

Up from empire: Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee, and Pan-Africanism in the age of U.S. and
European imperialism

by

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Abstract

Since Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" speech, as it was critically called by W.E.B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington has become a controversial figure in Black history. While critics of Washington, including Du Bois, chided him as an accommodationist acquiescing to white societal demands, including imperial powers that viewed Washington's speech as justification for subordination of colonial peoples, a deeper look at Washington's vision of the Hampton-Tuskegee model shows how Washington viewed technical education as a solution to elevating the status of Black peoples by building diasporic connections.

While these relationships were forged within the context of empire-building, they were not simply the product of imperialist designs. Instead, they were created largely by the agency of Black people themselves. Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee were vested in helping Black peoples in the pursuit of education, full citizenship, and economic independence, all crucial markers of freedom. Washington hoped that the Hampton-Tuskegee model would help create a cadre of future Black leaders. Since US imperialism coincided with European imperialism in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, rather than waging a counteroffensive to imperialism, many Afro-Diasporic subjects sought to take advantage of the opportunities created by the emerging imperial structure. These initiatives illustrate the complex interplay between diasporization, or the process by which diasporas are made, how racial solidarity is perceived and what the barriers are to achieving it, and different forms of empire-building in this period.

This work will examine how by working within imperialism's discourse, Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee's teachers, and its supporters used the Hampton-Tuskegee model to uplift Africans, African Americans, Afro-Puerto Rico, and Afro-Cubans and how it shaped larger

diasporic connections. Lastly, this paper will look at how the Hampton-Tuskegee model continued and evolved after Washington' death in 1915.

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Andrew Orr

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents Craig and Christie Smith.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

In a March 15, 1906, article in *The Independent* Booker T. Washington, the principal of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, argued that Africa needed industrial education in Africa.

The constantly increasing demand for trained men and teachers of the negro race from colonial governments and from great private enterprises...which are seeking to fit the native peoples to meet the new demands of the world's industry and commerce. All of these things indicate, I am inclined to believe, a growing impression among practical administrators of colonial affairs, as well as among students and missionaries, that the problem of dealing with the weaker races is fundamentally one of industrial education. The surest way of preserving these more primitive people from the evils which the higher civilization invariably brings in its train, is to develop in them talents which will make them useful and inculcate those habits of life which will cause them to be respected.¹

By 1906, Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee Institute had active connections in Latin America (Cuba and Puerto Rico) and Africa (Liberia, Togo, and South Africa): enrolling students from these countries at Tuskegee, sending Tuskegee graduates to develop industrial education, and working with both U.S and foreign governments regarding how best to develop industrial education that could benefit the people and those in power. Formally and informally, the United States and Europe carved up Latin America and Africa from the end of the nineteenth century into the twentieth century, each driven by a combination of power, perceived moral obligation, and economic pursuit to expand their respective influence and prestige. Different governments and private groups encouraged industrial education for colonized people for different reasons: Tuskegee officials viewed imperialism as an opportunity to assist Black people around the globe; Imperial powers sought to create a more manageable and effective labor force;

¹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds. *The Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 8: 1904-6* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 550.

and Black people in the colonies sought to use industrial education to achieve social and political progress.

This dominant literature on Booker T. Washington and his ties to imperialism casts him as an influential, well-connected, gradualist who was less focused on helping Black people in the diaspora and more concerned with growing his own power and prestige. However, throughout his tenure as Tuskegee's principal, Washington worked within the gray areas of imperialism to help Black people throughout the diaspora with varying degrees of success, an initiative that Washington's successors and supporters followed after his death. Little of the historiography of Washington's interventions in U.S. and European imperialism touches on this aspect of Washington and Tuskegee's Pan-African motivations. The common repeated comment is the narrative of Washington's 1895 "Atlanta Exposition Address" and its reception, with the implication that Washington, who many viewed as the spokesperson for Black America, justified white America and other imperialist powers' subordination of Black people.

European powers, like Germany, wanted to expand industrial education for their Black subjects. The imperialist powers who supported Washington's vision, sought to use industrial education to create a more manageable labor force and while reinforcing racial hierarchy. Booker T. Washington and his supporters, however, saw the industrial education model found at Tuskegee, a model which preached economic independence, self-help, and the importance of education for Black people, all tenants of what they believed constituted as upward mobility, as a way to help Black people at home and abroad who struggled under the yoke of imperialism and Jim Crow. They believed it would allow them to achieve a level of upward mobility and challenge imperialist demands. Africans and Afro-Latin Americans saw the Tuskegee model of education as a practical and attainable solution to the problems they faced, linking Africans,

Afro-Cuban and Afro-Puerto Ricans, and African Americans in the diaspora. Ultimately though, the barriers erected by imperialist powers were too great to overcome and Tuskegee's support ebbed and flowed after Washington's death, leading to the demise of the Tuskegee model at home and abroad by the middle of the twentieth century.

The narratives of failure and decline associated with Tuskegee and imperialism fail to tell the complete picture. This study will challenge the dominant position which views Washington and the supporters of the Tuskegee model as simply complicit actors following the whims of imperialists and instead add to the limited existing scholarship that looks at how Black people used the Tuskegee model to fit their own needs. This approach allows for a thorough examination of Washington and the Tuskegee Institute's motives, the issues affecting Liberia, Togo, South Africa, Puerto Rico, and Cuba and their Black populations, how U.S. and colonial governments used the Tuskegee model to meet their own goals, how Tuskegee and its supporters at times adopted imperialist rhetoric themselves while working in the gray areas created by imperialism to help Black people challenge their social, economic, and political oppression. Finally, linked to these narratives, this study will argue that Booker T. Washington was a Pan-Africanist during his time and sought to help Black people throughout the diaspora via the Tuskegee model because he believed it was the most practical solution to meet the demands of both Black people and imperialists.

There were inherent flaws in how Tuskegee and Tuskegee-like schools abroad recruited students and prepared them given their actual employment opportunities after graduation. First, while Tuskegee was able to recruit foreign students, obtaining continuous and sufficient funding was difficult as Tuskegee frequently had to rely on funding from philanthropic groups like the Phelps-Stokes Fund and work with colonial governments to achieve their needs under the veneer

of working in the best interest of Black people. Second, students from abroad that were able to attend were predominantly the children of middle-class Black people or African chiefs, thus class distinction played a significant role in the types of students that were able to actually attend school. Third, many students failed to secure meaningful employment because colonial governments either refused to recognize their credentials or students found that industrial education merely served as a pipeline for exploitative labor on plantations or factories such as the cases of South Africa and Liberia. The undercurrent in each of these issues was the differences in goals between Tuskegee's supporters and its students and the colonial governments. This study argues that these obstacles became too great for Tuskegee's supporters, its leaders, and its graduates to overcome, which ultimately led to the demise of the Tuskegee model abroad, but it was not without its individual successes.

A central issue in assessing the failure and success of Tuskegee's effectiveness are the rifts between imperialist aims, Tuskegee's aims, and the aims of colonized peoples. Although all three were inspired by the potential of the Tuskegee model, how these groups sought to use the model to advance their own means differed. Colonial governments and their supporters hoped to implement the Tuskegee model as a tool to create a more productive and obedient labor force that was fit to work in both industry and agriculture and eschewed anti-colonial politics. For Tuskegee, the aim was to help Black people advance within the imperialist structure through industrial and normal education so they could carve out their own space, one which allowed them to achieve economic independence and become leaders. For colonized people, their objective was to achieve the sort of education that would allow them to become Black leaders, to secure gainful employment, and to challenge the existing political and social structure. While

each of these groups used the Tuskegee model as a vehicle to achieve their goals, each had a different view of what constituted success or failure.

When the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute opened in 1881, Booker T. Washington became the college's first principal. The school, while erected in the image of the Hampton Institute in Virginia, was unique in that not only was the student body predominantly Black, but its leadership, including Washington, and its faculty were all Black. A Black school run by prominent Black men and women was a symbol for many throughout the diaspora as a symbol of what Black people could achieve and a space where they could be welcomed. While originally intended to be an institution that largely benefited southern African Americans, the school's opening coincided with the carving up of Africa at the 1884 Berlin Conference and the Spanish-American War (1898) in just over a decade's time. Washington, who laid out his plans for improving race relations in the American South in his 1895 Atlanta Exposition Address, attracted attention from colonial powers who sought to use Washington's strategies to meet their own needs. Washington's autobiography *Up from Slavery*, which was published in 1900 became another influential work, but it appealed more to colonized peoples than it did their governments. By 1900, Tuskegee became a destination for Black people throughout the diaspora and Washington was involved in the matters of several countries that had been affected by imperialism, including South Africa, Togo, Liberia, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. How Washington and Tuskegee officials sought to appeal to the needs of colonial powers, Black people abroad, and Tuskegee, posed its own set of challenges, the most serious being how to handle the differing priorities of each of these groups.

Despite encountering numerous obstacles, Tuskegee officials, including Booker T. Washington, were able to implement their strategies on a global scale. Washington's

contemporaries, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, D.D.T. Jabavu, and James Aggrey, saw him as a leader whose model, while flawed, sought a practical and obtainable strategy that suited the needs of colonized peoples. Successfully implementing the Tuskegee model of industrial education was a daunting task, and one that continued after Washington's death, ultimately collapsing in many instances because of the contradictions between Black people's desire for greater equality, autonomy, and security and the imperialist system's inherent racism. Various colonial powers did achieve degrees of success as they were able to shape the Tuskegee model into a pipeline of cheap labor. The collapse of the Tuskegee model largely came about by the middle of the twentieth century for several reasons. First, industrial education was discarded in favor of a more traditional education. Second, Tuskegee was unable to secure enough funding to support students studying abroad or pay for students from abroad to come to Tuskegee. Third, in certain cases, like South Africa, education for Black students was put under state control and ultimately the Tuskegee model was phased out. Despite these obstacles, the Tuskegee model was able to connect African Americans, Africans, and Afro-Latin Americans through education and their common determination to overcome racial barriers. The legacy of Tuskegee survived as schools abroad, like in Liberia, still bear the name of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee still maintains ties to these countries. Many students who graduated from Tuskegee went on to become influential Black leaders in their countries, and Washington inspired generations of Black leaders in the United States and abroad.

This study proposes a more nuanced approach to examining Booker T. Washington and imperialism that challenges the existing accommodationist narrative. Assessing Booker T. Washington based solely on the narratives of the failures of the Tuskegee model and the support of colonial governments misunderstands both Tuskegee's and its supporters' intentions. Taking a

broader view of Tuskegee and its relationship with imperialist initiatives between 1890 and 1950, reveals Tuskegee was able to achieve a great deal and helped establish itself as an important part of the Pan-African network, but the success was complicated and limited. Limiting the narrative to the success or failure of the Tuskegee model fails to take into consideration the scope and scale of the Tuskegee model and its effect on imperialism, its supporters, including colonial peoples, and Tuskegee itself. What Tuskegee was able to achieve between 1890 and 1950 abroad transcends simple narratives. The influence of the Tuskegee model and Booker T. Washington is evident well after Washington's death in 1915, both by Black leaders and students but also by colonial officials who sought to manipulate the Tuskegee model to better suit their own needs, like Firestone did in Liberia from 1929 and the following two decades afterwards. Thus, although acknowledging the work of other scholars, this study gives an assessment of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee that highlights the challenges and success of the vision of the Tuskegee model and arrives at a conclusion that examines its successes and failures but also the Pan-Africanist nature of Washington's vision. By taking this approach, Washington and Tuskegee assume a more Pan-African role in the age of U.S. and European imperialism in Latin America and Africa, albeit a role that at times accommodated imperialist designs.

Historiography

The interaction of Pan-Africanism and imperialism is well-attested in the historiography of imperialism in Africa and Latin America, and scholarship concerning both Pan-Africanism and imperialism in relation to Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee from the 1890s to the mid-twentieth century has been the subject of renewed interest over the last decade. The interest stems not only from the centennial of Washington's death and recent Afro-diasporic events, but

also from continuing questions and controversies about racial identity, the extent of Pan-Africanism, and the legacies of Jim Crow and imperialism that are prevalent at present. However, scholarship focusing on the broad reach of Washington, the Tuskegee Institute and their ties to imperialism and Pan-Africanism has not been part of the broader historiography, but rather elements of these themes have been discussed in works focused on other issues. There are few individual case studies which examine these topics, such as Angela Zimmerman's *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* and a chapter from Frank Guridy's *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and Africans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow*. However, there has yet to be a comprehensive work that explores these connections.

The historiography surrounding the legacy of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee, from Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address in 1895 to the legacy of his work after his death in 1915. Initial interest in Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee developed during the 1960s and 1970s with the intersection of the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement. As Black people in the United States pushed for educational and political equality, college campuses were among the most politically active. A long view of the history of these movements and its leaders was undertaken by scholars and an examination of Washington and Tuskegee fell under this umbrella. Scholars like Theda Peru in *Race and the Atlanta Cotton States Exposition Of 1895* and James Anderson in *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* have argued that industrial education, while promising upward mobility, actually created a neo-slave system that

allowed whites to maintain the racial hierarchy and restrict African Americans to performing menial labor.²

Scholarship that includes an in-depth analysis of the influence of the Tuskegee model as part of a broader analysis of the histories of imperialism and imperialism fits into several categories. First, early scholarship focused on the failures of industrial education vis-à-vis the Tuskegee model of education and Booker T. Washington's accommodationist stance towards supporters of imperialism and their uses for Washington's strategies. These works stop short of looking at why Washington believed in the power of the Tuskegee model to help Black people and why Black people in the colonies supported the Tuskegee model and Washington. The internationalism of Tuskegee and industrial education reached new heights after Washington's Atlanta speech. Colonial governments sought the Tuskegee model to maximize the economic output of their territories and while maintaining their colonized populations' acceptance of colonial rule, creating a more industrious and obedient population of laborers. Scholars like Donald Spivey in *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* argued that industrial education was not only replicated from America and implemented in Africa, but was used to maintain the racial hierarchy abroad.³ These earlier scholars concluded that Booker T. Washington's death did not bring about the end of industrial education under the Tuskegee Model but rather his legacy was carried on under Tuskegee officials, like Robert Russa Moton,

² Theda Perdue, *Race and the Atlanta Cotton States Exposition Of 1895* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010). James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988). Donald Spivey, "The African Crusade for Black Industrial Schooling," *The Journal of Negro History* 63, no. 1 (1978): 1-17.

³ Donald Spivey, *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* (London: Greenwood Press, 1978). Kenneth King, *Pan-Africanism and Education: A Study of Race Philanthropy and Education in the Southern States of America and East Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971). Michael West, *The Education of Booker T. Washington: American Democracy and the Idea of Race Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

who succeeded Washington, and white benefactors like the Phelps-Stokes Fund and colonial governments. These arguments maintained well into the early 2000s.

By 2010, the earlier arguments surrounding Washington and Tuskegee began to shift as scholars began to examine the Tuskegee principal and the institution's work globally through a Pan-African lens. One of the most prominent works is Angela Zimmerman's *Alabama in Africa* which examines Tuskegee's work in Togo under the auspices of the German colonial government in the first decade of the twentieth century.⁴ Zimmerman argued that Tuskegee attempted to build a Pan-African link between itself and the Togolese but often had to acquiesce to German colonial demands and at times mirrored similar imperialist rhetoric regarding Tuskegee's work as a civilizing mission in and of itself. While there were some earlier authors that examined the Pan-Africanism of Tuskegee and Booker T. Washington, such as William Manning Marble in the 1970s, Zimmerman's book was a deeper, more nuanced study of Washington and Tuskegee's Pan-Africanism strategies and mission to Togo, which was arguably one of its most successful missions.⁵

The motivations behind imperialism also deserve discussion to explain the Tuskegee Institute's involvement in imperialist designs and how the Tuskegee model was used by imperialist powers to advance their own objectives. According to Philip Darby in *Three Faces of Imperialism: British and American Approaches to Asia and Africa, 1870-1970*, imperialist

⁴ Angela Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, The German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). Jens-Uwe Guettel, *German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism, and the United States, 1776-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014). Andrew Barnes, *Global Christianity and the Black Atlantic: Tuskegee, Colonialism, and the Shaping of African Industrial Education* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2017).

⁵ William Marable, "Booker T. Washington and African Nationalism," *Phylon* 35, no. 4 (1974): 398–406. See also Edward Berman, "Tuskegee - In - Africa," *The Journal of Negro Education* 41, no. 2 (1972): 99–112. Michael West, "The Tuskegee Model of Development in Africa: Another Dimension of the African/African-American Connection," *Diplomatic History* 16, no. 3 (1992): 371–387.

powers were motivated by: power, a belief they possessed a moral obligation to civilize the uncivilized, and economic wealth.⁶ The recruitment of students from Black middle-class families and African chiefs was intentional. The civilizing mission undertaken by both Tuskegee and imperialist powers was designed to assimilate colonial peoples to western instruction and to create a power base that would carry out the demands of colonial governments.⁷ The Tuskegee model was used as a tool abroad, like it was in the American South, to modernize industrial production which was intended to help Black people adapt to learn new technologies but ended up preventing them from mastering new technologies or improved technologies that could actually benefit them. Michael Adas in *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* argues this very point. As does Daniel Headrick in *Power Over Peoples Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism* which also argues that technological superiority became a marker between dominant and subordinate groups.⁸ The Tuskegee model's style of education, while promoting economic opportunities through industry and the aim at creating future leaders, had mild success as it suited the needs of imperialist powers and their grand designs of maintaining power.

There have been countless works on the historiography surrounding imperialism and Africa, including the connection between the United States and Africa. Peter Duignan and Lewis Gann's *The United States and Africa: A History* highlights the historical relationship between

⁶ Philip Darby, *Three Faces of Imperialism: British and American Approaches to Asia and Africa, 1870-1970* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

⁷ Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

⁸ Daniel Headrick, *Power Over Peoples Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present* (2012). Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015). Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006).

Africa and the United States, arguing that the relationship was a reciprocal one.⁹ The emphasis on the impacts made by Africa on the United States and vice versa had a significant impact on one another over the course of U.S. history, with particular attention paid to the twentieth century. The legacy of slavery, the intersection of Jim Crow and imperialism, emigration schemes, foreign policy, and the impact of private enterprises shaped the complex and often unequal relationship between the United States and Africa. More recent works have looked at the effects of imperialism and the legacy of the relationship between the United States and Africa. Kenneth King's *Pan-Africanism and Education: A Study of Race, Philanthropy and Education in the United States of America and East Africa* examines the changing arguments surrounding agricultural education and Africa from its implementation in missionary schools to the Tuskegee model of education to the state of agricultural education in the late 20th century.¹⁰ Many African leaders argued for increased emphasis on practical agriculturally oriented schooling. However, during the 1920s and 1930s under the influence and control of philanthropic groups like the Phelps-Stokes Fund, private enterprises, and colonial governments, industrial education was either eliminated or reduced to a crude form that failed to meet the needs of Africans. Scholars of rural development such as Peter Kallaway in *The Changing Face of Colonial Education in Africa: Education, Science, and Development* have argued that this context has now altered.

⁹ Peter Duignan and Lewis H. Gann, *The United States and Africa: A History* (Cambridge University press, 1987). Jens-Uwe Guettel, *German Expansionism, Imperial Liberalism and the United States, 1776-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). William Allen, "Liberia and the Atlantic World in the Nineteenth Century: Convergence and Effects," *History in Africa* 37, 1 (2010): 7-49. Monday Akpan, "Black imperialism: Americo-Liberian rule over the African peoples of Liberia, 1841-1964," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* (1973): 217–236. Remi Clignet, "Inadequacies of the Notion of Assimilation in African Education," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 8, no. 3 (1970): 425–444.

¹⁰ King, Kenneth J. *Pan-Africanism and Education: A Study of Race, Philanthropy and Education in the United States of America and East Africa* (La Vergne: Diasporic Africa Press, 2017). National Research Council. *Emerging Technologies to Benefit Farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia*, 1st ed (Washington, D.C: National Academies Press, 2009).

Where colonialism has given way, popular rural education schemes, especially in an egalitarian form, have the potential to take effect.¹¹

Following the Spanish American War of 1898 the United States became a global imperial power by obtaining colonies in the Pacific and Latin America. The history of U.S. intervention in Latin America however predates 1898. The long relationship between the United States and Latin America has produced numerous works on it, with a continued scholarly examination regarding the motivations and impacts of U.S. intervention. Thomas Schoonover's *Uncle Sam's War of 1898 and the Origins of Globalization* argues that the 1898 war was a culmination of the United States' long quest for establishing its economic hegemony over the Caribbean and for opening the markets of in an effort to catapult the U.S. to the front rank of forces promoting globalization through its own unique process of Americanization.¹² However, as Alfred McCoy and Francisco Scarno argue in *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State*, Americanization or American Exceptionalism were not unique but rather mirrored European imperialism.¹³

This study draws on scholarship exploring the relationship of race and education with U.S. imperialism in Latin America. This scholarship is notable for its study of the figures and ideas who influenced the trajectory of U.S. intervention. Rudyard Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden" (1899) was widely interpreted as indicating the United States's moral duty to westernize non-white peoples abroad. Works that were published at the turn of the twenty-first

¹¹ Peter Kallaway, *The Changing Face of Colonial Education in Africa: Education, Science and Development* (African Sun Media, 2020).

¹² David Schoonover, *Uncle Sam's War of 1898 and the Origins of Globalization* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003).

¹³ Alfred McCoy and Francisco Scarano, eds. *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009). Paul McCartney, *Power and Progress: American National Identity, the War of 1898, and the Rise of American Imperialism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).

century pertaining to U.S. imperialism came on the heels of U.S. involvement in the Middle East, causing a reexamination of U.S. imperialism. In addition to showing that Americans used racism to justify imperialism, these scholars showed that the civilizing mission undertaken by the United States abroad also served as a deterrent to incorporating non-white people as citizens of the United States, an argument articulated by Rubin Weston in *Racism in U.S. Imperialism: The Influence of Racial Assumptions on American Foreign Policy, 1893-1946* and Eric Love in *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900*.¹⁴ Recent scholarship has expanded upon these earlier works, examining how racist ideologies were transplanted abroad by the United States and the acceptance, or lack of, non-white peoples which is tied to recent trends in immigration. Matt Frye Jacobsen in *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* argues that upon the creation of America's new empire, theories pertaining to the cultural and racial inferiority of the conquered peoples were motivated by an economic need.¹⁵ The United States was dependent on supposedly inferior peoples for its growing economic power. They were however constituted as a threat because of their apparent unfitness for self-government. Peoples abroad needed American uplift, it was argued, but there were doubts about the fitness of the peoples being absorbed into the American system; imperialists and anti-imperialists agreed on the fact that protecting America's identity was of the utmost importance while creating a subservient labor force was a close second.

¹⁴ Rubin Weston, *Racism in U.S. Imperialism: The Influence of Racial Assumptions on American Foreign Policy, 1893-1946* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972). Eric Love, *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

¹⁵ Matthew Jacobson Frye, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000). Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993). Paul McCartney, *Power and Progress: American National Identity, the War of 1898, and the Rise of American Imperialism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006). Gretchen Murphy, *Shadowing the White Man's Burden: U.S. Imperialism and the Problem of the Color Line* (New York University Press, 2010).

Part of the Americanization process and one that was important to securing America's interests was controlling the direction of education. U.S. government officials and colonial governments supported industrial education, particularly the Tuskegee model of education, for several reasons. First, it had the potential to create a more compliant, sufficiently skilled labor force. Second, it could highlight the success of America's civilizing mission through the construction and recruitment of colonial students thus providing them an education that offered them a practical path to employment. Third, the idea that Black U.S. instructors would be the most beneficial to Afro-Latin American students because of ethnic familiarity, was essential to U.S. designs. Jose-Manuel Navarro's *Creating Tropical Yankees: Social Science Textbooks and U. S. Ideological Control in Puerto Rico, 1898-1908* argues that United States educational policies in Latin America displayed an underlying ideological unity which shaped U.S. foreign policy through the application of assimilation and Americanization based on a curriculum based on Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute and industrial education at large.¹⁶ These works help bring attention to how education was used as a means to control peoples in U.S. territories but they avoid a larger discussion as to how Afro-Latin American students used industrial education to their advantage. This argument was first touched on by Frank Guridy in *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow*.¹⁷ Guridy's work is also useful in understanding the relationship between African Americans and Afro-Latin Americans at the intersection of U.S. imperialism and Jim Crow as well as understanding the role of race in Latin America and Pan-Africanism.

¹⁶ Jose-Manuel Navarro, *Creating Tropical Yankees: Social Science Textbooks and U. S. Ideological Control in Puerto Rico, 1898-1908* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002). Clif Straton, *Education for Empire*. Solsiree del Moral, *Negotiating Empire: The Cultural Politics of Schools in Puerto Rico, 1898-1952* (Chapel Hill: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013).

¹⁷ Frank Guridy, *Forging Diaspora : Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

Scholarly works surrounding Pan-Africanism and the African diaspora are useful in understanding the relationship between the various Black groups Tuskegee interacted with over the course of the twentieth century and how Booker T. Washington fits into the pantheon of notable Pan-Africanists. Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* focuses on the Atlantic world and the space between them as being essential to understanding how connections between Black peoples are made and how they identify. For instance, as Gilroy points, to be both European/American, and Black requires some sense of double-consciousness, which pushes groups within the African diaspora to identify with one identity over the other, even though they are not mutually exclusive.¹⁸ As a result, this creates an inequality within the greater African diaspora. The arguments put forth by Gilroy led to a greater exploration surrounding identity and inequality within the African diaspora by other scholars. These inequalities went beyond ethnic differences and duality and were also drawn along class lines. Gilroy sought to reframe scholars' view of the Atlantic World and the African diaspora by decentering the United States. Kevin Gaines in *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* highlighted how the U.S. Black middle class developed their own project of racial uplift and had an intellectual dependence on several dominant ideologies of whiteness and white constructions of Blackness.¹⁹ Uplift ideology sought to maintain and sometimes challenge relations of power and dominance. However, as Wilson Moses' *Creative Conflict in African American Thought: Frederick Douglass, Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey* argued, a reexamination of Black intellectuals like Booker T. Washington is necessary as early works have been too

¹⁸ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993).

