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Author
Schleitwiler, Vince

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1.

The Violence and the Music, April–December 1899

> The quality of light by which we scrutinize our lives has direct bearing upon the product which we live, and upon the changes we hope to bring about through those lives. It is within this light that we form those ideas by which we pursue our magic and make it realized. This is poetry as illumination, for it is through poetry that we give name to those ideas which are—until the poem—nameless and formless, about to be birthed, but already felt.
> —Audre Lorde, "Poetry Is Not a Luxury" (36)

> Improvisation must be understood, then, as a matter of sight and a matter of time, the time of a look ahead whether that looking is the shape of a progressivist line or rounded, turned. The time, shape, and space of improvisation is constructed by and figured as a set of determinations *in and as light*, by and through the illuminative event. And there is no event, just as there is no action, without music.
> —Fred Moten, *In the Break* (64)

a false start

The story with which I begin you'll have heard before, familiar in form even if its content appears as new. It's an old-fashioned story of modernity, an abortive tale about coming of age, a parable of racial meaning as a product of world-belting mass migrations mapped onto the scale of a single body, on a walk down a city street. Well-worn by countless retellings, the story is autobiographical, if admittedly less the way something actually happened than a way to make what happened *move* in the eyes of those who might gather to hear it. It's the story of a false start.

James Weldon Johnson spun a version in his *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, and Ralph Ellison recorded a cover in *Invisible Man*; Carlos Bulosan never stops telling it in *America Is in the Heart*, repeating it with such frequency and dizzying speed that, by the end, you can't tell if it's finished or just beginning. But the book I open now is by W. E. B. Du Bois, his polygeneric 1940 volume with the teetering, ambiguous title, *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay towards an Autobiography of a Race Concept*. My text is found in a chapter recounting Du Bois's early academic career, his rivalry with Booker T. Washington, and his departure from Atlanta University for the editorship of *The Crisis*, as processes exemplifying the world-historical forces of the chapter's title, "Science and Empire." The plot of the chapter is captured, in miniature, in an anecdote of a walk down Atlanta's Mitchell Street in April 1899—a journey much shorter than anticipated, a detour whose duration would extend beyond his long and eventful life:

> At the very time when my studies were most successful, there cut across this plan which I had as a scientist, a red ray which could not be ignored. I remember when it first, as it were, startled me to my feet: a poor Negro in central Georgia, Sam Hose, had killed his landlord's wife. I wrote out a careful and reasoned statement concerning the evident facts and started down to the Atlanta *Constitution* office, carrying in my pocket a letter of introduction to Joel Chandler Harris. I did not get there. On the way news met me: Sam Hose had been lynched, and they said that his knuckles were on exhibition at a grocery store farther down on Mitchell Street, along which I was walking. I turned back to the University. I did not meet Joel Chandler Harris nor the editor of the *Constitution*.
>
> Two considerations thereafter broke in upon my work and eventually disrupted it: first, one could not be a calm, cool, and detached scientist while Negroes were lynched, murdered and starved; and secondly, there was no such definite demand for scientific work of the sort that I was doing, as I had confidently assumed would be easily forthcoming. I regarded it as axiomatic that the world wanted to learn the truth and if the truth was sought with even approximate accuracy and painstaking devotion, the world would gladly support the effort. This was, of course, but a young man's idealism, not by any means false, but also never universally true. (*Writings* 602–3)

Du Bois's memory is not entirely reliable in this case. A consultation of "the evident facts," heroically compiled by Ida B. Wells, reveals that Hose did not kill his landlord's wife; in fact, while he admitted killing his employer, Alfred Cranford, in self-defense during a dispute over payment, he denied widespread rumors that he'd assaulted Cranford's wife (Wells 14).[1] But in this brief passage, autobiography takes the form of a fable or parable—not the science of history but the higher art of propaganda, in Du Bois's terms.[2] As the rest of *Dusk* makes clear, this anecdote both exaggerates the naïveté of his ambitions and telescopes his long transformation, that *eventual disruption* of his work, to provide his readers with the narrative kernel of an example—not quite *I once was blind, but now I see*, but rather: I thought I could see, but I was blind. Or, more expansively: in the arrogance of my youth, thrilled by the dawn of a modern age, I thought enlightenment would suffice to dispel racism, and that if I served the light, others would be glad to see—but they preferred to see differently.

This *red ray* was cast much farther than Mitchell Street. Wells, for one, made certain of it, catching and projecting it through the global circuits of modern mass media, compiling an account from Atlanta's white newspapers and commissioning a report from a white Chicago detective for her pamphlet *Lynch Law in Georgia*, to spread to the world the news of the migrant laborer known as Sam Hose or Samuel Wilkes. Yet while the transatlantic circuits of Wells's antilynching campaign are better known, news of this case also reached as far as the Philippines, where a nationalist resistance was waging war against U.S. colonial occupation. Indeed, as evidenced by the casual reference to this exceptionally American ritual in José Rizal's incendiary 1891 novel, *El Filibusterismo* (360), Filipino nationalists may have been aware of lynching long before its introduction to the Philippines by the U.S. military.[3] Seizing upon this news, the nationalists reflected it back upon their adversaries. By August, exiled leaders in Hong Kong had composed propaganda imploring African American soldiers to reconsider their loyalties, which appeared in placards concluding, "The blood of your brothers Sam Heose [*sic*] and Gray proclaim vengeance."[4] Among those who responded to this call was a young corporal of the 24th Infantry from Florida, David Fagen, whose exploits as an officer in General Emilio Aguinaldo's forces became legendary both in the Philippines and the United States.[5] Promoted from first

lieutenant to captain under General José Alejandrino, he was referred to as "General Fagen" both by his own troops and by the front page of the *New York Times*.[6] An official military investigation, spurred by wild rumors of his escape to California in 1901, revealed that an accused bicycle thief in L.A. had assumed his name in defiant tribute.[7] Fagen persisted in guerrilla warfare even after Aguinaldo and Alejandrino surrendered, bedeviling the U.S. general Frederick Funston, whose vain intentions to lynch him were so well known that his own sister-in-law mocked them at a Christmas dinner, conjuring a vision of Fagen's hanged body in a playful bit of light verse![8]

shades of a world problem

Given the dizzying reflections and refractions of this red ray, how might you begin to theorize the traveling operations of race across the domains of early twentieth-century U.S. imperialism? These movements flicker across what have been historically understood as two regionally distinct racialized regimes: Negro segregation, in the post-Reconstruction U.S. South, was consolidating both in law (as in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision) and in extralegal violence, while in the Philippines, U.S. colonial governance was being established through military conquest. Further, for U.S.-based scholarship, such historical understanding passes through and is inflected by two additional settings: the industrial cities of the Midwest and Northeast, like Wells's Chicago, where small black communities would be dramatically expanded by the long process of African American urbanization known as the Great Migration, and the West Coast, where the Asiatic exclusion movement, already turning from the Chinese to the Japanese, would eventually encounter a wave of Filipino migrants, establishing the conditions for their inscription in what would one day be termed Asian American history.

To draw together these historically and geographically distant domains, you must first acknowledge that the conditions of such articulation have their genesis in acts of overwhelming violence. But while a link between black and Filipino racialization was initially forged by U.S. imperial conquest, it was quickly seized upon by Filipino nationalists, in the Sam Hose propaganda, to foresee a different destiny for both groups, surpassing the telos of inclusion within the United States, as

nation or as empire. And it was not only the Filipino nationalists who saw this.

In seeking a theorization of race sufficient for this task, I turn to Du Bois's concept of the color line. Best known from his epochal 1903 *Souls of Black Folk*, it appears in an earlier speech at the 1900 Pan-African Conference in London, "To the Nations of the World,"[9] but its most comprehensive formulation is found in "The Present Outlook for the Dark Races of Mankind," Du Bois's presidential address for the third annual meeting of the American Negro Academy in Washington, D.C., in December 1899.[10] It is likely, if perhaps impossible to definitively prove, that this is the first text in which his oft-quoted declaration of the *problem of the twentieth century* appears.[11] More to the point, where the others merely present this statement as a striking premise, only this text presents it as a thesis to be demonstrated. Indeed, its express purpose is to establish the claim. Read closely, it offers a series of insights upon which the methodological and historical framework of this book is built.

Announcing itself as a characteristically ambitious inquiry into race "in its larger world aspect in time and space" (95), Du Bois's address takes his audience on a whirlwind tour of social conflicts spanning five continents and four centuries of world history, to argue that a crisis of accelerated imperial competition is generating intensified processes of racialization within imperial states, at their borders *and* at their centers, legitimizing both conquest *and* mastery in racial terms, whose ultimate horizon is global. *This* is the crisis he is naming in his proposition that "the world problem of the 20th century is the Problem of the Color line" (104). Crucially, he secures this claim at the end of his section on Europe, where "the question of color" arises unpredictably in a new racialization of metropolitan populations, as in the controversy over "the Jew and Socialist in France," and in aspiring powers' pursuit of global standing—for example, Russia's whiteness is questioned when contrasted with Germany but enhanced in conflicts with "the yellow masses of Asia" (103). Du Bois's color line, then, is better understood not as a binary or a bar to be lifted or crossed, but as *a traveling analytical concept for examining how race is made and remade, in uneven and unpredictable ways, across a global field of imperial competition*.

