

Abstract

Cotton, Rum, and Reason: Anti-Imperialist Poetry from 19th Century U.S. Newspapers
and Post-Colonial Discourse.

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Though American post-colonial criticism is by no means a field in need of literary material, one particular corpus is missing from the discussion. This thesis situates 19th century anti-imperialist poetry within the larger post-colonial conversation. The poetry that forms the core of this thesis is derived from the front pages of American newspapers as it appeared during three vital stages in the development of the American imperial mindset: the Mexican-American War, the overthrow and annexation of Hawai'i, and the Philippine-American War.

The 19th century poetry featured in this thesis represents an often overlooked voice in post-colonial discourse. The poets are voices of conscience and/or caution that were ultimately drowned out by the power of American expansionism, and these poets have the potential to better illuminate the nature of American empire. Anti-imperialist poetry regarding each of these periods is examined in the thesis from the view of historical context as well as contemporary criticism and poetry indigenous to the three regions mentioned. Period pro-imperialist poetry is also employed to balance the discussion of the emergence of an empire that was, at the time, far from a foregone conclusion.

In this thesis, the voices of post-colonial modernity and 19th century anti-imperialism share the same space and form a broader picture of the impact of American empire building.

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and Post-Colonial Discourse

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Introduction

Post-colonial literary criticism thoroughly examines, through the study of indigenous post-colonial literature, the effects of American imperialism yet limits the range of discussion. What is missing from the conversation is the voice of the American anti-imperialist who, during the 19th century, made known his or her opposition to empire. During this era, most American newspapers maintained a section on their front pages for poetry, either for submissions or reprints from other newspapers. As the United States exerted itself over its neighbors and eventually across the globe, American newspapers began to publish poetry in which citizens, often anonymously, expressed their concern or disgust at the transformation they were witnessing. These poetic objections to imperialism are the foundation for this thesis. Using anti-imperialist poetry published during three periods of American conquest: 1) the Mexican-American War, 2) the annexation of Hawai'i, and 3) the Philippine-American War, I have situated these American poets within post-colonial discourse.

Contemporary newspapers rarely, if ever, publish poetry and so it is important to recognize that during the 19th century there existed a very different relationship between poetry and journalism. The poetry section of a 19th century American newspaper was a space for both sentimental verse and for national discussion. Poetry published in this way, according to Perry Collins of the National Endowment for the Humanities, reveals “cultural and literary trends in 19th-century America.” Thus, the poems in this thesis are more than just pieces of verse published for entertainment; they are, in fact, a significant part of the national debate over imperialism that spanned the latter half of the 19th century.

As the debate over imperialism became also a debate over American identity, so too did newspaper poetry become a force in defining an American literary identity. The period poems

which appear in this thesis are topical though not necessarily aesthetically brilliant; they are often far more bombastic than they are beautiful. Spangled as they are with the exclamation points and melodramatic sighs of a style unfamiliar to contemporary poetry, the poems are also indicative of the peculiar power granted to poetry during the period by virtue of the newspaper. In *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville noted “nothing but a newspaper can drop the same thought into a thousand minds at the same moment” (90). This penetrating statement, made by an outsider to the United States, describes effectively the potency of the newspaper during the 19th century. When a citizen submitted his or her verse to a newspaper during the period, he or she was attempting to engage with the largest audience possible. The newspaper was the means by which the citizen could communicate with the community and, if the poem were reprinted, other parts of the nation. Yet de Tocqueville did not see the newspaper as merely a dispenser of ideas into unguarded minds, instead he insisted that it unites “wandering minds, which had long sought each other in darkness” (90) of the larger society. For the identity crisis that led to American imperialism there could be no better outlet than the newspaper.

It is not so difficult to see why poetry came to be the primary vessel of the anti-imperialist message. de Tocqueville, when consulted again, describes American poetry as largely unconcerned with the naturalist poetry that resulted from the Romantic movement of early 19th century Europe. In the search for the American identity the anti-imperialist poet, along with poets of other causes, exemplified for de Tocqueville a people who “may amuse themselves for a while with considering the productions of nature; but they are only excited in reality by a survey of themselves” (59). This survey of the self is taken even as de Tocqueville would “readily admit that the Americans have no poets; I cannot allow that they have no poetic ideas” (59). Certainly de Tocqueville cannot mean that no one in America was found to be writing poetry during his

stay in the early 1830s yet, whatever his meaning, he addresses the first great American literary challenge: that of building a national literature. In this way the poet of the political cause was operating in a dual capacity, both as the champion of an ideal and the vanguard of an undefined American literary body.

The poets featured in this thesis range from the anonymous or obscure to the well-known. William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., son of the famous abolitionist, is one of the poets featured in this thesis though there are also Southern hawks, an African-American minister, and others from a cross-section of 19th century America.

When a powerful nation goes to war against a weaker nation and is defeated, as with the United States and Vietnam, the latter creates a mythos of patriotic self-importance while the former reluctantly internalizes a cautionary tale. When a powerful nation goes to war against a weaker nation and crushes it, the latter often internalizes this as mythos of patriotic tragedy while the former promptly forgets the conflict entirely. In either case, the conflict does for a time attach itself to the artistic expression of each nation; indeed, this is part of the process of myth-making.

Just as American slavery is made no less horrible by the knowledge that some whites opposed it, neither is American imperialism less destructive because some Americans opposed it. Rather, then, than soothe the American conscience by the inclusion of anti-imperialist poetry, this thesis illustrates the ways in which American imperialism forever transformed a republic into an empire as its citizens watched.

To use the word imperialism, even though at first glance its meaning may seem self-evident, is to require clarification. For the purposes of this thesis, the term imperialism will only be applied to interactions between the United States and governments outside of what are now the lower 48 states. Imperialism is the system by which, though the means and justifications have

varied, the United States has sought to acquire extra-territorial property, political dominance, and/or economic dominance. Where for some nations this sort of action is only taken rarely or not at all, this thesis will view the United States as a utilizer of imperialist systems since at least the time of the Mexican-American War and continuing through the present. Though each era covered by this thesis will present different circumstances, the definition of imperialism will remain the same.

This thesis draws on new historicism to link the modern with the historical, creating a state of what Filipino critic Marjorie Evasco terms “the historical present” (1). Much of the contemporary poetry and criticism examined in this thesis explores a national or cultural present in the context of an American imperial past. Drawing also on the fiercely personal and imaginative criticism and poetry of Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa and Hawai’ian Haunani Kay-Trask, there is a particular emphasis on the historical trauma connected with imperialism.

The critical disposition of this thesis was not necessarily inspired by but certainly aligns with the Filipino critic Ophelia Dimalanta’s position regarding the poetry of Cirilio Bautista: “Whether [Bautista’s poetry] is authentically Filipino or not is moot. But is it Truth? Yes. Poets never lie, arbitrary as their sense of truth is” (15). This thesis is an initiation of a new dialogue of conscience through the juxtaposition of the 19th century anti-imperial with the contemporary post-imperial. Written from a new historicist perspective, this thesis does not combine the past anti-imperial with contemporary post-imperial; rather the embodiments of these two voices have been put in conversation.

The attitude and cause of American imperialism are perhaps best illustrated in George Lockhart Rives’s 1913 retrospective of the Mexican-American War. Rives insists that the “owners and inhabitants [of northern Mexico] had utterly failed to develop the natural resources

of the country” and that for the Americans, “every justification which could attend the settlement by European nations of countries inhabited by uncivilized races” applied to the Mexican conquest. Rives borrows from manifest destiny for justification, proposing that reasons “which could be offered to excuse the expansion of the United States over Indian territory” (658) could also justify the American war with Mexico.

Each chapter of this thesis focuses on a subject of American imperialism and will include a selection of anti-imperialist poems. These poems will form the core of each chapter, complemented by pro-imperialist poetry and contemporary poetry and criticism. In this way, the thesis is dedicated to drawing connections, whether of agreement or disagreement, between the pieces in order to initiate a dialogue. The American anti-imperialist poetry in this thesis does not provide closure to the discussion but complicates it, binding it with the American fight over slavery, American capitalist opportunism, and the legacy of European empire.

The Mexican-American War will be the point of origin for this thesis, beginning with a poem published two months after the conflict commenced. “Mexico-War!” was reprinted in William Lloyd Garrison’s *The Liberator* newspaper from the *Lowell Journal*. The poem is a satire of the stirring call to arms that resounding in pro-war poetry of the time, and is followed in the chapter by the far more somber “I Would Not Sleep Always.” “I Would Not Sleep Always” was published shortly after the close of the war in *The Boston Daily Atlas*, and contrasts sharply with what was at the time an atmosphere of post-war victory.

Chapter Two will focus on the overthrow and annexation of Hawai’i by the United States during the 1890s. The conflict, far removed from the borders of the United States, engendered less outrage on the front pages of America’s newspapers than the Mexican-American War, but for some it represented a distressing renewal of the ambitions of Manifest Destiny. The first

selection of the chapter is “He was by the American republic.” Written by an unnamed “native Hawai’ian”, the poem is a statement of hope for the restoration of the Hawai’ian monarchy. It is the only anti-imperialist poem in the thesis to come from outside the continental United States, and was published *Boston Daily Advertiser* after appearing in publications in Hawai’i. More universal in scope is the poem “Couriers of Civilization”, a poem in the tradition of “Mexico-War!” in its condemnation of American expansionism.

The poetry featured in the third chapter, centered on the Philippine-American War, will be a culmination of the attitudes and anxieties found in the first two chapters. The provocatively titled “Black Man’s Burden” will appear along with a poem simply titled “The Philippines”; these are two vastly different poems in attitude though their anti-imperialist disposition is the same.

The inclusion of voices of opposition from within the American empire at the time of its expansion moves the boundaries of the post-colonial conversation. Every historic trauma has its bystander or even would-be Good Samaritan. The American poets in this thesis are neither entirely bystanders nor entirely good yet their voices bear witness to the rise of a great hegemony.

Chapter One: Anglo-Saxons Going South

As the Southern aristocracy began to cast its eyes westward, President James K. Polk made it clear that territorial expansion was to be the primary focus of his administration. This desire for expansion was so great that the United States had almost gone to war against the United Kingdom over boundary disagreements in the Pacific Northwest during the early stages of Polk's term. On the southern border, the breakaway of Texas from Mexico and its eventual annexation by the United States compelled Mexico to sever relations with the United States, as Mexico still claimed Texas as part of its territory. When the United States dispatched a diplomat to attempt to purchase New Mexico and California, the Mexican government discovered the plan beforehand and refused to entertain any offers. Polk, not to be deterred, issued "instructions...to the general command of...troops to occupy the left bank of the Del Norte" in January 1846 (Richardson 2290), the left bank of the Del Norte being a part of the contested territory. From this act, Polk hoped to gain some form of pretext for engaging Mexico and gaining the desired territory through military rather than diplomatic means.