¹⁹ Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

narrow in scope when addressing Washington's Pan-African contributions and is an aim this work seeks to address.²⁰

African American involvement in imperialism outside of Tuskegee is important to understanding how Black Americans positioned themselves in the historical narrative surrounding imperialism but also contextualizes the work of Tuskegee and Booker T. Washington and their place in Black history. Willard Gatewood's *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903* addresses the wide range of opinions throughout African American newspapers and among Black American intellectuals who argued that support of such U.S. imperialism would lead to greater respect and support from white Americans and break down racial barriers to those who argued that the United States should solve its own racial problems at home before embarking on a civilizing crusade overseas.²¹ At the center of Adeleke's argument, which speaks to the historiography more broadly, is that Black Americans attempted to use engagement with imperialism in Africa and Latin America as tool to change their social and political position in the U.S. Tunde Adeleke's *UnAfrican Americans: Nineteenth-Century Black Nationalists and the Civilizing Mission* expands upon Gatewood's work, highlighting the views of Black intellectuals and their attitudes towards Africa.²² On the one hand, they praised Africa for its moral and spiritual significance in the diaspora, stressing a Pan-African consciousness. However, they also criticized Africans as ignorant, heathen, and

²⁰ Wilson Moses, *Creative Conflict in African American Thought: Frederick Douglass, Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²¹ Willard Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975). John Gruesser, *The Empire Abroad and the Empire at Home: African American Literature and the Era of Overseas Expansion* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).

²² Tunde Adeleke, *UnAfrican Americans: Nineteenth-Century Black Nationalists and the Civilizing Mission* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998). Jeannette Jones, "'The Negro's Peculiar Work': Jim Crow and Black Discourses on US Empire, Race, and the African Question, 1877-1900," 52, no. 2 (2018): 330-357. Michele Mitchell, "'The Black Man's Burden': African Americans, Imperialism, and Notions of Racial Manhood 1890-1910," *International Review of Social History* 44, no. Supplement 7 (1999): 77-99.

generally lacking in the material progress and cultural refinements that were perceived as the hallmarks of modern civilization. Using imperial projects like the Tuskegee model to validate their work was intended to enhance Tuskegee's power and prestige, thus exhibiting how they mirrored the "white man's burden" albeit trying to help Black people abroad in the process.

Imperialism in the late nineteenth century affected the entire African diaspora, shaping the relationships between Black people across the globe. In Nemata Blyden's *African Americans and Africa: A New History*, the complex engagement of African Americans with Africa and Africans is examined against the backdrop of several historical developments: emigration and "Back to Africa," Pan-Africanism, anticolonial movements, etc.²³ Focusing on what Africa meant to African Americans over the course of history, particularly from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, is a unique aspect of the historiography that helps express Black Americans' affiliation with or detachment from Africa, and their developed connections, both real and imagined, to the continent. For Tuskegee's officials and teachers, their connection was both real and imagined in that they had ties to several African states, such as Togo, Liberia, and South Africa, but the relationship was also imagined because they failed to understand the indigenous cultures they interacted with, and the power and functioning of the imperialist systems in Africa. Instead, they saw Africa as a proving ground to expand their influence and affect change in the United States, which stymied their potential to offer Africans beneficial help. This aspect of historiography reflects the works of scholars like Kevin Gaines in *American*

²³ Nemata Blyden, *African Americans and Africa: A New History* (Yale, 2019).

Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era who have taken a long view of the African American-African connection.²⁴

Finally, the relationship between African Americans and Afro-Latin Americans is an important aspect of the historiography that contextualizes the experiences of Afro-Puerto Rican and Afro-Cubans at Tuskegee and the role of race under Spanish and U.S. influence in Puerto Rico and Cuba, each shaping how Afro-Latin Americans confronted their Blackness. Peter Wade in *Blackness and Race Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Colombia* argued that to achieve upward social mobility at any level, Afro-Latin Americans have had to experience both physical and cultural mixing. This mixing has often been linked to another phenomenon, *blanqueamiento* or whitening, whereby individuals have had to distance themselves from their Blackness. To counter this, some Black people created avenues for themselves. Wade argues, two opposing forces work in Latin America "one encouraging concentration of blacks and affirmation of blackness, the other encouraging the dispersion of blacks and the negation of blackness through *blanqueamiento*."²⁵ The relationship between African Americans and Afro-Cubans and Afro-Puerto Ricans from the nineteenth century to the first decades of the twentieth century were forged in the spaces created by the intersection of Jim Crow and imperialism. As scholars like Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes asserted in *Between Race and Empire: African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution* the Pan-African racial kinship that was established went beyond national borders and centered on common experiences shaped by

²⁴ Kevin Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Penny Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). George Fredrickson, *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1996). Mildred Fierce, "Selected Black American Leaders and Organizations and South Africa, 1900-1977: Some Notes," *Journal of Black Studies* 17, no. 3 (1987): 305–326.

²⁵ Peter Wade, *Blackness and Race Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Colombia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

slavery and prejudice.²⁶ However, similar to the experiences of Afro-Puerto Rican students, Tuskegee and U.S. officials sought to impart their own Americanization processes on Afro-Cubans which as the scholarship highlights forced Afro-Latin American students to devise strategies to counter these attacks to preserve their culture and identity.²⁷

Although the historiography concerning imperialism, Tuskegee, and Pan-Africanism contains the analysis of the intersection of these fields, much can be derived from works that examine U.S. and African imperialism as well as the relationship between African Americans and the larger African diaspora that spanned the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In examining this era, scholars have viewed the work of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee officials with a growing yet mixed interest in the intentions and successes of the famed Tuskegee principal and his disciples. This study examines the gaps left by previous scholarship and seeks to expand upon the limited scholarship in existence by using archival sources that examine the connections between Tuskegee and the United States, Puerto Rico, German West Africa, Liberia, South Africa, and Cuba. General correspondence, addresses, and opinion pieces written and spoken by Booker T. Washington and from Tuskegee officials highlight the extent to which Tuskegee was connected to government officials, philanthropic groups, and Tuskegee supporters in the United States and abroad. They also show how attached Washington and Tuskegee officials were to imperialism and Pan-Africanism. Student records, letters, expulsion records shed light on how Black students from abroad that engaged with Tuskegee used the education to improve their lives

²⁶ Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes, eds., *Between Race and Empire: African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998). Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995). Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History*. Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes, *Between Race and Empire: African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

²⁷ Pablo Navarro-Rivera, "Acculturation under Duress: The Puerto Rican Experience at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1898-1918," *Centro Journal* 18, no. 1 (2006): 222-259.

but also shows the difficulties students faced at Tuskegee and the barriers to establishing meaningful Pan-African ties. Archival sources from the German colonial economic committee and the German colonial government in Togo exhibit the production of cotton in Togo by workers trained under Tuskegee teachers and which attests to the success of the Tuskegee model and the sources also show the treatment of the Togolese people under German colonial administration and Tuskegee's response. Using U.S. and Liberian government correspondences highlights the relationship between the two countries and using letters from the Firestone company places U.S. commercial interests at the center of Tuskegee's Liberian plans of uplift.

The works of notable Pan-Africanists like W.E.B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey help position Washington and Tuskegee within the arguments surrounding other Pan-Africanists. The South African archival sources help explain the progression of laws that stripped Black South Africans of their power and freedoms. They also highlight how Black South African leaders supported industrial education, the Tuskegee model, and the sources also address the grievances of Black South Africans towards the South African government. In each of these sources, the sources pertaining to the influence of philanthropic groups like the Phelps-Stokes Fund highlight how these groups aligned themselves with both imperialists and Tuskegee officials under the guise of uplift. These sources showcase the individuals and groups who were actively engaged in devising strategies that best helped Black people counteract the barriers constructed by Jim Crow and imperialism. The limiting factor to these sources is that they fail to take into account the firsthand experiences of the Africans who were directly impacted by the Tuskegee model and what they faced at the Tuskegee-like schools before and after graduation. Nonetheless, the volume and variety of historiography concerning Tuskegee's connection to imperialism

establishes a useful framework for examining Tuskegee's Pan-African strategies and provides a valuable historical context.

Organization

Chapter 2 begins with the examination of Booker T. Washington's and Tuskegee's first and heavily resourced foreign mission to Togo(land) to help the Togolese people achieve economic independence and elevate their status within the German imperial system. Although Germany assumed control of Togo in 1884, the German government's attempted transformation of the colony into a cotton plantation economy did not accelerate until 1900 with the recruitment of Tuskegee teachers to undertake the training of the Togolese and oversee the construction of a Tuskegee-like school. The experiment ended in 1909 when the German colonial government assumed control of the operation from the German Colonial Economic Committee, transforming the Tuskegee system into a pipeline of creating low-wage workers. Tuskegee's involvement in Togo reveals the complexities of defining Pan-Africanism as Tuskegee officials often occupied the same spaces as German colonial officials. As Tuskegee officials maneuvered their way through the barriers of Jim Crow and imperialism, they found it difficult to sustain the Pan-African solidarity that was intended to benefit the Togolese.

Chapter 3 highlights the relationship between Americo-Liberians and African Americans from 1900 to present as Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee officials appealed to the United States government and private enterprises to intervene in Liberian matters for the benefit of the Liberian people, to stave off the encroachment of European powers, and to give the United States a foothold in Africa. The Pan-African ideas espoused by Washington and Tuskegee officials were shared by Black intellectuals in the United States, like W.E.B. Du Bois, and abroad, such as Marcus Garvey. The success of Tuskegee's plans in Liberia was recognized with the

construction of a Tuskegee-like school Kakata that opened in 1929 and was administered by members from Tuskegee but fell under control of the Firestone company shortly after its opening, thus inhibiting Tuskegee's Pan-African attempts at uplift. Tuskegee officials saw that they were implementing a system for which Liberians could succeed. For most of the twentieth century, the relationship between Tuskegee, the United States, and Liberia played out in complex ways that left a lasting legacy that positioned Washington and Tuskegee as influential in U.S. foreign policy politically and economically as they were able to secure much needed aid for Liberia but did so through opening the door for U.S. intervention in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, Tuskegee has continued to maintain its commitment to improving the welfare of Liberians.

Chapter 4 tracks the evolution of racial policies from 1890-1950 that would become apartheid in South Africa and the efforts of South African missionaries and Black South Africans to expand industrial education, adding a complex dimension to examining the Pan-African relationships between the United States and Africa. Tuskegee officials led by Booker T. Washington lent their support of improving industrial education along the lines of the Tuskegee model as they say the racial policies of the South African government akin to Jim Crowism. While less involved than the previous instances of Togo and Liberia, Tuskegee's influence was felt by Black South Africans who desired a practical education system that offered the potential to achieve economic independence and upward social mobility. White South Africans, by means of education and social policies, were able to render the Tuskegee Pan-African vision mute with the Bantu Education Act of 1953. While Black South Africans were able to achieve some gains over the course of the twentieth century, including political representation from local chiefs in political organizations and the expansion of Tuskegee-like missionary schools, the Tuskegee

model became corrupted by the middle of the twentieth century, a corruption which Tuskegee inadvertently played a part in as it preached separation over integration.

The remaining chapters move on to Latin America and examine the role U.S. imperialism played in Tuskegee's attempt to build a Pan-African network between Black America and Black Latin America. Chapter 5 assesses the experiences of Afro-Puerto Rican students at Tuskegee and how they had to confront their Blackness in the American South while also using their Tuskegee attention to become leaders at home albeit as the Puerto Rican government under the influence of the United States sought to use the Tuskegee model of education to create a class of obedient workers. Beginning 1898, United States policy makers fostered assimilation, Americanization and de-Puerto Ricanization through educational practices. The Americanization process at Tuskegee was difficult for Afro-Puerto Rican students as they were segregated into Black institutions, experiencing Jim Crow racism firsthand. Conflict and academic issues were also a problem as African American students and Afro-Puerto Ricans had an often-contentious relationship. Regardless, Puerto Rican students that attended Tuskegee saw that practical and normal education offered possible paths to economic and political gain in Puerto Rico. Afro-Puerto Rican graduates of Tuskegee who successfully became educators and political activists espoused the benefits of a Tuskegee education to prospective students, challenging U.S. imperialist designs.

Chapter 6 examines the connections between Tuskegee and Cuba between 1898 and 1930. The revolutionary spirit of Cubans attracted Booker T. Washington who implored the U.S. and Cuban governments to recruit Afro-Cuban students to Tuskegee. Unlike in Puerto Rico, Afro-Cuban students took it upon themselves to seek out a Tuskegee education because they believed it offered them the most practical chance at upward mobility. This chapter also shows

how Tuskegee became a Pan-African space where Cuban students interacted with African Americans and combined Tuskegee education, Cuban culture, and the fight for independence to challenge imperialist systems. Booker T. Washington's imperialist views evolved over the course of U.S. intervention in Cuba, at times embracing imperialist rhetoric while also providing the tools to help Black Cubans attain economic independence. Tuskegee's connection to the U.S.'s complicated relationship with Cuba offers new insights about the limitations of Pan-Africanism such as the relationships of Afro-Cubans to the African diaspora and how the struggle for increased visibility on the part of Black Cubans played into the struggle for independence. Tuskegee's goal of creating future race leaders was emblematic in how Afro-Cuban embraced the idea of race leadership under the Tuskegee model as they hoped it would serve them best in their struggle for independence.

Finally, the conclusion evaluates the effectiveness of and the problems with the strategies employed by Tuskegee. How did the people Tuskegee intended to help benefit from Tuskegee's influence and what the shortfalls were will be addressed. Furthermore, how did Washington and Tuskegee situate themselves within the larger narratives concerning Pan-Africanism is a focus of this study. Lastly, Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee's legacy will be discussed and how the narrative should be reevaluated and why. Imperialism allows for the reevaluation of that legacy that has been greatly debated over decades. Examining Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee legacy through the lens of imperialism allows for a nuanced yet complex approach to the goals of the Tuskegee model and the inequalities within the Black diaspora.

Chapter 2 - Tuskegee in German Togo

On November 4, 1900, James Nathan Calloway, Sheppard Harris, Allen Burke, and John Robinson set sail for Togoland, a German colony that included modern Togo and a portion of Ghana. Traveling aboard the Hamburg-American steam liner *Great Waldersee*, they planned to teach the Togolese improved methods of cotton raising. As one of the men aboard the steamer said, "I feel as if I were going back to my old home to spread some part of what I have learned in this country."²⁸ For the group of Tuskegee teachers and students that went to Togo this was a novel undertaking, the expedition was the first of its kind by the Tuskegee Institute. The mission reflected Booker T. Washington's views on racial uplift through raising the economic status of Black peoples in a manner that would benefit both the Togolese and the Germans. In *The Negro in the South: His Economic Progress in Relation to His Moral and Religious Development*, written by Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, Washington reflected in 1907 on why Tuskegee agreed to the expedition to Togo:

Some six years ago a group of Tuskegee graduates and former students went to Africa for the purpose of giving the natives in a certain territory of West Africa training in methods of raising American cotton. They did not go there primarily as missionaries, nor was their chief end the conversion of these pagans to Christianity. Largely through the leadership of this group of Tuskegee students, there is shipped from this section of Africa to the Berlin market each year many bales of cotton. The natives have learned through the teaching of these men to grow more cotton and better cotton. They have learned to use their time, have learned that by working systematically and regularly they can increase their income and thus add to their independence and supply their wants. Not only this, but in order that these people might be fitted for continuous and regular service in the cotton field, their houses have been improved and the natives have been taught how to take better care of their bodies. In a word, during the years that these Tuskegee people have been in the community they have

²⁸ "To Teach Cotton Raising: Negroes from Booker T. Washington's School Sail for West Coast of Africa," *American Citizen*, November 9, 1900, 1.

improved the entire economic, industrial, and physical life of the people in this immediate territory.²⁹

Washington believed that their Tuskegee education, geared toward technical hands-on learning, gave students like these four young men the tools to help achieve economic independence and racial uplift for themselves and others. The Togo Mission reflected Washington's belief that Black peoples could most effectively advance their individual and group interests by working within the existing political and racial order.³⁰ Washington's solutions were best stated in his famous speech at the 1895 Atlanta "Cotton States and International Exposition" in which he implored African Americans to "Cast down their buckets in agriculture, mechanics, commerce, domestic service, and in the professions" and asserted that "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."³¹

To parts of the American white elite and the Black intelligentsia, Washington's speech was viewed as accepting of most of the Southern white racial practices and so the Tuskegee principal received both praise and criticism. But for other parts of the Black intelligentsia and Southern Black Americans, Washington's vision appeared to offer a solution to navigating within the economic and social barriers created by Jim Crow. Washington's vision for race relations and his commitment to industrial education were attractive to European colonial authorities, including German officials,

²⁹ Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Negro in the South: His Economic Progress in Relation to His Moral and Religious Development* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1907), 33–36.

³⁰ Booker T. Washington, 1903, Reel 992, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

³¹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, ed., *The Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 3: 1889-95* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 584-586.

who sought to create a more manageable and productive labor force without threatening white control of African colonies.³²

Tuskegee's mission to German Togoland was the first of its kind for the institute. While it was the first expedition of Tuskegee teachers and students to Africa, it was most significant because it marked the first time that Black Americans took up the civilizing mission by participating in a state-sponsored program to educate colonized Africans. This chapter shows how Tuskegee teachers, who were recruited by the German Colonial Government to help develop Togo's cotton industry, strove to educate via the Hampton-Tuskegee model and bargained on behalf of the Togolese for improved economic conditions while also adopting imperialist rhetoric and systems that ultimately benefited the German Colonial Government more than the Togolese. Tuskegee's leaders viewed the experiments in Togo as a success because it introduced large-scale cotton producing methods and provided technical education to the Togolese. In his 1905 book *Working with Hands*, Washington argued that the Togo expedition was a success by citing other governments' desire for Tuskegee to replicate the experiment in their countries or colonies:

We have received applications from both English and Belgian cotton raising companies that wish to secure Tuskegee men to introduce cotton-raising in their African possessions. The Porto Rican Government makes an annual appropriation for the purpose of maintaining eighteen students at Tuskegee in order that they may learn our methods. The Haytian Government has recently arranged to send a number of young men here, mainly with the view of their being trained in farming.³³

³² Louis Harlan, "Booker T. Washington and the White Man's Burden" *The American Historical Review* 71, vol. 2 (1966): 441-467, 441.

³³ Booker T. Washington, *Working with Hands* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 226.

Studying Tuskegee's complicated connection to imperialism, including explaining why the German Colonial government enlisted Tuskegee's help with the development of Togo reveals new insights about the inequalities of Pan-Africanism such as the actual effect of economic and social transformation of the Togolese people that was assisted by Tuskegee teachers and how while linked by exploitation and oppression by white people, the divisions between both Africans and African Americans under different systems of oppression, Jim Crow and imperialism, were not equal.

Recent scholarship has addressed how the journey of four African Americans from Tuskegee to Togo illuminates a small but telling part of the global nature of the struggles of African Americans navigating the landscape of Jim Crow and German colonial ambitions while interacting with the Togolese living under German colonial rule.³⁴ This chapter advances the argument that even while constrained by the aims of the German colonial government, from 1900 when the first Tuskegee officials arrived in Togo to 1909 when the expedition concluded, Tuskegee officials actively sought to improve the lives of the Togolese through modernization of the economy and education. In addition to Booker T. Washington's correspondence, letters written by John W. Robinson and James N. Calloway, two of the Tuskegee teachers who led the expedition, along with the German colonial government and German Economic Committee documents provide an in-depth look at how Washington and Tuskegee

³⁴ Sven Beckert, "From Tuskegee to Togo: The Problem of Freedom in the Empire of Cotton," *The Journal of American History*, vol. 92, no. 2 (2005): 498–526.

came to believe that Tuskegee had a vital part to play in securing the future success of the Togolese under the German colonial system.

Scholars such as Angela Zimmerman have pointed out that the erection of model farms of the Tuskegee experts in Togo both expectedly and unexpectedly carried out the "civilizing mission" of the German colonial authorities. Furthermore, the actions of Tuskegee officials created a paradox by unintentionally reproducing the American South in Africa while inspiring Pan-African notions of anticolonial solidarity. At the same time, industrial education became a tool that German colonial officials used to better manage colonial populations.³⁵ Other scholars like Andrew Barnes have pointed out that the industrial education movement served as a leading edge of the African challenge to European conquest of Africa.³⁶ Washington and his Tuskegee Institute became models (real and imagined) that would produce the kind of people leading to the recovery of African sovereignty and the development of fully modern African societies and Togo was that proving ground.

German colonial officials and the German Economic Committee's imposition of greater control over Tuskegee's operation in Togo combined with the failure of the Tuskegee Institute to attract more teachers to travel to Togo, ended the Tuskegee expedition in 1909. The end of the expedition served as a lesson to Tuskegee officials on the difficulties of navigating within an imperialist structure. Correspondence, memos, and letters from Julius Von Zech, the German colonial governor of Togoland,

³⁵ Angela Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). See also Lewis Gann, and Peter Duignan, *The Rulers of German Africa: 1884-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977); Mary Townsend, *The Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire, 1884-1918* (New York: Macmillan, 1930).

³⁶ Andrew Barnes, *Global Christianity and the Black Atlantic: Tuskegee, Colonialism, and the Shaping of African Industrial Education* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2017).

John W. Robinson, James Nathan Calloway, and G.H. Pape, who was put in charge of Germany's cotton expedition after the end of Tuskegee's involvement, revealed the complex relationship between Tuskegee, the German colonial government in Togo, and the Togolese.

Tuskegee's involvement in Togo reveals the complexities of defining Pan-Africanism as Tuskegee officials often occupied the same spaces as German colonial officials. While Washington brokered the deal between Tuskegee and the German colonial government that sent Tuskegee officials to Togo, James Nathan Calloway and John Winfrey Robinson were instrumental in carrying out Tuskegee's plan to improve the lives of the Togolese while simultaneously carrying out German colonial ambitions. As Tuskegee officials maneuvered their way through the barriers of Jim Crow and imperialism, they found it difficult to sustain the Pan-African solidarity that was intended to benefit the Togolese.

The Tuskegee Model of Education: A Blueprint for German Togo

The German Foreign Office learned in 1889 that inhabitants of the hinterland grew cotton, and that regional markets offered "very durable cotton cloth" but sold fiber at prices too high to make a profitable export trade.³⁷ Because the Germans knew that the Togolese were familiar with subsistence cotton farming, they thought the Togolese could make the transition to large-scale cotton production. In Togo, women controlled the growing and selling of cotton; they cultivated and spun the cotton, then wove and sold the fabric to market. Men, on the other hand, were responsible for putting up the collateral necessary for local farming and bought the fabric from women thus reinforcing the cycle of the local cotton industry.³⁸ However, German police

³⁷ Foreign Office to Eugen von Zimmerer, Kaiserliche Kommissar of Togo, Klein Popo, September 24, 1889, BArch R150, TNA FA 1-332, Bl. 1-2

³⁸ James Nathan Calloway, "Tuskegee Cotton-Planters in Africa," *Outlook*, March 29, 1902, 773.

power displayed by the *Polizeitruppe* played a crucial role in displacing the economic and domestic autonomy of Togolese women. For instance, the *Polizeitruppe* had destroyed the pottery industry in Tové, which sustained women's prosperity and independence.³⁹ German colonial officials were unsettled by the autonomy of Togolese women and sought to establish a more patriarchal system in Togo. Some Togolese men participated in the German scheme because it offered new opportunities to control women and offered access to wages and education.⁴⁰ These actions were primarily centered in the urban center of Tové which had a large market culture. The Togoese's familiarity with the means of cotton production proved something to German colonial officials when they launched their first cotton expedition to Togo in 1890: that Togo was suitable for cotton farming and could be developed into a large-scale cotton empire. Training Togolese men in modern cotton plantation farming was the next step in establishing a successful patriarchal cotton colony.⁴¹

German interest in transforming Togo into a stable cotton empire developed after the acquisition of Togo in part because of shortages of cotton during the Civil War in the United States. Prior to the war in the late 1850s, Prussia imported 69 million pounds of cotton from the United States.⁴² The trade embargo placed on the American South during the war resulted in global cotton shortages, especially in Germany where the cotton industry had grown from roughly 60,000 workers in 1800 to about 250,000 by 1860.⁴³ During the American Civil War,

³⁹ Reichskolonialamt, *Deutsches Kolonialblatt* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1900), 53.

⁴⁰ James Nathan Calloway, "Tuskegee Cotton-Planters in Africa," *Outlook*, March 29, 1902, 772. For a longer discussion on German violence and attempts at establishing a Togolese patriarchy, see John Garratt, "'Children of the Chain and Rod': The Evolution of Christianity and German Slaveholding in Eweland, 1847-1914," (PhD diss., George Washington University, 2017).

⁴¹ Dr. Hans Gruner, the station manager at Misahöhe, would later reiterate that in 1904 in a letter to local Togolese leaders, Tuskegee teachers, and missionaries; April 15, 1904, BArch R1001/8222, Bl. 140-141.

