CHAPTER III

W.E.B. Du Bois

W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963)

W.E.B. Du Bois was a scholar-general of the Black Liberation movement of his times. Du Bois fought for Negro rights with an aggressiveness that anticipated the black militancy of half a century later. Born in Massachusetts in, 1968, Du Bois studied at Fisk and Harvard and in Berlin, before becoming a professor of Economics, Sociology and History first at Wilberforce College and then in Atlanta University. He was a prolific writer. By the turn of the century Du Bois was widely recognised as the leader of the Negro opposition to the gradualism of Booker T. Washington whose acceptance of segregation would lead, said Du Bois only to perpetual "humiliation and inferiority for American Blacks. In 1905 he founded the Niagara Movement and of which grew the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People. NAACP Du Bois increasingly radical views caused him to leave the NAACP in 1948 and finally, embittered at the slow pace of Black Liberation, he joined the U.S. Communist Party in 1961. Du Bois went to Ghana in 1962. He died in Ghana in 1963.
W.E.B Du Bois autobiographical work "A Sociology on Viewing My Life from the last decade of its first century" is a literary tome of his times.

No single scholar has contributed more to one understanding of the anatomy and Physiology of white racism than Du Bois.

Du Bois started writing on the problems of Black Liberation at the end of the nineteenth Century; and he continued to write until his death in 1963. His first published work appeared in 1896 under the title "The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the U.S.A. 1638-1870." He wrote his autobiography towards the close of his life. Shortly before his death in 1963 Du Bois at the age of Ninety five, prepared a selection of his own writings which was published by Seven Seas Books, Berlin the same year. The selection of Du Bois was published under the title ABC of color.

W.E.B. Du Bois played an astounding long inning of public life. Born in 1868, Du Bois published his first work in 1895 and till his end in 1963, he continued to write and speak. He produced some twenty two books and dozens of monographs, hundreds of articles. He wrote with satire, irony,
humour and stirring energy. From 1892 to 1894 he had studied at University of Berlin with some of world's most eminent scholars like Wagner, Treitschke, Max Weber, Gustav Schmoller. In 1896 he was awarded Ph.D. Degree by Harvard for his thesis on slave Trades. He drew the attention of the scholarly world with the publication of his work, The Philadelphia Negro (1899). Continuing through hundreds of his published articles and monographs, Du Bois dedicated his entire life for the cause of Negro Liberation.

Dr. Du Bois was deep in his ninth decade when he wrote his third autobiographical script. A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life From the last decade of its First Centur,

As his editor Herbert Aptheker put it, relatively rare are those whose who autobiographies are published, very rare are those who live so long and so consequentially that two autobiographies see the printed page. But surely a rarity of rarities— if not quite unique in literature — is one to whom it is given to produce three autobiographies and have all three published (Editorial preface to "A" Soliloquy). In his 50th year — 1918—1919, he wrote "Dusk of Dawn" and in his 90th year — 1958—1959 he wrote the basic draft of his third autobiography 'Soliloquy' which he
revised in 1960 and it was posthumously published in 1965.

The purpose of critically documenting the W.E.B. Du Bois's significance as a spokesman of A Black Liberation Movement would have been fruitfully served even if substantial extracts from his autobiographical writings had been scrutinized and historically assessed. But that would have meant doing injustice to Du Bois as a historian of colour war in our times. Hence, an attempt has been made to cover the entire gamut of his major writings for presenting a sensible documentation of the rhetoric of black movement of our century. For this purpose, selections chosen by Du Bois from over a half a century of his own writings and selections made and edited by William Tuttle have been critically documented in this thesis. These selections chronicles the story of sixty years of the life of a great man. Du Bois, a social scientist historian and pioneer in the black liberation struggle — in the United States of America and in Africa.

Central Concern of Du Bois's life was his missionary Zeal for the uplift of the blacks. Du Bois looked to the issue of Black Liberation as a
part and parcel of global struggle for the remaking of human life. And in this struggle Du Bois considered the issue of moral and spiritual rearmament of the black soul. He therefore addressed his intellectual energies for documenting the facts of Black contribution to American and world culture. How the black folk in the capacity of explorers, inventors, soldiers, artists, writers, throughout history have played and instrumental role in shaping American society and culture. Du Bois did not stop there. Du Bois also wrote extensively about the role which Africa has played in world history and also about the personalities and future of the nation of Africa. Du Bois's message to the Accra conference speaks loudly about this matter. Hence, its critical documentation presented in this thesis is justifiable.

Du Bois was a scholar educator par excellence in the life story of black liberation movement in the U.S.A. Though suffered persecution at the hands of American authorities at various stages of his political career, the Negro academic parlours were always remained open for his scholarly address. What follows here is an excellent specimen of his scholarly evolutions.
What follows the Introduction (pages VII to XII), Preface (Page-3), Whither Now and why and Bibliography (Pages 159 to 167) are from the book 'The Education of Black People', by W.E.B. Du Bois, Copy Right, 1973:

While William Edward Burghardt Du Bois's published works reached almost incredible proportions, in this papers he left a vast collection of unpublished sketches, essays, journals, and even several books. In the body of both published and unpublished writings by the late Dr. Du Bois; it is, however, in largest part a book that he himself planned. Indeed, it was very nearly published early in the 1940s; since that is the books beginnings, it might be well for its Introduction also to commence at that point.

In late February or very early March, 1940, Du Bois—then chairman of the Sociology Department at Atlanta University in Georgia—submitted the manuscript of a book, which he entitled "Seven Critiques of Negro Education, 1908-1938," to the University of North Carolina Press in Chapel Hill. On March 6, 1940, Mary T. Bobbit, secretary to William T. Couch, then the Press Director, acknowledged, with thanks, receipt of the manuscript and promised: "As soon as possible, we will give our attention to this work and let you know our decision in regard to it."
That same month the manuscript commenced its round of Press readers. Among these was Edgar W. Knight (1886–1953), Professor of Education at the university and at that time also chairman of the Commission on Curricula Problems and Research of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In May the manuscript was ready by Howard W. Odum (1884–1954), Professor of Sociology at the university, Professor Odum, who had been President of the American Sociology Society in 1930, was in 1940 director of the Institute for Research in Social Science of the University of North Carolina. On May 24, 1940, the manuscript was passed on to Henry M. Wagstaff (1876–1945) who had been for over thirty years Professor of History at the university.

Mr. Wagstaff returned the manuscript a month later. It may be presumed that the Director of the Press, himself a well-known author, also examined the manuscript with care.

1. Letter in the Du Bois Papers, in custody of the editor. The original title of the book was as given above, including the error in date, since the first essay was dated 1906. The error is somewhat characteristic of Du Bois who was very careful about almost everything except dates; in any case his artistic soul would prefer the symmetry of 1908–1938.

2. Mr. Couch in 1945 moved on to become Director of the Press at the University of Chicago and more recently has been chief editor of several leading encyclopedias issuing from New York City. A copy of the manuscript record (No. 1166) was kindly sent to the editor on June 22, 1972, by Mrs. Jeanne C. Smith, assistant to the current Press Director; she informed the editor that no further documents on this manuscript were available.
All seemed to have been favorably impressed, for Mr. Couch, in a letter to Du Bois dated September 21, 1940, stated that the Press's Board of Governors had authorized publication, if the finance committee gave final approval. Couch thought the latter committee would give its approval but doubted that the book would do more than "pay for itself." He suggested, therefore, that if and when a contract were forthcoming it probably would provide for no royalty payment until after the first thousand copies had been sold and that then a payment of ten per cent of the retail price—whIch would not exceed $2—would be offered. Couch added that the "European situation"—meaning the Second World War which had just commenced—might upset any plans for the future.

Three days later Du Bois responded, acknowledging the latter and writing:

I am quite willing to have you publish my book on the financial basis which you mention. I have never received much income from my books but on the other hand I do not think that any publisher has actually lost money. In any case the money consideration is the least thing I have in mind in writing. 3

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3. The Couch - Du Bois letters are in the Du Bois Papers.
On the history of this manuscript, nothing else seems to have survived, except for a note on the "manuscript record" of the University of North Carolina Press which reads "Ret'd to author 2-19-41. Press unable to publish at present for financial reasons."

No evidence survives in the Du Bois Papers that he thereafter made any attempt to publish this volume; when he left New York of Ghana, however, in 1961, while he deposited many of his books and some of his Papers in the library at Fisk University and placed in the custody of the present editor all of his correspondence and the bulk of his unpublished writings, this manuscript he took with him. The editor came upon it in May, 1971, when he and his wife were the guests of Mrs. Du Bois in Cairo and were working on the additional Papers in her possession.

The book now in the reader's hands consists of the seven essays selected by Du Bois for the 1940 Volume and three additional ones, dated 1941, 1946, and 1960 selected by the editor. Each of the original seven is introduced by a brief note written by Du Bois and is followed by equally brief comment upon the address's reception, also written by him; this material is published here for the first time.

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4. With the exception of a letter to publishers Reynal and Hitchcock in 1943: see p. 127.
and was written by Du Bois for the projected Chapel Hill volume. In addition, the second essay, "Galileo Galilei," delivered in 1908, has hitherto not been published and appears in print now for the first time.

