

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Arrested Solidarities: Resistance and Racial Contact Zones in the 19th Century U.S.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/50z9t548>

Author

Lopez, Efren Michael

Publication Date

2021

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Arrested Solidarities: Resistance and Racial Contact Zones in the 19th Century U.S.

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy in English

by

Efren Michael Lopez

2021

© Copyright by
Efren Michael Lopez

2021

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Arrested Solidarities: Resistance and Racial Contact Zones in the 19th Century U.S.

by

Efren Michael Lopez

Doctor of English

University of California, Los Angeles 2021

Professor Marissa K. Lopez, Chair

Arrested Solidarities: Resistance and Racial Contact Zones in the 19th Century U.S. examines how minoritarian writings articulated and imagined resistance during the period from the Mexican American War (1848) to the Spanish-American War (1898). Each chapter settles on a historical and cultural flashpoint, each displaying a different set of literary and political forces. I claim that these writings, which existed in contact zones of race and politics under the encroachments of a growing and expanding U.S. Empire, pushed the political boundaries of their genres as well as the communities in which they participated and intervened. My curated use of underread texts and forms such as newspapers also call attention to the importance of expanding the literary archive and in doing so expanding the lexicon for how humanities understands literary resistance during this period.

David Torres-Rouff

Rafael Perez-Torres

Richard Yarborough

Marissa K. Lopez, Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2021

For my parents, Rudy and Grace, and my brothers, Arman and Marcos.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
VITA	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	21
Equality Imagined and Unrealized: <i>El Clamor Público's</i> Assimilationist and Emigrationist Ventures	
CHAPTER TWO	43
Textual Tactics: <i>12 Years a Slave</i> , <i>Blake</i> , and The Insurrectionary Imaginary in Antebellum Black Liberatory Discourse	
CHAPTER THREE	66
Manifested Destinations: Genre-bending as Social Protest in Jackson's <i>Ramona</i> and Ruiz de Burton's <i>The Squatter and the Don</i>	
CHAPTER FOUR	92
Black Soldier Letters and Sutton Griggs' <i>Imperium in Imperio</i> : The Politics of Alternative Nationhood and Imperialism in the Black Public Sphere	
CODA:	
Coda: On Reading and Archival Practices	116
WORKS CITED	120

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am eternally grateful to all who contributed to the genesis and writing of this dissertation. First and foremost, my committee members are an outstanding group of scholars and mentors to whom I owe everything academically. In actual practice, they embody the best of what the academy can be in terms of support, intellectual vigor, and collegiality. I thank my incomparably brilliant advisor Marissa K. Lopez, who encouraged my research from the beginning with tremendous counsel and mentorship and met with me to discuss this project whenever I asked. At every point she knew precisely the type of support I needed and provided it with rare generosity. I thank Richard Yarborough, whose courses and office hours meetings served as a significant inspiration for this work. Furthermore, his advice always helped me feel connected to who I am as a scholar. I am grateful to Rafael Perez-Torres, who helped ground and center me with his tremendous insight as a scholar and thinker. I owe so much to his mentorship. To David Torres-Rouff, who painstakingly and carefully responded with incredible feedback that shaped so much of this project and who provided outstanding mentorship at a crucial moment towards the completion of this dissertation.

I thank the Latinx Literary Reading Group, a community of incredible scholars who I was honored and lucky to be a part of: Abraham Encinas, Gabriela Valenzuela, Robert Mendoza, Salvador Herrera, Samantha Solis.

I thank Chris Mott for his tireless support and advocacy. I thank Shaili Shah for her writing coaching during the last leg of the project.

Thank you to my eternal friend Jazmin Delgado-Shah Flores, who inspired me to be a scholar. To Andrew Knighton, a scholar and mentor par excellence whose belief in me was simply indispensable.

I am grateful for the intellectual and emotional support of friends who saw me through this program from start to finish: Aaron Gebhardt, Joshua Adachi, Norma Delgado, Steve Gonzalez, Harry Marshak, Amber Vasquez, Jennifer Geraci, Sal Ayala, Amanda Kong, Gloria Negrete-Lopez, Cyndi Donelan, Saliha DeVoe, Shane Sparkes, Dennis Lopez, and Michael Hale.

To my graduate student peers, who were so much more than that to me. Many gave me friendship, camaraderie, and mentorship: Renee Hudson, Will Clark, Jay Jin, Ben Beck, Jordan Wingate, Kim Calder, Greg Toy, Craig Messner, Suleiman Hodali, Stacey Shin, Bobby Smith, Martin Zirulnik, Jonathan Kincade, Angelina Del Balzo, Cailey Hall, Caitlin Benson, Vanessa Febo, Tim Fosbury, Marilú Utomi, Rafael Jaime, Comfort Udah, Caitlin Benson, Alethia Shih, Jessica Lee, Kirsten Lew, Jené Pledger, Omar Zahzah, Michael Vignola, Kathryn Cai, Andrew Wagner.

Vita

Education

C.Phil., English, University of California, Los Angeles, 2019
M.A., English, California State University, Los Angeles, 2011
B.A., English, California State University, Los Angeles, 2007

Honors and Awards

Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship – Honorable Mention (2021)
Dissertation Year Fellowship, Department of English (2020-2021)
UCLA Marathon Reading Research Scholarship (2018)
Quarterly Teaching Excellence Award (Winter 2019, Fall 2018, Fall 2017, Fall 2015)
Graduate Student Research Mentorship (Summer 2015)
Milner Fellowship, UCLA (2013-2014)
Grace Morrow Hunt English Endowed Fund Award, UCLA (2013-2014)
Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship, UCLA (2013)
David L. Kubal Memorial Essay Prize, 1st place CSULA Department of English (2013)
Potter-Raskin Scholarship, CSULA Department of English (2013)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

“Acosta’s Literary Legacy and the Chicana/o/x Movement.” *The Sal Castro Memorial Conference on the Emerging Historiography of the Chicano Movement*. UC Santa Barbara. (February 2018).

“Affective Chambers: Repurposing Feeling in Oscar Zeta Acosta’s *The Revolt of the Cockroach People*.” *Latino Studies Association: Deliberating Latino Studies*. Pasadena (July 2016).

“Shame Narration: The Social-Emotional Order and Micro-Rebellion in Henry James’s *Daisy Miller*.” *Energies: Through the Material, Theoretical, and Textual*. USC. Los Angeles (March 2014).

“Jack London’s *The Iron Heel*: Utopia, Genre Anticipation, and the Dramatization of Revolutionary Risk.” *Southland Graduate Conference*. UCLA. Los Angeles (June 2012).

“Desire, Commodity, and Exchange: De-stabilizing Hetero-normativity in Henry James’s *The Beast in the Jungle*.” *Center for the Study of Genders and Sexualities*. CSU Los Angeles (May 2012).

“Through the Windows: The Built Environment and Racial Problematics in Charles W. Chesnutt’s *The House Behind the Cedars*.” *(dis)junctions Graduate Conference*. University of California, Riverside (April 2012).

“Writers Gonna Write: Text/Visual Internet Memes and Composition Pedagogy.” *2012 Conference on College Composition and Communication*. St. Louis, MO. (March 2012).

Introduction:

"Do not you, an Anglo-Saxon, slave-holding exterminator of Indians, from the bottom of your soul, hate the Mexican-Spaniard-Indian, emancipator of slaves and abolisher of slavery?"

–John Quincy Adams, "Distress Fugitives from Indian Hostilities,"
delivered to House of Representatives May 25th, 1836.

Arrested Solidarities posits an alternate and fugitive literary history that centers minoritarian writings and racial contact zones. The four chapters, each focusing on a thematically and historically connected set of texts, expand the lexicon for how 19th-century literature contends with resistance and race. Spanning the period from just after the Mexican American War (1848) to the Spanish-American War (1898), I investigate how minoritarian writings politically navigated the arc of Manifest Destiny to the period of US Empire. I argue that literary texts of the 19th-century considered, promoted, and imagined ideas of political resistance that exceed or transgress forms of social access codified through citizenry, representation, and inclusion. Instead, my objects of study grapple with notions of insurrection, anti-imperialism, and alternative nationhood. I also argue that concepts of liberalism inform canonical and reading practices in the present, affecting the types of insights even contemporary scholars draw from the 19th-century archive. Finally, by calling attention to how these writers imagined and engaged in strategies of alternative nationhood and insurrection, I am calling attention to how these writers sought to engage in the public sphere with politics that complicated and at times intervened in the manner by which the US liberal democratic nation-

state developed. Through their engagement, these writers enacted a subjectivity that accounted for the racialized positions they inhabited.

Resistance is a complex and fraught term often at the center of scholarly debate. In the past few decades, the scope of how resistance is defined has expanded. Sociologists Hollander and Einhower note that resistance has come to describe behaviors in all areas of social life, from revolutions to hairstyles (534). They account for definitions of resistance that encompass both active opposition as well as questioning and objecting. More recent scholarship has sought to define resistance in the context of resistance studies, a growing field in the social sciences. Here too, scholars have highlighted major debates in defining the term, including the notion of intentionality. Though, as Baaz and Lilja note, those intentions themselves can be "plural, complex, contradictory, and evolving" (140). My chapters, which all focus on writing in various forms, deal with resistance along a spectrum of intentionality. For example, in Chapter IV, while Griggs's novel *Imperium In Imperio* constitutes an intentional literary product meant to grapple with Black power and liberation, the Black soldier letters appear less deliberate, though they often speak to power.

I acknowledge that conceptually, resistance often gives power and agency primarily to dominant white forces. However I use the concept to describe engagements and imaginings that can far exceed or transcend these forces. Sociologist Monisha Das Gupta notes that the *Dictionary of Critical Theory* helpfully cautions against the impulse to define resistance in a static or fixed way (216). Rather, scholars can treat resistance as a problematic or theoretical starting point. To these ends, resistance allows me to bring together practices such as publishing an ethnically positioned newspaper and writing an insurrectionary novel. Despite their different ends, juxtaposing two such texts describe a history of racialized imaginings in the 19th-century

that displayed a diversity of relations to the dominant power structures of a developing US nation. Resistance is the productive problematic from which I survey and assess the politics featured in these writings, a starting point by which I can place different writers on a spectrum of proximity or alignment to dominant power structures. Along these lines, I use resistance as a keyword to underscore the ambiguity and ambivalence of an author such as Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, whose racial positionality displays a complicated relationship to the government she both lambasts and appeals to in *Squatter and the Don*. By using resistance as an umbrella, I invite explorations and assessments of political viability and agency. I am analyzing the efficacy of resistance in the context of power while also framing resistance as productive and not fully anchored to institutions and structures.

Each chapter narrates a literary imagining of a politics that confronts mechanisms of US nationhood and Manifest Destiny. Accordingly, the chapters center minoritarian writings that include less conventional objects for literary studies, such as newspapers and letters, rather than white canonical authors. In that sense, my project puts pressure on the politics of 19th-century literary studies by analyzing how subjects used writing to imagine forms of freedom outside inclusion to the US nation-state. The results varied; the insurrections conceived by Delany and Griggs, for example, never came to fruition. Nevertheless, these texts articulate the limits of liberalism and US Empire alike to grant the full rights and citizenry they presumably guaranteed, even in the abstract.

As my chapters demonstrate, the struggle for freedom in the mid-19th-century often occurred under the circumstances of racial and ethnic contact. The epigraph above, uttered by the son of a "founding father," evokes a national and, I would argue, colonial anxiety about the possibility of cross-ethnic solidarity and its threat to the chattel slavery so crucial to US nation-

building. Quincy Adams' mocking proclamation frames the threat's viability through contact between distinct racialized groups. Moreover, the quotation situates racial and ethnic groups in a way seldom present in the historical imaginary. Whether traditionally white-centric or "ethnic," categories of literary study" often focus on distinct racial or ethnic groups, framing them in isolation from each other. Even the categories themselves—"Chicana/o Literature," "African American Literature," and "American Indian Literature," for example—can imply that these groups developed ways of writing and thinking about the world in isolation, producing sharply distinct literary and political histories. Though these groups created rich literary traditions, historical and literary studies often isolate them in ways not coincident with material reality. Critics such as Kirsten Silva Gruesz, for example, remind us of the way Spanish and English writings in the US spoke to each other. And more pertinent to my thinking, I consider too how minoritarian writers themselves contemplated other racialized groups in the content of their writings.

The epigraph sparked two initial questions for me. First, what was the relationship between cross-ethnic solidarity, resistance, and insurrection in the long 19th-century? Secondly, how did minoritarian writers imagine their relationship to other racialized groups while conceiving their freedom struggles? Have literary studies of this era underemphasized racial *contact zones* and forms of political resistance shaped by the intermingling of minoritarian identity groups? My further exploration into this ran into a related archival problem: some of the groups mentioned above, in the 19th-century, did not have readily available published literatures, especially not in the forms often studied in English departments, such as novels, poetry, and published prose. Yet, these groups produced writings, and I draw from letters and newspaper articles, along with key novels that emerged in the middle to late 19th-century that contemplated

resistance through contact zones while staking an imaginative political space that differed from the prevailing literature of their time.

Mary Louise Pratt's articulation of the "contact zone" implies not only trans-ethnic/racial interaction, but the inherent colonially inflected power struggles that shape these interactions, describing them as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in the context of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (2). Pratt, through this conception, complicates monolithic accounts of ethnicity and race. The concept of contact zones not only theorizes space and race but facilitates reading practices concerned with how texts articulate these zones within the context of other dominant readings and approaches. Reading practices that emphasize contact zones analyze how minoritarian subjects conceive of themselves and their racialized position. They often write themselves against other groups using available transcultural forms for resistance, such as print culture, and the novel. I build from Pratt's contact zone to enable readings that de-centralize white supremacist paradigms by reframing the foci of political agency and the vocabulary of resistance. Through the lens of the contact zone, minoritarian subjects, rather than bound by the mechanisms of the nation-state, act as agents and participants of contemporary politics.

The texts that comprise my research highlight the way contact zones and transculturation produce varied strategies of resistance. If, as Pratt says, asymmetrical power is a feature of the contact zone, then what types of strategic imaginings are born from those on the other side of power? If Fernando Ortiz conceptualizes transculturation as the mingling, acquisition, and

uprooting of cultures that creates "new cultural phenomena,"¹ then *Arrested Solidarities* investigates how writings conceived of resistance in a contact zone marked by US Manifest Destiny and US Empire as they enacted protocols of slavery, territorial encroachment, Jim Crow, and white supremacy. *Arrested Solidarities* brings forward and explores the way racialized subjects intervened and participated in the developing public spheres they inhabited and imagined worlds and politics, adding their voice to the overall long history of US politics.

Chapter I approaches resistance writing through the lens of newspapers post-Mexican American War. As the US encroached on Mexican California both territorially and culturally, newspapers became a textual space for navigating this cultural tension. While some English-language newspapers, such as *The Los Angeles Star*, included a Spanish language section, publisher Francisco Ramirez created *El Clamor Público*. This chapter argues that *El Clamor's* run demonstrates how Mexican Californian print culture navigated the racial tensions of the Southwest and Mexico and how Ramirez, in particular, sought forms of alternative nationhood through his eventual emigration to Sonora.

Chapter II focuses on a similar historical period, the 1850s, but shifts focus to Black writings in the decade leading up to The Civil War. I compare *Blake, or the Huts of America* by Martin Delany with *12 Years a Slave* by Solomon Northup and consider how these texts articulate competing discourses of liberation, one driven by the notion of Black revolutionary insurrection and the other based on freedom granted by the US nation-state. *Blake*, I argue, turns

¹ Onís, De Harriet, translator. "The Social Phenomenon of 'Transculturation' and Its Importance." *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, by Fernando Ortiz, Duke Univ. Press, 2003.

to the novel form to outline and map an *insurrectionary imaginary* that pivoted from the politics of the slave narrative in significant ways.

Chapter III returns to southern California during the 1880s, several decades after Ramirez's *El Clamor* advocated for Mexican Californians. Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *Squatter and the Don* and Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* demonstrates how these authors used the novel and multiple genres to narrate the plight of Mexican Californians after decades of minoritization and territorial encroachment, underscoring the violence of Manifest Destiny.

Chapter IV focuses on the end of the century and the Black public sphere. If *Blake* imagines the US South and Cuba as emblematic staging grounds for Black liberation, firsthand accounts of US Black soldiers in Cuba, fifty years later, find Black Americans at an impasse. They found themselves stuck between the wish to earn full citizenship and the knowledge that peoples from Cuba and the Philippines may have more in common with them than Jim Crow society back home. While some of the letters see this imperial war as an ideal opportunity to prove full inclusion in the US citizenry, others saw exile and desertion as viable liberatory practices, as evinced by the case of David Fagen, a Black soldier who defected to the Philippine resistance. Here, I compare the archive of Black newspapers with Sutton Griggs' political novel *Imperium In Imperio* (1899) to examine how these texts imagined alternate nationhood in the dawn of the US Empire.

In each of these chapters, writing advocated and strategized resistance under conditions of racialization and Empire. As much as literary and historical scholarship defines the 19th-century in the context of a crystalizing US nation and its attendant white supremacist racial projects, these chapters remind us of a period marked by forms of resistance that exceed national needs for good citizenship or assimilation. As a whole, the chapters account for the dynamic way

minoritarian groups used writings to imagine resistance leading up to the development of American imperialism in the latter half of the 19th-century. I examine an understudied history of activist newspaper publishing, insurrectionary novels, and literary and print culture that asserts that the 19th-century was not only marked by the development of US Empire. The 19th-century was also a century of resistant and activist imaginings by racialized authors, representing a spectrum from hesitant assimilation to outright insurrection in their vision.

My emphasis and objects of study contrast traditional trajectories in literary studies, both in form and content. And one of my initial claims is that my objects of research point to a particular type of positional emphasis seldom present in American literature. The flashpoints of my study propose an alternate spectrum of a politics washed away, I would argue, by a soft hegemony of liberal capitalist and reform politics that underemphasizes the prevalence of anti-Blackness and anti-indigeneity in the formation of the national political imaginary. After all, multiculturalism—a liberal capitalist construction—acknowledges a need for equality and representation but flattens out the unique position of particular racialized identities, the effects of which I will further consider in this project.

The epigraph with which I begin hails the white supremacist anxieties proximal to these contact zones that *Blake* and other texts articulate, including those associated with the threat of multi-ethnic solidarity in the US imaginary. John Quincy Adams, addressing the House, argues for the fund allocation for those threatened by "Indian Hostilities" in Georgia and Alabama, forging his case by animating a multi-racial threat to "Anglo-Saxon" livelihood. Elsewhere in the speech, he warns of "a Mexican invader...proclaiming emancipation to the slave and revenge to the native Indian," broaching the possibility of "a Mexican, an Indian, and a negro war upon your hands" (6). Adams critiqued white southern racism and expansionism, though

hindsight tells us that the threat he raises never entirely occurred on a broad scale. Nevertheless, Adams' words suggest that the threat of cross-racial solidarities loomed in the US imaginary. Part of the stakes of my project is examining how cross-racial solidarity or conflict functioned in resistance writings how these texts conceived of their political strategies through racial and ethnic contact. Accordingly, my work suggests that reading literature through the lens of the contact zone de-centers whiteness while uncovering the ways writings contemplated insurrection and alternative nationhood. Emphasizing ethnic and racial contact zones builds on interventions by scholars such as David Kazanjian, Hortense Spillers, and Ifeoma Nwankwo, whose work complicates this atomized version of history and theorizes its philosophical and political import to the literary and historical arena.²

Field Survey

The prominence of canonicity and traditional literary forms persists in English departments and classrooms through influential literary anthologies such as the Norton Anthology of American Literature, which still features mostly poetry and prose forms. Yet, this project by necessity excavates ephemera, epistles, and testimony, often juxtaposing common literary forms with more fugitive³ ones. White-centric American literary scholarship, through the lens of anthology introductions, often defines the 19th-century as profoundly concerned with the development of national identity and the US nation-state. The *Heath Anthology*, for example,

² Spillers theorizes the transformations that take place in contact zones of intimacy between women and men utilizing three flashpoints in the 18th century: the French state, the American colonies, and Saint Domingue. See "Shades of Intimacy: What the Eighteenth Century Teaches Us," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0r2s8kRYWDo&t=535s>. Nwankwo, in *Black Cosmopolitanism* looks to the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution to examine the disparities and similarities between the approaches to identity articulated by people of African descent in the United States, Cuba, and the British West Indies during the nineteenth century. These examples, utilize something like a flashpoint structure as well as deep archival attention on what Spillers calls "history from below" centered on minority subjectivity

³ Here, I draw the term "fugitivity," from Fred Moten in "Stolen Life" who describes it as "a desire for and a spirit of escape and transgression of the proper and the proposed. It's a desire for the outside, for a playing or being outside, an outlaw edge proper to the now always already improper voice or instrument"

discusses the 19th-century through an illustrative juxtaposition between Ralph Waldo Emerson and Harriet Jacobs. While Emerson's "The American Scholar" (1837) indexes a moment that called for "a distinctively American culture in the decades since political independence" (1389), Harriet Jacobs, that same year "was suffering through a second year in the tiny attic of her grandmother's shed" (1392). This comparison between an enslaved Black woman and a Harvard-educated literary giant reminds us to "perceive the very different relationships and influences" that shape American writing. If Emerson and his literary sphere of influence symbolize a preoccupation with American identity and the nation-state, Jacobs embodies the contradictions and costs of that preoccupation. Jacobs, moreover, was not alone; minoritarian literatures, from slave narratives to testimonials, often contemplates the tension between ethnic subjects and whiteness or white supremacy.

The emergent field known as the *Latino nineteenth-century* provides an additional layered corrective to the above dichotomy, particularly the 2016 edited volume *The Latino Nineteenth Century* (Lazo & Alemán). I draw on and respond to this field along a variety of axes. The introduction, for example, frames the collection as registering "Latino aspirations...while engaging with partial, sometimes fragmented, and regularly dispersed textual remains" (3). I draw from this impetus in constructing a textual history of racial contact and resistance, as well as my emphasis on a multi-racial focused work "at odds with forms of US literary history driven by the canonical desires of US American literature and the fetishization of major writers" (7). Instead, I utilize a spectrum that spans archival fragments from 19th-century print culture to novels such as *Blake*, *The Squatter and the Don*, and *Ramona*, all of which are read though certainly outside the "Major writers" category Lazo and Alemán imply above.

Laura Lomas's contribution to the volume, perhaps more than any of the other chapters, is instructive of the types of conversations in which my work participates. Her chapter, "'El Negro es Capaz Como el Blanco': Jose Marti, Pachín Marín, Lucy Parsons, and the Politics of Late-Nineteenth-Century Latinidad," examines how Afro-North American and Afro-Latinx figures influenced the prominent Latinx figure, Jose Martí. Lomas frames the chapter as "reading across national, racial, gender, and language borders" to consider the complexity of what is known as *Latinidad* (302). "Pachín" Marín was an Afro-Puerto Rican poet who, after being effectively exiled from Puerto Rico, traveled throughout New York and the Caribbean, performing his poetry and involving himself in revolutionary activity before ultimately dying in Cuba of yellow fever. His work often affirmed his dark skin and lamented his erasure as an Afro-Latinx poet.

Lomas suggests Marín's influence on Martí, particularly in his letter to the editor of *The New York Evening Post* titled "A Vindication of Cuba." Martí responds to an anonymous writer in *The Manufacturer* who warned of problems inherent in incorporating a million Blacks in Cuba in the event of US annexation (305). He defended Cubans by arguing against annexation and went so far as to list the achievements of Cubans both in exile and on the island. Lomas uses this triangulation between Marín, Martí, and his letter to theorize and historicize a "transnational formation of Latinidad" that emphasizes and acknowledges Afro-Latinidad. The article employs a similar argument with Martí and Lucy Parsons, a Spanish-speaking woman with a Black mother and Mexican father.

I draw on triangulations such as Lomas's, which use archival materials to examine contact zones and their influence on forms of racial and ethnic solidarity. A prominent figure in Latinx cultural production, Martí drew his influence from Afro-Latinx figures who held a similar politic against US Imperialism and domination against darker-skinned peoples of the Americas

as a whole. Lomas asserts 19th-century *Latinidad's* multi-racial character and examines how this multi-raciality is informed by broader revolutionary struggles such as the Cuban revolution. Lomas re-reads how Jose Marti reconsiders his racial blind spots through his contact with figures such as Parsons and Marín but asserts a new late 19th-century literary and revolutionary history informed by under-read Afro-Latinx figures. My research seeks out precisely these types of juxtapositions in which the maneuvers of US imperialism and other colonial forces catalyze solidarities. The example of resistant Black soldier subjectivity during the Spanish-American War, for example, was influenced through their position as Imperial soldiers abroad.

Recent monographs outside the Latino 19th-century have taken similar cross-ethnic approaches. Manu Karuka's *Empire's Tracks* analyzes Indigenous Nations, Chinese workers, and the transnational railroad. He states his work "offers structural analyses of capital and imperialism from distinct colonial standpoints, crossing the borders of discrete subfields of Indigenous and ethnic studies in its citational practice" (xiv). Karuka's book grapples with, for example, the notion that the Chinese workers on the transcontinental railroad occupied a different political position than the indigenous tribes whose lands were scarred by railroad development. This relationship between the ethnic aspiration, in this case, represented by Chinese workers, and lost indigenous sovereignty is one I take up in my discussion of the Californios. Moreover, my research heeds Karuka's attention to "discrete subfields" and the crossing of them. Karuka's recent work clarifies the importance of an imperialist lens in negotiating research dealing with minoritized and colonized racial groups.