An Unnatural Boundary

A month after American troops arrived in the contentious border zone, the *Southern Patriot* newspaper of Charleston, South Carolina published "Song of the Anglo-Saxons Going South." The poet Caleb Lyon eagerly anticipates war and urges his fellow countrymen from the "militia of the Empire State" (line 25) to "to Kentucky's surest Riflemen" (27) to "teach the Mexicans/the shortest way to Heaven" (15-16). This sentiment was expressed as the United States waited for an opportunity to strike at Mexico and is indicative of the hawkish sentiment

that pervaded the South. After the justification for war had been found¹, prognostications of American victory would bear fruit in less than two years' time.

Although the United States seemed at the opening of hostilities was gripped by war fever, there was in fact a sharp divide over the war between the Whig Party and Polk's own Democratic Party. The energy of the abolitionist movement was also arrayed against the war. Abolitionists feared that the territorial expansion that would result from an American victory would lead to the extension of slavery to newly formed states. Less than two decades later, as the Civil War rent the United States, even Karl Marx recognized in retrospect that the Mexican-American War was fought for the “acquisition and the prospect of acquisition of new Territories” in order “to square the interests of...poor whites with those of the slaveholders, to give their restless thirst for action a harmless direction and to tame them with the prospect of one day becoming slaveholders themselves” (“The North American Civil War”). It’s not surprising then that the poetry published in newspapers during the war is generally divided not only ideologically but geographically.

The above mentioned poem by Caleb Lyon reflects a fervent patriotic spirit that possessed the South during the war. During and after the conflict a debate in verse took place on the pages of American newspapers from the *Boston Daily Atlas* to Charleston, South Carolina's *Southern Patriot*, as opponents and supporters of the conflict summoned their poetic talents to deify or decry the conquest. The Mexican-American War was one of the first in which Americans were able to hear news of the action with relative immediacy, thanks to steamships, railroads and nascent telegraph lines. For the people of the United States, engagement with the

¹ As President Polk was preparing a statement to congress in which he would ask for a declaration of war, he received news that troops under General Taylor had been attacked by Mexican forces in the disputed area. Polk delivered a “quickly revised war message—delivered to Congress on May 11—Polk claimed that Mexico had ‘invaded our territory and shed American blood on American soil’” (Richardson 2292).

movement of American forces and their successes became intensely visceral. Odes were written to specific regiments and commanders as news of battles, mostly victories by the Americans, reached home. Pro-war poets were able to tap into the patriotic vein of American sentimentalism with great success while at the same time charging those who opposed the war with nothing less than treason. The poetry of F.A. Durivage of Massachusetts (United States Federal Census) appeared multiple times in the *Boston Times* with reprints as far ranging as *The New Hampshire Gazette* and *Macon (Georgia) Weekly Telegraph*. In his poem “The Soldier’s Reply to the Whig Appeal for His Vote” Durivage assumes the voice of an American veteran in his poem. In the mode of character assassination that would become common in later conflicts, Durivage described Whigs as “traitors, sycophants, and knaves” (line 55) and, in a hyperbolically patriotic scene, wrote: “While we our country’s colors bore/Triumphant through the battle’s roar/You gave the murderous foeman aid/You whetted each assassin’s blade” (11-14). The patriotic ecstasy that swept much of the South was rewarded when, at the close of the conflict, America found itself in possession of 55% of Mexican territory (“Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo”). The war with Mexico was an astounding success for the United States and did not even last two years before Mexico City was occupied by American forces. The institution of slavery seemed poised to continue unabated as a result of this massive acquisition.

As the United States began to embrace the idea of Manifest Destiny, there was much less observed change of destiny in the newly conquered territories. The annexation of Texas by the United States did not only bring the powerful minority of white Texans into the Union, but suddenly thousands of native Mexicans found themselves a part of the country as well. The Chicana critic and poet Gloria Anzaldúa wrote, “[the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo] left 100,000

Mexican citizens on this side, annexed by conquest along with the land” (29). These 100,000 Mexicans and more importantly their lands became spoils of war for the triumphant Americans.

Anzaldúa is perhaps the most important voice to emerge from the contemporary Mexican-American border experience. Anzaldúa was a descendant of Mexicans who were brought into the United States as a result of the war. Anzaldúa’s writings speak to the bizarre condition of borderland dweller, the one who lives in a “place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary” (25). It was the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo that created this border, effectively trapping Mexicans inside the United States. The Mexicans became foreigners in their own home, speaking a language considered not only the language of a vanquished enemy but absolutely indicative of the outsider. The people one pro-war poet had described as “mongrel Mexicans” were now subject to whims of their recent enemy.

For Anzaldúa, the border is not a demarcation between two locations but a location in itself. The line established by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo remains unchanged since its creation and is a line, as Anzaldúa wrote, “where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds” (25). Of course, it was when this land was still a disputed boundary that the first bleeding began. In spite of the lofty rhetoric used by pro-war factions and the Democratic Party, there arose grave concerns in the Northern states as to the practical and moral consequences of such a war. Poet J. Wesley Hanson’s poem “Mexico-War!” was published in June 1846 in *The Liberator*, a Boston-based newspaper founded by William Lloyd Garrison and primarily dedicated to the abolition of slavery in the United States.

From the Lowell Journal.

M E X I C O : — W A R !

BY J. WESLEY HANSON.

All stocks are falling but gun-stocks!

Hurra, to the rescue! down, down with the slaves!
Kick the vile hordes into premature graves!
Have they dared, the poor caitiffs, to injure or vex us?
Upon them—repeat what we gave them in Texas!
Will the dull fools of Mexico make a new trial?
Then empty of vengeance the Death-angel's vial!
We are *freemen, enlightened*, we care for no man,
And wo to the Nation where rests our dread ban.
From the South and the West, from the East and the
North,
Pour your brave legions in multitudes forth;
Let them march in their strength, and the Mexican
hordes
Shall be like the grain,—and the sickles, our swords!
In the pride of our strength, our bold eagle will
sweep,
With a wing on the land and a wing on the deep,
And wo to the place where he stoops in his wrath,
Like the red-linked lightning he'll tear him a path!
O, the Eagle of Freedom's a proud, noble bird!
In the smoke of the battle, his screamings are heard;
With a broad wing all gloom; and a bright eye all
fire,
He sweepeth along in the pride of his ire!
He fears no assault, and he spurns all control,—
Wo, wo to the Nation where he deals his dole!
One shrill, deathly scream—one swoop on the prey,
And they pass like the shadows of sunset away.
Does he fear at all? Ah, histories tell us,
He is not at all times for battle so zealous;
A day or two since, when from England's broad
shore,
The old *British* beast was heard loudly to roar,
And the music came booming across the Atlantic.—
The *brave* Bird of Freedom had almost gone frantic!
In his terror he lost his great bundle of arrows,
And shook like a hawk-hunted covey of sparrows.
Yes; there he sat trembling, and timidly shivering,
And each gray feather with terror was quivering.
His screams were all hushed—he was mute as an
owl,
Awed silent and still at the Lion's dread howl.
His peace branch he waved with a suppliant motion,
‘Peace, peace,’ was his cry, ‘on the land, on the
ocean.’
And now that the Mexican buzzard, half dead,
Has dared, in his own nest, to raise up his head,
Our proud *BIRD of FREEDOM*, with flame-kindling
eye,

Proclaims with a shriek, ‘*I am king of the sky!*’
O, a right cunning bird is this *Eagle*, I ween,
As cunning a bird as there ever was seen;
When *England* shall speak, then he boweth his
plume,
As though in the sound there were judgment and
doom,—
His scream is all silent, his plumage is drooping,
No more in his pride froth his eyrie he's stooping.
There's some thing, I think, in the lion's hoarse
growl,
That changes the *Bird* to a barn-yard fowl!
But poor little *Mexico*, what right has she
To speak e'er a word to the *Bird of the FREE*?
We remember *Cortes*, with a dozen of men,
Conquered their legions once and again;—
And shall this Republic be wronged by them now?
No! down at our feet they shall suppliant bow;
Or *Paredes* and old *Santa Anna*, I ween,
Shall roast in the kitchen of *Guatemala*;—
Away! root them up! slay the haughty assumers,
And raz the proud halls of the proud *Montezumas*!
Yes, the *Eagle* is surely a wonderful bird,—
His terrible screamings may always be heard
When the *weak* and *defenceless* oppose him, or seek
To rend the poor prey from his blood-dripping beak:
But the *strong ones of Earth*, they may do as they
list,
And a gosling half fledged is not any more whist;
He will crouch him, and fawn, and bow down his
crest,
Nor rumple a plume on his purple-dyed breast.
O, shame on the Nation!—O, shame to us all,
That we ever from manhood so sadly should fall,
As to bite like a hound at the feet of the weak,
While before the Earth's strong ones we scarcely
dare speak!
Let us yield to all Nations, though feeble or strong,
Those rights which, as men, to those Nations belong;
Let us learn there's something far better and
higher,
Than pouring on weak ones our Navy's red fire;
Learn to o'erlook all the wrongs we receive,
Learn to have faith in the heart, and believe
That the Master of souls, in his *Gospel of Truth*,
Has given us more than the *Scriptures of ruth*;
Learn to be gentle, and never to wreak
Wrong or revenge on the helpless and weak;
Learn to depart from the wicked Death-angel;
Learn to do reverence to Christ's great *Evangel*!

Hanson's poem is worth including here in full because it does well to explain both the shame and trepidation felt by many in the anti-war camp during the early stages of the conflict. Like many of the abolitionists who were readers of *The Liberator*, Hanson draws on images from Christianity to support his case, making the poem a unique combination of abolitionist rhetoric while being at the same time a critique of American foreign policy.

Drawing on the contested border situation in the Pacific Northwest, which occupied the early part of the Polk administration, Hanson vividly compares the ardor for war with Mexico with the diplomatic compromise made with the United Kingdom. Hanson's poem plays with national personifications, with the American eagle and British lion. Mexico is presented in the poem as "the Mexican buzzard, half dead" (line 46). At first this assertion may seem grossly unfair, yet Mexico had only recently gained independence from Spain and had suffered through a series of unstable and inefficient governments in the interim (Richardson 2289). What's especially subversive about Hanson's characterization of Mexico is his image of the buzzard having "dared, in his own nest, to raise up his head" (line 47). With this refutation of President Polk's assertion that Mexico had "shed American blood on American soil" (Richardson 2292) Hanson turns the war into a war of American aggression in which Mexico is the defender. To portray Mexico as anything but a villain was a bold choice for Hanson, especially after the hyperbolic martyrdom of the Alamo and the more recent attack on Taylor's army. The mythology of the noble American military fighting against overwhelming odds and extraordinarily strong foes, as during the Revolution and War of 1812, is turned on its head by the war with Mexico. This is, of course, disregarding wars of conquest that had already been

fought against Native Americans, which even the most fervent anti-imperialists seem often to ignore.

