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Mary Talusan

Military bands, like national anthems, are part of the complex of symbols through which a state projects its nationhood. However, this symbolism is particularly complex when viewed from the colonial setting where military bands served to exhibit the authority of imperial rule and to project an image of empire. But despite their best efforts, American imperialists did not always succeed in binding colonial subjects to their proper place—individual agency and acts of resistance can never be fully contained. This article explores instances of these slippages through the musical activities of the Philippine Constabulary Band, focusing on their participation in the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904.

KEYWORDS: colonialism, military brass bands, representation, African Americans, Walter H. Loving

The Philippine Constabulary (PC) Band was hailed as one of the crowning cultural achievements of American colonial rule at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. Fairgoers delighted in the Filipino bandsmen's exceptional performances of symphonic excerpts and opera overtures, such as the "William Tell Overture," and high-spirited patriotic songs like "Stars and Stripes Forever." Yet, while they were a success in their own right, the band's outstanding musical abilities were presented in a context that was inextricable from America's colonial project, inadvertently attesting to and endorsing this contested vision of cultural progress. To Americans with imperialist predilections, the PC Band vividly characterized the success of "benevolent assimilation," and was

believed to demonstrate to the American public how the U.S. was civilizing the “primitives” of the Philippines. Scholars have pointed out that the neatly uniformed and orderly military band musicians playing Western music were intentionally juxtaposed with “half-naked” Igorot¹ tribesmen beating drums and gongs in seemingly chaotic fashion (Rydell 1984; Kramer 1999). Such representations in America’s expositions encouraged American fairgoers to marvel at the civilizing effects of the U.S. on the Philippines,² legitimizing the contentious way by which the Philippines was brought under its custody. In this way, the United States government’s exhibition of Filipinos at the St. Louis Fair can be seen as a successful effort to construct an image of the ideal colonized person, one who embodied an identity characterized by passivity, obedience, and perhaps gratitude through the convergence of military and musical performance. By contrast, the Filipino elites who worked with the American colonial government in organizing the Fair and, to a large extent, the musicians themselves viewed the accomplishments of the PC Band in nationalist terms, emphasizing rather than obscuring Filipino musical traditions established at least a century prior to American rule. Filipino politicians advocating Philippine independence indicated that achievements such as these and awarded by Americans demonstrated the Filipinos’ level of civilization and capacity to govern themselves.

In this article, I examine how the racial hierarchy enforced by U.S. policy within its own borders and imposed on its newly conquered territory did not always succeed, even within the context of the PC Band’s musical and ostensibly political accomplishments. American colonialists did not always succeed in binding colonial subjects to their proper place—individual agency and acts of resistance were never fully restricted or contained, especially in the arena of human creativity. This article explores these instances of slippage through the musical activities and representation of the PC Band in America’s international expositions, focusing on the circumstances of their participation in the Fair and the surprisingly silent historical record on their Black American conductor, Lt. Walter H. Loving.

Ethnomusicology, as a form of historical and cultural analysis, enables me to examine how the colonial military band was used as a tool

for American imperialist propaganda in political, martial, and cultural terms. Little scholarly work, however, has been done on colonial military bands since ethnomusicological focus has centered largely on the court and folk music of non-Western cultures; the colonial military band's repertoire of Western music does not seem significantly divergent from familiar Euro-American practices. Still, inquiry into these cultural vehicles can lead us to question radically our perceptions of how foreign musical forms are appropriated, localized, and practiced in various settings (see Wolters 1999). Rather than deeming Western forms and practices in the Philippines to be mere mimicry (a viewpoint that reinforces Western cultural hegemony), we can turn our attention to the ways in which elements appropriated from the outside are domesticated and naturalized into distinctively Filipino productions and practices (see also Cannell 1999). Examining the representation, performance style, and repertoire of the PC Band can shed light on important questions about the colonial process, on the role of exhibitions in this process, and the intersections of race and empire in a culturally-specific artistic form. Also, I endeavor to interpret the ways by which the Filipino musicians themselves, along with their much-respected conductor Loving, exercised agency, resistance, and creativity, transgressing the confines of America's racial and social hegemony.³

Racism and Acclaim for the Band

Shortly after the United States took possession of the Philippines, colonial military bands were formed to perform in official and ceremonial functions of the emerging colonial state. The most renowned organization, the Philippine Constabulary Band, was composed of enlisted Filipino soldiers recruited by the colonial regime. As a colonial paramilitary force, the PC was created with the aim of combating rebellions erupting throughout the archipelago that prevented the full implementation of U.S. colonial policy. Although manned by native troops, an enlisted American officer commanded each unit of the colonial military. Two such groups coexisted—in addition to the PC under the civilian colonial government, the Philippine Scouts under the

command of the U.S. Army also fought rebellions. Both military groups had their own marching bands. After the first year of its existence, the PC Band was sent to the United States to participate in the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, along with 200 other constabulary troops and 500 Philippine Scouts, to represent and serve as a model of "civilized" Filipinos.

To everyone's surprise, the newly formed brass band of "little brown men"⁴ and their African American conductor received two prestigious awards, a triumph of cultural achievement during a time when Filipinos as well as Blacks were deemed primitive and unfit for self-determination. The Band's extraordinary musical talents, sophisticated repertoire of European symphonic selections, professional character, and lively stage presence brought them an acclaim that rivaled more famous organizations at the fair, including the U.S. Marine Band and the John Philip Sousa Band. Audiences that packed the arena at their daily concerts and parades were especially delighted by the Band's numerous soloists who featured their individual virtuosity on piccolo, saxophone, and other instruments. The Band was in such high demand that they were allowed to leave the Fair in order to perform at several major cities in the U.S. at the request of various public officials. Well before the Fair's end, the Band had secured a place in musical history (figure 1).