Yet contact zones are not merely zones of solidarity. On the contrary, I am as interested in tensions and conflicts as solidarities, as signaled in my title: "Arrested" solidarities, i.e., halted or stopped but always possible. Thus, a crucial element of my research necessarily draws from a

critical ethnic studies trajectory that theorizes Blackness, Latinidad, and Indigeneity. These works, such as those by Jodi Byrd and Frank Wilderson help me negotiate the texts' relation to each other by situating the inherent complexity of racial identity.

An emblematic example of how critical ethnic studies informs my work is Jodi Byrd's *Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*, which examines how Indianess and Indigeneity function through US imperialism to expose the limits of liberal democracy. Byrd's critique draws a line between the origins of US empire and the present political moment, stating that too rarely are "American Indians theorized as the field through which US empire became possible at all," and that "the current multicultural settler colonialism that provides the foundation for US participatory democracy [must be] understood as precisely that—the colonization of indigenous peoples and lands by force" (xix). Byrd demonstrates the harsh, difficult limits of liberal democracy by indicting forms of assimilation, inclusion, and civil rights as at least partially complicit in perpetuating the colonial process by both legitimizing the state and ignoring the original colonial genesis of indigenous dispossession. For instance, even an appeal to equality under the law legitimizes the law. The contradictions this position exposes are perhaps uniquely evident in *Squatter* and *Ramona* since each features characters who are appealing for redress from the same forces that caused their oppression, and neither (with perhaps one exception) is particularly concerned a struggle for indigenous sovereignty. Through Byrd, the Mexican-Californian appeal for territory and the lament on the loss of white status maps on a history of indigenous land dispossession.

I suggest that this political stance constructs a clearer lens to read indigenous representations. Consider how Byrd frames a distinction between emphasizing the colonization of the territory and the colonization of the body:

But the larger concern is that this conflation masks the territoriality of conquest by assigning colonization to the racialized body, which is then policed in its degrees from whiteness. Under this paradigm, American Indian national assertions of sovereignty, self-determination, and land rights disappear into US territoriality as indigenous identity becomes a racial identity and citizens of colonized indigenous nations become internal ethnic minorities within the colonizing nation-state. (xxiv)

So direct struggles for equality for one, another, or even all races or ethnic groups, as depicted in literature or otherwise, have to contend with the relationship between that struggle and American Indian land rights and self-determination, all of which are always already delegitimized through the presence of the US as a territory which supersedes any of those incorporated by American Indians themselves.⁴ Byrd's intervention, then, creates a wider field by which we can analyze the politics of a novel. For example, we can see certain forms of anti-indigeneity not just as racism but as the expression of a specific political position whereby a group seeks to de-indigenize itself in order to gain proximity to the political arena for rights, inclusion, and recognition. Inclusion, recognition, and citizenship constitute the way I define the liberalism that I argue my texts confronted, pressured, and at times, exceeded.

I draw influence from both historical sources and criticism focused on racial/ethnic contact. Particularly instructive, Raul Coronado's chapter in the aforementioned edited volume *The Latino Nineteenth Century* (2016) calls for a methodological shift in Latinx literary studies,

⁴ See *Cherokee Nation vs. Georgia* (1831) Supreme Court Justice John Marshall rules that Indians tribes are different than foreign nations, thus despite the fact that they obviously entered into treaties with European nations/US as sovereigns within international law, they were considered dependent on the United States for aboriginal title.

especially in the relatively understudied long 19th-century. He exposes how common historical paradigms, driven by tradition and in some cases, assumption--believe the complications brought forth through deeper archival forays:

Rather than write literary histories that enshrine Latina/o resistance to Anglo American conquest and colonization, historians could focus instead on the accidents and reverse formations that led socially complex Latina/o communities to see themselves devolve from elite, Spanish American, Catholic communities of colonizers to increasingly racialized communities that were seen as homogeneous and devoid of sociocultural complexity. (51)

For Coronado, the archive does not reveal a smooth co-development of Latinx identity and political resistance. He cautions against a history of Latinx people that merely rehearses its struggles against white supremacy and settler colonialism. Indeed, many Spanish-speaking peoples in the 19th-century saw themselves as superior to the Black and indigenous populations. I explore what this idea might mean for other racial and ethnic groups in the 19th-century. For example, what does the archive reveal to us about the tensions and solidarities between indigenous groups and African Americans? Conventional history tells us that the history of those two groups was not necessarily marked by mutual solidarity, even as both were oppressed and exploited through the growth of the US national project and Manifest Destiny. I take to heart Coronado's call for a focus on "moments of failure" and "dreams that failed to cohere" (51), especially considering that the texts in several chapters mark failed revolts and unrealized solidarities. Again, my title – *Arrested Solidarities* – evokes not a foreclosure but a study in multi-racial tensions and solidarities under the purview of US imperialism and a white supremacy whose hegemony crystalized as the century progressed.

If the initial impulse of the project draws from Coronado's impetus for a less teleological encounter with the archive, it also draws from critics such as David Kazanjian, whose *The Colonizing Trick* combines a varied set of archival sources to consider race and class in the 19th-century. My chapter organization heeds his evocation of historical flashpoints: which he says addresses:

A historical, philosophical, and epistemological question: how might we characterize the dynamic relationships, forged during the colonial and antebellum periods within global economic and political systems, between universal egalitarianism and the particularistic discursive practices of race and nation? Specifically, I conduct historical and literary critical examinations of four sets of texts that correspond to four crucial, *historical flashpoints*. (4, emphasis mine)

Kazanjian proceeds to describe a varied set of objects: narratives of Black merchant marines, Thomas Jefferson's published texts and correspondence, early 19th-century Black American critiques of colonization, and Yucatán's Caste War during the 1840s and '50s. I similarly divide chapters according to historical moments and analyze eclectic texts to highlight the dynamic relationship between Imperialism and resistance practices.

Flashpoints are methodologically less linear, less geographically contained, and heavily driven by the archive. For Kazanjian, they allow him to range from Thomas Jefferson's correspondence down to the Yucatán Caste War, crossing disciplinary and national boundaries alike to expand the conceptual reach of his book. Flashpoints emphasize particular themes and social relations, often skipping or ignoring familiar moments in history over which chronologies may feel the need to pause. Kazanjian, like Spillers and Nwankwo, allows his encounter with the archive to drive his flashpoints. Thus, archival objects fill in previously institutionalized gaps,

and, by extension, can transcend previously codified modes of scholarship. My research attends to wide-ranging texts such as 19th-century Californio newspaper articles and Black soldier letters during the Spanish-American War, and all of which begin to chart an expanded literary and political history that traces a trajectory of arrested solidarities and, at times, misguided-in-retrospect political allegiances to nation-states.

The above organizational principles serve a set of interventional stakes informed by Jodi Melamed's *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*. I build upon Melamed in theorizing the political stakes of researching the 19th-century less bound by white-centric and canonical methods. Melamed theorizes a political literary history in three categories: racial liberalism, racial multiculturalism, and the functions of global literature. Through this division, Melamed outlines the mechanisms by which the institutional study of literature disconnects racism from material conditions, paving the way for models of resistance that ultimately serve capital. Melamed carefully distinguishes forms of literary multiculturalism from material anti-racism and their roles in the social and political order:

The potency of race novels, multicultural literature, and other forms of literary studies has come from their capacity to compel reading practices and to teach and transmit epistemic habits that forcefully encode the readers' social and material world by using liberal antiracist terms of difference so that the evaluations of racial liberalism, liberal multiculturalism, and neoliberal multiculturalism appear to be the whole truth of the matter in terms of reason, experience, and self-identification. (16)

Melamed's key point comes at the end of this excerpt when she discusses how literary paradigms such as liberal multiculturalism attempt to assume hegemonic status in the antiracist political imaginary.

Though Melamed begins her study around the 1930s, I am interested in how the dynamic she describes operates in literary studies of the nineteenth century, and furthermore how categories of literary study such as the novel and poetry often serve to control the voices discussed in English/Humanities departments. Though liberal antiracist thinking as an articulated category did not exist in the early nineteenth century, my work illustrates that struggles over inclusion, citizenry, and representation in fact circulated in writings during this period. My reading of how nineteenth-century texts grappled with these ideas to underscore a broader truth often obscured. For example, if the widely read *12 Years a Slave* plots the reclaiming of freedom through the US legal system, *Blake* depicts an insurrectionary plan outside of those mechanisms. Finding other voices, both ethnically/racially as *well* as politically, often necessitates expanding the objects of study to additional literary forms: the testimonial, the epistolary, and other objects offered by the archive. In that sense, intervention exceeds the scope of mere subject matter, extending to archival and canonical practices in the academy.

For example, few Californio women published novels; however, some wrote testimonials sharply critiquing U.S. imperialism. Conveniently, exalted forms of literature such as poetry and the novel often derive from majoritarian subject positions. Testimonials have only gained purchase in literary studies recently. Thus, research that neglects testimonials and similar forms excludes the resistant writings of minoritarian subjects. I am interested in excavating the nineteenth century for texts that do not simply guarantee state capacities or sanctioned forms of anti-racism. For example, Black soldier letters tell a different story about the relationship

between race and citizenship than an account written by a mainstream white historian. And again, focus on contact zones encourages interventional reading practices. For example, scholar David Luis Brown reads Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* for its sentimentality and struggle for indigenous personhood. But what might it mean to read *Ramona* by emphasizing its striking and provocative scene where Alessandro proclaims that Indian people would fight alongside Mexicans if they ever warred with the Spaniards? The novel theorizes the contact zones between Mexicans and Mission Indians as one of contradictory impulses of solidarity and hierarchy. Alessandro asserts a co-constitutive version of sovereignty, only plausible through allied cross-ethnic struggle.

If the prevailing historical narratives of the nineteenth century US follow the development and consolidation of the nation-state, both in terms of Manifest Destiny as well as its coincident cultural forms, nineteenth-century *literary* history follows a similar trajectory. This correlation codifies the literature of BIPOC through a generally progressive path towards full citizenship and rights. If Melamed asserts that the ideological and racial projects of US hegemony directly influence methods of literary study, then a focus on contact zones and all their attendant contradictory accounts of identity and the nation-state can provide an alternative racial and political framework, a fugitive account of the multi-racial nineteenth century. Each of my four chapters unearths some element of a previously understudied archive. Moreover, each chapter focuses on a particular contact zone that often doubles as a site of political struggle. And significantly, each chapter speaks to varied forms of political conflict imagined by these texts as a continuum of resistance paralleling the development of US Empire.

The seemingly distinct geographical axes I chart are born from an emphasis on examining key nineteenth-century accounts of resistance within the intermingling

transculturation of contact zones. My project counters research and reading trends that overemphasize liberal categories of resistance and liberation. Thus, my argument currently holds two connected layers. One is that our reading practices of the literary nineteenth century often carry the same flaws articulated by Melamed for the 20th century, focusing on liberal democratic capitalism at the expense of the material anti-racisms I associate with revolutionary and insurrectionary practices. The second is that reading resistance through the contact zones of race and culture exposes the conflicts and contradictions of a very similar dynamic in the nineteenth century, as Blackness, Indigeneity, and proto-Latinidad grappled with conceptions of liberation often, crucially, in *relation* to each other. Through these readings, my dissertation will both question our reading and institutional practices while excavating the past for insight about conflict and revolution presently buried under liberal democratic notions of identity and politics.

Chapter I

Equality Imagined and Unrealized: *El Clamor Público's* Assimilationist and Emigrationist

Ventures

The September 18, 1855, issue of California Spanish-language newspaper *El Clamor Público* features national and international stories, including news of guerilla conflict in Guatemala and the proposed building of a telegraph line from Florida to Cuba. However, that very same issue includes a column titled "Biografía de Los Presidentes de los Estados Unidos de America," featuring short biographies of famous US Presidents. The entries themselves include only basic information titled by a Spanish version of the president's name: Jorge Washington, Juan Adams, Tomas Jefferson, Santiago Madison, Guillermo Henrique Harrison, and Zacarias Taylor all have entries. For example, under "Jorge Washington," the paper provides the dates of his birth and death, and that he was the commander of the American army during the Revolution before being elected President twice. The entries contain little extra information or praise, assuming the style of an encyclopedia entry. The presence of such a column underscores *El Clamor's* early idealization of U.S. liberal⁵ democracy, and the "Spanishizing" of founding fathers seeks to familiarize and include them into the imaginary of the Spanish-speaking public founder Francisco Ramirez attempts to both inform and cultivate. Though not the only Spanish-language newspaper in Southern California⁶, nor the only politically-focused one, *El Clamor*,

⁵ Liberalism is certainly a fraught term. Historian Paul Bryan Gray notes that in addition to Ramirez's great admiration of U.S. Constitutional ideals, his liberalism also drew from the Mexican liberalism of Benito Juarez (24). Scholar Nikhil Pal Singh asserts that despite liberalism's standard definition of "respect for individual rights and freedoms, and gradual political reform towards democracy," the implementation and manner of reforms and change take a multitude of forms. Certainly, Ramirez viewed *El Clamor* as a gesture towards racial and liberal progress.

⁶ *El Clamor* was the 2nd Spanish-language newspaper in Southern California, after the *Los Angeles Star's* *La Estrella*, but the first stand alone. Hayes-Bautista, David E., et al. "Empowerment, Expansion, and Engagement: Las Juntas Patrióticas in California, 1848-1869." *California History*, vol. 85, no. 1, 2007, pp. 4-23

appeared during a period of political tumult for California Mexicans. And like other papers, it sought to carefully navigate the tense cultural and ethnic contact zone between the rising U.S. dominant culture and the Spanish-speaking American communities to which these newspapers catered. Scholars of U.S. Spanish-language newspapers note how these publications employed multiple strategies to amplify their constituent communities. They drew from the Spanish-language literary tradition, including prose and poetry. They focused on local news and crime. And often they published international news stories in order to foster and create a cosmopolitan and well-informed readership.

However, in its four-year run, *El Clamor* uniquely narrates an initial struggle for equity in California that ultimately settled on the idea of emigration to Mexico. The paper's run begins by gesturing towards equality and forms of assimilation, and it ends by promoting emigration to Sonora, with Ramirez himself moving there in 1860. While I utilize reading practices employed by critics such as Kirsten Silva Gruesz, who reads juxtapositions contained within singular newspapers to garner insight on editorial motivations, I locate key arcs in the entire run of *El Clamor Público* as a case for the way Spanish-language print served as a battleground for the defense of California Mexicans' rights, fully displaying their tenuous relationship to the liberal ideals they sought.

Through its fierce adherence to democratic freedom for Mexican Californians, *El Clamor Público* ultimately developed a politics of alternative nationhood and emigration as a critique of U.S. power, anticipating the further minoritization of Mexicans that would occur over the rest of the century. Californios, for example, viewed themselves as *gente de razon*⁷, or people of reason

⁷ *Gente de razon*, or "people of reason," was a colonial Spanish term deployed in order to distinguish landowning Hispanics from Indigenous or Mixed-race people in Spanish-America.

who were rightful inheritors and contributors to liberal democracy. However, their social standing and political power eroded as the century progressed, leaving them in minoritized status. *El Clamor* served as an initial record for this minoritization process, distinguishing itself through Ramirez and his editorials. While other Spanish-language sections such as the *Santa Barbara Gazette's La Gaceta*⁸ merely reported on news, and the prevailing English-language newspaper of record *The Los Angeles Star*⁹, trafficked in poetry, advertisements, and folksy tales, *El Clamor* featured Ramirez's scathing and lengthy critiques of the treatment of Mexican Californians. A study of *El Clamor* starts this project because it focuses on a print culture born of the intersection of U.S expansion and the Mexican Californian struggle to maintain territory and culture. *El Clamor's* navigation of this tension displays competing impulses for assimilation and alternative nationhood through Sonoran immigration. *El Clamor's* arc depicts a failed assimilation and failed realization of the stated values and rights granted by the U.S. Constitution for minoritized subjects. In other words, early issues of the newspaper sought to uphold and promote U.S. democratic principles, while latter issues began favorably covering emigration so Mexico.

19th-Century Spanish-Language Print Culture in California

⁸ *La Gaceta* was the Spanish-language section of the *Santa Barbara Gazette*, which was founded by R. Hubbard, T. Dunlap, and W.B. Keep, and began on May 1855, with the last known issue on March of 1858. According to Muir Dawson, however, *La Gaceta* was short lived, only lasting until December of 1855 due to lack of interest from the local Spanish population.

⁹ *The Los Angeles Star* was the first newspaper in Los Angeles, initially catering to the white minority in California. It featured two pages in English and two in Spanish, the latter of which was edited by poet, politician, and intellectual Manuel Clemente Rojo, who became a mentor to Ramirez when he himself worked for the *Star* as a fourteen year old in 1851. Upon Rojo's departure, Ramirez was briefly returned to the *Star* in 1854, the year before he founded *El Clamor* (Gray 20).

Nineteenth-century Spanish-language print culture, particularly newspapers, emerged in multiple areas such as Texas, New Mexico, New York, and California. According to Nicolás Kanellos, these papers served the conventional journalistic functions by providing local news, current events, and product advertisement. However, Kanellos points out that U.S. Spanish-language newspapers also served the unique functions of protecting language, culture, and rights against an often hostile and growing Anglo-American community (5). Kanellos categorizes Spanish-language newspapers into *immigrant presses*, *minority presses*, and *presses in exile*. Immigrant presses focused on news of the homeland and its relationship to the U.S. minority press emphasized the protection of civil rights and the community's economic and cultural standing. Accordingly, these newspapers often served as vessels for contestation against the politics and characterizations perpetrated by hostile English-language publications. Kanellos describes the presses in exile as those established by political refugees who took advantage of the free press in the U.S. to print news and commentary to be, in some cases, smuggled to their homeland. Often, newspapers took on the preoccupations of all three categories. Kanellos's work draws a roadmap to analyze the relationship between the press and minority community by categorizing their distinct background motivations: immigrant, exile, and minority.

El Clamor emerged from a history of Spanish-language printing that goes back to at least 1813, when printing presses came to Texas and 1830 when they first came to Spanish California and New Mexico. During these decades of the 1810s-30s, presses mainly disseminated religious and political treatises and agricultural and ranching information. A new era of Spanish-language periodicals would commence after the Mexican American War, during a period where former Mexican citizens struggled over dispossession of lands and decline of political influence. Gruesz identifies several prominent periodicals during this period, including *El Clamor* from Los

Angeles and *El Bejareño* and *El Ranchero* of San Antonio and Bexar County, Texas (1850). According to her, the two Texas papers were at constant odds with each other, only agreeing in their outrage over the advent of the anti-immigrant anti-Catholic platform of the Know-Nothing Party during the restive 1855 elections. *El Bejareño* leaned more assimilationist because it thought that Tejanos were better off as US citizens because Mexico was poorly run. (101)¹⁰ This characterization of the prevalent Southwest newspapers of this period shows that the print culture period during which *El Clamor* emerged was marked by a wish for assimilation and a need to fight back against the mistreatment of former Mexicans in the now U.S. My readings of *El Clamor* illustrate that it stood unique in the way it extended these political tensions through Ramirez's emigrationist politics that portrayed the possibility of autonomy for a group quickly minoritized by a crystalizing U.S. nation-state.

El Clamor was born from *The Los Angeles Star*. According to historian William B. Rice, English-language journalism came to California along with the Gold Rush. E. G. Buffum and J.A. Lewis were the first editorial staff of the paper and published a prospectus in San Francisco newspapers announcing their upcoming Los Angeles publication (8). Edward Kemple's early history of California Newspapers provides insight into the political and social arena of which both the *Star* and *El Clamor* entered. Kemple claims that "As the population of Los Angeles increased, and the attractions of the gaming table drew thither from New Mexico and our Southern and Western border towns the turbulent classes who so long disturbed the peace of society in that section, the *Star* shone out, a solidary ray, over a waste of dark waters" (233). Kemple situates the *Star* as a newspaper that helped create political discourse in a shifting and

¹⁰ Gruesz, Kirsten Silva. *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*. Princeton University Press, 2001.

changing city. He goes on to say that the *Star* found itself in trouble for its criticism of early governor John Bigler. Kemple's history establishes that southern California print culture, from its outset, operates as a political wing capable of generating conflict. Kemple states that though Republican, *El Clamor* opposed the Republican nominee for Governor in 1856 because of that candidate support of "settlers," remarking that the squatters were primary objects of the paper's aversion (235). If Kemple is accurate when he later categorizes *El Clamor* as the only Republican newspaper out of the primary papers in California, then clearly Ramirez represented a unique political as well as racially positioned voice.

Indeed, in California newspapers emerged during a period when Mexican Californians needed political platforms. After the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe in 1848, article 2 guaranteed full citizenship and land rights to Mexicans who chose to remain in what is now California. Prominent figures such as Pablo de la Guerra were elected to political posts where they fought against the unequal treatment of Mexican Californians (Leal 71). Famously, de la Guerra gave a speech in the California Senate where he describes his people as "strangers in their own land." This speech would be published by Francisco Ramirez, demonstrating how he used Spanish-language print as an amplifier for Mexican political grievances. Leal also describes *El Clamor* as a forerunner to the Chicano Movement and one of the first California Spanish-language newspapers to publish social protest poems (71). In the *Handbook of Hispanic Culture*, Leal accounts for *El Clamor* in a section in an entry on pre-Chicano literature titled "Territorial Literature 1848-1959," signaling the prominent place the newspaper has in the history of Chicano political thought.

Silva Gruesz illustrates the way reading practices show how printed text reveals political motivations. In her reading of the *El Labrador*, a paper out of Las Cruces, New Mexico, she

close reads different elements of the front page, such as advertisements for a lawyer in El Paso, Texas who can translate between Spanish and English placed next to ads for Cuban and Mexican cigars. For Gruesz, *El Labrador* exemplifies the way the print culture of Mexican America straddles two languages while juxtaposing local city and state/regional concerns. For Gruesz, this print culture archive "requires a transnational and multilingual frame of analysis, moving not only between American English and a Mexican Spanish marked by its Indigenous understory but between the kinds of spatial scales that are posed on that front page of *El Labrador*: from town and region to the centers of power in both US and Mexican publishing" (460).

The spatial scales referenced here also gesture towards political scales insofar as print can extend local imaginaries to national ones. For example, an assimilatory column, such a lawyer advertising language translation, is juxtaposed with news of a guerilla struggle in Guatemala, a country of which most of the readership, at least on a colonial and linguistic level, would be aware. As I argue, both synchronic and diachronic juxtapositions in *El Clamor* traverse political scales from assimilation to emigration, showing how *El Clamor* levied its critique: a wish for integration stunted by white supremacist U.S. nation-building which perpetuated Mexican Californian racialization. In turn, *El Clamor's* promotion of emigration to Sonora serves as a critique of the U.S.'s ability to realize its ideals due to the racialized liminal status of Mexicans in the U.S.

***El Clamor Público's* Liberal Narrative Arc**

El Clamor Público distinguished itself among mid-19th-century Spanish-language newspapers as an early vehicle for Los Angeles political discourse. It served as an arena for their grievances and attempts to establish a public culture. As mentioned above, Spanish-language newspaper writing appeared as special sections in larger, white-dominated newspapers such as

The Santa Barbara Gazette's (1855-1858) *La Gaceta*. These sections and others often served the purpose of social control, conditioning Spanish-language speakers to a white worldview and legal system, since they were often under the indirect editorial control of the primary paper. This dynamic, whereby an English-language paper featured a section for Spanish readers, itself frames a discursive contact zone between Mexican America and white English-speaking settlers. *El Clamor*, then, constitutes a unique type of movement in post-1848 racial politics, since it was independent and not beholden to a white parent paper. Unfettered by a parent paper, *El Clamor Público* promoted an activist discourse, reporting on white racial violence and inequality. Ramirez, fluent in both English and Spanish, was part of the second generation of Mexican Americans who followed the Californio during the transition to U.S. rule; and when they were bilingual like Ramirez, they were able both to consume local English-language newspapers and to produce Spanish writing of their own.

Ramirez's complicated class position influenced both his politics and the politics of the paper he founded. Historian Paul Bryan Gray frames Ramirez as a kind of outsider, neither a wealthy *ranchero* nor a laborer. His family was part of a small group of agriculturists, merchants, and entrepreneurs. As a liberal, however, he aligned himself with the working class and hoped to raise political awareness among them to garner votes for candidates dedicated to improving conditions for Spanish-speaking people (25). This biographical information speaks to a set of political motivations born of what Ramirez saw as crucial to equity for Spanish-Speaking people in Southern California. Through *El Clamor* Ramirez attempted to construct a political community sensitive to sweeping political changes after the Mexican-American War that threatened the equality of Mexican Californians.