Du Bois edited these addresses for the book he had in mind; the manuscript has been compared line by line with the published versions and changes of any consequence at all are noted at the appropriate places. The manuscript as a whole has been published as written by Du Bois, of course; the editor has added an occasional footnote and corrected factual slips and typographical errors. Du Bois did not provide the place of publication of the six essays previously published in his manuscript; this information will be found in the bibliography of his writings on education which the editor has compiled and appended to this volume.

The three essays selected for inclusion by the editor, and forming Part II of this volume, complete the presentation of Du Bois's views on education and represent, it is believed, the fullest expression of those views as they developed in the last quarter century of his life.
It will not be inappropriate, perhaps, for the editor to comment upon the substance of the essays that follow. In the lifetime of their author, no one in the United States was more expert in the area of the nature, theory, and purposes of education; and on the specific subject of the education of Black people in the United States, Du Bois had no peer.

In the analysis which he offers of education emphases and aspects change, naturally, for Du Bois was never irigid and advocated and practiced both criticism and self-criticism; further, of course, the time-range of these essays covers over fifty years—and fifty years which witnessed greater changes in the life of humanity probably than any preceding half century in history. But there are certain constants and these deserve emphasis in terms both of their own consequence and also in terms of comprehending W.E.B. Du Bois.

The reader will find a persistent demand—explicit or assumed—for excellence in education and this especially in fundamental skills: reading, writing, counting and, above, all thinking. He will find the demand for sacrifice, for a life of service, and an insistence that while such a life will bring hardships and temptations it also will bring fulfillment; an insistence that, in any case, only with such a life has one lived. In this
the first place with the education of his people in the United States, and that education as part of the process of the liberation of his people. Thus, his writing on education—as on everything else—has a kind of national consciousness, a specific motivation which—while directed towards his people—at the same time and therefore was meant to serve all humanity. Thus, he conveys a sense of pride in his people, but this is never false and is accompanied by sharp criticism where he feels the latter to be justified; but the pride and love above all shine through his writing. He also had a sense of urgency for he knew, in his own flesh, how awful was the crucifixion and how vital was the sense of progress. He insistently calls for great energy and initiative; for Black people controlling their own lives and for continued experimentation and innovation.

Withal, there always is present in Du Bois the devotion to fact, the need to face reality and the fierce—almost fanatical—insistence upon integrity. Finally, the essays that follow should convey the sheer courage of Du Bois: let the reader consider the circumstances, for instance, under which he gave his speeches of 1906, 1908, 1924—all three in the South, and the pre-New Deal South at that.
affirmation, there runs also Du Bois's particular feeling about his own people; that their own history has forced into their bones and hearts the ideas of service, of compassion, of justice.

In emphasizing excellence, Du Bois calls particularly for the mastery of the humanities and the sciences, with special attention to economics and mathematics. He views education as a life-long process; and while his words stress its seriousness, there also was in Du Bois what he called "The Joy of Living." He was a wonderfully happy man and he wanted those for whom he spoke and wrote to get that sense of joy in battle, joy in trying, and joy in accomplishing.

Du Bois saw education as a process of the teaching of certain central values: moderation, an avoidance of luxury, a concern for courtesy, a capacity to endure, a nurturing of love for beauty. He saw education as basic to the production of what—in his youth—people called character.

Du Bois saw education (to be truly education) as partisan and—given the realities of the social order—fundamentally subversive. Specifically, in this connection, he wrote as a Black man in the United States; in this sense he was concerned in
Du Bois's writing reflected the male-supremacist bias of our language and he repeatedly writes of men or boys when in fact he means men and women and boys and girls. This was, however, purely verbal with Du Bois; for, in fact, he was eras ahead of his time on the question of the rights and capacities and position of women as he was on most other significant social questions. In the case of Du Bois one has evidence of this going back to an editorial he wrote for the Fisk Herald in December 1887, Where he hailed the fact, as it seemed to him, that "The age of Woman is surely dawning." He was an early and persistent and militant advocate of full political and economic rights for women. This is not the place to develop this aspect of Du Bois but in a essay that follow his use of male terms when he means human beings is so common, one should note that he made his generic usage of "men" quite explicitly very early in his writing career. Thus, in an essay entitled "The Negro Ideals of Life" (published in The Christian Register, Boston, October 26, 1905), one finds:

Who are Men?...It is not simply the capitalists who are men...it is not simply the laborers, it is not simply the men who are men, but men's mothers and daughters, too, and finally the world of men holds men of many colors and races, and it is not white men
alone who aspire to life's higher ideals, and demand the possibility of their realization.

The editor expresses, again, his profound appreciation for the participation in producing this volume—as of everything else he has ever tried to do—of his wife, Fay P. Aptheker. His gratitude to Mrs. Du Bois for her encouragement and her confidence cannot be expressed adequately with words.

September, 1972.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

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Seven times in seventy years—mostly in the last thirty—it has seemed my duty to criticize and evaluate the education of American Negroes. Mostly, but not wholly, I have talked of college training at critical times in the career of various well-known Negro colleges, because I regard the college as the true founding stone of all education, and not as some would have it, the kindergarten. These speeches were made at various times at well-known institutions: one each was made at Hampton and Howard, four at Fisk, and one to a New England audience. Of the speeches at Fisk only two applied specifically to Fisk; the other two were of general application, and I made those because as an alumnus I made my Alma Mater my forum. The speeches represent in each case my firm conviction and emotional reaction against certain trends and facts which I wished to oppose or forward. The spoken word is not usually an attractive form of literature shorn as it must be of its responsive living audience. As I looked these talks over, my first temptation was to edit them into a statement of my present views. But on reflection, it seemed to me better if they were left standing as they are, as a sort of living record of reaction, written out before delivery and set down with some care. They would in a way tell more of what Negroes have been thinking concerning the development of their education especially in the colleges. I am, therefore, publishing these seven talks with explanations of their occasion and some of the results of their delivery.
WHITHER NOW AND WHY

The American Negro has now reached a point in his progress where he needs to take serious account of where he is and whither he is going. This day had come much earlier than I thought it would. I wrote in 1940 a book called Dusk of Dawn in which I sought to record our situation in a period of change which I expected to last for another fifty years, but the Second World War and the rise of socialism and communism have hastened the event and we are definitely approaching now a time when the American Negro will become in law equal in citizenship to other Americans. There is much hard work yet to be done before the Negro becomes a voter, before he has equal rights to education and before he can claim complete civil and social equality. Yet this;
situation is in sight and it brings not as many assume an end to the so-called Negro problems. But a beginning of even more difficult problems of race and culture. Because what we must now ask ourselves is when we become equal American citizens what will be our aims and ideals and what will we have to do with selecting these aims and ideals. Are we to assume that we will simply adopt the ideals and what will we have to do with selecting these aims and ideals. Are we to assume that we will simply adopt the ideals of Americans and become what they are or want to be and that we will have in this process no ideals of our own?

That would mean that we would cease to be Negroes as such and become white in action if not completely in color. We would take on the culture of white Americans doing as they do and thinking as they think.

Manifestly this would not be satisfactory. Physically it would mean that we would be integrated with Americans losing first of all, the physical evidence of color and hair and racial type. We would lose our memory of Negro history and of those racial peculiarities which have long been associated
with the Negro. We would cease to acknowledge any greater tie with Africa than with England or Germany. We would not try to develop Negro music and Art and Literature as distinctive and different, but allow them to be further degraded as is the case today. We would always, if possible, marry lighter-hued people so as to have children who are not identified with the Negro race, and thus solve our racial problem in America by committing racial suicide. More or less clearly this possibility has been in the minds of Negroes in the past. Although not assented to by all, some have stated it and welcomed it. Others have simply assumed that this development was inevitable and therefore nothing could be done about it. This is the reason that my Pan-African Movement which began in 1900 when I co-operated with a meeting in London and definitely was started in 1919, in the first Pan-African Congress in Paris, could get but little support and co-operation among American Negroes. Most of them resented it as being a "back to Africa" movement. Others simply said we had problems enough in America without taking on the insoluble problems of Africa.

Today when the African people are arising to settle their own problems we are in peculiar position
of being in a group of persons of Negro descent who
not only cannot help the Africans but in most cases
do not want to. Any statement of our desire to
develop American Negro culture, to keep up our ties
with coloured people, to remember our past is being
regarded as "racism." I, for instance, who have
devoted my life to efforts to break down racial
barriers am being accused of desiring to emphasize
differences of race. This has a certain truth
about it. As I have said before and I repeat I am
not fighting to settle the question of racial equality
in America by the process of getting rid of the
Negro race; getting rid of balck folk, not producing
black children, forgetting the slave trade and
slavery, and the struggle for emancipation; of
forgetting abolition and especially of ignoring the
whole cultural history of Africans in the world.

