

War Archive

Some stories are too complicated, too dear to tell with elegance. On the afternoon of June 18, 2006, Chanel Petro-Nixon, a sixteen-year-old eleventh grader at Brooklyn's sprawling Boys and Girls High School, left her home in Bedford-Stuyvesant to apply for a job at a local Applebee's restaurant. Her body was found four days later stuffed into a trash bag and dumped in front of 212 Kingston Avenue in the adjacent neighborhood of Crown Heights. The girl was a casualty of war. She left home a typical Brooklyn teenager, with processed hair and a face full of red and brown possibility, only to be caught in one of the many snares systematically laid for the weak and unwary. Was she murdered for her trainers, her phone, her sex? A broken body left on the side of a busy city street, Chanel's corpse represented a stunningly efficient closure of a key circuit within Atlantic society and culture. Like her lost, nameless, and long-forgotten ancestors, the girl was refuse, a creature whose gender, class, and color established her as "only flesh," an entity indistinguishable from her use value. No one was shocked that she was killed, only that the killing was so uneconomical and messy. To attach blame to something as common and expected as the murder of a black girl would be a far too gummy, much too sentimental procedure. The angel of history turns its bemused face in our direction, stunned by the clumsy vigor with which we mourn the ever-increasing detritus. How strange, how profoundly impotent, to pick through reeking mountains of trash, vainly seeking redemption in hastily discarded relics.

This is an essay about war. It is a necessarily confused meditation on the peculiar ways systematic violence against humans is narrated in the liberal communications industries of the United States and Europe. It is a shocked articulation of the blatantly apparent gender, race, and class biases that attend these narratives. Every day, ships and planes embark from the shores of my country loaded with men and hardware ever ready to release breathtaking violence against real and imagined threats

to what we name "our way of life." This, we are told, is war, the sovereign practice of Man. At home the violence is just as omnipresent but never so spectacularly or ostentatiously celebrated. The beatings, shootings, endless identity checks, and mass incarcerations continue apace with no real end in sight. Yet we are reminded daily of the privileges, honors, and responsibilities that are the hallmarks of membership in this grandest of the grand hordes. One must stand in the light of Manhood or risk sinking again into the muck. Domestic space becomes martial space. The female and the black must be attacked, must be systematically exploited in order to maintain the basic, everyday ideological structures that support Man's Pyrrhic victories over his animal self.

This is an essay about archives. It is an attempt to make plain the intimate connection between systematic forms of violence and the methods by which we identify, evaluate, store, catalog, and transmit what we take to be the most precious examples of civilization and tradition. In the process I mean to provoke a radical blurring of the "obvious" distinction between practices of war and intellectual/institutional practices of documentation. I argue that the clumsiness with which the contemporary intellectual is expected to approach the (non)topic of a viciously murdered black girl is itself a continuation of not only a process in which black life is continually sacrificed to the exigencies of white supremacy and capitalism, but also one in which the value of our intellectual practices is often predicated on how far we can remain from any direct engagement with this fact. If one takes seriously the reality that notwithstanding her age, race, gender, and class, Chanel Petro-Nixon was a living/struggling/resistant subject, then it becomes essential that we treat her murder not as the culmination of a process in which the "stillborn" black, the individual who never achieves social status, is inevitably culled, but instead as part of a centuries-long process in which (black female) potentiality has been actively targeted for exploitation. I reject out of hand the liberal conceit that systematic murder and abuse are first and foremost effects of ancient and not yet fully conquered forms of racism and woman hating. Chanel's murder was not an atavistic act. Instead it should be seen as evidence of the absolute modernity (one is wont to say sobriety) of her attackers. It is the quite logical continuation of the basic modes of human intercourse developed in the crucible of colonization and Atlantic slavery. I will state again, therefore, my disappointment with and

distrust of those humanistic disciplinary practices that were developed precisely to articulate—and then obscure—the ideology of Man through recourse to modes of aloof scholasticism that sniff at profound forms of violence as unfortunate, but nonetheless not quite possessing enough conceptual weight to unbalance “ancient” modes of study and critique.

I have allowed myself to dwell on this subject, to admit my unseemly fears and frustrations, because there is no way that I can maintain the ethical project that I have launched without paying attention to the reality that the structures and ideologies of war have so indelibly marred the most basic discursive and ideological assemblies of humanism. Of course I mean to maintain focus on the fact that slavery and enslavement were first and foremost martial procedures such that for better or worse, to be the descendant of slaves, to walk with a black/brown/yellow/red face through the crowded streets of New York, is to be read as defeated (and thus hostile and dangerous), while to be the descendants of slavers, one’s face glowing with hues of cream and pink, is to be marked as conquering (and therefore slothful and smug). I also mean to state unequivocally that war is by definition a raced, classed, and gendered practice, one in which the name of the game is at once to delimit radically the space available to females, people of color, and working-class persons while also actively and energetically exploiting their productive and reproductive potentialities. Our incessant scripting of war as something that happens “over there” is a means by which not only to service (read discipline, punish, incarcerate, extinguish) the “homeland” but also to attach the most blandly sentimental narrative procedures to the process, to evacuate accounts of war of any sustained and complicated consideration of the constant—and necessary—implication of the domestic and especially the female in broadly organized processes of bloodletting. It is for this reason that I continually note that domestic space is always already war space. Maintaining this stance allows us, among other things, to move past sentimental accounts of slavery and colonization, the belief that these systems were first and foremost non-systematic returns of Man’s natural tendency toward racialist antipathy, “fixable” disruptions in the march of humanist ideality, lapses that one might more or less easily address through essentially therapeutic practices of good feeling and liberal kindheartedness. The brittleness of our narratives of war is evidence of how little we have allowed ourselves to

imagine what the everyday effects of the martial cultures of slavery and colonization actually are. Part of the reason that it is easy for charges of white supremacy to be so effortlessly batted away is the simple fact that our methods of naming are often so very underdeveloped and parochial. We become obsessed with whether a pink thigh might nestle comfortably against a brown one on the seat of a crowded subway car, because to admit that all of our scurrying to and fro is established by—and in support of—efforts to extract value directly from the flesh of huge swaths of the human population would entail levels of radicalization that would forever disrupt the humdrum comforts of our ever so meticulously undertheorized lives.

I am looking for a rhetorical bridge with which to join my shock and disgust about the death of Chanel Petro-Nixon, the desecration of her flesh, with the presumably noble history of Black American engagements with Spain and Spaniards during both the so-called Spanish-American War and especially the Spanish Civil War. I want to avoid the exultant narratives of black male military advancement that structure so much within the official archives of these events. The gender politics surrounding black men’s participation in American military campaigns inevitably turn on the rearticulation of dominant notions of Manhood, notions that insistently repeat models of diminution, compression, and leveling of the human form, which are key aesthetic/ideological manifestations of the Man/human bifurcation that stands at Western humanism’s conceptual center. The African American soldier remains infinitely aware that perhaps his most important challenge is to collapse the distinction between the black male and the (black) Man. A significant portion of the black soldier’s militancy involves his constant effort to increase his stature, to articulate himself in ever more expansive arenas, particularly the grand theater of (anti)colonialist war.