Race and Displacement

Proponents of the war had not only the benefit of an invented Mexican aggressiveness, but also an enemy who lacks the “good limbs of Anglo Norman” (line 13, “Now Wave the Green Palmetto”). F.A. Durivage’s “A Song of Victory”, published in the *New Hampshire Gazette*, predicted that the “city of the Aztecs shall hold a nobler race” (line 41). Anzaldúa, like Hanson, recognizes the defensive position of the Mexicans not only during the war but before and afterward, beginning with the years during which “Anglos migrated illegally in to Texas...in greater and greater numbers and gradually drove the *Tejanos* (native Texans of Mexican descent) from their lands” (28). It was this migration that ultimately led prominent whites in Texas to declare the entire territory, including the native Mexicans, separate from Mexico. Anzaldúa’s view of history is wide, weaving cause and effect into a narrative that has one constant: the white subjugation of Mexico.

Anzaldúa’s poem “We Call Them Greasers” is distressing and easily allegorical for the annexation of Texas and the subsequent war with Mexico; the poem is also a shattering, microcosmic anecdote of American racial imperialism. The speaker, an unnamed white man who arrives at what seems to be a *Tejano* settlement, proceeds to drive the *Tejanos* from their land with invented legal claims, intimidation and, ultimately, violence. The speaker derides the *Tejanos*, bewildered by how “...they didn’t even own the land but shared it/wasn’t hard to drive them off/cowards, they were, no backbone/I showed ‘em a piece of paper with some writing/tole ‘em they owed taxes/had to pay right away or be gone by *mañana*” (lines 10-15). The cultural

differences, especially the *Tejanos*' lack of interest in private property, are for the speaker vindication of his intentions.

While many of the *Tejanos*, suddenly separated from any representative government and living in a foreign land, accept the claims made by the speaker, some resist. One of the greatest benefits that whites enjoyed in newly annexed Texas was the sudden dominance of the English language in government. Without Mexican rule, Spanish was no longer the language used in day to day transactions or in the court system. Anzaldúa's speaker refers to "...a few troublemakers/who claimed we were the intruders/Some even had land grants/and appealed to the courts/It was a laughing stock/them not even knowing English" (24-29). These initial defeats of the native *Tejanos* can be seen as illustrative of the larger event of the annexation of Texas. Mexico had still not conceded the territory of Texas when the United States took possession of it. Not satisfied with the territory gained by annexation, the United States coveted the vast lands from northern California to New Mexico and as mentioned before it was President Polk who dispatched John Slidell to Mexico to attempt to negotiate for the purchase of these lands. President Polk's offer was not even entertained by the Mexican government, and similarly there are some *Tejanos* in Anzaldúa's poem who "still...refused to budge/even after we burned them out" (30-31). In Hanson's poem as well there is the theme of Texas having been insufficient for American expansion. Hanson's mock-patriot speaker calls on the United States to "kick the vile hordes into premature graves!/Have they dared, the poor caitiffs, to injure or vex us?/upon them-repeat what we gave them in Texas!" (lines 2-4). Though Anzaldúa's poem makes no mention of Texas or the Mexican-American War, taking the liberty of imposing allegory onto her lines it is also possible to see the speaker as representative of President Polk. Of course, the speaker is

easily a stand-in for any number of opportunist Americans who gobbled up *Tejano* land in the years following annexation.

In “We Call Them Greasers” the speaker reminisces about the final consummation of the *Tejano* settlement. “And the women-well I remember one in particular/She lay under me whimpering/I plowed into her hard/kept thrusting and thrusting/felt him watching from the mesquite tree/heard him keening like a wild animal” (32-37). This violent, mechanical rape is the heightened, almost spiritual violence in the white American glutting of *Tejano* land. It is a consummation of defilement rather than an isolated act of defilement. The defeated body is assaulted and used with less care than one would allow an inanimate object. There is no use for the woman beyond this final act. The future does not belong to her or her lover, possibly her spouse, who watches helplessly from a distance. The future of Texas belongs to the whites and, as William H. Wharton declared, the “Anglo-American race are destined/to be forever the proprietors of/this land of promise and fulfillment” (lines 7-9). As the woman is raped her violator suddenly “felt such contempt for her/round face and beady black eyes like an Indian’s” (Anzaldúa 38-39). In the denouement of racial conquest, the speaker “...sat on her face until/her arms stopped flailing” (40-41) and the man lynched. The first line of the poem is “I found them here when I came” and perhaps nothing better reflects the imperialist experience, American, European or otherwise. In this way, the speaker of the poem becomes an explorer who will be able to write the narrative of the orgy of violence that has transpired. For his descendants, there will be no question as to their right to possess the land their forebear took by force.

Yet while most American anti-imperialist poets made no mention of race as motivation in the Mexican-American War, advocates of the conflict readily embraced racial superiority as an additional justification. William H. Wharton, as quoted in Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands*, wrote “God

will forbid that...Texas should again/become a howling wilderness/trod only by savages" and would be "redeemed/by Anglo-American blood and enterprise" (lines 2-4, 16-17). This idea of Anglo-Saxons or Anglo-Americans rescuing the lower peoples of the Earth from their own ignorance appears repeatedly in American imperialism, though in Wharton's poem there is only the desire to own Texas, not to uplift its darker-skinned people.

Hanson's poem is a scathing indictment of the United States, at once shaming his government for playing Goliath to a bed-ridden David and for violating the ideals of democracy and Christianity. The fact that Hanson's poem is published in the *Liberator* is telling because it once again proves the ideological divide that dominated the United States. The South's wholehearted support for the war painted a very thin veneer of patriotism over the obvious desire to expand the institution of slavery which was, ultimately, driven by the desire for capital. As Anzaldúa notes, "[Anglos] locked into the fiction of white superiority, seized total political power, stripping Indians and Mexicans of their land while their feet were still rooted in it" (29). Hanson recognized this motive also, facetiously painting the American eagle as "a wonderful bird-/His terrible screamings may always be heard/when the *weak* and *defenceless* oppose him, or seek/to rend the poor prey from his blood-dripping beak" (lines 72-75). Hanson's stark characterization of the United States is a world away from the joyous and chest-pounding odes to war and Anglo-Saxon superiority that were being written by Democrats and/or Southerners at the outset of hostilities. Though the Mexican-American War was a victory for the Southern planter-class, it failed to prevent the sectional divisions that would come to dominate the 1850s. The loose ideological alliance of anti-imperialists and abolitionists represented a convergence of liberal interests, though the boost of energy that the abolitionists gave to the anti-imperialist cause would prove to be temporary. After the close of the Civil War and the achievement of

abolition there was a renewed westward expansion, and the United States ran roughshod over indigenous nations on a path to the Pacific. During the era of the “Indian Wars” the voice of the anti-imperialist was conspicuously quiet.

Nascent Empire

President Polk did not seek another term in office following the conquest of Mexico. The goals of his administration had been fulfilled perhaps more quickly than even he had anticipated, and the religious/racial/capitalist ideology of manifest destiny seemed secure. Despite the earnest objections of the Whig party and others, the war against Mexico was carried out with the patriotic zeal that has come to typify American warfare. Democrats construed Whig criticism of the war to be cowardly or even treasonous. *The Boston Atlas*, a Whig-leaning newspaper, was perhaps one of the most vocal outlets of opposition during Polk’s presidency.

According to the Massachusetts Historical Society, “of Whig newspapers in Massachusetts...the *Boston Atlas* led and fairly maintained the lead, in fervency of spirit, while the Whig party and its own life lasted” (42). The *Atlas* was generally considered to be the main rival to the Democrat-leaning *Boston Post* and the two papers “sparred constantly” (42). While the *Boston Daily Atlas* was unable to stand in the way of the Mexican-American War, it continued as a Whig paper until the dissolution of the party prior to the Civil War. Yet even after the victory of the United States over Mexico, the *Atlas* continued to reproach both President Polk and his supporters for engaging in what the *Atlas* saw as an ill-conceived war of conquest. Into this post-war environment, as America found itself in possession of vast new tracts of land, the *Daily Atlas* published a poem that was as much a warning to the United States as it was a lamentation over the fate of Mexico:

For the *Atlas*.

"I WOULD NOT SLEEP ALWAYS."

A NEW SONG—TO AN OLD TUNE.

Air—Meeting of the Waters

I would not sleep always on straw for a bed,
With a beautiful cotton bag under my head,
Tho' for want of a better I might not demur,
Yet it is not exactly the kind I prefer.

But Oh! for a bed that is made up of down,
For its softness induces a sleep so profound,—
That the world and its troubles, vexations and care,
Can find no convenience for housekeeping there.

O, how sweet to be dreaming while dawa fades away,
And is lost in the glare of meridian day,
While the brain on wild, fanciful visions is set,
In displaying the humors and sorrows of life.

To detail all my dreams would detain me too long,
And extend to no purpose the verse of my song;
Yet a few I'll rehearse, just their nature to show,
And with which you're familiar, or ought to be so.

I dreamed of a Loco's refusing a place—
Of a belle, who yet never examined her face—
Of a debtor, who never refused to forgive—
Of a Dives, who seemed most unwilling to live.

I dreamed of a soldier all frosted with lace,
(But 'twas worsted, not silver, I ought to prefase,)
Still a counterscarp was not, as knew, the right sort,
If the angle ran in ward, not out side the fort.

So he modestly asked for a Lieutenant's rank,
But here fortune play'd him a singular prank,
For when the commission was placed in his hand,
By Jove! 'twas a Brigadier's full la command.

O'er my dream came a change, and a President rose,
With what claims to that honor, the Lord only knows
Yet the people call'd on him to pay their respect,
And most humbly to pray he'll not run them in debt

But he bowed them all out, for they've made him their lord
And he's paramount over both purse and the sword,
With his hand on the treasure, and blade by his side,
Great guns! what a national hobby he'll ride.

Yet it matters not much what composes our bed,
Whether straw, down, or feathers here pillows our head,
If the heart is but right, we can rest in a yoke,
But, if conscience is troublesome, sleep is no joke.

Can sleep, balmy sleep, ever visit the man,
Who found us at peace like a brotherly clan,
And instead of help treighting prosperity's ear,
Turns loose on our neighbor the blood bonds of war?

O'er a war of aggression, how angels must grieve,
And lament for the heart that such sin could conceive;
While defeat is dishonor, success yields no good,
And the progress of triumph is written in blood.

That sleep is not rest that can bring no repose,
Which blood, and pale phantoms, and horrors disclose,
While the coffinless dead from their graves seem to leap,
Their vigils in terrible silence to keep.

Can we sleep when the mangled seem lying around,
And the dead and the dying encumber the ground—
While the groans of the murdered, o'er valley and glen,
Are mingled with curses on ambitious men?

