

PART I

The Noble Science of Imperial Relations and Its Laws of Race Development

Political scientists in early twentieth-century America who traced the nineteenth-century origins of their field pointed to British theorist and statesman George Cornwall Lewis (1806–1863).¹ His best-known work is *Essay on the Government of Dependencies* (1841). Lewis defined the science of politics as comprised of three parts: the nature of the relation between a sovereign government and its subjects, the relation between the sovereign governments of independent communities, and “the relation of a dominant and a dependent community; or, in other words, the relation of supremacy and dependence.”² Modern writers, he said, had not yet taken up the nature of the political relation of supremacy and dependency in any systematic way.

Government of Dependencies was first reprinted fifty years later, a moment when modern writers—that is social scientists—were finally taking up Lewis’s challenge by founding a new American Political Science Association that would marshal the country’s burgeoning intellectual resources in support of the expanded empire. The central challenge that defined the new field called international relations was how to ensure the efficient political administration and race development of subject peoples, from the domestic dependencies and backward races at home to the complex race formations found in the new overseas territories and dependencies. What these generally younger, socialist-leaning, progressive political scientists saw as a bright new dawn for

the discipline, the Anglo-Saxon race, and civilization, other social scientists saw instead as a dark and ignoble end of their own 20-year-long effort to bring "the searching light of reason to bear" upon problems of politics.³

The early decades of international relations in the United States is a story about empire. We know its outlines mainly due to the work of two historical-oriented specialists in international relations, David Long and Brian Schmidt.⁴ The historians of empire and of imperial anthropology have shown us that empire wasn't easily pried apart from race in turn-of-the-century America, so the new disciplinary historians have gotten one important part of the account wrong. The problem is the current understanding of turn-of-the-century the place of race in the thought of social scientists of the era. The strand that still resonates in our own time about empire, states, and the like is considered to be the real scientific or theoretical core of the scholars' work, while the strand that involves now-repudiated racial constructs is treated instead as mere "language," "metaphors," and "prejudices" of the era. To undo this error and recover in full the ideas of early international relations theorists it is necessary, as John Hobson has shown, to bring the work of historians of conservative and reform Darwinism to bear on the first specialists and foundational texts.

We will also need to loosen the hold a particular idea has over our contemporary imaginations—that the subject matter of international relations has forever been found on one side of a geographic border between the "domestic" and the "foreign"—because the scholars who wrote the first articles, papers, treatises, and textbooks in international relations all included the "Negro problem" in the South within the new field of study. Political scientists imagined two fundamentally different logics and processes at work and thus different rules that applied across the boundary dividing Anglo-Saxons or Teutons and the inferior races found in Indian Territory, New Mexico, the Philippines, the Caribbean, Africa, and Oceania. Here was the original and signal contribution of U.S. international relations to the theory and practice of hierarchy, a theory that W. E. B. Du Bois challenged in his continuing arguments about the global color line.

For those who studied fundamental problems of world order at the turn of the century, it was innovations in communications and transportation technologies combined with the unprecedented expansion of capital that had increased contact and thus the potential for conflict between the world's superior and inferior races. Strategies for managing conflict or arresting the natural tendency toward war depended on a correct understanding of the way biology and environment determined and limited the prospects for civilizing the child races. Against the varieties of evolutionary theory offered up

as explanation and justification for hierarchy, anthropologist Franz Boas and sociologist Du Bois both began in the late 1890s to explain hierarchy instead as the outcome of history, specifically, of colonial and mercantile capitalist expansion and of the transatlantic slave trade that secured the dominance of the West. Boas's role in challenging the idea that hierarchy was natural and biologically rooted is well known. Du Bois's parallel explications are both less well known and misunderstood.

CHAPTER 1

Empire by Association

In 1906, Alleyne Ireland (1871–1951), the traveler turned expert, read a paper at the third annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in Providence on the growing interest in the theory of colonial administration. The subject was once treated as a “curious by-product rather than as a vital part of Political Science,” thus leaving the field to amateurs who had failed “to approach the colonial problem in that scientific spirit which in other departments of study is alone held to justify a public expression of opinion.”¹ While not a professor, Ireland was nonetheless seen by many as a pioneer in what he called the “science of imperial administration.” He earned this reputation after publishing *Tropical Colonization: An Introduction to the Study of the Topic* (1899). In 1901, the University of Chicago appointed him its colonial commissioner, a post that bought him two years of research for an ambitious eight-volume study on colonialism in all the Asian possessions of the United States, France, Britain, and the Netherlands.²

The development in political science Ireland trumpeted is obvious in retrospect. Professors had turned to the question of administration of empire even before founding the American Political Science Association in 1903. The two private eastern university-based political science academies had taken the lead in a series of conferences and in the pages of their respective journals. The American Academy of Political and Social Science, founded in

Philadelphia in 1889, launched a bimonthly journal, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, in 1890. Harry Huntington Powers, a professor of romance languages turned economist, wrote the lead article in the September 1898 number, "The War as a Suggestion of Manifest Destiny."³ Powers explained the war as the playing out of an irrepressible struggle for "race supremacy" that was leading rapidly to the necessary subjugation of the world's dependent, weak, and uncivilized nations. Within "two centuries, perhaps in one," only Slavs and Saxons would be left as major powers and would be locked in a struggle to rule the world, Powers predicted.

The academy followed this initial think piece with the first of its special-topics supplements to focus on U.S. foreign policy, a thick volume issued in May 1899 that began with a series of articles on the government of dependencies. By 1901, the academy had added a special department that focused on colonies and colonial government, and at the fifth annual meeting in Philadelphia in April of that year, its best attended to date, the speakers came to grips with the fact that the annexation of new territories had multiplied what were now "America's race problems."

It was hardly necessary for W. E. B. Du Bois, who had come up from Atlanta for the conference, to defend the claim he had made in his address to the American Negro Academy the month before that the color line was "the world problem of the twentieth century."⁴ The transnational connections were clear (albeit not in the way Du Bois had envisioned) to those who gave papers on the races in the Pacific, the natives of Hawaii, the races and semi-civilized tribes of the Philippines, the Latin and African races in Cuba and Puerto Rico, and on the Negro question in the U.S. South, where the proven unfitness of African Americans for the ballot was a key reason for believing that all the other less civilized races that were now American dependents would likewise be unable to govern themselves.⁵

As Hilary Herbert, a member of Congress and onetime secretary of the navy lamented, "political science played no part" in the Reconstruction acts, since African Americans were allegedly unfit for participating in government, but Congress had passed them anyway. Herbert, who was there to introduce papers by Du Bois and George Winston, president of North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, and Du Bois, ended his introduction with a quote as famous in some circles as Du Bois's is about the color line in the twentieth century, "the granting of universal suffrage to the Negro was the mistake of the nineteenth century."⁶

Edward Ross (1866–1951), a sociologist trained in Berlin and at Johns Hopkins who was the best-known scholar at the meeting, gave the keynote address. He used the occasion to elaborate a new theory of the sources

of white racial superiority. This work was until recently misrepresented on the American Sociological Association Web site as a critique of racism.⁷ There were those, Ross said, under the sway of Darwin who exaggerated the fixed-race element of difference, which was as grave an error as those who believed in the "fallacy of equality" or "the power of intercourse and school instruction to lift up a backward folk to the level of the rest." The sources of difference were subtler. Three factors made the Anglo-Saxon superior: energy, which varied inversely with adaptability to the tropics; self-reliance; and education.