In this sense, black male militants have simply continued in a minor key the androcentric and deeply homoerotic rhetoric of a masculinity seeking its release from the suffocating limitations of a feminized domesticity. Even Paul Gilroy’s extremely clever articulation of the sailing ship as a living “micro-political system.in motion” is built upon a set of fantastic images of all-male environments that is in serious need of revision. The image of the ship is so potent precisely because it evokes both confinement *and* expansiveness. The sailor enters into the (in)se-

curity of the floating cell in order to achieve his escape. Still, even as I can readily see the complexity and beauty of this image, I recognize that it cannot contain all the possibilities available to us in the fecund pit of Atlantic modernity. Though the ship is a key metaphor for Atlantic culture, it is not *the key*. Throughout *Archives of Flesh* I focus equally on ports, brothels, prisons, camps, and markets, locations at which the complicated workings of gender might be more easily discerned, if only because they are less encumbered by dreams of male exclusivity. I insist that we reevaluate the image of discarded female flesh with which I began this chapter. We must recognize the important work that this ugly picture does as we attempt to define the contours of modern culture and aesthetics. Moreover, as I have argued already, the inability to read this image outside the most deeply sentimental modes is itself evidence of an ideological assembly in which the black and the female are always already dead subjects such that the unceremonial dispersal of their remains is less a travesty than a matter of unremarkable, if unsightly, housekeeping. I will ask, therefore, not so much that we bring the wars home, but instead that we acknowledge that these homes, these sturdy desks, handsome chairs, and pleasant scenes glimpsed through leaded glass are not simply the detritus of war but also the very modes through which the “obvious” need to protect “us” from “them” are advanced.

They Are Called Negritos

Perhaps the most important, most useful conceptual advance in African Diaspora Studies of this generation was Brent Edwards's out-of-hand rejection of teleological notions of pan-Africanist structures of feeling (“I am African because I feel African”) in favor of a rigorously materialist—and dynamic—conception of diaspora in which the focus remains on structure and production, the many individuals and institutions articulating and translating African identity between key nodal points in Africa, Europe, and the Americas.¹ What many scholars of the African diaspora either miss or ignore, however, is the fact that in this work, traditional intellectuals were—and are—a distinct minority, one decidedly marginal to the project of articulation that Edwards so ably narrates. African Americans are much more likely to exit the confines of the fifty states as working-class laborers, especially soldiers, than as

novelists, painters, dancers, critics, or political activists. I would press this argument even further by returning again to the idea of refuse with which I began this chapter. The black in transit is perhaps most often transported as a thing that has lost value in its “native” location. What is, in fact, being transmitted is an empty cipher, a container into which meaning and value might readily be added. Blackness becomes first and foremost a cultural artifact, an idea, raw material waiting to be processed. Still, I must admit that I am delighted by the way that the word “refuse” allows for a species of undisciplined and obstinate theoretical play. Blackness may be that location ever filled with trash, detritus, and useless ephemera, but it is also a location of repudiation, negation, and critique. One of the few dodges available to the subject who has been discarded and discounted is indeed the ability to refuse, to resist rearticulation into dominant social and ideological structures, to decline to bow (or perhaps to do so with a sort of theatrical hesitancy) before the most sacred totems of “civilized” society. The black face that presents itself too abruptly within the precincts of self-satisfied (white Western) civilization seems always to be saying “No.” Certainly one of the reasons that African Americans are so easily read as angry, dangerous, and criminal is that our very presence short-circuits jubilant narratives of American and European exceptionalism. Even a single dark individual in the cheering crowd reminds one that these grand boulevards and regal monuments, those stunning feats of cultural sophistication might easily—and rightly—be read as emblems of bloodthirsty acts of violence, acts made more obscene still by rigorous enforcement of a sort of ungainly and only half-effective cultural amnesia.

To gain deep insight into the mechanics of African American internationalism, one must always consider the evidence of the remarkably consistent ways American and European cultural productions have depended upon slavery, colonization and war as primary vessels for their development. The prosecution of what was dubbed the “Splendid Little War,” referring to the relatively easy 1898 victory of the United States over Spain, accomplished between the months of April and August with engagements in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and a remarkable naval victory in Manila, was self-consciously understood by President McKinley and other members of the American political elite as a necessary continuation of the role of the United States as a specifically white

Anglo-American country whose destiny was to dominate presumably backwards “colored” peoples in both the Atlantic and the Pacific.² It takes no great stretch of intellect or imagination to understand that with the acquisition of Alaska with its largely aboriginal population in 1867; the consolidation of U.S. influence in Latin America, home to huge communities of blacks, Indians, mulattoes, and mestizos; the annexation of Hawai’i in 1894; the near total domination of the Cuban economy and its foreign policy after the enactment of the Platt Amendment; and the occupation of the Philippines until the country’s independence in 1946, American “republicans” had little trouble understanding and announcing themselves as the prophets of white supremacy and colonization.³

What gives pause, however, what stuns the less than romantic student of African Diaspora Studies, is the fact that 1898 was also a key moment in not only the articulation of African American internationalism, but also the articulation of what one might think of as “modern blackness,” a post-slavery, “New Negro” aesthetic in which black individuals utilized the mechanics of war to proclaim an African American avant-garde. Taking place only two years after the Supreme Court’s infamous *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, which initiated more than five decades of state-sponsored, federally supported racial segregation, the Spanish-American War provided a number of key opportunities for African American soldiers and the communities they represented. As Willard B. Gatewood rightly notes, the war gave many black men their first opportunity to fight for the United States as citizens of the republic. The larger-than-life image of the black in uniform, eager to risk his all in the service of country, would presumably blunt the viciousness of increasingly hostile whites against their black compatriots. Barring that, the “colored” nations of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines could provide key outlets for ambitious young blacks eager to advance in business and the professions.⁴ “I may visit the United States now and then,” wrote African American physician and soldier W. C. Warmsley to the *Washington, D.C., Bee*, “gaze once more upon the monument, . . . visit the Capitol Building and White House, converse with my many friends and acquaintances and again enjoy their proverbial hospitality, but to make the States my home, never!” (quoted in Gatewood, “Smoked Yankees,” 231).

For black soldiers, participation in the war involved a set of complex negotiations among competing ideologies of gender, race, and nation.

As Warmsley noted, enlisting in the Ninth Infantry and practicing his trade in the relative comfort of eastern Cuba provided a means of at least partial escape from the racial terror of the United States. What I would add to this commentary, however, is the fact that this form of martial escape was absolutely necessary to the production of the idea of the New Negro. Indeed, the post-slavery African American individual confident in *his* citizenship was a notion self-consciously fashioned in the crucible of war, most specifically the Civil War and, as we will see, the wars of Indian removal and the Spanish-American War. It was an identity built upon a negotiation with (if not exactly a refusal of) the systematic violence practiced at all levels of American society against black people.