No! What I have been fighting for am
still fighting for is the possibility of black folk
and their cultural patterns existing in America
without discrimination; and on terms of equality.
If we take this attitude we have got to do so
colorously and deliberately. This brings up a
number of difficult problems which we will have to
solve and make definite preparation for such solution.
Take for instance the current problem of the education of our children. By the law of the land today they should be admitted to the public schools. If and when they are admitted to these schools certain things will inevitably follow. Negro teachers will become rarer and in many cases will disappear. Negro children will be instructed in the public schools and taught under unpleasant if not discouraging circumstances. Even more largely than today they will fall out of school, cease to enter high school, and fewer and fewer will go to college. Theoretically Negro universities will disappear. Negro history will be taught less or not at all and as in so many cases in the past Negroes will remember their white or Indian ancestors and quite forget their Negro forebears. Read for instance the autobiography of John Mercer Langston.

To some folk this type of argument would lead to the conclusion that we ought to refuse to enter white schools or to clamor for unsegregated schools. In other words, that we ought to give up the fight against color discrimination. I want, however, to emphasize that this not only is unnecessary, but impossible. We must accept equality or die. What we must also do is to lay down a line of thought and
action which will accomplish two things; The utter disappearance of color discrimination in American life and the preservation of African history and culture as a valuable contribution to modern civilization as it was to medieval and ancient civilization. To do this is not easy. It calls for intelligence, co-operation and careful planning. It would meet head on the baffling difficulties that face us today. Here for instance, is the boy who says simply he is not going to school. His treatment in the white schools even if he is admitted, is such that it does not attract him. Moreover, the boy who does enter the white schools and gets on reasonably well does not always become a useful member of our group. Negro children educated in integrated schools and northern colleges often know nothing of Negro history. Know nothing of Negro children educated in integrated schools and northern colleges often know nothing of Negro history. Know nothing of Negro leadership and doubt if there ever have been leaders in Africa, the West Indies and the United States who equal white folk. Some are ashamed of themselves and their folk. They regard the study of Negro biography and the writing of Negro literature as a vain attempt to pretend that
Negroes are really the equal of whites. That tends to be the point of view of those of our children who are educated in white schools. There are going to be schools which do not discriminate against colored people and the number is going to increase slowly in the present, but rapidly in the future until long before the year 2000, there will be no school segregation on the basis of race. The deficiency in knowledge of Negro history and culture, however will remain and this danger must be met or else American Negroes will disappear. Their history and culture will be lost. Their connection with the rising African world will be impossible. What then can we do or should we try to do?

Negro parents and Negro Parent-Teacher Associations will have to at least temporarily, take on and carry the burden which they have hitherto left to the public schools. The child in the family in specific organizations or in social life must learn what he will not learn in school until the public schools vastly improve. Negro history must be taught for many critical years by parents, in clubs by lecture courses, by a new Negro literature which Negroes must write and but. This must be done systematically for the whole Negro race in the
United States and elsewhere. This is going to take time and money and is going to call for racial organizations.

Negro communities, Negro private schools, negro colleges will and must be organized and supported. This racial organization will be voluntary and not compulsory. It will not be discriminatory. It will be carried on according to definite object and ideal, and will be open to all who share this ideal. And of course that ideal must always be in accord with the greater ideals of mankind. But what American Negroes must remember is that voluntary organization for great ends is far different from compulsory segregation for evil purposes.

Especially and first there has got to be a deliberate effort made toward the building of Negro families. Our family organization has been left almost entirely to chance. How, when and where, the Negro boy and girl is going to meet and mate has been given no organised thought and in many cases the whole process has been deliberately ignored. Beyond that comes the primary question of what a Negro child is to do in life. This has been taught only incidentally and accidentally. The Primary basis and end
of life has not been guided by proper tuition in social sciences, in economics or in ethics, outside and beyond school; in the family and in religious organizations.

The Negro race has got to impress upon its children certain fundamental facts. The normal human being must work and work regularly to supply his wants, such legitimate wants as food, clothes and shelter. In addition there must be creative activities such as we understand under art and literature and them there must be systematic recreation for health, for normal satisfying of the sexual instinct, for social contact, for sympathy, friendship, love, and sacrifice.

In this matter of life vocation we Negroes have got to inculcate in the minds of our children many objects to which white American today is not only opposed but bitterly fights. Why should a man be a physician? Not simply to cure disease and treat accidents, but to prevent disease and protect health. Today most physician have no time for this. This is the object of social medicine and is practiced in most of Europe, western and eastern, and in China. But in the United States, the American
Medical Association fights with huge funds every effort to bring free government-supported social medicine to the service of the people. Why should a man study law but to see that justice is done; and yet the chief service and huge pay of lawyers today in America is to guide wealthy and powerful corporations in breaking the law and putting on the statute books laws which discriminate against the poor. Our jails are bursting with prisoners who have no one to defend them even when they have committed no crime. Why should a man become a dentist? Not to extract diseased teeth, but to prevent teeth from becoming diseased; by teaching dental therapy. The schools of the socialist and communist world are doing this. Our schools have scarcely begun. What is the object of business? Americans say, profits, and in order to make profits large we are spending $50 million a year for war. This war is carried on to make exploitation of land and labor possible, to steal materials, and cheat laborers. When Northern Rhodesia sells her copper for $36 million she pays nothing for the land our of which this copper comes and only half a million for the black labor that mines it. Twenty million dollars goes to the investors and the rest to
machines and white European labor. The true object of business should not be profit but service. The service of collecting raw material, processing it for consumption and bringing it to the consumer. For this service wages should be paid, but vast unearned income should not be given to the man who steals the land and takes from the laborer that which is his due. This is increasingly the belief of civilized countries, but it is not the belief of Western Europe nor of white America. The correct attitude toward covariances must then be taught increasingly in our schools. Yet today in American schools and colleges, white and black, economics, social science, money, and finance are not properly taught, and especially most schools and colleges are afraid to teach the remedies which socialism and communism propose for better distribution of work and income; or to tell how the larger part of the civilization world is adopting these methods of accomplishing these things. I pause to remark that your program committee has shown positive genius in not once mentioning the word "socialism" in this meeting. Yet socialism says most of the money which we pay for telephone service, for electrical devices and for power goes to make a few individuals rich and
not for paying good wages or making these services cheap. Insurance is a great invention designed to place the cost of death and accident on the whole community instead of letting it ruin the individual. Here is no place for private profit. The premiums should pay for the loss and the wages of management should be included, but today above this individuals make millions, and private insurance companies control national money and credit. Evidently insurance is a public function and not a private enterprise.

The great American world of which we have for centuries been striving to become a part and which has arisen to be one of the most powerful nations is today losing its influence and that American Negroes do not realize. There was a time when as leader of a new democracy, as believers in a new tolerance in religion, and as a people basing their life on equality of opportunity, in the ownership of land and property, the United States of America stood first in the hopes of mankind. That day has passed. I took a trip recently that lasted nearly a year. I had already traveled widely. I had been to Europe fifteen times.
I had been to Asia. I had circled the world. Then for nine years I was imprisoned in the confines of the United States by the unauthorized dictum of those who were ruling. From 1950 until 1958 I was not allowed to travel abroad. The reason was that I had co-operated with millions of men who wanted war to cease. Even here my action had been simply to tell Americans what was being done by other countries to promote peace. For this I was accused of being the agent of foreign peacemakers and ordered to admit this or go to jail. It cost me over $30,000 to defend myself in court against this absurd accusation. This sum I and my wife had to beg from state to state. The court threw the case out for lack of proof. Despite this I was refused a passport for travel abroad until the Supreme Court finally decided that the Department of State had no legal ground to refuse me a passport.

Paul Robeson, who for ten years had been deprived of a livelihood for equally baseless reasons. Myself and others were given passports. I and my wife went abroad to Great Britain and Holland, to France and czechoslovakia, to Sweden and Germany. To the Soviet Union and to the Chinese Republic. It was the most astonishing trip I have ever
had. It radically changed my whole point of view. I saw first that America and its actions since the First World War was thoroughly condemned by the civilized world; that no other country was so disliked and heated. The British and the Dutch while restraining their expression of dislike behind good manners and for fear of our wealth and power, nevertheless, did not like America or Americans. That the French could hardly mention Americans without calling them dirty; that the people of Czechoslovakia and Germany blamed America for the cruelties which they suffered and for the difficulties which they were facing. That the 200 million people in the Soviet Union regard Americans as their greatest threat and the 680 millions of China hate America with perfect hatred for treating them as subhuman.

Outside this matter of feeling was my discovery that the world was going socialist, that most of the people of the world, Europe, Asia and Africa were either socialists or communists. No matter what our attitude toward socialism and communism may be, no matter how we judge the teachings of Karl Marx we must face the truth. Not only black but white Americans must know. We do not know.

The news gathering agencies and the periodicals
of opinion in the United States are deliberately deceiving the people of the United States with regard to the rest of the world. For a long time they have spread the belief that communism is a crime or a conspiracy and that anyone either taking part or even examining conditions of socialist lands is a self-conscious criminal or a fool.