If this concept helps theorize the circulation and reconfiguration of race in the Philippine-American War, this is no accident. For the war,

Du Bois claims, was the occasion for his address: "But most significant of all at this period is the fact that the colored population of our land is, through the new imperial policy, about to be doubled by our ownership of Porto Rico, and Hawaii, our protectorate of Cuba, and conquest of the Philippines. *This is for us and for the nation the greatest event since the Civil War* and demands attention and action on our part" (102, emphasis added).[12] The text's internal logic and historical context together indicate that what's decisive in this *event* is the U.S. decision to conquer the Philippines. In the transition from the 1898 Spanish-American War to the Philippine-American War, African American popular opinion had largely turned against military-imperial policy, and the Philippines focalized a range of heated debates over U.S. expansion and African Americans' place within it. While Du Bois, who opposed the war, obliquely criticizes its prosecution later in the text, here he takes conquest, if not annexation, as a fait accompli, in order to contemplate the consequences of a massive increase in the nonwhite population including eight million Filipinos.

This event, Du Bois argues, must be embraced as a problem, an opportunity, a duty, depicted in ringing patriotic terms: "What is to be our attitude toward these new lands and toward the masses of dark men and women who inhabit them? Manifestly it must be an attitude of deepest sympathy and strongest alliance. We must stand ready to guard and guide them with our vote and our earnings. Negro and Filipino, Indian and Porto Rican, Cuban and Hawaiian, all must stand united under the stars and stripes for an America that knows no color line in the freedom of its opportunities" (102). What began as a matter of demographics attains world-historical importance, as Du Bois continues, assimilating these new populations to a benevolent project of racial uplift whose privileged American Negro subject ascends to autonomy on the geopolitical stage: "We must remember that the twentieth century will find nearly twenty millions of brown and black people under the protection of the American flag, a third of the nation, and that on the success and efficiency of the nine millions of our own number depends the ultimate destiny of Filipinos, Porto Ricans, Indians and Hawaiians, and that on us too depends in a large degree the attitude of Europe toward the teeming millions of Asia and Africa" (102–3). Here, Du Bois's attitude looks disturbingly similar to McKinley's infamous justification for conquest as

a duty "to educate . . . and uplift and civilize and Christianize" Filipinos deemed "unfit for self-government" (qtd. in Rusling). But Du Bois turns from this implicit mimicry of McKinley to signify explicitly on Rudyard Kipling: "No nation ever bore a heavier burden than we black men of America, and if the third millennium of Jesus Christ dawns, as we devoutly believe it will upon a brown and yellow world out of whose advancing civilization the color line has faded as mists before the sun—if this be the goal toward which every free born American Negro looks, then mind you, my hearers, its consummation depends on you, not on your neighbor but on you, not on Southern lynchers or Northern injustice, but on you" (103). In his elegant rhetorical sweep, Du Bois drives the ideology of the civilizing mission to the occidented conclusion that *its manifest destiny is the end of white world supremacy*, and presumes his *American Negro* audience's global solidarity with the *brown and yellow*, while exhorting them to assume self-determining moral agency in achieving it.

This autonomy, a liberating burden, arises as racial uplift shifts from a national struggle for equal opportunities to a transimperial crusade. The global phenomenon of "groups of undeveloped peoples brought into contact with advanced races under the same government, language and system of culture" establishes the world-historical significance of *American Negro* striving: "German Negroes, Portuguese Negroes, Spanish Negroes, English East Indian[s], Russian Chinese, American Filipinos—such are the groups which following the example of the American Negroes will in the 20th century strive, not by war and rapine but by the mightier weapons of peace and culture to gain a place and a name in the civilized world" (107). Note that while the text heralds an internationalism of the darker races—a politics of correspondence and even coordination—the color line does not itself figure that politics, whether as ideology or as organized alliance, but merely its preconditions. As a concept-metaphor, the color line enables a geopolitical analysis that, typically for Du Bois, is coldly pragmatic. For example, the address admits the "rapacity and injustice" of British imperialism, yet insists it is preferable to the alternatives in much of Africa and Asia, and welcomes its triumphs over its rivals (96)—a view that he would not hesitate to reverse when circumstances changed.[13] Moreover, this analysis bears in itself no guarantee of a particular political commitment. Given these

caveats, what is most crucial in this passage, for theoretical purposes, is that *the recognition of the* unevenness *of disparate sites of the production and contestation of race*—here, the relatively privileged position occupied by African Americans vis-à-vis colonized populations—*is the basis of potential counter-articulations* along, *rather than across, the global color line*.

The concept's potential for transformative politics is worth pausing over, for its conditions may be counterintuitive, and lead to several further historical and theoretical insights relevant to this inquiry. First, while disparate domains of racialization are initially linked via acts of imperial violence, this violence is inseparable from the benevolence of the civilizing mission, which promised justice through uplift. Vicente Rafael's gloss on McKinley's policy of "benevolent assimilation," as the "moral imperative" for the United States to develop and care for "wayward native children" in the same way "a father is bound to guide his son," is instructive: "Neither exploitative nor enslaving, colonization entailed the cultivation of 'the felicity and perfection of the Philippine people' through the 'uninterrupted devotion' to those 'noble ideals which constitute the higher civilization of mankind' " (21). "White love" is his memorable term for this attitude, which "holds out the promise of fathering, as it were, a 'civilized people' capable in time of asserting its own character. But it also demands the indefinite submission to a program of discipline and reformation requiring the constant supervision of a sovereign master" (23). The difficulty, of course, comes when dark sons—not to mention daughters—presume to ascend to the patriarchal position, asserting autonomy over the operation of racial uplift. In Du Bois's address, this claim is established first within empire, as black men anticipate the dereliction of white love toward little brown brothers, and then beyond it—for like white supremacy, racial uplift is not exclusive to any particular empire, regardless of its claims of exceptionalism. As such, American Negro uplift may forge imaginative links to nonwhite subjects of other colonial powers independently of U.S. geopolitical interests, a perquisite of the structural contradiction between racial and national identity Du Bois elsewhere called double-consciousness.

Second, Du Bois's ideas in this address are relatively unoriginal, even commonplace, just as his play on Kipling's phrase is a conventional trope in black writing in this moment.[14] More generally, as extensive and

informed as his awareness of global events and their ramifications for local race politics may seem to a present-day reader, it is hardly exceptional within African American popular intellectual life through at least the mid-twentieth century. Knowledge of international affairs had a different salience before the United States became the global superpower, when it was easier to imagine a higher foreign influence intervening within local hierarchical orders.

Similarly, when Du Bois concludes the address by sketching something of a plan of action, the program is uncontroversial boilerplate. He bemoans the "prevalence of Negro crime," calls for a "great revolution" in "the Negro home," invoking "the right rearing of children" and "the purity and integrity of family life," and closes with a bland cry for a greater "spirit of sacrifice" (108–9). Even when advocating for elite cultural achievement, he is careful to cite the example of "the new book by Booker Washington" (109). If you take the text at its word, the theorization of the color line is offered in the service of an ideological consensus among the American Negro elite, whose name is uplift.

Put differently, I contend that Du Bois's great original intellectual contribution, in this address, is *poetic*. This is one way to read the disarmingly modest opening to "The Negro Mind Reaches Out," his contribution to Alain Locke's 1925 *New Negro* anthology: "Once upon a time in my younger years and in the dawn of this century I wrote: 'The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.' It was a pert and singing phrase which I then liked and which I have since often rehearsed to my soul and asked:—how far is this prophecy or speculation?" (385).[15] This may also explain why Du Bois did not revise the address for *The Souls of Black Folk*, which abandons the thesis's argumentative grounding, distilling it into a catchphrase, *the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line*, repeated three times in the text.[16] For the insights carefully established by the address are, for Du Bois, embedded in the phrasing itself, remaining available for activation even as its elegance encourages an almost limitless capacity for repetition and recontextualization. Later in the chapter, I will return to the suggestion that Du Bois's radicalism emerges from his poetics.

Rather than citing or reproducing the argument of the 1899 address, "The Negro Mind Reaches Out" is effectively a *remake*, twenty-five years on, suggesting that the thesis's grounding is irreducibly historical.

This time, Du Bois's virtuoso survey of geopolitical events is organized, not by continent, but by empire—reviewing the "shadow" of race problems in Portugal, Belgium, France, and England—and by the transimperial movements of labor and pan-Africanism. This leads to a third observation. If the germ of later adversarial "colored" internationalisms can be traced back to the turn of the century, as in Du Bois's devout belief in the coming of a "brown and yellow world," then *it is necessary to account for the* continuity *of their emergence with the ideology of the civilizing mission*.[17]

If this statement appears as the converse of the earlier observation that the violence by which U.S. imperialism articulated its transpacific domains was inseparable from its expression as tutelary uplift, then taken together, they reveal the structure of what I have been calling *imperialism's racial justice*. Put differently, imperialism's own self-justifications, the epistemological and aesthetic production of race that cast this overwhelming violence as the actualization of justice, dominate the discursive realm out of which antiracist and anti-imperialist movements arise to seize and recast the meanings of race and of justice. Yet to imagine this domination as total is to complete the work that any existing imperialism necessarily leaves unfinished, to surrender your faith to the promises no imperialism can ever actually keep. This is a fourth point: *because imperialisms are always in competition, the realm of racialization and of justice is transimperial*. As an analytic figure traversing it, *the color line serves not to ground appeals to a transcendent conception of justice but to open up the fissures between the disparate sites of racialization that competing imperialisms are unable to fuse together*—even as the political programs thereby made possible may only register, in retrospect, as efforts to close up or seal over what has been broken and to complete what has been promised beyond justice's reach.