As many African American intellectuals—including many of W. C. Warmsley’s fellow soldiers—recognized, the U.S. incursions into both Cuba and especially the Philippines were largely motivated by the very rabid white supremacy that stood at the heart of the *Plessy* decision.⁵ The route that took the physician from Washington, D.C., to Santiago was one that meandered through some of the stranger peculiarities of American-style racism. Dr. Warmsley was a member of one of the four all-black “immune units” (the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Volunteer Infantries), a subset of ten regiments composed of individuals thought to be immune to yellow fever because of previous exposure (the whites) or innate racial “qualities” (the blacks). It was only in these units, built upon the presumed physical peculiarity of the colored animal, that black officers were commissioned. The gate through which the African American soldier had to pass in order to gain his ostensible liberation was one consecrated to the unremitting belief in his biological inferiority (see Gatewood, “Smoked Yankees,” 10–11).

At the same time, I want to remain focused on the fact that this process involved the self-conscious manipulation of ideologies of both race and gender. If you accept my assertion that the soldiers of the Spanish-American War helped to establish the original template for the so-called New Negro, then it is also important to remember that this newly established self-confident black identity was produced in relation to forms of sociality dependent upon ostentatious retreats from the domestic and the female. The New Negro gained his Manhood “out there,” gun in hand, the clumsiness of American-style race and gender norms thrown

by the wayside in favor of the modern modes of subjectivity for which the black subject presumably yearned.

In making this point, I would warn against assuming that what was on display in the black immune units was simply the continuation of ancient forms of racial antipathy that originated in slavery. On the contrary, both Dr. Warmsley and his white interlocutors were specifically modern. The segregation that he suffered was much more a product of the twentieth century than the nineteenth. The *Plessy* decision represented the court's attempt to rationalize the hodgepodge of law and custom surrounding race in the United States by settling the matter of where a black began and a white ended through rigorous application of the so-called one-drop rule. Part of what segregation produced for blacks was an ability to disestablish the idea that somehow African Americans were nothing more than bastards of an (interracial) American family. Extremely light-skinned Homer Plessy had the vexing question of his genealogy settled by the Supreme Court. He was no longer a creole existing on a continuum between black and white, but instead a (new) Negro, an individual with the potential to establish alternative accounts of his proper relation to the national. In one fell swoop the court helped to establish the white supremacist protocols that still dominate American society while releasing Negro citizens from having to confront complicated questions of primogeniture and paternity. Black men's military service represented a settling of accounts. The disequilibrium of the phrase "mama's baby, papa's maybe" was jettisoned in favor of the bold articulation of a newly established (and indeed war-hardened) black patriarchy, a subjectivity cleansed of the taint of boundarylessness, the shame of the masters' largesse.

Though many of the African American men who participated in the Spanish-American War were volunteers, a significant portion were black regulars drawn from the four regiments established immediately after the Civil War: the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantries and the Ninth and Tenth Cavaliries. These men had previously been stationed in the western territories and were utilized heavily in the wars of Indian removal, as prior to 1898, military policy did not permit African American soldiers to carry weapons east of the Mississippi River. Commanded entirely by white officers, these soldiers, especially the cavalrymen col-

lectively known as the Buffalo Soldiers, developed reputations as fiercely effective fighters. What I want to warn against, however, is moving too quickly away from the difficulties inherent when one attempts to hold both the enviable reputation of the soldiers and the assumption that they were ill-prepared to act as officers in the same sentences. Instead I would suggest that the one follows logically from the other. It is the black soldier's modernity, not his primitivism, that establishes him as at once a talented fighter and a disabled intellect. Severed from the pastoralism that defined enslavement, he became something altogether new, a figure not yet become a subject, a living being permanently cut off from its roots and thus unencumbered by profundities of will or complexities of intellect. The usefulness of the freedman, at least once he was dressed in khaki and blue, operated in direct relation to the fact that he had been left over—refused, if you will—thus made that much more available to the expansionist projects of the post-Civil War U.S. government. As a consequence, his ferocity as a soldier stemmed in part from his ability literally to lose himself in the work he was called upon to do. He was dangerous not because he was an angry individual with a gun, but because there was no clear distinction between man and weapon. Smoking metal and human flesh were fused into one entity, producing the very half-man/half-machine cyborg that continues to so confuse and fascinate.⁶ Ask an American general why send the blacks to confront the natives, and one imagines his quick, undigested response: "When confronted by a savage, send a monster."

Again, I will have been read incorrectly if my readers assume that what I am describing are forms of racism that have long since gone out of favor. Instead, linking the specific hostility to black soldiers with anxieties confronted by Americans as they witnessed their country undergo quick modernization, I am trying to establish the primary aesthetic/ideological modes that structure the basic gender and race protocols of Western humanism. The black stands at exactly the location at which the conceptual and ethical difficulties involved in maintaining the distinction between human and Man become most palpable. He is a subject whose lack of connection to his "native" land produces him as a potentially perfect modern, an individual freed from the enervating procedures and rhythms of traditional life. Even his much-maligned skin, the marker of not only his animality and barbarism, but also his

lack of deep connection to the United States, operates as both the most disabling of encumbrances and a profoundly fruitful site of possibility. As the dark individual, even the dark individual with a rifle slung across his shoulders, can never represent America *per se*, he has the ability, the "freedom," to transplant himself, to establish connections where presumably none previously existed.

We are up here in the mountains, where you can hear or see nothing but wild Caribous, deer and ponies. We eat both the deer and Caribous, but not the ponies; we haven't come to eating horseflesh yet. This is a fine little place. The people up here are different from the other Natives. They are called Negritos. They don't wear any clothes but a gee-string and are strung from head to foot with brass band. They don't understand anything. They carry a knife called a bolo, and are a very mean people. They live on rice and dried fish. They are ruled by a president. They never stay in their huts at night, but go into the mountains, returning about 4 o'clock in the morning. They make fine cigars. You can get about fifty for four clackers, which equals one cent in our money. The government has about 400 working the road between here and San Jose and pay them \$1 a week and their chow-chow; and they eat every hour. The soldiers are all doing well. They would have better health if they would let that beno alone. It is a drink that the Filipinos make. Poco Tempo [*sic*]. Tell my friends that I am just the same as a Filipino. (Quoted in Gatewood, "*Smoked Yankees*," 276-77)

This outstanding note, written from the Philippines by Edward Brown to *The Recorder* of Indianapolis, suggests a level of ontic flexibility and playfulness that is most often associated with experiments by self-consciously postmodern intellectuals. That Brown encounters his own half-naked, knife-carrying, hardworking, cigar-smoking, and mean-spirited doppelgängers, the Negritos, forces the soldier to reconsider where he stands within the particular chain of being that he describes. The people whom Brown met, properly referred to in the Philippines as Agta, are small, dark-skinned persons who can still be found in isolated communities throughout Southeast Asia. They were given the name Negritos (little blacks) by early Spanish explorers; it is not entirely clear whether they are direct descendants of the earliest hu-

mans or the remnants of nomadic African communities. In any case, the discursive structures that Brown utilizes to describe the community that he encounters were wholly overdetermined by the history of slavery and colonization of which his expedition to the Philippines was a part. That Spanish explorers and colonists assumed that the Agta were recently arrived Africans spoke to the breadth and complexity of the colonialist project. The presence of the Negritos reinforced the aesthetic practices that we saw with painters like Ribera and Cabrera. The fascination in Golden Age Spain with depictions of midgets, dwarves, *bufones*, and Negroes represented not only the fact that the "little people" were key to the support and functioning of the Spanish courts, but also that the shrinking and compartmentalization of their human potential were necessary aspects of the production of global systems of human domination, including capitalism. A Spanish explorer encountering Negritos in the Philippines was confirmed in the assumptions of human fungibility that lie at the center of colonialism. The little blacks of the Philippines, the little blacks of Africa, the little blacks of the Americas are all one and the same.

