

## *Black Transpacific Culture and the Migratory Imagination*

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For African Americans, for their country, and for the world, W. E. B. Du Bois announced, the twentieth century would begin in Asia. It was late December 1899, the end of a year of great ambition and personal tragedy for the young Atlanta University professor. His two-year-old son, Burghardt, had died in May, in a city where white physicians would not treat Black patients, and Black physicians were in short supply.<sup>1</sup> A month earlier, his near encounter with a gruesome trophy of the freshly lynched body of Sam Hose had struck his faith in the enlightening power of social science to its core.<sup>2</sup> And his nation was at war. Unlike the relatively popular Spanish-American War that preceded it, the Philippine-American War was vigorously debated by the Black press and intelligentsia, and even threatened to fracture historic loyalties to the party of Lincoln in the upcoming presidential election.<sup>3</sup>

As the year drew to a close, Du Bois traveled to Washington, DC, to deliver his presidential address at the annual meeting of the American Negro Academy. Largely neglected until recent years, this speech<sup>4</sup> was the source of his famous proclamation that “the world problem of the 20th century is the Problem of the Color line” (104). Shorn of the contextually redundant word “world,”<sup>5</sup> Du Bois would repeat this formulation on several occasions over the next few years – most famously in his 1903 breakthrough, *The Souls of Black Folk* – but only the 1899 address presents it as a thesis to be demonstrated. He does so by considering race “in its larger world aspect in time and space” (95), via a whirlwind survey of geopolitical conflicts on five continents, and a century-by-century review of 400 years of world history. In this argument, the color line is not merely a metaphor for segregation, a bar to be crossed or lifted, but a means of understanding racialization as a dynamic, modern, and modernizing force: a traveling analytical concept for examining the uneven, unpredictable ways race is made and remade across a global field of imperial competition, which would become a space of transimperial contestation for movements from below.

The occasion for his reflections, as Du Bois explicitly acknowledges, is the war and the “new imperial policy” it reflects (102). The colonization he opposed elsewhere is here taken as a *fait accompli*, in order to celebrate the potential doubling of the “colored population of our land” by the incorporation of eight million Filipinos, along with the significantly smaller populations of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Hawai‘i (102). “This is,” he argues, “for us and for the nation the greatest event since the Civil War” (102), endowing the race’s strivings with world-historical consequence – for on them depend the destiny of not only the new US imperial wards, but also “the teeming millions of Asia and Africa” (103). Signifying on Rudyard Kipling’s infamous admonition to his Anglo-Saxon brethren taking up the civilizing mission in the Philippines, Du Bois asserts, “No nation ever bore a heavier burden than we black men of America” (103). For if, as they “devoutly believe,” the twenty-*first* century is to dawn on “a brown and yellow world,” then a profound commitment to racial uplift by his audience, the “American Negro” intellectual elite, will be required (103).

Operating within the broader discourse of racial uplift that President William McKinley himself had used to justify US conquest,<sup>6</sup> Du Bois’s program heralds an age of anticolonialism by imagining the appropriation and fulfillment of imperialism’s own justifications by American Negroes. This model will serve “German Negroes, Portuguese Negroes, Spanish Negroes, English East Indian[s], Russian Chinese, American Filipinos,” and others, who in the coming century will “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). The counterexample to this exceptionalism, which does not disavow armed struggle against white supremacy, is the only other nonwhite group whose world-historical agency the text celebrates: “the island empire of Japan,” whose “recent admission to the ranks of modern civilized nations . . . is the greatest concession to the color line which the nineteenth century has seen” (98). Aligning Japan’s rise with the new US imperialism across the Pacific, Du Bois implicitly contrasts the nonviolent moral striving of American Negro uplift with the military might of Japanese imperialism, and explicitly predicts the 1904–5 Russo-Japanese War (104).

Over the next hundred years, the broader trends Du Bois identified would indeed transform the world. The prospect of an Asian challenger to European powers, and the increasing strategic significance – and critical potential – of African American incorporation into the US imperial enterprise, helped establish the conditions for a century of unevenly and dynamically interrelated struggles. These jaggedly articulated movements

against colonialism and metropolitan racism, and the social and political advances of Black and Asian peoples they achieved, define what may justifiably be called the Afro-Asian century.<sup>7</sup> It is this era that Du Bois heralds in his color-line thesis, articulated in response to the rise of US and Japanese global power amid the shifting dynamics of transpacific imperial competition. By reorienting the collective imagination of African American futures toward transpacific horizons, he envisioned a world-historical struggle, with the unprecedented achievements of Black people at its core.

This chapter takes stock of the first decade of Du Bois's prophecy, broadly mapping the scope of a Black transpacific culture, in imagination and action. Centering on two major geopolitical events – Japan's military victories in the Russo-Japanese War and the US colonization of the Philippines – it identifies a reorientation and restructuring of the collective imagination of African Americans' position, destiny, and movement in the world. Over the coming decades, African Americans would imaginatively and materially access new degrees of imperial privilege by crossing the Pacific as ambivalent participants in US imperialism, while simultaneously contemplating the emergence of a militant Asian champion of the darker races against white world supremacy. These developments inspired a sophisticated collective geopolitical awareness within Black publics, as well as more extravagant imaginations of freedom that reached beyond normative conceptions of the political into religion and the arts. While the more spectacular speculative scenarios thereby envisioned did not come to pass, the underlying themes of Du Bois's prophecy would be vindicated by the coming century's dramatic transformation of the global racial order. In what follows, I survey the material and speculative domains of early Black transpacific culture – geopolitics, military service, education, popular entertainment, and migration – to show how these events helped reshape the collective imagination of Black belonging, Black worldliness, and Black destinies, revealing the transpacific horizons of an emerging array of Black political and cultural modernisms that set an Afro-Asian century in motion. For if the twentieth century began in Asia, it would only reveal itself in *movement*.

### **Black Transpacific Culture and Imperialism's Racial Justice**

What I term "Black transpacific culture" emerges from the literal and figurative transpacific crossings of soldiers, educators, colonial officials, intellectuals, artists, and others, manifesting in periodicals, private

correspondence, material culture, literature, and popular entertainment; politics, religion, and the arts; and elite and working-class settings. Between 1900 and 1910, Black transpacific culture developed within five major contexts: *geopolitical speculation*, both pragmatic and extravagant; *military service*, to the metropolitan nation, its colonial wards, and most of all, the race; *colonial education*, as both precedent for and continuation of the contested theories and practices applied to “American Negro” uplift; *popular entertainment*, rapidly modernizing and globalizing; and *racialized migration*, in which dreams of individual and collective striving and escape from US racism became conflated with the pursuit of class and colonial privilege, and schemes of mass deportation and labor trafficking. This expansive definition of Black transpacific culture should itself be understood within a broader transpacific reorientation of Black culture, which helped establish the conditions for the global renaissance that heralded a “New Negro.”

Over the coming century, two major aspects of Black transpacific culture would arise, corresponding to the key geopolitical events of this first decade. One looked upward, anticipating an Asian military power capable of defeating white world supremacy on its own imperialist terms. This tendency encompassed both extravagant fantasies – speculative exercises of the Black radical imagination beyond the normative limitations of the political – and ethical and pragmatic critiques of alliance with actual Japanese imperialism. The other looked downward, at Asian and Pacific Islander territories and US imperial wards, in a benevolence never definitively extricable from colonial condescension and violence, while seizing the limited, if largely unprecedented imperial privilege offered to African American striving. Viewed collectively, Black participation in US empire should be understood as ambivalent, rather than oppositional or uncritical. Enabled, rather than deterred, by their awareness of the Anglo-Saxon supremacism motivating US imperial policy, African American soldiers, settlers, and colonial officials embraced the chance to demonstrate that only the Negro race was capable of delivering civilization’s benefits to their brethren across the Pacific.