Gray enumerates *El Clamor's* primary themes, which he suggests are "drawn directly from Mexican Liberalism" (24). Namely, he cites the belief in racial equality and the abolition of slavery, along with equal rights under the law and full political rights for all citizens. Additionally, Ramirez greatly admired the U.S. Constitution, though he "believed its value was largely nullified by American racism and slavery" (24). These ideals put his paper at odds with the Californios who exerted great power in Los Angeles, often allying with conservative American political leaders. Here, Gray mentions lawyer Joseph Lancaster Brent, who represented a party from the deep south called Chivalry and forged important political and economic relationships with the Mexican landowning elite in Southern California. Gray suggests even that, "There was a certain analogy between their position as owners of vast estates supported by Indian labor and the aristocratic plantations of the South worked by slaves" (25). And it is this analogy that I believe extends the stakes of *El Clamor's* ambivalent treatment of Indigenous subjects. In other words, the Indigenous subject is, in *El Clamor*, a vehicle for its ideas about liberalism and racial equality. And the way *El Clamor* handled indigeneity speaks to the complexities of the contact zone where Mexican and Indigenous meet, and where *El Clamor* served as a battleground for notions of equity under the law.

Eclectic in its offerings, *El Clamor* included news from around the world, a testament to Ramirez's interest in hemispheric politics, his fluency in multiple languages, and his rumored daily reading of foreign newspapers. The very first issue of *El Clamor* establishes its mission statement in line with U.S. liberal ideals. The first column of this issue discusses the price of the subscription and remarks that foreigners have shown much more excitement about subscribing than Mexican Californians. He makes a call to action to subscribe, saying, "you should be persuaded that the freedom of the printing press is the best guarantee for a people, and that ours

more than any other, needs its help.¹¹" The "you" here are the Mexican Southern Californians whom Ramirez wished to bend towards a political engagement in line with equality and liberalism, and the "ours" hailed the imagined community he hoped his paper would create. Yet this quotation is multivalent. It lauds and upholds the idea that freedom of press is the "best" guarantee for a people, a liberal stance echoing the US Constitution. Additionally, the phrase "a people." interpellates the public he speaks to, especially considering the opening statement discusses the lack of Spanish-Speaking Californian interest. This demonstrates the paper's impulse to rally and develop a Californian community based on shared political interests.

The last part of that same opening column clarifies what Ramirez sees as the paper's purpose and describing its adherence to Constitutional liberalism:

El Clamor is built on a solid foundation of liberal ideas, and its columns will always be open for impartial discussion of all matters of public interest. Convinced that the public will positively receive our efforts, from here on we will do our best to capture your esteem. We support the United States Constitution convinced that only under it will we have liberties, and only under it we can find happiness: and we will fight everything opposed to its magnanimous spirit and great ideals

The above quote constitutes, among other things, Ramirez's gesture to the new country and government he finds himself under. Furthermore, it adds a rhetorical force to appeals to justice and his subsequent critiques of the U.S. government's actions. From the outset, the paper

¹¹ *debeis persuadiros que la libertad de la imprenta es la mejor garantía para un pueblo, y que el nostro mas que ninguno necesita de sus auxilios*

demonstrates a devotion to liberal democratic principles to protect liberty and the California Spanish-speaking people with whom Ramirez associated.

It did not take long for the paper to begin pointing out how the ideals of the US Constitution did not always apply evenly. One of the main features of *El Clamor* was the reporting of crime and court cases, which often functioned as a social indicator of legal and cultural tensions when combined with Ramirez's overtly activist curatorial and editorial lens. In the June 3, 1855 issue, a short article describes how squatters, or U.S. whites who occupied Mexican land, killed a few cows that were owned by Mexican Californians. It details how the owners have "not been able to get these four criminals to receive a penalty" and goes on to say that "they will no longer be punished, because the four thieves are Americans, because for these men all crimes are forgiven by the judges."¹² The article couches its political stances within the context of a local crime report. Ramirez's lambasting of the U.S. legal system reflects his deep concern with unequal treatment under the law for the Mexican-Californians whose political standing most concerned him. Whether or not most of his readership would agree, Ramirez highlighted the inequality of the legal system, using his case as evidence. In addition, the first part of the article outlines the way the victim of the crime has not been successful in appealing to the legal system for justice. This type of editorializing marked a feature of *El Clamor* and

¹² un corresponsal de la cronica, anunela que en San Jose algunos racheros arrestaron a cuatro squatters, que mataron dos vacas, una de la propiedad de Bruno Bernal y la otra de Jose Espinoza, y despues de infinitas vueltas que los han hecho dar a los dueños de las reses, basta la fecha no se ha podido conseguir que a estos cuatro crimnales se les ponga alguna pena, pues el Juez del Condado dice que como el robo no es dlevalor de \$50, no puede juzgarlos su corte. Hán pasado el juicio a un Juez de Pas quien ha formado tres jurados, lo que han sideo escusados por el abogado que defiende a los reos. El dia 14 de Junio ha pasado la acusacion al Juez de Paz del pueblo de San Juan Bautista, ya seguramente no serán castigados, por razon de que los cuatro ladrones son Americanos, porque a estos señores to do crimen les perdonan los jueces. (June 3, 1855).

similar articles appear throughout its print run highlight a growing discontent with the U.S. legal system.

Comparing the thrust of *El Clamor*, *La Gaceta*, and *The Los Angeles Star*, during a two-month period in 1855 illustrates the way *Clamor* distinguished itself in its curation of writings. The three papers were not only connected geographically, but materially, since, for example, *The Los Angeles Star* included advertisements for *El Clamor*, which offered free translations for advertisers. In addition, *La Gaceta*, which was the Spanish section of the *Santa Barbara Gazette*, borrowed short articles from *El Clamor*, such as news of the death of a Commander Jose Pujol in Baja California in a September 20, 1855 issue. Though connected, the three papers differed in their approaches to newsprint.

During this mid-1855 period, *The Los Angeles Star* consisted mostly of advertisements, poetry, and folk stories. Though it did feature world news, the articles were mostly short and drew from other newspapers of note such as the *New York Times*, and included virtually no editorial commentary. The September 29 1855, issue included a story titled “The Effects of Magic Tricks on the Insane,” which was an account of a magician’s visit to an asylum, providing detailed descriptions of the audience’s reactions and ending with a lament about the situation of mental patients, remarking that we should “fully appreciate the blessing of a sound mind.” The September 8 issue included the story “The Death Shot, A Texas Incident” while the September 15 included a story called “A Gambler’s Fate.” Though its unclear whether they were real or fictional, the stories were both moralistic tales, with the latter, for example, ending with the death of a card cheat. The *Star* seldom included accounts of the racial tensions or cultural clashes that were present in Los Angeles during this period.

La Gaceta, also in Spanish, did report on political news, especially from Mexico. For example, the September 20, 1855 issue discussed the Revolution of Ayulta¹³, discussing General Comonfort's victories and Santa Anna's fleeing the country. The article concludes that, "They have opened the ports of Manzanillo and Acapulco...and everything will be under a more liberal plan than before. There's a rumor Comonfort will be the president, who will prove to be a man of intelligence and liberal principles."¹⁴ Here, *La Gaceta* appeals to the Spanish-speaking population's interest in the political situation in Mexico; and in this specific case the changing political tides towards liberalism. Though political, however, the article says little in the manner of editorial commentary.

In contrast, *El Clamor*'s September 18, 1855 issue features the article "Californian Hospitality" which asks, "What is the foreigner in California?" It characterizes the experience of Spanish-speaking peoples in California as in the most "inhospitable land that can be known" referring particularly for "the children of the various peoples of Spanish America, of those peoples whose individuals should be considered by the North Americans of California as brothers and children of the same family."¹⁵ The editorial proceeds to lambast the treatment of Spanish-speaking people's and indict the government for not protecting their rights and livelihood. *El Clamor*'s distinguishing feature is here on full display; its localized political

¹³ The Revolution of Ayulta was the successful war to oust General Santa Anna, which would usher in a succession of liberal presidents, Juan Álvarez, Ignacio Comonfort, and Benito Juárez. This eventually led to the 1857 Mexican Constitution.

¹⁴ "Han abierto el Puerto de Manzanillo y Acapulco, deberan revisar los derechos y todo estara bajo un plan mas liberal que antes. Se cree que Comonfort sera el president, quien se dice ser un hombre intellijente y de principios liberales"

¹⁵ "Es lo que no es en ninguna parte del mundo; es lo que no es ni en la tierra mas hispitalaria que se puede conocer. Al hablar nosotros de este asunto, nos referimos muy particularmente a los hijos de los diversos pueblos de la América Española, de esos pueblos cuyos individuos debieran ser considerados por los Norte-americanos de California como hermanos é hijos de una misma familia."

editorial commentary. Though other papers include local as well as international news articles such as this reflect the way *El Clamor* used the newspaper form to intervene specifically in the plight of Mexican Californians, whom he saw as unfairly treated by the U.S. legal system.

Despite its defense of Spanish-speaking peoples, *El Clamor* sometimes expressed contradictory views when it came to other non-white groups. On one hand, as much as the paper proclaimed to be abolitionist, it rarely featured stories about African American lynchings (Benavides 61). On the other hand, *El Clamor* featured several articles about Indians, reflecting the complex racial politics of Southern California in the post-mission era. After the Mexican Secularization act in 1833, Missions lost control of much of their broader landholdings, which were distributed to mostly Mexican military commanders. Often, this land was tended to and inhabited by Indigenous tribal peoples, and this land transfer often caused racial and ethnic animosity. Crime reporting again became an occasion for racialized editorializing, as seen in this June 7, 1856 issue report:

Last Sunday a Sonoreño named Epifanio Estrada killed, by stabbing, an Indian generally known by the name of Pedro. The murderer was arrested and taken to the jail where he has remained to date. According to eye-witness reports, it seems that the homicide was committed in self-defense, because the Indian had insulted and threatened him several times. The inmate was examined by the grand jury, who met on the 2nd, who absolved him of all responsibility, and we do not know why he has not been released.¹⁶

¹⁶ el domingo pasado un sonoreño llamado Epifanio Estrada mató de una puñalada a un indio conocido generalmente por el nombre de Pedro. El asesino fué arrestado y conducido a la carcel en donde ha permanecido hasta la fecha. Segun los informes que hemos tenido por testigos oculáres que presenciaron este hecho, parece que el homicidio fué cometido en propia defensa, porque el indio la habia insultado y amenazado varias veces. El reo fue examinado por

The above entry brings together several concerns common throughout *El Clamor*, including local crime and a sensitivity to the way the justice system handled punishments along racial lines, including between Indigenous and Mexican Californians. As common with the paper, the actors are racialized. The murder victim is identified as "Pedro," and then a few lines later is referred to as "The Indian." This switch functions to reinforce his racial identity, a racial identity whose presence was certainly a source of anxiety for Mexican Californian people. Aside from the animosity from the Secularization Act, scholars like Brian Hammett have suggested that Mexican Liberalism, despite valuing racial equality, often saw Indian peasant culture as an obstacle to modernization (14).

According to the article, witnesses stated that the murder was justified as self-defense, though it is difficult to judge the level of threat or insult without further information. By “wondering,” why he has not been released, the article engaged in a rhetorical move, urging the readership to question Estrada’s incarceration. In this sense, the article is calling into question Estrada's treatment by the legal system. The case of Estrada fits into a larger trend in the paper’s crime reporting that juxtaposes reports on Anglo transgressions against mostly Mexican Californians, and Indigenous crimes in general, animating two intensifying tendencies. As Mexican Californians continued to navigate post-1848 politics, Ramirez utilized *El Clamor* as a discursive space to question the legal system, while also reporting on Indigenous criminality. Ramirez frames a tension in Mexican Californian identity—stuck between Anglo-whiteness and its legality—and the Indigenous presence that was a persistent tension even before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

el gran jurado, que se reunió el 2 del presente, quien lo absolvió de toda responsabilidad, y no sabemos porque no habrá sido puesto en libertad.

Yet in other moments, *El Clamor* acknowledges the realities of racial mixture, recognizing the continued importance of Indigenous racialization when it comes to the Mexican Californian plight to exercise full rights under the Treaty. Scholar Jose Benavides has noted that despite the fact that white male Mexicans were granted the same rights as American white males under the California constitution, Mexicans could be considered non-white on factors such as race, class, or religion and, furthermore, that Mestizos were often considered white or non-white situationally (54).

In an April 1857 issue, *El Clamor* contemplated race and color through the case of politician Manuel Dominguez, a California Constitution signer and Los Angeles County supervisor who Leonard Pitts states was "one of the most respected Californios" (202). In a San Francisco courtroom, Dominguez, because of his Indian blood, was legally barred from testifying. In recounting Dominguez's case, *El Clamor* notes Dominguez's high standing, but then proceeds to discuss racial mixture more broadly.

We think that, if it were possible to do a blood analysis of our brothers in the United States, there would be very few who would leave without having at least one drop of Indian blood or Black. The era of blue bloods, if it has ever existed, is surely not the present.¹⁷

The article makes a notable move with its shift from report to editorialization, Since it spends the majority of the article lauding Dominguez's exemplary status, calling him "esteemed" and "wise." The article never suggests that Indigenous people or Indigenous-blooded people should generally be granted full citizenship. Rather, the article works to establish

¹⁷ Nosotros pensamos que, si fuera posible hacer un análisis químico de nuestros , hermanos de los Estados Unidos, serian muy pocos los que saldrían sin tener por lo menos una gota de sangro do indio ó de negro. La época de las sangres azules, si es que alguna vez ha existido, de seguro no es la presente. (April 1857).

Dominguez as a signer of the constitution well-integrated into the political scene in California. The article points out that white Americans may also likely have Indian or Black blood, suggesting that one's performance as a *gente de razon*, (a liberal subject and a person guided by reason), should take precedent over any Indigenous or Black blood quantum. Instead of advocating for Indigenous rights, *El Clamor* attempts equate Spanish-speaking Californians with Whites in an attempt to promote political equity. It accounts for the new realities of the racial and ethnic contact zones, especially when suggesting that the era of blue bloods "if it has ever existed" no longer existed. The latter of which also functions to disrupt narratives of white purity and white exceptionalism that often drove legal and political inequality in California post-1848 and beyond.

Along with *El Clamor's* reportage on injustice, liberalism, and complicated racial politics, another liberatory strategy emerged which would overlap with Ramirez's own life path: the promotion of emigration. As early as Feb 16, 1856, the paper began reporting on the journey of Jesus Islas, who led a caravan south to Sonora, Mexico. In a column titled "To Americanos, Hispano Americanos y Californios," Islas announced that interested parties could prepare themselves with supplies and weapons necessary for travel. Furthermore, he had gone to Sonora previously to secure resources for emigration and was "pleased to express to the public that upon my arrival in Sonora the project has been met with great enthusiasm by all the people of the state"¹⁸ and had received "cattle and seed donations." This Sonoran saga appeared prominently in the paper, a commentary on the vexed relationship that Ramirez and his imagined community

¹⁸ *El Clamor Público* February 16, 1856

had with the U.S. The supposed open arms of the people of Sonora served as a stark contrast to the encroaching force of U.S. territorial power. As the landownership and power of many Mexican Californians shrank in the post-1848 era, *El Clamor Público* offers, through the idea of Sonoran colonization, a narrative of land and resources awaiting any who move.

But the Sonoran venture was not without its detractors, and *El Clamor* provided platforms for the resultant debate through letters to the editor. The terms of the disagreement highlight the political and class tensions within the Mexican Californian community. In the May 24 issue, a few months after the aforementioned Sonoran announcement, letter signed only "A Californio" lambasted the Sonoran emigration. The letter begins by castigating Ramirez himself for his support of the caravan, accusing him of not being impartial as an editor. The letter argues that the supporters are "mistaken in believing that the Mexican Government is capable of protecting the colonization of its borders, let alone helping companies [such as the Sonoran caravan] now" and, furthermore that "true freedom...where thought and speech are not restricted" is what they currently enjoy in Alta California.¹⁹ Here, the letter demonstrates an investment in the possibilities of the U.S. as a beacon of liberal rights relating to freedom of speech, and furthermore rhetorically portrays Mexico as a land unable to protect itself or its populace.

The letter continues this characterization of Sonora, Mexico by distinguishing it from the "gente de razon" concept so crucial to the self-image of many Californios. The letter asks, "But in Sonora, where that mob of undisciplined soldiers and mercenaries have the people ruined," and "Where those famous Apache guerrillas have limitlessly harassed them in a horrifying way,

¹⁹ *El Clamor Público* May 24th, 1856

can you have any peace?"²⁰ The Apache Wars²¹ certainly constituted a volatile situation in hotbeds such as Sonora. However, the respondent still displays an investment in characterizing Mexico as particularly unstable to counter and soften the racialized plight of Mexican Californians by situating California as more peaceful and stable. The rebuttal mirrors the politics of white supremacy and Manifest Destiny, including the anti-indigenous strain present in many Mexican Californians by characterizing south of the border as uncivil, Indigenous and war torn, which operates to justify, implicitly, the state of post-1848 California, notwithstanding the racism and racialization experienced by *El Clamor's* readership. As portrayed in the column and the letter to the editor, the juxtaposition of these two politics demonstrates how *El Clamor Público* served as a repository and battleground for the political debates that marked Mexican California, acting as a print culture public forum. And certainly, *El Clamor* was reflecting ideas emergent in the local population. According to scholar Arturo Nuñez, much of the Mexican American population had begun to develop interest in Sonoran emigration; and by 1856, "there was evidence to suggest that there were many more Mexican Americans willing to emigrate than the Islas caravan could reasonably accommodate" (89). Nuñez also opines that injustice produced the need for what he calls, "alternative sanctuary communities" free from Anglo violence as a form of utopian homeland (90).²²

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ The Apache Wars were a series of conflicts from 1849-1886, between various Apache nations and the U.S. as well as Spanish Settlements. They were escalated by the Mexican-American war and the subsequent settlement of U.S. citizens in Apache lands.

²² Nunez, A. R. (2010). *Freedom's journal and El Clamor Público: African American and Mexican American Cultural fronts in Nineteenth-Century Newsprint* (Doctoral dissertation, 2010). Berkeley, CA. Notably, Nunez reads the Sonoran columns as a precursor to the politics of documents such as the 1915 Plan de San Diego which called for separate borderlands republics for Mexicans, Blacks, and Indigenous people.

While Nuñez's suggests that the Sonoran shift in *El Clamor* derives from a utopian impulse for a space free from racial inequality, I read it also as a political statement against U.S. liberal ideals. During a period when the U.S. was bolstering its political and territorial power, *El Clamor's* coverage of Sonoran migration and colonization shifted the terms of the debate outside the auspices of the U.S. nation state's reach and protocols. In that sense, it laid groundwork for a Mexican-American politics that imagines freedom outside of continued racialization and territorial encroachment that would only grow as the 19th-century progressed. Spanish-language print culture, as evidenced by *El Clamor*, was a vehicle for these politics that also covered and accounted for the politics of assimilation and adherence to liberal constitutional ideals. As a whole, the paper demonstrated a complexity impossible to dismiss as merely utopian or merely assimilationist.

Nevertheless, Ramirez himself would leave for Sonora in 1860,²³ but not before ending *El Clamor* in December of 1859 with a farewell column that restated the assumed principles of the paper while notably critiquing its surrounding community of Mexican Californians for what he saw as their lack of political engagement. He states that from the start his objective "was only to dedicate myself to the service of my native compatriots of California, and generally of all the Hispanic Americans." His interpellation of all "Hispanic Americans" underscores how he hoped to engage a broader Hispanic community in the debates he documented in his paper. However, he proceeds to critique this imagined community, stating that "I also hoped that some of my enlightened fellow citizens, seeing my efforts, would contribute with their productions to make this publication more enjoyable and instructive; But I couldn't get any of them to write a

²³ Francisco Ramirez, in Sonora, wrote for the state's official newspaper, *La Estrella de Occidente*, but returned to California amidst political turmoil in 1862.

single line²⁴ for EL CLAMOR PUBLICO"²⁵ Ramirez documents the fraught political situation encountered by Spanish-language-newspapers during the 1850s. During the turmoil after the Mexican American War, California Mexicans held conflicting political stances, often dependent on their belief in maintaining their own position and land ownership. And as Paul Gray notes Ramirez began to develop a tense relationship with some elements of the Spanish-speaking community, which was only exacerbated when he wrote "And you, imbecile Californians!" in a column in response to what he perceived was an apathetic response to a Mexican lynching in 1858. According to Gray, this expletive "imbecile" led to a decline in both his credibility and readership and was a factor in him selling the paper in late 1859.

El Clamor Público depicts, through Ramirez's lens, a Mexican-Californian class with a complicated relationship to both Anglo supremacy and the U.S. nation state, wavering between assimilation, protest, and emigration. *El Clamor* leaned into politics of equality that mirrors the liberal democratic ideals of inclusion and citizenship rights. *El Clamor* also navigated the presence of Indianness carefully, especially during a historical period where territorial battles encroached on Indian sovereignty. *El Clamor's* run would end in part due to Ramirez's failure to ignite the type of liberal, abolitionist and pro-Mexican rights community he had hoped. Unable to unite the varied strata of Mexican Californians behind his ideals and lacking both readership and sponsors, his project ended. *El Clamor* was an early, post-1848 example of Spanish-language print culture that recognized the vexed relationship between Spanish-speaking Californians and the growing influence of White American politics and ideals. The paper provided a platform to grapple with the racial and political tensions inherent with American

²⁴ This quote by Ramirez also substantiates one of my claims, which is that *El Clamor* was, uniquely, a paper driven by and effectively published by a single man who used it as a platform for his individual notions of racial justice and political critique. *El Clamor's* run is both reportage and testimonial.

²⁵ *El Clamor Público* December 31, 1859

encroachment after the Mexican American war. The proceeding chapter, though couched in the same historical period, focuses on a much different political and ethnic sphere. If *El Clamor* demonstrates the way print newspaper was wielded to negotiate assimilation and the struggle for full rights, the following chapter's focus on abolition politics and the Black literary tradition in the decade preceding The Civil War demonstrates the strategies used by Black writing to conceive of liberation in the antebellum period, turning to the imaginative space of the novel to exceed strategies of assimilation almost entirely.

Chapter II

Textual Tactics: *12 Years a Slave*, *Blake*, and The Insurrectionary Imaginary in Antebellum

Black Liberatory Discourse

In the Antebellum period, Black literary discourse sought ways to address and resist racial injustice, but the context of slavery produced different parameters of resistance. This chapter will demonstrate the way an emerging Black literary sphere produced a novel that put pressure on the political limits of the abolition movement. If the position of Californios and Mexican Californians was characterized by a wish to maintain their status as a *Gente de Razón*, Black discourse explores notions of citizenship and personhood, and this chapter will examine texts emblematic of this conflict.

Comparing Solomon Northup's *12 Years a Slave* (1853) with Martin Delany's novel *Blake, or the Huts of America* (1859) schematizes Black textual interventions in questions of freedom and liberation in the pre-Civil War 1850's. Comparing them situates us in heated debates over abolition and the viability of full Black personhood under the protocols of U.S. governmentality. My argument in this chapter considers how these texts articulate competing discourses of liberation: one based on freedom granted by the U.S. nation state, and the other driven by the notion of Black revolutionary insurrection. In this chapter I bring to light the way each text's formal qualities map these competing positions, while asserting that their divergent reception histories and distinct position within the humanities—*12 Years a Slave* much more widely read than *Blake*—affirm that the 19th-century political conflict between acceptable and unacceptable forms of resistance still has relevance in the present. After all, unlike many slave narratives, *Blake* refuses to appeal to the U.S. government to end slavery; rather, it constructs what I call an *insurrectionary imaginary*, marshalled through the novel's articulation of tactics,

such as Henry's fugitive travels, armed with a politics that situates Black Americans as revolutionary agents. This imaginary fits into the broader focus of my dissertation on narratives of racial contact and liberation. Each of the text's main characters uses moments of racial contact to situate their own political and social position, whether Indigenous or in the case of *Blake*, his journey to Cuba.

The two texts emerged during a period when discussions of authenticity and fiction intersected with the political strategies of abolition. For example, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), the bestselling novel of the 19th-century, attempted to intercede in the slavery question through its graphic account of plantation slave life. Stowe was credited for shifting attitudes towards slavery in the 1850's and 60's; anecdotes even credited it for helping ignite the Civil War.²⁶ When *12 Years a Slave* appeared the next year, the comparisons came quickly and easily, often stressing the novel's limits compared to the Northup's true account. The September 9, 1853 edition of *Frederick Douglass's Paper*, which advertised Northup's narrative, published several reviews that mentioned *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. *The Syracuse Journal* pointed out that *Uncle Tom* is "discredited by many" as a romance, but wondered "how the [same] apologists for the institution can dispose of Northup." *The Cincinnati Journal* proclaimed that "such a tale is more powerful than any fiction which can be conceived and elaborated--there are no depicted scenes in Uncle Tom more tragic" than the incidents encompassed in *12 Years*. *The Detroit Tribune* praised the narrative as "extraordinary...because it is only a simple unvarnished tale of the experience of an American freeman of the 'blessings' of slavery, while

²⁶ In a famous anecdote, Lincoln, upon meeting Stowe, refers to her as the woman whose book started the civil war. Recounted in, Charles Edward Stowe, *Harriet Beecher Stowe: The Story of Her Life* (1911) p. 203

Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom* is only an ingenious and powerfully wrought novel, intended to illustrate what Solomon saw and experienced." These examples demonstrate that reviewers understood the importance of distinguishing true accounts from fictional ones with regard to the way literature could affect the slavery debate. This mirrors tendencies in the abolition movement, which often strategically sought to reveal the vicious truths of slave life.