⁴² Statistisches Reichsamt und Deutschland Kaiserliches Statistisches Amt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich* (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1890), 87.

⁴³ Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 2014), 180.

Prussia, however, still imported roughly 16 million pounds of cotton.⁴⁴ They suffered considerably from the embargo because it relied on American cotton and after the war German leaders and business people viewed their dependence on American cotton imports as an economic weakness.⁴⁵ Throughout the 1880's, Germany imported more than 800 million pounds of cotton annually from the United States at a cost of 300 million Marks.⁴⁶ Because German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck considered the growing of cotton in the colonies as one of the most important ways of achieving self-sufficiency he created an informal committee to research the viability of large-scale farming in Germany's newly acquired territories. Early endeavors were launched in Germany's Pacific territories in the 1850s and 1860s that were managed by the *Kolonialabteilung* (Imperial Colonial Office), but a formal committee dedicated to colonial economic endeavors was not formed until 1896.

The *Kolonialabteilung* at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversaw the first expedition to expand Togo's cotton industry, appointing Ferdinand Goldberg, a specialist in cotton cultivation and former head of *Handels-und-Plantagen Gesellschaft* (Trade and Plantation Company). Goldberg was appointed to head the expedition because earlier he had successfully overseen the establishment of cotton plantations in the German colony of Samoa; on June 21, 1890, Goldberg arrived in Togo.⁴⁷ In Goldberg's first report on the progress of the expedition, he pointed out the potential for success for large-scale cotton farming in Togo. From 1865 to 1870, the Togolese had been growing large quantities of cotton which was bought by the French who cleaned and

⁴⁴ United States Department. of the Treasury Bureau of Statistics, *Cotton in Commerce: Statistics of United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Egypt, And British India* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895), 31.

⁴⁵ Deutsche Baumwolle Tägliche Rundschau (Berlin), February 27, 1913, BArch R 8024/58, Bl.86.

⁴⁶ Pierre Ali-Napo, *Togo, Land of International Technical Assistance Experimentation: 1900-1909* (Accra: Onyase Press, 2002), 5.

⁴⁷ Pierre Ali-Napo, *Togo, Land of International Technical Assistance Experimentation: 1900-1909* (Accra: Onyase Press, 2002), 6.

exported it.⁴⁸ Cotton is graded by both color and how fibrous it is and “middling” is an average grade for cotton. The experimental farm at Zebe produced “middling” grade cotton by world cotton standards. Further, the surrounding areas along the Zio River appeared to be possible sites for future establishments of cotton plantations. Improving the methods of cotton cultivation was an important step in building a sustainable cotton store that would be able to compete with other cotton sources, such as Egypt, which was the world’s third largest cotton producer, behind the United States and India.⁴⁹

The first expedition was successful in growing cotton on a large-scale but problems ensued; first, the high cost of the first expedition which included paying numerous officials and laborers from Germany, setting up the experimental plantation, and providing the necessary supplies, and second, the yield proved of good quality but was not enough to offset the cost.⁵⁰ In 1891, the *Kolonialrat* (Colonial Assembly) searched for methods to reduce the cost of cotton cultivation. The *Kolonialrat* had a variety of constituents: aristocrats with colonial connections, missionaries, civil servants, academics, and plantation owners. They recommended: promoting the growing of cotton where it was most likely to succeed, recruiting more Togolese to work on the plantations, and appealing to foreign governments to help secure production of the seeds best adapted for the area and find the best planting methods.⁵¹ In addition to helping reduce the cost of future expeditions, the suggestions put forward by the *Kolonialrat* were also designed to promote better farming methods by the Togolese.

⁴⁸ In the 1870s, the global price of cotton fell by nearly fifty percent. That combined with declining quality had contributed to the Togolese scaling back cotton production. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 1988), 555; and Ferdinand Goldberg, “Der Baumwollbau in Togo, seine bisheringe Entwicklung und sein jetziger Stand,” *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*, vol. 22 (1911): 282–87.

⁴⁹ Karl Supf, *Baumwoll-Expedition nach Togo* (Berlin: Mittler, 1901), 8.

⁵⁰ Supf, *Baumwoll-Expedition nach Togo*, 16.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

German colonial officials wanted to promote large-scale farming in Togo to establish a reliable cotton store. The *Kolonialrat* evolved into the *Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee* [KWK] (Colonial Economic Committee) in 1898, led by Berlin businessman Karl Supf, which continued to develop ways to exploit the area. The committee decided to launch another expedition called the *Baumwolle-Expedition* (Cotton Expedition) in 1900 because of their desire to transform the cotton industry in Togo.⁵² German officials wanted to separate themselves from the British in India and the Russians in Central Asia who had forced colonial subjects to work in certain industries. German officials wanted to promote a cotton culture that they hoped would foster a more manageable, subservient labor force. For that reason, they wanted to model the American South by establishing large-scale farms and relying on a system of labor that resembles sharecropping.⁵³

Baron Beno von Herman auf Wain and other members of the KWK became fascinated with the sharecropping system of labor after reading German geographer Friedrich Ratzel's description of his trip in 1893 to the American South, studying ethnicity and culture in North America. Ratzel noted that managing "the negro" was dependent on controlling and overseeing economic productivity through the sharecropping system.⁵⁴ That same attention to agricultural and economic productivity was instilled into the students of the Tuskegee Institute who later worked to share those values with the Togolese students.⁵⁵ German officials, seeking to replicate the American South in Togo, also believed that Black teachers would be more welcomed by

⁵² Deutscher Kolonialkongress, *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Kolonialkongresses zu Berlin am 5. 6. und 7. Oktober 1905* (Berlin: D. Reimer, E. Vohsen, 1905), 603.

⁵³ "Cotton Growing in Togo-Land: Negroes from Tuskegee Institute Show that the Soil is Suitable," *New York Times*, March 14, 1902, 9.

⁵⁴ Friedrich Ratzel, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, Vol. 2 (München: Oldenbourg, 1893), 292.

⁵⁵ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers: Vol. 6, 1901-1902* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 26.

Togolese students because of a racial familiarity, a belief held after German officials toured the Tuskegee Institute in 1895. Because of these aims, German colonial officials looked to an authority in Booker T. Washington to assist them in implementing such a system of education and labor in the colonies.

The Appeal of Tuskegee to the *Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee*

From the German government's perspective, Booker T. Washington was an attractive candidate to help Germany modernize the cotton industry in Togo. The combination of Washington's belief in the benefits of technical education and willingness to work within white power structures made him an especially attractive potential partner for a colonial power. Washington's ideas about race differed from most African Americans at the time because he felt that Blacks should eschew the immediate push for civil rights and instead focus on self-improvement and be accepting of the racial climate.

In his 1895 "Atlanta Exposition Address," Washington proposed that African Americans should develop better farming methods to become economically independent.⁵⁶ Washington's speech upset a number of Black leaders at the time, including W.E.B. Du Bois who, although not against the practical education espoused by the Hampton-Tuskegee model, criticized Washington for tabling the push for civil rights and the need to expand higher education for Black people. Despite criticism from people like Du Bois, Booker T. Washington was put in charge of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama to develop it into a technical school for modern farming methods. The institute trained Black students in new farming techniques and planting methods designed for large-scale farming, including cotton. European colonial officials, especially those in Germany, were familiar with Washington's work at Tuskegee and his views on race relations.

⁵⁶ Booker T. Washington, "Atlanta Exposition Address (1895)," *Black History Bulletin*, 68,1 (2006): 18-20.

Although other European states at the time, such as Britain and France, were skeptical about the practicality of the Hampton-Tuskegee model, the KWK decided to proceed because they believed that Tuskegee could develop Togo into a reliable and sustainable cotton source.⁵⁷ The appeal of Tuskegee to the KWK went beyond agriculture; Washington's support of industrial education under Tuskegee Model which implicitly maintained the racial hierarchy was equally as appealing and using African American students to train Africans was a strategy that deployed the tactic of racial familiarity to help achieve its objectives.

In September 1900, the KWK sent its first representative to meet with Washington about Tuskegee supporting the KWK's development scheme. Baron Beno von Herman auf Wain met with Washington and asked him to select students from the Tuskegee Institute who would be paid "100 dollars a month or a little less than that if the company [KWK] would give them 50% of the cotton harvested the first year for their personal benefit..."⁵⁸ The men chosen were to travel throughout Togo with the KWK officials to "select the land which they would consider best for two different experimental farms. There they would prepare the soil and put up the necessary buildings with the help of the natives."⁵⁹ In recruiting the Togolese to help erect the farm buildings that also served as the school buildings, Tuskegee teachers were required to teach the Togolese how to use modern farm technology, like the plow and the cotton gin, as the Togolese were unfamiliar with them. The KWK's excitement about involving Tuskegee in their imperialist ambitions was not shared by every member. In a letter to Booker T. Washington on September 3, 1900, Beno von Herman auf Wain informed the Tuskegee principal that some of

⁵⁷ Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift für Tropische Landwirtschaft* Vol. 4, (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1900), 224.

⁵⁸ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers* Vol. 5: 1899-1900 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 633.

⁵⁹ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, Vol. 5: 1899-1900, 634.

the members of the company had misgivings about whether the Tuskegee students would have difficulty in “starting and developing their work in Togo, in finding the necessary authority towards the native population and in having at the same time the necessary respect towards the German government officials.”⁶⁰ Washington assured the baron that there would not be “much if any difficulty in the men who go from here [Tuskegee] treating German officials with proper respect...at the same time they will secure the respect and confidence of the natives.”⁶¹

For the Tuskegee principal, the Togo expedition presented an economic and technical challenge which Africans and African Americans could strategically overcome in order to insure their own survival in the face of imperialism of Jim Crow. The appeal of the expedition to the Tuskegee teachers centered around the idea of Black education and Black economic development. From their perspective, accepting the offer by the KWK was an opportunity for Washington and the Tuskegee teachers to restrict further European encroachment of African lands and Africans’ autonomy by supporting endeavors that did not destroy independent Togolese production. In Washington’s letter to Baron Beno on September 20, 1900, he wrote, “I should very much hope that your Company will not make the same mistake that has been made in the South among our people, that is, teach them to raise nothing but cotton. I find that they make much better progress financially and otherwise where they are taught to raise something to eat at the same time they are raising cotton.”⁶² The opportunity to do work in Togo offered the potential of the Tuskegee model to thrive in Africa. Washington treated his students as the leaders of the race. They were to be the vehicles through which his vision of Black self-sufficiency would spread:

⁶⁰ Ibid., 635.

⁶¹ Ibid., 641.

⁶² Ibid., 640.

I want students who are going out from Tuskegee, to have it firmly fixed in your minds that wherever you go, however small the piece of land you occupy, you have got to get the most out of the soil, or somebody else will crowd you out. The same is true in regard to labor, commercial business and education. If we do not develop the talents in these respects to the very highest degree, somebody else, some other nation will crowd in upon us and we shall not be able to hold our own.⁶³

James Nathan Calloway, who headed the expedition, chose Robinson, Burke, and Harris for their expertise and eagerness. Robinson and Burke were scientific agriculturalists at the Tuskegee Institute and were chosen as the scientists on the expedition; Harris served as the mechanic. The excitement and pride of the men was palpable as they saw it as an important step in raising the status of their race. An article published in the *American Citizen* on November 9, 1900, called the expedition “the most important step in the development of the cotton industry since Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin”.⁶⁴ John Robinson was one of the most vocal advocates of the Hampton-Tuskegee model. In *Tuskegee & Its People: Their Ideals and Achievements*, John Robinson in 1905 reflected that he “had not been at the Tuskegee Institute long” before he “was led to know that ‘agriculture’ is the very highest of all industrial callings.” When chosen to go to Togo, Robinson called it a “call I could not resist. Here was a chance for the largest possible usefulness. Here I could have a part in a monumental undertaking, and I gladly agreed to go.”⁶⁵

⁶³ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 8: 1904-1906* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 459-460.

⁶⁴ “To Teach Cotton Raising: Negroes from Booker T. Washington's School Sail for West Coast of Africa,” *American Citizen*, November 9, 1900, 1.

⁶⁵ Booker T. Washington, *Tuskegee & Its People: Their Ideals and Achievements*, (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1905), 191,194.



A. F. CALVERT'S MAP OF TOGOLAND.

Figure 2.1 Map of German Togoland. Source: Albert Calvert, *Togoland* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1918).

As Calloway and company steamed to Togo from Hamburg, they made several stops along the way on the African coast, exposing them to the continent and its people for the first time. In a letter to Washington, which arrived at Tuskegee in February 1900, Calloway gave his impressions of various African peoples along the way. In Conakry, Guinea, Calloway was impressed with the occupations of the Guinean people who were clerks and traders. He also noted that they were “nicely dressed,” “English speaking,” and were Christian. Calloway made

similar observations on his stop in Monrovia, Liberia. It was in Liberia that he stated he and the other Tuskegee teachers were moved to tears of joy and promise:

This little republic is exerting a great influence upon the natives along the coast below. The Negro here from America [Americo-Liberians] must work and thus he teaches the natives to work. These natives are sought by the European vessels for laborers and carried down the coast. In this way they are being used for most [of] the important labor along the west coast. Manual labor is more dignified here than in other colonies. The masters work here.⁶⁶

When arriving in Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast, Calloway found both groups to be “improved in education but not inclined to manual labor” as they “sought to imitate their masters and become English gentlemen.”⁶⁷ Calloway wrote his observations to Washington as a way of distinguishing between “civilized” and “uncivilized” African peoples by employing both an imperialist lens of assimilation and modernity as well as the Hampton-Tuskegee model as means to make those distinctions.

On January 3, 1901, the Tuskegee teachers arrived in Lomé, the capital of German Togoland which is located on the coast and would be the site of the ginning station. Calloway noted that when he and his men arrived in Lomé, they had to figure out how to move their equipment, which included the cotton gins and wagons, without horses and oxen as the animals had yet to arrive. To Calloway’s surprise, when he recruited some of the Togolese to help them pull the wagons, the “natives feared to draw the wagons but were willing to carry them on their heads.”⁶⁸ A compromise was made, and Calloway and his men decided to abandon the wagons and enlist the Togolese to help them carry their supplies. The Tuskegee men began work immediately as they had to literally start from the ground up. The areas designated for the

⁶⁶ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 6: 1901-1902* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 26.

⁶⁷ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 6: 1901-1902*, 26.

⁶⁸ Karl Supf, *Baumwoll-Expedition Nach Togo* (Berlin: Mittler, 1901), 12.

experimental farms at Atakampé and Tové needed to be cleared, draft animals needed to be acquired, buildings had to be erected to house the ginning station at Lomé and the school buildings at Notsé and Lomé, roads needed to be improved in order to accommodate the wagons, the proper cotton seed needed to be acquired, and Togolese labor needed to be recruited.⁶⁹ The aims of the Tuskegee teachers were in line with the KWK which was noted by Dr. Hans Gruner, the station manager at Misahöhe. According to Gruner, the work of Tuskegee had the potential to make a significant contribution to the dissemination of cotton culture by testing the types of cotton suitable for Togo, investigating cotton diseases, obtaining seed material for distribution to the gin owners or to the Togolese, and training Togolese from the various districts of the country to grow cotton. The government could also “encourage cotton cultivation by [convincing the Togolese to] donate the land required for cotton farms or gin plants”⁷⁰

By May 1901, the Tuskegee teachers and the German colonial government were impressed with the progress being made. More than 100 acres of land had been cleared and cotton, corn, peanuts, and other crops had been planted to maintain the quality of soil and diversify the economic production of the Togolese. Sheppard Harris noted that “six months ago men passed this place without paying any attention to it, for it was nothing but a field of bushes and elephant grass,” but under the guidance of Tuskegee, “today one is attracted by the number of buildings, the growing of cotton and other products, also the pulling of the plows by horses and men guiding them.”⁷¹ The progress of the expedition was of utmost importance to the KWK.

⁶⁹ Activities of the cotton expedition of the Colonial Economic Committee under the leadership of James Calloway, 1901, Bundesarchiv R 150/318.

⁷⁰ Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift Für Tropische Landwirtschaft* (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1900), 263.

⁷¹ “West African Cotton: Beginning to Look as if the German Experiment Will Prove a Success,” *Yorkville Enquirer*, August 28, 1901, 1.

Calloway's impressions of the Togolese changed as the work began. In a letter to Booker T. Washington that was reprinted in the *Yorkville Enquirer* in 1901, Calloway noted:

The natives do not differ very much from the uneducated Negro of the black belt of the south. I believe the Africans have a better disposition. Color is about the same. If I did not know that I am in Africa I could easily believe myself in Alabama. The Natives are just as anxious to have clothes and to be educated as American Negroes. Many of them want to come to America. They do not seem to be lazy, but they cannot do a great deal of work on the food they now eat, which is principally rice. There is at Lomé a native who runs a seven-room boarding house. He also conducts a large business for a German who lives in Berlin.⁷²

In 1902, Karl Supf, a member of the KWK, restated that the KWK hoped the Tuskegee teachers would introduce a cotton culture in Togo. "Imbuing a cotton culture unto the Togolese was predicated on educating the natives to work while at the same time making them economically dependent on the KWK, significantly contributing to the profitability of our colonies."⁷³ Because of its educational character, establishing a cotton culture was a cornerstone in the cultural development of Togo. The Tuskegees, however, while wanting the Togolese to adopt modern farming techniques, hoped to train the Togolese to become independent farmers. The Tuskegee teachers' hopes ran counter to the KWK's aims. By the end of Tuskegee's tenure, the Tuskegee teachers found themselves acting as cotton collection agents rather than teachers of Tuskegee's principles. The school at Notsé was established to provide the Togolese with a formal education on how to grow cotton more efficiently. Notsé was chosen as the location for the technical school to provide classroom education about large-scale cotton farming. It was located near Tové so that after the students finished school, they could continue their education at the experimental farm.⁷⁴ The KWK selected John Robinson, one of the Tuskegee graduates,

⁷² "West African Cotton: Beginning to Look as if the German Experiment Will Prove a Success," 1.

⁷³ Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift Für Tropische Landwirtschaft* (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1900), 264.

⁷⁴ Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift Für Tropische Landwirtschaft* (1900), 233.

to lead the school because he originally suggested the idea of establishing a technical school like the Tuskegee Institute in Togoland. The school also trained German missionaries as instructors to teach large-scale cotton farming methods and stress the importance of it. The curriculum taught in the Notsé school included further training in what had been taught on the experimental farm at Tové such as the handling of draft animals, cotton cultivation methods, soil preparation, and finding the best seed. A ginning station was established at the school to teach the Togolese about the ginning process and to gin the cotton that came from the farm at Tové.⁷⁵

The introduction of new technologies and farming methods were important in teaching the Togolese to adopt a large-scale cotton farming culture and to become economically independent. The KWK wanted to develop a culture that revolved around cotton while Tuskegee had the difficult task of developing a system that benefited both colonizer and colonized.⁷⁶ German colonial officials recruited wage laborers from the region between 1899-1913 to work on previous experimental farms. However, despite the willingness of the Togolese to learn large-scale cotton farming, the Germans sometimes resorted to forced labor, such as in 1902, when there were labor shortages.⁷⁷ After their instruction at the schools in Notsé and Tové, the goal of the Tuskegee teachers was for the Togolese to receive their own equipment, plot of land, and seed to establish their own cotton farms.⁷⁸ Shepherd Harris in a letter to Booker T. Washington in May 1901 wrote that he and the other Tuskegee men in Togo were “doing all that there [was in their] power to reflect credit upon our race in America” in offering assistance to the Togolese.⁷⁹ In the plan drawn up by the KWK for 1902, besides overseeing the expedition,

⁷⁵ Harlan and Smock, *Booker T. Washington Papers: Vol. 6, 1901-1902*, 110.

⁷⁶ Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift für Tropische Landwirtschaft*, Vol. 12 (Berlin: Kolonial Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1908), 154.

⁷⁷ “German,” *The African Mail*, September 22, 1905, 617.

⁷⁸ C.A. Birtwistle, “An Admirably-Managed German Colony,” *The African Mail*, April 16, 1909, 273.

⁷⁹ Harlan and Smock, *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 6: 1901-1902*, 111.

James Nathan Calloway was responsible for the settlement of the Tuskegee teachers, and the establishment of cotton markets with mechanical harvesting. John Robinson designed the experimental and teaching station at Tove, and Allen Burke directed the cotton trials in the Lomé district.⁸⁰ When James Calloway left Togo in 1901/1902, Robinson was put in charge of the expedition, but Calloway believed that Germany along with Tuskegee created the blueprint for the success of Black people in Africa and the United States:

Whether or not Germany succeeds in becoming a rival to this country [United States] in cotton raising, some Afro-Americans believe that the German emperor has pointed the way to solve the American Negro problem. There are thousands of expert cotton farmers among southern Negroes, and if encouraged by offers of transportation and subsistence till their start in Africa was made, they would readily leave the black belt and the congested districts of this country.⁸¹

Calloway's opinions were speaking more to the tenets of Tuskegee and a critique of U.S. policies that targeted Black people rather than a call for African American migration to European colonies in Africa. In a letter from Booker T. Washington in January 1905, Washington noted that Calloway believed that the "State should not only give a common school education but an industrial training that will fit them to go out into this rich country and be skilled laborers in agriculture, mining and the trades."⁸²

It was John Robinson's task to determine how the Hampton-Tuskegee model could benefit both the Togolese and the German colonial government. "How to net the best return [in cotton production] without demoralizing the people or other colonial industries" was the dilemma Robinson was faced with.⁸³ Noting that the Togolese were already growing cotton at a

⁸⁰ John Robinson, *Sonderbericht der Versuchsstation Tove in Bericht II: Deutsch-koloniale Baumwoll-Unternehmungen 1902/03*, Supplement (*Beiheft*) to *Tropenpflanzer* 4 (1903): 100.

⁸¹ "West African Cotton: Beginning to Look as if the German Experiment Will Prove a Success," 1.

⁸² Harlan and Smock, *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 8: 1904-1906*, 184.

⁸³ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson, Bundesarchiv R 150/1994, p. 118.

subsistence level, Robinson believed that providing practical and agricultural education along with the implementation of modern farming technology would help achieve those aims.

However, Robinson shared in colonial attitudes towards the Togolese, referring to them as having a “childish mentality” and needed a more “intelligent head” to oversee their progress.⁸⁴

Robinson’s attitude towards the Togolese is reminiscent of the view shared by many members of the African American elite, a view espoused by Booker T. Washington in *Up from Slavery*. In his autobiography, Washington argued:

The ten million Negroes inhabiting this country, who themselves or whose ancestors went through the school of American slavery, are in a stronger and more hopeful condition, materially, intellectually, morally, and religiously, than is true of an equal number of black people in any other portion of the globe. This is so to such an extent that Negroes in this country, who themselves or whose forefathers went through the school of slavery are constantly returning to Africa as missionaries to enlighten those who remained in the fatherland.⁸⁵

Robinson and Washington’s views reveal the challenges of authentic Pan-Africanism under the Hampton-Tuskegee model as Tuskegee teachers, including Robinson, supported an evolutionary hierarchy within the Black race.⁸⁶

Robinson suggested the recruitment of families rather than just the Togolese males from the households because keeping the families together would contribute more labor and would limit the flight risk of students abandoning the farms to return home.⁸⁷ Robinson also suggested that the students be paid equal to other wage laborers as the Togolese students would leave the

⁸⁴ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson, Bundesarchiv R_150/1994, p. 118.

⁸⁵ Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (London: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1907), 16.

⁸⁶ Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 38.

⁸⁷ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson (1904), Bundesarchiv R_150/1994, p. 119.

school because they could make more in other professions. The KWK expected that after two years, students would then become laborers on the cotton farms, making the school a pipeline for colonial labor. Robinson challenged the KWK idea that the school should focus on teaching “cotton culture” by training the Togolese in all aspects of agriculture and economic and social uplift, the tenets of the Hampton-Tuskegee model.⁸⁸ Robinson also suggested that the Togolese students should also be allowed to grow their own crops for subsistence and sell them to local markets, while this was done prior to German intervention, this would continue teaching them the values of economic independence.⁸⁹ But as the expedition went on, the colonial government kept increasing demands of cotton production by the expedition, this increased pressure on Robinson and the KWK paved the way for the colonial government to assume more control over the expedition.

Did the Tuskegee-Togo Expedition Fail?

By 1903, the expedition was beginning to wane for both the KWK and the Tuskegees. Less than favorable returns since 1901 had resulted in the Tuskegee teachers not receiving their commissions which were outlined in their contracts regarding cotton production. The crop in 1903 suffered a cotton blight which caused much of the initial crop to die and the soil at some of the experimental farms was of poor quality. Additionally, the KWK struggled to supply the necessary cotton seeds, cotton gins, and draft animals. Some of the oxen arrived undersized or in one instance in 1908 half of the oxen procured died en route while procuring the right seeds

⁸⁸ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson (1906), Bundesarchiv R 150/1994, p. 300.

⁸⁹ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson (1906), Bundesarchiv R 150/1994, p. 132.

sometimes proved difficult by the KWK.⁹⁰ But despite these earlier setbacks, cotton production did increase steadily from 1904-1913 and the quality of the cotton produced maintained its middling quality. But the expedition was failing to deliver the colonial government's anticipated results, and so the Tuskegee teachers were advised to revise their curriculum and instead of teaching the tenets of the Hampton-Tuskegee model, they were instructed to direct their attention to the collection, transport, and ginning of cotton.⁹¹

The first yield of the expedition in 1902 produced 14,285 Kgs. of cotton. That number doubled the next year and continued to grow until the end of the expedition in 1907 when the Togolese exported 275,000 Kgs. By 1913, that number would double again.⁹² The only dip in cotton exports was in 1910 and was due to heavy rains that destroyed much of the crop throughout the colony. Second, similar to the early years of the expedition, much of the cotton crop felt subject to disease which severely impacted the crop yield.⁹³ Despite the sharp decrease in 1910, cotton exports rose steadily afterward. New technologies, like the expansion of the railroad which was centered in Lomé and expanded to Aného and Kpalimé and was completed in 1905, made assistance and exportation easier and more efficient. Even with the modernization of Togo through infrastructure, farming technology, and education, cotton production failed to meet the demand of the KWK, and the technological implementations of the railroad and the plow only furthered to exploit Togolese labor.