Americans scored high on "tests of superiority" except in the South because of the presence there "of several millions of an inferior race." What would sustain the superiority of Americans was "pride of blood" and "an uncompromising attitude toward the lower races," which secured white men of North America freedom "from the ball and chain of hybridism" that had trapped the Spanish in America and the Portuguese in Brazil and East Africa. "Asiatics" posed the real challenge. They might arrive in the country, enjoy the equal opportunity afforded them, and reproduce at a vastly faster rate than whites, in which case Ross predicted one of three outcomes. Americans might degrade themselves by multiplying more indiscriminately; Asians might adopt the norms of whites, which he judged unlikely; or whites would silently commit "race suicide" as the "farm hand, mechanic, and operative . . . whither away." Much hinged, then, on meeting the challenge immigration posed to white supremacy. Stem the tide and the white man would "play a brilliant and leading role on the stage of history" because of his capacity and efficiency, free institutions, and universal education.

What was left for W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963), then still a mostly unknown sociologist but the one true giant at the Philadelphia meeting that weekend, was to cut through all the cant in defense of hierarchy.⁸ The world was witnessing a new phase in European civilization's contact with "undeveloped peoples."

Whatever we may say of the results of such contact in the past, it certainly forms a chapter in human action not pleasant to look back upon. War, murder, slavery, extermination and debauchery—this has again and again been the result of carrying civilization and the blessed gospel to the isles of the sea and the heathen without the law.⁹

Du Bois presented the South as a case of the general phenomenon of race contact in order to challenge the propositions that passed for knowledge in a field "which the average American scientist deems somewhat beneath his dignity, and which the average man who is not a scientist knows all about."¹⁰

He analyzed Jim Crow's spatial segregation both as a purposeful project and one with a class dimension, similar to most other features of life in the Black Belt. The primary economic problem for African Americans was not how to turn ex-slaves into efficient workers. Rather, the problem was how to overcome slavery's deleterious impact on generations and recognize the structural disadvantages that both black and white workers faced in the post-feudal, unregulated economy. Racism worsened the effects on black working life, leaving little hope of organizing cross-race associations. What was most needed, therefore, was an expanded set of black organizations founded by an expanded cadre of black leaders in defense of community interests. The primary tool in this endeavor was the ballot. Without political power, black people would continue to suffer at the hands of the police and courts and continue to be starved of the public resources necessary for advancement, beginning with decent schools. Over the long term, better education combined with improved political leadership would make his people better citizens.

Thus, there were not just two competing theories of world interracial relations in the United States at the turn of the century, as Cleland Boyd McAfee laid them out in the *Journal of the Royal African Society* just a few years later, but three. One theory insisted that black inferiority was real and ineradicable and thus that equality of any sort was logically impossible. Efforts by blacks to pursue the fantasy of equal rights would lead to increased conflict. The second theory recognized black inferiority as real but not "fundamental." The dominant race would continue, necessarily, to dictate terms to the subordinate one but the fact of subordination need not end in conflict. It was possible to imagine forms of uplift that might over time make possible at least "some points of political, economic, and social equality available for some to-day and for the developed race ultimately." McAfee used the example of Du Bois in fact to show the principle in action: "first-fruits of the new race, now inferior, ultimately not inferior to us though always different from us."¹¹

Du Bois challenged both schools with his sustained critique of international hierarchy and of the racialism the West used to buttress it. The key pieces of this antiracist and internationalist perspective were in place in the essay he published in the *Annals* in 1901. He showed that the modern history of civilization building was undeniably brutal and exploitative, however much those who benefited from empire denied it. He linked his argument to the principle that the darker peoples of the world had the same rights of political self-determination as the lighter races. It was the same claim that he had put forward nine months earlier in his speech titled "To the Nations of the World" at the first Pan-African Congress in London.¹² He acknowl-

edged "that it is possible and sometimes best that a partially undeveloped people should be ruled by the best of their stronger and better neighbors for their own good, until such time as they can start and fight the world's battles alone," but this was a frank recognition that sovereignty would be difficult to secure against rival imperial complexes.¹³ Du Bois also decoupled strategies of tutelage from a belief in racial inferiority.¹⁴ Above all, Du Bois was pursuing the idea that the world was thinking wrong about race.¹⁵

Du Bois's arguments gained wider notoriety with the publication of *Souls of Black Folk* in 1903, the "electrifying manifesto" that in the words of Du Bois's biographer "redefined the terms of a three-hundred-year interaction between black and white people and influenced the cultural and political psychology of people throughout the western hemisphere, as well as on the continent of Africa."¹⁶ The review in the *Annals* by Carl Kelsey, the University of Pennsylvania's newly minted expert on the Negro, admitted that there was much to praise in *Souls*, but he instead focused on its purported snarling, overcritical tone and opined that the "chip on his shoulder" would keep Du Bois from gaining the influence he deserved. Du Bois painted too bleak a picture of black-white relations in the South, Kelsey wrote, and seemed obsessed with chronicling "the failures, the injustices, the wrongs." As for the book's most controversial section, the critique of Booker T. Washington and his role in African American disfranchisement, Kelsey said that Du Bois failed to make his case, "although there may be a measure of truth to the charge that [Washington's] educational program is too narrow."¹⁷ Here is a clear illustration of the line social scientists were drawing against advocacy at the beginning of the twentieth century, at least when what was being advocated—black people's rights, say, rather than the advance of U.S. empire—was unpopular. The *Annals* published two more special issues to which Du Bois, the powerhouse Atlanta University professor, *might* have contributed, one on race improvement in the United States (1909) and the other on the New South (1910). Booker T. Washington wrote for both, but Du Bois would not appear again in the journal's pages for a decade.

The Loneliest Political Scientist in New York

The New York Academy of Political Science is the publisher of the oldest political science journal in the country, *Political Science Quarterly*. It responded to the war with Spain with a lead article by Franklin Giddings (1855–1931) titled "Imperialism?" in its December 1898 issue. Giddings played a founding role in and served as a member of the editorial board of *Annals* while he was at Bryn Mawr. In 1894, he accepted a chair at Columbia, where he

rose to prominence as a theorist of social evolution with the publication of his *Principles of Sociology* (1896), which others would later describe as a kind of progressive or reformist Darwinism. In it, he argued that even while laws of competition and survival of the fittest operated among higher and lower races and classes, state intervention was often warranted to avoid the kinds of social conflict that were then on the upsurge in the United States. If unchecked, such conflict would end in the decline of the white race instead of its progress, Giddings claimed.¹⁸

"Imperialism?" begins with an apology "to men whose opinions I have long held in deep respect." Giddings argued that "their ambition to perfect the ethical ideals of the race" had led them to "neglect the humbler task of forecasting social probabilities."¹⁹ He believed that opposition to the war was futile, a conclusion that followed the routine assessments of opponents of the war of the inexorable forces that were propelling it forward (the "jingoism and yellow journals . . . the American population . . . eager to engage in blood-letting . . . the Morgans, the Cabot Lodges . . . war to develop American character, war to afford an outlet to American energies and genius."). The continuing opposition of those opposed to the war to territorial expansion and especially to the retention of the Philippines left them unable to deal realistically with possible outcomes of the war and to the main question they posed: "How can the American people best adapt themselves to their new responsibilities?" Giddings foresaw an eventual expansion of trade with the new tropical possessions "under the more intelligent direction of the white races." The biggest challenge would be to develop methods for governing inferior races from a distance. If this was not done, the civilized world would be forced to abandon all hope of "continuing its economic conquest of the natural resources of the globe." All of these observations led in the same direction: the West's moral evolution and the perfecting of American government through empire building, a necessary step in the continued domination of world politics "by English-speaking people, in the interest of an English civilization."