For decades now they have made Americans believe that communism is a failure, that the Russian people and the people of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the Balkans were prisoners, enslaved in thought and action; that communism only needed our help to fall in ruin; that China is trying to conquer all Asia. Despite all this propaganda we are beginning now to realize some things that are clear. That the Soviet Union has made color prejudice illegal, that she has a system of education probably the best in the world and far superior to ours. That science there is forging ahead of anything that we have, and that the people are not prisoners and are not asking our help in order to revolt. They are progressing at a rate superior to us in art, literature and general happiness.
I spent thirteen weeks in China. I was treated with a courtesy I had met nowhere else in the world and I was convinced that here was a colored people who in happiness and knowledge would outstrip the world before the dawn of the next century. The work of China today is a miracle of success. What we Americans want is freedom to know the truth and the right to think and to act as seems wisest to us under the democratic process; and what we have to remember is that in the United States democracy has almost disappeared. There is no use deceiving ourselves in that respect. Half of the citizens of the United States do not even go to the polls. Most Negroes are disfranchised. It is the considered opinion of the social scientists in America that the election which made Dwight Eisenhower president cost over $100 million and perhaps $200 million. Why does America need such an election fund? A democratic election doesn't need it and United States needed and used it only for bribing voters directly and indirectly or frightening men from acting or thinking. This is what the rulers of the United States demand and those rulers instead of being individuals are organized corporations who suppress freedom, by monopolizing wealth.
If all this true, it must be taught to our youth. It must be taught by teachers and instructors and professors and in that case we must face the fact that these teachers may lose their jobs. They can only be supported and employed if the bulk of American Negroes support institutions like the private Negro Colleges. If the Negro or white colleges are going to depend on the gifts of the rich for support they cannot teach the truth. If they are support they cannot teach the truth. If they are supported tomorrow, Negroes must give not a tenth, but a quarter of their income to support education and social organization and teachers must sacrifice to the last penny. This impoverishment of the truth seekers can only be avoided by eventually making the state bear the burden of education and this is socialism. We must then vote for socialism. We began this in the New Deal and then were stopped. But in Europe and Asia and also in Africa socialism and communism are spreading. Socialism will grow in the United States if we restore the democracy of which we have boasted so long and done so little. Here is where Negroes may and must lead.

This is my sincere belief, arrived at after
long study, travel, observation and thought. Many disagree with me and that is their right. They have every opportunity to express their belief and you cannot escape listening to them and should not if you could. But they have no right to demand that you refuse to listen to the world-wide voice of socialism or to threaten you with punishment if you do listen. This is the first right of democracy.

I appeal to the members of this organization, first to teach the truth as they see it even if they lose their jobs. To study socialism and communism and the philosophy of Karl Marx and his successors. To travel in the Soviet Union and China and then to dare take a stand as they honestly believe whether for or against communism. To refuse to listen to American propaganda without also listening to the propaganda of communism and to give up teaching and go to digging ditches before bowing to the new American slavery of thought. Above all to do everything possible to stop war and preparation for war which is the policy of the present rulers of this nation and their method of stopping socialism by force when they cannot stop it by work nor reason.
THE PUBLISHED WRITINGS OF W.E.B. DU BOIS

ON EDUCATION.

1. Fisk (University) Herald, October and November 1886 (on his teaching experiences in "The Hills of Tennessee").

2. Fisk Herald, Editorial, November 1887 (urges that Fisk seek independence from Northern philanthropists and that its finances come from Black people).

3. "Careers Open to College-Bred Negroes," in a pamphlet, Two Addresses Delivered by Alumni of Fisk University, in Connection with the Anniversary Exercise of their Alma Mater (Nashville: Fisk University Press (1898)) pp. 1-14. (The second address was by the Rev. H.H. Proctor.) Due Bois insists on the specific needs of Black colleges to serve Black people, calls for a more social Christianity, emphasizes the need for Black men and women in the professions, and closes by urging his listeners to "cherish unavering faith in the blood of your fathers" and to serve without equivocation or: the causes of truth and freedom.

5. A Memorial to the Legislature of Georgia on Negro Common Schools n.p., n.d. This is a single-page, printed leaflet; it is signed by eight leading Black men of Georgia, including Du Bois, who wrote it. Though this is not indicated on the leaflet, it was printed in Atlanta in 1900.


7. Memorial to the Legislature of Georgia on the Proposed Amendment Touching the Distribution of the School Fund (n.p., n.d.) is a four-page leaflet, somewhat similar to no. 5 above. It bears fourteen signatures of leading Black men in Georgia; the list is headed by Du Bois, who wrote the Memorial. It was printed in Atlanta early in 1901.

8. Testimony given, February 13, 1901, in Washington before the Congressionally-appointed Industrial Commission, in Volume XV of the
Hearings on General and Industrial Education,


13. "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others," being Chapter III of this The Souls of Black Folk (Chicago: A.C. McClurg, 1903): this was the only chapter of that classic written for the book. Much of it presents Du Bois's ideas, as of that date, on education. Nos. 4 and 11 above appeared as chapters in Souls, with some changes; the first under the title, "Of the Meaning of Progress" (Chapter IV) and the second under the above title (Chapter IV).
14. "The Training of Negroes for Social Power," the Outlook, October, 17, 1903; 74:409-14 (This was reprinted in pamphlet from in 1903 by the Atlanta University Press; but the title was changed to read: The Training of Negroes for Social Reform.)

15. "The Talented Tenth, in The Negro Problem (a collection of essays by leading Black figures of the day; no editor is given. It was published in 1903 in New York City by James Pott Co.; Du Bois's very significant and influential essay appears on pp. 33-75.)


19. "Representative Higher Institutions for Negro Education in the South" (a lecture given in Boston, February 8, 1905), Boston Globe, February 9, 1905.

20. "Atlanta University," in From Servitude to Service (Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1905), pp. 155–97 (a collection of essays by various authors on Black institutions of education; no editor is given; at times, Du Bois has been proposed to have been the editor but this is certainly in error; probably the editor was Edwin D. Mead).


27. The Common School and the Negro American... edited, with Augustus G. Bill (Atlanta, Ga.: Atlanta University Press, 1911), 140 pp.

28. Memorandum in Support of Proposed Amendment to H.R. 7951, Entitled a Bill to Provide for Co-operative Agricultural Extension Work Between the Agricultural Colleges in the Several States and the U.S. Department of
Agriculture. (This sixteen-page pamphlet was issued by the NAACP in 1914. It is signed by Chapin Brinsmade as Attorney and by Du Bois as Director of Publicity and Research; it was written by Du Bois).

Much of Du Bois's writings in the Crisis, which he edited from 1910 to the summer of 1934 dealt in one way or another with education, broadly defined, and many parts of his departments, such as "Postscript" and "As the Crow Flies," also touched this subject. Listed below (numbers 29-37), however, are those articles (signed and unsigned) by him in the Crisis which had as their subject in largest part, if not entirely, questions of education.

29. "Negro Education," February 1918; 15:173-78 (a long and critical (signed) evaluation of a book on the subject by Thomas Jesse Jones, who may be briefly characterized as the establishment's white "expert" on the subject).


34. "Missouri Show Us," September 1925; 30:226-27 (unsigned; deals with positive developments at Lincoln University in Missouri).

35. "Education in Africa," June 1926; 32:86-89 (a critical estimate, signed, of a two-volume report on the subject, by, again, Thomas Jesse Jones; see above, number 29).


39. "Diurni Silentii," Fisk Herald, 1924; 33;i-xii.*


43. The Field and Function of a Negro College* (Nashville: Fisk University Press, 1933), 16 pp.; a considerable excerpt was published in the Crisis, August 1933; 40:175-77 (delivered at the annual alumni reunion during Fisk's Commencement week, June, 1933).
44. "Does the Negro Need Separate Schools", 
Journal of Negro Education, July 1935; 
4:328-35.

45. Testimony, April 2, 1937, before Committee 
on Education, House of Representatives, 75th 
Cong., 1st Sess., Hearings on Federal Aid 
for the Support of Public Schools (Washington, 
pp. 284-95.

46. "How Negroes Have Taken Advantage of Education 
Opportunities Offered by (the Society of) 
Friends," Journal of Negro Education, April 

47. "The Revelation of Saint Orgne the Damned,"* 

Journal of Negro Education, October, 1940; 
9:553-70.

49. "The Future of the Negro State University,"* 
Wilberforce University Quarterly, April 1941; 
2:53-60.


53. "Jacob and Esau," the Talladegan, November 1944; 42:1-6 address (delivered at Commencement, June 1944, at Talladega College in Alabama).

54. "The Future and Function of the Private Negro College,"* the Crisis, August, 1946; 53:234-46, 253-54 (commencement address, Knoxville College, Tennessee, June, 1946.)


57. "Two Hundred Years of Segregated Schools," Jewish Life, February 1935; 9: No. 4 7-9, 15-18, 35.


For many years, in several newspapers, Du Bois contributed on a regular basis hundreds of columns. The subject of education frequently appears in parts of these but the list that follows indicates columns devoted wholly or in major part to one or another aspect of the question of education for Black people:

Amsterdam News.
59. June 29, 1940: describes commencements he visited at Atlanta University, Wilberforce University and Harvard University; recalls briefly aspects of his Harvard days.

60. May 24, 1940: describes commencements he visited at Atlanta University, Wilberforce University and Harvard University; recalls briefly aspects of his Harvard days.