Though these initial hesitations about the power of fiction faded after The Civil War ushered the abolishment of slavery, they remind us of narrative's stake in affecting racial political discourses. These reviews imply that despite *Uncle Tom's Cabin's* popularity, its status as fiction may have limited its ability to change minds because literary texts lacked the power of biographical accounts. And the abolition movement, as a strategy, sought to change public opinion by depicting the violent reality of slave life. The reviews suggest that if a political movement's primary thrust was to expose the truth, then true accounts might be more effective than novels. *Blake*, however, as a novel, took a much different approach to the question of slavery and abolition.

Released in 1859, the time period between *12 Years* and the Civil War, Martin Delany's novel eschews any fidelity to both truth and literary convention. The novel begins with a convention of the slave narrative: family separation. In this case, protagonist Henry's wife is sold, causing him to escape the plantation to save her. However, as he travels to reunite with her, the narrative begins to stage his larger mission, which involves traveling to various plantations and finding people to recruit in his effort to overthrow the slave system.

For example, by Chapter 20, "Advent Among the Indians," Henry has fully embarked on his mission to foment Black insurrection, beginning in the U.S. South. Henry insurrectionary plans circumvent the mainstream politics of abolition, instead seeking to overturn the state itself.

He has just left Texas, where he discusses his plot with an enslaved couple, counseling them on how to escape and become fellow revolutionary agents. This becomes a feature of the novel's first half, where chapters, roughly divided by geographic locations, map Henry's meetings. In Chapter 20, however, Henry detours to Fort Towson, Arkansas to converse with Chickasaw Chief Culver. After a heated exchange where he questions the Chief about his slave holding, Henry gets straight to the point: "What I now most wish to learn is, whether in case that the Blacks should rise, they may have hope or fear from the Indian?" (88).

Through Henry's question, the novel animates a confrontation between Blackness and indigeneity, driving its investment in questions about Black liberation and its relationship to racial solidarity. Narratively, this marks the first time, on his fugitive run, that Henry discusses his insurrectionary plans with a non-Black outsider. His question furthermore implies that insurrection necessitates non-Black allies, imagining the Black/indigenous contact zone as crucial to Black liberation. In a broader literary historical sense, Henry's wording "Blacks should rise" argues a Black politics whose purpose runs counter to the prevailing Black genre, the slave narrative.²⁷ Henry declaims a Black liberation neither individual nor routed through slave narratives or other novels. *Blake* not only refuses to appeal to reformist paths, but also outlines an actual insurrectionary strategy. This moment is emblematic of *Blake*'s insurrectionary *imaginary*, which I define as the novel's construction of revolutionary futurity through its depiction of tactics which undermine the racial capitalist project of the U.S. nation state. This

²⁷ Slave narratives generally did not promote insurrection. There were however militant tendencies in the 1850's abolition movement. Frederick Douglass, for instance, in his speech on John Brown in 1860, declared that "The Negroes of the South must do this; they must make these slaveholders feel that there is something uncomfortable about slavery. They must make the slaveholders feel that it is not so pleasant to be required to go to bed with revolvers and pistols, which they must do because they are afraid of their slaves" (Foner and Taylor 417).

chapter examines the literary strategies that *Blake* employs towards those ends, contrasting it with *12 Years a Slave*, which utilizes and stages slave narrative conventions. By contrasting the two texts, I will outline not only how literature intervened in the abolition question, but the way literature can serve to both delimit and expand the larger body of discourse on freedom and liberation. Furthermore, this chapter outlines the way the two texts understood the relationship between racial contact and liberation in such a way that exceeded other narratives of freedom, such as, for example, the preoccupation with rights expressed in the previous chapter. Black 19th-century discourse, then, ventured into futurity and insurrection precisely because the stakes exceeded equal rights towards questions of sovereignty and revolution.

The two texts emerge during an antebellum period rife with tension and political debate over slavery and abolition, including among Black abolitionists themselves. Delany's differences with Frederick Douglass, his friend and co-editor of the *North Star*, highlight these tensions. In the late 1840's, Delany, like Douglass and Garrison, believed in eradicating slavery through moral appeals to whites in conjunction with bolstering free Blacks' success in the capitalist marketplace. However, developments such as the Compromise of 1850²⁸ and later the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision in 1857²⁹ cast doubt on the viability of moral appeals and other reformist strategies. Though Douglass's politics began diverging from Garrison's, he maintained his belief in emancipation and Black elevation in the United States. In contrast, Delany began

²⁸ The Compromise of 1850 was a series of bills meant to settle disputes over slavery in the territories acquired during the Mexican-American War. Perhaps most famous was the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which required officials, even states and territories in which slavery was outlawed, to assist with the return of escaped slaves to their masters in the states and territories permitting slavery. This was an expansion of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, which guaranteed the right for slaveholders to recover escaped slaves. Often, only the sworn word of a slaveholder was enough to capture even a free man, which famously happened to Solomon Northrop.

²⁹ The Dred Scott Decision stipulated that Blacks were not included under the word 'citizens' in the Constitution, and thus cannot claim rights and privileges granted by the document. The law had reverberations since abolition in the 1850's was divided between Constitutionalists, who thought that the document could be wielded to grant freedom to Blacks, and another camp, led by William Lloyd Garrison, who considered the Constitution a pro-slavery document.

looking outside the U.S. context. In 1852 published *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*, which critiqued the U.S. for failing to live up to its own ideals, calling for Black emigration to Central and South America. *Condition*, as opposed to mainstream abolitionism, gestured towards a politics of self-governance and Black nationalism.

Around the period Delany wrote *The Condition*, two important abolitionist texts emerged on the literary and political scene. The aforementioned *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which inspired renewed hope in Douglass and other abolitionists that slavery and anti-Black racism could be eradicated. Solomon Northup's *12 Years a Slave* appeared a year later in 1853. *12 Years a Slave* garnered attention not only for its graphic violence, but because it narrated the memoir of a *free* Black man. In this sense, it operated as an exemplary slave narrative that appealed to justice by narrating the loss of a citizenry and personhood originally *granted* by the state. Solomon, as a free man, exemplified a set of rights granted under the purview of U.S. law. For this reason, I consider both *Blake* and *12 Years* as opposing representations of Black discursive freedom in the antebellum period. Comparing the two texts articulates competing pathways to liberation. Though both texts feature liberatory narratives, *12 Years* carves out a pathway towards individual liberation granted by the state, while *Blake* articulates a collective insurrectionary liberation that counters the state-based politics crucial to the narrative of U.S. progress.

Despite their differences, they feature notable similarities. Each main character travels: Henry as a fugitive, and Solomon as a commodity that changes hands multiple times. They feature contact zones which serve to catalog the social lives and organization of multiple plantations, including differing political ideologies and cultural practices. I read several of these encounters through the prism of an intra-racial contact zone, since they suggest an acculturation

between various plantations, especially regarding liberatory strategy. For instance, contact between different plantations serves as a network and strategy for Henry that accumulates as the novel proceeds. However, each text also goes beyond merely intra-racial contact zones, featuring a seemingly out of place moment where the main character describes an encounter with indigenous subjects. Indigenous and Black contact significantly makes visible the manifold relationships to U.S. citizenship and by extension visions of freedom, under the racialization necessary for the emergent U.S. social structure. These two texts depict Black subjects attempting to understand their strategic position through indigenous contact. This contact forms a nexus by which I read the relationship between the texts' vision of liberation and their consciousness about de-coloniality insofar as they gesture toward alternate systems of social life. In *Blake*, the indigenous contact presents a space by which the main character articulates notions of Black sovereignty.

The Structure of the Slave Narrative

The narrative structure of the two texts can be understood in the context of the slave narrative, a dominant Black literary genre in the mid-19th-century. Several scholars outline the basic features of slave narratives, while theorizing their rhetorical and political motivations. *Blake* and *12 Years* simultaneously draw from and stray from these conventions. In *To Tell a Free Story*,³⁰ William Andrews outlines the development of African American literature into the antebellum period from which *12 years* and *Blake* emerged. He notes that African American literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is dominated by treatises, pamphlets, addresses, and appeals that sought to address the problems of the Black situation, but

³⁰ Andrews, William L. *To Tell a Free Story: The First Century of Afro-American Autobiography, 1769-1865*. University of Illinois Press, 1986.

that Black autobiography had the most impact on the conscience of antebellum Americans (5). He suggests that the public was much more receptive to autobiography because first-person accounts--detailing the intimate thoughts and feelings of a slave in search of freedom, and the true facts of slave life--proved more compelling than long polemics and arguments. This suggests that African American literature developed and became popular according to how well it accomplished its rhetorical mission of exposing the horrors of slavery in order to appeal to white morality and empathy, while its focus on Black interiority and emotion sought to promote the Black subject as believable and God-fearing. According to this framework, the slave narrative genre traffics in specific abolition strategies preoccupied with white collaboration and government-granted rights.

Other critics have further outlined the basic goals and structure of the slave narrative. The Anthology *I Was Born a Slave*³¹, by Yuval Taylor, outlines slave narrative's basic goals as 1) documenting the conditions of slavery, 2) Persuading the reader of its evils, 3) Imparting religious inspiration, 4) Affirming the narrator's personhood, 5) Redefining Blackness or what it means to be Black, 5) Earning Money, and 6) Entertaining the reader (xvii). The first two on this list signify political motivations. They align with what critic Crispin Sartwell describes as the fundamental epistemic strategy of the slave narrative: "revelation, a bringing to light of the hidden" with regard to the realities of slavery. Sartwell contrasts this with pro-slavery propaganda's need to keep the truth and brutality hidden. Moreover, he concludes that bringing truth to light became associated with liberation, while concealment is associated with slavery (26). If uncovering truth functions as liberatory discourse, *Blake* complicates this idea through

³¹ Taylor, Yuval. "Introduction." *I Was Born a Slave: An Anthology of Classic Slave Narratives*, Lawrence Hill Books, 2015.

the use of fiction, foregoing experiential truths in favor of imagined future liberation, a revolution not yet to come.

James Onley identifies basic structures present across the slave narrative genre. He notes genre conventions, such as the initial statement of parentage following the line “I was born,” a description of a cruel slave master and a hardworking slave, a detailed description of slave life including food and clothing, a successful escape attempt, and finally an appendix full of documentary evidence such as details of purchase, bills of sale, or newspaper articles (51).³² According to Onley, these conventions apply to obscure and well-known narratives alike, including that of Frederick Douglass. He also reiterates that the primary purpose of the slave narratives was to provide a true account of slave life.

Though the primary purpose of Onley’s article is to argue that the slave narrative is neither pure autobiography, nor fiction, his description of the literary form of slave narratives is instructive since it draws connection between form and purpose. He asserts that thematically slave narratives expressing the reality of slavery and the need to abolish it, using episodes and events that will underscore this this theme. Formally, slave narratives follow a chronological plot that begins with an assertion of existence and testimony (53). This description calls attention to the audience and purpose of the genre and moreover to the critical relationship between form and content that is crucial to understanding the way *12 Years* and *Blake* operate. In other words, since slave narratives sought to exude authenticity as a political tool, they took pains to describe biographical information in great detail. Onley’s schematization of the genre, based on the fundamental purpose of making the reader feel the horrors of slavery, combined with a narrative

³² Olney, James. “‘I Was Born’: Slave Narratives, Their Status as Autobiography and as Literature.” *Callaloo*, no. 20, 1984, p. 46., doi:10.2307/2930678.

investment in proving authenticity of experience, provides the structure for my analysis of how each text strays from and by extension complicates the politics of emotional appeal. Northup's *12 Years a Slave* is a seemingly conventional slave narrative, but nonetheless adds an additional layer of appeal through Northup's status as a free man, while Delany's *Blake* complicates not only the slave narrative, but the parameters of Black liberation at large.

***12 Years a Slave* and the Parameters of Individuated Liberation**

Published in 1853 and promoted by major abolitionist figures Stowe, Garrison, and Douglass, *12 Years a Slave* becomes a bestseller, going through a half a dozen printings. The narrative was co-written and edited by David Wilson, a minor literary figure and associate of Northup's. Because of this collaboration, Wilson and Northup anticipated doubters, and decided to use real names and locations rather than the pseudonyms common to the slave narrative genre. Furthermore, after the narrative began to gain popularity, Wilson wrote a preface in which he stated unequivocally that Northup himself oversaw the narrative carefully for accuracy, often "dictating an alternation wherever the most trivial inaccuracy has appeared" (1). This provable narrative fidelity was in part driven by the specifics of Northup's story itself. Born in 1837 of two free parents, he moved to Saratoga Springs in 1834, working odd jobs as a violinist and carpenter. In 1841 he was convinced to travel to Washington, D.C. under false pretenses, kidnapped, and sold into slavery. He would circulate to multiple plantations before eventually regaining his freedom with the help of Canadian carpenter Samuel Bass, who sent letters to Northup's friends on his behalf. Though Northup appeals to morality and God in his narrative, which aligns it with other slave narratives of the period, his status as a free man affords him the right to appeal to the U.S. legal system. Northup, then, frames his freedom according to the logic of the social contract relationship to the state. Though he makes moral appeals in the narrative,

his overall rhetoric is also grounded in a legal appeal that should stand regardless of how the reader feels about slavery itself. Thus, Northup's pathway to individual liberation can parallel the realization of U.S. law and its ability to grant and recover freedom. In this sense, *12 Years* can be read as an injustice righted by the legal system.

The narrative's opening scenes establish the parameters by which it will define freedom and injustice. *12 Years a Slave* reinforces how it illustrates injustice through a prism of *granted* freedom taken away. As do many slave narratives, *12 Years* opens with a discussion of familial background.³³ Solomon, a freeman, has the privilege to detail his father's history as a freeman: "Besides giving us an education surpassing that ordinarily bestowed upon children in our condition, he acquired, by his diligence and economy, a sufficient property qualification to entitle him to the right of suffrage" (6). Here, *12 Years* frames key concepts relevant to the abolition movement. He asserts the capacity for education and intelligence in Black people and furthermore through his father, draws the connection between economic diligence and the attainment of rights and property. Though he highlights how his father's work ethic provided him suffrage, he also establishes that the U.S. state granted this right. In other words, this early moment in the narrative constructs a model for personhood and rights, reinforcing a causality between one's actions and status. Notably, this echoes an abolition movement strategy in the decades leading up to the civil war: if mainstream whites were shown how well Blacks could integrate into the economy, then they would be granted full rights within it.

The chapter then shifts to his own memories as a free man, appealing to white morality in ways most slave narratives cannot by modeling a free, Black man's gaze into slavery. Solomon,

³³ Consider how this quickly distinguishes *12 Years* from what is perhaps the most emblematic and famous slave narrative of Frederick Douglass. Where Douglass famously begins his narrative lamenting his lack of knowledge about his birthday as well as the probability that his slave master was his biological father, Northup carefully details his father's status and date of birth.

in other words, models how a free man can and should view slavery. Solomon recalls meeting slaves and includes details about their thinking. He discusses staying at a hotel that housed enslaved Blacks, remarking that

... they entered into conversation with me on the subject of Slavery. Almost uniformly I found they cherished a secret desire for liberty. Some of them expressed the most ardent anxiety to escape, and consulted me on the best method of effecting it. The fear of punishment, however, which they knew was certain to attend their re-capture and return, in all cases provided sufficient to deter them from the experiment. (10)

The excerpt above counters idealized versions of plantation life that portray slaves as content. It animates and displays to the reader a discussion of liberatory tactics and methods by depicting slaves contemplating their freedom through escape, before quickly foreclosing that idea by noting that fear of punishment deters escape. But Solomon's status as a free man here also constitutes another strategic feature of the narrative by allowing white reader identification with the narrator. Born free, Northup's status was granted by the government through U.S. law, even if the rest of the narrative will position his de facto enslavement. Northup's fall from freedom to slavery potentially undercuts theorizations of freedom in White America. This move dramatizes his capture, urging readers to identify with the narrator's individual struggle for freedom and universalizing the desire for liberty as depicted through his encounter with the enslaved. Through Solomon's perspective and use of words like "liberty" *12 Years* constructs a sense of Black freedom articulated through language familiar to the white reader.

This moment mirrors a feature in *Blake*---the discussion of strategy among enslaved Blacks. How the two texts portray these discussions underscores their political investiture. After

the slaves ask him about escape methods, Solomon explains that, “never once, I am proud to say, did I fail to counsel anyone who came to me, to watch his opportunity, and strike for freedom” (11). Solomon emphasizes individual freedom through escape. Escape, however crucial, fails to address slavery’s broader mass unfreedom. Henry's encounters with fellow slaves, in contrast to Solomon’s, occur for the purpose of insurrectionary organizing. Henry, for example, never limits his counsel to individual methods for freedom, instead encouraging and plotting mass action. This distinction clarifies the way the two texts constitute differing pathways to liberation.

This contrast between the two texts takes on additional valances when we compare the way each text treats indigeneity. *12 Years* depicts indigeneity to animate contrasting modes of social life. *Blake*’s indigenous counter narrates interactive discussion and planning with an indigenous chief. Solomon observes indigenous subjects from a similar distanced position as he views enslaved Blacks. This distanced position in *12 Years* reinforces its conception of personhood and freedom earned through individual adherence to enlightenment principles of rational citizenship. *12 Years* contrasts Solomon and the indigenous tribe to reinforce his rationality. Early in Chapter VII, he works for his slave master at Indian Creek. Solomon describes the Indians who lived there from an observational anthropological lens: “Mounted astride their ponies, men and women, I have seen them dash out into the woods at the utmost of their speed, following narrow winding paths, and dodging trees, in a manner that eclipsed the most miraculous feats of civilized equestrianism” (63).

Here, Solomon displays an awareness that his sense of social life differs from the Indigenous one he observes. As opposed to the episode in *Blake*, this scene describes not engagement, but a form of gaze. Solomon acts as a tour guide, describing how they ride horses and navigate the natural landscape in a manner exceeding “civilized equestrianism.” Solomon demonstrates his ability to

discern the cultural qualities of indigenous social life by judging their horseriding skills compared to those of the civilized. This further solidifies his position as a rational citizen of the U.S. whose freedom has been unjustly stolen from him. Notably, the encounter itself almost stands as an aberration, since it does little to advance the actual plot of the narrative. In the context of the abolition politics, this moment elevates Solomon as a self-possessed individual. In *12 Years A Slave*, the right to freedom and liberty crystalizes itself through expressions of anti-indigeneity, since he bolsters his position as a free man through his dissection of Indigenous social life. This comparison clarifies how literary contact zones staged cross-racial interactions as strategic and fraught. The particular strategy, as exemplified through *12 Years*, necessitated a disavowal of Indigenous social life in an attempt to prove Black capacity for reason and civilization, two capitalist enlightenment principles.

The narrative continues this disavowal strategy by demonstrating Solomon's knowledge of art when he describes indigenous musical performance. A skilled fiddle player himself, he provides the reader with a review of their music: "At the first note, if indeed there was more than one note in the whole tune, they circled about, trotting after each other, and giving utterance to a guttural sing-song noise, equally as nondescript as the music of the fiddle" (64). Here, Solomon exhibits his knowledge of the complexity of music. Notice that he refers to the music as "noise" and "nondescript." He frames indigenous music as lacking or unintelligible, presumably to somebody with a trained ear. Importantly, he shifts from the natural environment and equestrian skills, to music, framing himself on a higher cultural and epistemic level concomitant with liberal enlightenment.

The narrative solidifies his rationality along with the violence he endures until he finally seizes an opportunity to regain his freedom. In famous narratives by Frederick Douglass, Harriet

Jacobs, William Wells Brown, and Henry Box Brown, freedom comes as a result of escape.³⁴ In contrast, Solomon's escape in *12 Years* comes as a result of risk in combination with the assistance of a sympathetic white man, Samuel Bass, whom he correctly discerns he could trust. Rather than a dramatic escape, Northup's freedom actualizes when Bass sends letters back to Northup's home in New York, resulting in a series of legal proceedings ultimately reuniting him with his family. This slow process reinforces faith in the legal system and sympathetic whites to restore freedom legally recognized by the U.S. government. *12 Years* depicts a slow and deliberate adherence to the legal system, while modeling white assistance and sympathy as vehicles for this process.

The last chapters, however, serve as a warning with regard to the ability of the legal system to enact justice. Burch, the original slave trader who bought and sold him, was put on trial but ultimately acquitted. Solomon was not able to testify because he was "a colored man" despite his status as a free citizen of New York. Unable to find full justice on earth, Solomon finds comfort in the idea of non-earthly justice through faith and belief in a higher power: "A human tribunal has permitted him to escape; but there is another and higher tribunal, where false testimony will not prevail, and where I am willing, so far as at least as these statements are concerned, to be judged at last" (215). Solomon makes clear that despite granting him his freedom, the U.S. legal system is still deeply flawed.

The above appeal is also Christian, insinuating that his version of events and morality is open to higher judgement. This moment at the end is crucial because Solomon editorializes, analyzing his ordeal for his readers in an attempt to control the moral of his story. It is not

³⁴ Frederick Douglass gains freedom by escape, though the mechanisms do not appear in the narrative. Harriet Jacobs escapes by boat to Philadelphia, William Wells Brown slipped away on a steamboat, and Henry Box Brown famously escaped by being aided mailing himself in a box.

merely a statement of facts. *12 years*, while a powerful indictment of slavery, narrates an individual journey to liberation, from a starting point of freedom. A powerful intervention in the abolition politics of the pre-Civil War era, it implicates the system of slavery with eroding even the rights of free Black men, implying that the institution is a threat to freedom as a whole. Because of his free status, and because it is non-fiction, Solomon Northup's unique narrative cannot be charged with encouraging unlawful escapes or even accused of exaggeration, since much of his story can be corroborated through legal documents. But slave narratives were not the only type of textual intervention in the pre-Civil War era. Appearing several years later in 1859, *Blake* hazarded a much different type of entry in abolition politics.

Blake's Critical Trajectory

Martin Delany's *Blake, or the Huts of America*, forges an opposing intervention to *12 Years a Slave*. First, its genre status as a novel frees it from any responsibility to be truthful to real events or even people. Though based on the real dynamics of slavery, its plot is less concerned with one individual's journey towards freedom, instead tracing transnational, insurrectionary organizing and strategy.

Critics such as Sean Gerrity have tended to focus on marronage as *Blake's* primary strategy of resistance. Most broadly, marronage is defined as fleeing enslavement. However, critics such as Sylviane Diouf, in her book *Slavery's Exiles The Story of America's Maroons* (2016), distinguish between groups that established full fugitive autonomy, and groups that created enclaves that were nonetheless connected to the broader nation. See Gerrity for further elaboration. Yet, Henry struggles for a broader and more comprehensive form of liberation. However, marronage and the insurrection do overlap, especially since *Blake* suggests political practices possible through the Black imaginary through fiction. Gerrity's article, through an

analysis of marronage, makes several important interventions. First, he uses marronage to read Henry's practices in the novel as a freedom "embodied, psychic, and metaphysical," that "defies the notion of freedom defined as legal emancipation or freedom granted by external (white, state) actors" (13). Under this definition, marronage carries a similar motivation as insurrection, except on a smaller scale. He adds, "These theorizations of freedom via marronage, considered alongside interdisciplinary critical interventions on the subject, offer scholars... a means of thinking about freedom that is dislocated from the teleology of revolutionary fulfillment and the hindrances of deferred action perceived as stasis (14). Gerrity's last point crucially frames *Blake* as a cultural product that can be utilized to consider the definitions of freedom itself. I would suggest that *Blake* offers overlapping practices of freedom, from his escape to the stealth practices of his co-conspirators.

Andy Doolen approaches the question of liberatory strategy by noting the forms of resistance by the women in the novel. He identifies the actions of Mammy Judy and other women who congregate in her cabin to engage in fugitive planning. For Doolen, their resistance is integrated into the transnational schema of the novel: "they have helped to realign the territories of empire and slavery...they have already played a crucial role by guiding Henry Blake, 'The lost boy of Cuba' back home" (193). Doolen also references the way Mammy Judy fools the slave master when he interrogates her about Henry's disappearance after he escapes the plantation. Calling attention to Mammy Judy's acts of resistance, Doolen's reading highlights the connection between understudied acts of resistance and the idea of transnational Black insurrection. I build on Doolen, arguing that the novel does this work by starting in the intimate space of the slave cabin and expanding outwardly to Cuba, investing acts of resistance with their broader potentiality. The novel extends individual acts of slave resistance to a mass of people by

using Henry as a conduit, drawing the connection between Henry's mission and those he meets on his path. This framing operates to expand liberatory models, such as Northup's, which emphasize only individual rights or family reunification. The novel's move to Cuba is just this, not a critique of the nation, or an individual act of resistance, but a diagram where we might see the connection between the individual and the transnational in an insurrectionary context. Henry's revolutionary vision, in other words, exceeds the nation and embraces Cuba for its capacity to stage Black revolution.