Oh, yes! and tho'-a curses will surely descend!
On the soul with a force that no shield can defend,
When there's no tongue to flatter, no voice to mislead,
They will come, and the guilty will shake like a reed

In the halls of the Aztec our armies are found,
But yet we possess not a rod of his ground,
With Force we subdue, and tho' Fear we control,
But 'tis only by Love we can conquer the soul.

What will it avail tho' we gain all their soil,
And by annexation to legalize spoil?
Will it add to our grandeur, our glory increase,
Or secure for the future the blessings of peace?

No never! that Spanish blood eye will rebel,
Till each foreign foot from their soil they expel.
"Saragossa" their watchword, and "war to the knife"
And you will not have conquered them while they have life.

No' never will sweet, smiling Peace come again,
Till our blamished escutcheon is cleansed of its stain,
Till the nations who hies, shall applaud and be still,
While they envy our valor, forbearance, and skill.

Can a death-bed of glory beseech mourning grief?
Can a perishing monument furnish relief?
Can a bulletin dry up a poor mother's tears?—
Or restore to a father the son of his years?

Can the land of all Mexico ever repay
For the loss of a Ringgold, a Lincoln, and Clay?
Can the nation we've vanquished such heroes restore,
With a thousand warm hearts that will throb never more?

No' offer the land which in dying they won,
And the fathers will spurn it, and ask for his son;
Go, offer bright gold to that mother so wild,
And she'll shriek, in her anguish, "Oh! give me my child!"

We've a surfeit of glory—now think of the end
Is our national policy good to command?
Will the world that looks on think we're fit to be free?
And will God add his blessing for our liberty?

No! "Might is no right," and He will not uphold
A nation whose God is an Image of Gold—
Who tramples on Justice, or throws her away,
And the Laws of Expediency only obey.

Then, arouse! ye, the people—come forth in your might!
And compel those who rule to do that which is right.
Love, Justice, and Mercy, cry shame! on the free,
And the voice will be echoed by posterity
PRO BONO PUBLICO.

No clue is offered as to the identity of the author of “I Would Not Sleep Always.”

Published in March 1848, roughly a month after the war’s end, “I Would Not Sleep Always” characterizes the United States’ claim to Texas as “annexation to legalize spoil” (line 66). The poem runs through a long train of abuses, from questioning Polk’s legitimacy as a leader to illustrating the grieving parents of American soldiers. “I Would Not Sleep Always” was published even as other newspapers were poetic tributes to Polk and the victory of the United States over Mexico. While the poem may have been permissible before and even during the war, it must have seemed intensely perfidious after the war had been won.

The writer of “I Would Not Sleep Always” charges that what seems to have been an American victory is in fact more complicated. “In the halls of the Aztec our armies are found/But yet we possess not a rood of his ground/With force we subdue, and thro’ Fear we control/But ‘tis only by Love we can conquer the soul” (61-64). In *Borderlands* Anzaldúa similarly declared “this land was Mexican once/was Indian always/and is./And will be again” (113). This claim to the land in perpetuity and in spite of Euroamerican definitions of conquest is part of the unique spirit that defines the borderland today. The author of “I Would Not Sleep Always” contradicts Euroamerican assumptions regarding power and possession, overcoming prevailing dualities to paint the people and the land as inseparable. The poet writes “you will not have conquered them while they have life” (72). This assertion was made despite the fact that there was no substantive resistance to the American conquest once the conventional war was ended. Nearly broken by years of instability the Mexican government was in an even more precarious position after the war; the Mexican army had suffered greatly, losing perhaps 14,700 killed or wounded of a force that was already poorly equipped and poorly trained (Tucker 125). For the poet to assert that conquest had not been achieved must have seemed ludicrous to most Americans, even to those

who opposed the war. Yet this insistence on a more ambiguous interpretation of the consequences of the war fits with Alejandro Solomianski's assertion that Gloria Anzaldúa renders "the meaning of 'winners' and 'defeated' ...no longer clear or evident, so that historical processes recuperate the dense complexity they have in reality" (65). It was the dense complexity of the borderland created by the Mexican-American War that birthed Chicano resistance to white authority and the deep, mythohistorical soul searching that has evolved out of that resistance. This battle for identity is rarely fought within the satisfied ranks of the victor but is a characterization of the vanquished.²

One of the farthest-reaching and devastating effects of the war was the broadening of economic disparity between the United States and Mexico. Mexico had been by no means affluent before the war, but it struggled to rebuild in the wake of defeat, only to be once again invaded by a foreign power, France, during the 1860s while the United States was occupied with its civil war; a civil war fought because of the ultimately irresolvable issue of slavery and its expansion. The physical reality of the Rio Grande lent an even more definite nature to the boundary, creating a watery divide between the sphere of the *norteamericano* and the Mexican. As Anzaldúa writes, the border establishes a zone inhabited by the "prohibited and forbidden...*Los atravesados* live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the half-dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the "normal" (25). The U.S.-Mexico border sits atop territory that

² In the short term of history, however, and despite calls to conscience, the poet of "I Would Not Sleep Always" and the Whig party failed to stop the Mexican-American War or change the lopsided peace terms. In a strange turn of events, the Whigs managed to land Mexican-War hero General Zachary Taylor on their ticket for the election of 1848. Taylor's popularity pushed the Whigs to victory yet Taylor died after less than a year in office, succeeded by his Vice President Millard Fillmore. The Whigs would never again win an election and the party dissipated shortly before the Civil War.

was conquered in a war characterized by Ulysses Grant as “one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation. It was an instance of a republic following the bad example of European monarchies, in not considering justice in their desire to acquire additional territory” (“The Mexican-American War”). First in Texas and later in the conquered Mexican territories of New Mexico and California, whites arrived to find that the land war had purchased was indeed fertile and extensive. *Tejanos*, Californians, and New Mexicans were driven from their lands by force or artifice, and fences were erected to make inaccessible the private holdings of the new owners. Anzaldúa notes “los gringos had not stopped at the border. By the end of the nineteenth century, powerful landowners in Mexico, in partnership with the U.S. colonizing companies, had dispossessed millions of Indians of their lands” and as a result the descendants of this dispossession now work at “*maquiladoras*” for “American conglomerates...working eight to twelve hours a day to wire in backup lights of U.S. autos or soldering minuscule wires in TV sets” (32). Through empire by conquest and proxy, the United States has exerted tremendous influence over the lives of Mexicans since the Mexican-American War. As the poet Caleb Lyon exhorted in “Song of the Anglo-Saxons Going South”: “There’s billions yet untold/to overflow our treasury/with heaps of yellow gold” (lines 22-24). This promise of capital proved to be too much for the Polk administration to resist.

Much as the poets writing in opposition to the war would have preferred, the United States engaged in no real efforts at rehabilitation of the Mexican state after the war’s end. J. Wesley Hanson’s call for the United States to “learn to do rev’rence to Christ’s great Evangel!” (line 99) neither prevented the war nor guided U.S. policy afterward. In her poem “Horse”, Gloria Anzaldúa nightmarishly draws out the horrific flaying and dismembering of a horse by young white men while the Mexican owners of the animal slept. In an attempt at recompense,

“...some rich father/fished out his wallet/held out the folds of green/as if green could staunch red/pools dripping from the ribbons/on the horse’s flanks” (lines 29-34). Similarly, in “I Would Not Sleep Always”, the poet challenges President Polk to “...offer the land which in dying they won/And the father will spurn it, and ask for his son/Go, offer bright gold to that mother so wild/And she’ll shriek, in her anguish, “Oh! give me my child!” (lines 85-88). The emotionally charged poetry, both in favor of and in opposition to the war, is evidence of a point of departure in American identity. Like the European powers that once controlled much of the Western hemisphere, the United States forced itself into a false dilemma in which it would have to choose between being satisfied with its own geographic limitations or engaging in conquest. For the United States, there were two unique characteristics that were not part of the European equation: 1) the United States’ republican structure and 2) expansion as a prerequisite for the survival of slavery. To the great dismay of abolitionists and others in the United States, the government and wealthier classes chose conquest; a decision which would bring down on Mexico the ire of a nation that would prove to be mostly inept at empire building, but exceptionally skilled at finding reason to make the attempt.

Mexico is a country of repeated post-colonial existence, originally crafted by the Spanish experience but shaped and re-shaped by American and French incursion. While it may seem at first that the poet of “I Would Not Sleep Always” is arguing a prophecy of Mexican armed resistance it is more likely is that the poet is a reflection of Anzaldúa, who asserted “the skin of the earth is seamless” (line 49). Almost 140 years after the publication of “I Would Not Sleep Always” Anzaldúa writes that “beneath the iron sky/Mexican children kick their soccer ball across/run after it, entering the U.S.” (27-29). The famously porous nature of the U.S.-Mexico border is perhaps one fulfillment of the prophecies of “I Would Not Sleep Always.” The simple,

thoughtless invasion of the United States by children playing a game is a refutation of the American conquest, if only for a moment before the children return their game to Mexico. Gloria Anzaldúa and likely the poet of “I Would Not Sleep Always” would assert that now in the 21st century the United States is only witnessing the return of Mexicans to their rightful lands, a *reconquista* of denied inheritance.

Chapter Two: A Day of Infamy

The Hawai’ian literary figure and critic Haunani-Kay Trask characterizes early Hawai’ian literature as being literature *about* Hawai’i, and that to call it Hawai’ian literature would give the impression that it had been written by indigenous Hawai’ians themselves. According to Trask, this corpus includes “a jumble of travel writing...essays by literary tourists...explorer observations...” and “evangelical exhortations” (167). Trask calls Hawai’ian literature a “confused genre” that has been primarily written “in English, the unquestioned imperial language” (167). Unlike Mexico, the history of Hawai’i is one of absolute conquest and absorption by the United States. Like Mexico, the impetus for action and the ensuing national crisis of conscience was played out across the poetry features of the nation’s newspapers.

The overthrow and annexation of Hawai’i is closely linked to the Mexican-American War. Historian Stephen Kinzer insists “the overthrow of Hawai’i’s queen reignited a political debate that had first flared during the Mexican War half a century before. That debate, which in essence is about what role the United States should play in the world...” (13). Unlike the war with Mexico, however, the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani was neither inspired nor initially approved by the United States government. Instead, it was carried out by a small minority of white capitalists, American minister to Hawai’i John L. Stevens, and 200 United States Marines and sailors.³ If the capitalists and John L. Stevens could wrest control of the island from Queen Liliuokalani then they would also be able to negotiate for Hawai’i’s admittance into the United

³ This small cadre of conspirators resented attempts by Liliuokalani to reform the island government in favor of indigenous Hawai’ians, most notably in the form of a new constitution under which “...only Hawai’ian citizens had the right to vote. High property qualifications for voting would be eliminated, and the power of the nonnative elite would be sharply curtailed” (Kinzer 19). Liliuokalani was much less willing to be a pawn of the white minority after witnessing her father and her brother both give tremendous concessions to the foreign element. After Liliuokalani’s brother Kalakaua “turned Pearl Harbor over to the Americans in 1887, she wrote in her diary that it was ‘a day of infamy in Hawai’ian history’” (Kinzer 26).