Another Philippine military band was also a hit with Fair audiences. The Philippine Scouts Band was a smaller group directed by Eugene P. Fischer of the U.S. Army who programmed more popular tunes of the day and included ragtime music. One enthusiastic young fairgoer wrote:

The Philippine [Scouts] Band pleased me more than all the rest, they seemed to be natural born musicians. . . . I just felt like cheering to hear those little chaps playing "America," "Star Spangled Banner," [and] "Yankee Doodle". . . .They played these and a lot more of our patriotic songs, just like they had know [sic] them all of their lives and meant every bit of it. . . . I believe people will remember them when others are forgotten. (*The Diary of Laura Merritt*, quoted in Schwartz and Schwartz 2004, 3)

Although she demonstrated great enthusiasm for the band, the young teenage girl refers to the grown men as “little chaps,” a statement that reflected the ideology of “little brown brotherhood” and the trope of “benevolent assimilation.” Compared to the frightening, half-naked tribes people displaying “savage” behavior and uncontrolled sexuality preceding their arrival, the reserved rational military men playing patriotic songs were not only comprehensible, but also rather endearing. The girl applauded the quality of the Scouts Band’s performance and read into the musicians’ “patriotic” intent. This illusion of loyalty to the colonial power was precisely the aim in representations of colonial military bands.

As emblems of the nation, like national anthems, military bands symbolize modernity, sovereignty, nationhood, and state power. When viewed from the colonial setting, this symbolism is particularly complex

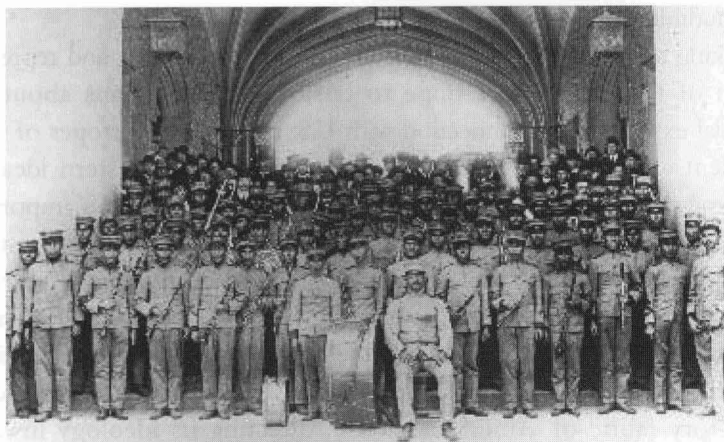


Figure 1. The Philippine Constabulary Band at the 1904 Fair. Their talented and respected African American conductor, Lt. Walter H. Loving, is seated in the front. With eighty members, the PC Band was the largest band at the Fair. Their repertoire of symphonic excerpts, overtures of European operas, and numerous soloists captured the hearts and ears of their audiences. While presented as examples of the successes of American colonial tutelage, the Filipino musicians were in fact products of a thriving centuries-old European-influenced musical tradition in the Philippines. Courtesy of the *St. Louis Public Library*.

because such icons served to project not so much the integrity of an independent nation, but rather the authority of imperial rule and an image of the conquering empire. In their article on Victorian brass bands in British colonies, Trevor Herbert and Margaret Sarkissian (1997, 169) explicate the ways by which the colonial military band served to “authenticate ideas of authority through military power.” Native subjects were paraded for every ceremony of the colonial state wearing identical military uniforms, marching in synchronized movements, and led by a White officer. Their repertoire consisted of “civilized” Western music performed on “technologically advanced” brass instruments. Thus, through the military and the military brass band, Euro-American aesthetics of civilization such as order, precision, and discipline imposed on and assimilated by subjugated brown male bodies were in themselves embodiments of the colonial process. Evidence of the colonial project’s success and merit, in this fashion, was made not only visual but also audible (figure 2).

Taking a critical approach to the composition, activities, and representation of the PC Band, I hope to raise crucial questions about the colonial experience in connection with U.S. racial politics, tropes of “benevolent assimilation,” the “civilizing mission,” and Western ideas of “progress.” The representation of the PC Band during an important historical moment both contests and reproduces the developing structures of American racism. The Band’s founder and only American conductor, Lieutenant (later Lieutenant Colonel) Loving, was a member of what is arguably American society’s most oppressed race. Loving’s leadership of the colonial military band reveals the complex and contradictory fabric of American racism, directing its ideology inwards toward its own people as well as outwards toward Filipinos. The extraordinary participation and collaboration of the PC Band and Loving at the 1904 Fair underscores the inconsistencies of American racism and racial ideologies, and the conflicting agendas of various agents within the colonial apparatus; it was another instance that contradicted the paradigm of Western racial and cultural superiority (cf. Kramer 1999).

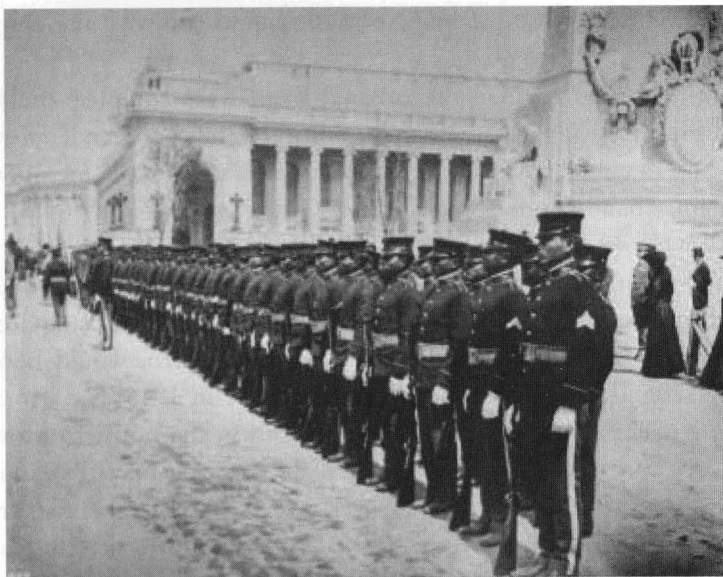


Figure 2. The Philippine Scouts standing at attention, dressed in identical uniforms, and led by a White American officer. Through the military, Euro-American aesthetics of civilization such as order, precision, masculinity, and discipline imposed on and assimilated by subjugated brown male bodies were in themselves embodiments of the colonial process. Courtesy of the *St. Louis Public Library*.