Finally, if the color-line concept identifies an intensifying crisis of imperial competition manifested in uneven and unpredictable processes of racialization, then the term itself serves as an analytical figure for the production of any number of modern subjects. That is, *the color line names the site at which new, modern racial subjects are incarnated and incorporated*. Pride of place in these processes goes not to Du Bois's American Negro, whose assumption of the burden of uplift heralds the rise of a new world, nor to his American Filipinos, constituted along

the tutelary paths of uplift, but to whiteness itself, in all its forms. For what drives the processes identified by the color line is the imperative to define imperial mastery in racialized terms. This whiteness is not a singular type, but an expanding category of racial privilege, whose competing forms vie to assume the position of rightful heir to the progressive expansion of civilization—or, as Du Bois succinctly defined it in 1910: "whiteness is the ownership of the earth, forever and ever, Amen!"[18] Yet this heterogeneous production of whiteness also generated unforeseen varieties of nonwhiteness in its wake. The theoretical intervention of the color line, finally, lies not in conceiving of movement *across* it, into new hierarchical forms of racial privilege masquerading as freedom, but *along* it, to ask: What other shades of modernity are produced, and what might happen as their disjunctures gather toward each other in its wandering course?

an Afro-Asian century and a third-conditional world

When the 1899 address lists those peoples expected to follow the American Negro example, there is one notable omission—the only other nonwhite group whose historical agency Du Bois celebrates, a counterpoint to what otherwise passes as an exceptionalism. This group's encounter with "advanced races" had not involved direct colonization or minoritization, and pointedly, it had not disavowed struggle through military force. Identified as the "one bright spot in Asia to-day," it is "the island empire of Japan," whose "recent admission to the ranks of modern civilized nations by the abolition of foreign consular courts within her borders is the greatest concession to the color-line which the nineteenth century has seen" (98).

Unlike the dramatic reference to the Philippine war, the rhetorical climax to the text's discussion of the United States, Du Bois's comment on Japan is relatively unstressed. Because the casual ascription of world-historical significance to current events is central to the text's method, the superlative phrasing barely delays its rapid inventory of the "congeries of race and color problems" (97) that is Asia. Further, Du Bois's rhetorical decision to relegate this recent event to the century that is ending suggests some effort to distance the Japanese example from his model of American Negro striving. Nevertheless, the text may

be justifiably described as prescient regarding the significance of Japan's challenge to global white supremacy. In a later section on Russia's designs in northeast Asia, Du Bois muses, "Perhaps a Russia-Japanese war is in the near future," concluding, "At any rate a gigantic strife across the color line is impending during the next one hundred years" (104).

Within five years Russia and Japan were at war, and Du Bois was quick to see a confirmation of his arguments. At the conclusion of a 1905 lecture titled "Atlanta University," Du Bois revisited his color line thesis, warning that a declining interest in African American concerns was ignorant of the direction of global affairs. After a succinct summary of the thesis's geopolitical grounds, he turned to the "epoch-making" event of the moment: "To-day for the first time in a thousand years the great white nation is measuring arms with the yellow nation and is shown to be distinctly inferior in civilization and ability." "The foolish modern magic of the word 'white' is already broken," he averred, "and the color line has been crossed in modern times as it was in the great past." If "the awakening of the yellow races," and eventually their "brown and black" counterparts, was now inevitable, the question is whether this "awakening . . . be in accordance with and aided by the greater ideals of white civilization or be in spite of them and against them." "This," he concludes, "is the problem of the yellow peril and of the color line, and it is the problem of the American Negro."[19]

Returning to the 1899 speech, it becomes clear that, while the format of its global survey runs predictably from Africa through Asia and South and North America to Europe, ascending a hierarchy of race or "civilization," the logic of its geopolitical analysis identifies Asia as the stage upon which the most strategically consequential imperial conflicts are taking place. There, two great events define the historic occasion, that dawning century, that modern black striving must seize. In short, *the color line concept was articulated as a direct response to the transpacific rise of U.S. and Japanese global power amid the shifting dynamics of imperial competition in Asia*.

If this association was merely incidental to the 1899 address, rightly jettisoned as the color-line thesis became a catchphrase, it might hold little interest. Yet subsequent history suggests it was prophetic, as the changing conditions of African American social and political life in the coming century would prove deeply interconnected with events in

the region. Corresponding to Du Bois's logic, two major aspects of an Asia/Pacific interest in African American culture may be identified. The first turned toward Asia in a kind of messianic anticipation, entertaining fantasies—usually casual and speculative, though here and there surprisingly devout—of the arrival of a champion of the darker races against white world supremacy. Though occasionally associated with other countries, this racially alien figure was most often identified with imperial Japan. The second aspect traversed the Pacific along U.S. imperial pathways, pursuing opportunities for racial uplift, particularly in the Philippines and Hawai'i.

Through the first half of the century, an intermittent but abiding interest in Japan was present across all the locations of a vibrant African American intellectual life, from the academy to the press, the church to the literary salon, the juke joint to the street corner, and the offices of respectable civil rights organizations to the meetings of ragtag radical groups. Rather than attempting to determine any singular coherence to this interest, it is best approached as a series of debates. For every editorial, lecture, or sermon promoting the modernizing and uplifting lessons Japan could teach, another might reject such claims. Similarly, intellectuals argued for and against the prospect of Japanese leadership of the darker races, and popular and elite sentiment oscillated between identifying with Japanese and Japanese American struggles against white racism and dismissing them for setting themselves above black people.[20]

Primarily shaped by geopolitics, this interest peaked around major events—the Russo-Japanese War; the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, where President Woodrow Wilson defeated the Japanese delegation's proposal of a racial equality clause for the League of Nations Charter; and the 1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia, in which widespread hopes of Japanese intervention were ultimately disappointed. The latter largely confirmed the attitudes of a younger cohort of intellectuals, whose leftward turn in the 1930s led to critiques of Japanese imperialism, sometimes recasting China or India in familiar pro-Japanese tropes. Yet the earlier influence of Marcus Garvey, who promoted "Asia for the Asiatics" and upheld Japan as a model of racial pride and self-determination, was not entirely dislodged. To a lesser extent, African Americans also monitored the anti-Japanese movement and Japanese American civil rights campaigns against school and housing segregation, restrictions

on immigration and land ownership, as well as the Supreme Court 1922 case *Ozawa v. United States*, in which a challenge to racial restrictions on naturalized citizenship, on the grounds that Japanese should be considered white, was denied. These currents crested during World War II, as African Americans contemplated both the mass incarceration of West Coast Japanese Americans and the demands and opportunities of national loyalty in wartime.

Yet the larger historical significance of this interest may lie in its more shadowy and imaginative manifestations. It was given freer rein, for example, in speculative fiction by prominent intellectuals. John Edward Bruce's uncompleted 1912 short story, "The Call of a Nation," and James D. Corrothers's "A Man They Didn't Know," published in *The Crisis* in December 1913 and January 1914, both imagine a race war, in which Japan's initial triumphs in the Philippines and Hawai'i lead to an invasion that the United States can defeat only by abandoning white supremacy to ensure the support of black soldiers. Fifteen years later, Du Bois himself contributed to the genre with *Dark Princess*, whose protagonist, a talented African American in Berlin, stumbles into a secret international council of the darker races plotting the overthrow of the white nations.[21] The greatest influence of this interest may have been in the pro-Japanese activities of a range of religious, nationalist, and emigrationist groups uncovered by Ernest Allen, including the Pacific Movement of the Eastern World, the Ethiopian Pacific Movement, the Moorish Science Temple of America, and the Allah Temple of Islam (a predecessor to the Nation of Islam led by Elijah Muhammad).[22] It almost certainly conditioned Noble Drew Ali's influential theory of "Asiatic" blackness, as well as Muhammad's vision of a Japanese-built UFO or "Mother Plane." Broadly understood, you may recognize its significance in the ways this interest offered imaginative realms for conceptualizing racial difference beyond white supremacy—a necessary condition for recovering an affirmative notion of blackness irreducible to its constitution by white racism. Thus, one of its more surprising variants provided a lexicon for alternative stylizations of female and queer nonwhite sexualities, in the appropriated Orientalisms of writers such as Marita Bonner, Nella Larsen, and Richard Bruce Nugent.

The final collision between U.S. and Japanese imperialisms in World War II, and the subsequent reshaping of the world order, drastically

revised the terms of this interest, both dispersing and intensifying it. Sympathies for Japan were largely forgotten, helped by active efforts of suppression during the war, by government officials—over eighty members of black organizations, including Muhammad, were arrested on charges of sedition or draft evasion in September 1942—as well as black intellectuals.[23] Meanwhile, a continuing series of wars brought more black soldiers to Asia, binding many closer to U.S. imperial interests while baptizing others in forms of radical internationalism.[24] One strain of the interest turned toward Third Worldist politics, particularly Maoism,[25] while another manifested in pop-cultural obsessions with kung fu and in Afrofuturist explorations of outer space by musicians like Sun Ra.

But Du Bois's early transpacific analyses are not merely useful for a taxonomy of black cultural formations. More broadly, they anticipate how the subsequent course of black history may be approached through an Afro-Asian interpretation of the twentieth century, which identifies the social and political advances of black and Asian peoples as the era's defining event, and the jaggedly articulated strivings of metropolitan minorities and colonized or imperially subjugated populations of color as its indispensable condition. In the most straightforward way, this is the prophecy of the color-line thesis. Yet the cold pragmatism of Du Bois's geopolitical analyses can seem disconcerting to the liberatory spirit driving recent recuperations of black internationalism and Afro-Asian sympathies. The epochal break he saw in 1905 would be generally recognized after World War II, and while he has been rightly accused of insufficiently critiquing Japanese imperialism,[26] his larger theme, shared by Corrothers and Bruce, was actually vindicated by the war: in contesting U.S. imperialism's monopolization of the terms of racial justice, Japanese imperialism helped create unprecedented openings that were seized by black freedom movements, even if its own dubious claims proved disastrous for populations under its sway.