⁹⁰ Measures to increase cotton cultivation in cooperation with the Colonial Economic Committee and the Cotton Inspectorate (1908), Bundesarchiv R 150/303, p. 219.

⁹¹ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson, Bundesarchiv R 150/1994, p. 35-37.

⁹² International Congress of Delegated Representatives of Master Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Associations, *The Ninth International Congress of Delegated Representatives of Master Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Associations: Held in Scheveningen, June 9th, 10th, and 11th, 1913* (Manchester: Taylor, Garnett, Evans, & Co. Ltd., 1913), 356.

⁹³ Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift für Tropische Landwirtschaft Vol. 11* (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1910), 150.

The unsatisfactory yield of cotton prompted the colonial government to reevaluate the expedition. In 1903, Robinson wrote a report which made recommendations that the decision making over the direction of the expedition should be more centralized with the formation of a council that included both Tuskegee members, the German governor of Togo, and members of the KWK. Robinson stated, “those who are genuinely interested in the development of the country, who look far into the future and foresee the moment when the colony can truly produce wealth, will see that it is very wise to strive vigorously until a solid base is gained, or until certainty of achieving good results.” However, Robinson was hesitant to involve the input of the Togolese, arguing that “considering the population in its present state of civilization, it must be said that there is no activity for which it would be suited but cotton-culture, and that no other could take its place.”⁹⁴ The council was less a conference and more of an opportunity for the KWK and the Tuskegee students to reassess the situation.

Nonetheless, the German colonial government was confident that Robinson could meet their demands. In 1906, Robinson was placed in charge of the agricultural school in Notsé, after Calloway but with a revised curriculum. By 1906, the school’s enrollment had increased to about 150 students.⁹⁵ Students were enrolled for a period of three years and were exempted from paying local taxes. The Togolese students were not only taught practical skills and its values according to the Hampton-Tuskegee model, received their own small farms, and took daily, one-hour courses in German. The first year, students learned the proper techniques of land clearing. In the second year of instruction, students were taught how to take care of draft animals and use plows, which replaced the traditional hoe, and students were also given their own hectare to

⁹⁴ John Robinson, *Sonderbericht der Versuchsstation Tove in Bericht II: Deutsch-koloniale Baumwoll-Unternehmungen 1902/03*, Supplement (*Beiheft*) to *Tropenpflanzer* 4 (1903): 105.

⁹⁵ Measures to increase cotton cultivation in cooperation with the Colonial Economic Committee and the Cotton Inspectorate (1904), Bundesarchiv R 150/303, p. 227.

grow their own cotton. In the third year, students spent most of the time working their own farms and any profit was kept by them.⁹⁶

Students were also paid a stipend to spark interest in attending the Notsé school. The plan was for training was laid out in the school's guidelines:

The agricultural students receive in their first year of apprenticeship 12 [marks] monthly, whilst in the second year the pay rises to 15 [marks] a month. The third year will pay a wage for 15MK per month. In addition to this students will also receive until their day of graduation the harvested cotton from one field, the size of one hectare, which they will from their second year personally take charge of. This amount is meant to help with their living costs during the first months of their settlement. Every year there will be an examination, which the agricultural advisory committee of the government will oversee, in the presence of the district leader of the agricultural school.⁹⁷

With the success of the Notsé school in creating a successful cotton crop and with training the Togolese, Robinson created the blueprint the German colonial government could expand upon. Because the district that the Notsé school resided in, Atakpamé, which was one of the most successful districts in the colony between 1905 and 1907, on April 1, 1908, the KWK agreed to hand over control of the school to the German colonial government. Unbeknownst to the Tuskegee teachers, the plan for the KWK was always to pass the baton to the German colonial government and sell the means of production to private enterprises. The government agreed to “keep the matter of cultivation as its first purpose,” and to “consult the committee from time to time.” The KWK also handed over the ginning stations to various private enterprises and the government.”⁹⁸ In 1909, Robinson was still an employee of the KWK and expected to remain for

⁹⁶ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson (1906), Bundesarchiv R 150/1994, p. 330-331.

⁹⁷ Karl Supf, *Deutsche Kolonial-Unternehmen*, Bericht VIII (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1907), 10.

⁹⁸ Karl Supf, *Deutsche Kolonial-Unternehmen*, Bericht X (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1908), 14-16.

another two years. However, that was not to be as he drowned in a boating accident near Lomé in 1909.⁹⁹

Robinson's death combined with the government takeover of the school marked the decline of the expedition. Togolese efforts were immediately undermined by the German colonial government which failed to adequately supply them with cotton seeds and also offered the Togolese non-competitive prices for their cotton, resulting in many Togolese selling to Togolese weavers or simply abandoning their farms.¹⁰⁰ The KWK wanted Robinson's replacement to be able to maximize Togolese students' production. In the wake of Robinson's death, German pressure led to major changes to how the expedition was run. Julius Zech, German governor of Togo asked Booker T. Washington to appoint someone who could get the Togolese to grow more cotton and retain the labor necessary to work on the farms after many had left. Washington chose, G.H. Pape, a graduate of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas (now Texas A&M) who had initially been sent to Togo as an American government cotton inspector.¹⁰¹ Zech had toured Texas in 1902 and found that the strict discipline Texas cotton farmers could enforce was successful. Washington chose Pape to head the school after Robinson because he believed Pape could meet Zech's goals.

Pape frequently used violent coercion which caused many Togolese to flee the school, either returning home or going to the Gold Coast which offered more opportunities for gainful

⁹⁹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 10: 1909-11* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 167.

¹⁰⁰ Donna Maier, "Persistence of Precolonial Patterns of Production: Cotton in German Togoland, 1800-1914," in Allen Isaacman and Richard Roberts, eds., *Cotton, Colonialism, and Social History in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Portsmouth, Heinemann, 1995), 91-95.

¹⁰¹ International Cotton Conference-Zürich, *Official Report of the Proceedings of the First International Congress of Delegated Representatives of Master Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Associations Held at the Tonhalle, Zürich, May 23 to 27, 1904* (Manchester: Marsden and Co. Ltd. Printers, 1904), 21.

employment.¹⁰² The grueling fifteen hour school days, the use violence, and increased labor demands were factors that contributed to diminishing enrollment.¹⁰³ This caused a decrease in production as the initial quota of two thousand bales was not met and instead about one thousand could be secured.¹⁰⁴



Figure 2.2 Enabling integration into the world market: Cotton is transported on a newly built railroad, Togo, 1905. Source: Bundesarchiv Berlin, R 1001/8223.

Under Pape's direction, the Togolese worked under a plantation style of labor as seen in the American South. Under the new system, the principles of practical education that made up the Hampton-Tuskegee model were discarded, undermining the work that Robinson and the

¹⁰² Pape is just one example of an official using violence to coerce the Togolese population. There were many German officials who also used violent coercion to increase production and maintain obedience. This can be seen in "For Six Days the German Reichstag has been...", *The Times*, December 6, 1909, 9.

¹⁰³ Establishment and Operation of a Cotton Cultivation School/Agriculture School in Nuatja, Founded by the Cotton Inspector Buvinghausen Under the Leadership of the Colored American Robinson (1906), Bundesarchiv R 150/1994, p. 329. While there were reports of students running away from the school, they were less frequent before Robinson's death (1904), Bundesarchiv R 150/303, p. 227.

¹⁰⁴ Der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, *Verhandlungen der Baumwollanbau-Kommission des Kolonial-Wirtschaftlichen Komitees* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, Königliche Hofbuchdruckerei, 1911), 3.

other Tuskegee teachers had done. The planting of secondary crops, which the Tuskegee teachers had encouraged the Togolese farmers to continue, had been abandoned under direction of the German colonial government which favored the planting of only cotton. Cotton, a labor intensive and soil exhaustive crop, when planted by itself and not interspersed with other crops, leads to nutrient and moisture depletion of the soil which was the case in Togo.¹⁰⁵ In addition to implementing a monocrop culture, the colonial government, in taking over instruction of the school, did not adequately explain the problems associated with modern farming technology, such as overploughing which also stripped nutrients from the soil. Students from the school who disobeyed the rulings of chiefs or refused to work were conscripted into expanding the Nuatja-Atakpamé Railway, and when they attempted to flee, they were sentenced to “improvement camps” where they were taught the “values of labor.”¹⁰⁶ Though not explicitly mentioned, the real object of the camps was to exploit labor for public works projects. A 1907 decree allowed compulsory labor to be used for public works projects when there was a labor shortage. Using forced labor on public works projects resulted in less laborers to cultivate the cotton harvest.¹⁰⁷ In 1910, the Germans opened another camp in Atakpamé.¹⁰⁸

Despite government decisions undermining Tuskegee’s project, the German colonial government blamed the failures of the school and expedition on “native laziness.” Failing to procure more teachers to send to Togo had been a problem since the early days of the expedition. As early as 1902, after the drowning of two members of the expedition that were to relieve the

¹⁰⁵ Paul Richards, “Ecological Change and the Politics of African Land Use,” *African Studies Review* 26, no. 2 (1983): 26-27.

¹⁰⁶ Reichskolonialamt, *Deutsches Kolonialblatt* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1911), 428.

¹⁰⁷ Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft Baumwolle-Kommission, *Verhandlungen der Baumwollanbau-Kommission des Kolonial-Wirtschaftlichen Komitees, Wirtschaftlicher Ausschuß der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1910), 30.

¹⁰⁸ The improvement camps are mentioned in D.E.K. Amenumey, “German Administration in Southern Togo,” *The Journal of African History* 10, no. 4 (1969): 631-632.

first four initially sent, Booker T. Washington found it difficult to find men willing to go to Togo to spread the Hampton-Tuskegee model. Washington even enlisted the help of George Washington Carver, who was teacher at Tuskegee at the time, to persuade Tuskegees to take up the cause. While the KWK agreed to fund prospective teachers willing to go to Togo, the Tuskegees were to remain in Africa for five years at the rate of forty marks per month.¹⁰⁹ The dangers of travel combined with the demands of the German colonial government over the course of the expedition led to Tuskegee abandoning Togo by the end 1909.

Conclusion

Teaching the Togolese to expand the production of cotton and modern farming technologies was a strategy that sought to help the Togolese succeed within the new German imperial order. However, the Hampton-Tuskegee model had the adverse effect of creating the blueprint the German colonial government used to exploit Togolese labor and the Togolese cotton market. The Tuskegee men on the expedition held a complicated view of the Togolese. While wanting to help the Togolese, they mimicked pro-imperialist attitudes by denying the Togolese from participating in the matters concerning the expedition and believing that their methods of farming were holding them back from achieving modernity. These arguments however were conducive to Booker T. Washington's own views towards African Americans which he outlined in the "Atlanta Exposition Address." The vision laid out by Washington in the "Atlanta Exposition," elevated him in the eyes of many European officials, including members of the KWK, as the spokesperson of the Black race. Moritz Schantz, Privy Councilor of the KWK, noted in 1909 that by "confronting white prejudice against colored people, Booker Washington takes the position: make the best of any given circumstance, overcome the prejudice

¹⁰⁹ Harlan and Smock, *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 6, 1901-1902*, 489.

by developing your natural talents, think yourself right and the world will be right towards you.”¹¹⁰

Moritz Schantz first visited Tuskegee in 1907 to meet with Washington. Schantz argued that “from the beginning Booker Washington took the position that his education work was to serve the interests of both coloreds and whites, and he sought to win the goodwill and support of both races.”¹¹¹ Unfortunately, Washington became the victim of his own vision. Washington and the Tuskegee expeditionaries believed that they were offering practical solutions that would benefit both the Togolese and Germany. By agreeing to assist the German colonial government and the KWK, Washington and the Tuskegee teachers worked within imperialist channels to meet the needs of the Togolese while still holding up their contractual obligation to Germany, hoping that this expedition would lead to a new path towards colonial management whereby both colonizer and colonized could succeed. However, the more successful Tuskegee was in Togo, the worse it would inevitably be for the Togolese. By 1909, Tuskegee had successfully established and managed a series of cotton schools and stations throughout Togo, found a strain of cotton seed that yielded both good quality and moderate production, and successfully implemented the means of modern production through the use of the cotton gin and the plow. While the expedition had ended for Tuskegee, the enrollment of Togolese students at Tuskegee continued but by and large interests in Togoland ended after 1909 as Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee officials focused on matters elsewhere in Africa and Latin America.

¹¹⁰ Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift Für Tropische Landwirtschaft*, (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1909), 582.

¹¹¹ Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee, *Der Tropenpflanzer: Zeitschrift Für Tropische Landwirtschaft* (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliche Komitee, 1908), 219.

Chapter 3 - U.S. Imperialism and Tuskegee in Liberia

In 1906, *The Independent* published a chapter written by Booker T. Washington, the famed principal of the Tuskegee Institute and one of the foremost Black leaders in the United States, in which he discussed the importance of industrial education in Africa. “Any experiment which seeks to encourage native industry by force or merely by an appeal to his ‘enlightened self-interest’ will fail.”¹¹² Although discussing several places in Africa, Washington focused mostly on Liberia, which was facing territorial threats from France, Britain and Germany. Despite never visiting Africa himself, Washington was keenly aware of the problems facing Africa, including Liberia, and wanted to offer advice and assistance. Liberia was a unique case because of its ties to the United States, especially in the hearts and minds of African Americans and Americo-Liberians, the African American returnees who emigrated from the United States to Liberia under the auspices of the Society for the Colonization of Free People of Color of America (later becoming the American Colonization Society in 1837). As Washington wrote in *The Story of the Negro*, “The millions of Negroes in America are almost as much interested, for example, in the future of Liberia and Abyssinia, as they are in their own country.”¹¹³ Washington believed that the United States, especially Tuskegee, could assist in preserving Liberian sovereignty.

While Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee were focused on assisting African Americans and Africans in becoming industrious, self-sufficient, pious, and thrifty, all components of what is known as the “Hampton-Tuskegee model,” the United States was in its early stages as global imperial power. American leaders wanted to prove the United States was strong enough to push

¹¹² Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 8: 1904-1906* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 459-460, 551.

¹¹³ Booker T. Washington, *The Story of the Negro* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 34.

back against the likes of Britain and France, the two strongest imperialist powers in the world in 1900. Washington, who was not only a friend of President Theodore Roosevelt but also held considerable sway over the Black Republican vote, wrote to Roosevelt in 1907 regarding the “Liberian Crisis,” as Liberia was facing territorial incursions by France and Britain and a massive debt burden. The United States government and Tuskegee also had a shared interest in developing commercial, agricultural, and industrial prospects in Liberia. Washington’s and Tuskegee’s influence continued to be felt from Presidents Roosevelt through Hoover. By appealing to the economic goals and political interests of the presidents, Washington worked within the channels created by imperialism to advance the Hampton-Tuskegee model.

While the story of Tuskegee and Liberia is intertwined with imperialist ambitions, that fails to show the larger picture. This chapter shows how Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee worked within the channels created by imperialism to assist the Liberian people, both Americo-Liberians and native Liberians, through a shared Pan-African struggle that tied progress to education reform. Studying how Tuskegee's Pan-Africanism, especially that of Booker T. Washington, intersected imperialist discourse during the first quarter of the twentieth century, is a growing field of study and one that offers a counter to the narrative of Washington’s accommodationist actions. Studying Tuskegee’s complicated connection to imperialism, including explaining why the United States government enlisted Tuskegee’s help with the Liberian crisis reveals new insights about the history of Pan-Africanism.

Only recently have scholars like Frank Guridy begun to assess how Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee officials worked to build Pan-African ties between Blacks while

maneuvering through the avenues created by imperialism.¹¹⁴ This is especially true in the case of Liberia. This chapter advances the narrative that while at times working with US imperial powers, Washington and Tuskegee were actively engaged in Liberia to protect the sovereignty and the future success of this Black republic from 1900, when Tuskegee first began to be involved in matters concerning imperialism in Africa, and 1930, shortly after the opening of the Booker Washington Institute in Kakata. Liberia was on the forefront of many race leaders' minds, including W.E.B. Du Bois, as well as in the minds of US government officials, including Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Elihu Root. Booker T. Washington left behind numerous letters between his office and the Liberian government, including President Arthur Barclay, and Liberian reformers like James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey and Wilmot Blyden. He also left extensive correspondence with US government officials and the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. These sources provide an in-depth look at how Washington and Tuskegee came to believe that the future of African Americans, and the United States at large, was tied to the future success of Liberia.

Scholars such as Milfred Fierce have pointed out that Liberians expressed gratitude for US assistance, rescuing it from the clutches of European imperialism which would not have been possible without the work of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee, who never lost interest in Liberia's salvation.¹¹⁵ Washington put his ideas into practice with the Hampton-Tuskegee model, later adopted in Liberia with the opening of the Booker Washington Institute, but also in working with US and Liberia governments to establish a race brotherhood while opposing colonial abuses. This "shared brotherhood" was forged within this intersection of imperialism and Jim

¹¹⁴ Frank Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

¹¹⁵ Milfred Fierce, *The Pan-African Idea in the United States, 1900-1919: African-American Interest in Africa and Interaction with West Africa* (New York: Garland, 1993), 159.

Crow, as Washington and Tuskegee connected these two experiences to better understand the solutions to the Liberian Crisis. Other scholars like Nemata Blyden have pointed out that Washington worked to preserve Liberia's national sovereignty as one of the last two independent nations in Africa.¹¹⁶ Because of his multiple involvements in African affairs such as the Liberian case, historian Edward Erhagbe has argued Washington deserves to be recognized among other notable Pan-Africanists like W.E.B. Du Bois and Edward Blyden..¹¹⁷ But it was Washington's stance on racial politics in the United States that made him the main spokesman of the United States in regards to Liberia.

Even after Washington's death in 1915, Tuskegee's involvement in Liberian affairs did not end. Emmett J. Scott and Washington's successor, Robert Russa Moton, continued to call attention to problems facing Liberia by working with African leaders like James Aggrey and commercial enterprises like Firestone while adapting to the changing US. foreign policies. A large amount of correspondence, memos, and letters from Washington, Robert Russa Moton, Emmett Scott, Black nationalists, Firestone, combined with U.S. and Liberian government reports highlight Tuskegee's complex relationship with Liberia and imperialism.

Washington's and Tuskegee's involvement in Liberian affairs reveals the complexities of defining Pan-Africanism as Washington and his cadre worked in the interstitial spaces created by imperialism. Booker T. Washington was instrumental in persuading the United States to protect Liberia's borders and Tuskegee officials clamored for economic development via the Firestone Company. He also influenced Pan-Africanists like James Aggrey, Wilmot Blyden, and W.E.B. Du Bois. As Washington and Tuskegee officials maneuvered their way through the barriers of

¹¹⁶ Nemata Blyden, *African Americans and Africa: A New History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 135.

¹¹⁷ Edward Erhagbe, "African-Americans and the Defense of African States against European Imperial Conquest: Booker T. Washington's Diplomatic Efforts to Guarantee Liberia's Independence 1907-1911," *African Studies Review* 39, no. 1 (1996): 55-65.

Jim Crow and imperialism, they created a Pan-African solidarity designed to protect the sovereignty of the Liberian republic.

The Making of a Leader Amidst an Imperial Landscape

In 1865, nine-year-old Booker T. Washington rejoiced to learn of his family's emancipation. "My mother, who was standing by my side, leaned over and kissed her children, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks. She explained to us what it all meant, that this was the day for which she had been praying for so long, but fearing that she would never live to see."¹¹⁸ Three years before the emancipation of Booker T. Washington and millions of other enslaved Black Americans, the United States formally recognized the Republic of Liberia. Little was Washington aware that Liberia would eventually become a significant aspect of his life as his devotion to improving the lives of African Americans in the American South would transcend boundaries to include both Americo-Liberians and native Liberians. Prior to becoming the principal of the Tuskegee institute in 1882, Booker T. Washington attended the Hampton Institute, the first normal school for African Americans, and it was under the tutelage of Samuel Chapman Armstrong that he was imbued with the belief that progress of African Americans was possible through practical education. As Washington stated in a speech before the Alabama State Teachers' Association in 1882, "It is true that we need lawyers and doctors, and at the same time we need inventors, machinists, builders of steamboats and successful planters and merchants. Such persons will do more to banish prejudice than all the laws Congress can pass."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Louis Harlan. *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856-1901* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 19-21.

¹¹⁹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 2: 1860-1889* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1972), 195. Washington made a similar speech in regards to the needs of Liberia at a commencement address in Washington D.C. in 1905; Harlan and Smock, *Booker T. Washington Papers Vol. 8: 1904-1906*, 304-317.

Washington sought to bridge the Atlantic between African Americans and Liberians through practical education.

While Washington was interested in Liberian affairs, he did not believe in emigration schemes and was initially reluctant to engage directly with Liberian issues. In a letter to the editor of the *Indianapolis Freeman* in November 1893 regarding the Back to Africa movement led by Bishop Henry McNeil Turner, Washington said, “This talk of any appreciable number of our people going to Africa is the merest nonsense...It does no good, but on the other hand does a great deal of harm among the more ignorant of our people....”¹²⁰ Later, upon the founding of the Liberian Commission, Washington was hesitant to take the position offered to him on it as he worried it would distract him from his work at Tuskegee and his duties to African Americans. Instead, with the insistence of William Howard Taft, Washington nominated his secretary Emmett J. Scott who also felt Washington was too important to US race relations to send to Liberia.¹²¹ Washington, who in 1901 was the first African American to be received as a visitor at the White House, let alone dine with the President of the United States, was influential among Blacks and whites. Washington’s position helped secure Congressional assistance to Liberia even as the US emerged as a major colonial power.

Liberia’s experience of colonialism and imperialism is unique among West African states and vastly different from Dutch and British colonialism in South Africa. While not formally colonized by Europe or the United States, it was colonized by free Black Americans. These “returnees” arrived under the guise of colonization schemes designed to remove African Americans from the United States as a solution to the race issue and to emancipation. In 1816, a

¹²⁰ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 3: 1889-1895* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 377.

¹²¹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 10: 1909-1911* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 41, 46.

group of white Americans founded the American Colonization Society (ACS) to deal with the growing free Black population in the United States by resettling them in Africa. The free Black members that made the journey to Liberia and immediately had difficulty with the native Liberians. The Returnees attempted to retain the culture they had brought from the United States and for the most part did not integrate with the native societies. The U.S. government provided Liberia some financial support, but settlers in the new Liberian capital of Monrovia, named after U.S. President James Monroe, were expected to move toward self-sufficiency. In 1847, Liberia declared independence from the American Colonization Society to establish a sovereign state and create its own laws governing commerce, becoming the second Black republic at that time.¹²² Imperialist ambitions over the course of the nineteenth century threatened Liberia's future.

The latter part of the nineteenth century ushered in a new wave of imperialism. Aided by advances in industry and changing power dynamics across the globe, Europe carved up Africa in 1884 with the Berlin Conference and the United States expanded into the Pacific and Latin America after its victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898.¹²³ Britain and France were the two greatest European powers on the African continent and Germany was trying to establish itself as a global imperial power that could rival Britain and France. At the turn of the twentieth century Liberia became a place of contention between the powers as it lay between French West Africa and British controlled territories of Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast. Germany also looked to expand its Western African claims. Liberia, an inspiring image in the minds of African

¹²² For examination of the effects of returnee colonization in Liberia, see Michele Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

¹²³ Daniel Headrick, *Power over Peoples: Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

Americans as one of only two independent African nations, faced the threat of imperial domination.

Fearing European encroachment on its borders at the turn of the century, Liberian president Arthur Barclay appealed to the United States and Black leaders, like Booker T. Washington, to help him protect Liberia. In 1903, French forces in West Africa returned to a previously abandoned policy of expanding into Liberian territory. They attacked Liberian frontiers and suppressed local chiefs in its hinterlands, which were difficult for Liberian troops to defend because they were a great distance from the central government in Monrovia.¹²⁴ The British also began to establish a presence in Liberia on the pretext of quelling violence in the region between Sierra Leonians and Liberians on opposite sides of the Morro and Magowi Rivers.¹²⁵ Seeking assistance from a non-European power with which it had a shared history, Barclay and his cabinet reached out to the United States to solve the border threat. To oversee the talks over codifying the Liberian border, Liberian Secretary of State H.W. Travis wrote to US Liberian Ambassador Ernest Lyon in 1904 to put together a commission that included an engineer and surveyor to demarcate Liberia's territory.¹²⁶ President Theodore Roosevelt was more concerned with matters in Latin America but Liberia offered the United States economic and political possibilities. Roosevelt immediately thought of the one man who could "rescue" Liberia. That man was Booker T. Washington.

Early attempts by the United States to assist Liberia proved successful. In an interview with Barclay in 1901, he stated that "Liberia [was] progressing well thanks to the firm stand of

¹²⁴ Secretary of State H.W. Travis to Baron de Stein (1903), Holsoe Collection - Liberian Government Archives I, Bloomington, IN: Liberian Collections, Indiana University Libraries, 2008.

¹²⁵ The Marquess of Lansdowne to the Liberian Consulate General (May 12, 1903), Holsoe Collection - Liberian Government Archives I, Bloomington, IN: Liberian Collections, Indiana University Libraries, 2008.