Giddings's opponents are not named in the essay, but they included Yale's William Graham Sumner (1840–1910), a follower of Spencer, a conservative defender of laissez-faire economics on evolutionary grounds, and the only social scientist to take a leading role in the American Anti-Imperialist League, which was formed in June 1898, just as the United States was in the process of annexing the Philippines. Sumner famously foretold a long war in the Philippines if the United States attempted to replace Spanish rule with one more of those modern conquering states that claimed to be "spreading freedom and truth," which he called "manifestations of national vanity"

that every nation laughs at when observing them in others. Sumner also shared the conviction of virtually all other social scientists at the time that the differences between civilized and uncivilized or semi-civilized people made their incorporation as citizens impossible. Nonwhites should instead govern themselves. He suggested a range of outcomes that would follow if this option was pursued, from the dismal conditions in Haiti after a century of freedom to the more promising case of Mexico.²⁰

Another of Giddings's unnamed opponents was undoubtedly his colleague, John W. Burgess (1844–1931), the best-known, most influential political scientist in the country, the founding dean of Columbia's School of Political Science, and the founder of *Political Science Quarterly*.²¹ Burgess called the war and its aftermath a "great crisis" in his country's history. Two decades later, in his *Reminiscences*, he called the war the "first great shock which I had experienced" in the eighteen years since his move from Northampton to New York.²² His was a viewpoint sharply at odds with the views of political scientists who were eager to demonstrate the practical value of their expertise. This goes far to explain why *Political Science Quarterly* alone among the professional publications published criticisms of the McKinley administration's imperial turn. Burgess's stature made the dissent all the more significant. His opposition to the imperial adventure also helps explain why, despite his stature in the field, Burgess did not play a leadership role in the American Political Science Association when it was founded a few years later.²³

What is perhaps most significant about Burgess's opposition is the puzzle it poses. His reputation was built on his magisterial two-volume *Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law* (1890), which argued that only the Teutonic branch of the Aryan race had mastered the art of political organization in the form of the national state. It was this "fact of Teutonic political genius" that "authorizes them, in the economy of the world, to assume the leadership in the establishment and administration of states."²⁴ The Teutonic nations ["the English, French, Lombards, Scandinavians, Germans, and North Americans"] had two obligations: to never surrender power to non-Teutonic elements, which meant at times excluding others from participation in political power, and to "carry the political civilization of the modern world into those parts of the world inhabited by unpolitical and barbaric races; i.e., they must have a colonial policy." He added the injunction that Teutonic nations had a responsibility to civilize the uncivilized and semi-civilized "by any means necessary." Three generations of historians of American empire have credited Burgess with an influence second only to Admiral Alfred Mahan for providing the intellectual scaffolding in support of the Spanish-American war on the basis of this 1891 essay while ignoring

Burgess's writings for the rest of the decade and his unequivocal opposition to the new imperialism.²⁵

In "The Ideal of the American Commonwealth," Burgess's address at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, the same series in which Frederick Jackson Turner delivered his famous thesis on the closing of the American frontier and Congress debated the question of annexation of Hawaii, Burgess shifted ground, from an argument about the need for a proactive colonial policy to an argument that the American nation as a "cosmopolitan state" need do nothing more than continue to serve as an example to others. All the other pieces of his argument remained the same: only the Aryan race—the Greeks, the Romans, and the Teutons—had founded and developed

great states of the world, in a modern sense. . . . We must conclude from these facts that American Indians, Asiatics and Africans cannot properly form any active, directive part of the political population which shall be able to produce modern political institutions and ideals. They have no element of political civilization to contribute. They can only receive, learn, follow Aryan example.

Since the other Aryan stocks had lost their capacities through race mixing, "the prime mission of the ideal American commonwealth [is] to be the perfection of the Aryan genius for political civilization, upon the basis of a predominantly Teutonic nationality," which would become the model "political organization of the world." The key would be to prevent the dilution of the race, "sins against American civilization" that were attempted by some in the past but, "thanks to an all-wise Providence, have failed." With the crime of Reconstruction reversed, the black electorate disfranchised, and immigration restrictions in place, the main threats to realization of the ideal democracy built on principles of liberty and self-government were socialism (in part through the corruption of young American students who studied political economy in Germany) and the growth of the power of the government during the Civil War, hence the importance of the system of checks and balances, especially the judiciary.²⁶ This fear of unchecked executive power explains his opposition to the course of U.S. foreign policy in the mid-1880s.

Consider in this light his commentary on the Cleveland administration's threat in 1896 to intervene "by every means in its power" in a boundary dispute between Venezuela and the British colony of Guiana if Great Britain did not follow U.S. dictates. Historians have since come to see Britain's bowing to American pressure in the Venezuela dispute as the moment when the United States announced its "arrival as a great power on the diplomatic

world stage."²⁷ Burgess challenged the administration and the jingoists for what he derided as "pseudo-Monroeism." The version of the Monroe doctrine trotted out in the recent conflict was the "slaveholders'" version that was invented in the 1850s during the failed effort to expand the southern plantation system into "Mexico and Central America and even Cuba," an attempt to make "the Gulf the Mediterranean of a slave empire." In the 1890s, there was no longer reason to fear that European states would intervene in the domestic affairs of the Latin American republics. Rather, Burgess believed it was the United States that now seemed poised to extend a protectorate system over the region.²⁸

Burgess warned of the responsibilities of establishing a protectorate and of the unreasonable costs of raising the military necessary for it. "Grand prospect! Plenty of offices, plenty of government contracts, large profits, abundance of work, high prices, and endless sensations! But it must all be paid for in the end in mountains of treasure, certainly, and in rivers of blood and centuries of misery probably." Most important, any such "course of conquest" requires an ethical principle for its justification, and the right of self-defense could not be stretched to accommodate empire. The duty of "civilized states to carry civilization into the abodes of barbarism" should not mask other ends nor was it in fact applicable to the countries of the hemisphere, which either were "working out" their "own civilization" or were already governed by other civilized powers. He concluded with a review of the prejudices that lay behind the talk of going to war with Great Britain that originated in badly written school textbooks that offered misguided views on the British Empire and came from those who courted the Irish American vote. As for war talk, once the spirit is excited, "is very difficult for the government to hold its own footing at all against it. It is the most dangerous weapon in all our arsenal of popular prejudices."²⁹

The chief jingoist and future chief conspirator in the 1898 war, Theodore Roosevelt, whom Cleveland had made police commissioner of New York, rebutted Burgess's views in the magazine *Bachelor of Arts*: "The Monroe Doctrine should not be considered from any purely academic standpoint . . . but by the needs of the nation and the true interests of Western civilization." Those who attacked the president and his secretary of state and who took the "anti-American side" were not patriots who loved their country but were instead promiscuous lovers of other places, as adulterers are of other women, in the thrall of "a kind of milk-and-water cosmopolitanism," a doctrine that was never attractive to "men of robust character or of imposing personality." The same weak, unmanly, and unpatriotic scholars trembled before a false vision of the future. The United States in fact had no interest in establishing

a protectorate over the Americas. Colonies of any kind were “unnatural,” and “the only hope for a colony that wishes to attain full moral and mental growth is to become an independent State, or part of an independent State.” Most important given the course in 1898 that he is so famously associated with, Roosevelt said that the worst situation from the perspective of development was one in which “the colonizing race has to do its work by means of other inferior races.” While there might be some prospect for development in the South American republics, despite “the mean and bloody” recent history, there was little if any chance for race development in the Tropics under the tutelage of a northern European race.³⁰