Put differently, what feels insufficient in the otherwise reasonable revisionist identification of an "Afro-Asian century"[27] is the seemingly unbridgeable distance between the extravagant visions of freedom it prophesied and the bitter realities it left behind, culminating in the impoverished conditions of formal national independence and formal racial equality. Moreover, the geopolitical conditions that enabled those visions no longer obtain. The color line is *not* the problem of the

twenty-first century, in Du Bois's sense; even as racism persists and expands, questions of racialization no longer provide the dynamic link through the social conflicts driving global change. To understand this trajectory of the prophecy, and to understand why its radical potential is not yet exhausted, I turn to the second aspect of the Asia/Pacific interest in African American culture.

This aspect traversed the pathways of U.S. imperialism, which offered fragile opportunities for black performances of colonial privilege, most extensively in the Philippines and Hawai'i.[28] Not reducible to simple patriotism or Afro-Asian solidarity, this aspect of the Asia/Pacific interest illustrates the fraught yet generative racial, sexual, and gendered contradictions embodied by American Negro uplift emerging within transpacific imperial competition. The ambivalent participation of black soldiers in the controversial Philippine war provided the first major nexus of this history, along with debates over their conditions of service and their relationship to other nonwhite groups. Another linked post-Emancipation debates over black education to U.S. imperialism in a complex transpacific circuit, connecting white American missionary education in Hawai'i, via Samuel C. Armstrong, to the Tuskegee model of industrial education championed by his protégé, Booker T. Washington, which subsequently served as a model for U.S. officials in Manila. Meanwhile, African American educators found opportunities for professional advancement under the colonial regime, including a young Carter G. Woodson, who wrote approvingly of the experience in his 1933 *Miseducation of the Negro*.

A third nexus involved debates over colonial migration, whether by upwardly mobile individuals or en masse; the Philippines briefly served as the focus for black emigration schemes, and the U.S. government entertained proposals to import black labor to the colony. Finally, the complex global circuits of modernizing popular entertainment brought black musical culture to the colonies, returning the latter to the metropole in cultural practices, memory, and fantasy. James Weldon Johnson, with Bob Cole and his brother Rosamond Johnson, wrote a groundbreaking 1906 play, *The Shoo-Fly Regiment*, about soldiers in the Philippines, as part of a brief fad of similarly themed productions, including works by Black Patti's Troubadours and the Pekin Stock Company. As late as 1927, the New York playwright Eulalie Spence could offhandedly introduce a

character as "one of these here Philippine gals" (*Her* 139). While memories of the colonial period faded quickly after the 1946 end of direct U.S. rule, traces persisted among veterans and their families: Ralph Ellison recalled his father's service in Cuba, the Philippines, and China in his 1981 introduction to *Invisible Man* (xiii), while Ann Petry helped to preserve the letters of an uncle who served in the Philippines and an aunt who taught in Hawai'i (E. Petry 2005).

If Du Bois's 1899 address sketches the contours of a future Asia/Pacific interest in African American culture, the methodological implications of its comparative spirit entail a contrapuntal narration of Afro-Asian history, which is why this book also takes up reciprocal, if uneven, interests in blackness in Japanese American and Filipino migrant cultures. As Vicente Rafael and Paul Kramer have shown, race-making under U.S. colonialism in the Philippines was contradictory: anti-insurgent warfare tended to conflate territories and populations into a singular racial enemy, while the exigencies of civilian colonial rule demanded the proliferation and classification of racial differences into a progressive hierarchy, whose heterogeneity was yet to coalesce into nationhood.[29] Intraimperial migration further complicated matters, and Filipino intellectuals frequently deployed figurations of blackness to negotiate the conjunctures of metropolitan and colonial racial formations, in the long advent of Philippine formal independence.

Japanese Americans in this period similarly relied on figurations of blackness in navigating a trajectory amid the competing claims and disavowals of Japanese and U.S. imperialisms. At times, they contrasted Negro servility to Japanese virility and militancy—persistent stereotypes in U.S. culture prior to World War II that were even employed didactically, if in a different spirit, by black intellectuals. At other times, drawing on overlapping experiences of segregation in the West, they figured blackness to imagine communal, if not necessarily nonhierarchical, relations outside of white supremacy. Through to the present, black presences in Japanese American culture typically signify the chance of multiracialism to which all imperialisms lay claim; thus, as Japanese Americans contemplated their destiny in the shadows of transpacific imperial competition, blackness came to figure histories of racial violence whose repression could be exchanged for degrees of privilege, but whose unleashing might be the condition of an unimaginable freedom.

Comparative and global inquiry, in Du Bois's color-line writings, was organized in terms of continents, in 1899, and of empires and transimperial movements, in 1924. They have rightly been cited as a precedent for transnational approaches to American studies and ethnic studies, as those fields seek to escape the geopolitical imagination of post–Cold War American exceptionalism. In drawing a methodology from Du Bois's color line, I approach the histories of black and Asian racialization in terms of *migrations*, rather than geopolitical units defined by past or present state borders, as processes in and of motion rather than geographical fixity. By "migrations," I refer to the large-scale and long-term resettlement of racialized labor, but also the transient movements of casual workers, military personnel, and displaced groups, as well as the individual journeys of students, educators, government officials, intellectuals, artists, and political activists. These bodily travels, furthermore, shaped and were shaped by proliferating modern telecommunications media. Thus, I conceptualize migrations as multidirectional and interrelated processes of physical movements and cultural circulation, rather than the unidirectional passage between fixed locations in classic U.S. narratives of *im*migration.

Through this model, you may interpret relationships between the movements of colonial Filipino workers to and along the West Coast and the deployments of African American soldiers in Asia and the Pacific, as two circuits of migrant labor within empire, articulating histories of dispersal on both sides that precede U.S. occupation by centuries. Or you might connect black urbanization in cities like Chicago and Los Angeles, accelerated by the demands of wartime production in the 1940s, with the forced removal, incarceration, and resettlement of West Coast Japanese Americans through concentration camps to Chicago and points east, before their gradual westward return over the next few decades—and then relate these "internal" migrations to the "foreign" threat their convergence invoked, from the specter of imperial Japan to a U.S. front of Third World revolution by the 1960s.

Now that the century of Du Bois's prophecy is over, the liberatory potential of a Third World front, or of previous figurations of Afro-Asian solidarity, seems thoroughly exhausted. The color line is not the problem of the twenty-first century, even if the problems associated with it remain. From this vantage, his faith in an Afro-Asian future can actually

function as a constraint on the imagination of freedom—a trap you might evade by considering a contemporaneous vision that consigned an Afro-Asian century to an unrealized past before it even began. To recover this possibility, I return to the earlier suggestion that Du Bois's 1899 address is surprisingly *unoriginal* within African American discourses of its moment.

Although its central conceit, that issues of race must be viewed from a global perspective, could appear as a revelation a hundred years later, as ethnic studies and American studies undertook a transnational turn, it was hardly unconventional in 1899. For example, at the previous year's American Negro Academy meeting, Howard University professor Charles C. Cook presented "A Comparative Study of the Negro Problem." Assessing English and Japanese histories of national emergence, Cook comments, "What it took England ten centuries to accomplish, the United States has done in two hundred, and Japan in thirty years" (3). While the latter was clearly not Cook's area of expertise—at least half of his brief section on Japan was a long quote from William Elliot Griffis's popular 1876 volume, *The Mikado's Empire*—it shows that Du Bois's impulse was hardly unique.

More substantive engagements with global affairs can be found across a range of black newspapers and journals of the period, including the A.M.E. *Church Review*.[30] Indeed, the same October 1900 issue that published Du Bois's address featured a series of aphoristic "Editorials" that tartly and succinctly capture the ambivalent perspective on imperialism theorized by Du Bois. Presumably written by editor Hightower T. Kealing, an educator, lay A.M.E. church official, and A.N.A. member, they range from a sentence to several paragraphs. One item pungently captures the common-ground position between growing antiwar black popular opinion and the concerns of some black elites that challenging Republican administration policies would deliver the election to their enemies: "Imperialism seems to mean the bringing of more colored people within contact with American contempt; while anti-imperialism is saving all this contempt for the colored people already on hand"! Other items illustrate the preoccupations of uplift ideology, bemoaning American drunkenness in the Philippines and celebrating the attendance of Cuban schoolteachers at a summer program at Harvard, and speculate on the rise of China (175). A longer piece relates the Zionist Max Nordau to

A.M.E. bishop Henry M. Turner's support for African emigration, offering a sympathetic critique of both (179).

Another item puts the promise of imperialism's racial justice in stark terms. Analytically linking three ongoing imperial wars in China, South Africa, and the Philippines, it condemns the "motives" of the Western powers as "undeniably and declaredly selfish and sordid," while upholding their core justification: "the rape of Africa, Asia and the islands will open them up to Western progressiveness, invention, comfort, personal liberty and the Christian religion." The logic of uplift detaches itself from white corruption, operating providentially, for "beyond" and "in very antagonism to" their reprehensible intentions "will come the elevation and equalizing of the protesting semi-savage that is despoiled." Following the occidented logic of imperialism to the same end predicted by Du Bois, he imagines that colonial violence will leave this semisavage "fresher from the fount of rejuvenation than his late master," eventually to achieve "domination in things commercial, literary, artistic, and economic, over the Western world" (177). The bluntness of Kealing's assessment strains against the resignation of its conclusions, illustrating the severe constraints he faces as a political actor. Indeed, the next item proclaims imperialism to be the highest moral issue in the upcoming presidential election, one the incumbent gets wrong and his challenger gets right, then endorses President McKinley anyway, citing his opponent's damning reliance on anti-black Southern Democrats.