61. July 19, 1941: concerning Wilberforce University and problems of church and state rivalry.

62. March 7, 1941: heads of several New York colleges say they would welcome Black faculty members; they are lying and we should now flood them with applications and call their bluff.

63. April 25, 1942: devoted to an estimate of the history of Tuskegee.

64. May 16, 1942: has lectured at Vassar and Yale; this induces observations about their elitism and racism, especially at Yale.
65. June 27, 1942: hails appointment of a Black professor (Allison Davis) at the University of Chicago; with continued effort, even Yale will one day become civilized.


67. September 5, 1942: a defense of college education if employed to acquire consequential knowledge.

68. May 29, 1943: we should battle more actively for the appointment of Black faculty members at so-called "white" universities.

69. October 6, 1945: segregated education is bad; and, above all, bad education is bad.

70. October 13, 1945: in opposing segregated education we must be careful not to demean Black teachers and youngsters.

71. May 18, 1946: "New Day at Lincoln University" in Pennsylvania because of the administration of Horace Mann Bond, its first Black president.

72. June 29, 1946: on summer schools: generally thinks them useless.
73. October 19, 1946: Much boasting in the United States about education but on the whole it is quite poor.

74. April 12, 1947: has visited and comments upon state colleges for Black people in Durham, N.C., and Virginia State and Florida State.

75. June 7, 1947: details about the governance of Wilberforce and efforts to improve it (see above, No. 61.)

76. November 29, 1947: an attack-evoked by an article in Ebony magazine—upon those who think "that the only goal for Negro intellectuals is to teach white people." National Guardian.

77. May 31, 1954: An analysis and estimate of the "School Segregation Decision" of the U.S. Supreme Court.

78. November 4, 1957: Returns to an examination of the 1954 decision, asking "what is the Meaning of "All Deliberate Speed?"
Finally, several of Du Bois's books treat one or another aspect of education. This has been noted above in connection with the Souls of Black Folk. In addition, The Philadelphia Negro (Philadelphia, 1899) deals at some length with the history, achievements and needs of education of Black people in that city; Black Reconstruction in America (New York, 1935) devotes dozens of pages to education, as one may find by consulting its index; his autobiographies—Dusk of Dawn (New York, 1940), and his posthumously published A Soliloquy on Viewing my Life from the Last Decade of its First Century (New York, 1968)—are filled with references to education, so that, for example, in the latter book Chapters 9, 11, 12, and 13 are devoted to this topic. Again, certain of his novels deal at length with education, this being an important theme in his The Quest of the Silver Fleece (Chicago, 1911) and in his trilogy, The Black Flame, especially its second volume, Mansart Builds a School (New York, 1959).
Clain Lock has presented a very thoughtful resume of the American Negro literary scene. One of his key papers is documented in the following section of this Chapter of the thesis.

What follows is Alain Lock's brilliant note on the Negro in American Literature:

The Career of the Negro in American literature properly includes not merely the story of the Negro as author, but also the general use in American letters of the Negro as a theme. This double development, especially when panoramically viewed, is fully as dramatic and significant as the social history it parallels. Historically, the Negro presents the unusual phenomenon of the most rejected and seemingly most unimportant segment of the population becoming, because of a fundamental contradiction between slavery and American democratic institutions, a center of such inevitable conflict and readjustment as to involve critically the destiny and fortune of the entire nation. On the cultural plane something similar and equally significant has happened. For the position of the Negro in American culture has come to mean far more than merely the artistic activity and cultural progress of the Negro minority. Sometimes nationally, sometimes regionally, it has
involved the trends and temperament of the whole literature, and so has brought about basic changes in the orientation of American letters and a vital enlargement of the national culture. For in addition to the crucial issues of cultural democracy, the goal of a fully representative and natively characteristic national literature has been at stake.

Just as slavery may now in perspective be viewed as having first threatened our democratic institutions and then forced them to more consistent maturity, the artistic and cultural impact of the Negro must be credited with producing unforeseen constructive pressures and generating unexpected creative ferment in the literary and artistic culture of America. In cutting the Negro completely loose from his ancestral culture, slavery set up a unique and unprecedented situation between the Anglo-Saxon majority and the Negro minority group. The peculiar conditions of American slavery so scrambled Africans from the diverse regions and cultures of an entire continent that, with the original background culture tribe to begin with, neither a minority language nor an ancestral tradition remains. The American Negro was left no alternative but to share the language and tradition of the majority culture. Thus, instead of
of the usual minority nativism with its logic of separation, Negro aspiration and effort has aimed, almost without exception, at full cultural assimilation. The occasional exceptions, like Marcus Garvey's "Back to Africa" movement and a few similarly quixotic and desperate "separate state" or "colonization" schemes, have been rare and relatively inconsequential. In the long run, this has meant that with the futility of trying to substitute an arbitrary, artificial barrier like a "color line" for a natural or accepted boundary of language, creed or culture, historical circumstances have made it necessary that this particular majority-minority issue be settled or resolved within the context of a common culture.

Full comprehension of this is essential to any adequate understanding of the Negro's special position in American society and culture. It explains why, although forced by majority attitudes of exclusion and rejection to take on a defensive attitude of racialism, the American Negro has rarely set up separate cultural values, much less developed divergent institutional loyalties or separate political objectives. On the whole, Negro racialism has remained what it historically is—an enforced, protective counter-attitude, stemming the worst of
proscription and discrimination. Accordingly, although becoming with each generation, and now with each decade, more racially militant and protesting, the American Negro remains steadfastly conformist in basic attitude and assimilationist in over-all policy. The Negro's values, ideals and objectives are integrally and unreservedly American.

And so, with no possibility of a solution by cultural autonomy or secession, and with no temporizing barrier of segregation effective for long, solution by progressive incorporation into the general culture has become for the Negro the only sane and real alternative. This commitment to a common culture is, naturally enough, the bogey and ultimate despair of the Negro's opponents; ironically enough, it is also their Frankenstein. But by the same token, it is the hope and ultimate assurance of the Negro and his well-wishers. It means for the Negro an eventual emergence from the social and cultural ghetto. For the common good it means an unpremeditated but inevitable democratization of the national culture.

After generation-long resistance and delay,
progress toward both these goals appears at last to have gained considerable momentum. In no field is this development more clearly observable than in the step-by-step evolution of the Negro, as both theme and participant, in American literature. The crucial factors in group relationships are social attitudes, and literature—recording and reflecting these in preference even to social fact—becomes the most revealing medium. It is to this mirror that I turn for the salient changes of majority attitudes toward the Negro and, equally important, for a view of the Negro's changed attitudes toward himself.

The Negro has been a figure in American letters for little more than a century and a half. In the total perspective a great cumulative transformation can be seen to have taken place—registering on the one hand, extraordinary growth and cultural development on the part of the Negro, and on the other, a significant democratic maturing of the majority mind and culture. But except in such longrange contemplation, the picture is sorry testimony to the psychocological blight of slavery and its aftermath, for its distorting stereotypes, both naive and deliberate, have crippled most literary portrayals of the Negro.
The Negro writer has been seriously affected by the public reign and tyranny of these stereotypes, for he, too, has either been forced in one way or other to cater to them in order to get a hearing, or else he has been driven to resort, in unrealistic despair and concern, to the dangerous over-correctives of counter-stereotyping. Indeed, one may say that except here there is the vision of sheer genius like that of Melville or Whitman or in such studied detachment as that of Chestnut and Tommer among Negro writers, only in the last decade or so has any deep portrayal or full self-portrayal of the Negro been possible.

The Negro came on the scene as a theme in American literature casually and occasionally in the late colonial period. Oddly enough, the first appearance of a Negro writer, in 1760, was quite as early. At this time American slavery was still predominantly patriarchal, and the full weight of the plantation regime had not yet settled on the land. Even by then, though rather naively at first, the portrayal of the Negro was inauspiciously out of focus, and the "typical" basic Negro of American tradition—grotesque, comic or sentimentally
pathetichad already been set. Low comedy, burlesque and sentimental melodrama had molded the twin stereotypes of the entirely "comic" and the wholly "tragic" Negro, which were to condition and delimit the way in which the Negro was seen and thought of for generations to come. Slavery saw to that, blinding the majority eye with the crude, condescending distortions of prejudice, and blurring the minority eye with a myopia of fumbling, exhibitionist concern for its own sad plight and predicament. It has taken generations to rise, step by half-step at times, from this level of farce, buffoonery, caricature and condescension to portrayal of the Negro as completely and self-sufficiently human.

Yet this has been a very necessary revolution, not only in the interest of the truth about the Negro, but also for the artistic integrity of the national literature. Not that I am insisting here upon realism as such—romantic and other non-realistic styles have their appropriate approaches. But in the past far too many romantic delineations of the Negro character have been so tritely and superficially drawn as to lack solid, honest quality altogether. Yet to millions, and for
generations, the Negro has been these pasteboard "Uncles," "Aunties," Chloes, Sambos and pickaninnies. In fact, the well-intentioned sentimentalists have done almost as much damage as the deliberate detractors.

