interact and live or was the reality perhaps more nuanced?

It is important to begin by mentioning that because they were called Chinatowns did not mean that its inhabitants were exclusively Chinese. Even though, they were predominantly so, they did cohabit with other ethnicities within the boundaries of Chinatown. In their study, Dunae *and al.* used a new technology to assess the distribution of people in Victoria's Chinatown in 1891. The 'tool' they used is called GIS

[111] Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*, 80.

(Geographical Information System). This technique enabled them to study in a new and innovative way the interracial interactions that occurred. "GIS is a method of managing, modeling, displaying, and analyzing spatially referenced data. Historical GIS (HGIS) is a way of linking attribute data, about people and activities from the past, with spatial data and to points on the earth. Historical GIS is a means of representing and studying historical phenomena spatially."[112] In other words, the idea was to link spatial references (such as maps or plans) with historical data (such as historical documents or surveys). Correlating those two sets of data enabled historians and geographers to draw a clearer image of the situation of a given space at a given time. The next step was to link this information with the lots on the map. It allowed the researchers to 'place' people within the geographical space: how many people lived in each building? What was their status? What was their ethnic origin? Those questions are a few examples of the type of data researchers were able to exploit thanks to the GIS technique. It also enabled them to start seeing the racial makeup of the various neighborhoods by assessing who lived next to whom, and what people lived next to each other.

One of the conclusions that they drew from that study was that about 600 people of European descent and 100 aboriginal people shared that space with the Chinese that made up about 70% of the population. Thus about 25% of the Chinese of Victoria lived outside of Chinatown and among the white neighborhoods. The remaining 5% made up for the Chinese that lived with their employers, when they were hired as household servants.[113] This goes against the notion that Chinatowns were hermetic spaces were a single community lived. It is true that the neighborhood was the home of the greater part of the community but it was not delimited by walls or anything of the sort. It was not a physically

[112]Dunae, *et al.* , "Making the Inscrutable, Scrutable: Race and Space in Victoria's Chinatown, 1891." 4.
[113] Dunae *et al.* , 6

'enclosed space' but rather a section of buildings that was known to be the heart of the Chinese community.

For all the horrid descriptions and frightening accounts, Chinatowns also exercised a form of fascination and piqued the curiosity of the white Canadians. For example, it had been reported that the traditional Chinese celebrations attracted crowds from all over, including white neighborhoods. Events, such as the Chinese New Year, were the occasion for the Chinese to showcase traditions that they brought from their home. Upon such instances, the Chinese could share drinks and delicacies with the rest of the population.

2. The bachelor society

> Third, there was the threat of Chinese immigration and of 'hordes' of Chinese – that loaded word was originally applied to central Asia – spilling over into the cities of Europe. And finally, the racial threat – the social degeneration that was thought to exist in 'Chinatowns' and to be spread through partnerships and intermarriage. All four were distilled unto the catchphrase the 'Yellow Peril'.[114]

The early Chinese community in Canada is sometimes referred to as 'a bachelor society' or as a 'married bachelor society'. This oxymoron illustrates a reality of the life of the Chinese immigrants to Canada. A bachelor being "a man who is not and has never been married"[115], how can a man be both a married man and a bachelor? The Chinese men living in Canada did correspond to that odd definition in the sense that they were – for the majority of them – married in China but came to Canada on their own, hence the word bachelor being used to describe their marital situation in Canada. It seemed as if they had

[114] Frayling, *Yellow Peril: Dr. Fu Manchu & the Rise of Chinaphobia*, 254.
[115] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/fr/definition/anglais_americain/bachelor

two separate lives with each their particular status. This oddity has often been taken as further evidence that they had no intention to settle in Canada for the long-term.

a. Predominantly male immigration

Many Chinese men had as their goal, upon their arrival in Canada, simply to make enough money to be able to return to China and live comfortably with the earnings they made overseas. However, "many of them became disillusioned and did not fulfill their dreams of the golden mountain. Because of their meager incomes and marginal existence, it would take them a very long time indeed to save enough to return to China with money and honor, and many never achieved their goals."[116]

The law and more specifically the series of discriminatory Acts that were passed to control and reduce Chinese immigration made it especially difficult for the men that came seeking employment to bring a family member with them. Indeed, "the cost of bringing an additional family member increased as the head tax was raised from $50 to $100 in 1900; and $500 in 1903. After 1923 and until 1947, it was simply impossible for the Chinese in Canada to sponsor their wives, as the law prohibited the entry of practically all Chinese."[117] Additionally, many Chinese feared that their family would not be safe in Canada where the hostile atmosphere towards immigrants was very present. Events such as the Vancouver riots and other violent acts directed towards the Chinese (and Japanese) population of Canada were as many reasons to explain the reluctance of Chinese men to bring wife and children with them. Canada's Chinese community have known a sex ratio imbalance up until 1971, that is to say that there were far more men than women in the Chinese communities. And the imbalance was so great that it took about 25 years to bridge

[116] Hoe, *Enduring Hardship: The Chinese Laundry in Canada*, 40.
[117] Li, Peter S. "Immigration Laws and Family Patterns: Some Demographic Changes among Chinese Families in Canada, 1885-1971."(*Canadian Ethnic Studies* 12, no. 1, 1980), 63.

it (from the end of the period of exclusion in 1947 when bringing family members to Canada was made easier to 1971 when the sex ratio imbalance ended).[118] Dunae *et al.* describe Victoria's Chinatown as a "highly gendered space: in 1891, 95% of Victoria's Chinese residents were male. Many of the men were sojourners or seasonal residents. The sex-ratio imbalance would remain such until the period of exclusion, indeed according to Wickberg *et al.* between 1858 and 1923, when Chinese men were able to sponsor a family member to come and join them in Canada, the majority of them sponsored a son or a nephew rather than a wife or a daughter.[119]

In this section we will take a look at the fate of the Chinese wives whose husbands left for the 'Gold Mountains', leaving them behind to live alone in China in the hope of their return. What often happened when a married man left China for Canada is that he left his first wife behind to care for the household and took his second wife (or concubine) with him to his new country "to satisfy [his] sexual need and to produce additional male heirs."[120] Still, many men arrived in Canada on their own, having left wife and children – if they had any – in China. Because of the labor-driven type of immigration, the pool of immigrants from China was composed almost entirely of men. Indeed, men were the head of the household and the main provider of livelihood for the family. The first wife was then left alone to take care of the household while the husband sought a better fortune in Canada.

Another category of women that were 'involved' in Canadian immigration were 'grass widows'. Grass widow was the name given to a woman who lived in China and who was arranged to marry a 'Gold Mountain guest' either shortly before he left for Canada or

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[118]Li, "Immigration Laws and Family Patterns: Some Demographic Changes Among Chinese Families in Canada, 1885-1971, 67.
[119]Con, and Wickberg, *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*, 14.
[120]Woon, Yuen-Fong, "Between South China and British Columbia: Life Trajectories of Chinese Women." (*BC Studies* 156, 2007/2008), 86.

during his first visit back home. When he left again to go back to Canada, she stayed in China. The spouses only saw each other when the husband could manage a trip back, which was not very often. During those visits, he could father children that would, too, stay in China with their mother. According to Woon, those women lived with the fear that their husband would abandon them and remarry in Canada; this rarely happened as there were very few eligible Chinese women in Canada and interracial marriages seldom occurred.[121] The idea was that after a life of labor in Canada, the husband would have accumulated enough money to retire comfortably in China with his wife and children. However, it was not always the case and many men stayed in Canada and retired there.

To conclude on that topic, it is worthwhile to discuss the end of the period of exclusion when the reunion of Chinese families in Canada was made easier. Indeed, the Exclusion Act was lifted in 1947, and with it ended the period of complete prohibition of Chinese immigration to Canada. Men who had immigrated prior to 1923 could then sponsor their wives and children to come and finally join them. However, this was an expensive process and often they could only sponsor one person at a time and thus the reunion of the whole family could take up to decades to be complete. As explained by Hoe, "they were often unable to bring more than one family member at a time, and they were always subject to bureaucratic delays and various immigration rules and regulations."[122] During the period that interests us, the majority of the Chinese living in Canada was men. And because of their status of 'married bachelor', they were often associated with the stereotype of the sojourner.

[121] Woon, "Between South China and British Columbia: Life Trajectories of Chinese Women.", 93.
[122] Hoe, *Enduring Hardship: The Chinese Laundry in Canada*, 46.

b. The stereotype of the sojourner

A sojourner is a concept coined by Paul Siu in 1952; he defined it as "a stranger who spends many years of his lifetime in a foreign country without being assimilated by it."[123] The concept is applicable to any person that fits that definition, regardless of their origins and the motivations behind their immigration. While it does not apply solely to the case of the Chinese in Canada, the word 'sojourner' has often been used to describe them. Generally speaking, a sojourner is a person that leaves their homeland to go settle in a foreign country. The reasons for the migration can be numerous: economic hardship in the home country or cultural, religious persecutions. In his article, Paul Siu presents various cases with an emphasis on Chinese Americans. Here, we will take the concept and apply it to the particular case of Chinese immigrants to Canada. The first official mention of such an idea was made by then-Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald. For example he said in Parliament in 1885 that "the Chinese bring no women to British Columbia with them, and are not likely, therefore, to be permanent settlers."[124] This notion of sojourner and sojourn had been reprised and used widely in scholarly studies of the situation of immigrants and notably in studies looking at Chinese immigrants at the end of the nineteenth – beginning of the twentieth century. There appears to be two contradictory views concerning the status of sojourner of the Chinese in Canada, along with two contradictory notions. The voluntary sojourner and the involuntary sojourner: the voluntary sojourner is a immigrant that stays in their host country without assimilating by choice. They intend to stay briefly before going back to their home country and therefore do not have any interest in learning the habits and customs of their new country. Conversely, the involuntary sojourner is made a sojourner by outside conditions imposed on him. They intend to stay and settle permanently in their host country but are unable to do so because of exterior parameters.