In the end, what's the difference between Du Bois's and Kealing's analytical responses to U.S. imperialism? Read together, it seems largely rhetorical, a matter of tone rather than substantive effect: the prophecy of a coming Afro-Asian world collapses into an affirmation of imperialism's own justifications, fully recognizing that its actualization is indistinguishable from violence. The limitations of their responses trace the constrained and compromised structural condition of the American Negro intellectual, whose capacity for action is given *within* relations of empire. But to identify the difference between them as rhetorical is merely to say that Du Bois's great contribution, again, is poetic. Its originality and genius lies in the unexpected way it reads, or learns to read, the positionality of the American Negro intellectual within imperial competition. Where Kealing endorses imperialism's principle of racial justice with a curse, Du Bois offers an inspirational exhortation. Both

draw on rhetorical traditions of prophecy, yet only Du Bois articulates his insight in a singing phrase that would become a great watchword of antiracist and anticolonial struggle.

Yet on the far side of that prophecy, as a century's visions of Afro-Asian liberation recede in disenchanted dusk—the long-awaited rise of China, the election of an African American commander in chief—you might recover a more apposite rhetorical formulation in one additional item from Kealing's editorials. It reads: "If Aguinaldo were the statesman he is reputed to be, he would form an alliance with King Menel[i]k of Abyssinia and do something worth while" (175). Here, the fantasy of Afro-Asian liberation, joining the leader of the Philippine resistance to the hero of African opposition to Italian imperialism, can be expressed only as a sarcastic counterfactual—it comes into view only after it is deemed impossible. Kealing's conception of racial justice cannot be extricated from the imperialism against which he would turn it, and the best rhetorical figure he can find to evoke the volatility of this paradox is a bitter joke.

To appreciate the operation of this joke, I borrow a term sometimes used in English language teaching to describe the grammar of conditional sentences. In the so-called first conditional, the relation between a condition and its consequence foretells a possible future (if X occurs, Y will occur), whereas in the "second conditional," a condition represented as unfulfilled determines a potential consequence as unreal (if X were true, Y would occur). Du Bois's exhortations follow the logic of the first conditional—*if you take up the black man's burden, white supremacy will fall*; Kealing's joke takes the form of the second—*if Aguinaldo were the hero advertised, he and Menelik would form the Afro-Asian alliance you desire*. But Kealing's tone and his other editorials make it clear that he has abandoned any fantasy of a Filipino-Ethiopian alliance, and is left unable to foresee any Afro-Asian future but what is bequeathed by uplift: that the semisavage could one day ascend to the position of the master.

In other words, Kealing already occupies the place where you now stand, on the far side of despair, gazing out at an unreal possibility already consigned to the past. This is the structure of the "third conditional": *if the antiracist and anticolonial movements of the twentieth century hadn't fallen short of the extravagant hopes invested in them, they*

would have achieved another world. Just as this bitter-mouthed joke is the sole rhetorical figure through which Kealing can express a desire excluded by the terms of racial uplift, it may be that this negated image of a future lost to history, this third-conditional world, offers you an apposite structure for expressing those desires for freedom that elude the epistemological and aesthetic constraints of imperialism's racial justice.

For his part, Kealing can go no further in expressing this desire, at least not in words, for what words he can find are capable only of betraying it. But where the words leave off, if there could still be music, that music would come to be called *the blues*.

resounding a red ray

If the color line serves as a tool for mapping the geopolitics of race and projecting its destiny across centuries, it also marks the site where race is produced, where bodies are given coherence and torn asunder. This is not a line to be crossed in triumph; to be crossed *by* it is to feel the violence of imperial incorporation extending itself as justice. The anecdote that began this chapter invokes such a crossing in order to evade it, in what I propose below is an improvised theoretical gesture of a radical poetics, out of which unfolded that enormous history of action—aesthetic, intellectual, political—which travels under the name Du Bois. So let me return to April 1899, to the earnest young man making his way up Mitchell Street. Eight months away from the speech in D.C., he is on the other side of a vast divide: over ten days in May, his son, Burghardt, age two, will take ill and die, in a city where white doctors would not treat black patients, and black doctors were in short supply (Lewis, W. E. B. Du Bois 227–28). For now, carrying his *reasoned statement* and his *letter of introduction* to the newspaper, he may still imagine that the violence he hopes to address reaches toward someone else.

This is a story about imperialism's racial justice and its tokens. In it, the ambitious young scientist recognizes his own tokenization: all his hard-won achievements suddenly seem meaningless before the evidence of overwhelming violence. If he's been endowed with the power to speak as a representative of his race, which he'd planned to use with the editor of the *Constitution*, it is because his achievements, his person, could

be taken to justify a civilizing mission. He appears, in autobiographical caricature, as what would later be called a model minority.

This is racial incorporation in a mode of sponsored uplift, whereby the nation guides the education of its nonwhite wards in the ways of white civilization—a mode pioneered in the metropole before its extension to the Philippine colony. If this process engineers a kind of model nonwhite racial subject hybridized by internalizing white civilization, it also secures the nation's claim to whiteness via the demonstration of a racial capacity for benevolent mastery. Further, the scientific efficiency by which the United States performs the civilizing mission proliferates racial distinctions *within* whiteness, engineering a modern, hybridized yet pure variety that could be heir and successor to European empires.

But I find another form of racial token here, manufactured by another mode of racial incarnation. I refer to the gruesome trophy said to be on display at the grocer's, the dismembered knuckles of the lynched body of Sam Hose. I argue that lynching is one manifestation of a mode of imperial incorporation through overwhelming violence, and that the lynching form may be understood as a communal, narrative act of sexual violence—a sex act, whose performance establishes and secures whiteness, as well as blackness, as racial categories of violent mastery and conquest. A racialized, sexualized, invasive violence is projected, as threat, onto the body to be sacrificed, and then mastered through an overwhelming, preemptive violence.

The trophy is a token of this act, condensing its narrative into a magical object, whose display reenacts the ritual. The token on display serves as a warning to black people in its vicinity, to fix them in place in the local racial order—not to expel them, not to exterminate them, but to *fix* them, in intimate bondage, in relation to whites. It serves, too, as a celebration and a commemoration for local white audiences. But it also addresses other white audiences, who may or may not be present, who may provisionally hold a superior position in a social order, and thereby deign to condescend to the community of lynchers. It defiantly proclaims a racial difference *within* whiteness, between higher but decadent strains of whiteness whose capacity for rejuvenating violence has degraded, and a lower but more vigorous, youthful, potent, rising racial strain. At issue here is a perceived threat of overcivilization, giving

rise to moral and sexual perversion, feminized men and masculinized women, and the inevitable decline of a great race in the cyclical rhythms of world-historical progress—that orientation to civilization I have been calling *occidented*.[31]

Lynching is commonly misunderstood as a strictly Southern phenomenon, exemplifying the conflict between a subordinated regional white community and a disapproving nation. I contend instead that lynching is just one of the manifestations of racial incorporation through sexualized violence crucial to the ways the United States, as a rising world power, claimed the imperial legitimacy of whiteness while asserting the exceptionality of its white racial character. Thus, one response to the spectacle of lynching, a condemnation from the perspective of some Northern or European elites, which would become dominant and shape subsequent histories of racism, takes it as evidence of the backwardness and debasement of white lynchers, of their savage or uncivilized ways—that the process, in effect, made them less than white, contaminated or blackened. Yet the danger of contamination is the necessary risk of a procedure to inoculate whiteness from overcivilized decline by infusing a sexualized, racialized savage essence, of the engineering of a hybrid modern whiteness that projects primal nature onto a nonwhite body in order to abstract and consume it in an act of sacrificial communion. As I argued in my reading of *King Kong*, this act makes white people more white, white men more manly and potent, white women more feminine and sexually desirable. Another analogy appears in the "Optic White" episode of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, where the secret ingredient of a superior white paint turns out to be ten drops of "dead black" liquid (163). In an influential analysis of this "remarkably astute parable of the production of whiteness" (74), Harryette Mullen reads it as an analogy, not to lynching, but to *passing*, taken as a model for fabricating "pure" whiteness from racial difference (72). If the social phenomenon of passing unveils the "formula" of whiteness's manufacture—not as an exception to the general rule of white reproduction, but as the exemplary case revealing the underlying principle—then the lynching form is one of its instances.

It would be tempting to narrate Du Bois's decision to turn back down Mitchell Street as a deferral or postponement, to say he reverses course because he has not yet prepared the theoretical formulation sufficient for

the scene he is on the way to witnessing. For the color line, as he would shortly define it, is first and foremost the natal site of whiteness, even as Du Bois's intervention seeks to overturn this priority to herald the emergence of modern nonwhite subjects. But the lynching form does not merely instantiate the color line—it seeks to collapse that line into a single, fixed point. Du Bois is justifiably less concerned, in this instance, with elaborating the multiple strains of whiteness lynching nourishes than with its propensity to reduce all varieties of nonwhiteness to the same fate. One might say that Du Bois hesitates before or evades the embodied experience of being crossed by the color line—except that, as I will argue, you may take his deferral or hesitation, the swerve or detour from the scene of lynching that necessarily returns him to it, as itself the crucial theoretical gesture of his narrative, improvised on the spot.

What happens in the encounter that Du Bois quite prudently avoids? Something of an analogue can be found in chapter 10 of James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*. The unnamed protagonist, whose New England boyhood is closer to Du Bois's biography than Johnson's, has come to the South after a series of adventures across the United States and Europe, determined to become a great composer by transforming the raw materials of black popular culture into a refined, concert-hall music. Following classic European models of modernizing nationalism—to reconstitute the collective accomplishments of the peasantry first into folk culture and then into the product of individual genius—his ambitions are fully worthy of Du Bois's vision of uplift. Arriving in the poor communities of the Black Belt, he begins "jotting down in my note-book themes and melodies, and trying to catch the spirit of the Negro in his relatively primitive state" (Johnson, *Writings* 105), but he is compelled to abort his initial research when he finds himself observing a lynching bee.