This begs the question of the African American soldier, ostensible agent of American modernity, as he is invited to regard with amusement and disdain people who are snarlingly referred to as "little blacks." I would remind you of the brief military history that I sketched earlier. Brown was a member of the regular army, the Twenty-Fourth Infantry, a regiment that, stationed in the American West, regularly engaged native peoples in combat before they were deployed to fight in Cuba in 1898. The following year they were called upon to fight against insurrectionists in the Philippines. Tellingly, the Agta were not widely represented as fighters in the Filipino struggle for national independence. For American soldiers, the presence of these people represented a strange and comical exception to the complexities of geopolitics and statecraft of which they were a part. "The people up here are different from the other Natives," Brown writes. Their food, their dress, their conceptions of time all mark the Agta as aloof individuals living a presumably archaic existence not unlike the aboriginal people of the western plains. As such they became (much like the African American community) a sort of perfect resource, providing nearly free supplies of cigars and labor remunerated only by one dollar a week and regular "chow-chow." When Brown an-

nounces that he is “just the same as a Filipino,” one must ask, “Which Filipino?” Is he a “Negrito,” a primitive subject only vaguely aware of the complex negotiations of power taking place all around him, or is he just as sophisticated as the insurgents who have developed gorgeously effective methods by which to rob him of his life? In a sense, Brown’s shock and amusement upon encountering the Agta were based in the fact that though defeated, these people could not be said to be “compromised.” Their reactions to Spanish and American colonialism did not involve taking up “the master’s tools,” those guns attached to mahogany-colored, khaki-covered shoulders. Unlike their Negro American counterparts, they could hardly be understood to be modern or new. Brown names no clearly discernible individual among the Agta. Instead, the Negritos remain as one indistinguishable mass. They are (human) beings not yet become Men. Ostentatious in their nakedness, they lack not only class, race, and gender, but also the protocols of violence that underwrite the structures of so-called Western modernity.

The reactions of black soldiers to their experiences in the Spanish-American War are clear examples of the “camp thinking” about which Paul Gilroy warns us in his 2002 work, *Against Race*.⁷ Of the many significant claims made by Gilroy, one of the most important is the idea that the public sphere is deeply marred by our overreliance on martial models of sociality in which various “racial” communities, “camps,” are inevitably figured as ancient and bitter rivals. While I find this idea wholly convincing, I would push against Gilroy’s tendency in *Against Race* to overvalue narratives of fascism and what he names “raciology” that take the Second World War and its aftermath as not simply key, but in a sense, elemental. Camp thinking has an extremely complex history in the United States, Spain, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines that predates the struggle against the Axis powers. Thus I resist deployment of the term “fascism,” to the extent that it presupposes a distinction, clear or otherwise, between slavery, colonization, forced migration, and the atrocities committed by Germany, Italy, Japan, and their allies. There is no way to dismantle racial peculiarity that does not involve careful attention to the specificities of the manner in which racism and nationalist militancy have become intertwined in our most precious notions of national culture. Hastily produced propaganda notwithstanding, the African American soldiers fighting in the theaters of Cuba, Puerto Rico,

and the Philippines could not be said to be generic “Americans.” No such creature exists. Instead, their very presence forced a re-modulation of what we might think of as hegemonic camp mentality. Our critique must involve, then, not only a return to—and expansion of—local archives, but also a recommitment to nuanced analyses that eschew overreliance on rhetorics of sophistication and cosmopolitanism that all too often remain unself-consciously enmeshed in Anglo-American parochialism.

What the African American soldiers, both regulars and volunteers, most readily confronted as they set sail for Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines was the starkness of the ontological choices they were offered. One must leave America as either Negrito or Negro, establish oneself as a Man willing to carry a gun and use it or an unwitting target viewed through a rifle’s scope. We begin to see the contours of a fascination on the part of many African American intellectuals with the ways that Spanish aesthetic practices resonate so profoundly with just this dilemma, with these intensely difficult questions concerning the nature of human subjectivity. In our nobility, vulnerable as the caribou; we were half-naked and ignorant, eating rice, dried fish, and the occasional deer. We wanted nothing more than our knives and cigars. The sour-visaged angels had not yet turned their faces in our direction. In our maturity we are dressed in the raiment of militants, the guns in our hands intricately notched, detailing the unrelieved spilling of ancestral blood. The Spaniards remind us of us. The staccato rhythms of their singing, the uneven proportions of their art reveal a people used to speaking multiple languages at once. It was inevitable that some of us would find our way to the peninsula. Whether our hands were empty or loaded with deadly metal, we had scores to settle.

Toward a Wider Horizon

On December 30, 1938, the *Daily Worker* announced a call by “Eight Outstanding Negroes” for a conference to be held the following January in Washington, D.C., in order to discuss “Spain and the Fascist Menace.”⁸ Signed by Max Yergan, executive secretary of the International Committee on African Affairs; A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; William Pickens of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Marion Cuthbert,

member of the National Board of the YMCA; the Reverend William Lloyd Imes of the famed St. James Presbyterian Church; Mary McLeod Bethune, president of Bethune-Cookman College; Dr. Julian Lewis of the Department of Pathology of Chicago University; and Channing Tobias of the National Council of the YMCA, the call was intended to present a unified front of black progressive thought. Whether they were aligned with social liberals like Bethune or labor radicals like Randolph, many African Americans, particularly those of the intellectual class, saw the Spanish Civil War as nothing less than the continuation of particularly virulent forms of anti-African, anti-black aggression by governments in both Europe and the United States. The violence in Spain and the gory methods used by white colonialists in Africa and the United States were part of one inglorious whole. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 and the subsequent support of the Spanish rebels by both Mussolini and Hitler demonstrated conclusively that so-called European fascism was but the return home of the methods and ideologies that had long structured white supremacist projects of colonization and enslavement.