Blake and the Insurrectionary Imaginary

Blake's narrative structure frames Henry's escape from Colonel Franks' plantation to his forays into U.S. plantations and subsequent travel to Cuba, finally ending at the brink of a Black insurrection. The plot offers an *insurrectionary imaginary* to discourses of abolition, anti-slavery, and Black freedom. Rather than a narrative that resolves in freedom granted by the U.S. nation state, *Blake* catalogues various tactical and strategic conversations that cross national and hemispheric boundaries. The rising narrative emphasizes planning and organization, though the actual insurrection never occurs, at least not in the editions of the novel available.

Accordingly, analyzing *Blake's* narrative resolution, or lack thereof, comes with complications. Though part I of the novel was first published in 1859 in the *Anglo-African Magazine*, the complete, or close to complete, novel was published in years later in issues of the *Weekly Anglo African* from November 1861 to around May of 1862. However, scholars have yet to locate the late April and May 1862 issues (Levine 297).³⁵ Since the novel in its current,

³⁵ Delany, Martin Robison, and Robert S. Levine. *Martin Delany: A Documentary Reader*. University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

published state ends at the eve of the insurrection, most scholars assume that the missing chapters include the insurrection in some form. They could have included anything from a description of the insurrection, complete with bloody battles, to merely more planning and organization, to insight into actions back in the U.S. or the ruling classes of Cuba. I acknowledge the strong possibility of lost chapters, but my readings attend to the seventy-four chapters of the published novel.

Blake traffics in tactical concepts, introducing the idea of a “seclusion” as Henry’s organizing strategy. Seclusions are face-to-face meetings with fellow Blacks in whom Henry senses potential as insurrectionary organizers. In Chapter XI, “A Shadow,” Henry declares himself a runaway to Andy and Charles, fellow slaves anxious to learn Henry’s plans. Henry pleads for their patience, remarking that, “Just for once, the slave-holding preacher’s advice to the Black man is appropriate--’Stand still and see the salvation’” (39). Here, Henry purposefully transposes his liberatory “insurrection” in place of spiritual “salvation,” wielding salvation as a relatable metaphor to construct a theory for liberation based not on prayer and faith in God, but instead faith in man and materialist practices. In this manner the novel on the Christianity of the “preacher.” Soon after, Henry tells the two that he has “laid a scheme and matured a plan for a general insurrection of the slaves in every state, and the successful overthrow of slavery!” (40). Not only does Henry tell them of his insurrection, he enfolds them in his plans, and models communal liberatory strategy that insists on mass agency.

Through Henry’s next order to them, the chapter further outlines a liberatory path based on tactical discernment, trust, and expansion. Henry explains, “You must now go on and organize continually [...] find one good man or woman--I don’t care which, so that they prove to be the right person--on a single plantation, and hold a *seclusion* and impart the secret to them,

and make them the organizers for their own plantation, and they in like manner impart it to some other next to them, and so on” (42). Henry’s order, while simple at first glance, implies a far more complicated set of practices. To follow his instructions, Andy and Charles must develop and practice the ability to discern trustworthiness and like-mindedness. If word of Henry’s insurrection reaches slaveholders, the plan will fail. Through Henry’s edict, the novel sketches a world where the enslaved wield the capacity for high levels of organization and secrecy. As a literary protagonist, Henry is a conduit for further insurrectionary actors, and in this way the novel gestures towards the idea of enslaved mass organization. The novel form, unrestricted by the political and imaginary limits inherent in the slave narrative, can make this type of future, insurrectionary intervention.

Black insurrection becomes transnational in Part 2, when the plot moves from the U.S. to Cuba. Where Henry travels in search of his wife. After finding her, sets out to reunite with his cousin Placido, a politically minded poet. Mirroring the “Shadow” chapter above, which features encounters with enthusiastic participants, Placido is eager to learn Henry’s plans. Henry responds that he has “come to Cuba to help free my race; and that which I desire here to do, I’ve done in another place” (197). Placido replies with exhilaration and mentions that he attends political groups that “meet for the express purpose of maturing some plan of action” (197). Here, the novel expands the scope of Henry’s insurrectionary plans and projects a Cuba with similar aspirations, especially through evocation of “action” in Placido’s reply. *Blake’s* move to Cuba speaks to abolition politics in the region in that time. Texas, once annexed, increased the slave trade to Cuba, and throughout the 1840’s Cuba was rocked with slave revolts. U.S. Republicans

worried that their investments in Cuba were in jeopardy (Horne 13).³⁶ In turn, U.S. Blacks took a great interest in Cuba, with notable Black intellectuals like William Wells Brown and Henry Highland Garnet making journeys to the island³⁷. The narrative's move to Cuba also suggests a vision of Black insurrection that transcends the laws or government of any singular nation. The novel uses this transnational strategy to forego not only individual-based liberty, but the idea that full citizenship and personhood can be granted by either the U.S. or Cuba, two countries operating on colonial systems. In *Blake*, Cuba is not only a better or alternate nation, but fertile ground for an insurrectionary vision.

The novel extends its tactical imaginary to a form of Pan-Africanism which necessitates additional tactics. Henry tells Placido that he plans to travel to Africa and overtake a boat, since they “must have a vessel at our command before we make a strike,” and will subsequently recruit men from Krumen in Africa and bring them back (200). Through Henry's plans, the novel activates the concept of Pan-African movements and insurrections, calling attention to the importance of mutiny and colonial arms and vehicles for insurrectionary use. The novel carefully schematizes the tactics necessary for mass insurrectionary war, extending the Black political imaginary beyond the limits found in most mainstream abolition politics of the antebellum period, which imagined a more just US nation without slavery that upheld its stated principles of liberty and equality.

³⁶ Horne, Gerald. *Race to Revolution: The United States and Cuba during Slavery and Jim Crow*. Monthly Review Press, 2014.

³⁷Harrison conjectures that Wells Brown, feeling trapped by the pro-slavery south and the mistreatment of Blacks in the North, traveled to Cuba motivated by events in Haiti and a wish to seek out country more amenable to Black freedom for his family. “William Wells Brown in Buffalo” *Journal of Negro History* 39/4 (October 1954).

The two texts' contrasting liberatory visions coincide with larger debates about freedom in the US and whether full personhood could be extended to Black people. Put differently, it coincides with global debates about Black subjectivity in a colonial context. This defines the stakes of the two texts. Black writing was at the epicenter of this global conversation, and this is significant in a developing imperialist country such as the U.S. whose expansion required slave labor. But a narrative such as *12 Years a Slave* also exceeds U.S. notions of freedom. It elevates Black tactics and strategy for liberation, though framed through an individual plight. Advocating Black liberation and insurrection. Delany's novel, then, immediately conflicts with any liberal notions of U.S. democracy reliant on solving inequality through achieving full Black citizenship through sanctioned legal processes. Delany's refusal might also offer insight about how enduring notions of literary and cultural value underpin white, cultural supremacy. Delany, despite his currency in literary studies, is mostly underread outside of Black and Ethnic literary studies. Solomon Northup's account, on the other hand, hit the mainstream and has been adapted into an Academy Award winning movie. Frederick Douglass, moreover, Delany's former collaborator and at times rival, is a canonical figure of African American and US literature. This demonstrates that this—albeit sometimes nuanced—distinction between assimilatory and insurrectionary radical strategies persists and that the Humanities continues to manifest animations of this debate through its canonicity.

Comparing these two narratives exposes a fundamental political contradiction in African American discourse leading up to the Civil War. The juxtaposition highlights the importance of *Blake* in expressing a political imaginary beyond the parameters of pragmatic reformism. As a genre, fictional novels can transcend pragmatism. Yet, at the same time, *Blake* traffics in the tactics of networking, subterfuge, and transnational alliance, pulling together various characters

to map Black resistance. As I assert, Blake's insurrectionary imaginary is based less on a static end result and more on the process of the aforementioned tactics. I argue that *Blake's* attunement to strategy is a political statement about the painstaking planning involved in insurrectionary outcomes. *Blake* is concerned with the tactics of insurrection almost more so than insurrection itself. *12 Years a Slave* concerns itself with the potentialities of liberal democratic agency and demonstrates faith in those principles, structurally packaging them in a way easily identifiable with an audience invested in the realization of U.S. egalitarian values. *12 Years* tells the story of a free Black man who has freedom taken away, a very strong anxiety for a nation attempting to reconcile its state and racial contradictions. *Blake* persists as a cultural product of an insurrection that has yet to be, an unrealized past and futurity that the injustices and unfreedoms of the present must continually confront.

Chapter III

Manifested Destinations: Genre-bending as Social Protest in Jackson's *Ramona* and Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don*

Published within a year of each other, Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* (1884) and Maria Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don* (1885) appear during a period associated with American literary realism. Though realism encompasses multiple literary characteristics, critics position the genre as a response to the idealization and aristocratic pretensions associated with the romance genre (Kaplan 16). *Squatter* and *Ramona* embody both sides of this debate between pretension and the details of real life. The two novels' critical trajectories has categorized them in multiple ways, associating them with historical romance, historical fiction, sentimentalism, realism, and naturalism. Rather than argue for one or another of these categories, I suggest that the novels cross genres as a political strategy towards racial reform and social protest. Their genre-crossing serves the political work the novels sought in narrating California's racialization process within the mechanisms of U.S. imperialism and Manifest Destiny.

The novels plot an Indigenous, Californio, and white³⁸ contact zone to animate the fates of Indigenous and Mexican Californian subjects' while cataloging their failed resistance against Anglo-encroachment. By illustrating the strategic practices such as attempted integration and business maneuvering employed by non-white characters, the two novels clarify a process of racialization anchored in whiteness that simultaneously produced difference when necessary.

³⁸ In this chapter, I define whiteness two ways. It describes both the American squatters who encroach on Mexican Californian land. But it also describes, in both novels, the whiteness inhabited by Californios through landowning and light skinned Mexican Californians, which distinguishes them from Indigenous characters even if they are mixed blooded. Whiteness is both a racial and a class category as it operates in the novels.

Landowning Mexican Californian characters, in other words, were at times distinguished from Indigenous subjects through their culture and landownership, while racialized as Mexican to deplete them of their landholdings and political power. By both novels' close, the Indigenous and Mexican subjects are either assimilated, vanished, or self-deported, complicating narratives of liberty and equality used to justify the U.S. moral legitimacy. I argue that the novels expose this contradiction in U.S. law and culture through the microcosm of California Mexican and Indigenous minoritization, which operated as a testing ground for U.S. power structures that would stratify white, Indigenous, and Mestizo³⁹ identity as the U.S. developed into an empire in the late 19th century.

The two novels depict and respond to a racialized Southern California history that intensified around the Mexican-American War. In racially integrated areas like Los Angeles, local municipal authorities we called upon to settle disputes caused by the arrival of U.S. troops while resolving complaints about Indian behavior in small rancheria settlements. Early on, these authorities settled racial issues under the pretense of order and harmony within Indigenous, Mexican, and Anglo contact zones. Such was the case during the pivotal California State Constitutional Convention in 1849, which set the parameters for California's legal rights. Historian David Torres-Rouff suggests that ensuing debates centered on the meaning of whiteness, especially regarding voting rights. Initial drafts enfranchised "Every white male citizen of the United States," while further suggestions added "every male citizen of Mexico."

³⁹ The terms "mestizo" (masculine) and "mestiza" (feminine) come from sixteenth-century Portuguese and Spanish, but over the past few hundred years, they have been incorporated into US English. In general, "mestizo/a" refers to racial and cultural mixing among Europeans, Indians, and Africans. As nouns, "mestizo" and "mestiza" refer to a mixed man and woman, respectively, but the word may also be used as an adjective, as in "the mestiza writer" or "a mestizo nation." Curtis Marez, *Keywords for American Culture Studies*, 2014. <https://keywords.nyupress.org/american-cultural-studies/essay/mestizoa/>

Conventional delegates debated the meaning of the word "white," and Pablo De la Guerra notes that many prominent citizens had very dark skin, but it would be unjust to deny them full citizenship because they were not white-skinned (73). Though they agreed that "white" would exclude the African race, the status of Indians proved more difficult since many prominent citizens either intermarried with Indigenous people or were themselves mixed. Ultimately, however, delegates compromised on wording that granted rights to "every male citizen of the United States, and every male citizen of Mexico (Indians, Africans, and descendants of Africans excepted)" (74).

Legally, this compromise appeared to situate Mexican Californians and European Americans, who constituted the primary landowners, on close to equal footing. However, the ensuing decades saw the slow and methodical minoritization of Mexican Californians and continued genocidal treatment of Indigenous Californians. These two historical trends would serve as focal points for *Squatter* and *Ramona*, which attempt to make sense of and protest against the racialization process in California.

Despite this period's association with American literary realism, a large bulk of the criticism places the novels in the sentimental and historical romance genre. David Luis-Brown, for example, asserts that the novels use the sentimental and melodrama as a strategy for reform. He defines sentiment as engaging with reform by representing the public sphere in terms of the domestic tropes of emotions, love, and family to claim moral authority (37). He situates this sentimentalism through the melodramatic trope of marriages, which attempt to resolve social conflict among different national groups. For Luis-Brown, these tendencies in the novels focus on whiteness as a central point of contention. For him, this is also a point where the novels differ. While *Squatter* charts an interethnic alliance through marriage that reinforces racial

hierarchies, *Ramona* exposes whiteness's fluidity through the main character Ramona's mixed-race heritage and blue eyes, which Luis-Brown suggests can both pander to white readership and signal the possibility of multiracial alliances (65). He states that this tension between the expansion and contraction of whiteness can be understood as its dual assimilative and exclusionary operations.

Critics like Anne Goldman focus on the marriage and romantic elements, pointing out that they racialize the marriage plots, thus adjusting a familiar genre to the political and racial situation of Mexican and Indigenous California. But crucially, Goldman notes the political implications of how each of the texts resolves. She states that despite *Ramona's* passionate politics, it draws from the past to contextualize current events, anticipating Californio and Indigenous downfall while foregoing recommendations for change. Conversely, she continues, Ruiz de Burton's romance similarly invokes the plight of Mexican Californians by lamenting their loss of cultural standing yet concluding "with a call to action that provides for the possibility of a kind of textual and political behavior that is more than simply elegiac" (69). This analysis of the novel's close echoes critical trends that seek to draw out politics from the novels' resolutions, producing differing interpretations between each novel. Goldman, also identifies the competing narratives within *Squatter* that similarly apply to *Ramona*. For instance, she describes how the Darrell-Alamar courtship, which ultimately unites Californio and White, progresses in the context of a political corruption so pervasive that it competes with marriage tribulations for centrality in the narrative (71). I build upon Goldman by arguing that competing narratives are a feature of how the two novels attempt to argue for reform while critiquing the pretenses of the U.S. nation-state.

John Morán González prominently features both novels in his monograph *Troubled Union*, which examines how historical romance played a role in bolstering national identity by renovating Manifest Destiny through courtship and marriage narratives. Discussing *Ramona*, Gonzalez details how the text reorients the traditional paradigm in American romance up until that time, which was the reunification of North and South. Instead, he states, *Ramona* maps the narrative of reunification on a love story between a California mestiza and Diegueno Indian Alessandro (58). Furthermore, through this love story, the novel articulates a colonial paradigm of normalizing natives through a "always to be completed" status, a form of assimilation rather than strict racial exclusion (61). For Gonzalez, the Ramona and Alessandro love story instantiates an Indian reform model based on a commonsense imperial subjectivity that full social agency can be granted through proper assimilative behaviors. Helen Hunt Jackson herself subscribed to assimilative pathways for Indigenous peoples as opposed to violence. The novel depicts this process through Alessandro's displayed humanity and his wish to marry a blue-eyed mestiza raised in the Spanish-American propertied class⁴⁰.

When moving to *Squatter*, Gonzalez focuses on the implications of the Alamars' downward class mobility in the context of 19th century's racial hierarchies. For Gonzalez, this minoritization process demonstrates the "shifting historical registers of social agency during the transformation of Spanish-Colonial racial hierarchies into those of post-Reconstruction United States" (89). In other words, the racial hierarchies that the Alamars put their faith in, due to their status as upper-class landowners, slowly erode in the post-Reconstruction period, which required constant maneuvering to maintain national narratives and allegories. Controlling and constructing white national narratives post-Reconstruction, required the consolidation of white-

⁴⁰ Spanish-American often referred to full-blooded Spanish born in the Americas.

American political power westward, necessitating the minoritizing of Mexican Californians. Gonzalez suggests that the novel displays narratives of economic plight and eventual marriage to show that the U.S. nation-state's contortions were not merely benign movements towards national unity. Instead, they were built upon violent racialization that put families such as the Alamars in liminal social and economic positions. For Gonzalez, no amount of marriage plots will unite the landowners of both coasts. Tentative forms of whiteness, at least in the novel, are only granted through marriage if it facilitates white integration into the power structures in California.

Though the historical romance has dominated much of the critical discussion on the two novels, other critics have noted how the novels veer into realism and naturalism. Elisa Warford, discussing *Squatter*, notes how the novel "borrows several different genres that are well suited to social protest, including verbatim legislation, the jeremiad, sentimental romance, and naturalism" (6). For Warford, the novel exhibits forms of naturalism by putting characters in situations where their lives are affected by things out of their control. She cites, for instance, the insurmountable machinery of the U.S. legal system that the Californios are unable to overcome, as well as the sudden snowstorm that cripples Victoriano and affects Don Mariano's health. She also puts pressure on the novel's genre status by acknowledging that though *Squatter* exhibits "similarities to historical fiction by depicting a culture in danger of dying out...and contains romantic plotlines," it also co-opts historical fiction by theorizing how Californios could survive while emphasizing the problem in the present day (12). Indeed, the end of the novel breaks almost completely from the rest of the plot and reads more like a political treatise than an epilogue. As I argue, the end is Ruiz de Burton's breaking from genre conventions to make a political statement about the corruption of the U.S. government against Californios.

Other critics have situated *Squatter* during the height of Howellsian realism. Alicia Contreras points out that both Ruiz de Burton and Howells depict a primary landscape of realism—the everyday world of business. She defines Mexican-American realism as uncovering and recovering "the national ambitions that once gave way to regional obscurity" (212). In piecing together the vestiges of these ambitions in both Ruiz de Burton's biography and *Squatter*, I offer an understanding of Mexican-American realism as a fundamental, albeit sequestered, literary formation of the late nineteenth century. If, as Amy Kaplan states, realist criticism attends to the novelist's engagement with society and puts pressure on the meanings, representations, and ideologies of their own changing culture,⁴¹ Ruiz de Burton certainly aligns with this tradition by deploying realist tropes against the shifting socio-racial dynamics of California after the Mexican American War. Contreras compares *Squatter* to Howells' *Silas Lapham* (1884), remarking that Howells novel describes business activities taking place in the West and Mexico to bolster the novel's realism. In contrast, Ruiz de Burton brings these regions to the forefront by illustrating California's waning cattle industry and Californios' attempts to modernize the state through the railroad and commerce (212). This critique situates *Squatter* as a realist novel by underscoring how it articulates the social forces confronted by the main characters. She astutely suggests that the novel's West Coast setting and Mexican-Californian characters often signal the novel's romantic and sentimental features at the expense of its unique brand of realism. But as I will illustrate, even the romantic and sentimental features are

⁴¹ Kaplan, Amy. "The Social Construction of American Realism (Studies in Law and Economics (Paperback))." *Introduction: "Realism and Absent Things in American Life,"* 1st ed., University of Chicago Press, 1992, pp. 1–14.

integrated with social critique, such as through the way indigenous characters present themselves as inhabited a contrasting way of life from the Alamar family.

Building upon criticism that places the novels within multiple literary categories, I argue that the novels, by necessity, cross genres motivated by their investment in humanizing Indigenous and Mexican Californians. This crossing serves to demonstrate their relationship to the mechanisms of Manifest Destiny, Industrialization, and the post-Reconstruction project of national unity. I contend that the downfall of the characters are not the failures of the works themselves since they expose the U.S.'s inability to enact racial equality or provide the pathway to those ends. To become an Imperial power, the nation chose a racial structure anchored on white supremacy that was simultaneously able to produce difference when necessary. The novels uniquely illustrate this historical dynamic through California's racial and ethnic contact zones in the 19th century.

Squatter and the Indigenous Contact Zone

A moment in *The Squatter and the Don* is instructive of the way the text wields the contact zone both to build pathos and to articulate the racial and economic problem of Mexican-Californians. Much of this novel's drama follows Don Alamar's wish to maintain his standing as a prominent landowner and community member; and late in the narrative, he finds himself in dire economic straits due to the continued interference of white squatters. Through through element of the plot the novel employs a realist aesthetic focused on the intricate mechanisms of the business world. Desperate, he meets with a fictionalized version of real-life tycoon industrialist Leland Stanford to convince him to build the Texas Pacific railroad into San Diego, which would significantly boost Alamar's financial position. In this meeting, Stanford tells Don Alamar in no uncertain terms that the situation is out of his hands, prompting a back-and-forth

between him and Alamar that serves as a microcosm for the racial and territorial politics of southern California in the long aftermath of the Mexican American War. Alamar describes how the squatters have shot and killed his cattle, while others have died in a snowstorm; and "The Indians," he goes on to say, "will finish those which survived the snow" (309). Stanford, attempting to find common ground along class lines, replies, "Those Indians are great thieves, I suppose." Stanford's reply assumes a shared anti-Indigenous sentiment coincident with the cultural belief of Manifest Destiny. After all, his westward expansion of the railroad and the economic infrastructure that comes with it maps on Indigenous land and social life. Alamar's response, however, complicates the easy and established racial hierarchies of the time: "Yes, sir; but not so bad to me as the squatters. The Indians kill my cattle to eat them, whereas the squatters do so to ruin me" (309). Alamar's comparison, which places Indians on a higher moral ground than white squatters, gives insight to his view of racial hierarchies and his position within them. Furthermore, the quotation constructs Don Alamar as a reasonable actor with the capacity to consider ethics outside racial paradigms. He suggests that the Indians act out of necessity while the squatters act out of greed and malice. Stated differently, Alamar confronts his lack of political options, having spent the novel negotiating with squatters and now failing in his appeal to the presumably reasonable Leland Stanford. If the novel up to this point narrates Don Alamar's insistence on negotiation, here it depicts an endpoint to a failed negotiation with a white Manifest Destiny in which he is excluded from the full rights of citizenship. The continued encroachment of the squatters, combined with his failure to secure the extension of the railroad in proximity to his land, marks both his economic and racial subjugation. Alamar is the realist subject, scrambling for his place in a shifting economy.

Moreover, the Stanford episode exposes how the novel, preoccupied with the Alamar family's struggle to maintain their economic position, glosses over the ethics and politics of Indian social life. Through his statement, Alamar considers competing forms of society, community, and even civilization. His thoughts on Indigenous ethics reflect a questioning of the ultimate viability of a legal system unable to provide him with fair justice about his property. Though *Squatter* only features Indigenous characters sparsely, their brief appearances occur during pivotal moments that follow Alamar's slow downfall, suggesting the importance of Indigenous presence in the Californio imaginary. They indicate Californio adherence to property rights and landownership, in opposed to the Indigenous "for use" system, which clearly contrasts capitalism.

Don Alamar's position regarding Indians draws directly from Californio history, which marks the Latinx and Indigenous contact zone as a site of cultural and territorial power struggle. Californios and Indians' fraught history was exacerbated by Mexican independence from Spain in 1821, bringing about sweeping changes in the Mission System that defined Mexican and Indian relations. Stephen W. Hackel, in his study of Indian-Spanish relations in colonial California, asserts, "Like their predecessors, these Mexican-born liberals considered Franciscan rule anachronistic and Indian land use inefficient. California's soldiers agreed and hungered for control over land, livestock and laborers" (369). Often, Californios contested the legitimacy of Indian landowners, taking advantage of their lack of government connections and legal representation.⁴² The secularization process, in which the Mexican government seized mission lands after the revolution, created a void of power that Californios were eager to fill, and part of this involved the exploitation of Indians and their labor. Ranch owners also wished to define

⁴² Hackel mentions specifically here two Californios, Jose Antonio Romero and his son Mariano, who challenged the landholdings of San Carlos Indians post-secularization.

themselves as an elevated social class on par with arriving Anglo-Americans. This dynamic would continue to inform Indian and Californio relations, taking the form of the anti-indigeneity present in the two novels. Each novel articulates how this rush towards power during mission secularization colored Californio's conception of themselves, affecting their political vision even after the Mexican American War when their landholdings and social position begin slowly eroding.

The two novels appear during an Indigenous, white, and Californio history wherein Mexican Californians are minoritized and Indigenous rights are diminished through the genocidal policy that Jackson attempts to address in *Ramona*. The two novels dramatize this Californio and Indian conflict by using Indigenous characters as narrative devices and disruptive or interruptive forces that impede the novels from their resolutions. These narrative impositions, I argue, find their analogy in the way anti-Indigenous sentiment forms a cornerstone of liberal democratic principles; or put another way, anti-indigeneity often represents a possible passport into white proximal inclusion. These California-focused novels do not merely invisibilize the Indian. On the contrary, the two novels animate the Indigenous subject to contrast them with non-Indigenous, non-white subjects. They argue for Mestizo and Mexican rights by complicating the gradations of whiteness in relationship to full citizenship. The novels suggest the crucial role of Indigeneity in shaping the trajectory of minoritization for California Mexicans and frame how this contact zone operated in the broader imaginary of Manifest Destiny and U.S. imperialism. For Manifest Destiny narratives, full citizenship is never really possible for most minoritized subjects, notwithstanding promises of equality and rights for all.