Filipino Band Traditions and the Founding of the PC Band

In 1901 Secretary of the Philippine Commission William H. Taft attended a concert given by the Black troops of the 48th Regiment Chorus and Band, U.S. Volunteer Infantry. He was so impressed by the performance that he asked to meet the man "responsible for such beautiful music" (Richardson 1983, 8). When he met Loving, Taft promised that he would soon establish a military band for the colonial government and appoint Loving as conductor. Keeping his promise, Taft summoned Loving back to the Philippines in February 1902 to serve as a sub-inspector in the newly established Philippine Constabulary (*ibid.*). Loving was assigned as commanding officer and conductor of the PC Band on 8 December 1902 and for several weeks rigor-

ously auditioned scores of Filipino musicians to compose the corps of the Band.

The men who formed the original Band were some of the most promising musicians of their time. Some of them descended from a long line of small town band musicians or were former members of regimental bands under Spanish rule. Others were already enlisted in infantry bands under U.S. control, and a few were “trumpeters who had served under Aguinaldo” (ibid., 9). Most men came from or lived in the Manila area, but a few were from the Ilocos, Visayas, and other places. One band musician, Pvt. Pedro B. Navarro, would become Loving’s right hand man and his first successor in 1916. Navarro, who was my maternal great grandfather, was born in the northern province of Ilocos Sur in the town of Tagudin. Recognizing Navarro’s musical talent, a local priest brought the seven-year-old boy to the convent of San Agustin in Manila where he trained formally in music. He studied with the master composer Marcelo Adonay from 1894 to 1898 and excelled in harmony and violin (Bañas 1969, 98). Adonay (1848–1928) himself was a product of a thriving musical school in Manila founded in 1742 by Spanish priests trained in methods used in the Conservatory of Madrid (Maceda 1973, 219–20). Outside of religious institutions, European classical music was taught in boys’ colleges, normal schools for boys, the Ateneo, the University of Santo Tomas, the Beaterio Colleges for girls, and also privately. Filipino elites and intellectuals actively supported the performances of concerts and operas by individuals, visiting organizations, and local art and literary societies with musical components. *Ilustrados* (educated elite who studied in Europe) brought back and kept in touch with the musical scene in Europe. Orchestras performed for a widely popular native form of opera called *sarsuela* (ibid., 224). In the PC Band Navarro’s main instrument was the piccolo, but he could play all the stringed and wind instruments; he also composed band music.

Outside of cosmopolitan Manila, provincial band musicians, passing on the tradition from father to son, played a vital role in the fabric of Philippine life. Town bands participated in “every rite of a town’s existence from birth to baptism, to marriage and death” (de Leon 1977, 1). Each regiment of the Spanish army also had a band and every

provincial church had a choir. As early as 1810 regimental bands paved the way for civilian brass bands (Rubio 1977, 4). During fiestas and other celebrations, town bands would play all night in a *banggaan* (literally, clash or collision) that would frequently expand into the "so-called '*tambakan*,' a duel of bands lasting for several . . . days and nights" (ibid.). The musicians would seat themselves in a circle "where everybody could follow the signs of the '*bombista*' in the center" (ibid.). These innovations made clear that, while European-style music began as an imposition of Spanish rule, it developed into distinctive Filipino cultural forms and practices.

With American colonial rule came dramatic shifts in performance style, instrumentation, costume, and repertoire as civilian town bands began to pattern themselves after American military bands. Eventually, silver- and gold-plated American instruments replaced European-brand instruments, wooden piccolos and flutes were discontinued for metal ones, and new Ziljian brand cymbals replaced Chinese cymbals (ibid.). Filipino music scholar Hilarion F. Rubio (1977, 4) described other remarkable renovations that took place after the influence of American aesthetics:

Since the advent of the Americans, the Filipino bands had undergone transformations in their uniforms, instrumentation, discipline, performance and music interpretation. The more ornate and clownish uniforms of the Spanish period were changed into simple, elegant ones. . . .

Too much elaborated and ornamented articulation in the playing of yester years are tabooed today. Over-expressive interpretation [sic] and sluggishness in tempo of by-gone days are now substituted by more elegant execution and high-spirited movement.

Rubio's portrayal of band transformations before and after the change of colonial powers captured the perceived benefits of American rule compared with the seemingly idiosyncratic Spanish ways. He positioned Spanish-style bands as archaic in dress, instrumentation, playing styles, behavior, and aesthetics. Spanish costumes were "clownish" and "ornate," while American ones were "simple" and "elegant." What could be considered as truly native developments in playing styles were

deemed too elaborated, ornamented, and overexpressive. To Rubio, American tutelage transformed Filipino bands into orderly disciplined entities, embracing the traits of modernity and moving towards “progress.”

Walter H. Loving and Black Soldiers in the Philippines

As the founder and only American conductor of the PC Band, Loving holds an important place in Philippine musical history. His immense musical talent, determination for excellence, close rapport with Filipinos, and the fact that he was a Black American during a racially oppressive regime are aspects not lost on Filipinos even today. Walter Howard Loving was born in Lovingson, Virginia, in 1872, a child of former slaves. His mother Emily died when he was just two years old and he grew up in Washington, D.C., with his older sister Julia, who worked in the household of Theodore Roosevelt (Richardson 1983, 5). After graduating from the M Street High School, Loving enlisted in the Army at St. Paul, Minnesota, in June 1893 and was assigned to the 24th Infantry. The 24th was stationed in the southwest, half at Fort Stanton, New Mexico, and half at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Loving spent over three years at Stanton, and about eighteen months at Fort Douglas, Utah. He left the 24th in Tampa, Florida, when his five-year enlistment expired in June and before the regiment deployed to Cuba. Loving then joined the 8th Voluntary Infantry (1898–1899) and later the 48th U.S. Volunteer Infantry (1899–1901), both of which were Black regiments raised for the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, respectively. He served as the chief musician in both regiments, making him responsible for selecting and organizing their bands.⁵

Before volunteering to serve in the Philippines, Loving had attended the prestigious New England Conservatory of Music in Boston where he excelled in music theory, composition, and cornet performance. His major professor J. Wallace Goodrich wrote: “during your course of studies . . . your progress was very remarkable. . . . (The) mark that you attained as a cornet soloist has never been surpassed since this institution

organized its special course for the cornet" (quoted in *ibid.*, 7). With only one term left to graduation Loving chose to reenlist in the army to fight in the Philippine-American war.