In other words, Black transpacific culture in the period cannot be uncritically recuperated within present-day conceptions of racial justice, nor is its fundamentally hierarchical understanding of intergroup relations easily reconciled with egalitarian models of coalition and solidarity. The historical conception of racial justice hegemonic in the United States at the century’s dawn was *uplift*, which, in one variant, organized ideas and practices of collective advancement and class differentiation within Black

communities and, in another, justified the violent colonization of new US territories across the Pacific, in line with state and philanthropic policies toward nonwhite populations generally. In this sense, uplift preceded later, more familiar conceptions of racial justice – formal equality and racial liberalism from World War II to the 1970s, multiculturalism and diversity from the 1980s to the Obama administration – which always appear as a terrain of struggle and uneasy compromise, of appropriation and reappropriation, and which from certain angles appear indistinguishable from the violent extension of imperial rule.

Uplift imagined itself as the benevolent relationship of a higher to a lower position within a hierarchy of civilization, whose expression as loving tutelage often took the form of a firm, disciplining violence. But because civilization's unilinear progressive movement, upward and forward, was punctuated by the cyclical organic rhythms of birth, maturation, reproduction, and death, any ascent carried the risk of decadence and downfall, while bringing one closer to an inevitable decline. Its hierarchies were reproduced within individuals, families, and groups, as well as between races, and the agency accorded to the higher position needed to be continually tested. The lower position was thus the source of vitality and the occasion for demonstrating moral superiority, in colonialism and class obligation as well as in patriarchy and the normative training of sexuality and violence. Both American Negroes and American Anglo-Saxons might aspire to succeed European powers at the pinnacle of civilization, yet their proper ascent required the healthy management of these hierarchical relations, whereby benevolence was necessarily inextricable from violence, and the meaning of race was found in the training of primitive sexuality into civilized gender norms.

In negotiating civilization's terms, Black transpacific culture celebrated the valor, honor, and achievement of the soldiers, educators, and officials serving in US empire. It emphasized the high esteem and fraternal affection they received from their nonwhite subjects, whose intellectual, moral, and political development was carefully compared to that of the metropolitan Negro masses in need of uplift. At the same time, it managed anxieties arising from military service, migration, and modernization through narratives of love, romance, and sexual entanglement, consolidating the emergence of "traditional" bourgeois heteronormative gender and family structures. With determination and defiance, it upheld these norms as proof of American Negro civilized status, and as necessary for the race's survival and advancement into unprecedented geographical and historical domains. The mission of uplift, in Black transpacific culture, demanded

the affirmation and fulfillment of ideals seized, without expectation of recognition, from white Americans, encompassing both the benevolent tutelage of imperialism and the bourgeois heteropatriarchal norms it promoted. Yet in other manifestations, Black transpacific culture bore witness to powers and perspectives outside the domains of US imperialism's racial justice, exposing the truth of this justice by addressing it in its own language of violence. Further, Black transpacific culture offered speculative domains for imagining other arrangements of racialized gender and sexuality beyond the reach of white supremacy.

### **Imagining an Asiatic Challenger to White World Supremacy**

As Edlie Wong's detailed chapter in this volume demonstrates, early twentieth-century African American interest in Asia and Asians was hardly limited to Japan and the Philippines. Indeed, the figure of Chinese Americans was more pertinent to questions of citizenship and inclusion, as mid-nineteenth-century Chinese labor migration and the corresponding exclusion movement set the framework for calculating Asian American rights through the 1960s. In geopolitical terms, the prominence of China within African American culture would rise in the 1930s, as a younger cohort of Black left intellectuals, including Langston Hughes, took up its cause to critique Japanese imperialism, and again from the 1950s to the 1970s, when the influence of Maoist thought and iconography was at its peak.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, India would occasionally feature as a potential ally in the global rise of the darker races, in both fact and fantasy, as in Du Bois's fanciful 1928 novel, *Dark Princess*, which drew on his contacts with South Asian anticolonial movements. Nonetheless, Japan and the Philippines – the two examples celebrated in his color-line address – set the coordinates of a transpacific interest in African American culture that established the global horizons of Black belonging and destiny across the twentieth century, and whose broad contours were established by the middle of that century's first decade.

Indeed, Du Bois's 1899 prediction of a Russo-Japanese war came true within five years, and he was quick to note Japan's military victories, which captured the imagination of the world. In a brief concluding section of a 1905 lecture titled "Atlanta University" – which appeared in 1906 as a slightly modified stand-alone essay for *Collier's*, "The Color Line Belts the World" – he revisited his color-line thesis in light of current events. Warning against a declining interest in African American concerns, he called attention to the "epoch-making" Russo-Japanese War: if "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,” this means the “foolish modern magic of the word ‘white’ is already broken.”<sup>9</sup> Five decades before James Baldwin famously proclaimed, “This world is white no longer, and it will never be white again,”<sup>10</sup> Du Bois’s words forecast the transformation of a global racial order that became manifest after Japan’s defeat in World War II. Du Bois’s analysis, while particularly acute, was hardly exceptional among Black intellectuals, as Reginald Kearney’s review of Black press coverage of the war demonstrates.<sup>11</sup> In its aftermath, Kearney finds evidence of a fashionable interest in Japanese-themed social events and objects within an aspiring African American middle class, including elaborate multiday fundraisers and gifts of decorative home goods.<sup>12</sup>

In the coming years, Black interest in Japan rose and fell in relation to major world events – notably, the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, where the Japanese delegation’s proposal of a racial equality clause for the League of Nations Charter was defeated by President Woodrow Wilson, and the 1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia, in which widespread hopes of Japanese intervention were ultimately disappointed.<sup>13</sup> To a lesser extent, African Americans also monitored anti-Japanese developments within Asiatic exclusion movements, as well as Japanese American civil rights campaigns against school and housing segregation and restrictions on land ownership, and the 1922 case *Ozawa v. United States*, in which the Supreme Court upheld racial restrictions on naturalized citizenship by ruling that Japanese could not be considered white.

Both currents crested during the 1940s, as African Americans contemplated the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans and the demands and opportunities of national loyalty in wartime. While the Black elite, influenced by 1930s leftist critiques of Japanese imperialism, had little difficulty shedding residual sympathies for Japan, the war exposed another variety of Afro-Asian politics, flourishing in the aftermath of Garveyism, in a circuit from Harlem through the Midwest to Chicago, down to the Mississippi Delta, and across to Kansas and Oklahoma. In this milieu, which had produced Noble Drew Ali’s influential theory of “Asiatic” Blackness and Elijah Muhammad’s Nation of Islam, pro-Japanese groups were organized by Asian American and Black activists, including Satokata Takahashi, Pearl Sherrod, and the purportedly Japanese Ashima Takis, who would later be identified as a Filipino national, Policarpio Manansala.<sup>14</sup> The appeal of these views for working-class African Americans is indicated by negation in a 1938 Communist Party USA pamphlet, authored by Cyril Briggs, James

W. Ford, Harry Haywood, and two others, which answered No to the question, “Is Japan the champion of the darker races?”<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, in September 1942, many African American elites were surprised and embarrassed when more than eighty members of Black organizations, including Muhammad, were arrested on charges of sedition or draft evasion, as alleged Japanese sympathizers.<sup>16</sup>

Du Bois himself was notoriously slow to abandon his appreciation for Japanese power, going so far as to tour Japanese-controlled Manchuria in 1936. Yet despite legitimate accusations that he was insufficiently critical of Japan, the larger theme of his writings on Asia was vindicated by World War II. The rise of Japanese imperialism as a legitimate challenger to white world powers, both militarily and in its ideological appeal as “champion of the darker races,” helped create unprecedented openings that would be seized by Black freedom movements – even as it proved disastrous for the nonwhite populations under its sway. And Du Bois was not alone in predicting this dynamic. Two short stories – the journalist John Edward Bruce’s uncompleted 1912 “The Call of a Nation” and the poet James D. Corrothers’s two-part “A Man They Didn’t Know,” published in *The Crisis* in December 1913 and January 1914 – share a plot imagining a future race war with Japan: facing an invasion after losses in the Philippines and Hawai‘i, the United States is forced to abandon white supremacy to win the support of Black soldiers.<sup>17</sup>