[123]Hoe, *Enduring Hardship: The Chinese Laundry in Canada*, 46.
[124]*House of Commons Debates*, (Vol. 1. 4th Parliament, 4th Session. Canadian Parliamentary Historical Resources, 1882), 1477.

The rhetoric used to demonstrate that the Chinese were sojourners in Canada and why they had no interest in settling permanently was based on two major points. The first was an economic one and the second, a social one.

The aim behind the decision to immigrate to Canada was – in the large majority of cases – to find employment. When Chinese men left they had a plan in mind about how their sojourn would unfold: ideally they would work in that branch for a while and then, return to their country (in our case, China) to finish their career or, depending on their age, retire. That explains, still according to Siu, why the word 'job' is used to refer to the profession of those sojourners and not the word 'career'. Indeed, a career would imply a lifelong dedication to a profession, the building of a career takes many years and it also implies a certain progression or ascension within the chosen field. Because of that, often, the sojourner is thought of in terms of the function he occupies in society rather than of his person. For example, Chinese in North America made up the majority of laundrymen and thus they were associated with that function above anything else. To quote Siu: "the intrinsic purpose of the sojourn is to do a job and do it in the shortest possible time."[125] And indeed, it was the case with Chinese workers in Canada; the time they would have to spend in Canada was determined in great part by the amount of money they could earn to pay back the cost of their trip to Canada and then the money needed to go back and settle comfortably in China. Also, we should not forget that because of the system of brokers, sometimes, workers could spend a long time earning money only to pay their broker back. In other words, they were not making any profit and not saving any money for their own projects. Likewise, if they had a family to take care of in China, they had to send money to them, to support them. And if it is true that many Chinese ended working in their host country for most of their life, building businesses that would last throughout the years, it is

[125]Siu, Paul C. P, "The Sojourner." (*American Journal of Sociology* 58, no. 1, 1952), 35.

not the plan they had in mind when they first arrived; to quote Li: "Most Chinese who went overseas ended up settling in the host country."[126] Still within the economic argument – and this aspect was what caused a great amount of tension between the immigrant population and the 'local' (here in the sense of the dominant population in the area of settlement, in our case white Euro-Canadian) people – was the reproach that the Chinese did not do their 'fair share' for the growth and development of the province (and more largely the country). The Chinese of Canada sent a portion of their income back to China to their family, to support them financially. Because of that, it appeared to the whites that the Chinese were not using that money to help and participate in the economic life of the country. British Columbians estimated that on average the Chinese spent a third to half as much as the whites.[127] And so, they were also not being 'a part' of society because they were not giving as much as them to that society.

The other aspect that makes an immigrant into a sojourner, still in Siu's definition of the concept, is that they have a rather ethnocentric[128] attitude. In other words, they retain a very strong link with their home culture and their traditions. It is understandable that, at first, those people would still keep some of their traditions and culture; it can hardly be expected from them that they would 'unlearn' and forget all of their cultural identity and upbringing. However, in the case of the sojourner, they live only by the standards of their original culture and do not try to integrate some, if not all, of their host country. And, in part, because of that they are also labeled as foreigners and as foreigners that have no interest in learning and absorbing some of the new culture and customs they are faced with. It can be seen in the segregated space they lived in as well as in the segregated 'institutions' that they had to create in order to be heard and to be taken care of. So, as we

[126]Li, *The Chinese in Canada*, 25.
[127]Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*, 10.
[128] Ethnocentrism: evaluation of other cultures according to preconceptions originating in the standards and customs of one's own culture. (Oxford dictionary online)

previously saw, they mostly lived in racialized areas with people of the same origin: Chinatowns. And they were members of associations created by and for them such as the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Those organizations were dedicated to the welfare of the Chinese people in North America because they did not feel like the Canadian institutions were sufficient or did enough for them.

However, it would be inaccurate not to consider the concept of sojourning by looking at the actions of the Chinese and not at the role of the whites and especially the government that participated by creating the conditions for such a pattern. "It was not subjective predispositions but structural forces that compelled the Chinese to remain marginal in Canadian society."[129] To begin with, one of the most used arguments to 'prove' that the Chinese were sojourners is that they came alone without their family. However, as we saw in the previous section, bringing their families with them was not often a viable option. Before the restriction laws the cost itself was too important and not worthwhile and after the laws were passed, it would only have been affordable to the extremely wealthy. The other reason that deterred Chinese men from bringing family members with them was the fear of violence. Indeed, many men were afraid that if they brought family with them, they would have to suffer physical and moral abuse that they had witnessed.

The Canadian migration policy is not the only one that should be taken into account when studying the topic of sojourning. Ching-Hwang argues that the Chinese migration policies were also not inconsequential in influencing the migration patterns of Chinese people to Canada. The image and the reputation of the overseas Chinese also had to be taken into account and in fact, they have changed drastically over the course of the duration of the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1912). Of course, we are still mostly interested in the

[129]Li, Peter S. *The Chinese in Canada*, 26.

1858-1923 period but it is nonetheless important to look back at the past in order for the perception of our period of interest to make sense in light of the evolution of the mentalities. At the very beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty (1644), the image of the overseas Chinese was very negative; images inherited from the Ming dynasty described them as "deserters, criminals, and potential traitors."[130] The Ch'ing government was extremely suspicious toward Chinese that had left China to live somewhere else; they were afraid that they would prove to be "political criminals, conspirators and rebels"[131] and that they were working against China and in the interest of their host country. It is, however, difficult to assess the extent to which those fears were founded; it is likely that some of them were indeed 'agents' at the service of their new country, but it is unlikely that all of them had political reasons in mind when they immigrated. More likely they were only looking for a more favorable place for trade and a more prosperous place to live. This strong and persistent fear was prompted because of political tensions in the empire. The Ch'ing dynasty came in power after the Ming; the Ch'ing are Manchus while the Ming were Han Chinese.[132] A resistance group led by Cheng Ch'eng-Kung (or as he was known in the West, Koxinga) opposed the Manchu rule. Because of that group of opposition to the official rule, it was often believed that the overseas Chinese were supporters of the dissident leader and that is why they were considered traitors to their country and why they were so distrusted by the rest of the Chinese population. An amnesty was issued for the overseas Chinese, providing that they could come back to their province and prove their 'good character'. The period following the amnesty was marked by a relaxation of the strong worry that political conspiracy was lurking. However, this did not mean that the negative status of the overseas Chinese was erased; prejudice remained and the general

[130]Ching-Hwang, Yen, "Ch'ing Changing Images of the Overseas Chinese (1644-1912)."(*Modern Asian Studies* 15, no. 2, 1981), 261.
[131] *Ibid.*, 262.
[132] The Chinese people is composed of an array of ethnicities (56 recognized by the PRC nowadays). The dominant ethnicity now and then is Han. Manchu is another component of the Chinese ethnic makeup.

opinion reverted to the "old image of deserters, an image that had no political connotations."[133] Indeed, the people that had made the choice to go live outside of China were still very much considered as undesirable elements, and it was sometimes said that they should not be allowed to come back and encourage more people to follow their example. "Underlying the Ch'ing government's obsessive and non-protective attitude were deep-rooted Confucian prejudices against foreign trade and emigration."[134] Indeed the importance of Confucian rule and values in Ch'ing society also helps explaining the harsh treatment of those who were considered deserters. As had been just been mentioned, Confucianism did not have a positive view of foreign trade and emigration. Moreover, emigration posed a serious threat to the upholding of the familial duties ordered by Confucianism. Indeed, one of the primordial duties of Chinese people was filial piety. Filial piety is a tenet of Confucianism 'doctrine'; it refers to the virtue of utmost respect for one's father, elders or even ancestors. Children had the duty to take care of them and owed loyalty and unconditional respect for their parents.[135] In the case of the overseas Chinese, the failure to carry out one's filial duty was what the Confucians considered one of the most severe offenses. This due respect was also translated into acts that one had to perform in order to be virtuous. If a person was not living in the same country as their parents and his ancestors, then how could he fulfill their duties as a child or more largely as a member of the family? He was then not only a deserter of his country but also to his family. During the period of the Opium wars (roughly between 1839-1860), the reputation of the overseas Chinese as being 'deserters' did not go away; on the contrary, it became even more present. Because of the growing tensions with the West, the overseas Chinese were once again perceived as a possible threat to the national security of China. They were accused of

[133]Ching-Hwang, "Ch'ing Changing Images of the Overseas Chinese (1644-1912)", 263.
[134] *Ibid*., 264.
[135] Oldstone-Moore, Jennifer, and Jean-Louis Houdebine, *Comprendre Les Religions Confucianisme: Origines,Croyances, Rituels, Textes Sacrés, Lieux Du Sacré* (Paris: Gründ, 2003), 98.