After Giddings’s expansive defense of the imperial turn in *Political Science Quarterly*, Burgess offered a careful and narrow-framed critique, “How May the United States Govern Its Extra-Continental Territory?” He began by making his own position clear. He opposed venturing out to seize new lands at the present stage of development of the United States while the home territory remained underpopulated and the country remained divided on key policy issues, from tariffs to “lynch law,” and had not yet found solutions to the “Indian problem,” the “Mormon problem,” and the “negro problem.” The pending crisis was thus not about the fact of territorial conquest but how the territories were to be governed, given “the principle of political science, that the same fullness of civil liberty, as well as of political liberty, is not appropriate to all conditions of mankind.”³¹

Burgess feared any attempt to govern the recently annexed territories extra-constitutionally, which he said would lead “towards absolutism.” No legal precedent existed for doing so. Rather, “all places over which the government of the United States extends constitutes the ‘States and territories’ or the ‘country’ of the United States, or the ‘American empire,’ as the court termed them; and . . . the limitations placed by the constitution on the powers of the government run with the government into all places . . . over which the civil government of the United States extends.” The McKinley administration would be wise not to rush to terminate military government, Burgess argued. It would take a while to determine the precise capacity of the people for self-government, and he held out the prospect that Americans might still come to their senses and reverse direction. In that case, and assuming that elements in the Philippines and the Caribbean demonstrated a “fair capacity for self-government,” the United States should let the occupied peoples rule themselves and withdraw its military forces. If they did not demonstrate such a capacity and Americans “show in some deliberate and unmistakable way their will to have a colonial empire, we should try territorial rule . . . under the limitations which the constitution imposes upon

the government in behalf of civil liberty.” If this type of limited government proved impossible, then the constitution would have to be amended “to permit the national government to exercise absolute, or more absolute, civil authority in certain parts of our domain.”³²

It turns out that Burgess got it spectacularly wrong. Americans never did come to their senses. Congress voted to annex Hawaii, where a white oligarchy already ruled, in July 1898, ostensibly as a war measure, although in the famous six-hour naval battle in Manila two months earlier, Admiral Dewey had destroyed every Spanish warship in the Pacific. It was made a territory in 1900. The potential problem posed by white rule over inferior races meant that the transition to statehood would be dragged out indefinitely, similar to the cases of Arizona and New Mexico, which were incorporated in the 1840s and had larger populations than some other recently created states of the union but still ruled along colonial lines. The same was true for Oklahoma, which was carved out of the western half of Indian Territory and incorporated in 1890. As for the new so-called dependencies, Congress had recognized Cuban independence in April 1898, before the beginning of the war, and the Treaty of Paris concluded with Spain in December put Cuba on the path to becoming a U.S. protectorate. The same treaty turned the remaining Spanish colonial possessions over to the United States, and the commissions McKinley dispatched to the Philippines and Puerto Rico resolved the question of fitness for rule of the various nonwhite “alien races” rather quickly, determining that a period of tutelage would be necessary. As for Guam, the absence there of any sign of civilized people, however “friendly” the so-called Chamorros might be, meant that a transition from military to civilian rule might not ever be possible.³³

Burgess’s gravest error, though, turns out to have been his belief that the constitution prevented Americans from ruling any place or people autocratically. The Supreme Court decided otherwise in a series of cases that established the principle of one set of rules for civilized peoples in incorporated territories and another set of rules for the uncivilized in unincorporated territories; that is, a system of political inequality and hierarchy.³⁴ The court relied heavily on the theorizing of Harvard political scientist Albert Lawrence Lowell (1856–1943), the future president of the university who famously segregated the new Harvard freshman dormitories in 1915.³⁵ Lowell argued that Congress had the power to decide if the principles outlined in the Constitution ought to determine how territories gained through war or through cession should be ruled. Lowell thus imagined two kinds of territories, incorporated ones that were destined for statehood and unincorporated ones that belonged to the United States but were apparently on a different

path.³⁶ The determining factor was the racial makeup of a territory and thus the capacities of the people inhabiting it.

Elsewhere Lowell showed that a parallel system of hierarchy operated within the continental boundaries of the United States, citing the case of the incorporated territory of New Mexico, where an inferior Spanish race was “not sufficiently trained in habits of self-government.” He went further. The “theory of universal political equality does not apply to tribal Indians, to Chinese, or to negroes under all conditions.”³⁷ Lowell’s colleague at Harvard, historian Albert Bushnell Hart, who would become president of the American Political Science Association in 1912, analyzed the existing system of hierarchical rule in and outside of the continental boundaries. “In any other country such governments would be called ‘colonial.’ Indeed, the present government of Oklahoma strikingly resembles the government of New York before the Revolution. . . . In truth, the territories are and ever have been colonies.”³⁸ Self-government proved to be an art few races had mastered, one that required training. Lowell emerged as the country’s leading advocate for the creation of a professional school for colonial administration, along the lines of West Point.³⁹

Burgess tried futilely to rescue his account of the republic’s constitution from the rising imperial tide. After all, the Supreme Court, he wrote in a 1901 critique of the first two of the cases that would later be known as the Insular Cases, had once also appeared to uphold slavery in precisely the same way that it now appeared to uphold “colonial bondage,” but the dissenting justices in these cases suggested that reason would ultimately prevail.⁴⁰ A year later he opened the pages of *Political Science Quarterly* to none other than John Atkinson Hobson (1858–1940), the British economist and *Manchester Guardian* correspondent during the first year of the Boer War who returned from Africa to publish his critically acclaimed study, *Imperialism* (1902). Hobson’s piece, “The Scientific Basis of Imperialism,” took aim at the various biological accounts of the necessity for and inevitability of racial conflict and subjugation and at the impoverished ethics that led whites to think they were advancing human progress through their new imperial conquests. Hobson singled out Franklin Giddings numerous times in the article, most crucially for his belief that empire somehow completed a democratic nation’s project when it in fact diverted a people from the uncompleted work of developing a rational “national economy.” It encouraged militarism and protectionism rather than the spread of “ideas and arts and institutions” or the “empire of the national mind,” which he called the only “legitimate expansion.” And it stood in the way of a more complex international government that would substitute “rational” for “natural” race selection that might protect “weak

but valuable nationalities” and “check the insolent brutality of powerful aggressors.”⁴¹