Remarkably, Etsuko Taketani has noted similar tropes in at least two other works of speculative fiction, written in the 1920s and 1930s by Japanese military officers, but here African American support proves crucial to the Japanese cause. In one untranslated novel, she explains, a fictional Marcus Garvey leads an uprising of ten million Black supporters after the invasion of a fearsome “Mother Plane, an airship that carries smaller airships and munitions in its bay.”<sup>18</sup> This image bears a striking resemblance to the Nation of Islam belief in a Mother Plane or Wheel, described by both Elijah Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan, that evokes both UFO folklore and the biblical vision of Ezekiel’s wheel (itself a point of identification between African American Christianity and African spiritual traditions<sup>19</sup>). As Farrakhan explained in a 1996 speech:

The Hon. Elijah Muhammad said that that wheel was built on the island of Nippon, which is now called Japan, by some of the original scientists. . . . He said there are 1,500 small wheels in this Mother Wheel, which is a half-mile by a half-mile. This Mother Wheel is like a small human built planet. Each one of these small planes carries three bombs.<sup>20</sup>



Mother Plane iconography exemplifies the pre–World War II Afro-Asianist lineage of postwar Afrofuturism, via visionary artists and intellectuals like Sun Ra and George Clinton. When the speculative fascination with imperial Japan as a champion of the darker races was no longer tenable, one element within it turned not to Maoism or other Asian powers but to outer space, in seeking to imagine a space beyond the reach of white world supremacy.

Put differently, the greater significance of African American fascination with Japanese power might lie not in its cultivation of a sophisticated collective geopolitical awareness but in the speculative realms it provided for imagining 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 Black sexualities, in the appropriated Orientalisms of Nella Larsen, Richard Bruce Nugent, and others. This work was eventually recovered and celebrated in the name of feminist or queer politics, but in its moment of production, its concerns with gender and sexual liberation were often articulated as a flight from normative conceptions of the political. In these cases, identifications with a more concrete “darker-races” or Afro-Asian internationalism, whose gender and sexual politics largely shared a civilizationist schema with white imperialisms, are avoided. Instead, the prospect of a space of difference beyond white supremacy, even though it must be accessed through appropriations of white Orientalist fantasy, enables the imagination of configurations of race, gender, and sexuality that elude uplift’s reach.

The 1904–5 Russo-Japanese War marked an epochal shift in the Black geopolitical imagination, expanding the transpacific horizons of African American cultural and political modernisms. Yet it had relatively little impact on the day-to-day lives of African Americans, and its consequences would not be fully apparent for decades. In the years 1900–10, the significance of Black transpacific culture can be seen more clearly in its other major aspect: Black participation in US transpacific colonialism, particularly in the Philippines.

### **Black Manhood in Imperial Service**

For African Americans in the twentieth century, the most significant pathway across the Pacific was through military service, in US imperial wars in Asia. The first in this long, unfinished series was the Philippine-American War, which involved all four Black regiments of the regular

army – the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry and the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, which traced their history to the end of the Civil War and had served in the Spanish-American War and fought Native Americans in the US West – as well as two new regiments of volunteers, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Infantry. The Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth arrived in the Philippines in July and August 1899, to be joined by the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth in January and February 1900; members of the Ninth (originally headed to fight the Boxer Rebellion in China) and Tenth arrived in September 1900 and May 1901.<sup>21</sup> After President Theodore Roosevelt presumptively declared an end to the war, the four units of regulars returned to the metropole between spring and autumn of 1902, a year after the volunteers' enlistments had ended – though some soldiers chose to remain in the colony after leaving the army.<sup>22</sup>

Following their initial service, 1910 census returns suggest that the Twenty-Fifth brought back the first Filipino recruits to the US Army on its assignment to Nebraska and Oklahoma Territory in June 1902.<sup>23</sup> The regiment was involved in the notorious incident at Brownsville, Texas, in 1906, when dubious accusations of violence leveled by an unwelcoming town led Roosevelt to dishonorably discharge 167 Black soldiers, including many veterans of the Philippines. Between 1906 and 1909, all four regiments of regulars returned to the colony: the Twenty-Fourth from 1906 to 1908, and again from 1912 to 1915; the Twenty-Fifth from 1907 to 1909, serving in Hawai'i from 1913 to 1918; and the Ninth and Tenth from 1907 to 1909, with the former returning during World War I.<sup>24</sup>

Although African American public opinion was highly critical of US imperial policy in the war, the participation of Black soldiers was typically seen as a separate matter – an opportunity both for individual professional advancement and for the demonstration of Black civilized manhood, understood as the basis of political rights. One exception was the militant Bishop Henry M. Turner, who asserted he “boil[ed] over with disgust” to think of Black soldiers “fighting to subjugate a people of their own color,” adding, “I can scarcely keep from saying that I hope the Filipinos will wipe such soldiers from the face of the earth.”<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, most Black critics of US policy saw no contradiction in supporting the Black soldiers, whom they viewed as earnestly fulfilling the benevolent spirit of uplift that white imperialism hypocritically proclaimed, but was too corrupt to uphold. Indeed, a running theme of African American accounts was an implicit or explicit contrast with white soldiers, in honor as well as valor: the soldiers' behavior toward vanquished enemies, sympathetic natives, and especially local women was as important as battlefield prowess in establishing civilized manhood.

The soldiers themselves left behind a remarkable body of first-person accounts of their service, mostly in the form of public letters to Black newspapers in the metropole.<sup>26</sup> In the absence of professional war correspondents, these letters provided African American communities with first-person accounts of the Philippines from a Black perspective – which, it went without saying, was presumed to be more accurate than a white American one. Predictably, such letters generally avoided questioning the war, though it was possible to express careful criticisms of US policies. In a letter in the September 30, 1899, *Richmond Planet*, Sergeant Major John W. Calloway of the Twenty-Fourth, a decorated veteran of the war in Cuba, admitted that “we black men are so much between the ‘Devil and the deep sea’ on the Philippine question, I fear I would not know what to say, should I attempt to scribble it.”<sup>27</sup> In a longer piece that November, he quoted “a wealthy Filipino planter,” Tomas Consunji, saying, “[W]e want Occidental ideas, but we want them taught to us by colored people.”<sup>28</sup>

That August, an unsigned letter to T. Thomas Fortune of the *New York Age*, reproduced in the October 14 *Planet* and in other Black newspapers and white anti-imperialist publications, went considerably further.<sup>29</sup> Drawing on his experience of moving “freely with the natives” and consulting “American colored men here in business . . . who have lived here for years,” the author admits the Filipinos “have a just grievance” – one met by US forces with “home treatment for colored peoples.” He recounts crimes by white soldiers that “colored soldiers would never countenance” – “desecrat[ing] church property,” grave-robbing, severing “a native woman’s arm in order to get a fine inlaid bracelet” – and bemoans their use of the slur “niggers” for Filipinos, for which they offer “some effeminate excuse” when confronted by their Black comrades. He concludes, “[I]f it were not for the 10,000,000 black people in the United States God alone knows on which side of this subject I would be.” In this letter, the contradiction of Black imperial military service, between duty to Negro uplift and fealty to a derelict Anglo-Saxon uplift, becomes nearly unbearable – “two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder”<sup>30</sup> – as the gendered terms of uplift, which demand the performance of normative manhood through moral rectitude, are made explicit.

Latter-day scholars frequently cite this letter, for the very reason that it was published anonymously: it goes as far as possible in contemplating switching sides in wartime, pulling back not out of loyalty to the nation but out of duty to the race back in the metropole. Similarly, outsized attention, contemporaneous and retrospective, has been given to the

handful of Black soldiers who actually crossed over to the Philippine side. The most famous, a teenaged corporal from the Twenty-Fourth named David Fagen, was promoted to captain in General Emilio Aguinaldo's forces and referred to as a general by the US press. Persisting in guerrilla warfare even after Aguinaldo's capture, Fagen bedeviled the US general Frederick Funston, whose desire to lynch him was well known; reports of his beheading by a Filipino hunter in December 1901 were questioned at the time and ever since. Fagen's own motivations are known only through conjecture, often from clearly unreliable sources, but his primary role has always been in legend.<sup>31</sup> In August 1901, for example, a brash young man calling himself Rube Thompson, arrested in Pasadena on allegations of bicycle theft, managed to befuddle authorities for weeks, at one point claiming to be the notorious rebel "John Fagens" himself.<sup>32</sup> As with Black transpacific culture generally, the greater consequence of Fagen's case is found in historical domains of the imagination.