All these trends have had to be counteracted in order for the Negro subject to progress slowly from stereotype of human being, from carelessly conceived genre and caricature to seriously studied and carefully presented character. An acceptably authentic Negro has had to wait for gradual liquidation of the inequities of double-standard portrayal. That this is at last on the verge of realization, even in the contemporary regional fiction of the South, and that the Negro writer, instead of being regarded as a mere ghetto prodigy or spokesman, is being more frequently received as a fellow artist and welcome collaborator, are symptoms of significant cultural progress, and so a matter for the deepest human and artistic satisfaction.

The first two Negro writers of record were poets: Jupiter Hammon and Phillis Wheatley, both favored slaves—in Northern surroundings. Long
Island and Boston respectively. Hammond, whose first publication, *An Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ*, and *Penitential Cries*, was issued in 1760, when his last work (and first prose one), *An Address to the Negroes in the State of New York*, achieved popularity because of its obsequious position on slavery. At best an imitative rhymester, Hammond displayed, naturally enough, the cautious complacency of the pet protege, and was mainly notable as a first example. He was aware of his more talented contemporary, Phillis Wheatley, and was race-conscious enough to compose twenty-one dedicatory stanzas in her honor in 1778. She, too, although unquestionably a more powerful personality, took on completely the coloration of her patrons and their Boston environment. In 1773 she traveled alone, but under their auspices, to England, and as guest of the Countess of Huntingdon was a sensation in literary and court circles. Her first book was published in London that same year. Returning to Boston, she shared the Wheatleys' Whig sympathies, and in 1775 addressed laudatory verses to Washington on his assumption of the command of the Continental Armies. But because she had experienced only nominal slavery, her racial patriotism was vaguely
rhetorical, with hardly any specific identification with the cause of anti-slavery. Indeed we find her saying; "Twas mercy brought me from my pagan land," and later writing even more explicitly in "Lines to the Students of the University of Cambridge."

'Twas not long since I left My native shore—
The land of errors and Egyptian gloom.

Perhaps no more was to be expected of these minds groomed by favoritism and bound by its silken chains. Their constructive contribution was to give evidence of the intellectual and artistic capacities of the Negro in a time and environment of doubt, and that, with a few other outstanding talents, they gave.

Soon thereafter the earliest indictments of slavery from the articulate free Negro gave signs of a virile group consciousness. These also came surprisingly early, less than a decade after the first Quaker and non-conformist challenges of the institution by such men as John Woolman, Anthony Benezet and Benjamin Rush. The first protest by a Negro was published in Baltimore, significantly
enough in the very year of the nation's official founding—1789. It was, understandably, an anonymous arraignment, entitled, *Negro Slavery by Othello: A Free Negro*. It was so forthright, trenchant and daring that, if its author could be definitely identified, he would be the first great name among American Negro writers. Considerable evidence points to the Negro, Benjamin Banneker, a man of many talents—astronomer, inventor and publisher of the widely circulated annual *Almanacks* of 1791–96. In 1791, in an exchange of personal correspondence he challenged Thomas Jefferson on slavery. Later he was appointed by Jefferson as surveyor-draughtsman on the L'Enfant Commission which laid out the plans for the city of Washington.

Both the language and the logic of 'Othello's' protest are masterful:

When the united colonies revolted from Great Britain, they did it upon this principle, "that all men are by nature and of right ought to be free." After a long, successful and glorious struggle for liberty, during which they manifested the firmest attachment to the rights of making, can they so soon forget the principles that governed
their determinations? Can Americans, after the noble contempt they expressed for tyrants, meanly descend to take up the soourge? Blush, ye revolted colonies, for having apostatized from your own principles! ... The importation of slaves into America ought to be a subject of the deepest regret to every benevolent and thinking mind. And one of the great defects in the federal system is the liberty it allows on this head. Venerable in everything else, it is injudicious here; and it is much to be deplored that a system of so much political perfection should be stained with anything that does an outrage to human nature ... So, far from encouraging the importation of slaves, and countenancing that vile traffic in human flesh, the members of the late Constitutional Convention should have seized the opportunity of prohibiting forever this cruel species of repugnated villainy. That they did not do so will forever diminish the luster of their other proceedings, so highly extolled and so justly distinguished for their intrinsic value.

This historic first protest was followed by a brave succession of others, Lemuel Haynes's in 1810, Peter Williams's in 1808, David Walker's Appeal in 1829, and that by the first Convention of
the Free Men of Color in Philadelphia in 1831. If
slavery molded the emotional and folk
life of the Negro, it was the anti-slavery struggle
that developed his intellect and suppressed him to
disciplined, articulate expression. Up to the Civil
War, the growing anti-slavery movement was the
midwife of Negro political and literary talent.

Under the zealous tutelage of the abolitionists,
Negro leaders, some well educated, others self-
taught fugitive slaves, learned almost equally well
the arts of public speech and of platform debate,
and there began that rate collaboration which in a
little over four decades divided American public
opinion and shook down the firmly founded edifice
of chattel slavery. Beginning in 1813 with John
Russwurm, editor of the first Negro newspaper,
Freedom's Journal, a vigorous group of Negro writers
and orators, including Martin Delaney, Ringgold Ward,
Highland Garnett and William Wells Brown, developed,
to be climaxed by the admitted giant of them all,
the ex-slave journalist and orator, Frederick
Douglass. Inspired by their alignment with a
great cause, they came to such skill and maturity
as to compare favorably with their white colleagues—
Lovejoy, William Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Weld, Charles Summer, Henry Ward Beecher and Wendell Phillips. Their activities earned for the Negro the moral credit and satisfaction of having been a valiant, effective collaborator in the struggle for his own freedom. Besides serving as traveling lecturers and abolitionist organizers in the North and Midwest, and on occasion as secret agents of the "Underground Railroad" for the rescue of slave fugitives, many of the more talented were sent abroad on extensive tours of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. William Wells Brown remained in Europe five years on a continuous mission, during which time, in 1853, he published the first novel of Negro authorship, Clotel. On several trips Frederick Douglass became the idol of Belfast, Liverpool, Manchester and London audiences. The presence of such men before foreign audiences and at international anti-slavery conventions had a most strategic effect in making abolition an international issue.

One of the most unique and effective contributions of the Negro to the liberation struggle was the "slave narrative," a genre of which there are several hundred examples extent. These were the life
stories of fugitive slaves, firsthand exposures of slavery's inhumanities and incongruities. Although propaganda tracts in origin and purpose, they were so crammed with a new brand of heroic and melodramatic adventure that they became popular "thrillers." Soon, with such incandescent sparks added to the abolitionist tinder, the audience at home and abroad was aflame with ardent anti-slavery sentiment. Although often exaggerated, the slave narratives had human authenticity and set forth a type of evidence that no amount of Southern propaganda could offset or contradict. The more capable writers had such power that they turned more flight from slavery into a dynamic crusade for human freedom. Moreover, as the Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin readily admitted, they were the core materials of the unrivaled bombshell of anti-slavery literature, Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852). Although not published until some years later, the slave narrative of Josiah Henson, told to her orally, was Mrs. Stowe's model for the character of Uncle Tom, while the narrative of Lewis Clark gave her the pattern for George Harris, with Frederick Douglass's famous Narrative serving as the general inspiration of the whole book.
All this was marvelously effective propaganda. But Uncle Tom's Cabin exemplifies the dilemma of more than two generations of writing about the Negro. As a moral issue and controversy, both pro-and anti-slavery thinking viewed everything in moralistic antithesis, sharply contrasted black and white, with no shadings. In a second novel, Dred (1856), Mrs. Stowe herself attempted a more carefully drawn picture, but it was swamped by the popular appeal of the sentimental melodrama in the first one.

Both sides were caught in this atmosphere, and with few exceptions, an incubus of moralism and polemics settled down not only on the pre-Civil War phase of American letter, but unfortunately also on that of a considerable part of the post-war Reconstruction period.

This brought a blight upon both the majority and the minority literature, each element seeking not truth, but self-justification. Negro writers saw themselves and their subject materials in terms either of self-pity or of parade-dress vindication. Northern views were either indifferent or sentimentally indulgent and patronizing, while with the chronic ambivalence of its half-child, half-best formula, the Old South waivered between condescending amiability
and deliberate hostility. As the iron ring of controversy tightened, the whole tone and temper of Southern fiction changed. The easy-going rustic atmosphere of such earlier novels as those of Kennedy and William Gilmore Simms were displaced by tense, fictionalized versions of the official pro-slavery argument in action, character and speech. In *The Negro in American Fiction*, Sterling Brown records that within three years of the publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin, fourteen pro-slavery novels were published in the South. The significant fact is that not one of them is remembered today; overt propaganda artistically stifled southern creative writing for over a generation.

But this dead hand of didacticism, though at its worst in the South, affected all sides. The works of the two Negro novelists of the period—William Wells Brown and Frank J. Webb—were dull and overdrawn counter-statements. The anti-slavery poems of Longfellow, Bryant and Whittier, in spite of their best intentions, were all several notches below these authors' artistic average. Only Lowell, Melville, Mark Twain and Whitman, because of their more universal perspective and approach, struck real fire. Melville's convincing Negro sailors in
Moby Dick and Mark Twain's unforgettable Jim in Huckleberry Finn are artistically worth reams of the sentimental moralizing with which the whole iron age of slavery controversy was plagued. So, also, is Lowell's brief but penetrating reference in the "Commemoration Ode."