¹²⁶ H.W. Travis to Ernest Lyon, January 22, 1904, Holsoe Collection - Liberian Government Archives I, Bloomington, IN: Liberian Collections, Indiana University Libraries, 2008.

the United States.”¹²⁷ While Barclay was grateful for America’s diplomatic assistance, he hoped the United States could help alleviate the country’s massive debt. Liberia had taken out a series of loans beginning in 1871 from Britain that were used to repay domestic debt, stabilize the government’s financial position, and fund an expansion of public works.¹²⁸ Other financial assistance had come from colonization schemes and commercial enterprises, this also included Black-owned business schemes in Liberia that took part in the development of Liberia’s infrastructure. In 1902 The Liberian Construction and Improvement Company was commissioned by the Liberian government to build a twenty-five-mile rail line. The company was granted a franchise and paid \$1,000 per mile of track laid.¹²⁹ Barclay was hesitant to welcome foreign businesses as he was leery of foreign land ownership and exploitation of commercial profits that would cause more harm to the republic. With its economy in disarray, territorial disputes, and debt owed to Britain, Liberia was on the cusp of becoming a British protectorate and thus being swallowed up by a foreign power.¹³⁰

The United States government throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century was more concerned with Latin America and the Pacific than West Africa. Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, however, brought Liberia into the purview of the United States policy at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1904, the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine asserted the right of the United States to exercise its international police power and intervene in the affairs of nations threatened by economic and political instability. While Roosevelt and his successors largely used it to justify intervention in Latin America,

¹²⁷ "Liberia Fears Germany: High Government Official Tells of Needs of West Africa. Great Future for American Negroes If They Will Take Up Mining on the West Coast -- Direct Line of Ships From Here Needed," *New York Times*, August 04, 1901, 3.

¹²⁸ G. W. Brown, *The Economic History of Liberia*, (Washington, D.C.: Associate Publishers, 1941), 66.

¹²⁹ "Shreds and Patches," *Colored American*, December 6, 1902, 4.

¹³⁰ W.E.B. Du Bois, "Liberia and Rubber," *The New Republic*, November 18, 1925.

Washington's efforts helped persuade Theodore Roosevelt to make Liberia a priority. Ernest Lyon wrote to Washington in 1907 warning him of the French and British threats against Liberia and urging the Tuskegee president to use his Washington D.C. connections to find solutions to the matter.¹³¹ In a letter to Ernest Lyon in 1907, Washington told the U.S. Ambassador to Liberia that he would bring the Liberian matter to Roosevelt's attention.¹³² Washington called for a "closer relationship between the United States and Liberia" which he thought should be given equal attention as Latin America.¹³³

Booker T. Washington's influence among not just African Americans but also on Africans was profound. His autobiography *Up from Slavery*, which was published in 1901, became widely translated and although it received its share of criticism, it was championed by many Pan-African leaders, including Edward Wilmot Blyden. Blyden, who migrated to Liberia via the New York Colonization Society and became an influential Pan-Africanist, called on African Americans to return to Africa, to create a strong, independent Black nation.¹³⁴ Achieving this vision would take a mission centered around Christianity, commerce, brotherhood, and when necessary, the assistance of whites. Minus emigration, these were all tenants that Washington preached through the Hampton-Tuskegee model.¹³⁵ However, Blyden did not favor assistance from the United States because he questioned U.S. intentions and because of U.S. treatment of

¹³¹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 9: 1906-1908* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1980), 332-333.

¹³² Harlan and Smock, *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 9: 1906-1908*, 336-337.

¹³³ "The Liberian Envoys, Commissioners from Black Republic Cordially Received by President Roosevelt and Secretary Taft," *Washington Bee*, June 20, 1908, 4.

¹³⁴ Edward Wilmot Blyden, *Liberia's Offering: Being Addresses, Sermons, Etc.* (New York: John A. Gray, 1862), 74.

¹³⁵ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 26-28. Blyden expressed this to Washington in a letter to him congratulating Washington on his Atlanta Exposition Address.

African Americans.¹³⁶ But Blyden, like Washington, realized the importance of the native inhabitants of Liberia. “Without the aborigines in our domestic, social, religious, and political life, there is nothing before this State but death,” Blyden prophesied.¹³⁷ But to ensure Liberia’s prosperity, Washington argued, native Liberians must be shown how to use their land “that they will not starve while living on the richest and most productive soil it has been the fortune of any people to live upon...there is no hope for the race unless the young men and women of the race lay hold of these important matters.”¹³⁸ “No matter how many loans Liberia may secure, unless this policy is pursued financial and other embarrassment will be the result.”¹³⁹

In 1909, Washington’s practical solution of implementing the Hampton-Tuskegee model in Liberia was in step with incoming President William Howard Taft’s foreign policy strategy of “replacing dollars for bullets,” also known as Dollar Diplomacy which was unveiled that same year. By 1912, Taft’s foreign policy strategy not only influenced Liberian politics but also its military as training of the Liberian Frontier Force which came under U.S. command and was led by Charles Young, an African American West Point graduate and commissioned officer in the U.S. Army’s Ninth Cavalry.¹⁴⁰ Washington was grateful for Taft’s assistance, noting that “Liberia’s salvation lies in the bond of friendship with the United States.” However, he cautioned that “no loan is going to help them except as they produce more of the natural resources of the

¹³⁶ Edward Wilmot Blyden, *Three Needs of Liberia: A Lecture Delivered at Lower Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Liberia, January 26, 1908* (London: C.M. Philipps, 1908), 35.

¹³⁷ Blyden, *Three Needs of Liberia: A Lecture Delivered at Lower Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Liberia, January 26, 1908*, 2.

¹³⁸ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898*, 484.

¹³⁹ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 10: 1909-1911*, 532.

¹⁴⁰ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-14* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 109-110. Charles Young engaged in a number of skirmishes in the Liberian frontier, eventually passing away in 1919 in Liberia from disease. He strongly supported Richard C. Bundy for the position of Secretary of State of Liberia because Bundy was tantamount in supporting Liberians in “every manner possible to adjust their affairs with foreign governments and bring about the materialization of the Refunding Loan Agreement.”

country they consume.”¹⁴¹ To secure the futures of Liberia and the United States, Washington and Tuskegee worked with the U.S. government to ensure the progress of Black people.

Booker. T Washington and Liberia’s Future

By 1907 many U.S. officials believed Liberia’s independence was in jeopardy and some appealed to Washington for help. “Unless the United States interferes, the impairment of the independence of Liberia is inevitable,” Lyon stated in his letter to Booker Washington on August 10, 1907.¹⁴² Booker T. Washington played a crucial part in influencing the U.S. government to respond to the needs of Liberia. In June 1908, the Liberian government sent a mission to the United States, led by Vice President James J. Dossen and composed of Former President G.W. Gibson, Charles B. Dunbar of the Liberian Bar Association, and Secretary Thomas J.R. Faulkner, with the objectives of requesting the United States to negotiate treaties on Liberia’s behalf and offer economic assistance. Echoing Booker T. Washington’s vision, Dossen argued that the key to solving Liberia’s economic woes lay in the modernization of machinery and education which would allow an expansion of industry and agriculture. Washington argued that closer ties with the United States were critical if Liberia was to reach its full potential. William Howard Taft, who was Secretary of War at the time, agreed with Washington that the most practical solution to solving Liberia’s economic and social woes was the implementation of the Hampton-Tuskegee model and the assistance of Tuskegee.¹⁴³

In 1909, to solve the problems of Liberia, newly elected president William Howard Taft established the Liberian Commission. Taft was more involved with matters concerning Liberia

¹⁴¹ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-14*, 183.

¹⁴² Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 9: 1906-1908*, 332.

¹⁴³ "The Liberian Envoys, Commissioners from Black Republic Cordially Received by President Roosevelt and Secretary Taft," *Washington Bee*, June 20, 1908, 4.

than his predecessor. The United States, under pressure from the Liberian Commission to agree to their recommendations, committed to assisting Liberia, thus halting European designs for the republic. The Commission made several recommendations to the United States regarding Liberia: first, the United States should act as a “friend of Liberia” to negotiate boundary disputes between Liberia and European powers; second, the Liberian Commission also recommended that the United States should oversee Liberia’s finances by “installing a system of collection and control of revenues;” third, the US should “organize and lend aid to the establishment of a frontier constabulary.” This action of the frontier force was not only to police the actions of Britain and France, but also to quell the unrest of the Liberian hinterland groups; fourth, was the establishment of a coaling station; and fifth, and of the most importance to Washington, was to aid in the agricultural development of Liberia to maximize its potential and wealth.¹⁴⁴ The aim of the final recommendation was in developing and expanding education that would yield the largest benefit to Liberia and its people. According to the Commission, the best solution was technical education. Emmett J. Scott, serving as the voice of Booker T. Washington on the Liberian Commission, Washington held great influence in the Liberian matter.

Booker T. Washington’s influence proved successful, and his allies celebrated the success. In a speech given before Tuskegee students on Thanksgiving Day in 1910, Reverend John W. Whitaker, the Tuskegee Institute’s first chaplain, told a crowd of students that resolutions in Liberia were passed “saving Liberia from the dismemberment by [Liberia’s] European neighbors.”¹⁴⁵ Whitaker noted that the U.S. intervention would not have been possible

¹⁴⁴ United States Commission To Liberia, *Affairs in Liberia: Message from the President of the United States Transmitting a Letter of the Secretary of State Submitting a Report of the Commission Which Visited Liberia in Pursuance of the Provisions of the Deficiency Act of March 4, 1909* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1910), 11.

¹⁴⁵ *The Freeman*, December 10, 1910.

without the work of Tuskegee's principal. "The success of that republic," he continued, "will result in the good of the whole race."¹⁴⁶ The task of assisting in the socioeconomic development of Liberia was the next step. Washington, who shared Taft's foreign policy of Dollar Diplomacy, sought next to persuade Taft to secure Liberia's future through investment in the development of Liberia's industry and agriculture.

Washington's belief that African Americans could achieve independence through education and hard work to become self-sufficient, was carried over to his plans for Liberia. Just like he did with the Tuskegee Institute, Washington sought assistance from anywhere he could, including wealthy philanthropists in the United States. Tuskegee was one the most successful industrial colleges in the United States because of Washington's success raising money to assist in the continued growth of the college and the success of its students. John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, former president Benjamin Harrison, and even Theodore Roosevelt all donated money to Tuskegee. Critics of Washington attacked him for accepting donations from white conservatives, accusing him of feeding his own selfish ambitions while forcing Black people to accept racial discrimination and disenfranchisement. Washington, however, was focused on practical solutions amidst a hostile racial climate.¹⁴⁷ He reached out to organizations and individuals who he knew would invest in Africa, in this case, Liberia. Most of these organizations were educational enterprises who were focused on elevating the status of Black people through the implementation of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education.

To create a transatlantic network connecting the Tuskegee Institute and Liberia, Washington accepted students from Liberia to attend Tuskegee while simultaneously sending

¹⁴⁶ *The Freeman*, December 10, 1910.

¹⁴⁷ "Mr. Washington in Politics," *Cleveland Gazette*, April 16, 1910, 2.

Tuskegee officials to Liberia to survey the educational landscape. Scholarship funds for Liberian students were furnished by the Phelps-Stokes Fund, created by Olivia Egleston Phelps Stokes and Caroline Phelps Stokes whose mission was to educate Africans and African Americans under the Hampton-Tuskegee Model. The Phelps-Stokes' believed that Tuskegee, more than any other institution, was most concerned about the "welfare of the Negro" and offered the most practical solution for Black people.¹⁴⁸ In a letter to Olivia Egleston Phelps Stokes on June 16, 1908, Washington informed her of his mediating between the Liberian envoy and Elihu Root and Theodore Roosevelt. Washington stated that the Liberians were "going to send some of their brightest young men here [to Tuskegee] for training." The first international student to attend Tuskegee in fact came from Liberia.¹⁴⁹ At the time of Washington's letter, Tuskegee had already been hosting two other students.¹⁵⁰ Washington wanted to secure funds to bring more Liberian students to Tuskegee. In another letter to Olivia Egleston Phelps Stokes on October 27, 1909, Washington wrote that he had been in contact with Bishop I.B. Scott and Ernest Lyon regarding this matter as well as the development of Liberia. The three men had recommended that the Liberian students that were already at Tuskegee remain there and that additional students should be sent for a minimum of a two-year period. Washington, Scott, and Lyon had suggested that these students be the children of Liberian chiefs who they believed would be important in disseminating the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education to the Liberian hinterland groups. Washington's focus on chiefs' sons is similar to the way that British colonial officials also sought to attract the sons of chiefs in that they both believed that technical education would produce a cadre of skilled workers while also creating a cadre of leaders that would influence

¹⁴⁸ Phelps-Stokes Fund, *Phelps-Stokes Reports on Education in Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 38.

¹⁴⁹ Booker T. Washington to Olivia Egleston Phelps, June 16, 1908, Tuskegee Student Records, TUA 547, Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Alabama.

¹⁵⁰ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 9: 1906-1908*, 580.

local peoples to see the benefits of technical education. Washington and Colonial officials also held the belief that technical education would help strengthen African people's "sense of community...through the improvement of agriculture, the development of native industries."¹⁵¹ This was also the first instance of Washington mentioning erecting a Tuskegee-like school in Liberia.¹⁵² In that same letter to Olivia Eggleston Phelps Stokes, Washington said the following:

After considering the whole matter very carefully, we [Washington, Scott, and Lyon] recommend the following...[Additional students] are to be the sons of chiefs from the Liberian hinterland, the idea being to get some of the best blood in Africa. We feel that if we can get hold of and properly educate these [students], they can return, together with some other American students from here [Tuskegee], if possible, and establish later on an industrial school that would mean something.¹⁵³



Figure 3.1 Liberian Delegation at Tuskegee, 1907. L-R standing Charles Branch - Secretary of Rep. of Liberian Commission, Booker T. Washington, President of Tuskegee Institute, Charles Anderson Collector of Internal Revenue. Seated L-R Charles B. Dunbar, G.W. Gibson, former President of Liberia and J.J. Dossen former Vice President of Liberia. Seated on the ground, L-R. Far left Emmett J. Scott, personal secretary to Booker T. Washington, and far right, Thomas Calloway. Tuskegee University Archives.

¹⁵¹ Advisory Committee on Native Education. *Education Policy in British Tropical Africa: Memorandum Submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, by the Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies* (London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1925), 4.

¹⁵² Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 10: 1909-1911*, 186.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 186.

Washington did reach out to his friend Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie, a member of the Anti-Imperialist League, was staunchly against the idea of colonization and war, both of which Booker T. Washington was also against. In an address titled “Education and International Peace,” delivered before a crowd at the Fourth American Peace Conference in St. Louis on May 1, 1913, Washington applauded Carnegie for “giving his life and means not in devising methods of slaying men, but in devising methods for saving men and exalting peace above war.” Washington, like Carnegie, believed that education played an important part in bringing about peace.¹⁵⁴ While Carnegie was more focused on American imperialism in Latin America and the Pacific, Washington attempted to get him interested in matters concerning Africa. However, in a letter from Booker T. Washington to U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom Walter Hines Page in January 1914, Washington stated that he had “tried several times to get Mr. Carnegie interested in Africa. He seems to have absolutely no interest in that country, and in fact has told me so rather bluntly several times.”¹⁵⁵ That same year Page had informed the Tuskegee principal that McCants Stewart, a graduate of Tuskegee who was at the time serving on the Liberian Supreme Court, also sought assistance from Carnegie to help erect a library in Monrovia.¹⁵⁶ Knowing Washington had ties, Stewart had hoped the principal would be able to convince Carnegie to provide the necessary funds. However, Stewart, like Washington, was also unsuccessful in persuading Carnegie to take interest in Liberia.

The election of President Woodrow Wilson in 1912 brought a level of uncertainty in the United States’ support of Liberia. Wilson rejected the foreign policies of his predecessors arguing that Roosevelt was too militaristic, and Taft’s Dollar Diplomacy was a folly. Wilson

¹⁵⁴ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-14*, 174-175.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 418.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 380.

promoted the idea of liberal internationalism, that intervention was necessary to support self-determination of peoples and support the spread of capitalism. Aware of Wilson's segregationist and racist attitudes, which were reflected in his governmental appointments and southern roots, Washington hoped to appeal to the tenets of liberal internationalism regarding Liberia.¹⁵⁷ The outlook for Liberia seemed bleak during the early years of the Wilson administration. In 1913, Minister Consul Frederick Randolph Moore, who was recommended by Washington, was recalled from Liberia and the appointment of a new American minister to Liberia was tabled as incoming president Woodrow Wilson sought to appoint his own choice. As Washington stated in a letter to Reed Paige Clark, who was receiver of Liberian customs, "Liberia's salvation lies in the bond of friendship with the United States...I confess that I have become a little troubled about the future of Liberia since the change of policy on the part of Mr. Wilson."¹⁵⁸

Washington, a Republican, was able to use his influence on the Black Republican vote to persuade Roosevelt and Taft to take up the Liberian cause. However, with Wilson, a segregationist Democrat, Washington was unable to use his political influence which not only weakened his standing politically but posed a possible threat to Liberia's future. In 1913, rather than keeping Washington's choice of Moore as the American representative to Liberia, Wilson recalled him and nominated George Washington Buckner, a Black physician and Democrat. Not wanting to see his work undone, Reed Clark and Washington hoped that Moore would remain on as an advisor to guide the new minister. Washington feared that with an inexperienced minister combined with Wilson's laissez-faire attitude towards Liberia, European powers would once

¹⁵⁷ In an editorial on "The President and the Negro," in the *New York Evening Post*, the article called out Woodrow Wilson for the supporting the demands that federal office workers be segregating, citing that the gains made under previous administrations were not for nothing in regard to a "heavily disadvantaged race," *The Evening Post*, August 4, 1913, 6.

¹⁵⁸ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-14*, 183.

again try to take advantage of Liberia.¹⁵⁹ With the Wilson administration's attitude towards Liberia, the threat of resumed European aggression into Liberian territory was a possibility.

Even amidst the uncertainty of the Wilson administration, Tuskegee still managed to support Liberian students that studied at Tuskegee through the assistance of Phelps Stokes scholarships. Tuskegee's first Liberian graduate was Charles Tedo Wardah. Wardah's experience was emblematic of foreign students who embraced the Hampton-Tuskegee model. Wardah's experience provides insight into the African student experience. He entered Tuskegee in 1909 with six other Liberian students.¹⁶⁰ Out of the six, Wardah was the only one to graduate and continued to work with Tuskegee after graduation, disseminating the benefits of the Hampton-Tuskegee model.¹⁶¹ Wardah shared Washington's belief that education was the key to Liberia's salvation which he highlighted in his graduation address, "What a Liberian Can Do For His Country." His speech underlined how African students could become both immersed in western education, namely industrial schooling, while still maintaining their identity. Wardah embraced his own identity as a Liberian while using Tuskegee as a space to disseminate his own African consciousness. His own nationalistic ideology combined with Tuskegee's practicality, Wardah became a link between Africans and African Americans. Wardah remained at Tuskegee until 1917, taking part in post-graduate work while waiting out World War I until it was safe enough to return to Liberia. For Wardah, the goal of a Tuskegee education was to go "back to my country now and put into practice the things which you have taught me here."¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 316.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 301-302.

¹⁶¹ "What the Christian World is Doing: Tuskegee's Only Liberian Graduate," *The Congregationalist and Advance*, June 17, 1918.

¹⁶² Charles Tedo Wardah to Emmett J. Scott, August 3, 1914, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

In the first years of World War I, Liberia remained neutral. Germany was one of its largest prewar trading partners and therefore it did not want to upset that vital trade network. However, as German trade faltered and the possibility of resumed European aggression continued, ties between the United States and Liberia grew stronger. Booker T. Washington was critical of European states for engaging in war stating, “the more I see of the action of these white people of Europe, the more I am inclined to proud of the Negro race,” criticizing Europeans for acting “silly,” as he called it.¹⁶³ He applauded Wilson for his neutral stance. However, Washington knew that more needed to be done to ensure Liberia’s survival. In September 1915, the Kru, who resided on the Southeast Coast of Liberia, revolted against the Liberian government. Following a request by Charles Young and Liberian President Daniel Howard, President Wilson dispatched the *USS Chester* to Liberia, bringing arms and ammunition to the Frontier Force. The real problem was in the frontier and the Liberian Frontier Force was ill-equipped to put down the revolt. The Liberian Commission along with the American Colonization Society pushed for Liberia to enter the war and in return receive economic and military assistance from the United States.¹⁶⁴

Washington, unfortunately, would not live to see the end of the war as he died in November 1915. Washington’s untimely death was not just a blow to African Americans, but to Liberians as well. However, the vision that Washington had for both the United States and Liberia did not end with him. Emmett J. Scott and Washington’s successor Robert Russa Moton used the same networks created by imperialism that Washington used to secure the future of each side.

¹⁶³ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 13: 1914-15* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 111.

¹⁶⁴ Litchfield West, *The Liberian Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: American Colonization Society, 1933), 8.

Tuskegee and Liberia After Washington

There was a level of uncertainty over who would continue Washington's work after his death. There was minor support for Emmett J. Scott and Tuskegee's treasurer Warren Logan, but the largest support was for Robert Russa Moton.¹⁶⁵ Like Washington, Moton was a graduate of the Hampton Institute. After graduating from Hampton, Moton served as commandant of the male student cadet corps at the Hampton Institute, the equivalent to the position of dean. It was that position that informally granted him the title of major. During World War I, Moton was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson to travel to Europe to assess the conditions of African American soldiers. Moton had the backing of Wilson along with Thomas Jesse Jones of the United States Bureau of Education, Margaret Murray Washington, the widow of Booker T. Washington, and Julius Rosenwald, President of Sears, earning him the position of Tuskegee's next principal.¹⁶⁶ Like Booker T. Washington, Robert Moton supported the Hampton-Tuskegee model. However, unlike Washington, he placed a stronger emphasis on integrating liberal arts into the Hampton-Tuskegee model and establishing Bachelor of Science degrees in agriculture and education. Moton also emphasized the "normal" aspect of Tuskegee's curriculum in teacher training. To achieve these goals, Moton significantly increased the outreach of Tuskegee to procure endowments from wealthy Northern white benefactors.

Moton continued Washington's mission of securing Liberia's future after World War I. Liberia relied on aid from the United States during World War I as it had lost its largest trading partner, Germany. The Liberian government also asked the U.S. for help suppressing revolts on its frontiers. Supporters of the Liberian cause suggested that Liberia was entitled to a voice in the

¹⁶⁵ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 13: 1914-15*, 486-487.

¹⁶⁶ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 13: 1914-15*, 459.

peace talks regarding its hinterland boundaries and that Liberia could “tutor” Germany’s former African colonies. Calling on the historical relationship between African Americans and Americo-Liberians, Liberian supporters also offered to negotiate on Liberia’s behalf if need be.¹⁶⁷ In 1919, Liberian president-elect Charles D.B. King was hesitant to accept outside assistance, especially from whites. King believed that it was essential that Liberians maintain their identities as “Africans and Negroes.”¹⁶⁸ King shared in the tenants of the Hampton-Tuskegee model, believing that practical education was Liberia’s best hope. With assistance from the Liberian Commission, King placed Liberia’s future in the hands of the United States. Emmett Scott, Ernest Lyon, and Robert Moton were able to help Liberia secure a five-million-dollar loan from American banks.¹⁶⁹ The future of Liberia seemed bright.

For King, the Hampton-Tuskegee model was an attractive solution to Liberia’s problems. The Americo-Liberian government hoped that the Hampton-Tuskegee model would benefit their hegemony over the country by providing the indigenous population with an education that would create a more tractable and productive laboring class. King hoped that replicating the Hampton-Tuskegee model in Liberia would placate the indigene population while enhancing Americo-Liberian designs. The Americo-Liberian government decided that providing the indigene groups of Liberia – the Bassa, Buzi, Kpelle, Gbande, Kru, Mano, Mandingo, Grebo, Gizi, Gola, Akra, Guio, Kwana, Bibi, and Kongo – with technical education was in their best interest as well as that of the Americo-Liberian dominated government. Both Americo-Liberians and the indigene population were suspicious of white intervention, especially in education, and opposed the idea of white instructors. Looking at Tuskegee’s makeup and principles regarding Black progress,

¹⁶⁷ “Liberia Should Have a Voice,” *The New York Age*, December 7, 1918, 4.

¹⁶⁸ “Liberia Wants to Keep Racial Identity Says President-Elect,” *The New York Age*, July 5, 1919, 1.

¹⁶⁹ George Ellis, “Liberia in the New Partition of West Africa,” *The Journal of Race Development* 9, no. 3 (1919): 265.

King was impressed by the idea of Black self-sufficiency and hoped to replicate a “Tuskegee in Liberia”. Like other Black leaders who shared in tenants of technical education, in regards to Liberia, King believed creating a “little Tuskegee” in Liberia would improve relations with the hinterland, create a cadre of workers to improve Liberia’s infrastructure, and provide education for the hinterland groups that were deprived of access to education.¹⁷⁰ However, the practicality of implementing the Hampton-Tuskegee model in Liberia was contingent upon U.S. assistance.

