

by the author's instructive, even if at times hysterical ramblings, on the threats posed by such plays to the American regime. Hereinafter, references to this volume appear in the main text.

Other useful background materials on the nationalist plays can be found in Cullinane, "Ilustrado Politics," pp. 173-83; and E. Arsenio Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography* (Quezon City: Filipiniana Publications, 1970), vol. 2, pp. 371-83; Amelia Lapena-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights: Early American Occupation* (Manila: Zarzuela Foundation of the Philippines, 1972). Also helpful in understanding the larger historical setting of the nationalist dramas are Doreen Fernandez, *The Iloilo Zarzuela* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1978); Edna Z. Manlapaz, ed., *Aurelio Tolentino: Selected Writings* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1975); and Resil Mojares, *Origins and Rise of the Filipino Novel: A Generic Study of the Novel until 1940* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1983).

¹⁷ See Ilet's nuanced discussion of how popular notions of "freedom" (*kalayaan*, from the root word *layaw*, a condition of perfect reciprocity usually associated with the child's relationship with its mother) varied considerably from American and Filipino elite understandings of "independence" as originating from the actions of the state in *Pasyon and Revolution*, chap. 5; and in "Orators and the Crowd," in Stanley, *Reappraising an Empire*, pp. 85-113.

¹⁸ For a more detailed discussion of notions of reciprocal indebtedness in Tagalog society, see Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), chaps. 3-4, and "Patronage and Pornography: Ideology and Spectatorship in the Early-Marcos Years," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32, no. 2 (April 1990): 282-304.

¹⁹ My remarks on the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality in this particular colonial setting are preliminary and for that reason, unsatisfactory. The colonial articulation of gender (and race) in the Philippines is undoubtedly more complex than what I've just sketched above, and it is a complexity that I am at present trying to unpack. In fact, where Philippine studies is concerned, it is these complex relations among race, gender, sexuality, and class that remain acutely understudied.

In the case of nationalist discourse, I have sought to outline not so much the patriarchal basis of nationalism as its tendency to produce a desire for patriarchy in the face of colonial fathers (e.g., Spanish friars) deemed illegitimate and degenerate. See Vicente L. Rafael, "Nationalism, Imagery and the Filipino Intelligentsia of the Nineteenth Century," in *Critical Inquiry* 16 (Spring 1990): 591-611. For a regional overview and comparative case studies of the intersection of gender categories with the construction of local notions of power, see the illuminating essays in Jane Atkinson and Shelly Errington, eds., *Power and Difference: Gender in Island Southeast Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

Black and Blue on

San Juan Hill

What Virginia Woolf wrote of books, that they "continue each other," can also be said of wars: wars continue each other.¹ Wars generate and accumulate symbolic value by reenacting, reinterpreting, and transposing the cultural meaning of prior wars. The Spanish-American War of 1898 can be understood to have continued the Civil War in an imperial national discourse of the United States at the turn of the century. Politicians and journalists represented the war with Spain as a nostalgic recuperation of the heroism of an earlier generation and as a purgative final battle, healing the wounds and divisiveness of their internecine war while completing its goals of national reunification. While the hundred-day brevity of the later conflict counteracted the interminable length of the earlier one, the international war also promised to reunify the nation by bringing together the North and the South against a common external enemy. Moreover, new battlefields abroad reputedly restored health and vigor to the male body, so massively dismembered in the war between the states. In fact, the vitality of the male body became the symbolic medium for national restoration, as manliness figured the common ground between previously warring factions. And all this, staged on the remote islands of Cuba and the Philippines, leaving the American landscape unscathed. No wonder John Hays called it a "splendid little war."

Yet to continue the Civil War as the final destination on what has been called the "road to reunion," the Spanish-American War had to collapse and undo the thirty-year history separating the two conflicts by waging an ideological battle against Reconstruction, the prior "continuation" of the Civil War. The conflicted legacy of Reconstruction disrupted this unilinear narrative of continuity. Rep-

representations of the later war can thus be seen doing battle on two related fronts: the international struggle with Spain and its colonies aspiring for national independence and the domestic struggle with African Americans fighting to achieve civil rights during Reconstruction. External and internal fronts met to pose the question of the position of African Americans in relation both to the union reconfigured by the Spanish-American War and to the newly colonized subjects acquired by that war. Would these subjects be assimilated into a post-Reconstruction model of race relations at home and would the empire abroad facilitate the subjugation of blacks as colonized subjects at home? Would African Americans position themselves in a relation to American nationhood that reinforced or resisted their assimilation into the role of either imperialized or imperialist?