States as a territory, thereby overcoming protective tariffs that had prevented Hawai’ian sugar barons from being able to take a greater share of the American market.

Through shadowy maneuvering and secret alliances, the white money men and Stevens were able to destabilize Liliuokalani’s government enough for Stevens to order ashore “nearly two hundred sailors and marines” (Kinzer 29) from the nearby *USS Boston*. The tactics of intimidation had their intended effect. Fearing a potential outbreak of violence, Liliuokalani abdicated her throne in favor of the already assembled white male government. All pretenses of concern over civil order and monarchical repression were quickly dropped as the newly established government delivered a proclamation that, among other things, stated “the Hawai’ian monarchical system of government is hereby abrogated” and that the new government would serve “until terms of union with the United States of America have been negotiated and agreed upon” (Kinzer 39). Hawai’i was officially annexed by the United States in July 1898.

She Will Not Turn Pale in Her Terror

Given Hawai’i’s distance from the continental United States, news of the overthrow of Liliuokalani at first came slowly. Most American newspapers labeled the uprising of the foreign capitalists as a revolution, with the *Knoxville Journal* going so far as to proclaim “nothing was ever better managed. Foreigners are a unit and they are determined never again to suffer Kanaka domination” (1). This bizarre perception of the white capitalists as victims of oppression is absurd yet sadly indicative of the willingness with which Americans absorbed the news coming from the islands. Many American publications were ecstatic over the rise of a white government in Hawai’i, with some attempting to draw anti-monarchical connections between the deposition of Liliuokalani and the American Revolutionary War. The notion that Liliuokalani and indigenous Hawai’ians had ever attempted to assert authority over the Hawai’ian Islands and the

whites who lived therein led to a general antipathy toward the deposed queen. Liliuokalani's attempts coincided with major political upheaval in the American South, when the reforms of Reconstruction were being dismantled, and an attempt at restoring the antebellum racial status quo was underway. Lynchings and other forms of intimidation were readily employed by Southern whites in order to rein in what they perceived as the threat of black oppression. In response, the federal government chose not to intervene on behalf of the recently freed slaves. So it was against this backdrop that in February 1893, a month after the overthrow, the *St. Paul Daily Globe* ran an editorial cartoon which portrayed Liliuokalani standing in a pawnbroker's shop barefoot, wearing a tight corset and drawn with skin, lips and hair that seem taken from an advertisement for a minstrel show. The caption reads as follows: "LILIUOKALINA [sic]---How much can you lend me on this Honolulu crown? PAWNBROKER---I might have let you have a few sandwiches a month ago, but it isn't worth a wisp of hay now" (1). Liliuokalani's corset is bounded at bottom by a short skirt, and she is standing in a posture of haughty presumption, her right hand pressed to her hip.

Word play with the moniker "Sandwich Islands" became common in the aftermath of the overthrow. Racial assumptions about Liliuokalani's appearance, especially in styling her as a minstrel caricature, lent a strange twist to the general public reception of the uprising. Suddenly Liliuokalani was not only a foreign woman who had tried to exert her will over white men; she was for all intents and purposes a black woman. That a black woman, more African in appearance than Polynesian, would have the audacity to limit the ambitions of white men made Liliuokalani an easy target.

The Philadelphia Inquirer printed a poem originally published in the *Indianapolis Journal*:

Hawaii's Ex-Queen.
Though fortune's rude flings do not spare
her
And regrets gather round in all sea-
sons
She will not turn pale in her terror—
For obvious physical reasons.
—Indianapolis Journal.

The poem was published in September 1897, over four years after the overthrow and just prior to the incorporation of Hawai'i as a territory of the United States. A handful of unsuccessful pro-royalist uprisings served to speed up the annexation process and the island's white capitalists, who dealt largely in sugar, were able to overcome the McKinley Tariff of 1890 which had "allowed sugar from all countries to enter the United States duty-free and compensated domestic producers with a 'bounty' of two cents per pound" (Kinzer 25). The interplay and clash of color, light and dark, in the saga of the Hawai'ian Islands would continue and seethes to this day. The dark skin of the natives, the white missionaries' pretensions of purity and the white sugar of their capitalist descendants all collide on the islands.

Contemporary Hawai'ian poet and critic Haunani Kay-Trask's book *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* was the first book of poetry by an indigenous Hawai'ian to be published in North America. Much of Trask's book focuses on the history of the islands, beginning with the arrival of American missionaries. The connection between the missionaries and their capitalist heirs forms a vital part of her often acerbic tone. Trask's poem "Christianity" is one of the more stark examples of the inseparable relationship between race, religion, and class in Hawai'i.

Trask envisions the "Europeans/Americans/Saints who came/bringing God's love/saw black and red/naked genitals/nothing so pale/as eternal/afterlife white/civilization" (lines 4-13). She may not be far from wrong. If the previously mentioned editorial cartoon and poem "Hawai'i's Ex-Queen" are any indication, the racial difference of the indigenous Hawai'ians was

keenly felt even after a century of European/American presence on the islands. Perhaps this is derived from the all too common imperial situation of white missionaries and traders existing as a small yet disproportionately powerful minority in Asia, the Pacific, and Africa.

The culture of indigenous Hawai’ians was confusing and frighteningly foreign to Americans even after the overthrow but especially when President Cleveland was rumored to be considering turning the islands back over to the Hawai’ian monarchy. The notion that the President would deliver the islands back to its rightful owners generated a peal of self-righteous indignation. A letter from a missionary living in Hawai’ian sought not to “parade the faults of [Liliuokalani], whose frailties are those common among her people; but to illustrate the character of the person proposed by Cleveland to rule over the only American colony on the globe” (Bishop 6). The writer, a Reverend, goes on to describe the hula dance in which all who participate “have lost sense of modesty and chastity” and is illustrative “of heathen lewdness and the loathsome liturgy of idolatrous worship” (6). Of course, it is mentioned in the letter that Liliuokalani herself is a patron of the hula dance and, therefore, certainly guilty of the “heathen vileness so completely embodied...in the hula” (6). Trask’s poetry is aimed squarely at this imperialist attitude and its modern manifestations. In “Christianity” she continues to portray the dual interest of the evangelist, the missionary whose divine objective is “cleansing the land/of blackness sin/of color” (lines 23-25). Trask’s “Christianity” is a narrative of the first phase of foreign domination in Hawai’i.⁴

⁴ The missionary schools became crucial in allowing the small numbers of white missionaries to make inroads into the dominant indigenous culture, and the first tangible reward for this work came “in the late 1840s” when “Amos Starr Cooke helped persuade King Kamehameha III, a former student of his, to proclaim a land reform” (Kinzer 22-3). Communal land, a vital part of Hawai’ian society, was replaced by a program under which: “...large tracts of communal land were cut into small individual parcels...this reform gave ambitious planters, including many missionaries and sons of missionaries, the legal right to buy as much land as they

For most indigenous Hawai’ians there was little elation at the prospect of becoming a part of the United States. Brief flashes of hope had flared during the period between overthrow and annexation, most significantly in the form of the Blount Report.

Imperial Limbo

The overthrow of Hawai’i’s monarchy occurred in January 1893 during the administration of lame duck Republican President Benjamin Harrison. The white conspirators in Hawai’i had hurriedly rushed a petition for annexation to President Harrison, who received it favorably though the effort stalled in congress. Newly elected President Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, took office in March. Cleveland, an anti-expansionist, promptly dispatched former U.S. House representative from Georgia James Blount to investigate the events surrounding the overthrow. According to historian Stephen Kinzer, Cleveland “was quite right when he declared that most Americans rejected the seizure of faraway lands ‘as not only opposed to our national policy, but as a perversion of our national mission.’ Five years later, this consensus evaporated” (43). The poetry published in regard to Hawai’i during this five year period is illustrative of this vital change in American attitude. It becomes plain that the period of 1893-1898, beginning with the Hawai’ian overthrow and ending with the Spanish-American War, is the period during which the United States firmly committed itself to becoming a market-driven empire. In April 1893, as Blount was in the process of beginning his report, a unique poem was published in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*.

wished...Before long, the missionary and planter elites had blended into a single class” (Kinzer 23).

He was by the American republic
Sent to investigate,
To find and get at the truth,
Of all that was said
By the foreign clique that tended to scan-
dalize
LILIUOKALANIONAMOKU
And the aborigines of the land.
BLOUNT has shown his power,
And Hawaii is crowned with victory.
Admiral THOMAS is England's hero;
Col. BLOUNT is America's hero.
BLOUNT has won the glory
On the 1st day of April
By giving his order
To again hoist the Hawaiian flag.
May it grandly wave forever,
Thou beautiful flag of our kingdom.
All the greed is overthrown.
The grabbing clique.
We shall call and you must answer.
BLOUNT is the messenger, and Hawaii will
be saved.
Let every one know the end.
LILIUOKALANI will be restored to the throne.

What sets this poem apart from many in this thesis is that it is purportedly written by a native of the location in question. Even more fascinating is the context in which the poem is set, as the *Daily Advertiser* provides an explication of sorts tinged with political commentary. The interplay between the expicator and the poem is telling in that it allows two distant voices, both geographically and perhaps ideologically, to speak engage in dialogue on imperialist expansion even as it occurs.

Speculation surrounded Blount's mission and American newspapers daily attempted to guess at what his specific instructions were. One of Blount's earliest actions was to order the "United States flag to be hauled down and the flag of the Hawai'ian monarchy to be run to the mast head" (*Wilkes-Barre Times* 2) over government buildings in Honolulu. This action is referenced in the poem though even the *Daily Advertiser* contends that the poet "with the fervor of his beliefs...ignores the facts of the present and looks into the future" (*Boston Daily Advertiser* 4). Though Blount's report ultimately found that the overthrow of the monarchy and the capitalist provisional government were both illegitimate, these findings did not lead to a

future in which “Hawai’i will/be saved” (lines 22-23) and “Liliuokalani will be restored to the throne” (25). The *Boston Daily Advertiser* finds little fault with the style of the poem but notes that in his prognostications the poet shows “disregard of the borders of the ridiculous” (4). The poet’s predictions did prove overly optimistic, seeing in Blount’s actions a future in which Liliuokalani would retake her place as Hawai’i’s leader.