Under the tutelage of Moton, the Tuskegee Institute’s direction in Liberia adapted to the United States’ changing foreign policy position after World War I. The Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge administrations during the 1920s followed the policy of the Wilson administration of withdrawing American banks from providing direct loans to foreign governments. At the same time, the State and Commerce departments worked vigorously and often successfully to protect economic interests abroad and to expand the frontiers of American foreign trade and investments.¹⁷¹ In 1921, Harding along with Secretary of State Charles Evan Hughes and Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover, argued that connecting the globe through trade would pave the path to peace.¹⁷² Economic foreign policy of the 1920s promoted private enterprises such as American firms and bankers rather than direct government loans. Liberia was a potential gold mine for private enterprises with its untapped resources, namely rubber. Black leaders of the time had mixed feelings regarding this new approach in American foreign policy, including Liberia’s President Charles King.

King, who was already reserved about American assistance, was hesitant about conceding land and resources to American firms and foreigners in general. However, he realized

¹⁷⁰ Charles Wilson, *Liberia: Black Africa in Microcosm* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 113.

¹⁷¹ Arthur Link, *American Epoch: A History of the United States Since the 1890’s* (New York: Knopf, 1955), 285.

¹⁷² Emily Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900-1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 95.

that American assistance was necessary. King's hesitancy was encouraged by Marcus Garvey, founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and the Back to Africa Movement. Garvey had been a supporter of Booker T. Washington, believing that the Hampton-Tuskegee model offered a tangible solution for the advancement of Black people.¹⁷³ The two men had planned to meet in 1915 but the death of Washington never saw that meeting come to fruition.¹⁷⁴ Adopting Washington's vision, Garvey founded the Black Star Line in 1919. Where the two men differed was in their ideas of resettling Black Americans in Liberia. Garvey viewed Liberia as a place of resettlement, creating an "Africa for Africans," meaning an end of colonial rule and removal of white people from Africa. Not wanting to jeopardize American assistance, King opposed Garvey, citing that Liberia was not in a position to accept mass immigration but being more receptive to African American assistance, welcomed "strong young men trained as artisans, engineers, and merchants who can bring with them some capital for investment." King promised that Liberia would never "allow her territory to be made a center of aggression or conspiracy against other sovereign states."¹⁷⁵ In 1921, Charles Young penned a letter to Robert Moton, encouraging the principal to intervene on Liberia's behalf by using his political and business connections to see a "decent and stable Government which will protect the native population, upon which every interest of the Republic, if it survives, must depend."¹⁷⁶

The strategy to assist Liberia rested on U.S. foreign policy of connecting the globe through trade and private enterprise to promote peace. Thomas Jesse Jones, Educational Director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, saw the potential benefit in this new political approach. In 1922,

¹⁷³ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 13: 1914-15*, 126.

¹⁷⁴ Robert Hill and Carol Rudisell, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Vol. I*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 166. Garvey referred to Washington as "the Man for America."

¹⁷⁵ Charles Dunbar Burgess King: An Open Letter, ca. April 13, 1921. W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

¹⁷⁶ Colonel Young to Dr. Robert Russa Moton, January 22, 1921, Charles Young Collection, NAAMCC.

Olivia Phelps Stokes gave explicit advice to Jones concerning education in Liberia. Jones intended for his ideas of commercialization and Westernization to benefit the people of Africa, just as he saw industrial education as the panacea to the troubles of African Americans. Seeking to secure additional funds for Liberia, Jones and Moton reached out to Harvey Firestone. Liberia's future became inextricably tied to Harvey Firestone's Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. In the 1920s, the popularity of the automobile created a significant demand for rubber, especially in the United States which was the largest consumer.¹⁷⁷ The British however maintained a dominant position on the rubber industry much to the chagrin of the U.S. government and Harvey Firestone. To promote American trade and gain a foothold on the rubber industry, Hoover worked to persuade Congress to investigate the possibilities of developing the rubber plantation industry and other essential resources, and to break British control over the rubber industry that had been a "disaster to the American consumer."¹⁷⁸ While Henry Ford saw potential in Brazil, for Harvey Firestone Liberia was the most logical choice because of its relationship with the United States, the country's untapped resources, and because Liberia was indebted to the United States.

In February 1924, President King made an official visit to the United States to meet with President Coolidge.¹⁷⁹ The work of Booker T. Washington had made a profound impression on the Liberian president. King had hoped to replicate the Hampton-Tuskegee model with the construction of a Tuskegee-like school that would train students to work for the new Firestone plantations. In July, Firestone and the Liberian government came to a tentative agreement

¹⁷⁷ James Stevenson, *Supplementary Report of the Committee Appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to Investigate and Report Upon the Present Rubber Situation in British Colonies and Protectorates* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1922), 3.

¹⁷⁸ "Monopolies Abroad Feared by Hoover," *New York Times*, February 23, 1923, 4.

¹⁷⁹ "This Is 'Bull' Sure Enuf 'Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary' to His 'Great and Good Friend'--It Is to Laugh," *Cleveland Gazette*, February 16, 1924, 1.

regarding the establishment of a Firestone rubber plantation in Mount Barclay, near Monrovia. King stated in his opening address to the Liberian Legislature in December 1924 that “for the development of our country, we must give liberal encouragement to foreign capital.” Firestone representatives celebrated the agreement as a chance to “further strengthen the traditional bonds of friendship and amity that have always existed between the peoples of Liberia and the United States of America.”¹⁸⁰ While there was still hesitancy in King’s cabinet, including his own Secretary of State Edwin Barclay, Firestone and a Tuskegee-like school offered potential solutions to Liberia’s problems.¹⁸¹

Tuskegee officials once again leaned on the assistance of the Phelps-Stokes Fund to continue developing Liberia. The Phelps-Stokes Fund aimed to aid educational movements on behalf of the native populations transplanting the Hampton-Tuskegee model. The Phelps-Stokes Educational Commission visited Liberia in 1920 and made several recommendations including the establishment of a Tuskegee-like school¹⁸² The Commission noted the problems attributing to Liberia’s underdevelopment centered around internal conflict between the Americo-Liberians and native Liberians. The internal strife between the two groups caused a “lack of character which hampered any serious educational efforts to elevate themselves.”¹⁸³ The Commission recommended that the Liberian system of education “provide schools first, to train teachers, ministers, and leaders for the masses of the people; second, to educate the masses.” The education of the masses included: “the ability to develop the resources of the country, household

¹⁸⁰ *Messages of the President* (Monrovia, Government Printing Office, 1924), 56.

¹⁸¹ “Firestone Plantation, 1925,” Holsoe Collection - Liberian Government Archives I, Bloomington, IN: Liberian Collections, Indiana University Libraries, 2008.

¹⁸² Thomas Jesse Jones, *Twenty Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1911-1931* (New York: The Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1932), 28.

¹⁸³ Thomas Jesse Jones, *Education in Africa: A Study of West, South, and Equatorial Africa by the African Education Commission, Under the Auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and Foreign Mission Societies of North America and Europe* (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1922), 315.

arts, sound recreation, rudiments of knowledge, character development, and community responsibility.”¹⁸⁴ All of these were tenants of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of which Moton and the Phelps-Stokes Fund supported.

Economic advancement, racial pride, and character building were at the heart of Booker T. Washington’s vision for Black people. In 1900, Washington wrote in his autobiography, *The Story of My Life and Work*, “If we make ourselves intelligent, industrious, economical and virtuous, of value to the community in which we live, we can and will work out our own salvation.”¹⁸⁵ This message was carried on by Robert Moton and Washington’s supporters in the United States and Liberia. For Moton and King, technical education offered a practical solution to solving the issues Black people faced. With the entry of Firestone into Liberia, the development of a “Tuskegee in Liberia” seemed to be a possibility, bringing to life an almost two decades old vision. Moton declared that the “Marcus Garvey theories and his ‘Empire of Africa’ [were] now dead.” In fact, many other Black leaders had also denounced Garvey’s emigration schemes.¹⁸⁶ Several prominent Black leaders, including W.E.B. Du Bois also believed in the potential of Firestone and Tuskegee to transform Liberia’s economic and social systems through economic development.

In 1925, W.E.B. Du Bois was confident that Firestone had the potential to achieve “one of the greatest and far-reaching reforms in the relations between white industrial countries like America and black, partly developed countries like Liberia.” He noted that the problem of Liberia had been that it was purposefully underdeveloped to make it susceptible to white

¹⁸⁴ Thomas Jesse Jones, *Education in Africa: A Study of West, South, and Equatorial Africa by the African Education Commission, Under the Auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and Foreign Mission Societies of North America and Europe*, 316-317.

¹⁸⁵ Booker T. Washington, *The Story of My Life and Work* (Cincinnati: W.H. Ferguson Company, 1900), 345.

¹⁸⁶ “The Future of the Negro: Interview with Dr. R. Moton, of Tuskegee Problems Black and White,” *The African World*, March 29, 1930, xv.

imperialism. The Firestone Plantation Company had the opportunity to create a new relationship between imperial power and colonial subjects, one built on mutual dependence and prosperity that was tied to capital, land, and labor. To accomplish that, the Firestone Company needed to train and educate Liberians in industry. According to Du Bois, it was important to “put colored men [from the United States] in authority to train them.”¹⁸⁷ Once trained, they would turn the reins over to those educated Liberians. In an essay in the *New Republic*, Du Bois shared his thoughts with the public at large. “White capital in America” had the potential in Liberia “to do a fine and unusual job in imperialism,” he wrote, if Firestone “can allow in Liberia decent and increasing wages: they can yield to the Liberian government satisfactory revenue. This is what Liberia and black America hope.”¹⁸⁸

Many African leaders shared the same optimism for Liberia, believing that the Hampton-Tuskegee model was important for Liberia’s survival. Ghanian born James Emman Kwegir Aggrey, who was a teacher, studied in the United States at Livingstone College in North Carolina. During his time in the United States, Aggrey experienced the discrimination of the Jim Crow South as he worked on behalf of African Americans and Africans.¹⁸⁹ It was during that time he was introduced to the ideas of Booker T. Washington. Aggrey believed in the values of a Tuskegee education and wanted to emulate the Hampton-Tuskegee model in Africa. Aggrey believed that “Africa needed artisans as well as artists.” He summed up his vision for Africans, especially Liberians, in a single sentence: “I want all my people to be educated in the larger sense, in heart, hand, and head, and thus render Africa indispensable in spiritual, intellectual and

¹⁸⁷ W. E. B. Du Bois, “Letter from W. E. B. Du Bois to Firestone Tire and Rubber Company,” October 26, 1925, W.E.B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

¹⁸⁸ W.E.B. Du Bois, “Liberia and Rubber,” *The New Republic*, November 18, 1925, 329.

¹⁸⁹ M.J. Sampson, *Gold Coast Men of Affairs (Past and Present)* (London: Dawson of Pall Mall, 1937), 59.

commercial products to the world.”¹⁹⁰ Aggrey, who served on the Phelps-Stokes Education Commission in 1920, arrived in Liberia that October. Upon his visit, he surveyed the condition of Liberia’s school system and much like Washington, Scott, and the Liberian Commission had done in earlier years, was critical in that it lacked “sufficient consideration for the immediate practical use of the learning in relation to the actual needs of the community,” calling out the exclusion of education in “agriculture, hygiene, and handicraft.”¹⁹¹



Figure 3.2 Booker T. Washington Institute, Liberia, January: Litchfield House, Principal's Residence, January 1940, Library of Congress.

Finally, in 1929, upon the urging of Tuskegee officials and various Black leaders along with the financial backing of the Firestone Company and the Phelps-Stokes Fund, the Booker T. Washington Agricultural and Industrial Institute was established in Kakata, about 45 miles from Liberia’s capital.¹⁹² The school was established in the name of Booker T. Washington, nearly two decades after he and Olivia Phelps-Stokes had discussed the likelihood of opening such a school.¹⁹³ Vice Principal of Tuskegee Robert R. Taylor was tasked with advising James L.

¹⁹⁰ “Dr. Aggrey: Father of African Education,” *Ebony Magazine*, 1959, 45.

¹⁹¹ Edwin Smith, *Aggrey of Africa: A Study in Black and White* (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1971) 149.

¹⁹² Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa and J. U. Aisiku, *Education in Africa: A Comparative Survey* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1982), 166.

¹⁹³ “The Republic of Liberia in 1929-1930”, *The African World*, 113.

Sibley, who was appointed to reform and expand Liberia's education system. The institute was managed by a Board of Trustees which included Anson Phelps-Stokes and Thomas Jesse Jones of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, Harvey Firestone and the Firestone Plantation Company, and Robert Russa Moton, along with an Americo-Liberian representative and a native Liberian representative. The institute hoped to strengthen ties between the Americo-Liberian and native Liberian populations with the establishment of the school. The curriculum was based on the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education, with a primary focus on agricultural education.

Almost immediately after the school opened, however, Tuskegee officials began to lose control over the institute's direction. The Firestone Company established a Jim Crow-like pipeline: keeping Liberians from management positions while relegating them to menial labor jobs and exerting more control over BWI's curriculum. Additionally, unlike Tuskegee, which was operated by an all-Black staff, the BWI soon replaced its Black administrators with white missionaries. While Tuskegee's efforts had the intention of wanting to provide educational opportunities to assist in the progress of Liberia by providing practical solutions, unknowingly it conversely played an integral part in solidifying the imperialist structure. Imperial powers, in this case the Firestone Plantation Company, replicated Jim Crow on a global scale and played out largely in Africa. While trying to circumnavigate Jim Crow at home, Washington and Tuskegee found that imperial powers who worked with Tuskegee merely saw the Hampton-Tuskegee model as a way to replicate Jim Crow in the colonies through the exploitation of labor and the segregation of labor forces. Like the German colonial government recruiting the assistance of Tuskegee in the development of Togo, Firestone mirrored the German colonial government's actions in Liberia.

By 1930, the Booker Washington Institute by 1930 was affiliated with Tuskegee in name only. James Sibley, who envisioned that the BWI would help bring harmony between local populations, the Americo-Liberian government, and Firestone, never saw his dream come to fruition because he passed away in 1930 during his first year as head of the BWI.¹⁹⁴ The Liberian government attempted to reduce Firestone's economic hold over the nation by establishing competing banks, trading stores, and other market outlets. However, they realized that they did not have the power to oppose the Firestone company, which included reinstating the Black faculty that was replaced. Sibley's replacement was Paul Rupel who was appointed by the New York State Colonization Society, who also happened to serve on the Board of Trustees of the BWI. While Rupel appeared to have the same zeal and outlook as Sibley, he instead echoed the demands of the Firestone company by demanding students spend longer hours in the fields to work.¹⁹⁵ With the BWI and Liberian officials under pressure from Firestone, Tuskegee had limited avenues to argue on behalf of Liberia's future as the U.S. government and president Franklin Roosevelt were focused on the Great Depression, deferring matters concerning Liberia to the League of Nations.

Tuskegee was also undergoing changes. Realizing that opportunities were slim in the job market and that an industrial education did not necessarily mean job security and success, Tuskegee students demanded that the system of education change. In 1927, students at Tuskegee went on strike to voice their complaints. A letter written in *The Nation* noted that the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education had for too long exploited students by offering false promises of gainful employment. Tuskegee's program was forced to change after the South established new

¹⁹⁴ Report on Educational Needs and Opportunities in Liberia, International Education Board Collection, File 290-2, Rockefeller Archives, New York.

¹⁹⁵ Paul Rupel to Thomas Jesse Jones, September 26, 1935, 2, IEB, File 290, Rockefeller Archives, New York.

educational standards for Black and white students and schools like Hampton and Tuskegee needed to change to meet new standards. This change in educational standards led to the establishment of professional degrees in veterinary medicine, nursing, and defense instead of cooking, carpentry, and agriculture which waned because of agricultural downturns and the decline of Black farmers.¹⁹⁶ While industrial education may have declined in the United States, Tuskegee's interest in Liberia was ongoing.

Despite the decline of influence in BWI's curriculum by Moton and Tuskegee officials, they were still actively engaged in Liberian matters. After his defeat in the 1927 presidential elections, Thomas Faulkner accused the President-elect, Charles D.B. King, of allowing slavery to exist in the Republic. Faulkner also claimed that certain government officials not only had knowledge of but were actively engaged in this matter and that they used the Liberian Frontier Force to force people into slavery. In 1930, the International Commission of Enquiry, launched by the League of Nations, looked into the matter, conducting interviews which included the Firestone Company to see if they were complicit.¹⁹⁷ The commission concluded that they could not find substantial evidence that Firestone had been involved in the scandal.¹⁹⁸ The scandal did, however, strengthen Tuskegee's commitment to Liberia. In a *New York Times* article, supporters of the Liberian cause called for:

The extension of education to all alike (which, incidentally, should include such institutions for training in agriculture and industry as Hampton and Tuskegee); breaking down the barrier between the civilized and uncivilized; recognizing tribal authority;

¹⁹⁶ W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Hampton Strike," November 2, 1927, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

¹⁹⁷ "The 1930 Enquiry Commission to Liberia," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 30, no. 120 (1931): 277–290.

¹⁹⁸ International Commission of Inquiry into the Existence of Slavery and Forced Labor in the Republic of Liberia and Cuthbert Christy, *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry Into the Existence of Slavery And Forced Labor In the Republic of Liberia, Monrovia, Liberia, September 8, 1930* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1931), 120-137.

outlawing domestic slavery and stopping the shipment of laborers and encouraging business operations from the outside world....¹⁹⁹

With the United States focused on the Great Depression, Tuskegee officials and African Americans concerned with the plight of Liberia continued to call on U.S. officials and on the League of Nations to intervene, including providing more economic assistance to the country.²⁰⁰

The BWI remained under Firestone and American control until it was taken over by the Liberian government in 1953. Over the subsequent decades, Tuskegee recommitted to assisting Liberia in modernizing its vocational schools. In 1962, Tuskegee president Dr. Luther H. Foster stated when speaking of the relationship between Tuskegee and Liberia, "If we are to make our maximum contribution as an educational institution...this fine spirit of commitment to responsibility and cooperative effort among us all will be absolutely essential."²⁰¹ Later, in 1979, Tuskegee president Dr. Benjamin Payton doubled-down on Tuskegee's commitment to Liberia that would "facilitate education, scientific, and socio-cultural exchange." Coordinated by Tuskegee Institute's Office of International Health, the agency focused on developing a new curriculum for Liberian education that centered on "nutrition education; laying the foundation for engaging in applied biomedical research; and exploring ways in which Tuskegee's long history in agriculture and rural development can be brought to bear on problems and opportunities in Liberia."²⁰²

¹⁹⁹ "Liberia," *New York Times*, January 12, 1931, 15.

²⁰⁰ "Liberating Liberia," *New York Times*, November 21, 1933, 18.

²⁰¹ "Many Links in 'skegee's Growing Chain," *New Pittsburgh Courier*, April 28, 1962, 5.

²⁰² "Tuskegee Builds Linkage with Liberia," *The Skanner*, October 27 1982, 5.

Conclusion

Protecting Liberian sovereignty weighed heavy on the minds of African Americans, especially Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee officials. As one of the few independent African states, it formed a powerful image of Black potential and kinship between African Americans and the Liberians. The intensification of Jim Crow in the American South, as race riots, disenfranchisement, and lynching were on the rise at the turn of the century, occurred at the same time European powers intensified their attacks across Liberia's borders, inciting violence and exploiting the economy. Booker T. Washington saw parallels between what was happening to African Americans in the United States and what was happening to Africans and believed both problems could be solved with similar solutions.

While other Black leaders were discussing what Black people should do to combat Jim Crow and imperialism, Booker T. Washington believed he was offering practical solutions to Liberia's problem. Using his political and economic ties, Washington and Tuskegee officials worked within the areas created by imperialism to meet the needs of Liberia that included securing economic and educational assistance. As imperial aims and foreign policies shifted from 1900 to 1930, Washington and Tuskegee officials adapted, using their business connections and political power to advocate for the securing the borders of Liberia, ensure that Liberia received economic aid, and advocate for the implementation of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education. The Pan-African connection between Tuskegee and Liberia did not end with Tuskegee, as it continued on through the years of Robert Russa Moton who used the Firestone Company to advance the aims of Tuskegee and Liberia. Washington, Moton, and Tuskegee officials saw themselves not as the disseminators of civilization, but as a model for which African Americans and Liberians could succeed.

Washington and Tuskegee were however limited by what they could achieve in Africa. By adapting to imperialist aims and relying on those imperialist channels to operate, Washington and Tuskegee were restricted in what they could achieve and inadvertently helped solidify imperial rule by improving networks of control. While they were able to help in securing economic, political, and educational assistance for Liberia, Washington and Tuskegee failed to rescue Liberia from the tentacles of imperialism of which Tuskegee was complicit. In order to secure loans for Liberia, Washington helped open the door for U.S. intervention in the twentieth century while hoping to improve the educational infrastructure of Liberia. Washington and Tuskegee sought help from white philanthropic organizations and U.S. corporations. Nevertheless, Tuskegee continued to maintain its commitment to improving the welfare of Liberians, a commitment that still exists in the present day.²⁰³

²⁰³ In 2014, six students from Tuskegee on a summer exchange program were stuck in Liberia as a result of an Ebola outbreak. The exchange students were sent to Liberia to help strengthen the educational partnership between Tuskegee and Liberia, serving as mentors at the African Methodist Episcopal University's bridge program to help attract and prepare high school students for college. "Six Students Stuck in Liberia Due to Ebola," *Alabama Public Radio*, August 6, 2014.

Chapter 4 - Tuskegee, Industrial Education, and Pre-Apartheid

South Africa

In a November 1913 letter, Booker T. Washington wrote to Joseph Booth, a white English missionary who supported industrial education and championed African self-rule and African-African American unity. Washington offered glowing support for Black South Africans and their freedom struggle. “My dear sir,” wrote Washington, “I have your very interesting letter of October 14, outlining your plans for racial peace in South Africa. I shall be glad to do anything that I possibly can to further the plans and purposes you have in mind.”²⁰⁴ Booth supported the emigration of African Americans to Africa, creating an “Africa for Africans,” an idea that was later popularized by Marcus Garvey, to help support Black South Africans, schemes which Booker T. Washington vehemently opposed. Washington, however, committed to assisting Booth’s anti-imperialist cause, and believed that instead of sending African Americans to South Africa, they could use the money to send “back home the class of white people in South Africa who are making the most trouble.”²⁰⁵ Washington further articulated his support for Black South Africans by “wishing that when the South African Constitution was framed a clause might have been inserted that no one who did not show a disposition to live in terms of peace and good will toward the native should be allowed to enter or live in South Africa.”²⁰⁶

The struggles of Black South Africans under the yoke of European imperialism dates to the seventeenth century when the Dutch first arrived in South Africa. In 1652 when colonial

²⁰⁴ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-1914* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 330.

²⁰⁵ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-1914*, 330.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 330.

administrators of the Dutch East India Company established the first Dutch Cape settlement, the process of colonization began. Over time the indigenous population was pushed northward and inland, as Afrikaners (Dutch-descended settlers who were born in Africa) began seizing their land and restricting the rights of Black Africans. Problems for Black South Africans only grew worse when the British arrived in South Africa, assuming control of the Cape Colony. In the aftermath of the Boer Wars (1880-1881, 1899-1902), which united the three South African states — the British Cape Colony and the two Boer republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State — Black South Africans saw themselves severely exploited and isolated in South Africa. Viewing the plight of Black South Africans as analogous to the struggle of African Americans under Jim Crow, Washington argued that fundamental education in agriculture and mining was the best solution to Black South Africans' struggle. "If we [the Black race]," said Washington in a 1905 speech, "do not develop the talents in respect to labor, commercial business, and education to the very highest degree, somebody else, some other nation will crowd in upon us and we shall not be able to hold our own."²⁰⁷ To Washington, Tuskegee had a duty to help those in the African diaspora but it was up to Black South Africans to want to help themselves.

The relationship between Tuskegee and South Africa highlights the Pan-African relationship between Africa and the United States but also the limitation of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education. While South African policymakers, educators, and activists were familiar with the Hampton-Tuskegee model by the end of the 1880s, the marginalization of Black South Africans from mainstream society made the implementation of Washington and his supporters' vision nearly impossible. Tuskegee's model had some successes, but they were

²⁰⁷ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 8: 1904-1906* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 459.

eventually erased after World War II. Until 1950, Black South Africans were funneled into industrial schools in the Cape Colony and some students were able to secure scholarships to attend Tuskegee. However, these schools were eventually shut down in the 1950s when the National Party government implemented formal apartheid and no longer supported instruction of non-whites. But from the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, long after Washington's death, the Tuskegee model was still championed as a solution to overcoming racially systemic obstacles and upward mobility. Industrial schools in South Africa even modeled themselves in the image of Tuskegee. Booker T. Washington believed that Tuskegee's model could solve South Africa's race problem. He was willing to work with white South Africans to achieve what he believed was best for Black South Africans. Similar to Robert Vinson's argument, of which this chapter agrees with, Black South Africans continued to view African Americans as inspirational models and as critical partners in the global anti-apartheid struggle. Examining the experiences of Black South Africans and their relationship to Tuskegee helps to further understand this Afro-diasporic connection as well as its activism along with its difficulties and inequalities.²⁰⁸

Scholars like Peter Kallaway have examined how the South African government manipulated education to impose and maintain Black subordination. South African education policy makers extended and perpetuated white domination by preparing Black children for economically and politically subordinate positions in society. Furthermore, the financial provisions by the South African state were always very far from adequate to support education of Black South Africans.²⁰⁹ The situation of Black South Africans was comparable to that of

²⁰⁸ Robert Vinson, *The Americans Are Coming!: Dreams of African American Liberation in Segregationist South Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012).

²⁰⁹ Peter Kallaway, *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 2017).