'collaborating' with the enemy and working against the interests of their home country, to the point that they were deemed responsible for China's defeat. According to Ching-Hwang, those accusations were not completely ill-founded, and 'traitors' did help the British during the war on various occasions, however it is an exaggeration to accuse them of being instrumental in the defeat of China. In the aftermath of the war, the 'traitors' were conveniently used as scapegoats by the government to justify some of their political and military mishaps.

In conclusion, the question of assimilation was indeed a burning issue in British Columbia from 1858 onwards. Because of the influx of immigrants, the white community started to question the status of these people and their place in the western society based on the British model they had re-created for themselves. Because of their discernable otherness and foreign customs, the Chinese were perceived as a potential threat to the established order and to the Euro-Canadian culture. However, as we saw, the motives evoked to justify their non-assimilable nature were often created by the same people that perceive them as evidence of the incapacity of the Chinese to 'become' Canadians. This attitude was quite hypocritical since the Chinese were criticized for not being enough a part of society but at the same time, as we saw, that the complaints and the discriminations directed towards them by were instrumental in keeping them at the margins of white society.

Also, for the sake of argument, it can perhaps be interesting to compare the situation of the Chinese with the one of the early Europeans immigrants to Canada. Indeed, the first Europeans to settle in the land of Canada (which was not yet Canada as we think of it now) were also immigrants and they also arrived in a land that already people living there in communities. However, when they first settled, they took the power and they imposed their own rule. They did not try to fit into the Native society but rather they built a

new society very similar to the one they had known before. The Chinese, on the other hand, arrived in a land where they could not do the same. They had to adapt and live within a world that did not resemble their former ones and this could also shed some light on the difficulties they had to find their place in Canada.

PART III: IMMORAL BEHAVIORS

> The Chinese lifestyle was characterized as full of vice such as prostitution and opium use, and the Chinese people were accused of being dirty, corrupt and carriers of various diseases.[136]

Finally, the last aspect that was used to stereotype negatively the Chinese people of Canada that I wish to explore is the reputation they were given to have low moral standards and that they engaged in behaviors that were considered indecent behaviors. They ranged from pastimes such as gambling to consumption of narcotics – in this particular case, opiates. But they also touched on issues of marriage and relationships.

The reactions that followed from these allegations of misconduct came from the white Canadians, but they sometimes seem to be misplaced or unjustified. Indeed, one can wonder: where did those come from: were they habits from China or were they formed in Canada? Were those behaviors traditional in their culture or were they considered deviant in China as well? Why were they perceived as immoral and threatening to the white community? Finally and perhaps more importantly, were these practices confined to the Chinese communities? They were used to characterize them in an attempt to present them as once again 'Other', foreign and incapable of being part of the 'good' Canadian society.

[136]Fernando, Shanti Irene, *Race and the City: Chinese Canadian and Chinese American Political Mobilization* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 22.

1. The concept of moral panics applied to the case of the Chinese in Canada

'Moral panics' is an expression coined in 1972 by Stanley Cohen, a South African sociology student who was looking for a topic for his dissertation. 'Moral panics' is a concept defined as the instance when the behavior of some members of a given society (not any society in particular) is thought by others as being problematic and threatening the established social order of the community. Thus, those who feel threatened believe that steps must be taken to control the behavior of this 'trouble-making group', to punish the perpetrators and repair the damage.[137] When Cohen first thought of this notion, he was working on the tensions between two youth subcultures in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s: the mods and the rockers. However, as hinted by Goode and Ben-Yehuda, this concept can be broadly applied to many different contexts and the same pattern can be found many times through history: from the witch-hunt in seventeenth-century America to the ongoing war on drugs. In their book, Goode and Ben-Yehuda allude to this phenomenon being at play in the American West. As for me, I would like to show that this model can be applied to the Canadian West.

> The "white slave" traffic moral panic was inspired by media attention to Chinese immigration to the American West, the fact that a substantial proportion of these immigrants smoked, or was thought to have smoked, opium, the fear that whites, especially women, would be corrupted by this "degenerate" Chinese vice, and the subsequent connection between opiate addiction and prostitution. In addition, Chinese immigration created a competition for jobs with the majority white population – hence, the fabrication of a "yellow peril": the fear that Asians would swamp people of

[137]Goode, Erich, and Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1994), 6.

> European descent in a "tidal wave" of yellow-skinned hordes who were willing to work for pennies a day.[138]

There are five stakeholders usually involved in the moral panics: the press, the public (here meaning the population), law enforcement, the politicians and legislators, and action groups. And indeed, it appears that those actors are all present on the Canadian stage and they all played a role in presenting the Chinese people as an evil threatening the social order.

- The press was indeed a key element in spreading news in the province at the time, it was the only source of 'standardized' information that people had access to in the sense that all the people from a same town or a same province could read the same reports and had the same information upon which to form their opinions about a particular topic.
- The public, here in our case, the white Euro-Canadians, strongly expressed their anti-Chinese sentiment.
- Members of law enforcement were involved in the life of the Chinese communities. Because of the tensions, the police and the Chinese people were often in contact.
- Politicians and legislators became an important part of that phenomenon when they started investigating the issue and passing laws to remedy it.
- Action groups are groups or organizations that are created in response to the moral panics. They appeal and campaign to cope with the threat that arose. Canada, and more particularly BC, saw the emergence of anti-Asian groups that were created with the goal to stem the problems that they believed were created by the influx of Chinese immigrants.[139]

There are three theories of moral panics depending on the class of society the panics originated from and what the aim of that group was: elite-engineered, interest-group and grassroots models. In the case of the early Chinese immigrants in Canada, it would

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[138]Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, 6.

[139]*Ibid.*, 23.

seem that the grassroots model was at play. Indeed, we saw that the first movement of defiance and violence towards the Chinese sprung from the bottom up. It originated in the working class (the gold-miners and then the railway builders) and those groups then tried to get their beliefs to be institutionalized by the elite by pressuring the government to pass legislation that would make those ideas into law. As further evidence, we also argued that the leaders or the firm owners were rather favorable to the immigration of Chinese for economic reason, and that excludes the idea that the discriminations and prejudices started from their level.

The five elements that characterized moral panics are defined as follows:

- Concern: there is a heightened concern surrounding a specific group that constitutes a minority within a society. In this case, the minority of Chinese immigrants living in Canadian society was under scrutiny and they aroused a lot of concern.
- Hostility: the group of 'Other' is subjected to an increased amount of hostility that can be translated into actual violence aimed at them. As it happened during the Gold Rush or later during the Vancouver riots – to only mention a few examples – the Chinese were subjected to hostility both verbal and physical.
- Consensus: while a portion of the population of Canada seemed to have had a favorable opinion of the Chinese deeming them trustworthy and hard-working – as some testimonies from the Royal Commission suggested – the substantial agreement was that the immigration of the Chinese was detrimental to the growing nation. This is proven by the amount of laws that were passed and that did not raise a widespread outcry among the Euro-Canadian population.
- Disproportion: often in the case of a moral panic situation, there is a discrepancy between the numbers of people involved in the behavior that is causing the moral panics than there actually is. In other words, people imagine the threat posed by the group accused of spreading moral panic to be greater than it actually is because they believe that the group is sizably bigger than it is in reality. Between 1881 and 1921, the Chinese represented on average less than 0.4% of the Canadian population and less than 10% of the population of British Columbia. While in the case of BC, they represented a sizable minority, they still remained a minority. The rhetoric used to

describe them tended to erase that by picturing them as numerous and overpowering. For example, expressions such as "tidal waves" or "hordes" were tropes regularly used in the press or by politicians.[140]

- Volatility: the 'moral panics' erupts and spreads fairly quickly. After, it can either fade and disappear in the same rapid fashion or, it can become institutionalized. In the case of Canada and the Chinese, the panics aroused pretty much as soon as the first immigrants arrived and then spread and lasted until it became institutionalized by the passing of laws and acts pertaining to them.[141]

Finally, besides the concept of 'moral panic', there is another important aspect to Cohen's theory that is often at the basis of a moral panic: 'folk devils'.

> A folk devil is a suitable enemy, the agent responsible for the threatening or damaging behavior or condition. To actors caught in the coils of the moral panic, folk devils are the personification of evil. And to such actors, some sectors of the population make better enemies or folk devils than others.[142]

In a sense, 'folk devils' are a form of scapegoats that are deemed responsible for the panic spreading through society. They are a useful – often a minority – group that allows the majority to find an entity liable for all the problems that they see in society. There is a process of 'demonization' through which a group of people is stigmatized as 'folk devil'. Their negative actions are reported in the press and thus, they become the personification of evil. They are instantly recognized as such, and it is almost possible for them to get rid of that status that has been attributed to them. The Chinese in Canada fit well within that pattern. They were stigmatized and the white Euro-Canadian society was suspicious of them early on and they were accused of numerous crimes and misdemeanors (theft, gambling, drug dealing, and promiscuity, to mention but a few).

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[140]Cohen, Stanley, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1972), xx.
[141]Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, 37-42.
[142] *Ibid.*, 27.

2. Gambling

Gambling was – in the eyes of the white population – an example of the moral depravity of the Chinese, further proof of their different nature. Gambling was extensively practiced within Chinatowns, in particular by the laborers who desired some distraction and leisure after their long days of work.