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release...  
Bow Down in prayer and praise!  
No Poorest in thy borders but may now  
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow...  
and Whitman's equally keen, swift strokes in  
"Ethiopia Saluting the Colours":  

What is it, fateful woman, sol blear, hardly human?  
Why wag your head with turban bound, yellow, red and green?  
Are the things so strange and marvelous you see or have seen?  
and in "The Wounded Person" in Song of Myself;  
The hounded slave that flags in the race, leans by the fence, blowing, cover'd with sweat.  
The twinges that sting like needles his legs and Neck—the murderous back-shot and the bullets.  
All these I feel or am...
I do not ask the wounded person how he feels. I myself become the wounded person.

At the close of the Civil War the moral enthusiasm of the North was deeply spent. With the Negro occupied with the practical emergencies of emancipation and reconstruction, the South had another, more successful literary inning. Shortly after 1875, reconstruction fiction began to appear, taking the form of adroit glorification of the ante-bellum regime. There was little counter-statement by Northern writer, with the notable exception of Albion Tourgee, whose A Fool's Errand and Bricks Without Straw were desperate attempts to tell the truth about the obstructionist tactics and Klan terrorism rampant in the South from 1880 on. But in its first phases, reconstruction fiction was at least genteel. It is typified by the work of Thomas Nelson Page, which just because of its sentimental blandishments won wide public favor. It persuaded a majority of its readers that the romantic version of the old regime was essentially true. In spite of its insistent injustice to the Negro, its dominating motive was to give balm to the South's injured pride and achieve emotional compensation for the "lost cause." A half-generation later,
however, with the open and sinister animus of Thomas Dixon's Leopard Spots and The Clansman, it became vindictive and overtly anti-Negro, and, as the critic William Braithwaite aptly puts it, "the portraiture descends from caricature to libel."

Not all the Southern romancers were equally partisan. Joel Chandler Harris in his Uncle Remus stories rendered as much poetic justice to the Negro as an orthodox Southerner could, and George W. Cable, an ardent local colorist, told decidedly more of the truth than was popular in his day. His Madame Delphine, and and especially The Grandissimes, with its two half brothers, the illegitimate mulatto Honore upholding the family's worthier traits and tradition while the legitimate Honore exhibited its worst, is courageously outspoken, and told a story for New Orleans and its Creole society that no one until much later would dare tell of the more characteristic South and its more typical undiluted Negroes.

What really was lacking was any presentation of the other side of the picture by either Northern or Negro writers. That, however, came with time. At almost the same cue, toward the turn of the
century, new forces broke into the doldrums of the Reconstruction, bringing fresh social and literary impetus. In 1895, Booker Washington appeared with his dynamic program of self-help and practical education, but also with his Up From Slavery theme of Southern appeasement, to head what became the inevitably popular "school of conciliation."

Shortly after, Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois followed as leader of an initially small equal rights movement. His Souls of Black Folk (1903) became, as the movement grew, the bible of the militant school of protest. Negro writing divided into two parallel trends, with Dunbar and Chestnut at their respective heads. Paul Lawrence Dunbar, best known as a dialect poet, but also a versatile lyric poet, story-writer and novelist, became immensely popular as a sort of Negro Eugene Field. Heralded by William Dean Howells, he became the lyric spokesman of the Negro peasant, and, as the later regretted, gave wider and longer currency to the accepted stereotypes. He himself thought more of his legitimate English lyrics and his later realistic social novel, Sport of the Gods. The first portrayal of the urban Negro in Harlem. It was very probably in subconscious protest against being tied to the sentimental
common-places of the peasant tradition that Dunbar had written three other, earlier, but mediocre novels, with white main characters, and bourgeois themes. His assured place in American letters, nevertheless, is as the tuneful laureate of "When Malindy Sings" and "When do C'on Pone's Hot." He represents the sunset of one era rather than the sunrise of the next.

It was the less popular Charles W. Chestnutt who stood for the coming age. His was the ambitious and progressive aim to counter the influence of the Thomas Nelson Page school of fiction and reveal a more balanced and accurate truth about Negro life in the South, which as a native North Carolinian he knew intimately. Chestnutt quite successfully modeled his short-story style on Bret Harte, his novel technique on Cable's, but with decidedly less success.

He achieved, however, considerable recognition in The Atlantic Monthly and a long career of publication by Houghton, Mifflin. With Dunbar, he represents the historic break-through of the Negro author into the mainstream of American letters. Chestnutt spared no one's foibles, Northern or Southern, black
or white. Himself almost quadroon, he ruthlessly satirized the mulatto color-line within the race, and sought to liquidate all conventional double-standard values. Miscegenation and mob violence were his main themes, as indeed they were for this whole period of fiction about the Negro, but with the important difference of careful, sober documentation and an even balancing of the situation, whether comic, melodramatic or tragic. With greater novelistic skill, Chestnutt would have been our outstanding period novelist.

As long, however, as romantic teste was in vogue, no amount of counter-statement, however sound and documented—Chestnutt's, Du Bois's or any other—could stem the tide of conventional stereotyping. The only antidote was realism. During the early 1920's a discerning critic could at last say; "The folklore attitude discovers only the lowly and naive; the sociological attitude finds the problem first and the human being after, if at all. But American art in a reawakened seriousness, and using the technique of the new realism, is gradually penetrating Negro life to its core." Just before that, a pseudorealism had brought a
spate of fresh misinterpretation, and particularly the magazines were crammed with the last serious majority cliche, that of blood atavism and inherent Negro primitivism. Well-intentioned writers for more than a decade deluged readers with such pseudo-scientific interpretations, which still linger on or recur with their false biology of the potent "black drop" of blood, an actual title of a story on the subject by Margaret Deland, and an equally dubious anthropology of the ineradicable "savage."

By and large, the Negro as subject matter achieved artistic freedom and stature only as American literature itself crossed over into the domain of realism. One of the earliest instances was in Stephen Crane's The Monster (1897); there were also Upton Sinclair's The Jungle (1905) and Dreiser's Nigger Jeff (1913). None of these is a pleasant characterization, but they at least present the full-length social and psychological truth about their respective settings—a Negro in a small Midwest town, Negro strike-breakers in the Chicago stockyards, and a Southern lynching. Most significantly for Southern literature, realism invaded the Old Dominion through Ellen Glasgow—tentatively in The Miller of Old Church (1911)
and then full force in 1925 in her epoch-making Barren Ground, which put into the same canvas with the Virginia aristocracy and bourgeoisie carefully observed "poor whites" as well as Negroes. William J. Cash rightly assesses this as "the first real novel as opposed to romances the South has brought forth, certainly the first real novel as opposed to romances the South has brought forth, certainly the first wholly genuine picture of the people who make up and always had made up the body of the South." With realism triumphantly crossing the Potomac, the legendary South was finally on the defensive.

It was an odd coincidence, perhaps, that this same period was also that of the Negro creative writer's spiritual emancipation. For from 1912 on other was brewing the movement that in 1925 explicitly became the so-called "renaissance of the New Negro." This movement was not so much in itself a triumph of realism, although it had its share of realists, but a deliberate cessation by Negro authors of their attempts primarily to influence majority opinion. By then Negro artist had outgrown the handicap of allowing didactic
emphasis and propagandist motives to choke their sense of artistry. Partly in disillusionment, partly in newly acquired group pride and self-respect, they turned inward to the Negro audience in frankly avowed self-expression. Langston Hughes, one of their number, thus phrased this literary declaration of independence:

We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter. We know we are not, it doesn't matter. We know we are beautiful. And ugly, too. If colored people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, their displeasure doesn't matter either. We build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know how, and we stand on the top of the mountain, free within ourselves.

Once again, there was a common denominator between the advance-guard elements of the majority and the minority. The anti-slavery collaboration had earlier forged a moral alliance; this was an aesthetic one, which spelled out a final release
from propaganda and its shackling commitments both for Negro materials in American art and literature and for the Negro writer and artist. And From 1925 to the present, realism and Southern regionalism on the one side, and the promotion of racial self-expression on the other have informally but effectively combined to form a new progressive atmosphere in American letters.

The "New Negro" literature was not without its social causes: Its roots were in the changed condition and temper of the Negro people themselves, stirred by heavy mass migration from farms to cities, from the deep South to Northern and Midwestern centers of industry; by improved economic and educational surroundings; and above all by the galvanizing insights and disillusionments of the First World War. All this was reflected in a new sort of race consciousness, divested of the older apology and self-pity, proud, self-reliant and challenging. A whole galaxy of talented poets and writers caught up and focused this new spirit—Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Sterling Brown, to mention the leading poets, and Rudolph Fisher, Eric Walrond, Zora Hurston, Arna Bontemps, Waters Turpin and Richard Wright
among the writers of prose. James Weldon Johnson, who in 1917 shared the stylistic outlook of Dunbar, by 1927 was publishing God's Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse, which renounced traditional dialect and put into rhapsodic free verse "the truer idioms of the folk imagination." In Countee Cullen's "Shroud of Color," his sense of race is one of loyalty, pride and group confidence, almost the tone of a chosen people:

Lord, I will live persuaded by mine own,
I cannot play the recreant to these:
My spirit has come home, that sailed the doubtful seas.