African Americans in the U.S. South, and it was because of this similarity that Booker T. Washington sought to offer the Hampton-Tuskegee model as a solution to South Africa's Black population. This chapter argues that South African policy makers attempted to model South Africa's Black education policy on Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute. However, white South Africans were not the only group pushing for Hampton-Tuskegee model, as prominent Black South African educators and activists, like John Langalibalele Dube and Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu, also believed in Washington's principles could achieve social, political, and economic upward mobility for South Africa's Black population.

Taking a Pan-African view of South Africa is at the heart of Ran Greenstein's edited volume. James Campbell addresses the shared histories of white supremacy in South Africa and the United States and how at the turn of the twentieth century, Black South Africans and African Americans developed new perspectives and understandings of each other's shared experiences.²¹⁰ Several of South Africa's missionary schools in the Cape Colony were converted into industrial schools and upon the Union of South Africa in 1910, Black education became solely rooted in industrial education. Like Black Americans in the American South, Black South Africans were funneled into schools similar to Tuskegee. While assigning Black students to these schools was designed to maintain a racial hierarchy in both societies, some South African students were able to attend Tuskegee on scholarship, building Pan-African relationships with Tuskegee's diasporic population. While others who were unable to obtain a scholarship to Tuskegee managed to graduate from South Africa's industrial schools, they found that pass laws, self-employment taxes, and licensing fees made it too difficult to achieve the upward mobility and financial independence they had hoped for.

²¹⁰ Ran Greenstein, ed., *Comparative Perspectives on South Africa* (London: Macmillan Press, 1998).

The Boer Wars (1880-1881, 1899-1902), fought between the Afrikaner and the British over control of South Africa, resulted in more than the unification of South Africa; they resulted in the further oppression of South Africa's Black population. British intervention in settlers' commercial activities forged perhaps the most critical transition in South Africa's history albeit at the further expense of Black South Africans. From an eighteenth-century colonial order based on patriarchalism and slavery to a mid-nineteenth century one founded on racism and state-regulation, the first decades of the twentieth century in South Africa marked a turning point in the country's history. As Timothy Keegan has argued, British authority was able to move relatively smoothly from the liberation of Khoisan slave labor to the support of settler-dominated racial capitalism. This was reflected above all in the legalized subservience of "free," "coloured" labor and the colonization of the Xhosa.²¹¹ The new South African order was arranged around capitalist ideologies which had been manifest from the very beginnings of the British colonial reform program. British officials enlisted Booker T. Washington to help them create the means to achieve their aims. Washington tried to utilize the imperialist system to offer aid and assistance to South Africa's Black population while opposing the South African government's exploitation of them.

Using correspondence, memos, and letters from Booker T. Washington, South African government agents, and Black South African activists, this chapter highlights Tuskegee's difficult relationship with South Africa and imperialism while also examining how Black South Africans looked to the accomplishments of African Americans at Tuskegee as a model of progress, adding a complex dimension to examining Pan-African relationships between the

²¹¹ Timothy Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996). See also: Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of the United States, South Africa, and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

United States and Africa. Tuskegee's goal of challenging imperialist structures was emblematic in the case of South Africa. As Washington and Tuskegee officials maneuvered their way through the barriers of Jim Crow and imperialism, Black South Africans attempted to build Pan-African networks in the face of adversity.

Booker T. Washington's Attitudes Towards South Africa

From July 23-25, 1900, the first Pan-African Conference was held in London, England, attended by more than thirty delegates who came from various parts of the world throughout the African diaspora. The purpose of the conference was to call attention to Britain's maltreatment of colonial subjects, in particular South Africa. "I beg to advise as many of our people," Washington wrote, "to attend this conference. In my opinion, it is going to be one of the most effective and far-reaching gatherings that has ever been held in connection with the development of the race."²¹² Washington encouraged the organizers of the conference to address the merits of industrial education and the potential good it could have in improving the lives of Black South Africans.

In 1899, Washington and his wife Margaret Murray Washington had visited the Agricultural College for women in Swanley, England. "We found forty intelligent cultured women," Washington noted, "studying theoretical and practical agriculture and horticulture, dairying, and poultry raising, chemistry, botany, zoology, and applied mathematics."²¹³ The Tuskegee principal was also amazed by the work the men were doing in similar fields. While impressed by the work of England's agricultural programs and its students, Washington asked

²¹² Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 156.

²¹³ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 156.

school officials if Black colonial subjects factored into any future designs for the expansion of agricultural programs. They did not but Washington was willing to lend support if needed.

The questions surrounding the future of Africans, especially Black South Africans, loomed large and had long been an issue that occupied Washington. Heli Chatelain, a Swiss missionary, wrote to Washington in October 1896. “I hope you will realize,” Chatelain wrote, “that all you do to advance the solution of the problems concerning the American negro, is a direct or indirect contribution to the solution of parallel problems in Africa; that as Dr. [Hollis] Frissell puts it, ‘your cause is ours, and ours, is yours...’”²¹⁴ Chatelain had hoped that Washington would support African American emigration to help implement industrial education schemes in Africa but Washington did not support emigration. In July 1899, Washington addressed the greediness of Europe since carving up Africa during the Berlin Conference in 1884. To that point, he noted that he saw “no way out of our present condition in the South by returning to Africa. Aside from other almost insurmountable obstacles there is no place in Africa for us to go where our condition would be improved.”²¹⁵ Viewing the expansion of European imperialism in Africa and U.S. expansion into Latin America and the Pacific, and the exploitation of Africans as similar to the treatment of African Americans in the United States under Jim Crow, Washington believed that he could support Black advancement for all African diasporic peoples.

²¹⁴ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 223.

²¹⁵ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 164.

STATISTICS OF THE CHIEF BRITISH MISSIONARY SOCIETIES FOR THE YEAR 1897-98.

Notes.—The figures do not include the Church Missionary Associations, the Baptist Boards, and the Presbyterian Church Missions of the Australasian Colonies. They also omit many small missions of the homeland. Where Missionaries are engaged as well as medically qualified, they have been reckoned among Medical Missionaries only. Great care has been taken to give figures correctly, but in several cases they can only be approximate. Difficulty is frequent through the different systems which the Societies employ in their statistics.

SOCIETY.	Date Formed.	MISSIONARIES IN HOME CONNECTION.						Wives.	NATIVE WORKERS.			Church Members or Communicants.	Elementary Schools and Orphanages.	SCHOLARS.		HIGHER GRADE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.		Sunday Schools.	Scholars.	MEDICAL WORK.		Expenditure, including amounts raised in Public Funds.
		Excluding Medical.		Medical.		Orphaned.	Lay.		Female.	Boys.	Girls.			Number.	Pupils.	Out Patients.	In Patients.					
		Or. Gained.	Lay.	Or. Gained.	Female.																	
New England Company.....	1649	3	7	5	...	...	1	1	3	...	10	250	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,000	
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.....	1689	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,259	
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.....	1702	216	28	5	7	...	178	2,504	375	46,685	801	21,972	8,240	33	4494	...	...	...	...	...	78,000	
Do. Women's Missionary Association.....	1866	...	80	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,110	
Baptist Missionary Society.....	1792	138	3	3	1	89	...	80	1,555	11	18,387	491	7,638	1,605	7	440	385	13,637	44,201	511	144,287	
Baptist Zenana Mission.....	1867	...	62	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,036	
London Missionary Society.....	1795	166	8	...	...	154	10	924	3,681	...	55,541	999	34,915	...	28	...	688	35,031	105,824	4523	1,047,991	
Do. Women's Work.....	1875	...	...	66	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	143,287	
Church Missionary Society.....	1799	393	86	44	...	319	...	340	4,596	...	64,411	2357	56,195	...	843	...	...	...	...	...	351,287	
Do. Women's Work.....	1886	...	...	203	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,149	
Church of England Zenana Missionary Society.....	1886	...	...	203	...	9	107	...	743	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	43,102	
Religious Tract Society.....	1799	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30,065	
British and Foreign Bible Society.....	1804	15	37	4	...	...	...	...	455	504	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	52,000	
Wesleyan Missionary Society.....	1813	144	18	...	...	126	...	158	8,136	...	40,879	1091	40,606	26,000	12	...	988	59,160	3,972	317	93,036	
Do. Women's Auxiliary.....	1859	...	49	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13,117	
General Baptist Missionary Society.....	1816	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Bible Christian Missionary Society.....	1821	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Church of Scotland.....	1829	22	10	3	6	...	6	537	12	2,083	102	8,011	1,042	5	798	15	...	...	26,592	798	20,553	
Do. Women's Association.....	1837	...	31	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,493	
Society for Promoting Female Education in the East.....	1834	...	35	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,179	
Presbyterian Church of Ireland.....	1840	23	4	...	...	20	...	4	326	27	1,492	67	2,042	2,210	8	1010	52	3,057	23,185	652	24,855	
Do. Female Association.....	1873	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,802	
Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Missionary Society.....	1849	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15,839	
Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society.....	1841	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,149	
Free Church of Scotland.....	1843	49	54	14	21	...	59	15	1,241	...	10,624	323	15,230	2,251	34	6362	10,502	87,947	1227	5,207		
Do. Women's Association.....	1843	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12,187	
South American Missionary Society.....	1844	13	21	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8,427	
Presbyterian Church of England.....	1847	16	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18,417	
Do. Women's Association.....	1878	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,317	
United Presbyterian Church of Scotland.....	1847	64	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,048	
Do. Zenana Mission.....	1880	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,159	
Mekranian Mission.....	1848	12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
New Hebrides Mission.....	1848	26	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,000	
Zenana Bible and Medical Mission.....	1854	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18,675	
Turkish Missions Aid Society.....	1854	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,679	
Australasian Wesleyan Missionary Society.....	1856	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14,150	
United Methodist Free Churches.....	1857	25	3	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13,666	
Christian Literature Society for India.....	1858	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11,298	
Universities Mission to Central Africa.....	1859	34	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Do. Women's Work.....	1865	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24,443	
Methodist New Connexion Missionary Society.....	1859	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,628	
British Syrian Mission Schools and Bible Work.....	1860	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,493	
National Bible Society of Scotland.....	1861	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,000	
China Inland Mission.....	1862	30	268	257	16	172	...	14	316	77	7,147	114	1,589	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	48,095	
Friends Foreign Missionary Association.....	1865	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20,500	
Primitive Methodist Missionary Society.....	1869	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,394	
Canadian Baptists, Ontario and Quebec.....	1866	12	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,613	
Do. Maritime Provinces.....	1873	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	28,800	
Presbyterian Church of Canada.....	1872	39	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,478	
Do. Women's Society, Western.....	1879	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,080	
Do. Eastern.....	1876	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Methodist Church of Canada.....	1873	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,478	
Do. Women's Missionary Society.....	1881	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,990	
Mission to Lepers in India and the East.....	1874	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,445	
North Africa Mission.....	1881	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,102	
Salvation Army.....	1882	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Congo Bible Mission.....	1883	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Zambesi Industrial Mission.....	1892	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Total.....	1495	881	1504	189	29	1081	200	1965	41,899	5596	340,684	11,084	307,258	157,441	218	18,081	4616	211,066	1,338,425	31,103	1,477,493	

¹ These figures refer only to the foreign missionary work of this Society.

² Figures for 1897.

³ These figures are only approximate owing to the unsettled state of Malagasy.

⁴ Including children in homes.

⁵ Figures only approximate.

⁶ Figures for 1896-97.

Figure 4.1 Statistics of the Chief British Missionary Society for the Year 1897-1898. Source: Ralph Wardlaw Thompson and Arthur Johnson, *British Foreign Missions, 1837-1897* (London: Blackie & Son, 1899).

Developing an educational system that best served the interests of Black South Africans was of the utmost importance to South African missionary leaders. Reverend Ralph Wardlaw Thompson and Reverend Arthur N. Johnson, prominent officials in the London Missionary Society, stressed the importance of industrial and technical teaching. They noted that industrial and technical education had “become very generally recognized, not only in countries where uncivilized peoples come into increasing contact with Europeans, but also where depressed classes require to be lifted up into a position of healthy self-support and self-respect.”²¹⁶ The Cape Colony had established a number of missionary schools that were modified into industrial and technical schools by the first decade of the twentieth century, which coincided with the

²¹⁶ Ralph Wardlaw Thompson and Arthur Johnson, *British Foreign Missions, 1837-1897* (London: Blackie & Son, 1899), 128.

establishment of the Union of South Africa. British missionaries were happy to report that their pupils in the Cape Colony “were already proving themselves able to do a large amount of useful work in brickmaking and in building, carpentering and joinery, and printing. Producing goods that were in constant demand.”²¹⁷ The aim of this study and of the mission schools was to highlight how industrial and technical education was important to creating a more manageable Black South African labor force.

The Second Boer War (1899-1902) coincided with the United States’ entry as a world power. Booker T. Washington was opposed to the Second Boer War and he and others opposed to the war petitioned President William McKinkley in October 1899 to encourage the United States to mediate peace between Great Britain and the Republic of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. “We [the signatories of the petition] respectfully submit that it is not only the right and duty of this nation, but also its high privilege, to strive to prevent the wiping out of two of our sister republics, the desolation of thousands of English and South African homes, the slaughter of thousands of civilized men and the drenching of South Africa with blood and tears.”²¹⁸ Washington was anti-imperialist, but he tried to use the imperialist system to advance the Tuskegee model of education as a means to helping Black peoples affected by imperialism. Speaking out against the evils of imperialism was not uncommon for Washington as he had done so in the past. In 1896, during the Second Matabele War in Southern Rhodesia between the British and the Matabele, Washington wrote an article in the newspaper *Our Day* criticizing British troops for “mowing down Africans simply because they tried to defend their homes, their wives, and their children, hundreds of prayers were being offered up in as many English

²¹⁷ Ralph Wardlaw Thompson and Arthur Johnson, *British Foreign Missions, 1837-1897*, 128.

²¹⁸ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 231.

churches that God might convert the heathen in Africa and bring them to our way of thinking and acting. What mockery!”²¹⁹ Washington took it upon himself and the Tuskegee machine to assist the struggling Black population in South Africa and the South African government welcomed his help in hopes that a powerful Black leader like Washington may help all parties involved. Washington agreed, adding “can we wonder that the Africans are hesitant of the Anglo-Saxon race?”²²⁰

The Tuskegee Influence in South Africa

The efforts of Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee and abroad were well documented and admired by many abroad, especially in South Africa. With Tuskegee students already in Africa by the turn of the twentieth century, Washington knew the immense undertaking in committing resources to such endeavors abroad and was apprehensive to send direct assistance but still lent support to the struggle of Black South Africans. In a response to a request from Albert Henry George Grey, Director of the British South Africa Company, who asked the Tuskegee principal to help “devise strategies to improve Black South African life” which actually was intended to exact the most productivity with the least possible resistance from Black South Africans, Washington wrote “The blacks there [in South Africa] represent every grade of intelligence and education from savagery to the college graduate, but the majority of the work of advancement is being done along industrial lines.”²²¹ Washington approved of the focus on industrial education but objected to how industrial education was being implemented because it was designed solely to benefit South African officials and white business owners. Furthermore, Washington’s

²¹⁹ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898*, 251-252.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 252.

²²¹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 7: 1903-1904* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 182.

attitudes towards Black South Africans carried with it an imperialist tone, viewing the Africans as uncivilized and needing guidance.

The combination of Washington's attitude towards Black South Africans and the success of the Tuskegee Institute made him attractive to British South African officials who supported technical education. Technical education was used in South Africa like it was in the United States to promise a modicum of education to non-whites while maintaining a separation of racial and social classes. Dr. Langham Dale, Superintendent-General of Education of the Cape colony (1859-1892) urged in 1868 that the "spread of civilization, by school-instruction and the encouragement of industrial habits among the Natives is of importance to the political security and social progress of the Colony."²²² Grey saw the integration of the African people into the Cape economy in terms of becoming disciplined, useful servants that had the potential to contribute to the wealth of the Colony through their labor. Grey's view was expressed in an issue of the newspaper the *Christian Express* which stated, "If education then is to be the lever for elevating the African race — and education not intellectual only nor industrial only, but the two going hand in hand, — the question of questions is how to reach the red, or heathen, Kaffirs [term used to describe Black South Africans] with education."²²³ Tuskegee would become the model to which South African officials would conform in develop their new technical education model and the Cape Colony officials and missionary officials would help oversee the development.

²²² Peter Kallaway, *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 2017), 51.

²²³ *The Christian Express*, April 1, 1880, 2.

State subsidization of the mission schools in the Cape Colony and Natal saw an increase in Black enrollment year over year between 1855 and 1900.²²⁴ This growth in attendance contributed to educational reform that was needed to meet new industrial and commercial demands as the agricultural and mining sectors boomed. The promises of improved living conditions, wages, and education enticed Black South Africans to continue to enroll in school. A 1901 report by the Southern African Native Races Committee found that:

The gradual introduction of individual ownership, by depriving the young tribesman of his right to a lot of arable land on marriage, makes it more and more necessary in some districts for natives to seek work...In spite of racial prejudice, education is making headway, and the natives are rapidly acquiring new wants and responding to new incentives to labour. Thus, potent forces are at work to increase the already large supply of native labour, and the efficiency of that supply.²²⁵

Education was vital to the designs of South African officials. Reverend Albert Leroy, a South African missionary, posed the question “Does it pay to educate the native?” in a Report of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science regarding whether education had any real benefits to Black South Africans and those in power. Leroy noted, “If education induces the best of them [Black South Africans] to go back and work for the uplift of their people, if the educated native is more temperate, works longer, and more steadily than the raw native...[and] is worth two to four times as much as the uneducated man...the answer is in the affirmative.”²²⁶

Seeing the potential of South Africa to emulate the Tuskegee model, Washington lent his support. In September 1899, Reverend Charles Satchell Morris, a missionary who earlier had served as secretary to Frederick Douglass and moved to Cape Town, South Africa a month before he wrote Washington, brought to the Tuskegee principal’s attention the work being done

²²⁴ South African Native Races Committee, *The Natives of South Africa: Their Economic and Social Condition* (London: J. Murray, 1901), 169.

²²⁵ South African Native Races Committee, *The Natives of South Africa: Their Economic and Social Condition* (London: J. Murray, 1901), 105.

²²⁶ Albert Le Roy, “Does it Pay to Educate the Native?” *South African Journal of Science*, 15 (1918): 356.

at the Lovedale Institute, a missionary school turned technical school, which Morris called the “Tuskegee of South Africa.”²²⁷ Morris called attention to the “550 students from nearly all the tribes of South of the Zambesie” and called South Africa a “great country with superb openings for men with brains and trained hands.”²²⁸ By 1900, Tuskegee already had students from the Pacific, the Caribbean, and Africa, including South Africa. Washington’s expertise was consulted beyond Natal and the Cape Colony. He was consulted on matters concerning education reform in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Washington contended that there was no very great difference between the native problem in South Africa and the Negro problem in America. Like the millions of freedmen after the American Civil War, millions of Black South Africans had been limited if not excluded from their academic and economic pursuits. As a result, Washington deduced, “the industries of South Africa languish and refuse to prosper for lack of labor.”²²⁹ For Washington, the problem South Africans faced mirrored that of Black people in the American South and so Washington worked to devise solutions to benefit both Black South Africans and South African officials and missionaries and they welcomed his help.

²²⁷ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 209.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 210.

²²⁹ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 7: 1903-1904*, 430.



Figure 4.2 Students at Lovedale Mission School, Cape Province (1899). Students were mandated to complete at minimum two hours of manual industrial training each day in agriculture, carpentering, blacksmithing, bookbinding, or shoemaking. Source: *Picturesque South Africa: An Album of Two Hundred Choice Photographic Engravings...*, (Cape Town: Dennis Edwards, 1899), 35.

The creator of the “Atlanta Compromise,” which in the words of the *Atlanta Constitution*’s Clark Howell was “the beginning of a moral revolution in America,” believed that Africans could learn from his example.²³⁰ Washington hosted numerous South African leaders at Tuskegee and influenced political activity abroad in South Africa. The success of his work *Up from Slavery* (1900) and his famous “Atlanta Exposition Address” (1895) introduced the world to Washington and the work Tuskegee was doing. His autobiography and his speech were translated to a variety of languages across the globe. From Japanese to Spanish and also Bantu.

²³⁰ “Booker T. Washington: Distinguished Colored Orator and Apostle of Industry,” *The Houston Post*, May 30, 1895, 17.

After reading *Up from Slavery*, John Langalibalele Dube, the “Booker T. Washington of South Africa” he was often referred to as, transferred the Tuskegee model of education to Natal. Dube, the Zulu educator and first President of the South African National Congress (ANC), visited Tuskegee in May of 1897. He told Washington:

Think what Tuskegee would do for our people! They would revolutionize the country, for the Zulus are intellectually and physically capable of the highest civilization, but our young men are not allowed to go into the white workshops because we are in the majority and the whites know that if we are educated as they are we shall rule the country. There are some people among the whites who do not want to educate the natives, but the government stands for right, and I hope that the day will come when the whole of Africa will be under Her Majesty’s rule so that all may have equal rights.²³¹

While born in Natal, South Africa, Dube’s connection to the United States was forged early on in his life. Dube’s grandmother, Dalida Dube, was one of the first Zulus to be baptized and converted to Christianity in the American Zulu Mission Church by the American missionary, Daniel Lindley who he had deep respect and admiration for. The association with the Boston-based American Board of Mission Church provided Dube with his first indirect link with the US industrial schools like Hampton and Tuskegee. Students at American Zulu Mission schools were required to engage in three hours of manual labor each day. As was the case at Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes, students engaged in manual labor at the school to help pay for their tuition and other school expenses.²³² The mission schools sought to develop “respect for labor and habits of regularity” among Black students. Thus, before Dube encountered Booker T. Washington in 1897, he was already familiar with the concept of industrial education as practiced by Americans because Dube himself obtained a form of American industrial education training. Dube was thrilled that the promotion of industrial education that he was familiar with in

²³¹ “Need of Industrial Education in Africa,” *Southern Workman*, July 1, 1897, 142.

²³² *Ibid.*, 142.

mission schools was then promoted by a Black leader in Booker T. Washington who he considered to be one of the “best living examples of Africa’s sons.”²³³

In addition to his admiration of Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee model of education, John Langalibalele Dube also shared similar views of Black South Africans that Washington had expressed. Dube, like Washington, believed that Black people needed to understand the value of work, discipline, and thrift, a point which Washington articulated in December 1895 address when he stated that “the greatest need of the black man to-day, strong, unselfish leaders, well grounded in industry and education, religion and common sense ideas of life.”²³⁴ When Washington gave this speech, Dube was traveling throughout the United States, familiarizing himself with America’s educational institutions like Oberlin College in Ohio and the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Dube articulated his views in the pamphlet *Talk About My Native Land* (1892) in which he expressed the same views as Washington:

To teach them to work is more needful than anything else, because the natives in their heathen state do not have many wants, and what little wants they have are easily supplied. So it is important to teach them to work, so they will first change that state of laziness before they become leaders, which is both beneficial to their common interest and to that of their race. When people become civilized, they need clothes and comfortable homes which are good for civilized people. In this school, young people are taught manners and other good things, which make them good, civilized citizens ; great pains are taken to make those who have come to be civilized, exactly what they ought to be, so that they shall be of great use to their countrymen.²³⁵

Mirroring the colonial language that Washington had articulated in his speeches on Africans and certain groups of African Americans, Dube was able to get the support necessary to spearhead the industrial education movement in South Africa, becoming Superintendent at the Incwadi Christian Industrial Mission School in Natal and overseeing the renovation of Lovedale.

²³³ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898*, 263.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 263.

²³⁵ John L. Dube, *A Familiar Talk About My Native Land and What I Have Found There* (Pietermaritzburg: Vause & Slatter, 1891), 28.

The necessity of using industrial education as a civilizing tool was expressed by Reverend A. Henry Attaway, who arrived in South Africa in 1901 to oversee the educational efforts of the AME Church. “Tho native has natural aspirations,” stated Attaway in a 1902 interview with the South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC), “but he does not know in many cases really what he requires. He sees the effect of civilization upon others and is very anxious, as far as possible, to keep pace with those things. But. as I see it, his salvation lies in his availability as a labouring asset.”²³⁶ Missionaries and education officials like Levi Coppin, the AME Church’s first resident bishop in South Africa shared Attaway’s belief that industrial education was beneficial to both Black and white South Africans. “People in the lowest stage of civilization should have the industrial idea emphasised, because we believe it most needed,” Coppin argued.²³⁷ The AME’s flagship school in Cape Town, the Bethel Institute, was in fact structured in the image and likeness of the Tuskegee Institute. The most enthusiastic supporters of the Tuskegee model were chiefs who saw it as a potential weapon to defend their economic and political rights. One AME member during his travels through the western Transvaal and the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1898 found that area chiefs were competing against one another to attract the churches, offering land for industrial schools and offering their own sons for training.²³⁸

Through John L. Dube and Booker T. Washington, a direct Pan-African linkage was forged. South Africa sparked a movement for Black industrial education and political demands for self-determination. Young South Africans who identified with Washington advanced an

²³⁶ South African Native Affairs Commission, *South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903-1905 Vol. 2: Evidence Taken in Cape Colony* (Cape Town: Cape Times, 1905), 256.

²³⁷ South African Native Affairs Commission, *South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903-1905 Vol. 2: Evidence Taken in Cape Colony*, 256.