These criticisms, though, proved to be beside the point. The war gained McKinley and his wildly popular vice presidential running mate, Theodore Roosevelt, a second term in 1900. As the lead article in Walter Hines Page’s new quarterly *World’s Work*, which was dedicated to the spread of the “evangelical faith” of American democracy across the globe, put it, the reality is “that the mass of men simply do not believe that our liberties are in danger because of our occupation of Porto Rico and the Philippine islands, whatever mistakes we may have committed there.”⁴² Thus, while his colleagues turned in earnest to building the new science of imperial administration, Burgess shunned—or was shunned by—the new American Political Science Association, home of “self-styled progressives” who seemed committed in fact to “political retrogression” in the direction of “governmental absolutism of earlier times.”⁴³ He retired from Columbia in 1912 but continued to analyze the cataclysmic changes he believed had been ushered in by 1898. It marked the republic’s turn toward despotism, bringing about the erosion of civil liberties, the “Democratic Caesarism” of the second Roosevelt administration (1904–1908), and such misguided steps as the Eighteenth Amendment. Above all, the unchecked militarism of the imperialists and of the trusts whose interests they served led the country into war again in 1917.⁴⁴ His lifelong efforts to introduce a rational science of politics into the post-Civil War United States, he said, had come to nothing.⁴⁵

The Field of Colonial Administration

Burgess might have been the first to imagine the early history of political science as tragedy, but the impact of 1898 looks different when we turn to the professional associations that virtually all professors of political science belonged to at the turn of the century, namely the American Historical Association (AHA) and the American Economic Association (AEA).⁴⁶ The report of the 1900 annual meeting of the sixteen-year-old AHA noted that the program was “frankly designed to answer those interests which are at present uppermost in the minds of Americans who care for history.”⁴⁷ Some of the papers “were not history at all” but instead promoted the idea “that present problems cannot be successfully solved without an attentive study of the experience of the past.” The main proof of the anti-antiquarian turn of the association was found in the session on American colonization. A year earlier, at the New Haven meeting, the AHA had organized a new Committee on the History of Colonies and Dependencies, headed by Henry

Bourne, one of the association's unabashed champions of the imperial turn, and Bourne chaired the session in Boston that reported some of the committee's main conclusions.

Bourne's paper, "Some Difficulties of American Colonization," saw two obstacles for an American imperial project, both of which followed from the tight intertwining of race and empire. The first was the abiding, practically "inbred . . . antipathy" of Americans for nonwhites. Bourne contrasted the United States with the colonies governed by England, France, "and even Spain" where typically races intermingled much more freely than in the South under Jim Crow. Thus the extreme hatred was a consequence of the ongoing "race conflicts" that so fundamentally constituted American history and identity. The second obstacle was the difficulty of adapting the century-old American territorial system of expansion to the new possessions.

By way of a necessary if not sufficient step toward securing effective rule over the new dependencies, Harvard professor of government Albert Lawrence Lowell rehearsed the argument of his forthcoming book on comparative colonial civil service and offered recommendations that the Americans emulate the British training of specialists in what we would now call area studies. Alleyne Ireland also attended the Boston meeting's session on colonization, where he said the Americans would inevitably turn to the system of contract or indentured labor the British were using in the West Indies as the most practical solution to governing in the tropics. (When this didn't happen, Ireland emerged as a leading critic of U.S. policy in the Philippines.)

The American Economic Association reacted in similar fashion. In 1899, the association's executive committee appointed a special committee to produce a set of essays on colonial finance. All of the members were close to President Roosevelt—J. W. Jenks of Cornell; E. R. A. Seligman of Columbia; Albert Shaw, a journalist with a PhD from Johns Hopkins; Charles Hamlin, a wealthy lawyer and former treasury secretary; and Edward Strobel, a lawyer, former assistant secretary of state, and financial advisor to modernizing monarchs in various colonies. The studies, which were funded by private businessmen, were published as *Essays in Colonial Finance by Members of the American Economic Association* (1900). The volume "appeared while the U.S. Army was still fighting the insurgent Philipinos."⁴⁸

We can gauge the rapid advance of the science of imperial administration to the commanding heights of the new discipline-in-formation on the eve of the first meeting of the new American Political Science Association by turning to the Universal Exposition in St Louis. The fair's organizers convened a remarkable Congress of Arts and Science that met each day for a week in September 1904, for 250 talks in all, designed to survey each of the branches

of twentieth-century knowledge and the relations among them. Politics, jurisprudence, and social science (by which was meant what we today call sociology), were departments of the division of knowledge designated Social Regulation (one of seven such divisions). The Department of Politics was further broken down into five sections: political theory, diplomacy, national administration, colonial administration, and municipal administration, representing the state of the discipline at the time. Papers given at these talks focused on progress in the fields and the most pressing problems of the future.⁴⁹

The sessions on colonial administration elevated two more political scientists into the ranks of leading specialists on empire. The first was Bernard Moses (1846–1930), a Heidelberg-trained professor of history and political science who joined the faculty of the University of California in 1875 (where "he taught every course in history and social science" at the new institution) and founded the separate department of political science in 1903, a year before the St. Louis exposition.⁵⁰ Moses is remembered primarily as a pioneer of Latin American studies in the United States, through his work on Spanish colonization of the Americas. It was that expertise that gained him his three-year appointment on the original United States Philippine Commission (1900–1902), which in turn led to his paper at St. Louis, "Control of Dependencies Inhabited by the Less Developed Races."⁵¹

The second was Paul Reinsch (1869–1923), a professor at the University of Wisconsin who was a founding member and first vice-president the new American Political Science Association (he later served as the fifteenth president). Reinsch was also the author of the first U.S. textbook on international relations and a future ambassador to China. He established his expertise in the new science of imperial administration by following his path-breaking *World Politics* (1900) with *Colonial Government* (1902). His paper at the congress, "The Problems of Colonial Administration," previewed his volume *Colonial Administration* (1905). In Chicago at the first meeting of APSA three months later, Reinsch delivered another paper based on the book, "Colonial Autonomy, with Special Reference to the Government of the Philippine Islands." These various writings are now well known, thanks to the research of Brian Schmidt. The one key piece that continues to go unnoticed is "The Negro Race and European Civilization," which also appeared in 1905 in the *American Journal of Sociology*.

A third political scientist, William Franklin Willoughby (1867–1960), also made his name at this time and in the same field. Willoughby, who received his PhD from Johns Hopkins, was the twin brother of Westel Willoughby, another Hopkins PhD, the first to teach political science in a separate department, and one of the founders of the American Political Science Association.

(He was later its tenth president.) William Willoughby also eventually served a term as president of the APSA, although he is often described as an economist. Unlike his fellow colonial experts, Reinsch and Rowe, William Willoughby taught mostly as an adjunct while working in a series of administrative positions, first in Washington and then as treasurer and secretary of Puerto Rico (1901–1907) and president of the upper house of the colonial legislature there. His major piece of scholarship in the 1900s was *Territories and Dependencies of the United States* (1905). Willoughby is better known today for the position he accepted in Washington in 1916 as director of the new Institute of Government Relations, which he eventually brought together with the Brookings Graduate School in Economics and Government to create the Brookings Institution.