Originally, gambling was an itinerant practice. The itinerant gamblers travelled from town to town, offering the inhabitants a chance to try their luck. It also provided them with distraction by recounting exotic tales of their travels. However, this transient and unstable life was not compatible with the kind of community the Chinese were trying to build in Canada. Indeed, to flourish and thrive the Chinese needed stability and hard work if they were to hope to 'make it' into a white society that was mostly hostile to them. For example, fathers feared that their offspring would leave to go and experience this itinerant lifestyle, but as workers were the root of the working-community, they could not afford to lose any workforce.[143]

During the early days of Chinese immigration, gambling was not considered as an issue by the white populations who did not perceived it as a threat to the moral and social order. The fact that Chinese played and gambled between them was of little concern to the white laborers. It was merely a distinctive trait, an original pastime. As a matter of fact, "the public considered the enforcement of gambling laws in Chinatowns to be a routine police matter unless white men or boys were involved."[144] In other words, the issue was

[143]Chan,*Gold Mountain: The Chinese in the New World*, 80.
[144]Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 16

not so much that the Chinese gambled as a pastime among themselves, but that they might lure white men into the habit and pervert white teenage boys. The police – often accompanied by journalists that recounted those events in the newspapers – raided many presumed gambling parlors in the hope to catch players in the act. This caused some disturbance for the people that shared the neighborhood. The police could raid a gambling den at any hour and since the entrance to some of them were hidden to avoid such occurrences; the operation could generate noise and turmoil.

Various types of games existed and Chinese people were not the only ones to participate in this kind of leisure. Indeed, the whites sometimes visited game parlors and partook in the games that seemed exotic and new to them. In Victoria, one of the streets associated with gambling was Fantan Alley. It is in that street that the first account of organized betting activity was recorded. In fact, it was known across North America as 'Bank Street' because of the promise of fortune it held. Gambling parlors opened in the Chinatowns of BC, they were places where men could go after their shifts in order to socialize and relax. The merchants that operated them kept them open at night so that the workers could go there after their workday. According to Lai, the men that worked in Canada were often bachelors (here meaning that they did not have any family or wife living with them in Canada) and the gambling parlors was a way for them to keep busy and to meet with other members of their community. Indeed, gambling was a very profitable trade in Chinatowns. For example, after the completion of the CPR, Fantan Alley was at its peak: it hosted no less than twelve houses of chance as well as restaurants catering to the hundreds of men that could frequent them at the same time. It also provided such entertainment as singers, acrobats, or even opera singers. Various types of games could be played in the Chinese gambling parlors: from policy (a lottery game that was popular because of the low initial bet it allowed) to fantan (a game with much higher stakes

requiring skills). However, the players did not often win and, on the other hand, the owners of the parlors did make a fortune amassing all the bets.

3. Sexual promiscuity

The demographics of Chinese in Canada were predominantly male. However, they were not exclusively so. Among this essentially masculine population did live a few female Chinese immigrants. This gender imbalance can be explained by two main factors: the first is that during the early days of Chinese immigration – when migration was not yet regulated by laws and not submitted to head tax – the low influx of Chinese women can be explained by the fact that the Chinese men went to Canada to earn money laboring in such fields as gold mining or railroad construction. Those jobs were not suited for women and thus, it might not have been perceived as worthwhile for them to immigrate. Indeed, while there was no tax yet, the trip was costly and women could not get 'sponsored' by employers that would lend the money for the boat fare in exchange for their work. Later, the taxes – that kept on increasing as time went by – deterred many men to sponsor their families to come join them because they could not afford such an expensive trip. So, it seems that often, the few Chinese women that lived in Canada were perceived through the prism of a reductive dichotomy: the prostitute or the concubine.

a. Chinese women in Canada: the concubine and the prostitute

The first Chinese women to come to Canada arrived as early as their male counterparts, in 1858. Between 1860 and 1947, Chinese women in Canada could be

divided into four main categories depending on their role or position in the community. Those four categories were: merchant's spouses, domestic slaves, serving girls and prostitutes. "However, patriarchal tradition in South China, British Columbia's frontier conditions, white racism, and restrictive immigration legislations combined to keep Chinese wives a small minority in Canada until the late 1940s."[145] According to the official statistics, the China-born wives made up only 0.7% of the Canadian population between 1887 and 1902.[146] For example, in 1884, the Royal Commission published the following numbers:

CHINESE WOMEN		
Occupation	Number of persons	% of total
Prostitutes	70	0,7
Married women and girls	88	0,8
Total Chinese people	10 492	100

Table 7: Repartition of Chinese women in BC, 1884[147]

However, "outsiders often assumed that most of them were prostitutes or concubines."[148] In fact, the white society had a rather restrictive vision of the position of Chinese women among their community and their family. They were often categorized as either wives – and in that case, almost exclusively, as second wives or concubine – or prostitutes. The word 'concubine' refers to the 'second-wife' of a Chinese man. Polygamy was not explicitly forbidden in traditional Chinese marriage rules, nor was it encouraged. However a man could – if he chose to – take a second wife (a concubine), this second-wife often had fewer rights and was considered as inferior to the first wife. In some cases, both wives could have equal status and be treated the same within the household. As explained

[145]Woon, "Between South China and British Columbia: Life Trajectories of Chinese Women.", 86.
[146]*Ibid.*
[147]*Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence.* Ottawa: Printed by Order of the Commission, *188.*
[148] Dunae, et al. "Making The Inscrutable, Scrutable: Race and Space in Victoria's Chinatown, 1891.", 3.

in the first section, it occurred that a Chinese man, upon immigrating, left his first wife in China and only brought with him his second wife. In the mind of the whites, the fact that a man could have several spouses was further proof of the backwardness of the Chinese. Indeed polygamy was very much frowned upon in the Christian mindset that the European settlers brought with them, it was thus deemed a heathen practice. To contextualize the polygamy issue, it can be interesting to draw a parallel with the situation of the American State of Utah were polygamy led to political problems. Indeed, Utah was the home to the majority of the worshippers of the worshippers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – commonly known as the Mormon Church. In the late 1840s, most of the Mormons left their original states and moved to Utah where the community settled. Polygamy as one of the tenets of Mormonism had been introduced in 1843 by the prophet and founder of the Church Joseph Smith. This created tensions and disagreements inside as well as outside the Church. In 1852, polygamy was officially declared one of the Mormon's principles.[149] This did not have only religious implications but political ones as well. In 1849, he people of Utah had petitioned the American government to enter the Union under the name of the State of Deseret, yet, this entity was never recognized by the State and in 1850, Utah Territory was created by an Act of Congress. The people of Utah would have to wait until 1896 to finally enter the Union as the State of Utah. The delay of 46 years between the creation of the Territory and its admission as part of the Union is often explained by the controversies that spawned from the Mormons' practice of 'celestial marriage' – the name they gave to plural marriages. So, while this example did not take place in BC, it illustrates how much polygamy could be an issue in British North America; the question of plural marriages was taken very seriously and was morally condemned.

[149]Barringer-Gordon, Sarah, "The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America." (*Journal of Supreme Court History* 8, no. 1, March 2003), 18.

It appears that in the mind of the white community, all Chinese women belonged to the lowest classes of society and were leading reprehensible lifestyles. In other words – if they were not the wife of a Chinese man – they considered them as being almost exclusively prostitutes. To quote one interviewee of the 1885 RC, answering a question regarding the "general character of the Chinese women who do live in the province of British Columbia": "Well, they are nearly all of the lowest class of prostitutes, though some of the Chinese traders have their wives with them."[150] Another man gives the same type of answer, saying that "they are all prostitutes, and it is a notorious fact that nearly all the Chinese women who come to British Columbia – and I believe to the Pacific Coast generally – are prostitutes."The system of trade of prostitutes was a Chinese practice that immigrants brought with them to Canada. Women could be sold for prices ranging from $50 to $2,000. So it appears that it was a rather lucrative trade for the men involved in it.[151] "Some Chinese merchants quickly realized that profits could be made from the sexual needs of Chinese workers and the curiosity of white pleasure seekers."[152] The Chinese prostitutes did not make any monetary profit for themselves. Indeed, they were bought and sold – often by well-to-do merchants – and they collected the money that the women made.

The issue was not so much that Chinese men required the services of Chinese prostitutes within the boundaries of Chinatown – although it was perceived as yet another evidence of their low moral standards. The real concern arose when the Chinese prostitutes allegedly lured young white men and perverted them to their filthy habits. *The Daily Colonist* – among other newspapers – was prominent in reporting these occurrences and trying to warn the population to be aware and to be careful. It printed articles explaining

[150]*Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence*, xxiv.
[151]Adilman, Tamara, "A Preliminary Sketch of Chinese Women and Work in British Columbia (1858-1950)." (In *Not Just Pin Money: Selected Essays on the History of Women's Work in British Columbia.*, edited by Barbara K. Latham and Roberta J. Pazdro. Camosun College, 1984), 3.
[152]Chan, *Gold Mountain: The Chinese in the New World*, 81.

that "Chinese women are in the habit of luring boys of tender age into their dens after dark, and several fine, promising lads have been ruined for life in consequence."[153] The fact that Chinese prostitutes did not charge a lot of money was also a reason why they were perceived as particularly dangerous for young men.[154] The issue was a moral concern as much as it was a health concern. Indeed, the rumor that all the Chinese women that entered Canada were prostitutes and were carriers of sexually transmitted diseases – namely in this case syphilis – was very persistent. The main worries were that procreation and the furthering of the Canadian nation could be endangered, if many respectable young men, future husbands and fathers, frequented Chinese prostitutes and contracted disease. Then they might not be able to have children and bring the future generation of Canadians. This was a particularly worrying idea for a young nation, especially one that feared that it was being 'invaded' by foreigners while trying to build a new nation on the British model, a white European nation.

b. White slavery panic

Another popular argument brought forward was the 'white slavery' fantasy. It caused a great amount of uproar among the Euro-Canadian society, as it was not only concerning Chinese women, but also white women. The white slavery panic refers to the widespread notion that white girls were 'abducted' and then sold as prostitutes to work in brothels – Chinese or not depending on the aim that the perpetrators of the rumor looked to attain. The girls would live in a form of 'slavery', at the mercy of their Chinese captors, working for them, earning money for them since they were barely paid in exchange for the service they provided. Police raids were common in Chinese dens and if they happened to

[153]"Chinese brothels", *The Daily Colonist* (Victoria), June 14, 1876.
[154]Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia*, 8.

find a white girl working there, it would be reported in the news, perpetuating the notion that such things did in fact happen, as a form of warning.[155] The image of a respectable young white woman reduced to work in a foreign brothel was perceived as the symbol of what could happen to Canada, if the Chinese – and other foreigners – were allowed to come and settle freely without any restrictions.