Jacqueline Goldsby persuasively argues for a reading of the book as a novel of lynching rather than passing, shaped by Johnson's own traumatic encounters with the violence. Indeed, it is the experience of lynching that transforms the protagonist into an ex-colored man. His representation of his decision appears disingenuous—"I would neither disclaim the black race nor claim the white race," he says, and merely "change my name, raise a mustache, and let the world take me for what it would" (115), though subsequent events reveal he must actively hide

his past. He rationalizes the decision as an impossible attempt to distinguish between the putatively biological inheritance of race and its function to mark social inferiority, while leaving privilege disingenuously unmarked—"it was not necessary," he tells himself, "to go about with a label of inferiority pasted across my forehead" (115).

It is not clear, however, that there *is* a decision at all; already passing "incognegro" as a witness to the lynching bee, he becomes trapped in this condition, looking for reasons after the fact: "It was not discouragement, or fear, or search for a larger field of action and opportunity that was driving me out of the Negro race. I knew that it was shame, unbearable shame. Shame at being identified with a people that could with impunity be treated worse than animals. For certainly the law would restrain and punish the malicious burning alive of animals" (115). From within his new racial status, he distances himself from a shame he attributes to blackness, due less to the denial of its humanity than its expulsion from the protection of the law. But a few paragraphs earlier, before he's "made up his mind" (115), this shame appears first in a notably different form. Coming out of the fugue state he'd passed into during the lynching, he comes to consciousness before its material remains—"a scorched post, a smoldering fire, blackened bones, charred fragments sifting down through coils of chain, and the smell of flesh—human flesh"—and walks off to sit and "clear [his] dazed mind": "A great wave of humiliation and shame swept over me. Shame that I belonged to a race that could be so dealt with; and shame for my country, that it, the great example of democracy to the world, should be the only civilized, if not the only state on earth, where a human being would be burned alive" (113). Consciously or not, Johnson is unmistakably reproducing the structure of Du Bois's famous formulation of double consciousness, that narrative subjectivity split in two along the contradiction of nation and race, *American/Negro* (Du Bois, *Writings* 364–65).

In the post-multicultural present, in which the grammar and lexicon of cultural diversity supply the dominant language of racial justice, the celebration of identity abstracted from historical and social analyses of racial inequality provides affirmative pathways for inequality's continuation and expansion. Following the logic of his own rationalization, then, it is easy for present-day readers to accept the ex-colored man's severing of this formulation of doubled shame, forgetting his initial emphasis

on his ethical implication as a member of a national body marked by exceptional violence, and condemn him for the sin of racial self-hatred. Yet the agony of the ex-colored man's passing, that joke which turns back onto him as tragedy, is that he never ceases to love and value black culture, even as his belief in uplift abstracts that love from the experiences of any particular black people he might know. In the logic of the narrative, the project of uplift is aborted only to be aggrandized, for the novel is a cautionary tale, staged to encourage readers to affirm the narrator's famous conclusion that he "sold [his] birthright for a mess of pottage" (127).

The shame the narrator remembers to confess—that the violence incarnates blackness, given birth as expulsion from the protection of the law—is what transforms him into the ex-colored man, driving him into whiteness. But because he confesses it, first in private, prior to marrying a beloved white woman who bears him two white children, and then, after her death, in the pages of his book, he lays open his shame to expose what Harryette Mullen explains is whiteness's own shared secret. Following Goldsby, you might read the novel as the author's own exposure of that same shame, the secret of Johnson's encounter with lynching, laid open to advance a race's transformation into *race men* dedicated to Negro uplift. In sum, if something in the ending leaves present-day readers uneasy, it cannot be attributed to the repression of a racialized shame. Rather, it's how easily the narrator toggles between his dream of uplift and his assumption of whiteness that is striking, now that uplift is no longer the dominant form of racial justice. The distinction between Negro uplift ideology and racial passing, on which the novel turns, proves troublingly difficult to maintain, and if this might seem bizarre to Johnson, it would be the very theme of Nella Larsen's 1929 novel, *Passing*.

This uncanny doubling becomes easier to understand if you recall the confession that the ex-colored man forgets to remember, the shame of membership in a political body constituted by the violence, of belonging to a state exceptionalized by lynching. This shame does not derive from an identification with whiteness, but with a civilization constituted and regenerated in the devolution of violence upon blackness. This is the shame of the American Negro as civilized subject, as the token of benevolent tutelage, which must be forgotten once *his mind is made up*

to pass. It risks revealing, among other things, that what passes for freedom across the color line, the mastery of civilization white status entails, which Negro uplift would contest, is merely the illusory privilege of standing on the lee side of the violence, a trick of perception that can be maintained only by separating oneself from what the violence bears away. For the violence has no master, only servants who hope to redirect its force onto others further down its course. Here you may recast the tradition of the passing novel, running through Johnson and Larsen, to understand its continuing salience as a challenge for reading. It asks, How is it possible to perceive the difference between whiteness, or racialized privilege, and freedom?

In short, Negro uplift ideology comes to seem indistinguishable from passing because of this second shame—because it is a manifestation of U.S. civilization's gospel of violence. The unbearable encounter between the tokens of uplift's benevolence and its violence reveals, beyond the author's intention, that the protagonist's dream of *catching the spirit of the Negro in his relatively primitive state* is homologous with both passing and lynching. Each posits the internalization of a black essence—refined, consumed, secreted, but at all costs mastered—in producing a reconstituted racial subject fit for modern civilization. Lynching exposes the logic of the violence that extends uplift's loving embrace. Following Goldsby's insight that "lynching's narrative force . . . compels the narrator to tell his story backward, with the result that the novel develops according to a process akin to that of photography" (217), you may understand the relation of passing to lynching as that of a negative to a photograph: one fabricates a white body, and the other fabricates its black essence, but the process they comprise together establishes the perception of the racial image.

Returning to Du Bois, you may recognize what lies before him as the scene of perceptual training in an aesthetics of racial terror, which he evades in the movement of an improvised countertraining. In the close encounter between two varieties of the racial token, each is empowered to speak only by silencing the other; each draws power by reference to the other but can express that power only in the other's absence. But Du Bois does not risk actually coming into the presence of the lynching trophy; instead, silenced, he turns away. This is not merely prudence, the justifiable fear of being overwhelmed by the violence and

mistaken for its proper target, but the unsettling premonition, on its way to surfacing as (double) consciousness, that he is already implicated in it, prior to intention or will, in his very constitution as a civilized American Negro subject. This is why he does not reschedule his appointments at the *Constitution* or submit his statement by post—why his modernizing scientific project is unsettled at its very core.

The U-turn down Mitchell Street may seem a retreat—repairing to the security of the university to theorize a response to unforeseen conditions—but retrospection identifies the detour as the opening of Du Bois's journey, an ongoing improvisation whose narration is itself the theorization it demands. The text, recall, is not an autobiography of the development of its historical subject, but *an essay toward an autobiography of a race concept*—a literary exercise marshaling the empirical facts of personal history in the service of a conceptualization. The turn away from the presence of the lynching trophy may therefore be understood as a narrative theorization of hesitation and detour. The text refuses to witness the token of lynching's violence, to represent the overwhelming sensory experience of the blackened knuckles, the char and stench, so as not to reproduce and reenact the lynching form.

This is *in some sense, illusory*, for Du Bois *swerves away from* the trophy only to *run right back to* and *through* it,[32] but the narrative introduces a kind of lag in this movement, tearing at the discrepancy in the doubled vision of uplift's twinned tokens at the site where they would be fused, in order to disrupt uplift's aesthetic protocols. An extemporaneous motion, the swerve opens Du Bois to an agency arriving from outside all that his knowledge and training has prepared him to perceive—which is to say, the act is prophetic. This is the strange *red ray*, cutting across his scientific blueprints, by which the narrative improvises the retraining of attention not on the lynching trophy but on that felt condition of insufficiency, shared by protagonist and narrator and reader, down all the decades of the violence's repetition and across the unbroken moment stretching back to the killing of the man known as Sam Hose, a problem of perception before it is ethics or epistemology.

This *red ray*, put simply, is a figure for what transforms Du Bois from a scholar to a political activist. But his activism continues to involve the production of knowledge and of writing. In "Poetry Is Not a Luxury," Audre Lorde describes a "quality of light" that has "direct bearing upon

the product which we live, and upon the changes we hope to bring about through those lives," defining poetry as a practice that "forms the quality of light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change" (36). In this sense, the figure of the red ray captures something of the quality of light that shapes and is shaped by Du Bois's developing poetic method, his epistemology and his aesthetics, in his relentlessly polygeneric, interdisciplinary, multimedia writings from *Souls* onward. The optic is just one aspect of this, of his ongoing improvisational orchestration of what Fred Moten calls "the ensemble of the senses"—*Souls*, for example, combines not only autobiography, sociology, history, biography, and fiction, but concludes with and is constantly interrupted by inscriptions of music.

With that in mind, I want to shift from reading the red ray as a strictly visual metaphor to think of this quality of light as having a sound, and to consider how it resounds or is re-sounded, not just in the sense of an echo but of a transformation or translation, as it moves along a global color line. It may be set to work, as in Du Bois's case, on the apparently impossible task of imagining racial justice beyond the terms laid down by imperialism's own justifications, which determine what can be perceived even before they dominate what can be known and represented. For Du Bois in this period, and arguably throughout his career, the agenda remains a form of uplift, but the sound of this red ray begins to bend his vision of black modernity onto a different course.

