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Letter from the Editors

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS:

Gideon Spitzer and Emily Kern

The Editorial Board is pleased to present the second issue of the eighteenth volume of the *Penn History Review*, the Ivy League's oldest undergraduate history journal. The *Review* continues to publish outstanding undergraduate papers based on original primary research. The Board is proud to feature scholarship that maintains the University of Pennsylvania's tradition of insightful and diverse historiography. These papers span not only centuries and geographic regions, but also disciplines in the study of history. In addition to providing four exemplary student essays, this issue of the *Review* features a special section showcasing the scholarship of those seniors majoring in History who completed honors theses.

The first piece featured in this issue of the *Penn History Review*, *The Houston Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League* by University of Pennsylvania Undergraduate Danielle Matsumoto, presents the untold history of Texan Japanese American in the post-World War II period. In particular, Matsumoto focuses on how the meaning of ethnic identity differed among Japanese Americans in Houston compared to their counterparts in the more prominent Japanese community in Seattle. The article offers an intriguing account of intra-ethnic divergences in identity formation, the origins of such divergences, and how differences in identity affect the nature of communal activism.

Our second piece, *Understanding the Legacy of the German Occupation of France through Theatre: An Analysis of Postwar Criticism of Jeanne Avec Nous*, by University of Pennsylvania undergraduate Clare Foran, probes the *âge d'or* (golden age) of French theater during the Germany's World War II-era occupation of France. Foran exposes the Nazi-backed Vichy Regime's effort to produce a French cultural renaissance as a mode of distraction from the horrors of war and the brutality of German occupation. Unlike traditional historiography which tends to focus on whether or not French theatre during the occupation was ideologically committed to the Resistance, Foran offers a comparative study of wartime and postwar criticism of a single play— Claude Vermorel's *Jeanne Avec Nous* – which was recast in the aftermath of occupation as a

From the Editors

pro-resistance work. Using the public reception of Vermorel's work as an analytical framework, Foran goes on to address the larger question of how the French have sought to come to terms with the memory of occupation and collaboration.

Ian Murray, also a University of Pennsylvania undergraduate, authored the third essay in the Spring 2011 edition: *Seward's True Folly: American Traditions and Strategy during "Our Little War With the Heathens."* Murray's piece investigates the forgotten history of 19th century American military intervention in Korea, a fascinating tale combining the diplomatic, military, and economic realms. Not only does Murray offer an in-depth exploration of the evolving 19th century power structure in East Asia, but he paints a revealing picture of the American path to military intervention. This historical chronology foreshadows the processes surrounding much larger foreign interventions by the United States later in the 19th century, providing a perspective on the geostrategic origins of the United States' presence in East Asia.

The fourth and final piece, *Salt of the Early Civilizations: Case Studies on China*, written by University of Pennsylvania undergraduate Elise Hoi, explores salt production and Bronze Age cultural interaction in the major Chinese river valleys. The paper, broken down into three case studies, finds several common historical threads related to resource exploitation and the traditional geopolitical structure of Chinese governments. Hoi melds an analysis of physical geography and developments in ancient transportation with a discussion of increasing social stratification. Using these innovative lenses of analysis, the paper examines center-periphery tension in Bronze Age Chinese governance, as well as the ways such frictions manifested themselves in elite relations.

The collection and publication of these papers represents the collaborative effort of many individuals. The *Review* would like to thank the many members of the history faculty who encouraged their students to submit essays for publication. The Editorial Board would like to especially thank Dr. Kathy Peiss, the undergraduate chair of the History Department, for her continued support of the journal. Finally, we thank the University of Pennsylvania and the History Department for their generous financial support of the *Review*, efforts to foster undergraduate research, and commitment to cultivating future historians.

Gideon Spitzer Emily Kern
Editors-in-Chief