Yet the concrete effects of fantasy and myth could be cruel, as Black soldiers surely knew. The front-page story on the edition of the *Richmond Planet* that included the anonymous letter reprinted a detective's report, commissioned by Ida B. Wells-Barnett, on the Georgia lynching of Sam Hose, or Samuel Wilkes, that April. The report refuted the widely circulated claim that Hose sexually assaulted the wife of Albert Cranford, his employer, whom he'd killed in self-defense in a pay dispute.<sup>33</sup> The lynching, which Du Bois often described as decisive in his transformation from an earnest social scientist to a militant political activist, was international news; exiled Filipino leaders in Hong Kong referenced Hose in composing propaganda targeting African American soldiers, which appeared in placards discovered by members of the Twenty-Fourth prior to Fagen's defection.<sup>34</sup> Following the uproar over Fagen, suspicion turned toward the aforementioned Sgt. Maj. Calloway, who had witnessed Fagen's enlistment<sup>35</sup> and whose loyalty was questioned by white officers based on his friendship with the Consunji family. Significantly, he was accused not of treason but of adultery – abandoning his legal wife to live with a Filipina. Acquitted of this, too, he was nonetheless demoted to private, dishonorably discharged, and deported to California.<sup>36</sup>

Despite such treatment, and their own ambivalence about the war, African American soldiers served in the Philippines with distinction. The most famous were Sergeant Major Horace Bivins of the Tenth Cavalry and Captain (later Colonel) Charles Young of the Ninth.<sup>37</sup> Also of historical significance was Walter H. Loving, who rose to major in the US Army and lieutenant colonel in its Philippine counterpart, and gained fame leading

the Philippine Constabulary Band at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition and the 1909 inaugural of President William H. Taft, a former governor-general of the Philippines. Loving, a close acquaintance of Taft, Theodore Roosevelt, and President Manuel Quezon, played a notable role in US military intelligence during World War I, investigating reports of sedition by and mistreatment of Black soldiers. He was killed by a retreating Japanese military in Manila in 1945.

To serve with distinction, however, was to live, kill, and risk death within the terrain of a contradiction, between racial and national consciousness, at the violently expanding frontier of imperialism's justice. Those who did not serve found it easier to evade, endorsing the call of Negro uplift – to mastery through violence and the firm moral guidance of one's racial subordinates – while dismissing its Anglo-Saxon variant as hopelessly corrupt. Yet the lived experience of Black soldiers – sometimes unbearable or impossible, sometimes unabashedly patriotic, but never, in any collective sense, uncritical – is crucial to the history of African Americans as imperial subjects, and all the contradictory forces they set in motion.

### **Competing Modernisms in Two Transpacific Circuits: Education and Entertainment**

In the estimation of the day, the most prominent Black intellectual to reside in the colony for a significant time was Theophilus Gould Steward, a prolific writer, polymath, American Negro Academy member, AME Church minister, academic, and longtime chaplain of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry. Steward published poetry, a novel, and influential works of theology and history, and regularly wrote for leading white and Black periodicals. During his Philippine service, he read and made acquaintance with Filipino intellectuals, gave public addresses, and served as superintendent of schools in Zambales Province, alongside his chaplaincy. His sons Charles and Frank also published notable writings on the Philippines. Frank, who took undergraduate and law degrees at Harvard, was a captain in the Forty-Ninth and a provost judge under the military occupation in Laguna. He published three fascinating stories in *Colored American Magazine* based on his experience, which were recently reprinted in *PMLA*.<sup>38</sup>

Theophilus Steward published his own three-part series in *Colored American Magazine*, “Two Years in Luzon,” in the November 1901, January–February 1902, and August 1902 issues – in between Frank's stories (September 1902 and March and October 1903) and an essay by Charles on “Manila and Its Opportunities” (August 1901).<sup>39</sup> Combining

memoir, travelogue, and social-scientific overview of the new colonial territory, Steward's series illuminates the key themes of Black transpacific culture in the Philippines and addresses two circuits, of education and popular entertainment, that, with military service, dominated African American transpacific transits. In part I, "Filipino Characteristics," he briefly introduces Manila and its environs, with reference to etymology, literature, natural history, and the built environment, before moving to his primary concern – the Philippine family, morality, and marriage practices. Tellingly, he concludes by reassuring his readers that, while African American soldiers have begun marrying native women, the race's reputation for upstanding husbands will remain intact.

Part II, "Examining Schools, Etc.," describes his travels beyond Manila, incorporating bits of local color – one anecdote concerns an expensive hat he indulges himself in buying, upon which a monkey commits "depredations . . . too numerous to mention" (165). But this installment centers on his experiences as a provincial school superintendent and his vigorous, effective efforts to advance education, which was meant to be US imperialism's signature reform. In part III, "Preparations for Civil Government," he addresses the state of Philippine education more systematically and analytically, alongside politics, the economy, and agriculture, bemoaning the outdated approaches of the Spanish colonial regime and attesting to the Filipinos' great potential for development, with proper tutelage. Steward's views of the teachers and students he is charged with uplifting are generally favorable, emphasizing their earnest, eager, and obedient ways, although his appreciation turned to mild horror when a teacher asks three boys, all barefoot and under eight, to "sing American" – by performing a "minstrel dance" along to "Hello Ma Baby" (part II, 167–8). Better known nowadays as an expurgated novelty sung by a cartoon frog, this well-known "coon song" featured lyrics about a Black man's enthusiasm for a romance conducted entirely by telephone – satirically addressing white anxieties over modernization by juxtaposing new technology with comical primitive stereotypes. Steward's discomfort, he suggests, lies not merely with the song's racism, which seems to fly over the Filipinos' heads, but with the deficiency of *American* popular culture, by contrast with uplifting European high art: "These same little boys had just sung elevating music, almost startlingly refined, that they had learned from the Spanish, and here was their idea of American music and song!" (168).

Both of these concerns – a systematic, up-to-date approach to education as the means to uplift, and globalizing forms of popular entertainment, fueled by a desire for US Blackness – were central to emerging modernist

conceptions of Black culture. And both had been plugged in to transpacific circuits well before the war began. The Tuskegee model of industrial education championed by Booker T. Washington extended the theories of his Hampton mentor, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, who drew on his experiences as the child of US missionary educators in the kingdom of Hawai'i. Hampton used its connections to send graduates to teach there after US annexation, including Helen James (Chisholm), aunt of the novelist Ann Petry.<sup>40</sup> In the Philippines, lingering grievances with Spanish colonial education, long articulated by *ilustrado* nationalists such as José Rizal, shaped US colonialism's pursuit of ideological legitimacy.<sup>41</sup> Thus, a 1904 Bureau of Insular Affairs pamphlet asserts that "the entire governmental structure erected in the islands is itself a school," whose curriculum was "American methods of government."<sup>42</sup> Frederick Atkinson, the first Philippine superintendent of education under US rule, wrote to Booker T. Washington in April 1900 seeking advice, and toured Tuskegee and Hampton in May.<sup>43</sup> He reported favorably on their educational model to the Philippine Commission, and Washington followed up with the War Department in 1901, looking to place Tuskegee alumni in positions in the colony.<sup>44</sup>