The red ray may be perceived at any number of locations along the color line—the site where modern racial subjects were incarnated and incorporated, where uplift and violence, logically incommensurable but regularly indistinguishable in practice, converged in a kind of blind spot of racialized perception, the occasion of aesthetic training and counter-training. As preparation to hear a quality of light, you may turn to the resources of black aesthetic traditions, following the guidance of poet-theorists like Lorde, Moten, Brent Edwards, Nathaniel Mackey, and others. Attending to the ways black cultural practices work the material edges of multiple representational media simultaneously—not to privilege the oral over the literary or imagine some combination adding up to total knowledge, but to mobilize the invisible and unspeakable at the limits of any medium or sense—you may find a pedagogical function in aesthetic form.

What I call reading as learning how to read, invoking the radical theorizations of literacy characteristic of black literary traditions, submits to this improvised aesthetic training beyond the historical constraints of racialized perception. Pursuing this reading along the color line, this method seeks to activate the imaginative longings within literary resoundings of the red ray, which open up a field of political engagement even as they are effaced in the historical record of social action. Persisting in their texts as a muffled call, they await a collective response enacting as-yet unknown forms of belonging across difference, while training reading as learning the conditions of collective responsibility.

In Du Bois's anecdote, the red ray emerges from a comparative moment *within* the heterogeneity of the category "Negro," but extending comparison's range across racial categories and formations can open up the unequal relations and unpredictable possibilities subsumed within a single term. His color-line concept expresses how racial forms produced at any one location always allude to others, whose exotic distance might function in excess of their capacity to signify in a local racial order. This allusive excess, found at the intersections of black and Asian migrations, signals a fugitive trajectory. Following lessons from Du Bois, the remainder of this book examines encounters between tokens of uplift and violence along the color line. If the violence of imperial racialization at times imposed a fictive identity conflating blacks and Asians, the resounding of the red ray emitted by these encounters served to operate an articulation of and through difference. The texts I consider, emerging from within the history of imperialism, did not triumph over its violence, and largely reproduced its civilizationist grammar and lexicon; yet by attending to their translations, striving to *hear* their quality of light, you might learn to read for what is excluded by, or eludes, imperialism's racial justice.

a fugitive end

In conclusion, I take up two further translations of the red ray, as it recedes into the dimming recollections of guerrilla warfare across the Pacific. The first appears in the aforementioned Sam Hose propaganda generated by the Filipino nationalist resistance. Here is one version of the full text:

> TO THE COLOURED AMERICAN SOLDIERS.
>
> It is without honour nor profit that you shed your costly blood.
>
> Your masters have thrown you to the most inicuous (sic) fight with double purposes.
>
> In orders (sic) to be you the instrument of their ambition.
>
> And also your hard work will make soon the extinction of your race.
>
> Your friends the Philipinos (sic) give you this good warning.
>
> You must consider your situation and your history.
>
> And take charge that the blood of your brothers Sam Heose (sic) and Gray proclaim vengeance.[33]

The blood of the soldiers being addressed is here aligned with the blood spilled out from the body of Sam Hose, another token, if rhetorical, of lynching's violence. But in this translation, it is endowed with the agency to speak a different message, a power of speech that is also the power of action—the blood does not cry out for, plead for, or even demand justice, but *proclaims* vengeance. Who is speaking for whom? Who, or what, is speaking? As propaganda, you might read this speech as ventriloquism: if the token seems to speak, it is only the voice or the message of the *insurrecto* that is actually heard. Alternatively, you might read it as possession: the proclamation of vengeance is a call that occupies and overwhelms whatever vehicle transmits it, emanating from an agency beyond mortal reach. What *is* certain is that the translation of this sound, which is of course never literally heard, is intended by the translators to produce a response, severing the bond of duty between the Negro soldiers and the U.S. nation, not to assert a racial identity between Negroes and Filipinos, but to make possible an articulation through difference—a provisional alliance of friendship.

Yet, as Du Bois and Kealing already foresaw, any realization of such an alliance would come on terms the propaganda dearly sought to avoid—

not the military coalition of Afro-Asian soldiers against Anglo-Saxon imperialism, but an uneven correspondence of sidelong glances between Negro and Filipino elites committed to racial and national uplift under U.S. rule—and even these efforts would be fleeting and fragile. The great counterexample to this statement, of course, is the aforementioned David Fagen, the most famous of the few soldiers who switched over to the Philippine cause, a figure of myth given new life in recent decades. Yet the reading with which I conclude, from the recollections of a comrade of Aguinaldo's who eventually served as a senator under the U.S. regime, suggests that even this figure is inscribed by the hand of uplift.

My text is taken from a memoir by General José Alejandrino, Fagen's immediate commanding officer, a chemical engineering graduate of the University of Ghent and close friend of José Rizal. In *The Price of Freedom*, originally published in Spanish as *La Senda del Sacrificio*,[34] Fagen is portrayed in disturbingly racist terms that largely align with U.S. imperialism's construction of black primitivism. In this episode, Alejandrino describes his surrender to General Funston and his honorable refusal to hand over his notorious subordinate. He describes "Fagan" as "a Negro giant of more than six feet in height" (174),[35] of nearly superhuman physical endowments. For example, asked why his soldiers understand that a retreat is signaled when he dismounts his horse, he explains that he rides to save his legs, in seeking the enemy or in battle, but he descends in retreat "because his feet are faster than those of his horse" (175). But like that of a loyal servant or pet, his astounding physicality corresponds to a touching solicitude to his less robust superior. He was "very affectionate and helpful to me," Alejandrino reports, "carrying me in his arms or on his shoulders when I, weakened by fevers and poor nutrition, had to cross rivers or to ascend steep grades. The services which he rendered to me were such that they could only be expected from a brother or a son" (174).

These extraordinary qualities correspond to a lack of manly discipline—Alejandrino's Fagen is "very fond of carousals and drinking" (175), and, as a matter of policy, not allowed custody of white American prisoners, as his habit was to kill them without trial or confirmation from his superiors (174).[36] But the most bizarre anecdote Alejandrino shares involves a woman Fagen lives with in camp, who comes to him "crying and showing one cheek bitten off and saying that Fagan had

done it." Summoned, Fagen explains he'd dreamed he was attacked by the enemy, and the "fury" of his resistance, down to "punches, kickings and bitings," fell upon "his woman companion" (176). You may hesitate to read too closely here—surely "bitten off" must be an exaggeration, in the original or in the translation?—but in any case, these are just old war stories, spun by an aging veteran, perhaps inured to the disbelief of younger generations. What is nonetheless clear is that "Fagan" is savage, even bestialized. His affections, however innocent and faithful, can be as dangerous as his enmity; his capacity for violence overwhelms normal men, but this physical superiority corresponds to a moral inferiority, whether in his techniques of combat (biting) or in his behavior toward captives (murder). By contrast, he illustrates the manly honor of his civilized commander, who is more suited than the duplicitous Funston for the patriarchal responsibility of civilizing love toward a darker brother or son.

To be clear, this brief reading of a distant memoir in subsequent translation allows no reliable broader assessment of Alejandrino's relationship to Fagen, much less his attitudes towards Fagen's race. Surely, the primary function of this depiction is not to inform his readers of the characteristics of American Negroes. Rather, it seems to provide the vehicle of a vicarious identification with an exaggerated violence motivated by the colonizer's racism—the "most outstanding characteristic" of this "Fagan" "was his mortal hatred of American whites" (174). Alejandrino's text comes as close as it might dare to inhabiting that terrifying savage figure in which Negro and Filipino were conflated by the totalizing imperatives of U.S. colonial warfare, pivoting away only through the operation of a racial *décalage*: it reminds his readers that it is the Negro and not the Filipino who is America's savage. And if this portrayal expresses the unspeakable desire for an overwhelming vengeance that could defeat U.S. imperialism in the name of its Filipino and Negro victims, the continuity of its representational logic with that of white imperial racism cannot be ignored.

The myth of David Fagen would rise again, during the Vietnam War and the second war in Iraq, in variations that took for granted their distance from the racist trappings of an earlier period's civilizationist preoccupations—just as uplift has itself been rendered obsolete by new configurations of imperialism's racial justice, organized by languages of

development and of diversity. But I will not tarry with these later versions, where the limitations of my capacity as a reader result from the familiarity of the terrain. In the end, whatever impulse pursues Fagen into the boondocks can only be dissatisfied, as what it desires cannot be found in the positive terms by which his figure is perceived, represented, and known, but in the negative space into which he escapes—the torn page in the archive, the scratch and skip in the historical record. For he did not return from the shadows, and the world he fought for was not won.

13 The artists Kerry James Marshall (in *Heirlooms and Accessories*) and Shawn Michelle Smith ("In the Crowd") each attempt to intervene in the aesthetic training enacted by this fascination, in responses to the same 1930 Indiana photograph.

14 See also Nicholson 113.

15 In a brief sociological lesson in her memoir, Holiday admits to hearing her "first good jazz in a whorehouse," as did "a lot of white people [who] helped label jazz 'whorehouse music,'" explaining that this "was about the only place where black and white folks could meet in any natural way," being "the only joints fancy enough to have a victrola and for real enough to pick up on the best records" (10).

16 On "black women's vocality," see Griffin, "When Malindy Sings."

17 This claim is appropriately dismantled by A. Davis (*Blues Legacies* 184–87) and Griffin (*If You Can't* 130–32).

18 For a discussion of this and related blues and jazz songs, usually written by men but sung by black women, see A. Davis, *Blues Legacies* 26–33, 177–79.

19 On scat, meaning, and this anecdote, see Edwards, "Louis Armstrong," esp. 624.

20 *Lady Sings the Blues* notoriously opens: "Mom and Pop were just a couple of kids when they got married. He was eighteen, she was sixteen, and I was three" (3). Nicholson establishes that there was no marriage, that the text cut six years from Sadie's age, making her younger than the father Holiday claimed, who wasn't recorded on her birth certificate. But Griffin persuasively argues that these details in the autobiography aim to defend Sadie from moralizing criticism (51–52).