The conference will discuss the Italian invasion of Ethiopia and the present Italian aggression in Spain; Czechoslovakia and the current demand of Germany for African colonies; Hitler's penetration of South America and the Caribbean and its significance to the civil rights of Negroes in those countries. Out of these deliberations are expected resolutions against the United States' recognition of the Italian conquest of Ethiopia and for the lifting of the embargo against Loyalist Spain. ("Negro Leaders Call Conference on Spain and Fascist Menace")

Ethiopia = Spain = Czechoslovakia = the Caribbean = the United States. There was nothing particularly new about either the ideologies or the methods being used by Franco and the Spanish rebels. They were, in fact, exactly those that had been utilized to great effect by generations of slavers and colonialists. The left propaganda produced to encourage the support of African Americans for Republican Spain made no bones about the essential connection between capitalism and white supremacy in the United States, colonialism on the African continent, and the fascist rebellion in Spain. Those black militants who traveled to Spain to fight as part of the international brigades (*brigadas internacionales*),

particularly the all-American Abraham Lincoln Battalion, were quick to narrate the war as an extension of the generations of struggle against slavery and white supremacy of which they were intimately familiar.⁹ Speaking of a monastery where he was housed with other recruits sneaking across the Pyrenees in order to fight on the part of the Republicans, James Yates observed, "this monastery was much like the places used by the abolitionists who temporarily housed slaves escaping from the plantations of the South in America."¹⁰ The journey to Spain represented for black militants both an escape and a return. If capitalism, fascism, colonialism, and white supremacy could be said to have achieved anything, then it was a diminution of space between peoples and cultures. The narratives of assault, exploitation, escape, and resistance that Yates first heard as a boy growing up in Mississippi proved to be perfectly workable as he attempted to make sense of the situation in which he found himself after he entered the not so civil Spanish Civil War.

I am surprised by the amount of clarity that one finds in the materials surrounding African American participation in the Spanish Civil War. In an intellectual tradition haunted by the belief that our histories have been lost, our noble past stolen from us, one encounters in the well-preserved and well-organized collections of materials associated with the war meticulous attention given to the task of naming (as individuals) approximately 90 African American soldiers among the 2,800 or so persons who left the United States to become part of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion.¹¹ This reality is made that much stranger by the fact that we are not telling the stories of victorious heroes. Spain did, in fact, fall to the fascists. In the face of the impassioned cry that the rebels would not take the Republican city of Madrid (*¡No pasarán!*), Franco and the Spanish fascist party, the Falange, did come to power, killing nearly a third of the Lincoln Brigade and setting up a government atop the corpses of hundreds of thousands of Spaniards.

What one encounters while wading through the resources of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archive (ALBA), housed in the Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives of New York University, is evidence of a striking self-consciousness on the part of leftist—and often Communist—militants about not only the need to disrupt the political lethargy and ethical clumsiness of an American public still deep in the throes of the Great Depression, but also the necessity of rescripting the

many rigid articulations of race that developed out of formal segregation in the United States and the country's colonialist projects in Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Guam, and Hawai'i. As with those eight Negro leaders calling in late 1938 for a conference on Spain and the "fascist menace," the propagandists working to build support for Republican Spain were wholly aware of the fact that at the core of notions of American exceptionalism was the widespread assumption that though the vicious exploitation of the African American people was unfortunate, it was in no way related to the colonialist projects of Europeans. African Americans—little Negroes, if you will—are very much understood as a people in constant need of development. Our many fetters are not forms of persecution *per se*, but instead the detritus of an essentially pedagogical apparatus designed to provoke our maturation. Moreover, this particularly self-serving version of white paternalism has been carefully packaged and relentlessly applied to subject populations in many parts of the globe. Americans do not exploit; we develop. We do not colonize; we assist.

In the face of this reality, the modern and progressive African American subject had to be represented as at once militant and deeply committed to internationalism. He had to demonstrate with vigor and precision that the "plantation Negro" with his unwavering allegiance to his white masters was long dead. The African American had to refuse. He had to resist the contorted idea that he represented nothing more than the flesh into which essentially mechanical structures of (white) modernity might be placed. The representation of individual black soldiers in the archives that developed around their involvement in the Spanish Civil War was itself evidence of a will to negate the namelessness and amorphousness of an always already only half-formed black "subject." In his place stood a broad-shouldered "New Negro," radicalized by both the liberation of urbanization and the insult of segregation. Though only ninety African Americans served in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, they were extremely effective emblems of the leftist propaganda machine that developed around the war because their stories fit so neatly the ideological requirements of early twentieth-century radical internationalism. "I had read Hitler's book, knew about the Nuremberg laws," remembered Harlemite Vaughn Love, "and I knew if the Jews weren't going to be allowed to live, then certainly I knew the Negroes would not escape and

that we would be at the top of the list." "I saw in the invaders of Spain the same people I've been fighting all my life," said Mississippian Eluard Luchelle McDaniels. "I've seen lynching and starvation, and I know my people's enemies" (quoted in Carroll, *Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade*, 12).

The articulation of just these types of black commitments to anti-fascism and Spanish Republicanism continued unabated throughout the war. Tellingly, however, the expression of African American support for the loyalists was always understood as peculiar, a thing emanating from an essentially domestic experience of unambiguously African American culture. The New Negro would become a solidly established subject, a creature separated from his spectral past, exactly to the extent that he was able to define the contours of black specificity, racial and cultural difference that placed him on a parallel and sometimes overlapping yet nonetheless distinct path of modernization.

In an April 26, 1938, article entitled "International Letter from Paul Robeson, Jr.," the *Daily Worker* published an extremely odd note, presumably written from Moscow by the ten-year-old son of the famed singer, actor, and activist Paul Robeson. The piece titillates its readers by catering to a desire to see an articulation of Negro internationalism that though radical nonetheless continues familiar tropes of race, gender, and domesticity. "Dear Friends," he begins, "How am I ever going to answer the hundreds of letters I have received from you? . . . Oh, I know—I'll answer them collectively. And each of you must take this collective letter as your own: that is why I am saying 'Dear Friends.'"¹² What follows is a (black) child's-eye view of the major conceits and concerns of the internationalist left. Robeson tells us that his parents brought him to be educated in Moscow because "there is no race prejudice" in the Soviet Union and because he is being taught "kindness and cooperation." His grandmother, with whom he lives in the city, tells him that the religion of the country is brotherly love. Even more to the point, the boy's note carefully sentimentalizes both the war in Spain and the second Sino-Japanese War, appealing to his readers' sense of moral indignation more than their shared political commitments:

While my Dad and Mummy were in Spain, I could not help thinking of all the Spanish children and the Chinese children whose fathers and

mothers wouldn't come back and also of the thousands of children themselves being murdered by fascist bombs. And there are the children, also of the Japanese, Italians, and Germans; they have fathers and mothers too.

What a terrible thing war is: can't we children do something about it? We can ask our parents to work, vote and talk against it. ("International Letter from Paul Robeson, Jr.")

Strangely, we see deployed in the pages of the *Daily Worker*, chief propaganda organ of the Communist Party of the United States, the very rhetorical tricks long deployed by liberals. The political argument being advanced here, the belief that progressive Americans had a pressing need to support besieged peoples in both Spain and China, is made as if it is no argument at all. Instead, it is but the musing of a child innocently speaking a child's sense of reality. That even a reader inclined to agree with the logic of the piece might seriously doubt that it was actually written by Paul Robeson Jr. is beside the point. What one sees is a tremendously interesting experiment with propaganda. Though the boy is in many ways an anomaly (black, upper-class, highly cultured, expatriated), he is represented as typical. His concerns for his parents, his language (Mummy, Dad, cheerio), and his youthful interest in sport and games mark him as any boy anywhere minus the fact that he is black, American, and the only child of Paul Robeson. Again, what we see is the awkward process of aggression and conciliation that structures New Negro identity. The highly sentimentalized rhetoric of this article notwithstanding, it is clear that the wars of Europe, America, Africa, and Asia take place not simply at the edges of human habitation but also within domestic space itself. The brilliant child of Paul Robeson has been called upon to enter the fray, the difficult contortions to which he submits himself in the process be damned.