Hawai’i is unique in being an American territory which uses as its name the ethnic and cultural name of the indigenous people. The poet of “He was by the American republic” is only mentioned as being a Hawai’ian, a term used by indigenous Hawai’ians as well as residents of Hawai’i. Even the “grabbing clique” (line 20) in the poem may have considered themselves to be Hawai’ian, if only to appear dedicated to Hawai’i’s welfare. This confusion of identity became a hallmark of the American expansionist experience, wherein the newly conquered became subjects of the American empire while at the same time suffering the prejudices attendant with being dominated by a Europhilic state. The poet refers to the Hawai’ian flag as “thou beautiful flag of our kingdom” (line 18) yet refers to the indigenous Hawai’ians as “the aborigines of the land” (8), perhaps denoting a certain degree of distance from claims of nativism. The poet’s ethnicity may seem to be a trifling matter in the political struggle over Hawai’ian sovereignty, yet Haunani Kay-Trask identifies the use of the term “Hawai’ian” as central to conflicts regarding Hawai’ian identity and nativity. Perhaps it is perfectly symbolic that the poet of “He was by the American republic” is said to be “Hawai’ian” with no further descriptor; indeed, this illustrates the division of Hawai’ian literary authority that persists to this day. Trask insists that the struggle between “*Haole* (whites) and Asians for local authenticity is rather like the fight between earlier and later immigrants: the indigenous is wholly denied” (170) and characterizes the conflict over nativism as an “intra-hegemonic squabble [that] has created...a general

confusion as to what is, and who is, Hawai’ian” (170). The geographical isolation of Hawai’i gave rise to a people of tightly bound ethnicity, whose systems and culture flourished for centuries before the arrival of Europeans. In Trask’s poem “Hawai’i” she sees the Europeans wading ashore with “ruddy face/coming from cold breakers/mesmerized by the sun” (lines 9-11). The mesmerized state would last only as long as it took for the Europeans to commodify whatever of the indigenous they could not overtly conquer.

Couriers of Civilization

During the years between the Hawai’ian overthrow and annexation, when the fate of Hawai’i was still in doubt, the question of Hawai’i’s future began to inspire a new wave of anti-imperialism. Nowhere is this more apparent than in a poem published in *The Santa Fe Daily New Mexican* in June 1894. A.H. Lebro’s “Couriers of Civilization” is a three-stanza satire of imperialist jingoism as acted out through an allegory of three small boys and their grandfather. The boys, in order from oldest to youngest, detail their civilizing agenda to their grandfather.

The eldest boy reveals his ambition for adulthood “to go to every/heathen race/That roamed the torrid tropic wilds in manner idly rude/And teach to them the wickedness of being/nearly nude” (lines 7-12). A precursor for this gift of shame would be the introduction of Christianity, a religion that craves, as Trask envisions, “every surviving/primitive a Christian/reciting scripture/genuflecting on/broken knees/enduring penance/for dark skin” (lines 25-31). For Hawai’ians, especially in hindsight, it becomes clear that the beginnings of American conquest are found in the arrival of American missionaries during the early to mid-1800s. These missionaries introduced to the social mores of American Protestantism and, through the founding of schools across the islands, introduced themselves as leaders in the introduction of foreign ideals. Ultimately it was the missionaries and their descendants who began to reap the benefits of

the introduction of private property to the Hawai’ian Islands. Though Lebro’s poem is an allegorical satire and Trask’s a reflection on tragedy, both recognize the means necessary to begin the subjugation of a “primitive” people through the ironical guise of spiritual uplift.

In regard to scope, Lebro’s poem goes further than Trask’s “Christianity”, following a path similar to the one by which the early Christian missionaries of Hawai’i gave rise to the planter class that ultimately worked to overthrow Liliuokalani. Lebro moves to the next young boy, who dreams of the day when “Willie dear has taught those folks habil-/iments to wear/Of course they’ll have to buy them, and that’s/when you’ll find me there” (lines 17-20). The same slow metamorphosis of the missionary class to a planter class that Hawai’i experienced is plainly illustrated in the example of the shrewd little boy. The boy will sell the people of the aforementioned “torrid tropics” (line 9) and “sell those heathens overcoats and mufflers/and skates/and other things they do not need and charge/them triple rates” (21-24). Tellingly, Lebro has not thus far mentioned any of the reaction from the “heathens” in the poem. Whatever hypothetical feelings they may have about these changes have been left to the imagination or more realistically, simply ignored by the two boys. In their zeal to bring the gift of civilization to the so-called heathens, the boys establish a system by which the indigenous is subsumed while the foreign element profits.

Selling the natives “things they do not need” (line 23) is part of a system of American imperialism that does not end with conquest or, in Hawai’i’s case, annexation. The influx of American systems is also accompanied by American material obsession, creating a microcosm of the American market without the allowance of the so-called American dream. The dream is denied to the “heathens” who wear winter clothing in a tropical setting just as they wear American corporate imperialism in a culture founded upon entirely incompatible ideals. Just as

the Mexicans after the Mexican-American War, indigenous Hawai’ians become foreigners in their own homeland; they are labeled American citizens but have little more in common with Americanism than visitors from abroad. In *Decolonizing Hawai’ian Literature*, Haunani-Kay Trask quotes Hawai’ian poet Dana Naone Hall’s poem “Hawai’i ‘89”: “People are sleeping in cars/or rolled up in mats on beaches/while the lū’au show hostess/invites the roomful of visitors/to step back in time/to when gods and goddesses/walked the earth/I wonder what she’s talking about” (lines 24-31). This illustration of dispossession takes on the appearance of scattered playthings, cars and blankets, across the Hawai’ian landscape. Just as with the winter clothes sold to the natives in “Couriers of Civilization,” so too is the car in Hall’s poem presented as an unnecessary object, fit only to be slept in for the absence of a home: an American good as the last retreat from American imperial encroachment.

The final stanza of “Couriers of Civilization” is worth reproducing in full because of its succinct summation of the imperial blueprint:

The youngest mused a moment, with his chin
 upon his hand,
Then said: “I’ll as a soldier go to that benight-
 ed land,
And when the natives rise in wrath at Henry’s
 awful rates
And show some signs of lapsing to their former
 heathen states,
Imperiling the foreign trade and their immor-
 tal souls,
I’ll take my little rifle down and fill them full
 of holes.”

—A. H. Lebro.

Queen Liliuokalani’s new constitution would have disenfranchised the white Americans on the islands due to their non-citizen status within the Kingdom of Hawai’i. Liliuokalani’s efforts toward reform are embodied in Lebro’s poem as the inevitable response of a people who begin to recognize the designs of imperialism. What’s compelling is that this resistance is presented as a natural consequence that is part of a larger process of domination. Rather than

resistance being a roadblock to imperial conquest it inhabits a place within the imperial system, almost as though the imperial system was a natural cycle. Just as Lebro's poem witnesses, Liliuokalani's reforms were met initially by white American panic at the natives' desire to "[imperil] foreign trade and their immor-/tal souls" (lines 33-34). This panic quickly evolved into Minister Stevens' request that U.S. Marines be landed from the *USS Boston*, fulfilling Lebro's recipe for imperial conquest as the violent vanguard of Americanism arrives in "that benight-/ed land" (27-28). Military intervention then becomes the final step in the process, occurring only after American systems have been put in place.

The poem does not mention a specific place name and instead simply uses a nameless, "heathen" people as its focus. Yet the fact that this poem was published during the Hawai'i'an crisis puts it directly within the discourse of American imperialism, especially given the United States' unique brand of religious /capitalist conquest as vividly described by Lebro.

Trask's poetry and critical commentary often focus on the overthrow of Liliuokalani as the climax in Hawai'i's tragic transition from de facto to de jure white domination. For Trask, Liliuokalani's deposition is the genesis of the "everlasting conflict between the beauty and power of our homeland and our culture and the forced Americanization that all Hawai'i ans endure" (180). Just as Lebro's poem suggests, the conquest of the Hawai'i'an Islands by the United States was not contained entirely within the 1893 coup but was a slow, seemingly directionless evangelism of American religious and economic ideals.

What ultimately connects Haunani Kay-Trask and A.H. Lebro is not only the historical reality of Hawai'i's subjugation. Far more important is the way in which both poets highlight the machinations of American imperialism. Their work calls attention to the often hidden, patient nature of American-brand conquest. The overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani is the crux of

American empire. At the end of the 19th century, the saga of manifest destiny quite literally balanced on the beaches of California, Oregon, and Washington. For all intents and purposes the Native Americans had been reduced to a captive status within the bounds of the United States, citizens of no place in particular, bound to small tracts of land set aside by the government. A continent that had seemed at the beginning of the 19th century to be limitless was, at the end of the century, settled from coast to coast. In 1893, the United States, through the gift of scheming industrialists in Hawai'i, had been given its first true overseas territory. For the next five years the United States grappled with what dictates it would deliver in the fate of Hawai'i.

On 12 August 1898, the United States and Spain signed the Protocol of Peace in Washington, beginning a period of two months of negotiation, after which the United States would come into possession of all Spanish territory in the Pacific (Richardson 6581). That same day, in a muted ceremony at Iolani Palace in Honolulu, the flag of the United States was raised once more – and permanently, as the United States made its annexation of Hawai'i official. If any date of birth can be given to the American Empire then perhaps it is 12 August 1898 (Richardson), when the United States formalized its victory over Spain, formerly one of Europe's greatest empires. Americans celebrated the defeat of the Spanish and the acquisition of nearby Puerto Rico, as well as the Philippines, a group of islands about which most Americans, including President McKinley, knew absolutely nothing.

Chapter Three: Benevolent Assimilation

Though the United States has built a reputation as both a traditional and neo-imperialist power, the nation is quite lost, indeed almost drowning, in the post-colonial discourse of The Philippines. Spanish architecture, language, and place names color the contours of Filipino daily life. Inside the timeline of the Philippines, the American possession of the archipelago exists as a small fraction. In truth, the literary discourse regarding the Philippine-American War and subsequent American imperial presence forms more of a transition in Philippine history, rather than an actual epoch of empire. For Filipino poet Cirilio Bautista, the Philippine-American War and subsequent imperialist period is a continuation of Spanish foreign domination rather than a separate period.

Bautista's poetic epic, *The Trilogy of St. Lazarus*, is perhaps more than a cornerstone of post-colonial discourse in Filipino literature. *The Trilogy* may well be the foundation of post-colonial discourse for the Philippines. Much of Bautista's *Trilogy* was written during the tenure of President Ferdinand Marcos, and the repression and neo-imperialism of the Marcos era are ever present in *The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus* and makes the poem especially powerful, as Bautista, in the words of Filipino writer and critic Marjorie Evasco, becomes "the writer who keeps vigil at the gates of the historical present" (1). The four-way intersection of Bautista, the relatively recent U.S.-aided Marcos dictatorship, the Philippine-American War and anti-imperialist American poetry makes for a deep web of history and post-colonial interpretation.

The Picture of Our Sin

Centuries of Spanish imperial presence in the Philippines brought two major societal institutions to the islands: the Spanish language and the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1898, President William McKinley met with a delegation that would be sent to negotiate the treaty with Spain. McKinley, who had no doubt as to the United States' desire to possess Puerto Rico, had been less certain about the Philippines. Ultimately, however, McKinley made up his mind and informed the delegates that the United States must take "the commercial opportunity, to which American statesmanship cannot be indifferent" (Kinzer 59).⁵ McKinley later recalled that, regarding the Philippines, he ultimately realized "there was nothing left to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos and uplift them and Christianize them" (Kinzer 58). McKinley's statement was made despite the fact that most Filipinos "were already practicing Catholics" (Kinzer 58) due to the Spanish presence in the archipelago. Mirroring a tragedy repeated across American history it became apparent that most Americans, including President McKinley, knew next to nothing about the people over whom the nation had deigned to rule.