Initially the U.S. Army resisted enlisting Negro soldiers and sending them to the Philippines, fearing they might be sympathetic to the plight of "their colored Filipino cousins" (Gatewood 1972, 560).⁶ In 1899 President McKinley authorized two volunteer regiments with Black company officers for service in the islands in order to "soothe the hostile feeling among Negroes" and to recover the support of Black leaders and the electorate (*ibid.*). Antiimperialist Black leaders, such as Booker T. Washington and the more outspoken Bishop Henry M. Turner, spoke out against American aggression in Cuba and in the Philippines (*ibid.*, 558). Although many were dedicated to serving their country, Black soldiers resented both the brutality with which White officers and soldiers treated Filipinos and the deployment of the same epithets used on Blacks such as "nigger" and "black devils" to refer to Filipinos (Kramer, n.d.). This familiar abuse of Filipinos by Whites strengthened Black sympathy, prompting several soldiers to join the Filipino revolutionary army and fight against American military aggression (Powell 1998, 9).

Filipino fighters, aware of the treatment of Blacks in the U.S., encouraged soldiers to join them by distributing posters addressed to "The Colored American Soldier" (Gatewood 1972, 650–51). The most famous case is that of David Fagan who accepted a commission under General Lacuna of the revolutionary forces and led Filipino troops on several successful missions against American forces (Powell 1998, 9). Upon his surrender in 1901, Lacuna refused to deliver Fagan because the U.S. Army rejected his stipulation to treat Fagan as a prisoner of war. After the official declaration of the end of the war on 4 July 1902, and despite continued rebellions until 1913, twelve hundred out of six thousand African American soldiers chose to stay in Philippines (*ibid.*, 12).

While many Black Americans were sympathetic to Filipinos, the relationship between them was not a simple one. For example, some Blacks resented "McKinley's preferential treatment of the Filipinos," while at the same time others "condemned McKinley for thwarting

(Filipino) aspirations for independence" (Gatewood 1972, 561). Within a highly stratified Filipino society, it was unlikely that the mestizo elite (descended from mixed Spanish, Chinese, and native ancestry), who prized and protected the markers of their social class, would have related to Black soldiers in the same ways revolutionaries did.

To glimpse ways by which the discrimination of Blacks influenced the personal and professional relationships between the Filipino bandsmen and Loving would be fascinating and enlightening. Unfortunately I lack any first-hand accounts by these men and thus can only imagine how the situation produced tensions or strengthened bonds. I have heard many stories from Navarro's daughter (my grandmother Irene N. Gamalinda) and his grandson, Emilio N. Gamalinda, of the great respect that the bandsmen had for Loving as a leader, musician, and officer. He was described as a very strict, principled, and compassionate man, and the bandsmen were fiercely loyal to him.⁷ My great-aunt, Leonora Navarro, related that Loving would often eat dinner with their family.⁸ In addition to their profound relationship as musicians, Loving's command of Spanish certainly fortified their connection. During those times many Filipinos used Spanish as a language of resistance against American hegemony, since many Americans in Manila could not speak it. By using Spanish to communicate the bandsmen and Loving created for themselves a space for camaraderie and resistance.

The Philippine Constabulary as a Marginalized Force

Around early 1901 tensions were already high between contending factions within the American government who desired a military-controlled rather than a civilian-controlled colonial structure in the Philippines. Determined to wrest political control of the Philippines from the U.S. Department of War and the military establishment, Taft's regime began to recruit and incorporate Filipinos into what was ultimately a collaborationist government. Filipinos included native troops in the constabulary as well as political elites in Manila and other provinces. While the colonial government began to consolidate its power through local channels and the creation of a civilian-controlled colonial military

force, the U.S. War Department continued to control the U.S. Army as well as the Philippine Scouts.

Antiimperialist outcry and vociferous demands to send American troops home prevented an increase in the number of U.S. soldiers needed to deal with the uprisings that continued to escalate throughout the archipelago. To deal with this problem and following the strategy of European colonialists, the U.S. Army recruited natives to fight the increasing number of "insurgents." In part this strategy manipulated traditional rivalries between various "tribes" of the islands. Displaced from their former position as soldiers in the Spanish regiments, Macabebe recruits from Pampanga province joined to form the first group of Philippine Scouts on 10 September 1899 (Laurie 1995, 48).

By 1901 over five thousand men joined the Scouts after an act of Congress initiated the full-scale recruitment of Filipinos from Luzon and the Visayas (Laurie 1989, 182). President Roosevelt, the U.S. War Department, and Congress were gratified that the Scouts troops would take half the pay of American troops (Laurie 1995, 49). Filipino Scouts working within the colonial regime were also effective propaganda, demonstrating to the critics at home the benefits of American rule and projecting both to expansionists and antiimperialists the eventuality of Filipinos becoming willing collaborators in the colonial enterprise. Whatever their motives for joining the colonial army, Filipino Scouts took great pride in their status as soldiers. At the St. Louis Fair, newspapers described their arrival with admiration: "They have square shoulders, stand perfectly erect, look the soldier from head to foot, and work with vim and determination . . . no one can molest them without subjecting himself to the dangers of the bayonet . . ." (*St. Louis Republic*, 18 April 1904).