Opposition to the Tuskegee model was ably represented in the colony as well. In 1902, John Henry Manning Butler, a recent arrival in Zambales from North Carolina, wrote discreetly to Washington's rival, Du Bois, to express concerns about the industrial school graduates' academic qualifications, and asked Du Bois to forward copies of his own writings on education and racial uplift to the Department of Education in Manila.<sup>45</sup> Butler went on to a long, distinguished career as a teacher, provincial superintendent, and professor of education in the colony, publishing locally and in Black scholarly journals in the United States, before dying during the Japanese occupation. His obituary appeared in the April 1945 issue of Carter G. Woodson's *Journal of Negro History*.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, the great historian was himself a former colonial educator in the Philippines. Arriving in 1903 as a schoolteacher in San Isidro, Woodson taught himself Spanish and was promoted to supervisor of schools, directing teacher training in Pangasinan. Though he left for health reasons three years later, he was still pursuing a return as late as 1909, after he had begun his PhD at Harvard.<sup>47</sup> In his 1933 classic, *The Mis-education of the Negro*, he alluded to his experiences in colonial education, comparing them favorably with African American schooling.<sup>48</sup> Decades later, the diplomat and scholar Renato Constantino published an influential essay, "The Mis-education of the Filipino," which shared much of Woodson's critiques of education while drawing opposite conclusions about the US regime.<sup>49</sup>

Like turn-of-the-century debates over education and racial uplift, questions about Black participation in US popular entertainment also had earlier transpacific connections. Matthew Wittman has identified a “Pacific circuit” extending from the US culture industry since the mid-1800s, centering partly on minstrelsy, and offering significant opportunities for African American performers and troupes in the century’s later decades.<sup>50</sup> Gary Okihiro has called attention to parallels, convergences, and reciprocal relations between African American and Hawaiian musics, noting the latter’s immense popularity in the 1910s and 1920s, and that early sheet music marketed it as “coon songs” or “oriental coon songs.”<sup>51</sup> Its influence can be seen in W. C. Handy’s famous origin story for the blues. Handy claimed he’d learned the style from an anonymous passenger on a Mississippi train platform in 1903, who played the guitar with a knife on the strings “in a manner popularized by Hawaiian guitarists who used steel bars.”<sup>52</sup>

The distinction between Black-themed popular entertainment and uplift recurs in a remarkable 1927 letter to Du Bois addressing the Negro vogue in Harlem.<sup>53</sup> The author, a *Crisis* subscriber in Manila, was one J. W. Calloway – the same Sgt. Maj. Calloway who’d been deported after false charges of disloyalty and adultery a quarter-century earlier! Determined to rejoin his wife, Mamerta de la Rosa, and their growing family, and eager to clear his reputation, he slipped back into the colony, was imprisoned and deported a second time, but eventually returned for good, maintaining a futile correspondence with US authorities for several years. He was occasionally referenced among leading African Americans in the Philippines by the Black press and received a respectful obituary in the *Manila Tribune* in April 1934.<sup>54</sup> Many of his descendants eventually returned to the metropole, including his daughter Maggie, a performer and film actor in Manila, Shanghai, and the United States. His grandson and namesake is currently active as a Latin jazz performer and prominent educator in San Francisco.

In his letter, Calloway points out that the “splendid attention on the stage” for Black performers in the United States is a “vogue” extending to “Europe and the Orient”: “Even Russian artists in the Orient use his mode rather than their own. . . . The Charleston, Black Bottom and so on, are the rage from Tokyo to Peking and Harbin to Batavia; [f]rom London, Paris and Madrid to Hong-Kong and Manila” (1). Though he acknowledges some pride in this interest, he prefers to leverage it “to advertise [the Negro] in his true light” (1). Specifically, he suggests that Du Bois himself take the lead, assisted by “the ablest musicians of the race,” in creating a serious opera. He provides a detailed, three-act sketch for his proposal,



which covers the whole of African American history, in an uplifting alternative to “the surfeit of sordid city alley life which the silly jazz ditties of the present pour out to the world as a reflection of the Negro self” (2). This ambition parallels the desire of the narrator of James Weldon Johnson’s *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* to uplift ragtime by transforming it into classical music.<sup>55</sup> Unbeknownst to Calloway, this generational political aesthetic of respectability was already driving conflict between Du Bois and the younger members of his Krigwa theater group.

Johnson’s own early theatrical career marks an important shift in these transpacific circuits. *The Shoo-Fly Regiment*, a groundbreaking 1906 musical he cowrote with his brother Rosamond and Bob Cole, followed the adventures of graduates from the fictional southern Lincolnville Institute as soldiers in the Philippines.<sup>56</sup> It played on Broadway while the four Black Army regiments were serving a second tour in the colony, and was part of a fad of similarly themed productions in the decade after Black soldiers first arrived in the Philippines, including works by Black Patti’s Troubadours, the Pekin Stock Company, and lesser-known troupes.

A deep engagement with transpacific imperialism was central to Johnson’s ambitions in musical theater.<sup>57</sup> His first major work of “comic opera” was begun with Rosamond in Jacksonville in 1899 and brought to New York as a calling-card for their attempt to break into the industry. With their new partner, Cole, the brothers repeatedly revised it under new names – *The Royal Document*, *Toloso* or *Tolosa*, *The Fakir*, *The Czar of Czam* – but retained a central theme, satirizing the new US imperialism on a fictional Pacific island kingdom that resembles Hawai‘i and alludes to the Philippines.<sup>58</sup> More than a decade later, the brothers drew on Johnson’s experiences as consul in Nicaragua for another unproduced project, *El Presidente; or, The Yellow Peril*, which satirized US and Japanese machinations in an effort to build a preemptive competitor to the Panama Canal.

While further research is needed on Johnson’s theatrical writings and on Philippine and Hawaiian themes in early twentieth-century Black popular culture generally, it is clear that Johnson was not alone in associating the new transpacific imperialism, viewed through a sophisticated, sardonic African American lens, with new creative and professional opportunities for Black artists and entrepreneurs. The new century, it seemed, offered unprecedented chances for all those worldly and ambitious types prepared to seize them – a modernist vision linking African American participation in popular entertainment and transpacific imperialism.

Yet aligning these opportunities with the more “elevating” forms of high culture, as Theophilus Steward, John W. Calloway, and Johnson himself

suggested, remained a problem. New scholarship in popular culture might complement the small, growing body of work by Murphy, Greusser, Jennifer James, James Robert Payne, and others on the presence of transpacific imperialism in novels, fiction, and poetry by writers such as Sutton Griggs, Frank Steward, James McGirt, and F. Grant Gilmore. Moving forward, it might consider later theatrical works, straddling literature and popular entertainment, like Alice Dunbar-Nelson's *An Hawaiian Idyll*, written for a production at Howard High School in Wilmington, Delaware, and Eulalie Spence's 1927 *Her*, a play involving an African American veteran-turned-landlord and the ghost of his Filipina war bride.<sup>59</sup> Placing these literary and cultural texts together would reveal how the question of the American Negro imperial subject helped mediate the generationally marked conflicts of Renaissance-era African American literary and cultural history, between "elevating," tutelary attachments to high art and uplift politics, on one hand, and the scandalizing products of modernist artists and popular entertainers, on the other.

### **Emigration Schemes and the Migratory Imagination**

Histories of migration are understandably predisposed to emphasize large-scale permanent resettlement over smaller, transitory movements, like those of Black soldiers and colonial educators, and over speculative possibilities, which may seem more preposterous in retrospect than in their time. While the years 1900–10 might seem like a pause in the long series of migrations constituting African American and diasporic histories, the real and imagined transpacific movements of Black people during these years pointed forward to the Great Migrations soon to come.

In fact, the colonization of the Philippines gave rise to serious proposals for African American emigration. These developed from different interests and vantages, taking distinct, often bitterly opposed forms. One might identify five types of migration schemes, beginning with two varieties focused on a growing Black middle class. First came small numbers of soldiers, like Calloway and Loving, and colonial officials like Butler (and, briefly, Woodson), who formed personal or professional attachments that led to indefinite or permanent settlement. This group established the pattern for a second, larger, more intentional intra-imperial migration, of enterprising young professionals and entrepreneurs, shaped by new educational opportunities for African Americans, who saw opportunity in a rapidly modernizing world. This form of migration, advocated by the academic W. S. Scarborough in *The Forum* and *Southern Workman* and

by Charles Steward in *Colored American Magazine*, generally followed the terms Calloway proposed in his December 30, 1899, missive in the *Richmond Planet*: ambitious African Americans, impatient with the pace of uplift at home, could seek their fortunes in the colony, where a favorably disposed but less advanced population needed their tutelage.<sup>60</sup> While these appeals found some eager audiences, their greater historical consequence lies more in their circulation than in the number of readers who actually took up the suggestion – not in the fact but in the fancy, as Du Bois might have put it.