The agenda of the first annual APSA meeting, held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the AEA, was overwhelmingly given over to problems posed by imperialism, which is hardly surprising given the events of the first years of the century. The United States fought a short war with Spain and a longer one of conquest in the Philippines. Great Britain waged a second war with the Boer Republics in 1898–1902. In 1904, the year of the convention, Russia fought the rival Japanese empire over Manchuria and Korea. Little wonder, therefore, that Alleyne Ireland took note of the rise of the new field of colonial administration in his 1906 APSA address, which he also referred to as the science of “race subjection.”⁵²

Most work up to that point had been historical rather than practical and most of it had been written by nonspecialists—“lawyers, doctors, soldiers, sailors, politicians, presidential candidates, ministers of the gospel, labor leaders, poets, geologists, engineers and professors of subjects as wide apart as ethics and zoology.”⁵³ Ireland dismissed most of this work as worthless. Instead, dispassionate analysis showed that “the object of colonization” was the establishment of “a profitable commerce” and thus, the proper focus of systematic, comparative investigation was “the degree to which institutions of colonial governance reflected the principle of “exploitation” or that of “development.”⁵⁴

Ireland was right, judging from the expanding shelf of books by Reinsch and other political scientists and the growing number of meetings and conference proceedings devoted to problems of dependencies, which included some extremely critical views of the first decade of U.S. rule in the Philippines. The first exuberant accounts of the wholly new course in benevolent empire that was being charted across the Pacific and Caribbean for the economic benefit of native peoples gave way to a precocious critique. Ten years later, it proved impossible to distinguish U.S. policies from the policies

of countries with longer records of overseas expansion. And needless to say, by the time of the New Deal the critique had been enshrined as a doctrine of state, in the form of a new “Good Neighbor Policy” that contrasted with the exploitative orders the United States had put in place over the previous three decades. Political scientists were a bit too exuberant in imagining that they had a role to play in designing new and improved political institutions for the tropics; U.S. occupation authorities reached for the same old British-origin “territorial model” of the late eighteenth century to organize center-periphery relations in the newest dependencies at the turn of the twentieth century.

Political scientists were more successful in building new institutions at home, including the world’s first journal of international relations, the *Journal of Race Development*, founded at Clark in 1910. The journal and the conferences that supported it in Worcester served as an important node in an ongoing transatlantic debate about the prospects for uplift of backward peoples, from the Sea Islands of Georgia to the Philippine Archipelago.⁵⁵

CHAPTER 2

Race Children

The white social scientists who offered their expertise to the new imperial state and the handful of critics of the new expansionist wave all assumed that hierarchy was natural, that it was biologically rooted, and that it could be made sense of best by drawing on concepts such as higher and lower races, natural and historic races, savagery and civilization, and the like. Consider in this light the late modification of the conventional Spencerian three-stage evolutionary sequence by America's most famous anthropologist and explorer, John Wesley Powell (1834–1902), who helped secure the hegemony of the “Anglo-Saxon branch of the Aryan family” across the continent. He designed the reservation system for the Utes and neighboring peoples in Utah and Nevada and built the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology in Washington, D.C. “to study the tribal peoples [the United States] had defeated.” His work had proved, he said, that man passed through four stages: savagery, barbarism, monarchy, and “republikism.”¹

George Stocking argues that if we are to understand the racial ideas of political scientists such as Reinsch, sociologists such as Ross and Giddings, and others involved in discipline building at home and civilization building abroad, it is important to realize that “they were evolutionists almost to a man.” Their ideas about evolution reflected the influence of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859), an older strain of “natural development-theory” that imagined a path from savagery to civilization that Darwin himself drew on, and the influence

of American anthropologists working in the 1860s and 1870s. Across those decades older ideas about superior and savage “peoples” and “nations” reemerged as notions of organic and innate differences among the “races” of mankind.²

The confluence proved powerfully productive, to judge from the debates, museum exhibits, archeological excavations, and the beginning of Jim Crow the theorizing licensed. Social scientists who began working on problems of world politics or international/interracial relations found grounds for justifying what much later would be called “realism” in arguments about the ceaseless struggle of existence, survival of the fittest, and the aphorism of the era, “might makes right.” Those who challenged this stark reading of world order argued that the expansion of civilization would reduce tendencies toward conflict even as it brought the developed and undeveloped races closer together.

However, the shift from discussing biological traits shared by all humans that were evolved from nonhuman species to theorizing about how society evolved and specifically about evolutionary differences among races was problematic. These were wrong roads down which American social scientists rushed headlong. One was a belief that races were so different and so unequal in capacities that they had to have evolved from different origins (polygenesis), an argument that relied on readings of the Bible. It was also one that Darwin himself tried to refute in his second book, *The Descent of Man* (1871), even in the face of his own belief in the reality of racial hierarchy. As Carl Degler explains, Darwin rejected the idea of different species of man. The typical markers of race were impossible to explain using his theory of natural selection—that is, “race was outside evolution.”³

Through this pathway came one of the first laws of international relations theory, namely that the differences in races made it impossible for whites to acclimate to tropical environments. Stocking considers versions of the theory that were not occasioned by the war of 1898. He includes *Races and People*, the lectures that were published in 1890 by the University of Pennsylvania anthropologist Daniel Brinton, who would soon become president of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science. The boldest or most extreme version of the claim came from MIT economist William Z. Ripley, who argued that no race ever acclimated to a different environment.⁴ Thus, colonization of the tropics was impossible. Ripley was a leading figure in the American Economic Association who was famous for his work in both racial taxonomy and railroad regulation. The last article Stocking cites is from 1914, written by Yale's Ellsworth Huntington and published in the *Journal of Race Development*. Huntington, a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Race Development*, argued that the Negro “would apparently die out in the northern United States were he not

replenished from the South.”⁵ Nonetheless, the theory and its policy implications continued to preoccupy scholars, research programs, and foundations for another twenty-five years.

A second theoretical question with implications for imperial development policy had emerged, namely whether or not it was possible for the different races to “amalgamate,” that is, to mate and produce healthy offspring or hybrids. The arguments were more complex and the disputes more serious than in the claim about “acclimation.” Ross laid out the basic view in “The Causes of Race Superiority,” where he argued that continued white hegemony depended on “pride of blood.” Many other examples can be found in the works of others who founded the APSA and published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* and the *American Journal of Sociology*.⁶ Complications arise with characterizing support for the claim, between those, for example, who argued that in fact the offspring of such unions tended to be infertile (thus proving that the races were indeed different species) and those who recognized that such offspring might not be sterile but would produce degenerate offspring. The facts of the case might differ, too, depending on the distance between races. There were possibilities for good “cross-races,” and those who rejected polygenesis, for obvious reasons, sought to demonstrate that new and viable mixed races would emerge through intermarriage.⁷ The basic point behind all of this social science theorizing was the idea that race mixing between blacks and whites was wrong, a norm that white social scientists clung to long after the scientific scaffolding for it collapsed.

Most social evolutionist thought rested on a second, even more common assumption about the inheritability of acquired characteristics or behaviors (Lamarckism), the main way the races were imagined to have emerged, multiplied, and traveled their different evolutionary pathways, or, for those who imagined a single evolutionary path for all, the way the Anglo-Saxons gained enormous ground as others increasingly lagged behind. Here was the main engine for the creation of hierarchy. Thus one finds descriptions of, for example, “warlike, peaceful, nomadic, maritime, hunting, [and] commercial races” in the writings of these men.⁸ One also finds the Jewish nose, which, according to one anthropologist, evolved from its origins as “a habitual expression of indignation.”⁹ The new social science disciplines were all infected with the idea of the inheritability of acquired characteristics, and in tracing the course of the virus, Stocking refers to virtually every political scientist and sociologist who wrote on “race formation,” including Burgess, Giddings, Ross, Kelsey, and Reinsch, in a literature that was spawned, as we have seen, by the new round of imperial expansion.