When the American military finally turned over the government to civilian authorities, a police force was formed to work as a counterpart to the military-controlled Scouts. On 8 August 1901 the Insular Constabulary was founded (Cojuangco et al. 1991, 8), but immediately there were tensions between the two military forces, magnifying the power struggles between the War Department and Taft's civilian government. The Army and the Scouts ridiculed the Constabulary in numerous ways:

The Constabulary was handicapped . . . by its very corps name. The "I.C." of its collar ornaments was a source of great laughter; for the term "I.C.," in army parlance, means "Inspected and Condemned." So it was as the "condemned corps, without inspection" that the Constabulary took to the field. (Hurley 1938, 48)

The U.S. Army jealously guarded their uniform style and, while the Scouts were uniformed like American soldiers sans the latest weapons, Constabulary patrolmen were forbidden to wear uniforms similar to the regular army: "The material adopted was a soft, cottony fabric, steel-gray in color. *Camano* cloth, it was called. The shoulder ornaments and commissioned ratings were fantastic and wholly unmilitary" (ibid.).

The constables were always outnumbered and disadvantaged compared to the insurgents. The colonial regime issued primitive black powder shotguns to them while the rebels used more sophisticated German Mausers (Cojuangco et al. 1991, 16). Each constable lived off an average expenditure of US\$250 per year, paid for by the colonial government, in comparison to the US\$1,000 spent each year on the regular army trooper in the Philippines (Hurley 1938, 53). In addition to a minute compensation, they had no pension, no relief for widows, and no disability pay (Cojuangco et al. 1991, 14). Constables had to buy their own food through a *vale* or credit system wherever they were stationed (ibid., 32). Thus, to many the Philippine Constabulary was considered a sort of "unwanted, orphaned child" of the military (Hurley 1938, 34). Not until more than a year later did army hostilities subside enough to allow constables to adopt khaki uniforms as well as standardized commissioned ratings for the officers. Into this collaborationist, marginalized organization the PC Band was born, perhaps making their success all the more unexpected.

By May 1903 the PC Band performed its first concert, with members numbering eighty men. The specific occasion of this performance was to honor the two members of the Exposition Board assigned to search the Philippines for entries to the 1904 Fair. The two were both botanists working at American institutions, Dr. William P. Wilson and Dr. Gustave Niederlen. After the concert Wilson approached Loving and stated the Board's intentions to include the Band as part of the

Philippine Exhibit. As quoted by Raymundo C. Bañas (1969, 101), a Filipino music scholar, Wilson praised the Band:

I was surprised and satisfied with the musical talent you possess . . . I have had the opportunity tonight to admire your musical talent and your natural predisposition to art. You should take into account that the advancement in music can only be acquired primarily through the talent and genius that you have, and in the second place, through diligent practice.

Wilson presupposed that Filipinos, as well as African Americans, were biologically inclined to music (although he used the term “art”), thus casting them as emotional and inferior rather than rational and civilized. He indicated to the Band that the singular way of “acquiring” advancement and success was to harness and discipline their natural resources and labor under American supervision and guidance. This standpoint reflected President McKinley’s ideology of benevolent assimilation, requiring Filipino obedience in order to “prepare” them for self-rule. By filtering the process of colonization, which required pacifying and subjugating the natives through “assimilation,” the trope of “benevolence” was used as political capital for American imperialists. In this way the very principles on which America was founded would not be contradicted.

At the St. Louis World’s Fair

Just over a year after its founding the PC Band was sent to the St. Louis World’s Fair, also known as the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, to represent the successes of America’s “civilizing mission” in the Philippines. The U.S. Department of War constructed a costly and extravagant 47-acre exhibit on the Philippines designed in form and content to defend and promote the colonization of the remote territory to a divided American public. Exposition organizers working with the colonial government, including controversial government anthropologists such as William McGee, brought more than twelve hundred men, women, and children, tons of materials and artifacts, and livestock on a long and arduous journey from the Philippines to St. Louis (Rydell

1984, 166–67). Each “tribe” was displayed in its recreated “native setting” and visually presented what is now well known as a flawed/folkloric evolutionary hierarchy from what was perceived to be the most savage to the barbaric, from the semi-civilized on to the civilized. This mode of presentation infused the exhibit with scientific and educational authenticity. It also reflected former President McKinley’s ideology of “benevolent assimilation” and the imperialist trope of “manifest destiny” by impressively presenting America’s civilizing progress. Filipinos were required to seem savage, needing the civilizing guidance of the United States, while also proving to be useful and productive subjects in the same way that the marginalized position of Blacks and Native Americans were imagined in the domestic sphere (ibid., 176). Viewing stations were set up for fairgoers to scrutinize the different “tribes” of Filipinos going about their daily activities, such as preparing meals, making otherwise mundane activities exotic and ordinary events as spectacle (Vergara 1995, 119). Disgusted but titillated, fairgoers could watch the so-called headhunting Igorot behaving in “barbaric” ways, reenacting warfare, marriage rites, and funerals and slaughtering dogs for food. Nearby the disciplined Scouts and Constabulary executed military drills and their respective bands performed Western concert music. As Paul Kramer (1999, 94) argues, this shockingly dramatic contrast allowed fairgoers to “look down a foreshortened evolutionary tunnel boring deep into the prehistoric past” in order to marvel at the progress of the United States in enlightening the “savages.” Upon the arrival of the Philippine troops, the *St. Louis Republic* (18 April 1904) reported that there was “nothing savage about them” and that they were “none of your dog-eating, head-hunting half-naked” Igorot. Therefore, the representation of the Philippine Constabulary Band within the context of America’s world’s fair was intended to exemplify the pinnacle of the colonial state’s cultural progress and achievement.

The PC Band was an immediate hit with Fair audiences, but one particular event catapulted the Band into historical legend. For reasons unknown, but considered by several second-hand accounts as an act of sabotage, the lights went out and the concert hall was plunged into darkness as Loving gave the downbeat to the William Tell Overture.

The Band, however, did not miss a beat and performed the hour-long concert in total darkness; the only thing visible to the Band and the audience was the white handkerchief tied to the tip of Loving's baton (Richardson 1983, 3). Because the audience was so impressed with this performance, the Band was awarded second prize at the competition and Sergeant Navarro received a bronze medal for his performance on the piccolo (*ibid.*, 10). The legend of the triumph at the Fair has endured in the literature and folklore on the Band. To Filipinos the Band's triumph was a source of pride—against difficult odds in which the cards were stacked against Filipinos, including a seeming act of sabotage, they succeeded through their own capabilities. However, to the American fairgoers the Band must have appeared fantastic, confirming the incredible feat of Americans to make musicians out of "savages." While the Band succeeded through their own merit, American colonial officials were quick to take credit for such achievements, thus presenting a misleading cultural validation of the colonization of the Philippines.