McKinley's decision not to be indifferent to possibilities for American capitalist expansion was a fitting end to a century in which the United States had slowly whetted its appetite for militarist-economic adventurism. American enthusiasm for "manifest destiny" abated only slightly during the middle of the century, tempered by the bloodbath of civil war, yet the United States entered the 20th century as a corporate empire.

When the United States came into possession of the Philippines an American military force was already in the country, leftover from the Battle of Manila Bay between U.S. naval forces and a woefully underprepared, skeleton Spanish fleet and battery. Misunderstandings about the nature of the Philippines were rampant in the United States as armed conflict began in

⁵ Much of the United States was still euphoric over the quick and relatively painless Spanish conflict which American politician John Hay characterized as a "splendid little war" (Kinzer 51). The war represented a revolution of power in which the United States, once a colony itself, soundly defeated a European imperial power and took up role of empire.

June 1899 between U.S. troops and Philippine nationalists under the command of Emilio Aguinaldo. Even before the war began, murmurs of complaint arose as to the decision by the United States to maintain the Philippines. In December 1898, a poem simply titled "The Philippines" was published in the *Charlotte Observer* by M.B. Wharton:

THE PHILIPPINES.	
M. B. Wharton, D. D.	We've got them, let's enjoy the feast;
	The Spaniard now the treaty signs,
	We've got the jewels of the East (?)
	We've got the boasted Philippines.
	We've got their cabbage-leaf cigars,
	We've got a thousand petty wars,
	We've got a thousand pety wars,
	We've got the pesky Philippines.
	We've got eight million heathen souls,
	We've got ten thousand heathen shrines;
	We got the scum of the Mongoles
	When we obtained the Philippines.
	The lepers, too, will form a part
	Of this great government's assigns,
	And criminals of every art—
	'Tis well we get their hemp and twines.
	We've got a twenty-million debt,
	A hundred million more, perhaps,
	A Mongrel office-holding set
	To suck the governmental paps.
	The millionaires begin to plot—
	Trusts, jobs, monopolies, combines,
	Two thousand elephants we got
	When we obtained the Philippines.
	Now, Uncle Samuel, we think
	The time has come to draw the lines,
	Or thy great government will sink
	In quagmires of the Philippines.
	And Spain will conqueror be at last;
	She falls with cannon and carbines,
	But slays the Giant of the West
	With pebbles from the Philippines.

Wharton's assumptions regarding the Philippines seem to mirror those of President McKinley, especially in respect to claiming "We've got eight million heathen souls/We've got ten thousand heathen/shrines!" (lines 9-11). Wharton's opposition to the acquisition of the Philippines, then, runs counter to the more humanitarian rationales of anti-imperialists. Wharton's worries are largely grounded in the fear that "the scum of the Mongoles" (line 12) will have a negative impact on the long-term future of the United States. Wharton's bizarre misunderstandings regarding the Philippines are endemic of a larger problem that is explored in depth by Cirilio Bautista in *Sunlight on Broken Stones*, the third and final part of *The Trilogy of*

Saint Lazarus. In this poem, Bautista asks: “whose eyes shape/the picture of our sin?” (lines 45-346). When exploring anti-imperial sentiment in the United States it’s important to note that opposition to imperialism did vary in motive. Conflict of conscience was certainly present but the fear of bringing more “colored” citizens into the union was very real. This is explored in one of the most potent poems published during the time of the Philippine crisis, “The Black Man’s Burden.”

The effect of imperialism on domestic affairs in the United States is rarely explored, largely because the United States entered into foreign imperialism during the golden age of European global domination. The morality or rationality of colonialism often went unconsidered in the pursuit of profit and political one-upmanship. Moreover, the connection between oppressed peoples, both those in the United States and abroad, was not a connection readily acknowledged by the white power structure. Clergyman H.T. Johnson published “The Black Man’s Burden” in April 1899 in *The Voice of Missions*, a publication of the AME Church.

Pile on the Black Man’s Burden.

'Tis nearest at your door;

Why heed long bleeding Cuba,

or dark Hawai'i's shore?

Hail ye your fearless armies,

Which menace feeble folks

Who fight with clubs and arrows

and brook your rifle's smoke.

Pile on the Black Man’s Burden

His wail with laughter drown

You've sealed the Red Man's problem,
And will take up the Brown,
In vain ye seek to end it,
With bullets, blood or death
Better by far defend it
With honor's holy breath (Johnson).

The poem was one response of many to Rudyard Kipling's infamous "The White Man's Burden" which, whether satire of imperialism or no, became a motto of the Euroamerican colonizers in calling for the white race "To wait in heavy harness/On fluttered folk and wild--/Your new-caught, sullen peoples,/Half-devil and half-child" (lines 5-8). Perhaps half lamentation and half rallying cry, "The White Man's Burden" attempts to paint Euroamericans with a bizarre image, that of the long-suffering hegemony. Johnson's poem draws a direct link between the treatment of people of color in the United States and American imperialism abroad, highlighting imperialism as not only as an immoral practice but as a continuation of exploitation founded on the colonial fictions of race. This assertion of racially motivated aggression is especially valid in light of letters written by American soldiers as they arrived in the Philippines, writing home about their plans "'to blow every nigger to nigger heaven' and vowing to fight 'until the niggers are killed off like Indians'" (62). Racial antagonism was vital to Euroamerican imperialism and the repression and lynching in the United States was soon exported overseas:

Johnson and Bautista both recognize the residue of imperialism inherent in their experience. Johnson, like Bautista, also seems to be a writer who "keeps vigil at the gates of the historical present" (Evasco 1). Johnson recalls the most recent victim of American expansion, the American military having "sealed the Red Man's problem/And will take up the Brown" (lines

11-12). Johnson rightly points out that the relocation of Native tribes was followed, almost as a matter of course, by the Hawai’ian annexation and then war in the Philippines. Bautista, like Johnson, works to avoid the fate of the colonized, both writing to “renew my race...avoid its dismemberment” (Bautista line 437-438). Both races suffer from a colonial diaspora: the African’s by the slave trade and the Filipino’s by the imposition of Spanish and American imposition. Johnson’s poem was but one in a constellation of parodies and responses written in reaction to Kipling’s “The White Man’s Burden” but it illustrates brilliantly the way in which the struggle for America’s conscience took shape during the late 19th century. Though Johnson and Wharton, the author of the aforementioned “The Philippines” are distant in their views regarding the morality of imperialist action, both oppose the American possession of The Philippines. Wharton and Johnson also both acknowledge the cause of America’s sudden overseas incursions as being to the advantage of “millionaires” who “begin to plot/trusts, jobs, monopolies, combines” (Wharton lines 23-24). In this light, the long-suffering nobility of the white man’s burden falls flat as does the supposed intention to Christianize the already Christian Filipinos. The rebellion that had successfully overthrown Spanish colonial rule was once again mobilized, this time to fight the United States.

Between Rifle and Mandolin

In the second installment of *The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus, Telex Moon*, Bautista writes as the disembodied spirit of Filipino revolutionary José Rizal. Rizal was the founder of the non-violent reform society *Liga Filipina*. Though neither *Liga Filipina* nor Rizal were involved in the violent revolution against Spanish rule in 1896, Rizal was arrested and executed by the Spanish colonial authorities in December of that year (Fisher and Montilla 442). Bautista takes up residence in Rizal’s spirit as he witnesses the history of the Philippines evolve.

Two years after Rizal's death the United States would defeat Spain and, one year after that, decide to possess the Philippines. As Rizal moves through Manila he witnesses with a bewildered and guilty conscience the conquest of his islands by the United States. The ghost of Rizal reflects on his nonviolent movement and the way in which it created two opposing modes of resistance to Spanish rule: "I have made with marble and marmalade/a tension between rifle and mandolin/such that roses grew with bloody petals,/and gunwounds blossomed with shiny metals" (lines 249-252). Ironically, the execution of non-violent Rizal sparked a new level of Filipino commitment to the armed rebellion. Rizal's death also opened up a vacuum of revolutionary leadership in the Philippines into which stepped Emilio Aguinaldo, a general of the revolution who escalated the war with the Spanish and, after the American defeat of the Spanish in 1898, led forces against the United States military (Kinzer 62). Rizal watches in dismay as the United States begins to transform itself into an image of the Spanish empire it had so recently defeated. Spoken, informal promises of Philippine independence become fodder in a battle of words between U.S. representatives and Filipino leaders. Rizal begins to see Aguinaldo as made of the same material as American Admiral George Dewey, the naval commander who defeated the rusted Spanish fleet in the Battle of Manila Bay. "...Aguinaldo and Dewey,/they who were born with coat-of-arms in their teeth/and shipwrights in their tongue. The rubrics sprung/from their biography formed lexicon, thus:/*Feudalism*" (Bautista lines 704-708). The timing of the Philippine-American War, lasting between 1899 and 1902, proved to be the bridge that led the United States from the 19th to the 20th century. The war inspired the greatest level of organized resistance to imperialism within the United States in the form of the Anti-Imperialist League, though according to scholar Fred Harvey Harrington "with few exceptions, the anti-imperialists did not base their opposition to expansion on commercial, constitutional, religious, or

humanitarian grounds; rather they set themselves against it in the sincere belief that annexation...would mean the abandonment of American ideals of self-government and isolation" (650). Still, within that group there were exceptions and perhaps one of the most darkly satiric poems to come out of the anti-imperialist movement was "Onward, Christian Soldier" by William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., son of famous abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, Sr.:

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIER.
The Anglo-Saxon Christians, with gatling gun and sword,
In serried ranks are pushing on the gospel of the Lord;
On Afric's soil they press the foe in war's terrific scenes,
And merrily the hunt goes on throughout the Philippines.

What though the Boers are Christians; the Filipinos, too!
It is a Christian act to shoot a fellow creature through;
The bombs with dynamite surcharged their deadly missiles fling,
And gallantly on their fatal work the dum-dum bullets sing.

The dead, and mangled bodies, the wounded and the sick,
Are multiplied or every hand, on every field are thick?
"O gracious Lord," the prayer goes up,
"to us give victory swift!"
The chaplains on opposing sides the same petition lift.

The mahdis and the sirdars along the great Soudan
Are learning at the cannon's mouth the brotherhood of man;
The holy spirit guides aloft the shrieking shot and shell,
And Christian people shout with joy at thousands blown to hell.