Consider in this light the pioneering contribution of international relations scholar Paul Reinsch to the *American Journal of Sociology*, “The Negro Race and European Civilization,” where he assays the future of an inferior stock in an era of “increasingly intimate contact” among the “peoples that inhabit the globe.” The “puzzle,” as political scientists say now, was that black people were too vigorous a race to go the way of other races and “fade away.” Survival in the face of slavery proved the race’s relative fitness, Reinsch claimed. Solving the puzzle, that is correctly assessing the race’s prospect for progress, required two things. The first was an expanded case set, to cover “their original state in the forests of central Africa, as a mixed race under . . . Arab and Hamite” race dominance, “living side by side with a white population” and in those “few isolated communities which enjoy rights of self-government based on European models, as in Hayti and the French Antilles.” It also required frank recognition that outmoded ideas of “the absolute unity of human beings” and of “the practical equality of human individuals” had been abandoned in conformity with the scientific truth of the essential differences among “types of humanity.”¹⁰ Reinsch followed these observations with a long account of his understanding of life in Africa. He contrasted “the marvelous sense for melody” found among blacks in the plantations with the “almost hypnotic effect” of the rhythm of the tom-tom in Africa, the absence of anything like patriotism among those so ready to fight against their neighbors on that continent, and so on.

For Reinsch, these facts confirmed the idea that black brains are physiologically different from white brains even in the face of the accumulating evidence that refuted the idea that the cranial sutures of blacks closed earlier “and [that] organic development of the faculties seem[ed] to cease at puberty.” He also argued, however, that physiological differences did not foreclose the possibility for race improvement because an even greater source of difference with the white race than average individual capacities was the burden of the inheritance of social, political, and climatic conditions on the inferior race. In fact, if these conditions were to change it might even lead to changes in the structure of black craniums over time.¹¹

Reinsch’s main conclusion based on his study of four types of black-inhabited environments (an “original state” of forests in Central Africa, as a mixed-race controlled by Arab and Hamite races in Northern Sudan, living alongside whites in South Africa and North America, and the outlier, that of a self-governing community as in Haiti) is that those outside sub-Saharan Africa had shown some development capacity but only under the tutelage of other races. Reinsch advocated a civilizing policy in Africa that would emphasize economic efficiency, infrastructure development, and the intro-

duction of metallic currency. At the same time, however, native "tribal and social unity" ought to be respected, local institutions kept intact, and property rights preserved. Otherwise, he claimed, Africans would degenerate morally in ways similar to what had happened to blacks in the South after slavery.¹² Reinsch's argument amounts to an early version of what British colonial reformers would come to call the policy of "indirect rule." Reinsch was influenced by accounts of the South's experiments with industrial education and the ascent of Booker T. Washington: "The mass of the negroes cannot pattern primarily upon the whites with whom they come in contact, but should have leaders of their own race to look up to." Yet those "models of leadership" would not emerge unless whites showed "negroes of high character and intelligence" the way. Reinsch assured his readers that nothing in his analysis implied the possibility of "political power over whites" in Africa or of "social equality" anywhere between the two races.¹³

The most important center for research on the psychology and pedagogy of race development was Clark University, which opened in 1889 under the presidency of psychologist G. Stanley Hall (1844–1924). Hall, who was awarded the first PhD in psychology at Harvard and studied under William James, began his career as a professor of psychology and pedagogics at Johns Hopkins in 1882. Like Johns Hopkins, Clark University was dedicated exclusively to graduate education. Hall founded the *Journal of Psychology* in 1887, served as president of the new American Psychological Association in 1892, and, while at Clark, started four more journals, including the *Pedagogical Seminary* (now known as the *Journal of Genetic Psychology*) in 1891 and the *Journal of Race Development* in 1910.

Hall's most famous idea, usually referred to today as the "recapitulation hypothesis," was that the development of the minds of individuals in their early years repeated stages of the mental history of the human race. A child's mind thus was both like that of its own race's earliest ancestors and that of savage adults in the present. Adolescence was a window into evolution, and anthropological studies in the various rain forests and deserts of the world were a window on the world of childhood. Reinsch and others drew on Hall and his many students when they argued that mental development in the lower races stopped at adolescence because the cranial sutures of members of those races fused earlier than they did among white people or insisted that children and savages both acted more out of instinct than intellect. Thus, when Hobson, like many other scholars, journalists, and administrators, used the concept of the child race, the usage reflected the highest stage of social science theorizing rather than inexperience or ignorance. The concept continued to be used for another two decades after Hobson's *Imperialism*. In 1930, John H. Harris, looking forward to the creation of a "World

'Native' Policy" built on the Versailles Treaty, argued that western states had accepted "the principle of 'Sacred Trust' as the basis of relationships between the civilized nations and the backward or child races."¹⁴ A decade later, the once-scientific concept was being denounced as "a patronizing metaphor."¹⁵

The problem for Hall and all the other race formation and development theorists is that their basic framework was also being dismantled piece by piece in the 1890s and 1900s. Biologists (but not all biologists by any means) were pounding on the edifice from one side, having taken Mendelian principles as the basis for a new field of genetics that could explain an increasingly vast range of hereditary phenomenon.¹⁶ Coming at race theory from the other side was Columbia's Franz Boas (1858–1940), the anthropologist who had once worked for Hall at Clark.

Although the summary statement of Boas's ideas was published in *The Mind of Primitive Man* in 1911, all the key elements of what made up the Boasian revolution could be read in his scientific articles in the 1890s. Among them was the idea that no civilization was "the product of the genius of a single people" but instead that ideas had been widely disseminated through cultural contact. He wrote of the geniuses of peoples rather than of "a people." As Stocking explains, "as a critic of racial thought," Boas sought to define these capacities "in other terms than racial heredity. His answer, ultimately, was the anthropological idea of culture."¹⁷ Degler, writing two decades after Stocking, stresses Boas's underlying "critical method," which was "historical and relativistic." Historical argument substituted for racial determinism. An example is worth quoting at length.

A skeptic might ask why some modern colored peoples seemed unable to absorb the civilization of white Europe to the same extent as others had done earlier. Boas's response [in 1894] was that disease, competition from European factory-produced goods which drove out native crafts, and the large number of European invaders slowed the assimilation of European culture. In short, history, experience, and circumstances, not race, supplied the answer."¹⁸

What drove the Boasian revolution ultimately was the anthropologist's ideological opposition to racism.

I draw attention to these points because the same commitment, rare at that time in the American academy, to challenging ideologies of racial hierarchy drove Du Bois. The two shared more than just convictions, however.¹⁹ Du Bois's work in sociology paralleled Boas's investigations in anthropology, and his famous early article on the "Conservation of the Races," when read side by side with Stocking's and Degler's exegeses of Boas, show Du Bois to be another thinker who was pushing on ahead of his time instead of being trapped by it.²⁰ Du Bois's historical and empirical investigations of the conditions of blacks in

the South, including the 1901 *Annals* piece, "The Relation of the Negroes to the Whites in the South," resemble the investigations of Boas. His 1904 essay "The Development of a People," in which he explained conditions in the Black Belt in terms of history rather than evolution, is even more striking because the word race does not even appear in it. Instead, Du Bois spoke of nations, groups, and classes, and, as the title makes clear, of blacks as a people.²¹ It bears repeating that this was a time when most other social scientists shared a different set of convictions about equality and about the evolutionary basis of inferiority.