21 Cf. Dove's gloss on her eponymous songbird, musician's slang for a female vocalist, as the canary in the coal mine, in the audio clip on the poem's *Poetry Foundation* webpage.

22 But see Shilliam, published too late for me to engage substantively in this book.

1. The Violence and the Music, April–December 1899

1 This appears to be an editorial error, as Du Bois accurately described the case in earlier and later accounts. See the 1938 speech that was the basis for *Dusk*, "A Pageant in Seven Decades" (254); typescripts of the speech in the University of Massachusetts's online Du Bois archive; the May 14, 1938, installment of his "Autobiography of William E. B. Du Bois" in the *New York Amsterdam News* (13); and his 1961 recorded interview with Moses Asch, *W. E. B. Du Bois: A Recorded Autobiography*. The error recurs in his 1968 *Autobiography* (222). Meanwhile, the facts of the case are still disputed over a century later by local white communities; see Arnold.

2 Du Bois's famous dictum in "Criteria of Negro Art" that "all Art is propaganda and ever must be" (*Writings* 1000) seems to contradict his indictment of antiscientific uses of propaganda in U.S. historiography in "The Propaganda of History." However, that text crucially distinguishes between history as "a science" and "an art using the results of science" (*Writings* 1029); the latter has pride of place for Du Bois within a hierarchy of culture. Du Bois's literary project can thus be understood,

roughly, as art (propaganda) using the results of science. Even so, the error is regrettable.

3 See Brown [as Ngozi-Brown], "African-American" 45; Balce, esp. 52–58.

4 Marasigan 62, 67. For more on the placards, see ["A placard"](*Richmond Planet*, November 11, 1899); "Negro Troops Are Asked to Revolt" (*Atlanta Constitution*, November 2, 1899); Ontal 125; Gatewood, *"Smoked Yankees"* 258–59n2. "Gray" is presumably Edward Gray, lynched in Louisiana in June ("Latest Louisiana Lynching," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 16, 1899). Gray is mentioned in at least one account of a presentation by Louis P. Le Vin, the detective hired by Wells, describing a follow-up visit to Georgia after his initial report became public ("Detective L. P. Le Vin Makes a 2nd Trip," *Afro-American Advance*, July 1, 1899).

5 On Fagen, Robinson and Schubert's 1975 article remains essential, as is Schubert's 2008 essay. See also San Juan, "An African American Soldier," and Ontal.

6 Robinson and Schubert 75; "American Deserter a Filipino General," *New York Times*, October 29, 1900. Also in the *Times*, see "Negro Deserter Beheaded," December 9, 1901, and "Lieut. Alstaetter Talks of David Fagin," December 10, 1901.

7 Robinson and Schubert 78. According to Russell, the accused man, Rube Thompson, had worked for the U.S. Army in the Philippines (219).

8 Robinson and Schubert 76–77. Fagen's end is shrouded in myth; despite questionable reports that he was ambushed and beheaded in December 1901 or "hacked to death with a bolo" in late 1902 (80–81), rumors that he survived, possibly faking his own death, continued to circulate.

9 For important readings of the 1900 text, see Edwards, *Practice* 1–2, and Shepperson 307.

10 Except where indicated, all references are to its subsequent publication in the A.M.E. *Church Review* in October 1900, which Herbert Aptheker lists as the source for his reprint in *Writings of W. E. B. Du Bois*.

11 The *Church Review* version is apparently the only extant text, so it may be impossible to determine if changes were made for publication. A growing but still limited scholarship on the address occasionally misdates it to March 1900. However, an American Negro Academy (A.N.A.) program in the Du Bois Papers at the University of Massachusetts has the speech scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on December 27, 1899 (American Negro Academy), corresponding to the text's statement, "We stand to-night on the edge of the year 1900" (104). A contemporary account in H. T. Johnson's A.M.E. *Christian Recorder* praises the speech effusively, expressing the intention to reproduce it in the future ("The Negro Academy"); see also coverage of the meeting in the *Colored American* ("National Negro Academy") and a subsequent *Church Review* article that quotes Du Bois's text, referencing the A.N.A. (Mossell 223, 224). Curiously, Alfred Moss's history of the A.N.A. reports that Du Bois neither appeared at the meeting nor submitted his speech to be read (65), only to contradict itself in the same chapter (92, citing the *Colored American*). Finally, the December 1899 date is accepted by the most assiduous reader of Du Bois's early work, Nahum Chandler, in an annotated

reprinting of the speech in his invaluable new collection of Du Bois's essays in this period (Chandler 125-26n1).

12 I follow Aptheker ("Present Outlook," ed. Aptheker, 77–78) in correcting two errors in the *Church Review* text: "period" for "peroid," and, more aggressively, "Hawaii" for an otherwise redundant "Havana," thereby tracking references to "Hawaiians" in the same paragraph, quoted below.

13 Cf. Du Bois, "Negro Mind" 397–406.

14 On black responses to Kipling, see Gatewood, *Black Americans* 183–85, as well as H. T. Johnson's 1899 lecture, *The Black Man's Burden*, which reprints his widely cited poem of the same name.

15 An earlier version of this article appeared in *Foreign Affairs* ("Worlds of Color").

16 See Du Bois, *Writings* 359, 372, 391. The word "world," whose elision improves the rhythm and makes the phrase easier to repeat, is effectively redundant—for Du Bois, a "century" is self-evidently a category of *world-historical* time.

17 That is, you might say that the radical desires of this project are staked on the chance that what appears in the historical record as *mimicry* might be read, recalling Zora Neale Hurston, for and as *improvisation*, following Fred Moten's meditations on the term in *In the Break*.

18 In "Souls of White Folk" (339), later collected in his 1920 volume, *Darkwater*.

19 "Atlanta University" 197. These paragraphs are virtually identical to a 1906 standalone essay in *Collier's*, "The Color Line Belts the World," which is better known (see, e.g., Mullen and Watson). While Du Bois's enthusiasm suggests a growing radicalism, the political agenda here is still to preserve alignment with *the greater ideals of white civilization*.

20 Since the rise of a post-Soviet New World Order, interest in Afro-Asian connections has steadily increased, including a growing body of scholarship on African American interest in Japan and Japanese Americans. Joining early contributions by Hellwig and Shankman, important work was begun by Allen, Kearney, Gallicchio, and Lipsitz, and subsequently extended by Horne, Widener, Taketani, and Onishi, among others.

21 The novel's depiction of the relationships between nonwhite characters dramatizes a complex reading of geopolitics, in which Japanese guidance ultimately gives way to a messianic child, born to the hero and an Indian princess.

22 See Allen, "When Japan" and "Waiting for Tojo," and Hill.

23 See Allen, "When Japan," and Ottley 327–42.

24 See Peery, *Black Fire* and *Black Radical*, and Green.

25 See Kelley and Esch.

26 For an extensive but generally sympathetic accounting, see Kearney, "Pro-Japanese Utterances."

27 See A. Jones and Singh.

28 Scholarship on black/Filipino connections has also expanded in recent years, driven both by American studies' critiques of empire and by the growth of Filipino American/diasporic studies. The essential works of Gatewood, along with

articles by M. Robinson and Schubert, Payne, Brown, and San Buenaventura, have since been joined by Ontal, Murphy, Gruesser, San Juan Jr., Marasigan, Y. Cho, Puente, Mendoza, and others.

29 See Rafael; Kramer, *Blood*; and also Salman.

30 For an extensive discussion of the A.M.E. Church and imperialism, see Little.

31 On the threat of overcivilization, see Bederman. On lynching's *modern* "cultural logic," see Goldsby.

32 These italicized phrases come from Moten's gloss (*In the Break* 4) on Saidiya Hartman's instructive refusal, in *Scenes of Subjection*, to reproduce Frederick Douglass's account of the beating of Aunt Hester.

33 Reproduced as quoted in Marasigan (67) from U.S. military records. See also note 4 above.

34 Translated by Alejandrino's son, this English version appeared in 1949, under quite different historical conditions than the 1933 original.

35 Robinson and Schubert list him as five foot six (73), though Ontal, apparently reviewing the same U.S. military records, has five foot ten (119).

36 For contemporary testimonials to the contrary, including an interview with one of his prisoners in the *New York Times* ("Lieut. Alstaetter"), see Robinson and Schubert 78.

2. Shaming a Diaspora

1 But see Brent Edwards's provocative consideration of Duke Ellington's phrase "the literature of music" in "The Literary Ellington" (2).

2 See Alexander Weheliye's transformative reading of this tension between the ephemerality of music and technologies of sound recording, *Phonographies*.

3 This is not to imply a conclusive dismissal of the trope, whose multivalent, esoteric force exceeds its deployment within the epistemological constraints of any particular mode of knowledge.

4 Edwards, "Uses," 66; cf. Edwards, *Practice* 11–15.

5 The work of Willard Gatewood remains the best introduction to these debates; see *Black Americans* and *"Smoked Yankees."*

6 See Charles Steward, "Manila and Its Opportunities," and Scarborough, "The Negro and Our New Possessions" and "Our New Possessions—An Open Door."

7 See Suisman. Despite its policy of using black musicians exclusively—per its famous slogan, "The only genuine colored record. Others are only passing for colored"—the company eventually reissued some records by white musicians under pseudonyms. Yet if these sides were among them, this still suggests some hope of an audience for black-performed Hawaiian music.

8 For more on Loving, see Richardson; Kornweibel; Woodson, "Walter Howard Loving."

9 David Levering Lewis credits Loving with the "coup de grace" to the controversial military ambitions of Du Bois and NAACP president Joel Spingarn, but praises the nuance and integrity of his reports, noting his subsequent friendship with Du