The pulpits bless the victor arms and praise the bloody work,
As, after an Armenian raid rejoiced the pious Turk;
The Christian press applauds the use of bayonet and knife,

For how can social order last without the strenuous life?
The outworn, threadbare precept to lift the poor and weak,
The fallacy that this great earth is for the saintly meek,
Have both gone out of fashion; the world is for the strong;
That might shall be the lord of right is now the Christian song.

The Jesus that we reverence is not the lowly man
Who lived in poverty and rags where Jordan's waters ran;
Our savior is an admiral upon the quarterdeck,
Or else a general uniformed, an army at his beck.

How natural that a change should come
in nineteen hundred years,
And bibles take a place behind the bulletts and the beers!
We need a new Messiah to lead the latest way,
And gospel version well revised to show us how to prey.

Then onward, Christian soldier, through fields of crimson gore,
Behold the trade advantages beyond the open door!
The profits on our ledgers outweigh the heathen loss;
Set thou the glorious stars and stripes above the ancient cross!

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

Garrison depicts in graphic language the images of imperialism. His family's legacy as devout and determined Christian activists opposed to slavery translates easily to this opposition

to American imperialism; indeed, Garrison's authorship can be interpreted to be a sort of generational idealism, with slavery reborn as imperialism. It is likely that H.T. Johnson, author of "The Black Man's Burden", would find this an apt extension.

Garrison recognizes the largely economic impetus behind imperialism, despite the casual and misinformed evangelism of President McKinley: "...onward, Christian soldier, through/fields of crimson gore,/Behold the trade advantages beyond the/open door!/The profits on our ledgers outweigh the/heathen loss" (lines 65-70). Bautista's spirit of Rizal paints the American mode: "...*imperialism*-‘a pure/fundament, a belly worm that feeds on/sugar, pineapple, gold, manganese,/and the English language’" (lines 719-722). With the annexation of Hawai'i already accomplished, the annexation of The Philippines may have seemed less dramatic event for Americans had it not been for the armed conflict that ensued. The violent and often indiscriminately brutal behavior of the American military at times aroused American sentiment against the conflict. Despite this, and thanks to attempts at apologetics on the part of the United States government, the anti-imperialist movement was unable to curtail the conflict. The strange marriage of mildly Christian rhetoric, corporate subservience, flag-waving jingoism and the American military ultimately proved to be too much for Aguinaldo and the Filipino rebels to withstand.

The capture of Aguinaldo in 1902 (Kinzer 63) and his appeal for Filipinos to lay down their arms ended The Philippine-American War. The Anti-Imperialist league continued its existence through the end of World War I, after which it was dissolved in the midst of American victory. The Philippine-American War set the United States on a path to greater expansion that would continue unabated throughout the 20th century. Garrison insisted that in the supposed Christian nation: "the outworn, threadbare precept to lift/the poor and weak,/The fallacy that this

great earth is for/the saintly meek/Have both gone out of fashion; the world/is for the strong;/That might shall be the lord of right is/now the Christian song” (lines 41-48). What remained for The Philippines was the uncertain prospect of colonial existence under yet another imperial power.

Residents of This Plane

Ferdinand Marcos’ presidency had degraded into a dictatorship after the declaration of martial law in 1972 due to a supposed Communist “plan to stage, undertake and wage a full scale armed insurrection and rebellion in [The Philippines]...maintaining a well trained, well armed and highly indoctrinated and greatly expanded insurrectionary force, popularly known as the ‘New People’s Army’” (Proclamation No. 1081).⁶ As previously mentioned, it was in this environment of instability that Cirilio Bautista wrote *The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus*. In *Telex Moon* Bautista as Rizal bears witness to the legacy of American conquest, both before and after independence in 1946, as even after independence the United States maintained a tremendous military and economic presence on the islands. Bautista writes this period of Philippine history as a plane of existence, a tangible separate zone of time and place:

I have known the residents
of this plane – patriarchs and gluttons, potentates
and gnomons, stewards and waterclerks, footmen
and scullery maids – who make of life a
conceit. They have built a clock run by deceit:

⁶ The student demonstrations began in 1970 “when student demonstrators filled the streets of Manila to protest against U.S. imperialism” (Noble and Silliman 16). Martial law was not lifted until 1982 and during this period of repression Marcos was assured by U.S. Vice-President George H.W. Bush that “We love your adherence to democratic principles and to the democratic process, and we will not leave you in isolation” (Russell).

sixty numerals in luminous ticks
tickling their marrow in thoughts of tomorrow
where daylight is longer than any sorrow.

They flip in the outskirts of Kamaloka,
then, ruled by the clockwork of passion and flesh,
thus: comes the sanctimonious jellyfish
clicking his teeth to disavow the pain
attendant to selfhood... (lines 268-280)

Bautista's lines are dense and scathing accusation aimed not only at the neo-imperial leaders of the Philippines but the people as well. Of the three states examined in this thesis, The Philippines is the only one to have been possessed by the United States and then granted independence. The yearning for Hawai'ian independence in the writing of Haunani Kay-Trask is counterbalanced by the disillusionment of Bautista's Rizal. The post-independence Philippines was economically bound to the United States and, as a condition of independence, the United States secured lengthy leases for military bases in the islands, bases used during yet another imperialist adventure, the Vietnam War. The people of The Philippines, thus liberated, become yet again a prop for U.S. imperialism, yet unwilling or unable to force out the United States, preferring to "make of life/a conceit" (lines 271-272) in which the label of independence is sufficient even if independence is not entirely a reality.

"The outskirts of Kamaloka" (line 276) refers to a Buddhist "*semi*-material plane, to us subjective and invisible, where the disembodied 'personalities', the astral forms...remain, until they fade out from it by the complete exhaustion of the effects of the mental impulses that created...human and animal passions and desires" (Blavatsky 171-2). In Buddhist thought, the

fading out from Kamaloka is a part of the progression toward Nirvana. Similarly, in Bautista's vision of progression toward nationalist selfhood, Kamaloka is a plane which must be overcome but from which Filipinos are either reluctant or unable to part. The "pain/attendant to selfhood" (lines 279-80) is avoided and thus imprisonment in Kamaloka continues for The Philippines until the nation removes itself from the facilitation of neo-imperialist agendas. The fact that Buddhist theosophy is used as an analogy for the progression of selfhood is an assertion of independence from the predominance of Roman Catholicism in the Philippines.

Filipino critic Ophelia Dimalanta describes Rizal in *Telex Moon* as "both accuser and accused, bewailing a city [Manila] grown old, grown cold, with its 'earthbound denizens/tied to wealth and therefore be wealth possessed...its god/was Internal Revenue to which people chanted strange songs'" (13). Dimalanta's notion of a "cold" Manila is itself an assertion of the foreign, neo-imperialist elements that have embedded themselves in The Philippines, bringing with them the unnatural seasons and monied deities of their native climes. What Bautista does with Rizal is employ a historic and revered historical figure as conscience. Just as anti-imperialist poets in the United States attempted to provide a voice of conscience, so too does Bautista for The Philippines.

If by the Philippines the United States begat its true overseas empire, then Bautista's work is no less daunting than to attempt to exorcise the neo-imperialism of his homeland by asserting a national selfhood. In the "Author's Foreword" to *Telex Moon*, Bautista writes that he hopes "to contribute, in my own small way as a poet, to the realization of a body of artistically excellent literature that will reveal the Filipino psyche and interpret for all quarters the uniqueness and the beauty of the Filipino Experience" (1). Bautista's ambition is impressive, especially given the fact that he wrote his foreword during the period of Marcos's presidency. In

taking on this task, Bautista attempts to make of himself a nation builder. The epic nature of *The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus* then becomes part of something new, a response to centuries of unending imperialism, first by Spain and then by the United States, while also being a rejoinder to neo-imperialist policies. The thousands of islands within The Philippines, the subject of alarmed but ultimately inconsequential concern by American anti-imperialists, continues to struggle and to adjust to its position within the Asian community and American sphere of influence.

Conclusion

The oppressor and the oppressed, the victim and the victimizer, rarely speak with only two distinct voices. The objections of 19th century Americans to imperialism were rooted in a variety of motivations, some humanitarian and some not. In the poem “The Massachusetts Regiment”, styled as an opera, U.S. President Polk welcomes representatives from Massachusetts to the White House. Polk is wary of the representatives due to their states’ reluctance to support the Mexican-American War, yet when the men show themselves to be willing to support the conflict, Polk sings: “The Government shall bear in mind/A northern deed so rarely kind” (lines 31-32). The Bay Staters promise President Polk (styled in the opera as “King Polk”) a regiment of troops to fight in Mexico, to which the King responds: “The blue old streak of Federal treason/Fades, wiped by cotton, rum, and reason” (lines 35-36). Thus even as early as 1846, at the onset of the Mexican-American War, it was understood by the anti-imperialists that the United States would pursue wars of aggression to advance public or private treasuries.

Despite the transformation of the United States from a small republic to corporate empire during the 19th century, the American poets who submitted their anti-imperialist verse to newspapers during that time provided a whisper of conscience, of caution. Mexican land taken for the expansion of slavery, Hawai’ian land for sugar and naval bases, and The Philippines as the spoils of war, proved the United States to be a nation which was not only capable of violently suppressing the non-whites within its reach, but a nation eager to stretch itself overseas.

Juxtaposing contemporary post-colonial writers and 19th century Americans is not intended to be an exercise in pluralistic multiculturalism by which, according to David Palumbo-Liu’s definition of pluralism, an attempt is made to “smooth over the rough grain of history and

politics...those very things that have constructed the ‘ethnic’ in the United States” (2). Even in the most idealistic, humanitarian or anti-imperialist poetry there are echoes of racial and/or cultural supremacist values; though these values were often woven into the daily life of 19th century America, they find heirs even in the 21st century, long after they ought to have been dispatched from public discourse. Thus there are inherent weaknesses in even the most well-intentioned anti-imperialism of the 19th century and certainly in the more economic, self-interested anti-imperialism. By including these distant American voices in post-colonial discourse, it becomes necessary to engage heavily in the study of the time and place in which each voice was situated. The contemporary poets and critics included in this thesis are the descendants of consequences which the American voices tried, through various means and by various motivations, to limit.

More often than not the poetry published in newspapers during the 19th century never appeared in another form. Some of the poems included in this thesis were reprinted in other newspapers across the country but beyond this they received little more lease on life. Including these works in a post-colonial discourse achieves a fuller narrative; beyond of the dichotomy of American patriotic slogans (such as “54-40 or fight!” and “Remember the Maine!”) and post-colonial literature there can exist a broader conversation of which these poems may form a part.

The failure of these poets to inhibit the eventual impact of American imperialism does not detract from their potency as literary artifacts; the legacy of indigenous genocide, slavery, and capitalism makes American imperialism, in retrospect, seem inevitable. The poems included in this thesis form only a small part of a largely unexplored corpus of work which deserves to be studied within colonial and post-colonial literature; these ghosts of American conscience will complicate and expand what is already a healthy multicultural criticism.

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