However, the arguments for small-scale settlement, by veterans and educators or by professionals and entrepreneurs, were quickly drowned out by three additional schemes for migration on a mass scale. One simply reoriented the old diasporic dream of collective return, whose desire for a homeland on the African continent had sometimes alighted on alternatives in Cuba, Puerto Rico, or Haiti before Hawai'i and the Philippines.<sup>61</sup> Like other diasporic dreams of a homeland, this tradition has had powerful historical consequences as an act of liberatory imagination but may not be realizable outside of settler colonialism. In *Souls*, Du Bois offered a deft and visionary critique of emigration by citing US imperialism as evidence: “nothing has more effectually made this programme seem hopeless than the recent course of the United States toward weaker and darker peoples in the West Indies, Hawaii, and the Philippines, – for where in the world can we go and be safe from lying and brute force?”<sup>62</sup> At the century's dawn, it was already too late for the dream of a homeland: any emigration of African Americans would, of itself, demonstrate the global reach of the Western imperialism it aspired to escape.

Emigration schemes of this type often featured an unexpected convergence of interests between militant Black leaders like Bishop Turner (who rejected geographical alternatives to an African homeland) and white supremacists, who dreamed of deporting all African Americans. This provided cover for a fourth model, which envisioned a mass Black exodus from the South to the Philippines. Its determined advocacy by Alabama Senator John Tyler Morgan led to congressional hearings in 1902 and a separate formal report, commissioned by the secretary of war and written by George W. Davis, commander of the Department of Mindanao. Neither proved favorable to Morgan's proposals, but later that year President Roosevelt sent the journalist T. Thomas Fortune on a fact-finding tour of Hawai'i and the Philippines.

Like the unrealized dreams of a Black homeland, the consequences of the white supremacist fantasy of deportation lie mainly in its imaginative

circulation, but Brigadier General Davis's report reveals a fifth, more practical alternative: an organized traffic in racialized labor. Dismissing Senator Morgan's proposals, Davis floated his own scheme, to establish a sugar industry by importing Black labor from Louisiana, under a contract system modeled on the British intra-imperial traffic in "East Indies coolies," echoing contemporaneous plans by planters in Hawai'i to recruit Black workers.<sup>63</sup> Unlikely as this proposal seems in retrospect, the precedents Davis cites show it was hardly unthinkable. The importation of racialized labor, a persistent feature of colonial economic development, continued on in Hawai'i, and the heavy shadow of chattel slavery and the Middle Passage on US empire manifested in ever-evolving forms of unfreedom with which the southern Black peasantry was already familiar.

Fortune's official trip to the Philippines was ill-starred from the beginning. Rivals had derailed his hopes for a diplomatic post, preferably ambassador to Haiti, as a reward for supporting Roosevelt's election in 1900. As a poor consolation prize, his temporary transpacific appointment suggested that emigration was not being taken too seriously.<sup>64</sup> He faced immediate criticism, in the white and Black presses, on its announcement, and again on his return, when the prospects for emigration had already dimmed.<sup>65</sup> While he was away, the *Colored American Magazine* published a thorough critique of Morgan's plan by Rienzi B. Lemus, a soldier of the Twenty-Fifth, whose letters had appeared alongside Calloway's in the *Richmond Planet* and who became a labor leader and journalist in the decades after the war.<sup>66</sup> By the time Fortune published "The Filipino," a three-part travelogue, in *Voice of the Negro* in 1904, the schemes were sufficiently discredited to warrant only a half-hearted mention at the series' end.<sup>67</sup>

Even so, the journal printed a response to the proposal a few months later, by one of Du Bois's star students from Atlanta University, Harry H. Pace. Rejecting mass emigration schemes entirely, he dismissed Morgan, Fortune, and Turner with an appeal to consensus: "Whether the advocate of emigration be white or black, editor or bishop, the majority of thinking people of both races have already concluded that the masses of the Negro people will, for a long time to come, live in the South, and that it is best that they should."<sup>68</sup> Scarborough, for one, had rejected this consensus, identifying "the assumption that the Negro is always to remain in the South" as "an assumption without an adequate basis of fact."<sup>69</sup> In the coming decades, Pace's masses would come to their own conclusions, proving him wrong and Scarborough right.

As Alain Locke would explain twenty years later in *The New Negro*, the agency of the "migrating peasant" proved epochal, even as the southern

educated class lagged behind.<sup>70</sup> Taking this agency seriously, as a protagonist of a so-called Negro Renaissance much larger than Harlem, allows one to read the debates over Philippine colonial settlement as speculative rehearsals for the coming Great Migration. The dawning century, as Pace's teacher Du Bois foretold, was one of unprecedented opportunities, and the southern Black masses, on their way to knowing themselves in and through movement, were waiting to seize them. An entrepreneur and committed race man, Pace himself would follow their lead, founding the first major Black-owned record company, Black Swan, noted for classical music and spirituals, along with blues and jazz sides by Ethel Waters, Alberta Hunter, and Fletcher Henderson. During its brief but influential existence, the company reportedly maintained active sales agents as far as the Philippines, and even issued some recordings of Hawaiian music.<sup>71</sup>

In 1910, so much remained to be written. If – to indulge in a bit of Du Boisian fancy – the African American migratory imagination was still mostly slumbering, in preparation for the busy decades to come, it had long since moved on from fitful dreams of a homeland across the Pacific. After a decade, the early returns on Du Bois's prophecy were looking strong, but the unpredictable dynamics along the color line had yet to be played out, and the movements of an Afro-Asian future were slumbering too. It would still be years before an Alain Locke might write, "We have not been watching in the right direction; set North and South on a sectional axis, we have not noticed the East until the sun has us blinking."<sup>72</sup> Of course, in that passage from *The New Negro*, Locke was not referring to *that* "East." But – so much remains to be written! – perhaps he should have been.

### Notes

- 1 David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: The Biography of a Race, 1868–1919* (New York: Henry Holt, 1993), 227–8.
- 2 See Vince Schleitwiler, *Strange Fruit of the Black Pacific: Imperialism's Racial Justice and Its Fugitives* (New York: New York University Press, 2017), chapter 1.
- 3 See Willard B. Gatewood Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898–1903* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975), chapter 9.
- 4 Published the following year as W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Present Outlook for the Dark Races of Mankind," *Church Review* 17, no. 2 (October 1900): 95–110. Subsequent references will be to this version, cited parenthetically in the text. A reprint appears in an invaluable collection of Du Bois's early work, *The Problem of the Color Line at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*:

- The Essential Early Essays*, ed. Nahum Dimitri Chandler (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 111–37.
- 5 A close reading of the text reveals that this formulation refers to world-historical time measured in centuries; only a “world” problem could qualify as the problem of a century.
  - 6 Gen. James Rusling, “Interview with President William McKinley,” in *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance*, ed. Daniel B. Schirmer and Stephen Rosskam Shalom (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1987): 22–3.
  - 7 Cf. Andrew F. Jones and Nikhil Pal Singh, eds., *The Afro-Asian Century*, special issue, *positions* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 1–260.
  - 8 Robin D. G. Kelley and Betsy Esch, “Black like Mao: Red China and Black Revolution,” *Souls* 1, no. 4 (Fall 1999): 6–41, 8; see also Robeson Taj Frazier, *The East Is Black: Cold War China in the Black Radical Imagination* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).
  - 9 W. E. B. Du Bois, “Atlanta University,” in *From Servitude to Service: Being the Old South Lectures on the History and Work of Southern Institutions for the Education of the Negro* (Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1905), 155–97, 197; Du Bois, “The Color Line Belts the World,” in *W. E. B. Du Bois on Asia: Crossing the World Color Line*, ed. Bill V. Mullen and Cathryn Watson (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 33–4.
  - 10 James Baldwin, “Stranger in the Village,” in *Collected Essays* (New York: Library of America, 1998), 117–29, 129.
  - 11 Reginald Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese: Solidarity or Sedition?* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 18–38.
  - 12 *Ibid.*, 14–16.
  - 13 On the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, see Yuichiro Onishi, *Transpacific Antiracism: Afro-Asian Solidarity in 20th-Century Black America, Japan, and Okinawa* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).
  - 14 See Ernest V. Allen, “Waiting for Tojo: The Pro-Japan Vigil of Black Missourians, 1932–1943,” *Gateway Heritage* (Fall 1995): 38–55; Allen, “When Japan Was ‘Champion of the Darker Races’: Satokata Takahashi and the Flowering of Black Messianic Nationalism,” *Black Scholar* 24, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 23–46; Keisha N. Blain, “[F]or the Rights of Dark People in Every Part of the World’: Pearl Sherrod, Black Internationalist Feminism, and Afro-Asian Politics during the 1930s,” *Souls* 17, nos. 1–2 (January–June 2015): 90–112.
  - 15 The Negro Commission, National Committee, Communist Party USA, *Is Japan the Champion of the Darker Races? The Negro’s Stake in Democracy* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1938).
  - 16 See Allen, “When Japan.”
  - 17 John Edward Bruce, “The Call of a Nation,” in *The Selected Writings of John Edward Bruce: Militant Black Journalist*, ed. Peter Gilbert (New York: Arno, 1971), 99–100; James D. Corrothers, “A Man They Didn’t Know” (Part I), *The Crisis* 7, no. 2 (December 1913): 85–7; “A Man They Didn’t Know” (Part II), *The Crisis* 7, no. 3 (January 1914): 136–8.

- 18 Etsuko Taketani, *The Black Pacific Narrative: Geographic Imaginings of Race and Empire between the World Wars* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth University Press, 2014), 16.
- 19 See, e.g., John Noble Wilford, "Ezekiel's Wheel Ties African Spiritual Traditions to Christianity," *New York Times*, November 7, 2016.
- 20 Louis Farrakhan, "The Divine Destruction of America: Can She Avert It?," *The Final Call*, accessed June 30, 2017, [www.finalcall.com/artman/publish/Minister\\_Louis\\_Farrakhan\\_9/article\\_7595.shtml](http://www.finalcall.com/artman/publish/Minister_Louis_Farrakhan_9/article_7595.shtml); cf. Farrakhan, "The Divine Destruction of America (Can She Avert It) Pt. 2," YouTube video, 46:47–49:06; posted March 28, 2015, <http://youtu.be/wRq6meab4Ww?t=2806>; cf. Allan, "When Japan," 25.
- 21 Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 262.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 292, 262.
- 23 Quintard Taylor Jr., "Introduction to the Bison Books Edition," in John H. Nankivell, *Buffalo Soldier Regiment: History of the Twenty-Fifth United States Infantry, 1869–1926* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), ix–xxiv, xviii.
- 24 Frank Schubert, "24th Infantry Regiment (1866–1951)," "25th Infantry Regiment (1866–1947)," "9th Cavalry Regiment (1866–1944)," "10th Cavalry Regiment (1866–1944)," *African American History in the American West*, BlackPast.org, accessed June 30, 2017, [www.blackpast.org/aaw/african-american-history-american-west](http://www.blackpast.org/aaw/african-american-history-american-west).
- 25 Qtd. in John Cullen Gruesser, *The Empire Abroad and the Empire at Home: African American Literature and the Era of Overseas Expansion* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 15.
- 26 Many are now available in searchable newspaper databases, but Willard Gatewood's collection, *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Black Soldiers, 1898–1902* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1987), remains invaluable.
- 27 "Colored Troops in the Philippines. Virginia Soldiers Write to Us," *Richmond Planet* 16, no. 42 (September 30, 1899): 1.
- 28 "Voices from the Philippines. Colored Troops on Duty – Opinions of the Natives," *Richmond Planet* 17, no. 3 (December 30, 1899): 1.
- 29 The *Planet* version, "Terrible Scenes There," *Richmond Planet* 16, no. 44 (October 14, 1899): 4, matches the version in Gatewood's *"Smoked Yankees,"* 279, transcribed from the May 17, 1900, *Wisconsin Weekly Advocate*. A slightly longer excerpt appears as "From a Colored Soldier in Manila," in the October 14, 1899, issue of *The Public* (Chicago), edited by the white anti-imperialist Louis Freeland Post, citing the October 5 *New York Age* but retaining an August 11 date for the letter. Archives for the *Age* in this period are not extant.
- 30 The italicized passage is from Du Bois's famous description of double consciousness in W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, in *Writings*, Library of America 34 (New York: Viking, 1986), 364–5, which refers to the very contradiction between American Negro racial and national identification at issue here.

- 31 Michael C. Robinson and Frank N. Schubert, "David Fagen: An Afro-American Rebel in the Philippines, 1899–1901," *Pacific Historical Review* 44, no. 1 (February 1975): 68–83; Schubert, "Seeking David Fagen: The Search for a Black Rebel's Florida Roots," *Tampa Bay History* 22 (2008): 19–33.
- 32 Though he got most of the names wrong, his confession demonstrated a detailed awareness of Fagen's publicly reported exploits, and an expectation that local authorities would know them as well. The historian Timothy Russell, who tracked down this story, verified that the U.S. Army Quartermaster in Manila employed a "Reuben Thompson" as a teamster from November 1899 to April 1900 – though this identity could have been appropriated, too. See Timothy Dale Russell, "African Americans and the Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection: Military Participation, Recognition, and Memory, 1898–1904" (PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 2013).
- 33 Louis P. Le Vin, "The Detective's Report. The Georgia Burning. – Sam Hose Not Guilty of Rape," *Richmond Planet* 16, no. 44 (October 14, 1899): 1.
- 34 See W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept*, in *Writings*, 602–3; the placard, widely discussed, is reproduced from US military records in Cynthia L. Marasigan, "'Between the Devil and the Deep Sea': Ambivalence, Violence, and African American Soldiers in the Philippine-American War and Its Aftermath" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2010), 67.
- 35 Schubert, "Seeking David Fagen," 27
- 36 Scot Brown, "White Backlash and the Aftermath of Fagen's Rebellion: The Fates of Three African-American Soldiers in the Philippines, 1901–1902," *Contributions in Black Studies* 13, no. 5 (1995/6): 165–73; Gill H. Boehringer, "Imperialist Paranoia and Military Injustice: The Persecution and Redemption of Sergeant Calloway," *Dialogue21.com*, accessed June 30, 2017, <http://dialogue21.com/vb/showthread.php?t=7000>.
- 37 Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 274.
- 38 Frank R. Steward, "Pepe's Anting-Anting: A Tale of Laguna," *Colored American Magazine* 5, no. 5 (September 1902): 358–62; "'Starlik': A Tale of Laguna," *Colored American Magazine* 6, no. 5 (March 1903): 387–91; "The Men Who Prey," *Colored American Magazine* 6, no. 10 (October 1903): 720–4; "Three Stories," ed. Gretchen Murphy and John Cullen Greusser, *PMLA* 126, no. 3 (May 2011): 784–97.
- 39 Theophilus G. Steward, "Two Years in Luzon: I. Filipino Characteristics," *Colored American Magazine* 4, no. 1 (November 1901): 4–10; "Two Years in Luzon: II. Examining Schools, Etc," *Colored American Magazine* 4, no. 3 (January–February 1902): 164–70; "Two Years in Luzon: III. Preparations for Civil Government," *Colored American Magazine* 5, no. 4 (August 1902): 244–9; Charles Steward, "Manila and Its Opportunities," *Colored American Magazine* 3, no. 4 (August 1901): 248–56. Theophilus Steward's series is hereafter cited in the text.