Although both the Scouts Band and the Constabulary Band were popular at the Fair, there were marked distinctions between the two as revealed by their different repertoires. The Scouts Band, conducted by a White officer, performed ragtime in their program while the Constabulary Band did not. The PC Band's core pieces mostly were excerpts by European symphonic composers such as Verdi, Tchaikowsky, Bizet, Wagner, and Weber. Although concert bands that featured symphonic excerpts were regarded as a more sophisticated musical group, brass bands in general did not have the high culture status of symphony orchestras during the early-twentieth century (Levine 1990, 265). Symphony-goers abhorred the practice of excising selections from "legitimate" European music because this allowed the lower classes access to elite music and culture. The upper class fought to maintain social distinctions through European symphonic music since Europe was still, for American high society, the location of elite culture. As a case in point, elite American audiences did not consider American composers in the symphonic idiom "legitimate" composers (*ibid.*). Overseas in Europe, however, brass bands and ragtime music were tremendously popular among the masses. Although many White Ameri-

cans did not want Black music to represent them to Europe and the world, no other form of music was as distinctly recognizable as American. To the exasperation of American elites, the crisis of an ambiguous American identity was being mediated through ragtime and jazz in spite of its suppression in the cultural realm of high society in the United States.

The most famous band composer John Philip Sousa, also present at the 1904 Fair, incorporated ragtime into his band's repertoire despite his contempt of it: "most of it made you want to bite your grandmother" (Bierley 1986, 142). Sousa believed that ragtime was a music that inspired a most savage and depraved act and, thus, was created by a culture of similar values. Rather than lose those audiences and exclude Black music from his repertoire, he drew on his musical capital to legitimize ragtime music: "I have washed its face (and) put a clean dress on it . . . It is now an attractive thing, entirely different from the *fronzy-headed* thing of the gutter" (ibid., emphasis added). Sousa made a racial insinuation in his attempt to justify his relationship with Black music and suggested that ragtime could be civilized through his intervention.

Notwithstanding his hostility, Sousa was compelled to incorporate Black music into his life and musical activities. Because Loving did not have such capital, I argue, his performance of ragtime would have brought consequences to his smooth participation at the Fair. Whatever his *musical* reasons for not programming ragtime (perhaps a bias towards his classical training), in this context I suspect that his performance of ragtime would have been seen as threatening to White audiences. As long as Loving and the bandsmen operated within acceptable parameters without overtly threatening the existing social order, they were allowed inside and commended in the military, the concert hall, and historical record.

Tensions and Transgressions

Contending visions of race and progress ruptured at situations when fairgoers and participants traversed these as yet fluid and intersecting boundaries, out of the control of the Fair's agents (Kramer 1999, 90). Clashes involving the Scouts and Constabulary soldiers emerged when

they proved to be *too* civilized by accepting social invitations from White women. Schoolteachers from St. Louis invited the men to accompany them on tours of the fairgrounds and the city. Fear of non-White male sexuality preying on White women, anxiety over racial contamination, and insecurity about their social dominance easily inflamed White males.

Affronted headlines exclaimed, "Filipinos Become a Fad with Foolish Young Girls" (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 3 July 1904). White men protected by Jim Crow laws initiated physical violence, kicking the men to the ground and hurling the epithet "nigger" to situate them (Rydell 1984, 177). Although this particular term was thought of as being aimed specifically at African Americans, European and American Whites have deployed it against physiologically different but similarly oppressed socioeconomic groups (see Takaki 2000; Pieterse 1992). In a way that did not transgress racist schemas, Chief Clarence R. Edwards of the Bureau of Insular Affairs denounced these epithets "in view of the fact that there are none of the negro [sic] blood in the Scouts or Constabulary" (quoted in Rydell 1984, 177). Endorsing the Whites' brutality, headlines read "Scouts Lose First Battle with Marines," implying that there were encounters yet to come (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 7 July 1904). The Marines, according to Rydell (1984, 177), were "determined to show the Filipinos that the lynch law was not limited to southern blacks."

Finally tensions exploded in a fatal clash between St. Louis Whites and Filipino soldiers during which one White was fatally stabbed (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 24 July 1904). Regardless of who started the violence, this fatal act in the minds of the White American public seemed to shatter the illusion of the colonial government's claims of successfully civilizing the savages and demonstrated the very brutal effects of enforcing a social order based on race.

Amplifying the perceived differences between the two "civilized" military groups, Laurie (1995, 53) writes that the fatal brawl "involved members of the Philippine Constabulary" and that the "Scouts, it was reported, had left the scene at the first sign of trouble." By making the "barbaric" and "civilized" groups markedly different from each other, tensions between various "civilized" groups were concealed by Fair officials, giving the impression of unity in the U.S. effort in the Philippines.

More than 400 Scouts attended the Fair compared with the 280 Constables, but the two groups together accounted for more than two-thirds of the 1,100 Filipinos at the Fair. Major General George W. Davis, who commanded the Philippine Division, was at first hesitant to send the Scouts to the Fair. He pointed out the serious risks engendered by the "hostility that existed between the different native units at home, hostility that often resulted in open conflict and bloodshed" that could rupture abroad (*ibid.*, 49). The fighting was particularly hostile between the Tagalog and Macabebe Scouts units. However, Taft was in favor of sending the Scouts because it put the financial burden on the U.S. federal government, costing the Philippine treasury nothing (*ibid.*, 50). In order to bolster his position, Taft also pointed out that the number of Scouts desertions was well below the number of desertions by Americans in the Philippines (*ibid.*). Scouts troops were carefully screened and selected from four companies (organized by "tribe") composed of Ilocano, Tagalog, Visayan, and Macabebe to form one unit. This became a temporary organization created solely for the purpose of sending the Scouts to the Fair—they were officially designated as the First Provisional Battalion, Philippine Scouts, U.S. Army.