The representation of empire at the turn of the century could function both as an external catalyst and as a medium for resolution of domestic racial conflict. This complex interaction underlies one of the most enduring cultural icons of the Spanish-American War: the battle for San Juan Hill. The charge up San Juan Hill can easily be debunked or demystified, and it has been since the earliest reports of the war: it was not heroic, but a military fiasco; not a massive orderly charge, but a straggling line of desperate soldiers, pitilessly exposed to enemy fire; not even the romantic San Juan Hill, but the more mundane "Kettle Hill" (itself an apocryphal name). But more useful than demystifying is to understand how the battle of San Juan Hill was produced as an icon precisely because it processed, contained, and crystallized multivalent and contradictory political meanings into a monumental frieze.

No American has remained more visible and virile in the iconography of San Juan Hill than Theodore Roosevelt leading his Rough Riders. In Richard Harding Davis's words, "he was without doubt, the most conspicuous figure in the charge . . . mounted high on horseback, and charging the rifle-pits' at a gallop and quite alone, [he] made you feel that you would like to cheer."² In contrast to his own conspicuousness, Roosevelt, in his account of the battle (which first appeared in *Scribner's* in April 1899 and later in *The Rough Riders*), calls attention to how "astonishing what a limited area of vision and experience one has in the hurly-burly of a battle."³ In fact, so limited was his vision that he only killed one Spanish soldier—whom he could see point-blank—and that, not surprisingly, with a revolver from the sunken battleship *Maine* (given to him by a brother-in-law in the navy).

In marked contrast to this blurred vision is the remarkable clarity with which Roosevelt notes the presence of black American soldiers "com-

pletely intermingled" with his own troops. "Such mixing," he explains, "was inevitable in making repeated charges through thick jungle," but was in need of "reforming" under his command (135). As the American troops entrench themselves on the top of San Juan Hill, Roosevelt's narrative retrenches along racial lines. The battle concludes without a cathartic shoot-out with Spanish soldiers, but instead with a sustained confrontation with African American soldiers that caps the horizontal narrative throughout the report of the threatening intermingling of blacks and whites. An emblem of this threat comes into focus when the color sergeant of the black Tenth Regiment ends up bearing his own colors and those of the white Third Regiment as well (whose flag bearer was killed).

Toward the end of the battle, Roosevelt notes that neither white regulars nor volunteers were weakening, in contrast to the "strain of the colored infantrymen" whose white officers had been killed—and who were left as masterless men in vague affiliation with Roosevelt's troops. When the black soldiers start to drift to the rear to join their own regiment or transport the wounded, Roosevelt perceives them as "depleting my line" and confronts them violently and theatrically: "So I jumped up, and walking a few yards to the rear, drew my revolver, halted the retreating soldiers, and called out to them that I appreciated the gallantry with which they had fought and would be sorry to hurt them, but that I should shoot the first man, who on any pretense whatever went to the rear" (138). When he vows to keep his word, all of his men watched with "utmost interest"; his "cow-punchers, hunters, and miners solemnly nodded their heads and commented in chorus, exactly as if in a comic opera, 'He always does, he always does!'" (138–39). Roosevelt claims that his show worked when the black soldiers, the "'smoked Yankees'—as the Spaniards called them," played their own minstrel parts. They "flashed their white teeth at one another, as they broke into broad grins, and I had no more trouble with them" (139). Roosevelt concludes this confrontation with a paean to racial harmony and national unity: "they seem[ed] to accept me as one of their officers" and the Rough Riders, with their "strong color prejudice, grew to accept them with hearty good-will as comrades, and were entirely willing, in their own phrase, 'to drink out of the same canteen'" (139). At this point in the narrative, with racial trenches dug deeply and national unity thus affirmed, Roosevelt can return to the battle in a roll call that names and praises the gallantry of the individual Rough Riders, as though their individual integrity has been protected by his confrontation with African American troops.

This showdown on San Juan Hill, which serves as both the climax to

and digression from the narrative of the battle, raises several interesting questions. Why did the presence of African American soldiers loom so large to Roosevelt as to disrupt the uphill trajectory against the Spanish, with a counternarrative of sidelong glances to the racial intermixing of American soldiers? Why did the potential absence of the African Americans in returning to their regiments, appear even more threatening? In addition, why is the scene at once so startlingly violent and yet so comically theatrical?