The Reform Politics of Indigenous Erasure: Byrd's *Transit of Empire* and Saldaña-Portillo's *Indian Given*

Critical ethnic studies provides the theoretical framework to understand how anti-indigeneity operates towards political ends. Jodi Byrd's *Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* examines how Indigeneity functions through internal and external forms of U.S. Imperialism, thereby exposing the limits of liberal democracy. Using a de-colonial framework, Byrd critiques the prevailing liberal categories associated with freedom or progress: "Settler colonialisms of the global north create a quagmire where human rights, equal rights, and recognition are predicated on the very same systems that dispossess Indigenous peoples" (xix). For Byrd, appealing to colonial governments' rights and representation legitimizes the same system that disposes Indigenous land and social life. In other words, the appeal to rights forms a continuation of Manifest Destiny by enabling the domination of space through the U.S. legal system.

For Byrd, the struggle for rights and liberation does not always cohere, especially in an Indigenous context. Direct struggles for "equality," as depicted in literature or otherwise, must contend with the relationship between that struggle and American Indian land rights and self-determination. Byrd points out that the presence of the U.S. as a colonial territory delegitimizes full Indigenous sovereignty by legally superseding territories incorporated by American Indians themselves.⁴³ From this premise, Byrd critiques the prominence of liberal democratic principles as a perceived pathway towards justice for minoritized and racialized groups. Through this, for example, anti-indigeneity connotes not just racism but a practice whereby a group seeks to de-indigenize itself to gain proximity to rights, inclusion, and recognition. This is present in both

⁴³ See *Cherokee Nation vs. Georgia* (1831) Supreme Court Justice John Marshall rules that Indians tribes are different than foreign nations, thus despite the fact that they entered into treaties with European nations/US as sovereigns within international law, they were considered dependent on the United States for aboriginal title.

novels when Californio characters refer to Indians as backward or savage in order to reinforce, even if just to themselves, their elevated social standing. This contradiction revealed itself more and more as the century progressed. Groups who previously viewed themselves as non-Indigenous and thus entitled to democratic rights were *minoritized*, though *not* precisely *indigenized*, a feature often present in Latinx identities. Contact zones define Latinidad in this way and, by extension, define the limits for Latinidad as a political entity—limits traced, outlined, and struggled over within 19th-century texts that center Mexican Californian subjects. By offering only the possibility of representation or inclusion into its power structures, liberal capitalism forecloses alternate forms of sovereignty or social life that do not align with racial capital. Minoritarian literature attempting to navigate racialization and racial hierarchy often leans into a liberal capitalist politics by demonstrating their ability to adhere to U.S. ideals of citizenship: capitalism, landownership, industry, and hetero-monogamy through marriage. However, this inclusion strategy serves to legitimize the same U.S. nation-state that expropriated Indian land and destroyed much of Indigenous social life throughout the 19th century and beyond, while simultaneously excluding Latinas/os from full citizenship.

Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo provides the historical background for anti-indigeneity specific to Mexican and Mexican American identity in the long 19th century. She raises the figure of the *indio bárbaro*, or savage Indian, whom she describes as beyond assimilation into any nation, a racial imaginary shared by both Mexico and the U.S. (109). Saldaña-Portillo describes the racializing changes that occurred after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, explaining how the treaty established the terms of enfranchisement for Mexican citizens

by requiring *some* Mexicans (and subsequent Mexican American generations) to repress or deny their Indigenous and afro mestizo heritage, while requiring other

Mexicans—Indigenous, afro mestizos, and too-dark mestizos—to excise themselves from the geography of citizenship altogether. The effect of this...found expression in early Mexican American literary production with the figure of the indio bárbaro claiming psychic space in a protonationalist imaginary. (134)

Enfranchisement here implies full citizenship and all attached rights. The lines drawn between a Mexican⁴⁴ and an Indigenous or afro-mestizo are sometimes blurred because Indigenous proximity was weaponized by the Anglo-American legal system to de facto deny rights. When Saldaña later describes the "land grab," she describes how courts often considered Mestizo Mexicans unfit to govern their territory due to their Indigenous racial character (137). Literature about Californios and Mexican Californians manifests the anxieties associated with post-Treaty racializing logics through its depictions of Indigenous characters. And even though *Ramona* features Indigenous main characters, their narrative arcs resolve with a form of vanishing Indigeneity. The two novels utilize Indigenous characters by animating them as expendable foils to measure Mexican Californian adherence to U.S. ideals. As a political strategy, the two novels anticipate a tactic employed by race novels in the 20th century: demonstrating citizenship. Nonetheless, the failure of these strategies illustrates that the privileges of whiteness and full citizenship are less granted by behaviors or social class and more by the dictates of Anglo-American cultural and economic hegemony and its need for economic and political control.

The Squatter and the Don: Alamar's Anti-Indigenous Strategy

⁴⁴ Mexican here can describe white-identifying as well as Mestizo, which reinforces the slippage of the ethnic and racial categories.

The Squatter and the Don takes up post-1848 tensions, crystallizing them into a plot defined by continuous forms of negotiation against the U.S. legal apparatus that views Californios and their land holdings as an impediment to Manifest Destiny. The U.S. government, both indirectly and directly, deploys white squatters to inhabit Californio-owned land, while property taxes and legal wrangling seek to divest Californios of capital. *Squatter* narrates a series of tactical and survival moves by various characters, all of which are meant to grow—or at least maintain—their economic position. These include love and marriage plots that, as I previously outlined, provide romance and sentiment as well as a symbolic resolution which opens a pathway for Californio social and economic survival: assimilation into the Anglo power structure by marriage. In this sense, *Squatter* employs dual plots which stand in for genres; Alamar's realist plight co-exists with love and marriage stories which not only align with popular romance tropes, but characterize Californios as viable candidates for assimilation.

Squatter depicts the Alamar family's struggles against white squatters who settle on their land, kill Don Mariano's cattle, and ultimately appropriate their ranch. Aside from the economic plight, marriage plots constitute a bulk of the novel, especially Don Alamar's daughter Mercedes' marriage to Clarence Darrell, a successful businessman who symbolizes the further growth of Anglo-American power and economic structures in the Southwest and California. This saves the Alamar family from complete ruin through assimilation. Yet several tragedies come to pass by the novel's close, including the death of Don Mariano and Gabriel's near fatal accident that relegates him to a menial labor job hauling bricks.

Much of the narrative consists of negotiations, including Don Alamar's attempts to hold community meetings to discuss business solutions and his appeal to Stanford described at the beginning of this chapter. Indigeneity remains the foil by which the novel positions Alamar's

social standing. Stanford's response is so striking because it contrasts with sentiment otherwise found in the novel. Don Alamar, for example, goes out of his way to distinguish himself from Indians and assert their low place in the economic hierarchy. At one point, in conversation with a squatter, he proclaims that he never goes lassoing unless he wants and that "You can hire an Indian boy to do that part" (94). As Jesse Aleman suggests, Alamar here attempts to "distinguish Californios and Anglos from Indians" (68). And this distinction is marked by Alamar's implicit assertion that whites and Californios alike can benefit from Indian labor. These moments highlight the way Mexican Californians situated themselves against Indigenous subjects as a political and social tactic for Californio inclusion into the projects of U.S. Imperial expansion.

A novel that relegates Indians to background characters might seem to have no room for Indian agency. Nevertheless, the novel contemplates the distinction between Indigenous and Latino social life, which maps on colonial tensions. Consider a moment of stereotyping where an unnamed Indian responds to Victoriano's order to tend to the horses:

“Yes, *patroncito*, I'll do it right away,”aid the lazy Indian, who first had to stretch himself and yawn several times, then hunt up tobacco and cigarette paper, and smoke his cigarette. This done, he, having had a heavy supper, shuffled lazily to the front of the house. (265)

Note the contrast between the Indian's words and actions. His words, in isolation, demonstrate a respect that firmly entrenches the Indian/Californio class and racial divide ever-present in the novel. But his actions clearly express a lack of urgency and obedience to Victoriano, allowing for a sarcastic reading of his "patroncito" title. "Patroncito" translates roughly to "little boss" or "son of boss" ; but rather than diminutive, here it implies false endearment and submission. The "Indian" exercises agency by moving at his own pace, rather than the immediate needs of the

Californio family. Thus, the narrator's description of the Indian as "lazy" may be inaccurate. Laziness implies general sloth or lack of capacity for labor. But almost comically, he methodically moves from his resting state and smokes his cigarette, punctuated by a description of him shuffling lazily to the front of the house as opposed to immediately attending to the urgency of Victoriano's orders. The "Indian," maybe not lazy, is rather just under no imperative to quickly act, which undermines the conventional servant/master relationship expected of their racial dynamic. This stereotyping, much like Don Alamar's suggestion that Indians act out of use, is the manner by which the novel distinguishes Indigenous social life from the concerns of the Californios.

In attempting to play on Indian stereotypes and distinguish Californio from Indigenous social standing, the novel narrates the how Californios assert their status as "gente de razon" by contrasting their motivations and culture with those of Indigenous figures. During a period in which the U.S. was at war with many Indigenous tribes over land and resources, the novel takes pains to situate the Californio characters against the Indigenous ones. Here, through the Indian figure, Californio discourse asserts an antagonism towards forms of Indigenous social life concomitant with pre-colonial, pre-imperial modes of existence. The Indigenous servant's ambivalence towards Victoriano's urgency is a metaphor for Indigenous lack of interest in Californios concerns about citizenship, land rights, and ultimately full inclusion into the U.S. political project.

This exchange occurs in the midst of Mariano family drama, of which the "Indian" is apparently unaware. The above moments frame the "Indian" operating under a different set of values and priorities, shut off from the Alamar's quest for assimilation. Along with Don Alamar's assertion to Stanford that Indians kill cattle only to eat, rather than to thief, this

suggests that the novel acknowledges the futility of Alamar's political tactic, especially if viewed from the point of view of Indigenous subjects in a more advanced stage of minoritization. The Indian is a signifier of the certain downward minoritization that Ruiz de Burton had already witnessed in 1885. Said differently, the Indian is the figure in the novel that represents that the urgency from which Victoriano addresses him is ultimately futile. The Indian is ordered to prepare the horses so that Victoriano can go maintain the marriage plot. In the broader narrative, this scene slows down that plot and interrupts it with a countervailing force to the family drama, more conspicuous since the scene seems to serve no other real purpose. The overall plot. The drama of the marriage plot, which the novel uses in order to draw sympathy from the white reader, is bolstered by the way the Indian serves to distance Californio culture and position from Indigeneity.

But the marriage plots are successful insofar as they ultimately occur. Discussing Clarence and Mercedes's marriage, Gonzalez asserts that the marriage "promises to secure the fortunes and futures of both through the affective ties of marriage, but the narrative tells more a tale of familial woe than marital bliss" (93). Indeed, the Alamars still lose their rancho; and furthermore, the novel describes the Californio's loss of their position as white, which signals their dispossession and loss of property rights. If marriages traditionally imply the reconciliation of divergent constituencies, marriage in *Squatter* reads as more of a survival tactic that implies not reconciliation or the maintenance of property but assimilation by necessity. The fact that the marriage occurs under the conditions of economic duress implies that *Squatter* forecloses full reconciliation or, as Gonzalez describes it, a failed national allegory. The Alamars have performed citizenship insofar as they have engaged in strategic marriages to whites and separated themselves from Indigeneity, but ultimately these strategies fail. At the same time, the

novel engages in a different type of work by revealing these failures. While the characters fail, the novel demonstrates that the U.S. national project is based on a specific version of Anglo-whiteness that is violently flexible in its ability to create difference in order to consolidate its racialization and economic projects. By initially drawing sympathy to Don Alamar for his reason and willingness to negotiate, alongside the love and marriage plots, the novel ultimately critiques the U.S. government as inherently unjust.

Jackson's *Ramona* as Lamented Counter-Narrative

A companion novel to *Squatter*, Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* similarly grapples with Indigeneity, whiteness, and Latinidad in 19th-century California. Jackson began her career in the late 1860s as a poet during a new era of magazine publishing based on demographic and geographic expansion along with growing specialized readerships.⁴⁵ She published in magazines such as *The Atlantic* and *The Nation*. In the late 1870s she would become interested in Native American issues after hearing a speech in Boston by Indigenous civil rights leader Standing Bear. In mid-1883, Jackson toured Southern California as a Special Agent to the Commissioner of Indian affairs for three months, assigned to investigate California Mission Indians. This visit would be the impetus for an official report as well as *Ramona*.

If *Squatter* relegates Indians to the background, as pawns for labor or talking points for Don Alamar's declamations of his class, *Ramona* employs a different tactic. Jackson *centers* Indigenous characters, naming and animating them in ways *Squatter* does not, though as we will see, the ultimate results are similarly dire. Most notably, Ramona's love story to Alessandro

⁴⁵ Holbo, Christine. "'Industrial & Picturesque Narrative': Helen Hunt Jackson's California Travel Writing for the Century." *American Literary Realism*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2010, pp. 243–66. *Crossref*, doi:10.1353/alr.0.0051.

entails a growing identification with her Indigenous identity, a stark contrast to de-indigenizing tendencies elsewhere in both novels. As a precursor to *Ramona*, Jackson published the nonfiction *A Century of Dishonor* (1881), which sought to make visible injustices levied against Indigenous tribes by the U.S. government, including broken treaties, forced removals, and massacres. Meant as a corrective to the policies enacted by the Indian Appropriation Act of 1871⁴⁶, it called for a reform policy to protect Indigenous rights. The document's preface sets forth ideas that anticipate the need for both *A Century* and *Ramona*: "Many of the stories will be new to the reader. The Indian owns no telegraph, employs no press reporter, and his side of the story is unknown to the people" (v). *Ramona* sought to correct this void in Indigenous-centered cultural production, especially considering that *A Century of Dishonor* was not well-received upon publication.

The March 1883 issue of *The Nation* featured a critique of *Century* that suggested hypocrisy in Jackson's claim that lands should be restored to Indigenous tribes. The issue stated that even "the warmest sympathizers with the Indian's wrong will repudiate the opinion that civilization should have remained in Europe and scrupulously respected the right of the red man to the possession of this continent" and even quotes her own assertion that the notion that Indians are the rightful owners of this soil as an "untenable extreme" (152). Though full of white chauvinism, the review notes Jackson's hypocrisy in asserting that while particular tribes should have their land restored, it is too extreme to view Indians as the rightful owners of this territory. Brian Norman suggests that Jackson's ideas "ran counter to the post-Reconstruction soldering of the nation-state. Jackson's tension collapsed into either a belief in the inevitability of Indian displacement or a reliance on total assimilation" (119). As Norman suggests, Jackson's ideas

⁴⁶ The act stated that no longer were any group of Indians recognized as an independent nation, and that all individual Indians were deemed wards of the federal government.

seem contradictory and failed to gain traction, especially during the prevailing post-Reconstruction emphasis on a united nation that, as the history of Mexican California and Southern Jim Crow suggests, attempted to solidify an Anglo-American power structure based on land, power, and resources. In other words, Jackson's struggle for Indigenous land rights during this period conflicted with the needs of a U.S. nation as a rising imperial power as the century closed. Inspired in part by the mass popularity of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Jackson turned to the novel.

If *A Century of Dishonor* sought to promote Indigenous rights against a hostile U.S. nation-state, *Ramona*—through a combination of romance, sentiment, and naturalism—employs a strategy of Indigenous fragmentation, and ultimately invisibilization. Unlike *Squatter*, Jackson features an Indigenous protagonist, Alessandro. *Ramona* narrates the plight of its title character, a mixed-raced Indian who lives on the estate of Señora Moreno, her aunt. Señora Moreno cares for Ramona out of duty while favoring her only son, Felípe. Annually, the estate hires a group of Indians from Temecula to help shear sheep, including Alessandro, the son of Pablo Assis, the chief of their local tribe. Much of the plot revolves around the racial and ethnic tensions that arise when Alessandro and Ramona fall in love. Eventually, they elope, and the rest of the novel narrates their constant displacement as they attempt to find a stable home safe from the constant encroachment of white settlement. They eventually have a child who dies from lack of medical care and another daughter, Ramona, who survives. Tragically, Alessandro dies at the hands of ranchers for stealing a horse when he was not of sound mind. Eventually, Ramona Sr. arrives back at the Moreno estate and marries Felípe.

Critics have focused on Alessandro's death. Rosemary King points out the import of Ramona's eventual marriage to Felipe at the end, framing it as a commentary on the Latinx and

Indigenous shared minoritization: "Felipe [at the end] becomes the mouthpiece vocalizing the shared oppression of Californios and Indians at the end of the novel," which his mother Senora Morena would never have acknowledged, since she spends much of the novel distinguishing her family from any form of Indigenous status (15). For King, Alessandro's death serves as a reminder of the drastic effects of Indian oppression, both psychologically and materially. However, Felipe and Ramona's marriage at the end and Felipe's awakening to shared oppression appears only possible through Alessandro's death and erasure. In this revelation, the characteristics of romance and naturalism meet since a new marriage resolution is combined with a critique of racial oppression. Alessandro and Ramona's fate as a couple seemed inevitably doomed by a white-dominated structure that chases them around in search of safety. Afterward, Ramona's plight is resolved through her marriage to a Californio. If in *Squatter*, the reconciliation implied by marriage is between whiteness and California Mexicans as a means for survival, Ramona's marriage implies that Indigenous survival is only possible through assimilation into Californio or Mestizo identity.

Yet, the novel employs a sentimental love plot to humanize Alessandro, especially through his conversations with Ramona. His intimacy with Ramona serves as an open space for his thoughts on his plight, a space not possible in *Squatter* since it relegates Indigenous figures to background characters. For all the critical framing of Ramona and Alessandro's romance as sentimental and cliché, their kinship models a form of resistance, as their growing intimacy entails discussions of Indigenous history, as Alessandro laments the downfall of his tribe. Alessandro operates in the novel as a mouthpiece for Indigenous rights and resistance. Through him, the novel attaches the Indigenous plight to the love and romance plot. Through their romance, Ramona begins to understand the Indigenous side of her identity in a way that runs

counter to Señora Moreno's anti-indigeneity. Furthermore, Alessandro does not take for granted Indigenous displacement. During a moment in which romantic convention and resistance politics meet, Alessandro and Ramona are reunited after a long absence, which saw Ramona bedridden with grief. His long absence mirrors the moment in *Squatter* where the unnamed Indian takes his time smoking the cigarette. It slows down the full realization of their love plot that dominates the novel. For Ramona, her marriage to Alessandro constitutes her identification with and understanding of her Indigenous identity, while their children symbolize Indigenous family, culture, and futurity. The time they spend apart dramatizes title character Ramona's love for Alessandro, eliciting sympathy, by association, for Indigenous life and livelihood. However, their subsequent married life becomes marred by the encroachment of whites, and the inevitability of their downfall mirrors the inevitable victory of the Ruiz de Burton's squatters. Again, romance and naturalist inevitability suggest the injustice of Indigenous erasure.

Alessandro's downfall is telegraphed throughout the novel. At one point, he brings news of his father's death and the subsequent displacement of his people by white settlers. Ramona asks if there was a battle, to which he responds, "There was no battle. There would have been, if I had had my way; but my father implored me not to resist. He said it would only make it worse for us in the end" (190). This depiction of Alessandro's father's unwillingness to resist serves as a tragic but comforting notion for an anxious nation state's vision of reconciliation. The novel characterizes Alessandro through his lament about his people's downfall, portraying its inevitability while drawing his emotional energies towards his love for Ramona. From Alessandro's politically defeated perspective, his only way forward is through his kinship and love for half-Indigenous character Ramona. Jackson humanizes Alessandro, the Indigenous

subject, through his emotional expressions in the love plot while relegating his political resistance to lamentations.

Alessandro's tragic death at the hands of white settlers forecloses his love story with Ramona and arrests the narrative of Indigenous union. However, Ramona's story continues. The resolution of the novel itself ends predictably in a marriage between Ramona and Felipe, the inheritor of the Moreno estate. If *Squatter's* marriage plots entail strategic assimilation with the white power structure in order to salvage social standing, Ramona offers a slightly different formulation. The marriage plot at the end of Ramona is between a Californio and a half-Indigenous woman. Thus the marriage plot constitutes a Mestizo union that, occurring after Alessandro's death, operates to remove the Indian rather than assimilate to whiteness. Except that the marriage and remainder of their lives continue not in the U.S. but in Mexico, described as "indeed a new world, a new life" (388). Their relative stability in Mexico comes from the fact that "General Moreno's name was still held in warm remembrance in the city of Mexico" (388). In other words, Felipe stood at a higher end of the hierarchy in Mexico, just as he had once in California. So, by the novel's end, an exodus to Mexico being only the reform that would allow Californios to maintain their class status. Indigenous erasure remains the status quo; and furthermore, Jackson ends the novel with everybody being in a place that conveniently aligns with fantasies of American hegemony: The Americans presumably continue their encroachment on California land; Felipe and Ramona are in their own country, and Alessandro is erased. Much like *Squatter*, however, the resolution at the end carries with it a critique of the U.S.'s ability to enact racial justice. At this point, the novel has taken us on two marriage plots involving Ramona. If marriage constitutes a reconciliatory space or allegory, the novel suggests that for Indigenous and California Mexicans, the U.S. as a nation-state fails to grant them full citizenship

outside of its paradigms of white proximal hetero-monogamy. The novel takes all of the sympathies granted to minoritized characters and demonstrates that U.S. Manifest Destiny has no place for them.

Ramona and *Squatter and the Don* offer distinct accounts of the racialization process. By utilizing marriage plots and realist articulations of individual agency in the face of a changing racial and ethnic hierarchy, they chart the complications inherent in the Indigenous and Californio contact zone in the West. The southern California indigenous, white, and Mestizo contact zone stages how racial identities, though sometimes fluid, were dictated by the needs of U.S. Empire. In terms of sentimentality, comparing the novels' marriage plots furthermore provides a path for assimilation in the face of minoritization. *Squatter* offers marriage into whiteness, available to previously landholding light-skinned Mexican Californians. *Ramona* marries twice, one to Indigenous Alessandro and one to Californio Felipe. As all of the participants in *Ramona* are from minoritized groups, there is no gateway to assimilation in the context of the U.S. nation-state. In these two novels, which sought reform against a racialization process that slowly eradicated non-Anglo rights, the only resolution is assimilation to whiteness or alternative nationhood through self-deportation. That the novels only imagine these two options serves as a critique of the U.S. as a unified nation under any context other than the Anglo-American power structure necessary to justify the development of the U.S. as a growing empire.

By centering the California Mexican subject, each novel narrates the complicated process of racialization and its relationship to the necessities of Manifest Destiny. The novels posit racialization as a contested space not necessarily based on property ownership or the ability to perform the standards of citizenship. Rather, the process of racialization sought to ensure that

whiteness was attached to U.S. national identity and supremacy that contorts itself towards the needs of U.S. racial capitalism at any cost. This version of racial formation contradicts liberal conceptions of race that portray merit and individual, behavior-based versions of race positioning. Indeed, regardless of Don Alamar, Ramona, or Alessandro's wisdom, ethnic, or morality, the need for white settlement to extend westward overrides Don Alamar's legal or moral right to land ownership and Ramona's right to her Indigenous future. The two novels cross genres of realism and romance in order to attach the plight of Indigenous and Mexican Californians to relatable literary situations such as love and marriage. The novels intervene by using the genres as vehicles to promote justice for groups seldom advocated for in novels during the late 19th-century. Because they undertake this advocacy, the novels detail the complexities of Indigenous and Latinx racial contact zones and the fluidity of racialization under Manifest Destiny.

Chapter IV

Black Soldier Letters and Sutton Griggs' *Imperium in Imperio*: The Politics of Alternative Nationhood and Imperialism in the Black Public Sphere

In Chapter XVII of Sutton Griggs' novel *Imperium in Imperio* (1899), one of the two main protagonists, Bernard, has just assumed control of the underground Black organization known as the Imperium. The novel describes the way he ingratiated himself to the membership and created an underground newspaper documenting anti-Black oppression. Meanwhile, a conflict breaks out: "At length an insurrection broke out in Cuba, and the whole Imperium watched this struggle with keenest interest, as the Cubans were in a large measure negroes. In proportion as the Cubans drew near to their freedom, the fever of hope correspondingly rose in the veins of the Imperium" (201). By pulling together Black print culture with notions of insurrection and transnational solidarity, this excerpt plots the strategic conflict that preoccupies this chapter. These elements of the Black public sphere critique anti-Blackness while imagining forms of alternative nationhood as a liberatory strategy. This alternative nationhood took the form of emigration, colonization, and in the case of *Imperium in Imperio*, the seizing of a U.S. state to form a Black nation. This historical period was marked by a growing U.S. empire and the Spanish-American War, as well as debates in the Black public sphere over the correct political response to U.S. Jim Crow racism. These debates are explored in a set of Black texts that imagine strategies of political action that run counter to the interests of national unity and U.S. Empire.