Certainly the growing collection of books and articles by the new specialists in imperial administration of the 1900s confirm that the historicist and culturist turn from biological determinism was slow and piecemeal. None of the imperial theorists ever admitted to a conversion experience similar to that of University of Pennsylvania sociologist Carl Kelsey, the onetime critic of Du Bois's *Souls* who by 1903 had found it impossible to make a precise determination of the collective capacity of black people for progress because of all the blood mixing that had happened in Africa and in the South.²² By 1907, in pointed commentary on a paper heralding the science of eugenics, Kelsey was challenging its basic precepts. "Heredity . . . should be used to denote those physical characteristics which come to us through the germ cells of the parents. . . . We know pretty definitely today that acquired characteristics are not passed on from generation to generation." Kelsey continued, "This fact . . . is reacting powerfully upon our social theories." Ability could be improved among members of any class. "Here lies an argument for universal education that has as yet been scarcely utilized by our educators." Most important, another "result of our studies is to weaken the belief in superior and inferior races," which meant that it was necessary to rethink many matters, including barriers to immigration and the value of educating women.²³

The discipline's new experts on colonial administration and race development tended, instead, to cling to the Lamarckian orthodoxy or move on to new projects and new positions during and after World War I, which makes changes in their ideas hard to gauge. The one possible exception is Paul Reinsch, who delivered his last paper on relations between races during his year at the University of Berlin as the Theodore Roosevelt professor, when he traveled to London to attend the First Universal Races Congress in July 1911. The congress was a remarkable (and until recently forgotten) event in the shaping of modern ideas about racial equality and the right of national self-determination in the years before the Paris Peace Conference of 1919.²⁴ The first objective was explicit, the second articulated on the margins and hardly expected by the Londoners who dreamed of rebuilding the empire on a sounder basis.

Dedicated to challenging ideologies of race supremacy and promoting "interracial harmony," over 1000 attended. They represented "fifty races and nations," as Du Bois put it. (In fact, twenty-two states sent representatives.) Mohandas Gandhi; Krishna Gokale, who was one of Gandhi's political mentors; Tengo Jabavu, the founder of South Africa's first Bantu newspaper; the heretical Zionist Israel Zangwill; Haiti's ex-president Francois Legitime; and Filipino nationalist and autonomy advocate Manuel Quezon joined with Mexican, Guatemalan, Japanese, European, and American internationalists; peace movement activists; feminists; and socialists to listen to dozens of papers over four sweltering days inside the University of London's Imperial Institute.²⁵ A young Alain Locke, who was studying in Berlin, attended the conference, which had an enormous impact on the lectures he would deliver at Howard a few years later. Reinsch wrote one of the papers that was circulated before the conference, although his biography makes no mention of his participation—an irony, given Reinsch's burgeoning interest in what he called international unions.

The organizers sought to avoid signs of discord among participants and urged members to avoid debate on specific political problems in the various colonies and dependencies. Reinsch protested from the floor one day about exaggerated press reports of disharmony at the congress and the prevalence of anti-patriotic views among participants ("internationalism [has] never been anti-national," he insisted).²⁶

However, divisions had erupted on some key issues even before the congress was formally convened, during the preliminary meetings of anthropologists and international lawyers. One was the question of the equality of all races and peoples, an organizing principle of the congress that a few participants said could not be true. Another minority view emerged that insisted both on the naturalness of racial antagonism—what we would now call war—as the key means of world progress, again, in the face of the organizers' abiding interest in ameliorating conflict and securing cooperation among peoples. A third dispute dissented from another of the key organizing principles, that the idea of "race" itself was unscientific and in its place terms such as "nations" or even "civilizations" should be used. One point about the contradictory nature of the arguments advanced at the congress still matters today: "If one speaker says that what we must do above all things is to regard other nations as our equals in every way, and leave them respectfully alone to work out their own national ideas, we applaud him warmly. If the next says the purdah system and infant marriages are degrading institutions, and we must crush them out at any cost, we applaud no less."²⁷

Reinsch's paper "Influence of Geographic, Economic, and Political Conditions" for the congress's session titled Conditions of Progress, appears to

position him closer to the potential “unity of humankind” and farther from the “immutability of hierarchy” end of the spectrum. Certainly he was less interested in explaining differences than in demonstrating the significance of what we now call globalization; that is, the growing unity “of the branches of the human family in all parts of the world” through advances in communication, transportation, and the spread of European and American economic power. He explored differences that hindered or advanced race development and nationalism in Europe, Africa, and Asia, according to the degree to which geography had protected people from climate and from one another. The absence of fixed boundaries and the “eternal shifting back and forth of population elements has retarded African development,” he claimed. These rules of geography were coming undone in the twentieth century under the sway of western “scientific mastery.” The question was the degree to which the kind of national self-consciousness that had proved critical in the cases of Europe and Japan could emerge elsewhere in an era of interdependence.²⁸

Reinsch nonetheless saw powerful regularities operating between the tropic and temperate zones of the world economy, and modern development had made exploitation of tropical industries increasingly easy. He was also convinced that the world distribution of natural resources would work to limit the spread of industry unnaturally by “artificial and political factors.” The days of protection were over, he insisted. Neither the west nor the system of civilized states had completed their mission on behalf of humanity, and he repeated a line heard earlier at the conference, that “only the fully national can contribute to the cosmo-national.”²⁹

The brief 1911 paper, which drew from his new book on *International Unions*, reflected both his rekindled interest in Eastern countries (“the Orient”) and the growing force of nationalism in the colonies and semi-colonies, from Persia to India to China. It is also the last piece of scholarship he produced. In it, Reinsch dispensed with explicit arguments about physiology and deemphasized the concept of the immutability of radical differences that just a few years before had made him skeptical of the idea of the equality of the world’s peoples. The powerful explanatory force he gave to geography and environment is still hard to separate from ideas about the inheritability of acquired characteristics, as we have seen. And he reiterated the law of the tropics of the new science of international relations. What the paper thus seems to underscore is the degree to which anticolonial nationalism was driving professors to revise and perhaps refine their ideas of hierarchy in ways that would be institutionalized just a few years later at Versailles and in the creation of distinct categories of “mandates,” some of which were viewed as moving more or less rapidly toward independence and others of which were destined by their nature to permanent rule by whites.

PART II

Worlds of Color

Raymond Leslie Buell, a 29-year-old instructor in comparative colonial administration at Harvard, wrote to Howard University’s Alain Locke on May 23, 1925, at the urging of *Herald Tribune* book critic Lewis Gannett. The ambitious Buell already had two books in print. He published his first one on French party politics when he was just out of the army and before beginning work on his MA. When he published his second book, on the Washington (arms control) Conference, which took aim at Japanese imperialism, Princeton’s department of history and politics awarded him a PhD. Henry Holt and Company was about to come out with his third book, the over-700-page *International Relations*.

Buell’s advisor at Princeton and friend, Edward S. Corwin, the great legal scholar and associate of Woodrow Wilson, had wanted a textbook on modern colonial politics for his new American political science series, but Buell instead proposed that he write a book that situated problems of colonial administration within a broader framework of nationalism, internationalism, and imperialism. In *International Relations* he turned to the new political science—“where international law leaves off”—to explain the increasing tensions between the world’s lighter- and darker-skinned peoples.¹ Harry Elmer Barnes, an apostle of the “new history,” called the approach “revolutionary” in his review in the *New Republic*.² With the international relations book finished, Buell headed to Africa to deepen his understanding of race