The game for the editors of the *Daily Worker* was one in which they attempted to create a language capable of making plain the connections between fascist aggression abroad and segregation in the United States, to state without blushing the indistinction of war in its foreign and domestic iterations. We have seen already that central to this enterprise were Paul Robeson and his family. What Robeson brought to the effort was nothing less than the disruption of the distinction between Man and human. His physiognomy (dark skin, broad features, kinky hair,

large stature) marked him as an animal, a creature with his ancestors' experience of enslavement written across his face; while his talent, poise, cosmopolitanism, and militancy demonstrated him as equal to any Man. He represented the ideological compromise worked out between black freed persons with the rest of American society, the very compromise cynically warped and rearticulated by the Supreme Court in the *Plessy* decision. Blacks might be accepted as moderns—and perhaps even citizens—in the contemporary United States, but only if they were able to continually announce and maintain an essentially unbreachable racial difference. Thus part of what the image of Robeson gives us is the ability to understand that war is in fact a place where a highly formalized set of ideological and aesthetic practices take place. Robeson was a Man, perhaps even a great Man, but one whose presence was always contained within the limiting/leveling confines of race. The Spanish theater of war was then just that, a theater. Robeson, the actor and ideologue, uses the stage provided him by Spain to rehearse a new character, a New Negro, as a mode of being in the world that had previously been unavailable to most of his audience.

In an interview with Robeson by the Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén, first published in 1938 in the Marxist journal *Mediodía*, then translated and reprinted in 1976 in the *World*, we find a surprisingly clear articulation of a developing ideology in which the tables seem to have been turned on white supremacists such that a black subject like Robeson is imagined as not simply human, but also the very quintessence of what modern Man could be. There is little evidence, however, that Guillén ever made his way to what one might think of as "post-racialism." Instead, Manhood is imagined as a state one might achieve only after fully inhabiting the best traits of one's race and ethnicity:

At the side of democracy in Spain, and on every front of struggle for its triumph, there are men of the most diverse races, from the most diverse places in the world. Silent Chinese who fire their rifles at Italians and Germans, confident that it is the same as their fight against the Japanese who profane Nanking, and Hindus who traded the dirty banks of the Ganges for the narrow waters of the Jarama; Blacks born in the Yankee south, in Cuba, in Jamaica, in Brazil.¹³

For Guillén there is no need to make a distinction, fine or otherwise, between struggles for national liberation and the march toward international socialism. At the heart of internationalism is both nationalism and racialism. "The Negro's position as outcast is his most powerful human driving force," Guillén argues, "a force which hurls him forward towards a wider horizon that is more universal, more just, towards a horizon for which all honorable men are struggling today."¹⁴ The value of the African American in the Spanish Civil War was altogether caught up with the matter of his blackness, with the ways his anomalous presence in the midst of a conflict ostensibly taking place between white Europeans portended other horizons, to borrow Guillén's language, locations at which the most burdensome structures of capitalism and white supremacy might collapse in upon themselves. As a consequence, Guillén spends no time at all attempting to dismiss the fact of Robeson's racial "difference," but instead presses heavily on the correspondences between black and Spanish culture. "I belong to an oppressed race, discriminated against, one that could not live if fascism triumphed in the world," Robeson tells Guillén in response to a question about his motivations for taking up the cause of Republican Spain. "My father was a slave, and I do not want my children to become slaves" ("Spain, 1938: Guillen and Robeson Meet").

I have noted already that much of what motivated the adoration that Robeson evoked was his athleticism. His heavily muscled body represented a newly assertive and active Negro presence, the very presence on display in images of black soldiers wallowing through muddy trenches in Spain. The aesthetics of the conflict were played out between poles of good and bad, black and white, strength and weakness that were only further solidified as the fight continued. Of course what was announced and celebrated in the iconography that developed in and around the Spanish Civil War was a spectacular idea of a muscular and self-confident masculinity, the very idea carried about so ably on Paul Robeson's handsome frame. What immediately strikes one, however, is how fragile these images of male virility appear upon close examination. The fuller and bolder the drawing, the more it seems prone to cracking. Moreover, it is striking how much gender segregation is actually celebrated in war iconography. Whether one encounters the female form

crumpled by the side of the road or not, her place is always and ever imagined as distinct from that of the combatants. Even when the sanctity of the domestic sphere is shattered, war is imagined to take place at a masculinist conceptual and spatial remove.

One of the reasons that the Spanish Civil War continues to be so fascinating is the fact that in an era of widespread illiteracy, the Republicans were particularly successful at using modernist innovations in graphic design to advance their arguments about the necessity of defeating fascism. They produced hundreds of posters demonstrating the ideological parameters of the threat they perceived. What is most interesting when we look at these images today is not simply that they reproduce a set of decidedly old-fashioned gender ideologies, but also that they are dripping with both homoerotic desire and profoundly complicated articulations of race. The Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Labor, or CNT) is a Spanish confederation of mainly anarchist labor unions often affiliated with the Asociación Internacional de los Trabajadores (International Association of Workers, or AIT). Founded in 1910 in Barcelona, the CNT was largely responsible for expanding the role of anarchism in Spain and played a very significant role in the articulation of leftist ideology during the war, particularly through its production of posters (see figure 1.1).

What arrests one's attention when first encountering this particularly fine example of the graphic arts practiced during the Spanish Civil War is the seeming effortlessness of the work's iconography. A naked, visceral masculinity stands alone against the beast of fascism. His prepossessing form is nearly overwhelmed by the impressiveness of his musculature, making his body seem almost an experiment in modernist technique, a collection of discrete parts struggling one against the other to form an organic whole. His skin is dark, nose large, lips thick, hair close-cropped. The effect is particularly "Iberian," suggesting to the viewer that "the Spaniard" is but a nodal point in a much longer history of racial and cultural mixing. The plainly drawn phallic symbols, the hammer and the snake, remind us of what the battle is truly about. The threat of *fascismo* is the threat of penetration, the threat of the snake's tail caressing even the firmest of buttocks. Paul Robeson himself might have stood as the model for this poster. He traveled to Spain during the war and worked