As an example, in 1909, a report from a Methodist organization that was involved in social reform reported that "the awful traffic in procuring the daughters of our godly home for the vile and shameless social evil is carried on in this Dominion."[156] White slavery did not exist to the extent that these statements seem to suggest. However, it is important to note that this type of report is evidence that people were genuinely concerned with white slavery and afraid that it could happen to them. But panic coalesced around that particular notion and it spread through society creating more distrust towards the Chinese community. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the white slavery panic was not exclusively directed toward the Chinese; some historians saw this phenomenon as having been used as a means to keep the social gender hierarchy in place with women remaining in the private sphere. Such tales of abduction and prostitution were also meant to frighten young women that would go live on their own in bigger cities for instance.[157]

[155]Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia, 8.*
[156]UCA, Annual report of Methodist DESS, 4.
[157]Valverde, Mariana, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 103.

4. Opium-smoking

> Physically degraded Chinese opium smokers were a problem because they lured unsuspecting or thrill-seeking white boys and girls to their demise. Opium smoking was a social concern because it led to other, more dire impediments to the future of society. Given its association with the vice constellation, opium smoking was a problem because of the danger of moral and social decline – for example, due to sexual immorality, gambling and laziness.[158]

The consumption of opium can be traced back as early as the Neolithic Age, and it was consistently used throughout the ages and the cultures. It has been shown that the Ancient Greeks, the Sumerians, the Assyrians, the Egyptians and many more peoples from various culture and various continents have made use of the poppy. It was a quite widespread pain relief medicine that allowed painful surgical acts to be performed. The use of opium as a pain reliever continued up even until the nineteenth century; for instance, it was used during the American Civil War when it was replaced by morphine, another opiate-based medicine.

At the time of the first Chinese migrations to Canada, opium had been known and consumed in China for centuries. Indeed, opium was used as early as in the seventh century as a medicinal plant and was considered a pharmaceutical product as well as an aphrodisiac. It was an inherent part of the Chinese life, albeit a part they were trying to control and to reduce. Indeed, it is clear that when the first Chinese moved to Canada, they imported this 'tradition' with them and implanted it in their new home. In Canada, on the other hand, opium was not yet common and its importation into the country was not

[158]Malleck, Dan,*When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 100.

welcomed by all. Soon, the traffic of opium became a burning issue in Canadian society. The opium problem would prompt the creation of the first drug legislations.

a. History of opium in China

Since the issue of opium in Canada was often blamed on the Chinese immigrants, it is important to give a background on the use of opium in China in order to better understand the history of opium in Canada.

Opium was first used as a medicinal remedy during the T'ang dynasty (618-906 CE), it was used – identically to its usage in other parts of the world – as a pain reliever. By the seventeenth century, Formosans[159] were mixing it with tobacco and used it as an addictive drug. Presumably because of that growing trend of recreational use of opium, in 1729, the Ch'ing government passed a law prohibiting the import of opium into China. Indeed, at the time a lot of the opium culture was done in Portuguese India,[160] and was then brought into China. Upon realizing how lucrative the trade of opiate was, the East India Company (EIC) decided to create a monopoly on opium in order to counter-attacks the Portuguese trade on the substance. Moreover, the British had an important trade deficit with the Ch'ing that they hoped to bridge with the commerce of opium; even though its import into China was firmly prohibited. From 1800 to 1818, the traffic moved through Macau, during this period about 4000 chests of product were smuggled into China every year.[161] As the following table shows the traffic of opium was flourishing at an exponential rate from the 1820s onwards, and for most of the years after that date, the amount of foreign opium was over 10,000 chests a year reaching 40,000 chests in 1838-1839.

[159]The term Formosan refers to the aboriginal people of Taiwan.
[160]Portugal had a colonial empire that included settlements on the Malabar Coast of India.
[161]Twitchett, Denis *et al.*, *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 10, Part 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 171/172.

Year	Chests[162]	Year	Chests
1819-1820	4 186	1829-1830	16 257
1820-1821	4 244	1830-1831	19 956
1821-1822	5 959	1831-1832	16 650
1822-1823	7 773	1832-1833	21 985
1823-1824	9 035	1833-1834	20 486
1824-1825	12 434	1834-1835	21 885
1825-1826	9 373	1835-1836	30 202
1826-1827	12 231	1836-1837	34 776
1827-1828	11 154	1837-1838	34 373
1828-1829	13 868	1838-1839	40 200

Table 8: Foreign opium entering China 1819-1839[163]

Opium thus became "the world's most valuable single commodity trade in the nineteenth century."[164] By 1836, the total imports came to $18 million. This money was then used to help and further Britain's colonization of India. In 1831, the EIC started to transit its opium through Calcutta; from there it flowed freely to Canton, in southeast China. But trading only through Canton was not enough for the British; they wanted to extend the reach of their market to not only Canton, but the rest of China and its 400 million people. To do so, they needed a safe harbor, a place they could use as an entrepôt and from which they could distribute their merchandise to the greatest number. They soon realized that the diplomatic way was not going to work out; they would have to go to war. This conflict was called, the First Opium War, also known as the Anglo-Chinese War (1839-1842). Because of various diplomatic and economic incidents, trade entered into a deadlock, and the prices went up. Furthermore, in 1839, the Chinese government decided that they wanted to put an end to the smuggling of opium by the British. Indeed, opium

[162] A chest contained about 140 pounds worth of product.
[163]Zhou, Yongming, *Anti-drug Crusades in Twentieth-century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), *14.*
[164] Twitchett, Denis et al., *The Cambridge History of China*, 173.

was perceived as a real issue for the Chinese government and although it is difficult to have a precise estimate of the numbers of smokers, it is understood that this number was high enough for the government to feel like they needed to take actions in order to restrict the consumption of opium in the country. To give an idea, in 1836 it was believed that there were 12.5 million smokers and most contemporaries scholars feel like a reasonable estimate for the late 1880s was of about 10% of the population. However, "the figures those literati cited were not as important as the appearance of ubiquitous opium smoking."[165]

On the question of opium, the general opinion was divided into two 'clans': the Legalizers that advocated for a legalization of the substance and the Moralists that wished to prohibit and to ban the product from Chinese society. The emperor agreed with the Moralists and started to implement measures to control and help the addicts; for example sanatoriums opened where the addicts could be treated. On June 3rd 1839 occurred an episode remembered as the 'destruction of opium at Humen' from the location where the destruction was carried out. That day, 1016 tons of illegal opium were seized and destroyed representing an important economic loss for the British traders. This event, in particular, gave 'casus belli' or cause for war to the British and incidentally led to the First Opium War. The British used that event to create the conditions for a war that would allow them to extend their influence over China. In the end, the Chinese agreed to sign humiliating peace treaties notably the Treaty of Nanking.

The Second Opium War, also known as the Second Anglo-Chinese War or the Franco-British Expedition to China (1857-1860). Britain felt like China was not respecting the conditions of the treaty of Nanking; for example they considered that the Chinese ports were not opened to trade soon enough. In 1856, Britain decided to use this as a pretext to

[165] Twitchett, Denis et al., *The Cambridge History of China*, 178.

start an offensive against the Chinese. Feeling very much threatened, the government accepted to sign the Treaty of Tianjin meeting the requests of the Western powers.[166] The treaties mentioned here are not all the treaties that qualified as Unequal Treaties but they are the most important ones and the ones that scarred China the most. Indeed, the treaties that fall under that qualification span over a century, from 1842 with the Treaty of Nanjing to 1933 with the Tanggu Truce.

So, it appears clearly that opium was an important concern in China at the time, and particularly from the 1880s onwards. During that decade, the country saw a rise in the prohibition movement and narcophobia. Numerous campaigns were led, advocating for the limitation and ultimately the prohibition of opium usage in China. It culminated between 1904 and 1935 with a series of laws being passed to deal with the issue.[167]

But opium-smoking was not only a Chinese experience. In fact, by the 1860s/1870s, the drug could be found in many cities around the world. In Europe, it was also known as the 'drug of the poets' and indeed a few writers and poets did not hide their use of the substance but rather used it as a means and as a theme for some of their literary productions. The question of the role of opium in Romantic poetry has been studied quite extensively by critics. In Britain, some of the Romantic poets such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge as well as Thomas de Quincey were part of that group. In France, the situation was rather similar. To name the most renowned, there was Charles Baudelaire of course. A famous example of that is Baudelaire's essay *Les Paradis artificiels (Artificial paradises)* published for the first time in 1860; in this essay Baudelaire delves into the relationship between the usage of drugs and literary production. De Quincey's book is one of the most important pieces of literature of that period dealing with the question of drug addiction.