The Scouts were given new uniforms and new weapons intended only for display. In the field they had never actually used the new and more effective Krag-Jorgensen rifles. The Scouts were ordered by the War Department to perform many tasks in addition to their hours of daily drills and guard duty patrolling the Philippine Reservation. They had to be a firefighting crew and work on the grounds as carpenters and laborers, building many of the exhibit's pavilions, the parade ground, the fence surrounding the camp, and the ditches for water and sewage (*ibid.*, 51).

In addition to antagonisms between the U.S. Army-controlled Scouts and the colonial regime's Constables, the very different treatment of various Filipino groups at the Fair also created acute tensions. For example, Scouts were allowed to wander the fairgrounds while the "tribal" peoples were prohibited from leaving the Philippine Reservation. In one case, the Igorot protested against unjust treatment by "loudly beating their drums during Scout drill exhibitions" (quoted in *ibid.*). Scouts officer Major Johnston threatened to depart the Fair with

his men if the Igorot were “not disciplined and brought under control” (*ibid.*).

To accentuate the fairgoers’ perceptions of dichotomy between barbarity and civilization, representatives and behaviors that bridged the two poles were excluded. Units of Igorot Scouts and Constables wearing military style jackets with their loincloths and traditional headdress as well as Muslim Constables who were given modified headgear that allowed them to touch their heads to the ground in prayer were not displayed. American adaptations to Filipino elements of dress also were hidden from view—White officers in some units adopted the traditional Igorot headdress as part of their uniforms (see Cojuangco et al. 1991, 26). To incorporate representations such as these would be to admit that an indigenous Philippine identity, one that did not erase local distinctiveness, could be in itself civilized. It would go against the claims that civilization could be attained only through American tutelage and assimilation.⁹

The representation of the “civilized” PC Band, within the evolutionary and racist schema of the Fair, presented contradictory messages. Loving, as a Negro officer in military uniform, might have been perceived by audience members as having been assimilated and made successful by American tutelage and training. He seemed to confirm the trope of “benevolence” by embodying America’s democratic rather than racist principles. In sharp contrast, African American groups were kept from participating in the fair and their representation was limited to the nostalgic “Old Plantation” exhibit. The few Black fairgoers that did attend were excluded from water fountains and restaurants (Kramer 1999, 101). By eluding certain social boundaries, I argue that Loving’s participation provided an instance of rupture in the evolutionary narrative of the Fair.

Since the racial hierarchy relegated Blacks to the lower ranks, Loving stood as a challenge to the paradigm created by American anthropologists at St. Louis and institutionalized by American domestic law. I interpret Loving’s presence and participation as a subtle yet noticeable critique of the Fair’s overall message of racial superiority. In fact, I found no references to Loving’s race in any of the public documents of the Fair, suggesting that, since he could not be contained in the dis-

course of evolutionary hierarchy, his racial identity was better left unidentified. Had he transgressed certain social and cultural boundaries, his Blackness would have been highlighted as a major factor. I can only speculate as to how White audiences would have reacted had he performed ragtime (without Sousa's "whitewashing" of the syncopated rhythms) or emerging forms of jazz in his repertoire. But, as part of the Philippine exhibit, Loving evaded certain restrictions and transgressed the social order created to dominate Blacks.

Outside and Beyond the Fair

In addition to their busy schedule at the Fair, the PC Band took several side trips to perform concerts at the request of various organizations. On 15 August 1904 they traveled to Louisville, Kentucky, to perform for the biennial conclave, Knights of Pythias (*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 15 August 1904). In September the Band visited Chicago and Milwaukee where they were featured at the Wisconsin State Fair. Speaking of their tremendous popularity, Secretary of the Wisconsin Commission Grant Thomas stated:

Twenty thousand citizens of Milwaukee, who were attracted by the reputation of the Philippine musicians, attended the opening day of the State Fair, while heretofore the heaviest attendance on the first day has never been more than 2,000. (*The St. Louis Republic*, 8 September 1904, 3, col. 6)

Several cities invited the band to perform after the conclusion of the World's Fair, but for some reason the Band declined the offer.

Before they sailed off from San Francisco in late November, two band members were accidentally left behind in Topeka, Kansas. The *St. Louis Republic* reported that the two men, Pvt. Pedro Navarro and Pvt. Rafael Principe, got off the train to look around the city and were left behind. The two only had 20 cents each and had to telegraph their officers for funds to pay for their expenses until they could take the next train. The transport from San Francisco back to Manila was delayed a couple of days before the two men arrived to join their group (*St. Louis Republic*, 30 November 1904, 1, col. 7).¹⁰

Due to their popularity, the PC Band would return to the U.S. three more times to perform in various venues. In American expositions the Band was presented within the framework of the varying agendas of American and Filipino officials. However, on their concert tours of major cities, such as New York, Boston, and Chicago, the Band performed in venues that framed them differently. On their second trip to the U.S. in 1909, the Band transformed into a stringed orchestra and played in symphonic concert halls, a space that Lawrence Levine (1990) identifies as the sacred location of Western high culture.