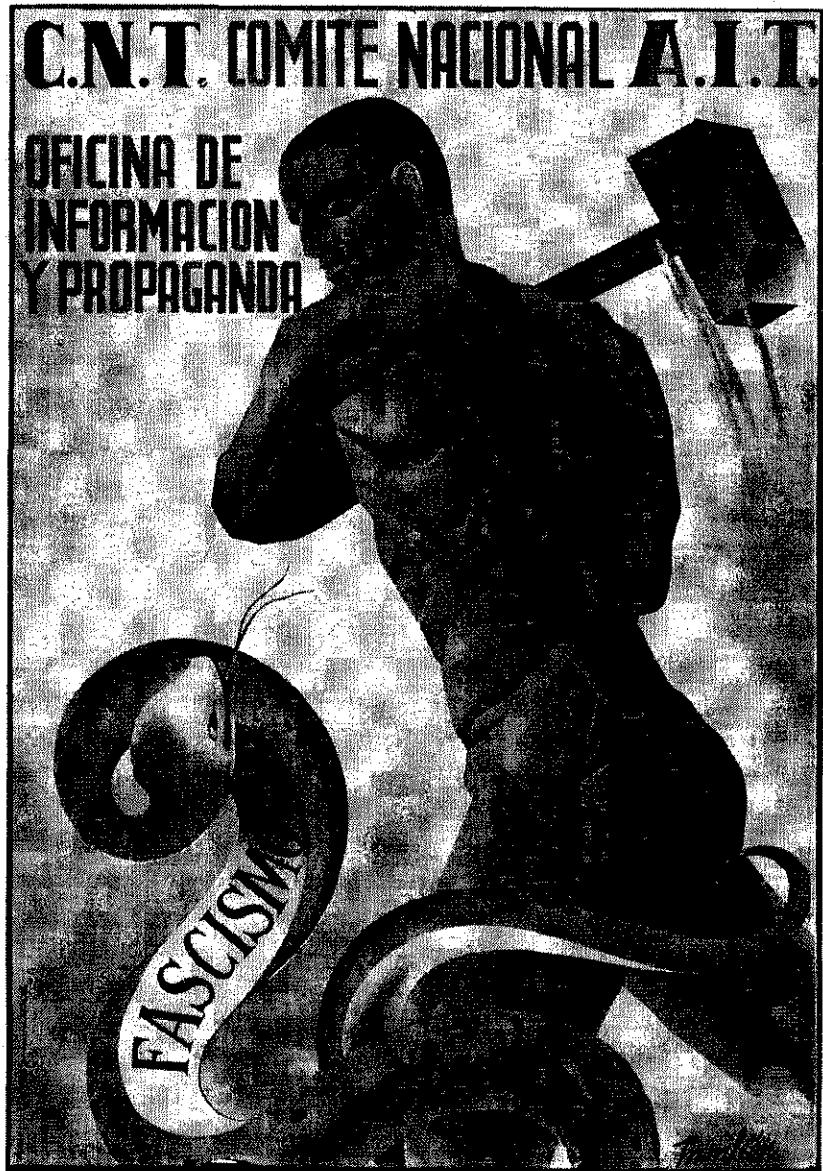


Figure 1.1. Poster produced by the Comité Nacional of the CNT/AIT Spanish labor union. Held by the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. Used under CC BY NC SA (Creative Commons).

tirelessly in support of the Republican cause. His image appeared on the front cover of the special January 1936 issue of the leftist journal *Nueva Cultura* entitled "Hallo América." Featuring pieces by Rafael Alberti and María Teresa León as well as an article on the young poet Langston Hughes by Miguel Alejandro, *Nueva Cultura* stressed modernism, internationalism, and experimentation while demonstrating a decided emphasis on naming, if not exactly breaking down, boundaries of nation, race, and gender. As with the New Negro, the new Spaniard is a creature that has broken free of the confusion and viscosity of human animality. He has become an independent and fully formed modern. Yet the vulgar reproductive protocols of his ancestors still lurk.

Once we recognize this, it becomes that much simpler to understand why in their efforts to lampoon Falangistas and other conservative elements in Spanish society, left propagandists so often developed images of effete and enfeebled survivors of a set of social and cultural tendencies that had long since outlived their usefulness. The fascists' retreat into rebellion and disloyalty to *patria* was simply evidence of the fact that turpitude and viciousness were the only things they had left to offer. No one was more available for such critique than King Alfonso XIII (see figure 1.2). Born in 1886 shortly after the death of his father, Alfonso XII, the king came of age just after the country lost its most important colonies in the Spanish-American War. Eager to return the country to what he took to be its previous glory, Alfonso supported the leader of a 1923 coup, Don Miguel Primo de Rivera, eventually appointing him prime minister and allowing him to suspend the constitution and establish martial law. After Primo de Rivera's resignation in 1930, Alfonso's hold on the throne became increasingly tenuous. With the founding of the Second Spanish Republic (which Franco would eventually overthrow in 1939), Alfonso was forced into exile in Italy. Having never renounced his throne, he returned to Spain after the war, eventually relinquishing his title in favor of his son, Juan Carlos de Borbón. Juan Carlos would never, however, become king, having had his own access to the throne blocked by Franco in favor of Alfonso's grandson, Juan Carlos I, father of Felipe VI, the current king of Spain.

What becomes clear is that the figure of Alfonso was synonymous in the minds of many Spaniards with the greed, vulgarity, and licentiousness of the monarchy and also the profound decline in stature of the



Figure 1.2. King Alfonso XIII. Artist unknown. Biblioteca National.

country following the disastrous war with America. That is to say, Alfonso was not a Man. Unlike the impressively athletic militant fighting against the serpentine threat of fascism, Alfonso is effete and comical. Seated atop the law and the constitution, his sword a flaccid and comically ineffective toy, he tramples the rights of the citizenry (*derechos de ciudadanía*) as mindlessly as an impudent child trampling roses in the family garden. Even the colors that frame him, the bright orange of the background and the royal purple of the oversized cap he wears, suggest a cartoonish figure to be pitied and dismissed. The effect is to separate Alfonso's own stature from that of the Spanish throne. The presumed weakness of Alfonso's masculinity disrupts his claims to the most regal forms of Manhood. This allows us to get a bit nearer to understanding the bitterness of the long explanatory text that accompanies Alfonso's image:

A pesar de ocupar el trono de España, no fue nunca rey de los españoles. Durante su borbonada, se fusilaron a los hombres libres, como Ferrer, se encarceló a los obreros y a los hombres liberales, se martirizó en cárceles y calabozos, se asesinó aplicando la ley de fuga, se violó la correspondencia, se allanaron las moradas, se persiguió a los hombres de ciencia, se amordazó a la prensa, se encumbró a los salteadores de la caja nacional y se aniquiló a las voluntades honestas. Nunca se respetó precepto alguno de la constitución. Se depauperó al país llevando al extranjero todo el oro que había en las arcas. . . . Al abandonar España el rey delincuente ha dicho "que no había renunciado a ninguno de sus derechos." Cabe preguntarle si el país había renunciado a alguno de los suyos durante los treinta años que se le robaron todos.

(Despite occupying the throne of Spain, he was never king of the Spaniards. During his "Borbonada,"¹⁵ free men like Ferrer were shot; workers and liberal men were jailed, martyred in prisons and dungeons, killed by application of the excuse of escape [*ley de fuga*]; correspondence was violated; homes were raided; men of science were persecuted; the press was muzzled; highwaymen were raised to the national bank; and honest intentions were annihilated. Never was any provision of the constitution respected. The country was impoverished by having all of the gold that was in the coffers carried abroad. . . . Upon abandoning Spain, the delinquent king said "that he had not renounced any of his rights." It is fitting

to ask whether the country had renounced some of its rights during the thirty years that everyone was robbed.)