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[166] Twitchett, Denis *et al*., *The Cambridge History of China*, 297.
[167] Dikötter, Frank, Lars Peter. Laamann, and Xun Zhou. *Narcotic Culture: A History of Drugs in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 95.

b. Importation to Canada: a Canadian plague

> By the end of the century [nineteenth century], the white person in Chinese opium dens of Chinatowns in London, Vancouver and San Francisco was a familiar, and frightening, representation of the West in decline and of the threats that it faced from within and beyond its borders.[168]

When immigrants settle in their new country, they often retain at least some of their homeland traditions and customs. In the case of the Chinese in Canada, it was often said that they brought with them a plague that would threaten the social and moral order of the young nation: opium. And while Europe had long been acquainted with the product, the Euro-Canadians soon used the argument of opium-smoking as being a specifically Chinese trait that once again displayed their immorality and their incapacity to be a part of the 'morally good white Christian society'. And if opium came in fact from China and was consumed by many Chinese in Canada, they were not the only ones to be addicted to the drug, and the rhetoric used to present them as the perverting element in Canadian society was flawed in many ways.

[168] Malleck, *When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws*, 4.

Year	Opium (in lb)	Morphine (in ounces)	Year	Opium	Morphine
1876	23 457	-	1895	32 755	3 986
1877	455	-	1896	53 275	5 722
1878	17 523	-	1897	57 285	1 649
1879	29 379	-	1898	60 060	3 552
1880	17 219	276	1899	65 789	2 405
1881	22 962	1 007	1900	59 573	1 482
1882	31 752	825	1901	85 675	3 702
1883	29 229	358	1902	73 026	3 071
1884	63 910	321	1903	64 742	10 200
1885	85 012	481	1904	50 883	5 414
1886	75 460	637	1905	45 750	5 949
1887	97 325	69	1906	87 200	5 441
1888	107 018	227	1907	69 144	1 523
1889	69 636	1 290	1908	92 274	1 506
1890	129 581	5 152	1909	35 626	133
1891	156 841	3 821	1910	3 947	1 590
1892	146 625	4 288	1911	7 482	1 250
1893	155 151	5 083	1912	4 708	440
1894	87 050	2 267			

Table 9: Imports of opium and morphine into Canada, 1876-1912[169]

From this chart, two main conclusions can be drawn. The first is that there was a clear increase in the amount imported in the mid-1880s which corresponds to the massive influx of Chinese workers to come to work on the CPR, and the second, is the slow decrease, notably in the 1910s that marks the progressive implementation of the Canadian drug laws.

Until the last half of the nineteenth century, the sale and commerce of medicines were essentially unregulated in British North America and the people of BNA thus had access to a very open market. There were no laws or set rules that specified under which circumstances one could purchase medicine and that was also the case for medicines that

[169]Malleck, *When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws*, 15.

were characterized as 'poisonous' because of their dangerous nature if not administered properly. Under that label were found all the ranges of opium-based medicine such as laudanum or morphine. Those medicines were designed to cure all-sorts of ailments; they were used as common pain killers or cough syrups. If one wanted to buy such products, the only document required by the seller (often a pharmacist or a physician) was a note of 'good moral character' that ensured that they could be trusted with those products, that they would use them cautiously and for their intended purpose. However, from the 1870s onwards, concern grew around the habit of opium – and its addictive quality – in both the medical and non-medical fields.

Addictions could take different forms and, according to records the people suffering from those came from the whole range of social classes and occupations. It can be inferred from the records of their purchase of opium-based medicines; the sale records of the pharmacist shows recurring – and often increasing – purchase of opiates. It sometimes happened that a person suffering from an illness or an injury required that their physician prescribed them some sort of opium-based remedy (laudanum or morphine for example) and after their recovery, found themselves to crave the medicine still. Because they grew accustomed to the product, they needed always larger amounts to satisfy their needs. Addiction to opiates was considered by the medical corps as a form of enslavement, and a loss of freedom: "addiction to opium, then, was the result of the combination of medical mis-prescription, the improper desire by the individual to seek pleasure in intoxication, and the weakness of the will to resist the craving."[170] However, it appears that the concern was largely shared by the rest of the population of BC. In 1895, *the Daily Colonist* claimed that the opinion widely shared by the English speaking population on both sides of the Atlantic was that they were aware that the "habitual use of opium is ruinous both to body and

[170]Malleck, Dan, ""Its Baneful Influences Are Too Well Known": Debates over Drug Use in Canada, 1867-1908." (*Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 14, 1997), 267.

mind" and that 90% of them knew that "the man or the woman who once begins to take opium in any form habitually, soon becomes a slave to it, and in a very short amount of time it makes a wreck of him or her."[171] So it appears that as early as the 1890s there was already a form of awareness of the dangerousness of opium addiction and the difficulty of breaking the habit once the addiction had settled in. The addicts often presented the same physical characteristics: emaciation of the face sterility, impotence, mental decline were the main ones reported by the doctors

The disquietude linked with opium addiction ran deeper than the sole health problem that came with it, and it fell within the broader issue of the construction of a new nation built following the model of European white society. In the post-Confederation era, one of the main preoccupations of the government of the province was to maintain an image of law and order that would help attract investors and white immigrants, and opium posed a threat to the moral order of that society still in construction.[172]

> Although residents of BNA may have been aware of opium as a poison and a medicine, the substance did operate on a third level: opium as an exotic indulgence and a danger from faraway places. The smoking of opium, normally associated with Chinese people, and the various interpretations for its meaning increasingly became issues of concern to Canadians throughout the nineteenth century.[173]

Indeed, the consumption of opium was very much associated with the Chinese population and their apparent 'recreational' use of the product in opposition with the medical – at least in theory – use of the white community. However, they were repulsed by the 'indulgent' habit of smoking opium for the sake of it and not to help cure any ailment. The first import of opium into Canada started as early as the 1870s, roughly a decade

[171] "A Royal Commission", *The Daily Colonist* (Victoria), May 16, 1895.
[172] Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, 14.
[173] Malleck, *When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws*, 84.

before the beginning of the CPR construction. In the 1880s, the majority of opium – for the Chinese consumption, not the medical use of the white community – was brought in by the CPR workers. Indeed, because of their isolation the laborers sometimes used the substance as a means to escape and alleviate their harsh living conditions. According to Chan, "forced to return to their low-paying jobs to crowded dismal, unsanitary rooming houses, many lonely and despondent laborers turned to opium as an alternative to madness."[174] The idea that smoking opium was a Chinese pastime was frightening to the white society. The fact that the Chinese were smoking opium was not only the proof that their moral standards were debased compared to those of the whites – but it was also and more distressingly so creating the fear that they were luring white men and women and turning them to their 'heathen' habit. By doing so they were perverting the 'good Christian' society and undermining the foundations that the founders of the new nation of Canada were trying to lay. Opium played a significant role in the concern with the influence that the Chinese habits might have on society. The fear that Chinese moral standards would come in the way of achieving that ideal was very present in the rhetoric of the anti-opium advocates. The smoking of opium was very much anchored in the mind of the British Columbians as a Chinese evil, a heathen practice that posed a very serious threat to the – moral – development of the young province and – on a larger scale – of the young country. And as a matter of fact, there was a strong disparity between the ways these stories represented the various actors. The Chinese were always depicted as agent of drug traffic who willingly sold the drug to honorable white people. And the whites that used drug – even if it was of their own choice – were placed in the position of the victim, an innocent that was tricked into falling into addiction. Their descriptions were meant to inspire pity and compassion in the mind of the readers. On the other hand, a Chinese addict was always an addict because

[174]Chan, *Gold Mountain: The Chinese in the New World*, 75.

of some characteristics inherent to its 'race'. They were always the perpetrator and never the victim. Those accounts always highlighted and insisted on the foreign nature and behavior of the Chinese, placing them further apart from the white community. The authors gave unflattering descriptions of them, insisting on the physical details that set them the most apart as well as on their cunning and intelligence. They used those last terms that are usually associated with qualities as flaws. Indeed, the Chinese were quite smart but they used this quality to smuggle drugs into Canada. Not only did they not belong to the Euro-Canadian society but they were even trying to undermine it with their degraded practices.[175]

For some, the concern should be particularly aimed some categories of the population especially young, able-bodied men upon whom the future development of the nation relied upon; while other believed that every Canadian person should be worried and careful of the influence that the Chinese habits could have on them.[176] For example, Police Superintendant Charles Bloomfield reported that the greater issue was not young industrious men consumed opium as he believed that there were not many of them. However, he said that he had been informed "on good authority that white girls of respectable parents use it."[177] The fact that young women – and especially upper class women – would endanger their capacity to procreate – amenorrhea[178] was one of the possible side effects of opium consumption – was a source of great concern. The imagery of the opium den in which a depraved Chinese man would lure a young white man or woman was very vivid in the minds of the British Columbians. In the context of a young nation, that prospect was particularly worrying – particularly in the recent province of

[175]Carstairs, "If Ah Sin" to Save the White Race: Moral Panic, Racialization, and the Extension of Canadian Drug Laws in the 1920s.", 76
[176] Malleck, "Its Baneful Influences Are Too Well Known": Debates over Drug Use in Canada, 1867-1908.", 278.
[177]*Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence*, 48.
[178]Amenorrhea is a clinic conditions that refers to the absence of menstrual period in a woman of reproductive age. It can thus jeopardize a woman's capacity to have children.