There is a familiar trope in war fiction and journalism of dislocation and loss of vision on the battlefield, in response to which a visual anchor must be found—a comrade, a flag, a feature of the landscape—to reorient the soldier and reader. For Roosevelt, black and white intermingling provides both an emblem of this chaos as well as a familiar footing or anchor.⁴ Roosevelt's confrontation with the black troops reestablishes the reassuring order of the domestic color line in a foreign terrain, as their heightened visibility displaces and compensates for the occluded vision of the Cuban political landscape. Intermixing is not the only challenge to Roosevelt's order posed by black soldiers in blue uniforms. Their presence raises the white fear of armed insurrection and of national self-representation, which African American soldiers pursued in their printed rebuttals of Roosevelt's account. This double threat of revolt and representation resonated with the claims of the Cuban revolutionaries whom the American soldiers were sent both to liberate and to subdue. This scene of domestic racial confrontation in *The Rough Riders* cannot be separated from its international context of shifting alliances and conflicts between the Americans and the Cubans.

To analyze this scene in *The Rough Riders*, it is necessary to understand how American journalism was remapping the political coordinates of the Cuban battlefield, how reports were implicitly working to supplant Cuban counternarratives scripted by a prior long revolutionary struggle against Spain. A repeated theme that emerges from the reports of the Cuban battlefield is the contrast between the invisibility of both the Spanish enemy and the Cuban allies and the almost suicidal conspicuousness of the American troops. Soldiers and reporters repeat the refrain: "I didn't catch sight of a single Spaniard, not a one," a lack of visibility which comes to signify their cowardly lack of manliness (as they are often compared to "red Indians"). As many reporters commented, in contrast to the Spanish who hid behind trenches, their Cuban guerillas who sniped from behind tree tops—and the Cuban insurgents who cowered behind their American liberators, the American soldiers marched out into clear view.

They offered an inviting target made even more obvious by their outdated smoking guns, in contrast to the Spanish modern smokeless weapons. In addition, reporters noted the large lumbering observation balloon sent up ahead of the troops, which proved not only impotent in surveying enemy positions, but even worse, drew dramatic attention to the position of the Americans and turned them into open targets.⁵

The lack of overarching surveillance of the enemy presented a problem for representation as well as for military strategy, as one photographer for *Harper's Weekly* explained: "Although I was thus on the first firing line, and many men were wounded and killed all about me, as you will see by my photographs. . . . I found it impossible to make any actual 'battle scenes,' for many reasons—the distance at which the fighting is conducted, the area which is covered, but chiefly the long grasses and thickly wooded country."⁶ This absence of a "scene," a context for the wounded bodies, is due to more than the hindrance of the landscape, but to a kind of political myopia. Whereas Elaine Scarry has argued that wounded bodies in warfare give meaning to an otherwise abstract political conflict, I would suggest the inverse here; the spotlight on wounded bodies effaces the political context by fetishizing those bodies as the only meaningful focal point.⁷ In other words, the conspicuousness of American bodies and the corresponding invisibility of all other combatants had to be produced ideologically as subject positions, not just perceived as military positions. The positions were plotted in part by a narrative that effaced the prior history of the Cuban war against Spain and located the U.S. entry into the war as the point of historical origin.

Although the exposure of the American soldier was lamented as strategically suicidal, it had the important ideological effect of defining American masculinity itself. Report after report praises officers for needlessly yet gallantly standing up in full view under fire, and the charge is portrayed as a kind of grandstanding conspicuousness of sheer bodies hurling themselves up the hill against impregnable trenches. Pictorial representations depict the battle from the point of view of the artist looking up the hill behind the troops and drawing their backs. But a figure usually breaks this perspective by turning around frontally to the spectator, even when he is shooting ahead of him. Rather than directing his focus to confront the enemy, he turns to pose for an audience at home.⁸