There are a number of competing goals in this passage that make it particularly complex—and somewhat confusing—syntactically. On the one hand, Alfonso is described as not only profligate but also vicious. Men were shot, killed, martyred, and jailed. Homes were raided, the press muzzled; estates were confiscated and patriots deported. Still, the sober response to these claims is that though these actions were heinous and perhaps criminal, they were certainly not outside the prerogatives of a king. As Giorgio Agamben reminds us, sovereignty is established at the location at which an individual, an institution, or a state gains—or at least claims—absolute dominion over life and death.¹⁶ What the anonymous authors of this text imply is that though Alfonso held the throne, he was never king, because to be a king one has first to be a Man. The graphic depiction of an effete, buffoonish, and flaccid Alfonso works to denigrate him while also reiterating the idea that royal sovereignty is but an extension of the presumably natural dominance of strong men over the rest of human society. The king was far too womanish. He is not faulted so much for being vicious as for being too inwardly focused, for directing his greed and rage toward the domestic sphere. It is telling in this respect that this piece mentions not a word about Spain's colonialist atrocities in North Africa.¹⁷ Instead it is only the Spaniards who can be recognized as having suffered Alfonso's insults. They represent living beings whose Manhood has been denied and attacked.

The many crimes of which the king had been charged were described as events that happened *in spite* of him. Even though this criticism of the "sovereign" was not written in the passive voice *per se*, all action is directed outwards. Through the continuous use of the impersonal pronoun *se* (one) rather than the personal pronoun *él* (he), the propagandists who produced the poster cleverly critiqued the king while refusing him the dignity of remarking his agency. *Se fusiló a los hombres libres.* (One shot free men./Free men were shot.) *Se encarceló a los obreros y los hombres liberales.* (One jailed workers and liberal men./Workers and liberal men were jailed.) Even and especially in war, even and especially as Spanish radicals groped toward new languages with which to name and describe the dynamism of their social and cultural lives, they nonetheless found

themselves hobbled by old-fashioned bias. As a consequence, the discursive structures with which they described their beliefs were at times stiff and thin, incapable of conveying the complexity of the social, ideological, political, and aesthetic worlds they were intended to describe.

CHAPTER 1. WAR ARCHIVE

1. Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
2. For a very useful treatment of the racialist and white supremacist impulses compelling the Spanish-American War, see Neil Irvin Painter, "The White Man's Burden," in *Standing at Armageddon: A Grassroots History of the Progressive Era* (New York: Norton, 1987), 141–59.
3. Between 1898 and 1919 the U.S. military invaded not only Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, but also Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua.
4. See Willard B. Gatewood Jr., *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898–1902* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1987).
5. The *Plessy* decision was part of a group of racialist decisions by the court designed to ratify the country's developing status as an imperial power while guarding against the threat of racial mixture. I specifically have in mind the series of Supreme Court decisions regarding the political status of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines as "foreign in a domestic sense." There are a fair number of

works that treat this matter in depth. Among the best is Christina Duffy Burnett and Burke Marshall, eds., *Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, American Expansion, and the Constitution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001). See also Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

6. See Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
7. Paul Gilroy, *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture beyond the Color Line* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002). Tellingly, the work was published in the United Kingdom in 2000 as *Between Camps*.
8. "Negro Leaders Call Conference on Spain and Fascist Menace," *Daily Worker*, December 30, 1938.
9. The Fifteenth International Brigade would ultimately number approximately forty thousand troops from fifty-two countries. See Peter N. Carroll, *The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade: Americans in the Spanish Civil War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 12.
10. James Yates, *Mississippi to Madrid: Memoir of a Black American in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (Greensboro, NC: Open Hand, 1989), 115.
11. As with most chroniclers of the participation of American militants in the war on behalf of the Republican government in Spain, Peter N. Carroll refers to the collective body of persons who served as the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. This name is technically incorrect as, in fact, the soldiers, ambulance drivers, doctors, nurses, and others mainly served in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, which was part of the Fifteenth International Brigade of the Spanish Republican Army. This brigade was made up of troops from countries around the world, particularly Europe. One of the reasons for continuing with the inaccurate title Abraham Lincoln Brigade is to bring together those individuals who served in the actual American battalion along with those individuals who served either with Spanish troops or with other, non-American forces. At the same time, the use of the term "brigade" obscures the fact that no more than three thousand Americans served in the Republican army.
12. "International Letter from Paul Robeson, Jr.," *Daily Worker*, April 26, 1938.
13. "Spain, 1938: Guillen and Robeson Meet," *World Magazine*, July 24, 1976.
14. Quoted in Jonathan Scott, *Socialist Joy in the Writing of Langston Hughes* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 36.
15. Roughly, "the silly reign of the house of Borbón": Borbón + nada (nothing).
16. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). Where I differ with Agamben, however, is not so much in his deployment of the idea that much within the practice of modern biopolitics is specifically designed to distinguish "bare life" from "qualified life"—or what I label here "human" from "Man"—but instead that he demonstrates so little interest in the multifarious methods utilized

by humans identified as objects, automatons, and chattel to refuse this same sovereignty. Like most of his predecessors, Agamben speaks of the slave but not to him. He attempts a critique of the most vulgar aspects of so-called Western humanism without once noting that there are very many alternatives to even the most sacred of these presumably universal intellectual traditions.

17. Here I am referring primarily to the complex history of the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco, a location in the extreme north of Morocco that as late as 1955 held as many as one million persons, or perhaps a tenth of Morocco's population. Today the remnants of the protectorate comprise primarily the poor "garrison cities" of Ceuta and Melilla. See Tony Hodges, *Western Sahara: The Roots of a Desert War* (Westport, CT: L. Hill, 1983); and John Mercer, *Spanish Sahara* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1976).
18. Salaria Kea Application to the Army Nurse Corp, Frances Patai Papers, Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archive (ALBA), Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, New York University (hereafter cited as Frances Patai Papers).
19. Negro Committee to Aid Spain and the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, *Salaria Kee: A Negro Nurse in Republican Spain* (1938; reprint, San Francisco: Bay Area Post of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, 1977). In reference to Kea's last name, I will spell it Kea, which she preferred at the end of her life, rather than Kee, which appears in most of the documents that discuss her. For ready access to this pamphlet, see the website Ireland and the Spanish Civil War, <http://irelandscw.com>.
20. Howard Rushmore, "Fascists Won't Win, Declares Negro Nurse," *Daily Worker*, May 18, 1938.
21. Salaria Kea O'Reilly, "While Passing Through," Frances Patai Papers.
22. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1970; reprint, New York: Vintage, 1994), 297.
23. Bob August, "Salaria Kea and John O'Reilly: Volunteers Who Met and Wed in Spain, 1938," *Cleveland Magazine*, 1975, available at Ireland and the Spanish Civil War, <http://irelandscw.com>.
24. Martin Balter to Frances Patai, December 7, 1990, Frances Patai Papers.
25. Frances Patai to Martin Balter, December 7, 1990, Frances Patai Papers.
26. For more on the history of African American women in the nursing profession, see Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Women in White: Racial Conflict and Cooperation in the Nursing Profession, 1890–1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).
27. Most of these individuals were part of the Fuerzas Regulares Indígenas (Indigenous Regular Forces) recruited from the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco. For more, see Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Penguin, 2003); and Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain* (New York: Penguin, 1982).