The Spanish-American War put many Black Americans in a quandary. While some thought service in the military would prove full Black citizenship and allegiance, others saw a contradiction in fighting other people of color abroad for a country whose Jim Crow racism

raged at the century's close. This quandary played out in the Black press, and alongside *Imperium in Imperio*, I explore Black soldier letters from the Spanish-American War for how they describe racial contact zones with Cubans and Filipinos for their liberatory potential. Though much has been written about Black military service during this period, including the debates among Blacks over the politics of integration and resistance, I explore how the archive of Black soldier letters and Griggs' novel serve as interventions in Black political debate and discourse. Specifically, I argue that these texts describe the way Black integration into institutions expanded the Black political imagination beyond the dimensions prescribed by dominant American values such as patriotic national unity. In these texts, the Black soldier and the Black intelligentsia occupy spaces of radical potentiality. The texts not only expand narratives of Black resistance, but reveal contradictions of imperialism. Namely, the expansion and integration of military service can create new forms of resistance: The Black soldier can draw from his experiences abroad to imagine alternate Black national belonging, while the Black intelligentsia, such as depicted in *Imperium*, can use their knowledge of white institutions to undermine the nation and construct their own.

Critic Amy Kaplan historically contextualizes how the Spanish-American War operated as a vehicle for national reconciliation in which African-Americans held a dubious position. The war, she suggests, "Promised to reunify the nation by bringing together the North and South against a common external enemy" (122). However, this period was complicated by the role of Jim Crow and the continued oppression of African-Americans, creating a two-front conflict for U.S. white supremacy: against Spain and its colonies, and against the Black struggle for civil rights. Kaplan sets up the questions born of these fronts—namely would African-Americans connect their fight for civil rights at home with anticolonial struggles abroad, or would they fight

for their civil rights through their alignment with the imperial project (123). In this chapter I answer these questions by looking at the way US Blacks used print culture and literature to imagine possible resolutions to these contradictions, and in doing so carved out possible pathways to sovereignty and self-government.

The Black press long grappled with strategies for justice and rights. Martin E. Dann notes two main currents of Black intellectual history are apparent in the Black press: *inclusion*, and *exclusion*. He describes inclusion as the desire to be recognized as citizens and turn the US towards egalitarian ends. Exclusion refers to a separationist response to racism, which encompassed various forms of resistance, including foreign and domestic colonization. In short, one current seeks to operate within the U.S. system, and the other transcends it. Dann situates this binary under an overall push for Black national identity, which he associates with a nation within a nation, motivated by protection of the individual and the community against hostile governments, collective responsibility, resistance to racism, and self-determination (13). The Black press provided a crucial arena in which these issues could be discussed and disseminated; in some cases, was the only source of information available about anti-Black repression, which the white press severely underreported.

The Black press during the Spanish-American War continued this function, with the added layer that for the first time since acquiring citizenship, Black men were called upon to render military service outside the United States (Gatewood 3). Under this new dynamic, the Black press was eager for reliable information about the soldier war experience and opened up their columns to their correspondence. Where the white press could draw from paid staff and wire service, the Black press, often underfunded, used letters from soldiers as correspondents (16). Conversely, Black soldiers wrote to the Black press to counter what many of them viewed

as the white press's tendency to underplay and defame their service and conduct abroad. These soldiers practiced political agency through these presses, and they often expressed conflicted positions regarding their role in U.S. imperialism. Formally, the positions they articulate come at the intersection of print culture and the epistolary. At times they are personal and even addressed directly to the editors, signaling their understanding that their letters would reach a Black readership, constituting a much-needed form of information about the plight of the African-American soldier. Because the letters were collected by Black editors, they are unfiltered by the white press and serve as a valuable archive and touchstone in the history of Black political thought.

As a repository for the Black soldier experience, these letters operate as a microcosm for the conflicted position of African-Americans more broadly. Drawn from prominent Black newspapers as *The Colored American*, *The Bee*, and *The Cleveland Gazette*, the letters narrate both hope and disillusionment with military service and the U.S. at large. The trajectory of the letters span from service in Cuba, to the treatment of veterans back home, to the U.S. occupation of the Philippines after the signing of the Treaty of Paris that ended the Spanish-American war. As in Cuba, Black soldiers were again called to duty against the Filipino insurrection; but as the letters show, the contradictions Black soldiers felt in Cuba grew sharper in the Philippines, as Black soldiers harbored sympathy for Filipino's wish for independence.

Letters from Cuba display a mix of casual landscape reporting and invitations for African-Americans to consider Cuba as an alternate land of opportunity. A clear example comes from W.C. Payne, writing from the *U.S.S. Dixie*, published in *The Colored American* (Washington) August 13, 1898. Payne begins the letter by discussing his pleasure in writing about Cuba and its "opportunities which may be enjoyed by the American Negro, should he

choose to take advantage of them” (53). By framing the opportunities a matter personal choice, he frames Cuba as a space where individual success is less defined by external factors such as racism or classism. From there, he moves to a much broader rhetorical question: “Will Cuba be a Negro republic?” He answers yes, “because the greater portion of the insurgents are Negroes and they are politically ambitious” (54). Payne’s equation connects his earlier invitation of opportunity with a prediction about Black control of the country, which ties the soldiers to Cuban Blacks in a form of Pan-Blackness that troubles the U.S. Black allegiance expected of Black soldiers. Payne’s statement undermines the idea of Black allegiance to the U.S. as a given through his account of Cuba’s racial and political character.

Payne then makes a recommendation that doubles as a warning against white interference. He states that he would “not recommend” Cuba to “the greedy politicians as a rendezvous” because the Cubans are going to have “political troubles of their own” (54). Payne suggests that the political conflicts Cubans may encounter on their way to their Black republic should be free of outside white influence. Moreover, he characterizes the greed of those politicians dissuade imperial interference with the Black society he constructs in the letter. Payne’s rhetoric demonstrates how many of these letters structure their critique of U.S. Imperialism and racism. The letters masquerade as simply reports or advertisements for Black opportunity, while simultaneously critiquing the lack of opportunity and agency for Black people in the U.S.. And the form is a friendly recommendation which operates as a warning. In other words, Payne’s invitation can serve as reminder that Black people might find freedom elsewhere, thus detaching themselves from the U.S. as a nation. Payne imagines Cuba as a space full of opportunity outside the reach of exploitative white politicians, reinforcing the letter as strategic liberatory rhetoric.

Payne's letter indirectly critiques the U.S.'s ability to grant African-Americans justice and full citizenship. Nevertheless, many still held onto the hope that Black military service could open a pathway to better treatment back home. As this idea persisted, other letters documented Black soldier treatment upon returning home. In the *Cleveland Gazette* from October 22, 1898, George W. Prioleau reported from Fort Grant Arizona Territory. He begins by depicting the bravery of his unit, describing how they "faced the enemy amid shot and shell up San Juan Hill. Its members fought, they bled, some died to vindicate the rights of our country" (83). He then quickly contrasts this with a report about their treatment back home, lamenting that they "were not allowed to stand at the counters of restaurants and eat a sandwich.... while white soldiers were welcomed and invited to sit down at the tables and eat free of cost" (83). By contrasting the heat of battle with the simple mundane activity of sitting at a restaurant, Prioleau starkly illustrates the persistence of Black inequality at home despite their sacrifice. His letter undermines the notion that performance as a U.S. soldier grants equity, and even remarks at the end of the letter that there were few places in the country where the "hatred of the Negro is not" (84). Doing so, he asserts racism as a national problem and questions the U.S. and its capacity for Black freedom.

The tenor of Black soldier responses shifts slightly as their service moved to the Philippines. Under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo, the Philippine people rebelled against Spanish rule in May of 1898. At first the rebels applauded the arrival of American forces, believing them to be allies; but they soon realized that Americans had little interest in a free Filipino republic. After Spain signed a treaty that ceded the Philippines to the US in 1898, Aguinaldo's forces declared war against the US as their new invaders in February of 1899. And just as they had in the Cuban theater, Black soldiers wrote the Black press to provide first-hand

accounts. However, some soldiers found their situation much more difficult to reconcile after their poor treatment in the aftermath of the Cuban front.

Strikingly, some letters recounted conversations with Filipino locals over race and politics. One is dated December 30, 1899 by John W. Galloway, Twenty-Fourth Infantry, San Isidro, Philippine Islands, from *Richmond Planet*. He recalls asking whether Filipinos had a different view of whites than Black Americans, to which the Filipino replied that their people were “told by whites that Blacks were ‘inferior’ and had brutal natures but that they found the opposite to be true. Significantly, that conversation de-centers whiteness by animating a lens and critique of the whites between peoples of color themselves. Furthermore, Galloway frames these conversations as tactical, saying that he engaged in them so that “we might know our position intelligently” (252). He continues by quoting locals directly: “Of course you are both Americans, and conditions between us are constrained, and neither can be our friends in the sense of friendship, but the affinity of complexion between you and me tells, and you exercise your duty so much more kindly” (253). This letter underscores how the racial and ethnic contact zone can operate as a site of political and transnational affiliation. Their conversation de-centers the white gaze and whiteness as a touchstone for observation and racial theorization. When the local utters “affinity of complexion,” they forge a connection between minoritized and colonially racialized subjects that makes clear the white supremacist nature of imperialism.

Because Galloway’s connection occurs in a letter published in a Black newspaper, he understood his audience. Strategically, he chose to effectively publish an account of a conversation critical of white occupation and imperialism while depicting affinity between Black and Filipino subjects. Galloway, therefore, uses this form to expand and transnationalize alternate conceptions of race to a Black readership. In a U.S. Imperial occupation that presumed

an alibi of liberation or Filipino subjects, Galloway fears that the future of the Filipino “is that of the Negro in the South” (253). This statement extends his racial critique to U.S. Imperialism and the idea of the U.S. as a benevolent presence. Galloway urges a sympathetic connection between the Black Jim Crow experience and the occupied Filipino experience that troubles the role of the Black soldier.

At the close of the letter, Galloway paints the Philippines as a possible location for Black migration. The Filipino interviewee concedes that “American sovereignty is inevitable and American colonization is a probability” and that they would look kindly upon Black Americans as neighbors. He adds that Filipino people welcome occidental ideas and development but would prefer them taught by “colored people” (254). Galloway concludes by inviting “practical scientific agriculturalists, architects, engineers, businessmen, professors and students of sciences” to consider the Philippines and ends the letter by saying, “They extend us a welcome hand, full of opportunities. Will we accept it?” (255). Galloway’s letter thus ends by imagining a developing Philippines that could be brought into modernity through a collaboration between educated or industrious Black Americans and similarly minded Filipinos. According to Galloway this alliance would alleviate and create alternate pathways for sovereignty and agency for Black and Filipino people alike. The letter thus establishes an alternate non-white centered modernity attainable through trans-racial collaboration.

Other letters strike a different political tone, underscoring a more radical Filipino politics. A letter in *The Colored American*, from March 17, 24, 1900 by Michael H. Robinson Jr., 25th infantry, discusses the capture of Fort Camansi that occurred in January of 1900. The bulk of the letter narratives a heroic account of the battle, including an accounting of lives lost on both the American and insurgent sides of the battle. The end of the letter, however, contemplates the

situation of the Black soldier abroad. Robinson talks about his discouragement over the fact that Black soldiers have lost their lives in a war that is unpopular among their people. However, he says, as soldiers they have been instilled with the “feeling and resolve” to perform their duty no matter what the consequence may be as to public sentiment” (268). He reports that Black soldiers have been warned by insurgent leaders in the shape of placards placed on trees and left in houses:

saying to the colored soldier that while he is contending on the field of battle against people who are struggling for recognition and freedom, your people in America are being lynched and disfranchised by the same who are trying to compel us to believe that their government will deal justly and fairly by us. (268)

This account demonstrates how the contact zone allowed for the passage of strategic messages meant to show Black soldiers the contradictions in their imperial service to the same government that oppresses them back home. The presence of the placards reveals a transnational vision of solidarity based on mutual mistreatment by white Americans.

It also reveals the rhetorical strategies employed by Black soldiers to communicate the difficulty of their situation to the Black public sphere through the avenue of Black newspapers. In essence, this letter constructs a Black transnational political theorization based on combining report with editorial commentary. Indeed, in the very last line of the letter, Robinson hopes that there will be space in the newspaper to publish at least a portion of his article. Robinson’s letter carefully combines accounts of Black heroism and duty in the capture of Fort Camansi with his own consternation about his role as a Black soldier. Robinson demonstrates allegiance to the U.S. combined with an understanding of poor treatment at home, which he includes in the letter through the voice of the Filipino placards.

The conflicted position of Black soldiers was a topic taken up by prominent writers and reporters of the time. Stephen Bonsal was a correspondent for the *New York Herald* and Pulitzer Prize winner who reported on military conflicts. His description of Black soldier performance in both Cuba and the Philippines arcs from heroic to seditious. In Cuba, Bonsal says, they displayed “courage and soldierly efficiency” and were key in the Battle of San Juan Hill. In an anecdote about Black-soldier heroism just after the Spanish surrender, he describes how the entire Twenty-Fourth Infantry agreed to volunteer at a hospital treating those stricken with yellow fever, at great risk to themselves. In describing Black soldiers in the Philippines, however, the narrative shifts. He starts by reporting favorably, imparting how quickly Black troops connected with the native populations, even learning their language with “surprising facility” (325). According to Bonsal, soon white officers opined that “the negro soldiers were in closer sympathy with the aims of the native population than they were with their white leaders and the policy of the United States.” Bonsal evokes non-white solidarity as a threat to the US. Notably, his reporting characterizes Black sympathy through larger questions about allegiances to US policy, demonstrating that the question of whether Black solidarity based on mutual non-white status loomed on the mind of whites.

Close reading this newspaper letter archive expands the political lexicon for the late-19th-century Black political arena, calling attention to the form by which Black letters brought this discussion into the public sphere. Indeed, due to the intimate form of the letter, they often contain a frankness and political critique that align then with Black political literature of the period in how they pushed ideas far beyond reform. Historian Alex Zamalin notes that Black political resistance is often viewed in the dominant culture as redeemable only if it calls for gradual reforms or align with individualistic notions of private property. Zamalin recognizes the

need to recover traditions of resistance that do not align with the histories that American culture chooses to preserve and archive. While Zamalin's work accomplishes this by looking closely at figures such as David Walker and Ida B. Wells, I continue this recovery through print culture and Black soldier letters. The letters served as space for a variety of political ideas that push the limits conventional notions of Black resistance. They add to a lesser-known history of radical, anti-imperialist thinking in the moments that U.S empire asserted itself abroad. But some Black soldiers took their resistance beyond letter writing. The archive is also haunted by the idea of Black desertion and counter-imperialism through the figure of David Fagen. Though Fagen was not the only Black man to turn against the U.S. and join the Filipino insurrectos, he is among the most famous.

Fagen, after serving in the army for a year, shipped off to Manila in June of 1899 as a member of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry, one of four Black regiments in the Army. Later that year he participated in a major northeast campaign led by General Samuel B.M. Young into Luzon. Accounts in the *Manila Times* report that Fagen had general difficulties with his superiors, and that if not for his participation in the successful Young campaign, he might have been court-martialed. Records show that he also clashed with his Black sergeants and tried to obtain transfers on several occasions.⁴⁷ Finally on November 17, 1899, Corporal David Fagen severed connections with his company and the United States Army, reportedly with the help of an insurgent officer who had a horse waiting for him near the company barracks⁴⁸ Because no first-hand accounts from Fagen himself exist, his story can only be pieced together by various records

⁴⁷ *Manila Times* September 19th, 1901.

⁴⁸ Regimental returns, 24th Infantry, Nov. 1899, NA, RG 94; information slip on David Fagen, AGO file 431081, NA, RG

and newspaper articles. As word of his desertion spread, narratives about Fagen began appearing in newspapers. These accounts constitute a rare depiction of the Black-soldier deserter. Most reporting on him appears in white newspapers, underscoring the differing relationship that White and Black America had with the idea of Black desertion.

Michael Robinson and Frank Shubert note that Black newspapers generally paid little attention to David Fagen's story. Examples include the *Richmond Planet*, *Cleveland Gazette*, *Chicago Broadax*, *Indianapolis Freeman*, *(Des Moines) Iowa State Bystander*, *Sedalia (Missouri) Times*, and *Washington Bee*. They speculate that Black publishers may have been hesitant or embarrassed about stories of Black soldiers who defected. In addition, many of these papers often ran stories questioning American Imperialism and feared that they might be held partially responsible and considered disloyal during wartime. Still, Black newspaper publishers were likely very aware of his story but chose not to publish it, revealing how their relationship to the U.S. dominant culture was still very cautiously and carefully crafted.

Prominent white newspapers, however, covered Fagen in a series of articles in late 1900 and 1901. First and foremost was *The New York Times*, October 29, 1900 article titled "American Deserter a Filipino General" with subheading "David Fagin of Twenty-Fourth Infantry an Insurgent."⁴⁹ The article describes the way a private merchandise barge was attacked by a group of insurgents led by Fagen before American troops intervened and prevented its capture and looting. This short article takes pains to characterize Fagen's "rank of general among the insurgents" and the way he has "shown special enmity towards his former company." While accounts and records show that Fagen had a prominent rank in the Filipino army, the descriptions of his "special" hostility from him appear to be editorialized. The articles reports also that Fagen,

⁴⁹Newspaper articles about Fagen often misspell his name.

“sends special messages to his comrades threatening them with violence if they become his prisoners.” Clearly, the *New York Times*, a paper of record, feels an investment in portraying Black desertion as a particularly violent threat. Notably, the article does not explicitly mention his race, though most readers would likely have known that the Twenty-Fourth infantry was a Black troop.⁵⁰

Soon after, The *Salt Lake City Herald* published an article titled “They Knew Fagen: Salt Lake Colored People talk about Filipino Officer” from October 30, 1900. Fagen was of interest because he had briefly lived in the area while a soldier at Fort Douglas, a small military garrison a few miles east of Salt Lake City. The article contains first-hand accounts, also features one of the only known pictures of Fagen, a rudimentary drawing that appears midway through the article. The article recalls that he was a frequent visitor of gambling resorts in the area. The article contains quotations from Sergeant Williams, who has just returned from a 20 year service in the Twenty-fourth infantry, where he served at one point with Fagen. The soldier notes that Fagen was “no soldier,” “would never make a soldier,” was “Lazy” and “had too much book learning in his head.” He speculates that Fagen probably joined the insurgents because he wanted to have a high rank and that he also looked Filipino because of his medium complexion. He is described as a jovial poker player, and somebody who avoided following orders. The article also quotes soldiers who did not believe he deserted, instead guessing that he was taken hostage and forced to fight. Articles like the *Herald's* describe Fagen’s lack of discipline and propensity for vice. They marshal a fellow soldier in order to counter any idea that Black soldiers approved of or followed Fagen in any way. In this sense, the article maintains a sense of mediation and

⁵⁰ As Gatewood notes in *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden* (1975) the Twenty-Fourth Infantry was both a source of pride in the Black community, as well as a source of tension when stationed in white communities.

comfort for both Black and white populations in the area, since the portrayal of soldiers was a concern to those who, again, viewed military service as a pathway to full citizenship. It portrays Fagen as a severe outlier and his desertion as result of his personal flaws, rather than external forces of racism or imperialism. In each case, both *The New York Times* as well as the *SLC Herald*, the white press sought to control the narrative in order to contain Black resistance, especially desertion.

But evidence exists that Fagen's story affected the Black population in ways not containable by these narratives. Articles in the *San Francisco Chronicle* from August 16 and 17 of 1901 read like a story in two parts.⁵¹ The first article, titled "Traitor and Deserter by his Own Confession," describes a young Black bicycle thief arrested in Los Angeles, who revealed that his name was "John Fegan," and who confessed he had deserted the U.S. army and served in the ranks of the Philippine resistance. The man said he had stowed away aboard a transport boat and arrived in San Francisco earlier that year. The short article concludes by describing the punishment for desertion as 40 years imprisonment. The very next issue, August 17, featured a small retraction under the title "Bicycle Thief Not Army Deserter," indicating that the confession of the man turned out to be a "baseless fabrication." Though the man's motivations for such a fabrication are unclear, these two articles substantiate that prominent newspapers were quick to publish articles related to desertion, and that the story of Fagen had reached the Black youth.

⁵¹ The two articles from the *San Francisco Chronicle* were cited briefly by Schubert and Robinson, who noted that "The San Francisco Chronicle reported that he had surreptitiously boarded a troop ship and returned the United States. The story touched off an official military investigation, which revealed only that a Negro bicycle thief had taken the name "Fegan" in honor of the guerilla" (78).

Whether the man in the article was simply after the fame attached to Fagen's story, or claimed his identity as a form of homage, or tribute, however, is unclear.

The story of David Fagen's desertion constitutes a radical chapter in the story of Black resistance during the Spanish-American War era. Fagen's narrative speaks to aspects of late-19th-century racial imperialism that resonates with Black political philosophy as well. No less than W.E.B Du Bois theorized imperialism's relationship to the contact zone. In 1907 Du Bois was asked to comment on a paper by Alfred Holt Stone on the question of inevitable race friction between whites and Blacks. He begins on the significance of race compatibility, remarking that the "modern world spells increased and increasing contact of groups and nations and races" and that those who believe that Blacks have the ability to strike out and create their own nation are mistaken because of imperial reach. He references the Philippines, referring to their people as a group of colored folks a half a world away, for which the U.S. is not content until it annexes them and rules them according to its own ideas (184). By depicting imperialism as a hinderance to minoritarian alternate nationhood, Du Bois crafts a theory of imperialism and Black liberatory strategy alike. Du Bois ultimately asserts that the U.S. will have to learn to "live in peace and prosperity with her own Black citizens" in order to keep up with other imperialist powers. Du Bois frames internal racial strife as a possible flaw in U.S. imperialism.

Recent scholarship places Fagen's action in the context of political dissent. E. San Juan Jr., for example, reads Fagen's actions as a repudiation of the white supremacist juridical political order, noting that his joining a revolutionary movement that resists a colonial power with a history of slavery "is to reaffirm the right of collective self-determination and revolt against the slave system" (39). San Juan Jr. also distinguishes Fagen's actions from previous maroon revolts because while they sought to restore a pre-capitalist order "in an isolated place,"

Fagen joins a Filipino anti-colonial struggle against a fully industrialized U.S. capitalist power. In E. San Juan's view, Fagen affirms a new level of dissent, which, on the cusp of a new era of finance capital and imperialism, has global, transnational resonance. San Juan Jr's contextualization of Fagen suggests that the culture of print media was clearly cognizant of dissent and resistance that interfered with the developing imperial era marked by war abroad and racial tension back home. Both the Black soldier letters and the newspapers' handling of the famous Fagen case demonstrate that each sought to construct visions of racial and political progress in the U.S. and beyond. Framing Fagen as a shameful outlier underscores the idea that desertion or the impulses towards it were rare and to be criticized. Conversely the Black soldier letters were a space to critique U.S. anti-Blackness and imagine possibilities outside of the U.S. nation, in part, through cross-racial solidarities.

Imperium In Imperio: The Literary Capacities of the Intelligentsia

The era of empire and the Spanish-American War also saw the presence of race-conscious Black political writings, speeches, and literature. Black political thought and literature in the late 19th century emerged from a period that saw an expansion of Black art, writing, and participation in the electoral process. Furthermore, African-Americans fought to establish educational institutions, resulting in the founding of over seventy schools and colleges. However, as Reconstruction ended and federal troops were removed from the south to restore a Jim Crow status quo, debates intensified in the Black public sphere. For example, through this push for schools came a debate over the direction of Black education, animated in part by the conflict between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois. This debate would inform not only education but political organization and strategy. Washington was known for an accommodationist strategy and he discouraged agitation and strikes, instead urging Black

Americans to work hard, be respectful, and acquire vocational training useful for the growing economy in the South. He considered this the proper pathway to full citizenship, outlining these views in his famous 1895 Atlanta Exposition Speech.

W.E.B. Du Bois, a Harvard intellectual, espoused a different view. He thought Washington's accommodationist strategy would only perpetuate white oppression. He asserted the importance of political action and furthermore, he thought that social change was in part driven by the development and organization of college-educated Blacks he described as "The Talented Tenth"⁵² Though the debate between Du Bois and Washington held prominence, questions persisted over migration to the North, as well as emigration to Africa, especially as racism and lynching intensified as the century came to a close.

The violence of Jim Crow sparked a variety of philosophical, political, and literary responses. Prominent figures such as Frederick Douglass continued to speak out about issues such as the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, and he published the third version of his autobiography in 1881. Ida B. Wells, spoke both domestically and abroad about the mistreatment of Black Americans and in 1892 published the pamphlet *Southern Horrors, Lynch Law in all its Phases* as an investigation and analysis of lynching. Sutton Griggs, whose *Imperium In Imperio* (1899) opens this chapter, was a Baptist minister and writer from Texas. Griggs mostly disagreed with Booker T. Washington's politics of accommodation and seemed to lean towards the Du Bois side of the political spectrum, even joining his Niagara Movement in 1905 (Carson 158).⁵³

⁵² "The Negro Race, like all races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men. The problem of education then, among Negroes, must first of all deal with the "Talented Tenth." It is the problem of developing the best of this race that they may guide the Mass away from the contamination and death of the worst." Du Bois "The Talented Tenth" 1903.

