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## Letter from the Editor

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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On behalf of the entire editorial board, I am honored to present the latest issue of the Penn History Review. Since 1991, the Penn History Review has been dedicated to promoting the study of history amongst undergraduate students. Since its founding, PHR has published exceptional historical scholarship written by students at the University of Pennsylvania as well as schools across the United States. Our Fall 2020 edition exemplifies the diversity of study within our field. It includes articles that explore dynamic topics such as the redefining of femininity through the abject moment, the ideological struggles of China's economic rise, medicine in the colonial West Indies, and republican motherhood and feminism in the French Revolution. Together, these pieces manifest the core values of our publication: curiosity, critical thinking, a dedication to research, and most importantly a passion for history. Our entire editorial team deeply enjoyed working with the authors and editing these papers. We hope that you will find them thought-provoking and enjoy reading them as much as we did!

Our first article, "Ideology and Experimentation in China's Economic Rise: How Opposition Spurred Growth" is authored by Aylete Rubenstein. She analyzes the experimental and incremental nature of China's economic reforms through a unique historical lens. Rubenstein highlights this through her investigation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs). She argues that, by serving as a restraining force, opposition played a central role in the process of reforming China's economy. China's story, she adds, "supports the idea that a successful path to economic development depends on pre-existing institutional arrangements."

In the next article, "Landscapes of Healing and Superbodies of Knowledge: Race, Medicine and Stolen Cures in the Colonial West Indies," Carson Eckhard demonstrates

how the healing practices of Black and Indigenous peoples have challenged the Eurocentric dominance of medical history. She uses primary accounts written by British explorers in the West Indies including A.J. Alexander and Edward Long. Eckhard highlights the phenomena where “white doctors appropriated traditional African and Amerindian cures while concurrently erasing these healers and their traditions from the historical and medical record, ‘westernizing’ their cures while constructing a white supremacist sociopolitical framework.”

In the third paper, “Agents of Reconciliation in a Changing Canadian Narrative,” Anna Lisa Lowenstein examines the struggle for reconciliation with the indigenous peoples of Canada. She begins by providing historical context on how the Canadian government sought to destroy the indigenous cultures and assimilate them into Westernized society through the residential school system. She adds that this system was in place until the 1990s and that the healing has been relatively recent. She discusses the positive changes that have been made in the past two decades to heal the centuries-old wounds between the government and indigenous peoples. Lowenstein emphasizes the unique role that newspapers and the media played in giving the issues of indigenous people a platform. She concludes by calling on “newspapers utilize their agenda-setting abilities to keep indigenous issues and the legacy of residential schools at the forefront of Canadian public conversation.”

Our fourth piece, “Citoyenne of the Home: Republican Motherhood and Radical Feminism in the French Revolution,” comes from Elizabeth Lindqwister of Stanford University. She highlights the roles played by women, especially mothers, during the French Revolution. She demonstrates how they used motherhood to embrace a radical feminist ideal equality during an age of enlightenment and revolution. She highlights the role the legalization of divorce played in changing women’s roles and helping them

take control of their futures. “A woman’s ability to select and reject a husband implied a level of independence and self-assertion unprecedented for women in French society.”

Our final article, “A Triangular Contest of Power on the Tea-Horse Road: The Tang Dynasty, Tibetan Empire, and the Nanzhao Kingdom” comes to us from Lejiu Sun of Wake Forest University. She highlights the Tea-Horse Road functioned as a triangular regional network. She organizes her paper and the events that occurred around the year 755. Sun argues that the main purpose of the trade shifted over the years from political domination to economic recovery. By the end of the 9th century, she claims “all three states sought to gain economic benefit within this triangular contest and confrontation on the Tea-Horse Road for economic reasons, in contrast to the game-play before 755.”

The editorial board would also like to thank a number of people without whom this edition of the PHR would not have been possible. Our publication only exists thanks to the generous support of the Penn History Department who continues to support and fund us each year. In particular, we are extremely grateful to Dr. Siyen Fei, the Undergraduate Chair of the department, and Dr. Yvonne Fabella, the Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies. They have both offered invaluable guidance and encouragement throughout the editing and publishing processes. The dedication they have for both their students and field of study is an inspiration. In addition, we would like to thank the faculty members at Penn and other universities who promoted our publication, as well as all of the students who submitted papers for consideration. This edition would not exist without your support. Thank you as well to our contributing authors, who worked patiently and diligently to refine their articles for publication.

Finally, I would like to thank our editors for their exceptionally hard work on this issue of the Penn History Review. I would like to recognize three new editors we

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were especially fortunate to have added to the board this semester, Vito Acosta, Adrian Brown, Jordyn Kaplan, Joanna Kim, Kelly MacGarrigle, Spencer Swanson, Mark Wang, and Stephanie Yoon who have already made a positive impact on our journal.

This has once again not been a traditional semester. COVID-19 has impacted everyone across the globe and PHR is no exception. Thank you so much to the Penn History Department for your continued funding. Without it, we would have been unable to publish our editions remotely. Thank you to our authors who have been so understanding about changed deadlines and schedules. It has been a pleasure to work with you. Most of all, thank you to our editors who have made coming to meetings and editing the articles a priority and enjoyable despite different time-zones and virtual learning. Your dedication and passion is an inspiration. This edition is a testament to all of your hardwork. It is an honor to work with such brilliant young scholars who share a deep love for the field of history.

Congratulations again to all of the authors and editors who participated in this edition of the Penn History Review!

“History gives answers only to those who know how to ask questions.” -Hajo Holborn (1902-1969)

Lorenza Colagrossi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Colagrossi', with a stylized flourish at the end.