British Columbia that lacked white settlers during its early years. It endangered the future generations of British Columbians and more largely of future Canadians.

Interestingly, the inhabitants of the province often made a point to differentiate between the Chinese practice of consuming opium and the 'Euro-Canadian' habit of alcohol consumption. Also different from tobacco smoking, with the need for a special apparatus (the opium pipe was a different size and shape than the tobacco pipe for example), it is important to notice that not all alcohol consumption was shunned upon with the same force. For example, drinking more expensive alcohol moderately in social contexts was not as much of an issue that the tavern drinking where men drank large quantities that often led to a state of inebriety. In the 1885 RC, the commissioners endeavored to understand why in a country where the consumption of whiskey was important, the smoking of opium was perceived as such a threat while the number of 'consumers' was lower than the one that drank alcohol regularly. One of the answers given is again revealing of the stigma that existed on the products and habits of Chinese origin. To the question: "What was the difference between getting drunk on whiskey and getting drunk on opium?" the interviewee replied with indignation that "One was a Christian habit, the other was a heathen vice."[179] Another man, Reverend Gibson, explained that he rented one of his buildings to Chinese people and that he saw them smoking opium. For him, the difference is mostly on the effect the product has on the body that does not react the same way when subjected to both habits: "The effect of smoking opium is different from the effect of drinking whiskey, the latter stirs people up, makes them rampant, and fight sometimes ; Chinamen never fight when under the influence of opium."[180]

[179] *Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration Report and Evidence*, LX.
[180] *Ibid.*, 273.

Incidentally, this growing concern coincided with the rise of the temperance movement, especially the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The WCTU was the first mass temperance movement founded. It was founded in 1873 in Ohio and then later spread to the rest of the world, particularly Britain and Canada. The Canadian branch of the Union was created in 1874 in Ontario; one of its main goals was to promote abstinence from alcohol that the members of the temperance unions believed was at the root of many societal problems. The members of the WCTU were inspired by the Victorian ideal of the woman; they saw themselves as the guardians of morality through their duty of housekeepers and mothers. In order to do so, they were convinced that they had to carefully check the composition of the medicines that they were giving to their children and to shield them from ingesting products derived from opium, such as pacifiers or cough syrup. Also, the WCTU was warning women from taking opiates themselves because of the harm it did to their body and mind and prevented them from being 'respectable' members of society. From 1892 onwards, the Dominion WCTU's Resolution Committee included in its report recurrent mentions exhorting the government to take actions to control the trade of opium within its country.[181]

The Chinese elite – composed of the wealthy merchants as well as the country's body of officials – also grew concerned about these attacks and wanted to remedy the issue themselves. The anti-drugs campaigns were detrimental to the image of respectability they were trying to achieve. The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association and the ambassador of China met and discussed possible plans of actions that would allow them to

[181]Malleck, ""Its Baneful Influences Are Too Well Known": Debates over Drug Use in Canada, 1867-1908.", 275.

stop the traffic in Chinatowns in order to bring order and an honorable reputation to their community.[182]

c. The first Canadian drug laws

> It was no accident that the most important campaign against drug use in Canada took place at the same time as a concerted drive for Chinese exclusion. In this intolerant environment, an understanding of drug use emerged in which Chinese drug traffickers were vilified, Chinese drug users were ignored or regarded as a moral contagion, and white drug users were regarded as tragic victims. This imagery provided one more excuse for keeping the Chinese out of Canada, and resulted in the passage of severe drug legislation.[183]

The Canadian drug laws were passed at a time when many other countries were also trying to control and to regulate the drug market. However, the successive Canadian drug laws were among the harshest ones in the world. Does that mean that the problem of drug consumption was worse in Canada than anywhere else in the world? Or are there other factors that influenced the decision of the legislative power to take such drastic measures?

One of the main changes that created the conditions that made the passing of such laws possible and justifiable was the decrease of the medically addicted at the end of the nineteenth century. This transition led to a demographic shift in the population concerned with medical abuse of opiate substances. While previously white upper-class people and notably women had been the major demographic group affected, this shifted to urban lower-class males that acquired the product by illegal means and opium dealers rather than

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[182]Carstairs, Catherine. "If Ah Sin" to Save the White Race: Moral Panic, Racialization, and the Extension of Canadian Drug Laws in the 1920s." *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*, 1999, 76.
[183]*Ibid.*, 82.

physicians. It made the legislation possible because the problem was no longer correlated to the medical field and was no longer a 'healthcare' issue but truly a moral and social one.

The first drug laws – meaning, the laws dealing with non-medical trade of opium – were tinted with racist motives from the very beginning and more specifically anti-Chinese sentiments. After the 1907 Vancouver riots, William Lyon Mackenzie King, then Deputy Minister of the Minister of Labor, was sent to Vancouver to assess the damage and organize the settlements for the losses caused by the uproar. During that process, he noticed that among the people that filed claims for restitution were several opium dealers of Vancouver. He was startled by this discovery and it prompted him to investigate and study the extent of the opium trade in Vancouver. From his observations, he drew a report entitled *A Report on the Need of the Suppression of the Opium Traffic in Canada.* In this document, Mackenzie King gave strong evidence that the fear of opium and the effect it would have on Canada's moral standards were not unfounded. This document can be considered a form of pamphlet notably because of the strength and the vehemence of the arguments that Mackenzie King brought forward. For example, when relating one of the conversations he had with a plaintiff, he explained that this manufacturer sold as much opium to the whites as to the Chinese immigrants and then went on adding that this information is of utmost importance because the white population of BC ignored that the problem was not confined to the Chinese community. This was – in Mackenzie King's mind – the sort of information that the whole population of Canada needed to be aware of.

Four dominant themes can be identified from his report:

- The increased popularity of opium-smoking among white men and women,
- The opium trade conducted by Chinese and the profit they are able to make from this illegal trade,
- The fact that this trade was in violation of the pharmacy legislation,

- Canada had to set an example as a good Christian nation and to do so, they had to rid themselves of the opium evil.[184]

The trope of freedom and slavery – used by the physicians – is also very much present in Mackenzie King's rhetoric: "In enacting legislation to this end, the Parliament of Canada will not only effect one of the most necessary of moral reforms so far as the Dominion is concerned, but will assist in a world movement which has for its object the freeing of a people from a bondage which is worse than slavery."[185] Mackenzie King's aim was to rid the country of an evil that was debasing it; but the first step to do so what to make the people of Canada and the government aware of the problem by painting them an accurate picture of the situation.

As a result of Mackenzie King's report and the recommendations he gave in it, Parliament came to pass the very first law relating to the question of drug regulation: the *Opium Act* of 1908. This Act made it an indictable offense to import, manufacture, offer to sell, and sell opium for non-medical purposes. The offender was liable to a fine of $1,000 or two to three years of incarceration. The 1908 law also provided a form of compensation for the former tenants of opium dens to make up for the loss they suffered when they could no longer operate, such as to give them six months to dispose of their reserve of product. However, this Act alone did not suffice to eradicate all the opium trade in Canada. On the contrary, it created the conditions for a flourishing illicit market. Indeed, the Act did not contain any provisions regarding the treatment of the addicts and those people still craved the drug and composed a readily available pool of customers for the illegal dealers. Because of his role in the 1908 *Opium Act*, Mackenzie King gained the reputation of being a social reformer and an expert in the field of opium use. As such, he was appointed to

[184]Solomon and Green, "The First Century: The History of Nonmedical Opiate Use and Control Policies in Canada, 1870-1970.", 313.
[185]King, William Lyon Mackenzie. *Report by W.L. Mackenzie King, C.M.G., Deputy Minister of Labour, on the Need for the Suppression of the Opium Traffic in Canada(Printed by Order of Parliament*, Ottawa: Printed by S.E. Dawson, Printer to the King, 1908), 9.

attend the Shanghai Opium Commission, the first international meeting organized specifically with the goal to prohibit the trade of opium. Upon his return, he proposed a new legislation that dealt primarily with opium but also with cocaine that was becoming another concern at that period. The 1911 *Opium and Drugs Act* came to pass and it provided that the sale or possession of morphine, opium, or cocaine became an offence carrying a maximum penalty of one year's imprisonment and a $500 fine.