⁵³ The Niagara Movement was a civil-rights group founded in 1905 at Niagara Falls. Du Bois assembled with leaders including teachers, clergy, business owners, on Canadian side of Niagara Falls to form an organization committed to change for African Americans. It demanded an end to

Griggs's wrote *Imperium* specifically with a Black audience in mind, and it was a rare novel at the time that contained almost exclusively Black main characters.

Imperium's two main characters, Bernard Belgrave and Belton Piedmont, first meet as rival schoolboys in Hampton, Virginia, both academically gifted. Despite this commonality, they come from different familial backgrounds. Belton grows up impoverished with multiple siblings, while the light-skinned Bernard is raised by his wealthy mother in a luxurious home. After high school they embark on divergent paths and the first part of the novel moves back and forth between their stories as they attend college and establish careers. Belton studies at the all-Black Stowe University, a clear reference to Harriet Beecher Stowe. Meanwhile, the novel reveals that Bernard is the son of a prominent white Senator, whose connections land him at Harvard University. Bernard becomes a criminal defense lawyer, and eventually a congressman in Virginia after a contested election. Belton's career proves much more difficult and beset by obstacles. He finds work as a teacher, journalist, postal clerk and college president. Each time, however, racism and discrimination drive him from his position. This comes to a head during his time as president of a Black college in Louisiana, where he becomes the target of a lynch mob for encouraging the Black vote and, finally, for touching a white woman's bible at church.

The white mob hangs and shoots him but he survives, unbeknownst to the men who cut him down and deliver him to Dr. Zacklund, who intended to dissect him. Instead, Belton pretends to play dead on the gurney until he seizes an opportunity to kill Zacklund and flee. While on trial, a liberal newspaper publishes Belton's statement about the lynch mob, which garners enough attention enough that Bernard hears about it and comes to defend him, getting

segregation and discrimination in unions, the courts, and public accommodations, and equality of economic and educational opportunity. Its ideals led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

him acquitted. Later, Belton invites Bernard to Waco, Texas, where he learns of a secret Black organization known as the Imperium, who want Bernard as their president due to his stature as a highly educated lawyer. The final chapters narrative a debate in the Imperium as to the course of action; Belton argues for a more accommodationist stance while Bernard argues for war and insurrection. After Belton persuades the Imperium against war, Bernard offers an even more aggressive war plan, which Belton rejects, resigning from the Imperium in the process. Since resignation equals death in the Imperium, the organization executes Belton. The insurrection never moves forward, however. Berl Trout, a fellow Imperium member, turns on the organization and reveals their plans to the government. The novel, however, ends with his confession and never fully resolves the fate of the Imperium.

Imperium's critical trajectory often situates the two main characters as representations of conflicting strains in Black political philosophy. In particular, they have mapped Booker T. Washington as Belton Piedmont. Hannah Wallinger notes, "Belton Piedmont is certainly meant to be taken as a Booker T. Washington figure...a fictional representative of the real-life controversy between the more conciliatory Washington and the more radical Du Bois" (199). David Kramer argues that while Belton's foil, Bernard Belgrave, speaks against conciliation, it does not seem that Belgrave is modeled after Du Bois (8). For Kramer, Du Bois does not mirror Bernard in his radical ideas about insurrection and war against the state. Indeed, Mark Braley writes that Du Bois, despite always supporting the Black soldier, was generally against war during this period.⁵⁴ Though the characters do not map exactly, this strain of criticism clarifies

⁵⁴ 22. Mark Braley, "The Sweetness of his Strength": Du Bois, Teddy Roosevelt and the Black Soldier," *W.E.B Du Bois and race: essays celebrating the centennial publication of The Souls of Black Folk*, Chester J. Fontenot Jr. and Mary Alice Morgan, eds. (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2001) 97-121.

how *Imperium* participates in debates over the prevailing ideas of Black politics and liberation. And indeed, Griggs uses literary space imaginatively, since the novel's dramatic staging of arguments over insurrection and alternate nationhood built from all-out war would have constituted radical tendencies in Black liberatory politics.

Of his status as a writer, Addison Gayle likens reading Griggs to being “propelled light-years into the future” since his writing seems to bypass the Harlem Renaissance, Richard Wright, Baldwin, and Ellison, “to arrive in the modern era” (60). Griggs, for Gayle, is a writer who anticipates the ideas of the 20th-century Black political arena, including debates over education, the conflicts between nationalism and assimilationism, and the functions of Black secret societies. Gayle also notes that Griggs sold his book door to door in Black communities, and the politically innovative and radical tendencies in his work were a function of the fact he was self-published. He was not beholden to a publisher or patron. I build upon Gayle in my readings by drawing from his idea that Griggs's goal was the presentation of debate and ideas and I argue that in *Imperium* Griggs was interested in putting models for revolution into the literary and political imaginary, and the detail by which he rehearsed these debates spoke to the seriousness of his undertaking.

The question of Black liberatory strategy and form comes up in an article by Keith Byerman and Hannah Wallinger. They assert, “Griggs uses the devices of speculative fiction both to expose the injustices of racism in American society, through the experiences of Belton, and to suggest the possibilities of radical change” (191). In their view, the novel demonstrates the *Imperium* as an effective democratic political structure that shows the capacity of Black Americans as political and intellectual agents. For Byerman and Wallinger, the ultimate failure of the *Imperium* is not due to racial incompetence, which was a common attack on Blacks.

Rather, the *Imperium*'s failure shows that Black competence was not always a true countermeasure to white supremacy and prejudice. The critique, then, targets the hypocrisy of U.S. ideals of freedom and equality that nonetheless produced and perpetuated racial injustice.

Much like I situate Black soldiers and David Fagen as reference points for Black political critique, I read *Imperium* as an attempt to imagine these threads of Black liberatory strategies to potential conclusions. *Imperium* takes the spirit of stories like David Fagen and the alternative nationhood imaginings of Black soldiers and resituates them within the context of a rising Black intelligentsia informed by figures like Washington and Du Bois. One could imagine David Fagen as a member of the *Imperium*, cheering for Bernard's declaration of war. Before the novel even reveals to us the existence of the *Imperium*, however, it articulates the source of rebellion from the educated classes. In the middle of the novel, Belton has just been fired from his position as a postal clerk because he refused to endorse his chief's political candidate, a known racist.

The novel pauses over Belton's position as an educated Black man. He is in an impossible position because racial prejudice bars him from attaining jobs commensurate with his education. Belton, echoing sentiments expressed by Booker T. Washington, concludes, "Colleges were rushing class after class forth with just his kind of education, and there was no employment for them" (130). The narrator then notes that many young men were in this position and "would get together in groups" and discuss their condition, criticizing "a national government that would not protect them against prejudice" and progress from merely passively "hating the flag" to thinking of "rebellious against it" (131). This scene draws an important connection between Black assembly and rebellion that would become fully articulated through the *Imperium* later in the novel. But much like Black soldier rebellion and resistance are in part a result of their role as imperial soldiers, this equation that led the Black educated class to

rebellious ideas operates similarly. Part of the U.S.'s growth into an empire was the result of the evolution of its racial configurations. The proliferation of the Black educated classes and Black universities created a space by which Black academics pondered questions of national allegiance.

The novel imagines the radical organization of the Black educated class through the Imperium. When Belton reveals its existence to Bernard, he also outlines its mission and history. According to Bernard, the Imperium “conducted a campaign of education, which in every case preceded an attempt at securing members” meant to teach Blacks “what real freedom was (192). For the Imperium, freedom from slavery was only the beginning. By illustrating the full story and machinations of the Imperium, the novel offers, into the political imaginary, the idea of resistance through clandestine organizing and planning. Moreover, the novel dramatizes the tensions inherent in decision-making as the novel hits its climax through a strategic debate between Belton and Bernard. The debate occurs just after the moment that begins this chapter, where the Imperium eagerly anticipates news of the Cuban insurrection. The transnationality and pan-Blackness implied by their anticipation is solidified when the Imperium decides they will take action.

The debate over strategy plays out in the form of two speeches which effectively read like two treatises. Bernard’s fiery speech outlines the history of injustices experienced by Black Americans in the U.S. He then addresses the Imperium, saying, “The question remaining before us, then, is, How are we to obtain this freedom? In olden times, revolutions were effected by the sword and spear. In modern times the ballot has been snatched from our hands. The modern implement of revolutions has been denied us. I need not say more. Your minds will lead you to the only gate left open” (220). Clearly, Bernard’s speech situates accommodation or reformist politics as ineffective. Members of the Imperium begin shouting, “War, War, War.”

Belton then counters Bernard's ideas, and calling for patience and asking Blacks to continue proving they have earned citizenship. However, he slightly shifts by positing a four-year plan in which they will "impress the Anglo-Saxon that he has a New Negro on his hands and must surrender what belongs to him" and that if they are unable to win their rights, they will emigrate to Texas and secure possession of the state government (245). Belton's speech proves persuasive, but later that night Bernard approaches him with a revised plan. In it, he outlines a series of steps for taking over Texas that begins with having as many members join the U.S. Navy as they can and creating a diversion in the form of a state fair where the governor would be out of his office. At that point they will seize the capital of Austin and hoist the flag of the Imperium there, bolstered by their numbers in the Navy.

When Belton disagrees with Bernard's revised plan and resigns from the Imperium, the novel's focus shifts to how the organization handles disagreement and infighting. Belton's execution and Berl Trout's eventual betrayal of the Imperium read as a warning about the difficulties of collective decision making and action. Trout betrays the Imperium in part because he considers Bernard to be out of control and his ideas dangerous. Griggs seems to suggest that radical fervor has dangerous limits and thus decision-making itself must be taken as seriously as the ideas and strategies on paper. Yet the novel demonstrates the capacity of the Black intelligentsia to plot and organize against the state with a secrecy and detail born in part from the need for the Black "talented tenth" to relay ideas about U.S. democracy and freedom through their presence in Black schools and universities.

Though accounts of Black political strategy are often characterized through the figures of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, Black soldier letters, David Fagen, and *Imperium* demonstrate a broader spectrum of politics that include cross-racial solidarity, emigration,

alternative nationhood, desertion, and war against the U.S. itself. The Black literary and public sphere at the onset of U.S. empire employed multiple strategies to consider effective pathways to freedom during a period of horrific Jim Crow violence and oppression. But this public sphere also reveals fundamental contradictions and flaws in imperialism. Imperialism must expand its reach while maintaining national unity. Imperialism, as a form or state of capitalism, requires racial hierarchies in order to organize and manage labor, including soldiers and intellectuals. These entries into the Black literary sphere, in different ways, speak to weaknesses in U.S. empire that demonstrated to the Black public opportunities for them to win and assert their rights or create alternate nations. Transnational contact zones, though more present in the soldier letters, serve as a jumping off point for thinking about the plight of non-white peoples around the globe. Though Griggs, for example, sees alternative nationhood in the contiguous U.S., the *Imperium* draws inspiration from insurrection abroad in Cuba, and the novel's publication overlapped with the Spanish-American War. As Imperialism changes and takes different forms in the present day, the onset of U.S. imperialism around the Spanish-American war can unveil pathways for new ideas for liberation in the present.

Coda: On Reading and Archival Practices

Arrested Solidarities brings together case studies that demonstrate how scholarly curation and reading practices expand the spectrum by which we view the liberatory and resistant strategies of racialized subjects. I highlight various textual maneuvers writers used to enact their subjectivity into the political arenas they inhabited. Because of the tradition of white-centric tendencies in literary studies, many of these imaginaries remain understudied. Taken as a whole, these writers express a dissatisfaction with their racialized positions in the context of U.S. empire and white supremacy. Subsequently, they employed writing as a tactic to critique the U.S. government, overturn it, or in some cases, imagine entire alternate social relations. I utilize the concept of racial contact zones since it influences and inform show cultural production grapples with race and liberation. For me, the contact zone is both a way to juxtapose disparate literary traditions and a methodology for reading texts with an attunement to how minoritized groups wrote and thought about each other.

The breadth I take on in this dissertation allows me to illustrate the relationship between form and content across multiple racial and historical contexts. For instance, Delany's *Blake*, and its provocative vision for insurrection during the antebellum period, was written in the context of the abolition movement, urging its comparison to the rhetoric of slave narratives. On the other hand, the *Squatter and the Don* was not about insurrection but rather about injustices and corruption inflicted on Mexican-Californians. I put pressure on the tendency to simply frame one as insurrectionary and the other as reformist. Instead, the distinction might serve as an occasion to analyze how Mexican-Californians still identified as white and landowning, and thus rightfully under equal relationship to the U.S. legal system. Nonetheless, Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton employed her novel in such a way to mix and exceed the traditions of romance and

sentimentalism in order to lambast monopolists and corrupt politicians. Despite these differences, however, the two case studies present through lines. Characters in both *Blake* and *Squatter* interacted with Indigenous characters to clarify their position as political agents, underscoring the role of Indigenous subjects in the development of racial and political hierarchies in the 19th-century.

My archival choices were influenced by scholars such as Saidiya Hartman, who in *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments* (2019) says, “Every historian of the multitude...is forced to grapple with the power and authority of the archive and the limits it sets on what can be known, whose perspective matters, and who is endowed with the gravity and authority of historical actor” (1). The decisions I made as a researcher in this dissertation were born of how seriously I take the notion of power and perspective in my objects of study. I focused on primarily non-white texts and non-canonical works. I juxtaposed novels, newspapers, and letters and often employed reading practices that sought to tease out under-emphasized political visions and strategies.

In the same way the writers I study are eccentric in their political visions, my canonical choices are eccentric to the white versions of literary studies focused on a small cadre of great writers. F.O. Matthiessen’s *American Renaissance* has had a considerable impact on literary scholarship. Though Matthiessen’s work is far more complex, and it would be an oversimplification to say he was promoting writers such as Melville, Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, and Hawthorne as the *only* important literary giants of the period, the influence of his book further reinforces their exalted place in the Humanities. Though I am writing about the 19th century, I include none of these authors. Instead, I consciously chose authors of color who had a different relationship to the philosophical and political arena of the 19th-century. Though several

of the writers I discuss had an important place in the public sphere of the period, few of them held a prominent place in the literary tradition compared to the writers mentioned above. One would seldom find them in undergraduate college syllabi and even less so in the high school curriculum.

And this fact is significant because I am working from a premise that racial and ethnic representation alone is insufficient to provide literary history with the multiplicity of ideas present in the archive. I am interested in the representation of ideas that trouble and complicate the parameters by which politics are studied in the 19th-century and beyond. What does it mean when writers search beyond the notion of rights or full citizenship? Insurrection, emigration, and transnational solidarity emerge in my work as necessary potentialities in a nation incapable of granting full citizenship rights to racialized subjects. Texts such as *Blake, or the Huts of America* and *Imperium In Imperio* suggest that insurrectionary imaginaries, rather than just reactive to power, can also be tactical, strategic, and ultimately creative.

There are also further possible expansions to this spectrum of political imaginaries, only hindered by the limits of the archive and the innovation of our reading practices. The seeds of my research have much room for growth. Initially, my first chapter began by examining the case of Toypurina, a Tongva medicine woman who helped plan the 1785 rebellion against Mission San Gabriel. As a scholar, I made the difficult choice to remove that chapter. Still, it taught me a lesson that will inform my future research on how minoritarian writers imagined resistance and other political visions. I wanted to explore what Toypurina and her co-conspirators thought and the details of their political visions, but the archive was sparse. The most relevant archival piece is a court transcription in Spanish. Working with this document would constitute two forms of mediation from Toypurina herself, the court's interpretation and selection of her testimony, and

my translation of the document. With little else to go on, I decided to table the research for the time being because I felt I could not yet do justice to Toypurina and the rebellion's political vision. This is a problematic of the colonial archive. Materials, perhaps more in the past than now, are nonetheless curated institutionally by power, administration, and the legal system. But as researchers and archivists continue to excavate materials, the possibility remains of further work developing. In this sense, the archive is yet undiscovered and unwritten. But our job as researchers in the humanities and social sciences necessitates a conscious effort to seek out projects whose materials are sparse because those are often the same ideas and visions mediated and suppressed by colonial protocols. As scholars, we can remove suppressed histories from their encasement, and hopefully, bring them to the public sphere.

I have sought to expand the lexicon for resistance through this project, motivated by a wish to show that minoritarian subjects in the United States have used writing to imagine different worlds and protest the ones they inhabited. This history is as significant as ever. In the wake of the 2020 elections, many view the practice of voting or supporting the democratic party, for example, as insufficient to address the racial and class issues that plagued 2020. Many took to the streets and continue to take to the streets, and though street protests might be viewed as mostly symbolic, they too carry on the insurrectionary impulses of the 19th-century.

Works Cited

- "A Century of Dishonor." Rev. of Century of Dishonor. *Nation* 32 (1881): 152.
- "Melville, Delany, and New World Slavery." *To Wake the Nations: Race in the Making of American Literature*, by Eric J. Sundquist, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994, pp. 135–221.
- "Speech ... on the Joint Resolution for Distributing Rations to the Distressed Fugitives from Indian Hostilities in the States of Alabama and Georgia. Delivered in the House of Representatives, Wednesday, May 25, 1836." *Speech ... on the Joint Resolution for Distributing Rations to the Distressed Fugitives from Indian Hostilities in the States of Alabama and Georgia. Delivered in the House of Representatives, Wednesday, May 25, 1836*, by John Quincy Adams, *National Intelligencer*, 1836.
- Alicia Contreras. "'I'll Publish Your Cowardice All Over California': María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don* in the Age of Howells." *American Literary Realism*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2017, p. 210. *Crossref*, doi:10.5406/amerlitereal.49.3.0210.
- Amparo, Ruiz de Burton María. *The Squatter and the Don*. Modern Library, 2004.
- Andrews, William Loring. *To Tell a Free Story the First Century of Afro-American Autobiography, 1760-1865*. University of Illinois Press.
- Baaz, Mikael, et al. "Defining and Analyzing 'Resistance.'" *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 41, no. 3, 2016, pp. 137–153., doi:10.1177/0304375417700170.
- Bonsal, Stephen. "The Negro Soldier in War and Peace." *The North American Review*, vol. 185, no. 616, 7 June 1907, pp. 321–327.

- Byrd, Jodi A. "The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism." *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*, University of Minnesota Press, 2011, pp. xi-xxxix.
- Carson , Warren J. *The Cambridge History of African American Literature*, edited by Maryemma Graham and Jerry Washington Ward, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2015, pp. 154–176.
- Das Gupta , Monisha. *Keywords for Asian American Studies*, by Linda Trinh Võ and Cathy J. Schlund-Vials, NYU Press, 2015, pp. 216–219.
- Delany, Martin Robison, and Jerome J. McGann. *Blake ; or, The Huts of America: a Corrected Edition*. Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Delany, Martin Robison, and Jerome J. McGann. *Blake, or, The Huts of America*. Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Delany, Martin Robison, and Robert S. Levine. *Martin R. Delany: a Documentary Reader*. University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Doolen, Andy. "When Mammy Lies: The Everyday Resistance of Slave Women in Martin Delany's *Blake*." *Studies in American Fiction*, vol. 45, no. 1, 2018, pp. 1–17., doi:10.1353/saf.2018.0000.
- Douglass, Frederick, and Philip Sheldon Foner. *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*. Chicago Review, 2012.
- Elisa Warford. "'An Eloquent and Impassioned Plea': The Rhetoric of Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don*." *Western American Literature*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2009, pp. 5–21. *Crossref*, doi:10.1353/wal.0.0018.

- Farrison, William E. "William Wells Brown in Buffalo." *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1954, pp. 298–314., doi:10.2307/2715403.
- Gatewood, Willard B. *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902*. University of Arkansas Press, 1999.
- Gatewood, Willard B. *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902*. University of Arkansas Press, 1999.
- Gatewood, Willard B. *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*. University of Illinois Press, 1975.
- Gayle, Addison. *The Way of the New World: the Black Novel in America*. 1976.
- Gerrity, Sean. "Freedom on the Move: Marronage in Martin Delany's *Blake; or, the Huts of America*." *Melus*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2018, pp. 1–18., doi:10.1093/melus/mly024.
- González, John Morán. *The Troubled Union: Expansionist Imperatives in Post-Reconstruction American Novels*. Ohio State University Press, 2020.
- Griggs, Sutton Elbert. *Imperium in Imperio*. Modern Library, 2003.
- Hackel, S. W. "Sources of Rebellion: Indian Testimony and the Mission San Gabriel Uprising of 1785." *Ethnohistory*, vol. 50, no. 4, 2003, pp. 643–669., doi:10.1215/00141801-50-4-643.
- Hackel, S. W. "Sources of Rebellion: Indian Testimony and the Mission San Gabriel Uprising of 1785." *Ethnohistory*, vol. 50, no. 4, 2003, pp. 643–669., doi:10.1215/00141801-50-4-643.
- Hamnett, Brian R. "Benito Juárez, Early Liberalism, and the Regional Politics of Oaxaca, 1828-1853." *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1991, p. 3., doi:10.2307/3338561.

- Holbo, Christine. "'Industrial & Picturesque Narrative': Helen Hunt Jackson's California Travel Writing for the *Century*." *American Literary Realism*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2010, pp. 243–66. *Crossref*, doi:10.1353/alr.0.0051.
- Hollander, Jocelyn A., and Rachel L. Einwohner. "Conceptualizing Resistance." *Sociological Forum*, vol. 19, no. 4, 2004, pp. 533–554., doi:10.1007/s11206-004-0694-5.
- Horne, Gerald. *Race to Revolution: the United States and Cuba during Slavery and Jim Crow*. Monthly Review Press, 2014.
- in Cuba U.S.Mexico, and the United States*. Duke UP, 2008.
- Jackson, Helen Hunt. *Ramona: A Story*. Signet Classic, 2002.
- Kanellos, Nicolás, and Claudio Esteva Fabregat. *Handbook of Hispanic Cultures in the United States*. Arte Público Press, 1993.
- Kaplan, Amy. "The Social Construction of American Realism (Studies in Law and Economics (Paperback))." *Introduction: "Realism and Absent Things in American Life,"* 1st ed., University of Chicago Press, 1992, pp. 1–14.
- Karuka, Manu. *Empire's Tracks Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad*. University of California Press, 2019.
- Kazanjian, David. *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America*. University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- Kemble, Edward Cleveland. *The History of California Newspapers. From the Sacramento Daily Union, Dec. 25, 1858*. 1858.
- King, Rosemary A. "Claiming Space: Domestic Places, National Divides." *Border Confluences: Borderland Narratives from the Mexican War to the Present*, by Rosemary A. King, University of Arizona Press, 2004, pp. 3–29.

- Lauter, Paul, and Richard Yarborough. *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2014.
- Lazo, Rodrigo, and Jesse Alemán. *The Latino Nineteenth Century*. New York University Press, 2016.
- Luis-Brown, David. *Waves of Decolonization: Discourses of Race and Hemispheric Citizenship*. Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2011.
- Melamed, Jodi. *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*. no. 1, 2007, pp. 111-134.
- Norman, Brian. "The Addressed and the Redressed: Helen Hunt Jackson's Protest Essay and Northup, Solomon. *Twelve Years a Slave*. Penguin Books, 2016.
- Northup, Solomon. *Twelve Years a Slave*. Penguin Books, 2016.
- Olney, James. "'I Was Born': Slave Narratives, Their Status as Autobiography and as Literature." *Callaloo*, no. 20, 1984, p. 46., doi:10.2307/2930678.
- Pitt, Leonard. *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-speaking*
- Pratt, Mary Louise. "Arts of the Contact Zone." *Profession 1991*, 1991, pp. 33–40.
- Robinson, Michael C., and Frank N. Schubert. "David Fagen: An Afro-American Rebel in the Philippines, 1899-1901." *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 44, no. 1, 1975, pp. 68–83., doi:10.2307/3637898.
- Saldaña-Portillo, María Josefina. *Indian given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States*. Duke University Press, 2016.
- San Juan, E. "African American Internationalism and Solidarity with the Philippine Revolution." *Socialism and Democracy*, vol. 24, no. 2, 2010, pp. 32–65., doi:10.1080/08854301003746924.

Sandos, James A. "LEVANTAMIENTO!: The 1824 Chumash Uprising Reconsidered."

Southern California Quarterly, vol. 67, no. 2, 1985, pp. 109–133.,

doi:10.2307/41171145.

Stowe, Charles Edward., and Lyman Beecher. Stowe. *Harriet Beecher Stowe: the Story of Her*

Life ; With Portraits and Other Ill. Riverside Press, 1911.

Taylor, Yuval. *I Was Born a Slave: an Anthology of Classic Slave Narratives.* Lawrence Hill

Books, 2015

the U.S. Protest Novel Tradition." *Canadian Review of American Studies*, vol. 37,

Wallinger, Hannah, and Keith Byerman . "The Fictions of Race ." *The Cambridge History of*

African American Literature, edited by Maryemma Graham and Jerry Washington Ward,

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2015, pp. 177–205.

Zamalin, Alex. *African American Political Thought and American Culture: the Nation's Struggle*

for Racial Justice. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.