- 40 See Gary Y. Okihiro, "Afterword: Toward a Black Pacific," in *AfroAsian Encounters: Culture, History, Politics*, ed. Heike Raphael-Hernandez and Shannon Steen (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 313–30. Okihiro writes suggestively on Armstrong's upbringing and lifelong association of Hawaiians and African Americans (319–22) and finds, in his writings, evidence of native Hawaiian soldiers in Black Civil War regiments (321). On Petry, see Elisabeth Petry, *Can Anything Beat White? A Black Family's Letters* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005).
- 41 Education in the metropole and elsewhere in Europe was central to the formation of *ilustrado* nationalists like Rizal, the legendary novelist, physician, and polymath, whose prior execution by Spain meant that, under US rule, both colonizer and colonized could celebrate him as the father of the Philippine nation. Both Theophilus and Frank Steward thoughtfully cite Rizal, as would be customary for any informed writer at the time.
- 42 *What Has Been Done in the Philippines: A Record of Practical Accomplishments under Civil Government*, Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Dept. (1904), rpt. in *African American Perspectives: Pamphlets from the Daniel A. P. Murray Collection, 1818–1917*, accessed June 30, 2017, [www.loc.gov/item/o4022314/](http://www.loc.gov/item/o4022314/), 20. The eminent Black librarian Daniel Murray included this document in his collection, now on the Library of Congress's American Memory website.
- 43 "The Training of Teachers," *Southern Workman* 29, no. 7 (July 1900): 390, and "Hampton Incidents," *Southern Workman* 29, no. 8 (August 1900): 490–2. The latter issue also featured an article on Hawaiian education.
- 44 Paul A. Kramer, "Jim Crow Science and the 'Negro Problem' in the Occupied Philippines, 1898–1914," in *Race Consciousness: African-American Studies for the New Century*, ed. Judith Jackson Fossett and Jeffrey A. Tucker (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 227–46, 234–5; Jacqueline Goggin, *Carter G. Woodson: A Life in Black History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 17.
- 45 John H. Manning Butler, Letter from [J.] H. M. Butler to W. E. B. Du Bois, August 28, 1902. MS, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers 312. Spec. Coll. and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Library. *Credo*, SCUA UMass, accessed July 30, 2017, <http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b001-i346>.
- 46 [Carter G. Woodson], "John Henry Manning Butler," *Journal of Negro History* 30, no. 2 (April 1945): 243–4.
- 47 Goggin, *Carter G. Woodson*, 16–23; see also Steffi San Buenaventura, "The Colors of Manifest Destiny: Filipinos and the American Other(s)," *Amerasia Journal* 24, no. 3 (Winter 1998): 1–26, 19–20.
- 48 Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-education of the Negro* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2005), 98–9.
- 49 Renato Constantino, "The Miseducation of the Filipino," in *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899–1999*, ed. Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 177–92.

- 50 Matthew W. Wittmann, "Empire of Culture: U.S. Entertainers and the Making of the Pacific Circuit, 1850–1890" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2010).
- 51 Okihiro, "Afterword," 323.
- 52 Qtd in Bryan Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace: Black Culture and the Police Power after Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 26.
- 53 J[ohn W.] Calloway, Letter from J. Calloway to W. E. B. Du Bois, November 14, 1927, MS, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers 312. Spec. Coll. and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Library. *Credo*, SCUA UMass, accessed July 30, 2017, <http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b037-i324>. Hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.
- 54 Orsenio Gonzalez, "Philippine Islands: Tribute to Frederick Douglass," *Washington Bee* 32, no. 40 (March 9, 1912): 1; John F. Cragwell, "Race Men in the Philippine Islands on Top," *Topeka Plaindealer* 23, no. 40 (October 7, 1921): 1 (reprinting from the *Seattle Enterprise*); Boehringer, "Imperialist Paranoia."
- 55 Calloway's letter does also show evidence of a sensibility shaped by decades in the Philippines. For example, he asserts that "a people so gifted in bringing to one joy must also possess the gift to make one cry" (2), an attitude toward tragedy that runs counter to a African American critique of racial representation that considers the audience's tears no less demeaning than their laughter. See, e.g., James Weldon Johnson's famous dismissal of dialect poetry in his 1921 *Book of American Negro Poetry* as "an instrument with but two full stops, humor and pathos," in Johnson, *Writings* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 713.
- 56 Paula Moore Seniors has reconstructed the lost play's plot from extant reviews in *Beyond "Lift Every Voice and Sing": The Culture of Uplift, Identity, and Politics in Black Musical Theater* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009). See also John Cullen Greusser, *The Empire abroad and the Empire at Home: African American Literature and the Era of Overseas Expansion* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).
- 57 On Johnson's unproduced plays, I rely on Greusser's analyses in *The Empire Abroad*, chapter 4. See also Lori Lynne Brooks, "The Negro in the New World: The Cultural Politics of Race, Nation and Empire, 1885–1911" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2001), and Johnson, *Along This Way*, in *Writings*, 125–604.
- 58 As Johnson noted, the white humorist George Ade had success with a similar play, *The Sultan of Sulu*, shortly afterward.
- 59 See Jennifer C. James, *A Freedom Bought with Blood: African American War Literature from the Civil War to World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); and James Robert Payne, "Afro-American Literature of the Spanish-American War," *MELUS* 10, no. 3 (Autumn 1983): 19–32. On Dunbar-Nelson, see Lurana Donnels O'Malley, "Alice Dunbar-Nelson's 'An Hawaiian Idyll' as Hawaiian Imaginary," *Comparative Drama* 47, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 1–30. Wallace Thurman's 1929 novel *The*

- Blacker the Berry* also features a mixed-race Filipino character. I consider the romance plot in early African American literature on the Philippines, and read Spence's play alongside a Philippine reference in Robert Johnson's 1936 blues standard, "I Believe I'll Dust My Broom," in Schleitwiler, *Strange Fruit*, 93–8, 152–66.
- 60 W[illiam] S. Scarborough, "The Negro and Our New Possessions," *Forum* 31, no. 3 (May 1901): 341–9; Scarborough, "Our New Possessions – An Open Door," *Southern Workman* 29, no. 7 (July 1900): 422–7; Charles Steward, "Manila"; [Calloway], "Voices from the Philippines."
- 61 Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 295.
- 62 Du Bois, *Souls*, in *Writings*, 399–400.
- 63 For a reprint of the report (with the quote on p. 73), see Joseph O. Baylen and John Hammond Moore, "Senator John Tyler Morgan and Negro Colonization in the Philippines, 1901 to 1902," *Phylon* 29, no. 1 (1st Qtr. 1968): 65–75. On Hawai'i, see Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 298–300.
- 64 See Emma Lou Thornbrough, *T. Thomas Fortune: Militant Journalist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 222–3; Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 307.
- 65 Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 307–8; Thornbrough, *T. Thomas Fortune*, 235; "T. Thomas Fortune's Philippine Appointment," *New York Times*, November 30, 1902; "Labor Problems in Hawaii," *Washington Post*, December 26, 1902; Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 316–17.
- 66 Rienzi B. Lemus, "The Negro and the Philippines," *Colored American Magazine* 6, no. 4 (February 1903): 314–18.
- 67 Nonetheless, Fortune's series is fascinating reading – elegant, engaging, and corrupt. See Schleitwiler, *Strange Fruit*, 122–8.
- 68 Harry H. Pace, "The Philippine Islands and the American Negro," *Voice of the Negro* 1, no. 10 (October 1904): 482–5, 485.
- 69 Scarborough, "The Negro," 341.
- 70 Alain Locke, ed., *The New Negro* (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 7.
- 71 See David Suisman, "Co-workers in the Kingdom of Culture: Black Swan Records and the Political Economy of African American Music," *Journal of American History* 90, no. 4 (March 2004): 1295–324. 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. If the Hawaiian sides were among them, this still suggests some hope of a market for Black-performed Hawaiian music.
- 72 Locke, *The New Negro*, 4.