Around that time and partly because of the awareness that these accounts and law brought, Canada entered a period of nation-wide anti-drugs campaigns. One of the primary agents of those campaigns was the press. Indeed, during the early nineteenth century, a number of very popular newspapers provided extensive coverage of the drug 'scene' with feature stories published on the front cover. In British Columbia, the *Vancouver Sun*, the *Vancouver Daily World* both dealt with the Chinese threat to the nation's morality and health as a recurrent theme. They used 'catchy' headlines such as "Drug Soaked Addicts. Oriental Crews Largely Engaged in Traffic" or "Deport the Drug Traffickers."[186] They played on fear with the idea that drug peddlers are widespread and that everyone could be at risk; and they also offered a potential solution that would solve the problem and bring an atmosphere of safety. In 1920, Police Magistrate and Judge of the Juvenile Court of Edmonton, Emily Murphy, published five articles regarding the question of drug abuse in Vancouver in *Maclean's* magazine. The same year, the legislation was once again amended and the punishment for drug users and sellers was severely increased. In 1921, the amendments implemented increased penalties and special punishments for the sale of drugs to minor. Distribution to minors was made an indictable offense punishable by seven years of imprisonment. In 1922, Murphy followed up with the publication of *The Black Candle*. This book is a rather detailed account of the state of the drug traffic and

[186]Carstairs, "If Ah Sin" to Save the White Race: Moral Panic, Racialization, and the Extension of Canadian Drug Laws in the 1920s", 75.

consumption in Canada as of 1922. It does not solely deal with opium but also with other drugs that came to co-exist with it on the market such as cocaine and heroin.

Also, in 1922, the law was made even harsher, giving the court discretionary power to lash minors found guilty of substance consumption; aliens could be deported if convicted. This particular provision was clearly aimed at the Chinese population and showed once again that they were a category set apart. In 1923, the *Opium and Narcotic Drug Act* stipulated that:

- Penalty for smoking opium was $100,
- Penalty for being in an opium den was punishable by one to three months imprisonment,
- Right of appeal from convictions for offenses in illegal import or export of drugs, illegal possession, and illegal distribution of drugs to minors was abolished,
- Penalties were increased:
  - On indictment – 6 months' minimum – 7 years' maximum imprisonment.
  - $200.00 minimum, $1,000.00 maximum fine.
- On Summary conviction:
  - 6 months' minimum – 18 months' maximum imprisonment
  - 6 months' minimum imprisonment plus costs and $1,000.00 maximum fine plus costs.
- Court lost the power to impose less than the minimum sentence provided by the law,
- Deportation of aliens automatically followed termination of the penalty imposed by the court.[187]

After 1923, the anti-drug legislation kept evolving through the years. It was amended in 1929 and then in 1952, on the occasion of the 1952 revision of the Dominion statutes, the Act underwent some minor changes. In 1954, the new Act was more aimed at punishing the addict than it had been in the past, when the addict was a mere 'collateral'

[187] Trasov, G. E., "History of the Opium and Narcotic Drug Legislation in Canada." (*The Criminal Law Quarterly* 274, 1961-1962), 280.

element of the larger trade. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the 1920s were a prolific period in terms of drug legislation. The subsequent amendments to the law where made more sporadically over the course of the twentieth century. It appears impossible to dissociate the first Canadian drug laws from the Chinese population as the two are closely linked.

To conclude on that section, the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century were still a period of construction for Canada and even more so for British Columbia since it only entered the Confederation in 1871. As such, it was a time where the questions of nation building and the desired future of the Province were prominent in the political discourse. The ambition was to build a white Christian nation based on the British model. To do so, the country should also apply Christian moral standards and Christian values. And thus, there are two aspects that can be lifted from the issues that were just exposed. Firstly, there is the question of the Chinese person moral character. It appears that in many instances, some habits – that were also often shared by white people – were used as proof or as example of the degraded or perverted nature of the Chinese. It was used to set them apart and to justify the regulation and then prohibition of their immigration to Canada. Indeed, they did not fit within the British model. They had different customs that were considered heathen and going against what the government and the Euro-Canadians were trying to build. However, the fact that Chinese were – in the minds of many white Canadians – foreigners with filthy habits was only one side of the issue. The other problem was that they were potentially threatening the welfare of Canada by introducing ‘good Christian people’ to their vices and thus jeopardizing the construction of the future nation.

CONCLUSION

With this dissertation, I endeavored to give a fairly detailed account of the plight of the Chinese immigrants from the very early days to the period of exclusion. To phrase it differently, the living conditions of an ethnic minority that left their country to live in a society built on a white European framework. Through the course of the dissertation, it appears clearly that the lives of the early Chinese immigrants in Canada were difficult, shaped by racism and discrimination. Indeed, the Chinese-Canadian identity was constructed in opposition to the Euro-Canadian society that was still in its budding phase as well. Indeed, even though, European colonists had lived in Canada prior to the period we studied, they were not organized together as a social and political entity. And while the Euro-Canadians were positioning themselves as the majority group and the founders of the new nation; the Chinese were cast in the role of the 'Other', the foreign minority, and were marginalized in all aspects of society: economic, social, moral and political.

Because of that ascribed status, the Chinese suffered from a lot of prejudice and discrimination that were fueled by stereotypes. Stereotypes are particularly treacherous because they are built on half-truth. Indeed, the elements that were used to discriminate against the Chinese were not wild fantasy without basis; however, they were greatly exaggerated and blown out of proportion so that, in the end, they were seen as more dangerous than they were truly. The Canadian State as well as the Canadian people participated in the elaboration and the propagation of the various stereotypes we exposed throughout this dissertation. The various levels of society had their personal reasons and motives that led them to adhere and propagate this discrimination. What we saw is that they suffered from such attacks in almost every aspect of their everyday life: work, personal life, traditions and habits.

We began our study with perhaps what can be considered as the main aspect of the lives of the Chinese people in Canada: the working world. The promise of a job was in

almost all cases the motivation behind the decision to immigrate and many of the Chinese left with the hope of a better fortune that they knew in their home country. However, what we saw –was that the occupations they found – at the exceptions of a few merchants – were difficult and underpaid. The job market was also segregated which means that the Chinese only had access to a certain number of working fields and that they often held the lowest position of labor. They were nonetheless accused of stealing the work of white laborers and of creating unemployment for them. The government and the members of the higher strata of society – here meaning those who owned or assumed leadership positions – had an ambiguous and quite opportunistic attitude towards the Chinese people. While – for the majority of them – they had no intention to consider them as full members of society in the same way as the Euro-Canadians, they still were content to use their labor as a cheap way to further their own agenda.

Then, we examined another of the reproaches that was often made: the belief that the Chinese could not – and did not want to – be assimilated into society. In other words, that they were too different to, one day, be able to fit completely and seamlessly into the nation that was being created.

Finally, the last part was dedicated to the study of the behaviors that were deemed immoral and were taken as evidence of the lower moral standing of the Chinese as a whole. Their traditional pastimes or their personal relationships were scrutinized and publicized and used as proof that they could never be fully integrated into the white society. Once more, the hypocritical stance of the majority group was displayed. They either chided the Chinese for behaviors that they were themselves guilty of, or behaviors for which they had created the conditions.

One can wonder whether the issue was their ethnicity in particular or merely the fact that they were a foreign people. Indeed, during the period we looked at Canada was still in its phase of foundation. The Confederation was only a few years old and many of the Provinces that compose the country today were not yet a part of it. So, to have such an influx of foreigners was a frightening perspective for the government of the new nation as well as for its people. Their goal was to build a white Christian country based on a European model.

So, throughout this dissertation, I have attempted to demonstrate the influence of the stereotypes and the prejudice on the legislation making of the State. Many laws aimed to regulate the influx and rule over the life of the Chinese have been passed between 1858 and 1923. All the stereotypes and the prejudice were used to justify the denying of the same rights and the same opportunities as their white counterparts. Because they could not behave as the whites saw fitting to their norm, then why should they belong to the same class of citizen and enjoy the same privilege?

There is an interesting shift that has occurred concerning the Chinese people of Canada that I would like to mention as a way of concluding. Today, the descendants of the early Chinese immigrants are fully integrated into Canadian society. They enjoy the same rights and can benefit from the same opportunities. They are no longer Chinese immigrants living in Canada but Chinese-Canadians. This is not to say that all discriminations have ceased to exist nowadays – that would be somewhat naive – however they have ceased to be institutionalized in the law. However, the distrust has moved onto another group – albeit not on the same scale as what we studied here – very wealthy Chinese– often from Hong Kong – investing in British Columbian's property. A pattern has started to emerge towards the end of the twentieth century with a new relationship developing between Chinese people and the Province of British Columbia. Over the course of the last decade, very

wealthy Chinese people have started to acquire property in BC, usually enormous mansions or luxurious penthouses in locations that were inhabited by descendants of the early British settlers. Simultaneously, the real estate prices went up, between 1982 and 1989, prices for housing in Vancouver doubled.[188] This gave the – false – impression that there was a correlation between these immigrants investing in real estate and the increase in prices. In reality, this rise in cost was a natural consequence of the demographic change of the time: the influence of the baby boom and the attractiveness of the city. There was also an issue of esthetics since the Asians buyers often redesigned their houses to fit their tastes better. This was used as an argument by their detractors as denaturing the historical face of BC's old neighborhoods. Those houses were referred to as 'Monster Houses'.

This led to protests from local group who – undercover of heritage protection – reproduced the patterns of discrimination that we studied. They produced pamphlets and placards on which they denounced the loss of the British heritage to the hands of the Chinese. The protesters were afraid of the influx of immigrants and the creation of quarters with a Chinese minority. The opulence of the houses and the ostentatious wealth they display also contribute to a certain increase of tensions. They challenge the traditional image of the Chinese immigrants and are thus perceived – by some – as a threatening force.

[188] Li, Peter*, "Unneighbourly Houses or Unwelcome Chinese : The Social Construction of Race in the battle over 'Monster Homes' in Vancouver, Canada",(*International Journal of Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies, 1994), 19.

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