The spectacle of the American male body remaps the coordinates of the battlefield to wrest away political agency from the Cubans on both sides of the conflict, a process put in motion as soon as the Americans land in Cuba. Roosevelt's first impression of the insurgents was as a "crew

of as utter tattered demoralizations as human eyes ever looked on, armed with every kind of rifle in all stages of dilapidation" (71). Their appearance provides evidence for him and many others not of the prior history of the dire material context in which the Cuban insurgents had been fighting their three-year war of independence, but of the fact "that they would be no use in serious fighting, but it was hoped that they might be of service in scouting" (71). When the battle begins, however, Roosevelt is disappointed, but not surprised, to find that the Cuban guide at the head of the column ran away at the first sign of fighting. He contrasts this figure with two Americans who remained, "who though non-combatants—newspaper correspondents—showed as much gallantry as any soldier in the field" (82). The replacement of Cuban scouts with American newspaper reporters is apt; better guides in remapping the coordinates of the battlefield to foreground the spectacle of American manhood, they supplant the Cuban map of the entangled political terrain that antedated U.S. intervention. This triangulation of the soldier with the journalist and domestic audience recuperates an image of American masculinity by denying masculinity and political agency to the Cubans, who were in the midst of a long revolutionary process, which is made to disappear.

This displacement can be seen quite starkly in Stephen Crane's aptly titled "Vivid Story of San Juan Hill" published in the *New York World*.⁹ (Crane himself was said by Davis to have engaged in this theatrical visibility by exposing himself to fire atop the hill until Davis embarrassed him by calling attention to his self-dramatizing conspicuousness.)¹⁰ Crane represents the charge as a sporting event, referring to the absent audience who "would give an arm to get the thrill of patriotic insanity that coursed through us" and referring as well to the international audience of foreign attachés who were shocked and impressed by such foolish gallantry (158). In a populist note, Crane also represents the charge as a "grand popular movement" led by the "gallantry of the American private soldier" whose officers were left behind (155). Yet when the Americans reach the top of the hill to entrench themselves for the night, Crane abruptly interrupts his narrative and shifts directions from the upward battle for Santiago to the horizontal struggle with America's allies, the Cuban insurgents. "It becomes necessary to speak of the men's opinion of the Cubans," pauses Crane. "To put it shortly, both officers and privates have the most lively contempt for the Cubans" (163). Class divisions within the American army between privates and officers—which Crane previously celebrated—are healed in their common contempt for their allies.

Crane's article never returns to the continuation of the battle but in-

stead backtracks to review the same events in terms of Cuban nonparticipation. While the Americans "sprinkled a thousand bodies in the grass," not a single Cuban was visible. Once an "efficient body," the insurgents have now become "no more useless body of men anywhere," demoralized and emasculated by American aid (163). While the Americans fight, the Cubans are only interested in feeding their bodies with U.S. rations. Thus the end of the narrative charge up San Juan Hill for Crane is neither the conquest of Santiago nor combat with Spanish soldiers, but the appropriation of the Cuban uprising as an American popular movement and the displacement of lazy, inefficient, hungry Cuban bodies with the spectacle of aggressive American manhood.

The physical absence of Cubans from the battlefield of San Juan Hill was due to the U.S. political decision to exclude the Cuban command from military operations and consequently from deciding on their future in the peace settlement with Spain. Yet the journalistic representations of the Cubans as cowardly, undisciplined, and unsoldierly—in short, unmanly—blames them for their disappearance from the scene. Even Crane's depiction of Cubans and Americans fighting side by side in an earlier battle undermines their alliance by turning the Cubans into a backdrop or foil against which the erect "strong figures" of the Americans are composed. In contrast to the "businesslike" marines, for example, the Cubans are described as "a hard-bitten, under-sized lot, most of them Negroes, and with the stoop and gait of men who had at one time labored at the soil. They were in short peasants—hardy, tireless, uncomplaining peasants—and they viewed in utter calm these early morning preparations for battle."¹¹ While these peasants show no capacity to reflect on their position, "contrary to the Cubans, the bronze faces of the Americans were not stolid at all" (135). When they fight, Crane comments on the "rock-like beautiful poise" of the marines taking aim, which "one noticed the more on account of the Cubans who used the Lee as if it were a squirt gun." In the midst of fighting, "toiling, sweating marines" stand out against "shrill jumping Cubans" (138). Finally, when a Cuban is hit, he is described as "a great hulking Negro" who "seemed in no pain; it seemed as if he were senseless before he fell." And when a fellow soldier carries him, they appear not as comrades in arms, but "the procession that moved off resembled a grotesque wheelbarrow" (138). Thus while the overt narrative trajectory of these reports pits Americans against Spaniards, the detailed representation pits American bodies against Cuban ones to disaffiliate them as allies. Whether stolid or hysterical the Cubans relinquish control to the Americans and become a passive yardstick for measuring