Toomer, whose Sketches of Georgia in Cane (1923) are one of the artistic triumphs of the new era, in "Song of the Son" sees slavery in this calm, Third-generation perspective:

Now just before an epoch's sun declines
Thy Son, in time I have returned to thee . . .
In time, although the sun is setting on
A song-lit race of slaves, it has not set . . .
Though late, O soil, it is not too late yet
An everlasting song—a singing tree
Carol ing softly souls of slavery.
Instead of Phillis Wheatley's myopic apologies for Africa as "the land of errors and Egyptian gloom," Claude McKay sees her in this dignified retrospect in his sonnet, "Africa":

The sun sought thy dim bed and brought forth light,
The sciences were sucklings at thy breast;
When all the world was young in pregnant night
Thy slaves toiled at their monumental best.
Thou ancient treasure land, thou modern prize,
New peoples marvel at thy pyramids!
The years roll on, thy sphinx of riddle-eyes
Watches the made world with immobile lids.

Nor was the poetry of this talented generation unrealistic enough to neglect the significant new notes of social protest and the unflinching intention to hold democracy to strict and just account. This ranged from the quiet confidence of Cullen, in his challenge "From the dark Tower":

We shall not always plant while others reap
The golden increment of bursting fruit,
Nor always countenance, abject and mute,
That lesser men should hold their brothers cheap, . .
We were not made eternally to weep.
To the harsher defiance of McKay in "White Houses":

Your door is shut against my tightened face,
And I am sharp as steel with discontent,
But I possess the courage and the grace
To bear my anger proudly and unbent.

In its prose, this group of Negro Writers faced the realities of Negro life and experience with laudable detachment and objectivity, which not only added to their artistic success but quickly enlarged their audience, for intelligent majority circles were glad to have a reliable inside view. For a time, Negro fiction was mired in the problem novel; as with Du Bois's Quest of the Silver Fleece (1911) and Walter White's The Fire in the Flint. But in such work as McKay's Home to Harlem (1928), and (1924) Rudolph Fisher's semisatiric stories and novel of Harlem. Walls of Jericho, the new trend turned to full-scale social realism quite in key with Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, Dreiser and Dos Passos. Gradually the whole range of Negro life was opened up—Northern, Southern and Caribbean; urban and rural; upper, middle and lower class—the last much to the distaste of the older generation and their tacit taboos of "respectability." George
Lee's River George gave us an excellent close-up of both the white and the black sharecropper; Zora Huston an excellent inside view, in both folklore and fiction, of contemporary Negro peasant life; Jessie Fauset pioneered in depicting the unfamiliar circles of the upper and middle-class Northern Negro. Arna Bontemps dived into historical fiction with Black Thunder and drums of Destiny, and in God Sends Sunday into sporting life in St. Louis and New Orleans. Turpin in a series of period novels sketched three contrasted generations, while Langston Hughes in Not Without Laughter gave a semi-auto-biographic account of the Midwest. Eric Walrond in Tropic Death exploited his native Caribbean, as did McKay in Banana Bottoms and Gingertown. In short, Negro life attained for the first time almost fullscale self-revelation and considerable self-criticism. Finally, in something of a Studs Lonigan style, and with a Chicago slum setting, Richard Wright climaxed the development with an international best-seller, Native Son (1940), a masterpiece of realism, spiced in the final chapters, with a Communistic sauce, at that time vigorously espoused but later repudiated by its author. Wright's accusation of the social
environment, however, had point and relevance, and with the work of others of his generation brought Negro writing abreast of contemporary American realism and within hailing distance of cultural maturity. Thus rapidly did the younger Negro writer move out from the brackish backwaters of problem isolation into the main current of contemporary American letters.

While this advance of the Negro writer had its own racial dynamic, it could hardly have been successful without considerable reinforcement from trends in the national culture at large. Indeed important initiative often came from the leading talents in American letters. As early as 1916, Ridgeley Torrence promoted a new dramatic interest in the Negro with his Three Plays for a Negro Theater. This led to Eugene O'Neill's sensational success in 1919 with The Emperor Jones, and with Charles Gilpin in the title role, to the Negro actor's first undisputed Broadway success. Paul Green's many plays of Negro actor's first undisputed Broadway success. Paul Green's many plays of Negro life climed in a 1927 Pultizer Prize for his In Abraham's Bosom. Similarly, three pioneers of
Southern regionalism broke open the deep South in courageous frank novels of Negro life—Calement Wood in Nigger and T.S. Stribling in Birthright in 1922, and in 1925, Du Boës Heyward in the momentous Porgy, later dramatized, and still later in Gershwin's musical setting reworked into America's most successful folk opera. Starting with her sensitive character study, Green Thursday, Julia Peterkin banished at least some of the Stereotypes of the plantation tradition. In 1928, with Scarlet Sister Mary, she too won a Pulitzer Prize. Marc Connelly salvaged the trite materials of Hoark Bradford's Old Man Adam, and in The Green Pastures inaugurated a new era of sympathetic insight and understanding of the Negro folk imagination. In Dark Laughter, Sherwood Anderson brought to first articulate recognition those factors of emotional buoyancy so distinctively characteristic of Negro living, already half revealed in the growing vogue of ragtime and jazz. Here, he suggested, was the spiritual ammunition for that generation's crusade against puritanism and its joyless repressions, and the Negro folk spirit and its materials became the standard-bearers for over two decades in a nationwide cult of joy in living.
Then, in spite of considerable resistance from the old romantic but reactionary trends in Southern fiction, realism continued its conquest of the leading creative talents of the South. William Cash's *The Mind of the South*, with its surgical self-criticism, definitely turned the tide. A strong succession of novelists like Hamilton Basso, William March and Robert Rylee picked up the challenge in a third-generation defiance of the South's most sacred taboos, opening one ancestral skeleton closet after the other, especially on the South's sex mores and the subject of the Negro. Some wrote not so much in specific desire for retributive justice for the Negro as out of loyalty to realism's basic aesthetic credo; but others like Lillian Smith and Grace Lumpkin had the explicit resolve of making moral amends. So, the literary revolution that started in the Midwest with Willa Cather, Carl Sandburg and Sinclair Lewis was destined to achieve one of its best triumphs in the literature of the South, bringing that region its first era of outstanding cultural distinction. For this movement climaxed in the contrasted geniuses of Erskine Caldwell and William Faulkner. Caldwell, after the shattering disclosures about the "poor
whites" in Tobacco Road, went relentlessly on to equal candor about the South and the Negro in Kneel to the Rising Sun and Trouble in July. William Faulkner, with hesitant but brave introspection, has detailed the South's most intimate and apologetic social confessional. From the characterization of Joe Christmas in Light in August (1932) to the artistry of Intruder in the Dust in 1948, one of his central concerns has been the enigmatic and inconsistent relation between Southern whites and the Negro. The international acclaim that brought to Southern letters its first Noble Prize, awarded to William Faulkner in 1950 for his unexcelled, intensive portrayal of Southern life, includes as one of its most vital justifications, ironically enough, recognition of his unorthodox integrity in the treatment of the Negro. Such honest liberalism is, of course, far from being the present average in the South, but it is becoming established among the South's artistic elite. And in view of the undeniable more liberal attitudes of the younger generation, this is a happy augury of an eventual attainment of both social and cultural democracy. Happily the
upsurge of a new Negro has been paralleled by the significant emergence of a new South.

For the moment a strong sense of integration has taken hold of many of the younger Negro writers, and with good reasons. Even though it may temporarily reduce the more overt kind of racial self-expression, it is appropriate that Negro artists, in moving out into the mainstream of American culture, should gain a sense of solidarity with both the national and the general world of art. As a clear instance on the popular level, one can cite the repeated successes of a best-seller romancer like Frank Yerby, who writes general fiction exclusively. More meaningfully, however, and on a higher level, stand the careers of Willardry Motley in Fiction and Gwendolyn Brooks in poetry. Motley’s novels, Knock On Any Door and They Fished All Night, both blend the Negro materials proportionately into a representative cross section. Most significant, perhaps, is the work of Miss Brooks, the first Negro recipient of a Pulitzer Prize, who chooses a skillful combining of universal themes with racial overtones:

Grant me that I am human, that I hurt,
That I can cry.
Not that I now ask alms, in shame gone hollow,
Nor cringe outside the loud and sumptuous gate,
Admit me to our mutual estate.

Open my rooms, let in the light and air,
Reserve my service at the human feast,
And let the joy continue.

With improving race relations, a welcome relaxation of emotional tensions is making possible a calmer flow of creative effort and a deeper current of human understanding. In time one may expect a return on the part of Negro writers to native materials, but in a context healthily free from both provincialism and propaganda. For the Negro seems at last on the verge of proper cultural recognition and a fraternal acceptance as a welcome participant and collaborator in the American arts. Should this become the realized goal, the history of the Negro's strange and tortuous career in American literature may become also the story of America's hard-won but easily endured attainment of cultural democracy.