Discourse created and reflected through newspapers seemed to confirm the stereotypes about the Philippines and Filipinos created by and disseminated through the St. Louis Fair. These became absorbed into what Pierre Bourdieu (1977) refers to as the *doxa* or taken-for-granted reality of White domination. For example, one astonished newspaper reporter wrote: "The Oriental musicians . . . have no freak instruments among their number" (*Washington Post*, 6 March 1909), reflecting American expectations of the backwardness of Filipinos and revealing how the "savage" stereotypes were more powerful than other representations. The *New York Times* (8 March 1909, 4, col. 2) reported that the Band had members who several years ago "had never seen an instrument now play Wagner and Beethoven," erasing Filipinos' long history of producing European music centuries prior to American rule. The report also described the Bandsmen as being from different Philippine tribes: "As for the men themselves, they all look much alike, and every one of them is a pure blood [sic] Filipino, most of them being recruited from the Tagalog, Visayan, Bicole [sic], Ilocano, and Pompangan [sic] tribes of Luzon and the Visayas" (ibid.). While the reporter tied together ancestry and nationality, ignoring the relatively recent U.S.-imposed geopolitical boundaries on the archipelago, he also employed a strategy of denying the idea of an independent Philippines by hinting at the ethnic heterogeneity of Filipinos as a disarray of "tribal" alliances. This reasoning allowed Americans to argue for a policy of assimilation and defer the Filipinos' right to self-government. Nevertheless, the PC Band again defied the formulated theory. The men were from diverse "tribes" and "races," including conductor Loving, but they worked and collaborated in harmony, both musically and in human

terms. Finally, while the reporter meticulously identified the racial sub-categories of Filipinos, there was no mention of Loving's race, rendering this uncontainable fact conspicuously invisible.¹¹

Conclusion

In this article I have attempted to bring a critical perspective to the well-known triumphs of the Philippine Constabulary Band at the 1904 Fair in order to complicate understandings of their participation and representation to Fair audiences, Fair officials, and other Filipinos. After the Fair they traveled three more times to the U.S., including the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific International Exhibition in 1909, the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in 1915, and the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition in 1939. The Band marched at William H. Taft's presidential inauguration in 1909 and performed in many major cities in the U.S. From these different sites the Filipino bandsmen as well as Loving, as successful examples of American military tutelage, were able to transgress the intertwined but distinct boundaries of class, race, and nationalism in both the U.S. and Manila American society. But while they did embody these aspirations, a closer reading dismantles the benevolent and civilizing pretense of American racism. In Manila the Band's context was equally complex—American colonialists as well as different classes of Filipinos framed the PC Band and Loving differently from audiences in the U.S.¹²

By exploring their participation in different circumstances, I sought to underscore the ways in which seemingly tidy identities of "collaborator," "revolutionary," "military men," "Black," "White," and "Filipino" all contain fluctuating and even contradictory degrees of complicity, resistance, and nationalist sentiment. I assert that the Band and Loving succeeded tremendously in their endeavors, bringing musical excellence to new heights amid a powerful discourse that deemed Filipinos and Blacks incapable of independence and thus undeserving of freedom. American reviews raved about the Band's performances of music, comparing them to the best bands in the world. The Band could not have been so praiseworthy and inspiring if the musicians were simply "behaving biologically" or mimicking. I suggest that the musicians' pro-

found understanding of their work expressed through their imagination and agency must have exposed to their audiences, if briefly, the inconsistencies boring through American racial ideology. Music, in this way, did not only fulfill a pleasure but also created a space for deeper understanding, recognizing human dignity within a complex colonial encounter.

Notes

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1. "Igorot" is a broad and once derogatory term for the diverse groups that inhabit the Cordillera region (see Scott 1982).

2. In his work on international expositions, Robert Rydell argues that the U.S. propagated particular views of national progress and race in order to legitimize social and economic exploitation at home and abroad in its newly created empire (Rydell 1984; Rydell et al. 2000).

3. I develop my interpretations through newspaper accounts and some second-hand ethnographic accounts, since neither the bandsmen nor Lieutenant Loving left first-hand accounts about the 1904 Fair. Unfortunately, I have not found any extant recordings of the Band's performances from 1904.

4. William H. Taft referred to Filipinos as "our little brown brothers" in order to create a seemingly paternalistic and benevolent relationship with them, disguising its violent qualities.

5. I wish to thank military historian Roger D. Cunningham for this information as well as other corrections to the military details in this paper. More detailed information on Loving's military career is documented in Schubert (1995, 271) and in the Walter H. Loving Papers at Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Center.

6. Gatewood (1972) presents the range of opinions and debates in the Black community toward American expansion and imperialism in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines during the war with Spain. He also discusses the ways in which these debates informed and influenced Black participation in the military, and how they changed over time.

7. In a 1980 monumental interview by Dr. Claiborne T. Richardson with PC bandmen recruited to play in the 1939 San Francisco exposition, José Baldevarona narrated a story in which he tried to help Loving escape from the Japanese in 1944. However, as an extremely principled, ethical military man Loving refused because he had already promised to report to Japanese authorities twice a week for letting him return to his home with his wife under house arrest, after Filipinos petitioned for the arrangement. Loving and his wife Edith (also African American) later were imprisoned in an internment camp, before Loving was executed by the Japanese Army. To read about Loving's long career in the Philippines, see Richardson 1983.

8. She was very young when she first met Loving. During the Japanese occupation, she would accompany Navarro to Loving's home on Mabini Street in the Ermita district of Manila where he was under house arrest.

9. Speaking on current contexts in the U.S., Renato Rosaldo (1993, 212) states that the message from White dominant society seems to be "either join the mainstream or stay in your ghettos, barrios, and reservations, but don't try to be both mobile and cultural."

10. Many thanks to Rick and Iris Schwartz for sending me these newspaper reports. Their work on bands at the 1904 Fair was extremely helpful to this article.

11. So far, I have found only one direct reference to Loving's race in all the newspapers during the time period that I am researching: "the Philippine Constabulary Band under the leadership of Captain W. H. Loving, a full-blood [sic] American negro [sic], arrived on the steamer Manchuria yesterday" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 February 1916). The verbiage reflected the categories used by eugenicists at the exposition.

12. In a larger work I treat the Band's participation in three other American expositions (1909, 1915, and 1939) and their context in the Philippines, including competition with other Filipino bands. As an American-sponsored organization, the PC Band's status as the Philippines' preeminent musical group was downplayed. Nationalist response highlighted the triumph of native ingenuity, as reflected in this statement by Teodoro M. Kalaw:

On Sunday, everyone played *William Tell*. The best player was the Banda de Pasig, which was repeatedly applauded. This band has already garnered laurels abroad. Although the Constabulary Band had more instruments, more men, two directors, more time to rehearse, the Pasig Band did better. (*El Renacimiento*, 1 March 1908)

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