²³⁸ *Voice of Missions*, February 1, 1898, 2.

ideology predicated on the principles of Black capitalism and Black power. The Tuskegee model grew in popularity among Black South Africans because it offered a formula that had the potential to enable Africans to break the European monopoly on economic and technical skills, to regain control of their economic lives, to scale the social and economic heights they perceived Black Americans of having reached. Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba, founder of the Presbyterian Church of Africa preached a doctrine of self-help similar to Washington's. He eschewed politics in favor of building Black schools and churches and believed that race prejudice would end through the development of education and the acquisition of wealth. He wrote to Washington in March 1901, applauding the Tuskegee principal for his benevolence towards student acceptance for those that were able to attend Tuskegee and work off their tuition debt, a strategy that Mzimba supported. "In South Africa there are many young people who are anxious for education...who would be thankful to learn a trade and be able to receive higher education as well...The sons of Africa are crying to Africans in America 'Come over & help us.' We have about 12 young men & 6 young women anxious to go at once [to Tuskegee]." ²³⁹ While Tuskegee was predominantly an industrial and normal school, the opening of the Phelps Hall Bible School in November 1892 attracted many Africans who wished to "fit themselves for the ministry or other forms of Christian work." ²⁴⁰ Among the first South Africans to graduate from Tuskegee was the first Black South African born bishop, Francis Herman Gow.

Gow entered Tuskegee on September 15, 1904, on a one-month trial. He studied agriculture, with an emphasis on cotton growing, studying under the prolific scientist George Washington Carver. Upon graduation, Gow became the first South African to complete training

²³⁹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 6: 1901-1902* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 63.

²⁴⁰ Louis Harlan and Raymond W. Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 3: 1889-1895* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 271.

at Tuskegee. Gow emerged as a major influence on the student body, the faculty, and even principal Washington. Gow's father provided him with photographic evidence of the dire conditions in South Africa. Gow used these photos to educate his peers and Washington. A February 1905 letter to Washington read, "I am glad to have the privilege of giving you the few photos, presenting scenes from life of the Zulu, and the Afrikendos."²⁴¹ Washington also inspired Gow. After reading, "Industrial Education in Africa," Gow wrote, "The statement made in this article has inspired me as none other has done to an intelligent regard for the needs of my people."²⁴² Gow believed that industrial education was the most practical and effective measure for the economic, social, and political development of South Africa which led him to transition to becoming a full-time student. He reflected on his journey, "My experience here enables me to more clearly appreciate and understand the serious responsibility which rests upon the home government-that making citizens better and more intelligent citizens in the colonies of South Africa."²⁴³

Gow championed expanding the Tuskegee-South Africa pipeline by which Black South Africans would be sent to Tuskegee to be educated and as a result, be more prepared to fight the future battle for Africa. "I think a better plan would be to have a small company of African boys who are most promising to attend school here and pursue the study of agriculture and the mechanic that the industrial life of our colonies most demand."²⁴⁴ Gow argued that the uplift of Africans must be done by Africans, not Black Americans, South African missionaries, or South

²⁴¹ Francis Herman Gow to Booker T. Washington, Phelps Hall, February 16, 1905, Box 905 Reel 683, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁴² Francis Herman Gow to Booker T. Washington, Phelps Hall, June 4, 1906, Box 905 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁴³ Francis H. Gow to Honorable Jan Bryce, K. C. M. C, British Ambassador, Washington, D. C, July 8. 1907, Tuskegee University Archives, Tuskegee, AL.

²⁴⁴ Francis H. Gow to Honorable Jan Bryce, K. C. M. C, British Ambassador, Washington, D. C, July 8. 1907, Tuskegee University Archives, Tuskegee, AL.

African officials. Tuskegee graduates would serve as the very foundation of uplift in African peoples. He urged South African officials to sponsor future students for training at Tuskegee. “I suggest that the home government secure Dr. Washington’s consent and support a small band of African students, say 25 who will pursue such studies here as governments shall erect you will find out, sir, that the expenses here are four times cheaper than other American colleges.”²⁴⁵ Gow went on to major success in the United States and in South Africa, and continued to push for normal education under the Tuskegee model in the 1920s and 1930s at the Wilberforce Institute in Evaton, a township outside of Johannesburg where served as principal after returning to South Africa in 1934. Its American counterpart Wilberforce College had enlarged its mission under the A.M.E. Church and through the support of prominent Black American leaders like W.E.B. Du Bois, to accept Black African students.

Wanting to expand the A.M.E. church’s mission, a Wilberforce-like college was opened in Evaton but shirked a higher education model for the Tuskegee model which its supporters believed truly embodied the principles of self-determination, self-sufficiency and a proud African identity. The school was embraced by its founders as a symbol of a new phase of struggle, a crusade rooted in the idea that Africans were a conquered nation that needed to claim intellectual and cultural autonomy before achieving political independence. Under Gow, a greater emphasis was placed on the Tuskegee model at Wilberforce more than any of his predecessors. Gow purchased equipment to keep the school running despite financial hardships faced during the Great Depression in the 1930s. One of these purchases included a printing press that went on to promote Black activism and the Black South African struggle. Gow eventually

²⁴⁵ Francis H. Gow to Honorable Jan Bryce, K. C. M. C, British Ambassador, Washington, D. C, July 8. 1907, Tuskegee University Archives, Tuskegee, AL.

became the first African elected Bishop of the AME Church in 1956, having left Wilberforce on the eve of it falling under state control as part of the Bantu Education Act.

Many other prominent Black South Africans came to view Tuskegee as a symbol of Black autonomy and advancement. The editor of the South African newspaper, *Izwi Labantu* (Voice of the Bantu), A. Kirkland Soga reached out to Washington for advice in 1903. Like other prospective students, Washington provided Soga with photographs and information regarding Tuskegee's programs. Soga used the information provided by Washington to exchange ideas about educational advancement. He hoped that the information on Tuskegee and its message would be used to disseminate practical strategies for racial advancement. The first secretary general of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) Sol Plaatje observed that Washington was, "the champion of the cause of the dark and backward races... a thankless job."²⁴⁶ For South Africans such as Soga and Plaatje, Tuskegee became a key institution essential to the advancement of national liberties and independent advancement. The death of Washington dealt a major blow to the Tuskegee-South African pipeline, but the legacy of the Tuskegee model lived on.

Change at Home and Abroad: Tuskegee Post-Washington and the Union of South Africa

The 1910s marked a significant turning point in South African and Tuskegee histories. In 1910, the Union of South Africa was created. That same year the South Africa Act was passed which enfranchised white people, giving them complete political control over all other racial groups while removing the right of Black people to sit in parliament. What few rights Black South Africans had before 1910, were swiftly stripped away over the course of the next two

²⁴⁶ Sol J. Plaatje (Kimberley, South Africa) to Emmett J. Scott, Sep. 25, 1913, Box 874 Reel 653, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

decades as the movement of Black people was limited under the Native Land Act (1913), which Black people, except those in the Cape, from buying land outside certain areas, the Native Urban Areas Act (1923) which implemented residential segregation and provided cheap industrial labor for white people, and the Colour Bar Act (1926) prevented Black mine workers from practicing skilled trades.²⁴⁷ These measures made the adoption of the Tuskegee model difficult for Black South Africans as industrial labor was rooted in the very trades that were targeted and made acquiring land and meaningful capital nearly impossible. These laws mirrored the laws in the American South which also aimed at limiting the freedoms and movements of Black Americans which also made the Tuskegee model difficult to sustain after the first two decades in the United States. Furthermore, the death of Booker T. Washington in 1915 was a major blow to the Tuskegee-South African pipeline. However, the spirit of Tuskegee lived on among both Black South Africans and white South African officials who sought to use the model to further their own ambitions.

In the 1920s, a new spirit of Pan-Africanism swept across the globe and South Africa was in the hearts and minds of Black people. The Pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey, who admired Booker T. Washington, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association to carry on the legacy of Washington and the Tuskegee model of economic self-sufficiency and saw it as a practical solution for Africa. “The Universal Negro Improvement Association teaches our race self-help and self-reliance,” Garvey stated in his 1923 speech “An Appeal to the Conscience of the Black Race to See Itself,” “The race needs workers at this time, not plagiarists, copyists and mere imitators; but men and women who are able to create, to originate and improve, and thus

²⁴⁷ South Africa Parliament, *Parliamentary Publications* (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1931), 280.

make an independent racial contribution to the world and civilization.”²⁴⁸ Many Black South Africans rejected and resisted the racial educational platform and technical assistance as a whole because they saw the objective championed by the likes of Garvey and Washington was in stark contrast to the reality which was limited opportunities for upward mobility and a future of servitude. Still, the loudest supporters of the Tuskegee model of education continued to support the model’s long-term benefits.

South African activists like Davidson Don Tengo (D.D.T.) Jabavu followed in the lines of Booker T. Washington, espousing the value of the gospel of work as the best and truest means of raising South Africans in the path of civilization and prosperity. Jabavu was born in King Williams Town, in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, and studied at the Lovedale Mission School. His father was a member of the South African delegation which influenced D.D.T. Jabavu’s political activism. Jabavu visited the United States on a tour of Booker T. Washington’s Tuskegee Institute in 1913 to meet the Tuskegee principal to see the Tuskegee firsthand and to gauge whether or not the Tuskegee model could be sustainable in South Africa.²⁴⁹ Jabavu was impressed by what he experienced at Tuskegee: a Black college and a Black community that were operated and owned by Black people. Jabavu noted:

[I] went along Fourth Street and got i into the Negro quarter where almost every building is occupied by a coloured person. Every kind of business is done here. I visited Negro banks, Printing offices, Photographers, Newspapers, Doctors, Barbers, Tailors (one of whom was a Tuskegee graduate), blacksmiths, restaurants, moving pictures, fruiterers, billiards saloons; in fact almost every kind of of trade one can think of, was represented here.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Robert Blaisdell, ed., *Selected Writings and Speeches of Marcus Garvey* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2004), 139-140.

²⁴⁹ D.D.T. Jabavu, *My Tuskegee Pilgrimage*, August 13, 1913, University of South Africa Archives, 54.

²⁵⁰ D.D.T. Jabavu, *My Tuskegee Pilgrimage*, August 13, 1913, University of South Africa Archives, 51.

Like Washington, Jabavu noted the tumultuous state of race relations in his country and argued that the solutions to solving the problem were to fix the economic and education issues in the country. In his work *Black Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems* (1920), Jabavu likened the situation in South Africa to the Jim Crow South. “Socially speaking, the black man in all public places is either “jim-crowed ” or altogether ostracized.”²⁵¹ Jabavu, who formed the South African Native Farmers' Association, which encouraged the development of better farming standards and stressed the value of manual labor, also founded the Cape African Teachers' Association and the South African Native Teachers' Federation. Jabavu however believed that the South African educational system regarding Black South Africans was superior to that of the United States and argued that the South African system did not be overhauled but simply readjusted to be more equitable for Black South Africans.

In a Normal and Industrial institute like Tuskegee...the Tuskegee graduate and full-fledged harnessmaker not only can earn more, in the struggle for life, than the [university] third year pupil teacher who knows more school theory, but is a more independent man on account of the independent character of his trade, which, in turn, brings him into vital touch with both the cultured and backward classes of his community.²⁵²

D.D.T. Jabavu was also an accommodationist like his mentor Booker T. Washington. Washington who stated in his famous September 1895 “Atlanta Exposition Address,” explained to the Black Americans in the southern audience “the wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather

²⁵¹ D.D.T. Jabavu, *Black Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1920), 9.

²⁵² D.D.T. Jabavu, *Black Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1920), 28-29.

than of artificial forcing.”²⁵³ Accepting white rule with the promise of improved access to education and capital for Black Americans, was Washington’s compromise that he believed offered the best strategy for Black Americans, and later Black people around the world. A quarter of a century later, Jabavu’s cure of South African angst was “the appointment of officials with tested sympathy towards Natives in all departments of government and our being able to produce well-educated Native leaders trained in a favourable atmosphere, who will be endowed with commonsense, cool heads, with a sense of responsibility, endurance, and correct perspective on things.”²⁵⁴ Jabavu and other African elites who shared his vision, argued that the best way for Africans to secure greater rights was to gain a better understanding of how the government worked and to accept the legitimacy of the white government.

African elites, notably Jabavu, while accommodationist in their messaging, still tried to use their relationships with the government throughout the 1920s and 1930s to change policies that harmed Black South Africans. One of the issues that caused the most tension was the Native Affairs Act (1920). The act, introduced by South African Prime Minister Jan Christian Smuts, created the South African Native Affairs Commission (all of whose members were white) to advise the government on issues relating to Africans, and extended the local council system. The commission was intended to oversee local government, recommend policy to the national government, and hold annual Native conferences.²⁵⁵ John L. Dube called the commission the

²⁵³ Harlan and Smock, eds. *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 3: 1889-1895* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 586.

²⁵⁴ D.D.T. Jabavu, *Black Problem: Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1920), 10, 16.

²⁵⁵ Empire Parliamentary Association: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. United Kingdom Branch. *Journal of the Parliaments of the Commonwealth* (London: United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 1921), 210-211.

“best attempt yet made to meet the requirements of the bulk of the Native people.”²⁵⁶ However, the commission was merely a shoddy device to side-track the African demand for the right to sit in parliament. Jabavu and other African elites viewed Smuts a sympathetic voice in government because to them, Smuts emphasized class over race and did not outright reject the gradual inclusion of rural and urban African elites into the power of the white structure.

The introduction of James E.K. Aggrey and the Phelps-Stokes Fund in South Africa supported Jabavu’s cause and also furthering the advancement of the Tuskegee model in South Africa. Jabavu spoke of Aggrey fondly, noting “his eye for the essential in politics was keen and prophetic, his forecasts usually reliable, and his knowledge of the philosophy of politics, among both white and black in South Africa, profound.”²⁵⁷ James Emman Kwegir Aggrey, a Ghanaian teacher who studied in the United States in North Carolina, experienced the discrimination of the Jim Crow South and noted similar discriminatory practices by whites in both the United States and Africa.²⁵⁸ Aggrey, a firm believer in the Tuskegee model of education, was recruited by the Phelps-Stokes African Education Commission in 1920 to explore the practicality of expanding technical education throughout Africa with a particular focus on Liberia and South Africa. Aggrey wanted his “people to be educated in the larger sense, in heart, hand, and head, and thus render Africa indispensable in spiritual, intellectual and commercial products to the world.”²⁵⁹ Expanding technical education was a challenging process which the Phelps-Stokes Commission acknowledged. “It is, of course, understood that collegiate instruction and training must be

²⁵⁶ Select Committee on Native Affairs, *SC 10a - '20: Second Report of the Select Committee on Native Affairs* (Pretoria: Government Press, 1920), 10.

²⁵⁷ D.D.T. Jabavu, *The Life of John Tengo Jabavu: A Great Bantu Patriot* (Fort Hare: Lovedale Institution Press, 1922), 48.

²⁵⁸ M.J. Sampson, *Gold Coast Men of Affairs: Past and Present* (London: Dawsons, 1960), 59.

²⁵⁹ “Dr. Aggrey: Father of African Education,” *Ebony Magazine*, 1959, 45.

modified to meet the requirements of community consciousness,” the commission reported.²⁶⁰ Supporting the Tuskegee model was one thing, but finding an equitable solution that benefited both Black and white South Africans was an issue that reformists knew needed to be addressed.

After the Phelps-Stokes Commission’s findings in 1921, technical education was at the center of debate among South African officials as to how to improve it and improve race relations between white and Black South Africans. Welsh missionary turned reformist John David Rheinallt Jones who moved to South Africa in 1905, was put in charge of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) in 1929 which included both white and Black representatives to address issues and find solutions. Rheinallt noted how:

In the past Europeans have urged that Native education should be ‘practical.’ They have emphasized that education should aim at making the Native useful to the white man. Fundamental changes are taking place to-day in Bantu Life-in their mental life no less than in the social structure of Bantu society and in the economic conditions in which they are living. These changes must be recognized in their education. Their newly acquired self-consciousness leads them to demand a voice in the education of their children.²⁶¹

Jones, while recognizing that Africans needed a system that worked for them, also supported segregation because he believed it allowed Africans to develop at their own pace. This, he thought, offered a middle path between repression and equality and an education system that would lead to gainful employment for the masses of Black South Africans while allowing for higher education opportunities for those who had the potential to be future Black leaders.²⁶² To support the findings of the SAIRR and the Phelps-Stokes Fund Commission, Jones worked to

²⁶⁰ Thomas Jesse Jones, *Education in East Africa: A Study of East, Central, and South Africa by the Second African Education Commission Under the Auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, in Cooperation with the International Education Board* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1925), 69.

²⁶¹ John David Rheinallt Jones, “The Crisis in Native Education in South Africa,” *International Review of Mission*, 28 (1939): 197.

²⁶² Charles T. Loram on South Africa, Box 21 Folder 1, Phelps-Stokes Fund Records, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library.

secure funds from the Phelps-Stokes Fund. "Public sentiment on race relations is changing for the better in South Africa," Jones wrote in a 1928 letter to Thomas Jesse Jones, "I am most grateful to you for your constant help and your words of encouragement. The seeds which you and Aggrey sowed in 1921 will bring fruit to make your names blessed in South Africa."²⁶³

John Jones' most famous contemporary in South Africa was Charles Templeman Loram. Loram, an educator and school inspector in Natal, studied education in the United States, conducting extensive research at Tuskegee in 1914. In his dissertation, Loram stated:

The Negro has been receiving the same education as the White, and men like Booker Washington of Tuskegee admit that the Negro is at present " backward " in his development as compared with the Whites...One of the reasons why the Cape Province adheres to its policy of identity of curriculum for European and Native, is that past attempts at differentiation have been opposed by the Natives themselves, or at least their leaders. The believers in race equality need to be reminded that there can be no real equality between a people with many centuries of civilisation behind them, and a race which is just emerging from barbarism...The governing class in South Africa has decided that for the present, at any rate, there can be no talk of equality between the two races.²⁶⁴

Like John Jones, Loram was in 1920s and 1930s a liberal reformer who was the principal figure amongst those that wanted to educate Africans within a framework tailored to the needs of the colonial system. Doing good on behalf of Africans meant opposing the repression they experienced, not the system that imposed that repression. Adapting education to the needs of Africans was linked to Loram's scheme of establishing an "education for life" which was to prepare Africans for a life of inferiority and remove them from competition with whites for labor and capital, all under the veneer of progress. Loram noted that 90 percent of the students leaving African schools would earn their living with their hands.²⁶⁵ Therefore, an education based on

²⁶³ South Africa Institute of Race Relations (1928), Box 33 Folder 3, Phelps-Stokes Fund Records, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library.

²⁶⁴ Charles T. Loram, *The Education of the South African Native* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1915), 22.

²⁶⁵ Charles T. Loram, "A National System of Native Education in South Africa," *The South African Journal of Science*, XXVI (December 1929): 927.

character building, hygiene, teacher training, and industrial education were what Africans needed most and was admired by the likes of D.D.T. Jabavu and Tuskegee officials after Washington's passing.²⁶⁶

Tuskegee involvement in South Africa and assisting South Africans started to wane after Washington's passing. Robert Russa Moton, who took over the Tuskegee Institute after Washington, carried on the Tuskegee legacy of helping Black people throughout the diaspora but favored supporting efforts that were not led by Tuskegee. Similar to Washington, Moton was reluctant to visit Africa himself, arguing that there was plenty of work to be done at Tuskegee. In 1924, Moton received a letter from a representative of Nyasaland (present-day Malawi) to take part in a missionary campaign in South Africa to help gain further support for the Tuskegee model. The letter also called on Moton to help secure space for potential students from South Africa to attend Tuskegee and to help secure funds for the mission.²⁶⁷ But by the 1930s onward, securing funds for prospective South African students became hard to come by as the Tuskegee curriculum was rapidly changing and technical education in the United States was being canceled in favor of higher education, the Tuskegee Institute itself changing its name to Tuskegee University, and expanding vocational education in other programs like nursing beyond practical education and agriculture. A 1946 letter to Tuskegee President Frederick Douglass Patterson summed up Tuskegee's attitudes at that time:

We are almost daily receiving such communications from African students who have an insatiable thirst for education and a desire to come to this country to pursue their courses. It is unfortunate that scholarship funds are not available in any considerable amount for African students. However, you will be glad to learn that there is a newly organized committee sponsored by the British Consulate in New York, several of the mission

²⁶⁶ Charles T. Loram on South Africa, Box 21 Folder 1, Phelps-Stokes Fund Records, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library.

²⁶⁷ Robert Russa Moton on South Africa (January 9, 1924), Box 5, Folder 1, Phelps-Stokes Fund Records, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library.

boards and representatives of the American State Department that is endeavoring to work out a plan for giving opportunity to particularly promising African Students who desire to study in America.²⁶⁸

The letter came on the eve of an important and dire situation for Black South Africans as South Africa politics were about to go through a massive shift which would see an end to any progress Africans had made and an end to the Tuskegee model of education.

Even as their freedoms were stripped away between the 1920s and 1950s, Black South African students at missionary schools did not sit idly by. The Lovedale Institute had one of the most active student bodies in South Africa after two major riots occurred in 1920 and 1946, both over dissatisfaction of limited school resources, limited job prospects upon graduation, and the overly harsh and strict punishments on students. One of the students had complained about the “demands that students should say ‘sir’ when addressing staff... [and that] they were not allowed to question things....”²⁶⁹ The students had started to view the missionaries and the government as one in the same and demanded that their situations be improved. The missionary education that attached both normal and technical education did not meet the demands of students who were limited by the color bar that existed in South Africa. To the students who took part in the 1946 Lovedale Riot, a Tuskegee-like education prepared them for a future of second-class citizenship.

Prior to 1953, Black South Africans were treated more as second-class citizens than full colonial subjects when it came to education. Education remained under control of provincial administrations rather than under control of the central government.²⁷⁰ By 1948, gaps in the

²⁶⁸ Tuskegee-Africa (December 10, 1946), Box 52 Folder 10, Phelps-Stokes Fund Records, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library.

²⁶⁹ Lovedale Riots: Extracts from the Journal of RHW Shepherd, November 30, 1945, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Eastern Cape: MS 16,453, File B (2).

²⁷⁰ Union of South Africa, *Official Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education: UG 29-1936* (Pretoria: Government Press, 1936), 52.

social structure concerning the rights and opportunities of nonwhites were becoming apparent. Rapid economic development during World War II attracted Black workers in large numbers to industrial centers. The escalation of Black urbanization combined with inaction on the part of the South African government, increasing crime rates, and shortages of public services and housing, caused a backlash by white South Africans. Furthermore, calls of self-determination by African leaders after World War II, led to a call by the conservative Nationalist Party to unite Afrikaners and English against non-white South Africans. The Nationalist Party came to power in 1948, bringing about the institutionalization of racial segregation known as apartheid.

In 1953, education became a target under the Bantu Education Act which saw the closure of all but three missionary schools as the government no longer funded the schools and was instead focused on degrading the Tuskegee model of education that was once championed in South Africa, turning into a rudimentary image of itself which produced unskilled Black labor making it impossible for Black South Africans to achieve economic independence let alone control their own destinies.²⁷¹ Black Newspapers in the United States like *The Crusader* reported on the Act, commenting how “Boer bigotry killed 5,000 missionary run schools [because] too many Negroes have been educated,” and that the South African government had “instituted their education for serfdom.”²⁷² For all the Tuskegee model’s weaknesses, the National Party was content on destroying it because it believed that the model was encouraging Black autonomy.

Conclusion

The gradual evolution of what would become apartheid in South Africa highlights an interesting intersection when looking at how it followed along a similar path of Jim Crowism in

²⁷¹ John Shingler, "Education and the Political Order in South Africa, 1902-1961." (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1973), 295.

²⁷² "Education Under Boers Told Thru Death of School," *Crusader*, April 8, 1955, 1.

the U.S. South and how Tuskegee sought to devise strategies to maneuver through the barriers posited by both systems. Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee machine were a shining example to Black South Africans of what could be accomplished when Black people had control over their own destinies. Seeing parallels between both, Booker T. Washington and African elites like John L. Dube, Marcus Garvey, D.D.T. Jabavu, and James Aggrey, believed that uplifting their race through education, capital gain, and eschewing calls for equality, were goals that could be accomplished through the Tuskegee model.

South Africa was an interesting case for Booker T. Washington compared to his other African initiatives like Togo and Liberia. The barriers, while great in Togo and Liberia, were less difficult to overcome than the geopolitical landscape of South Africa which is why Washington was more reluctant to get involved in South Africa. Furthermore, the resources that Tuskegee needed to secure to offer assistance was being stretched thin, ultimately disappearing by the 1940s. Washington during his tenure as principal was still sympathetic to the plight of Africans everywhere, including South Africa, which he articulated a July 1899 article in which he was promoting the Pan-African Conference in London in 1900, “In my opinion, [the conference] is going to be one of the most effective and far reaching gatherings that has ever been held in connection with the development of the race.”²⁷³ Washington called special attention to the sessions on “the industrial development of our people in light of current history,” and “Europe’s atonement for her blood guiltiness to Africa, is the loud cry of current history.”²⁷⁴ Tuskegee continued to lend support at the turn of the twentieth century by sponsoring South African students, some of which became politically active in the Black struggle, and firmly believed the

²⁷³ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 156.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

Tuskegee model provided a blueprint for which African Americans and South Africans could succeed.

The Tuskegee model, while championed by Africans and Tuskegee, became the very means by which South African officials could control Black South Africans. While Black South Africans were able to achieve some gains, such as representation from chiefs, representative members in the South African Institute of Race Relations, and the expansion of Tuskegee-like missionary schools which provided education for Black South Africans, the Tuskegee model became corrupted by the middle of the twentieth century, a corruption which Tuskegee inadvertently played a part in as it preached separation over integration. The Tuskegee model was used as a means to overcome obstacles like Jim Crow and the South African system that eventually became apartheid, but education was also used by South African officials like the Nationalist Party and Charles T. Loram to preserve separate identities and to prevent the emergence of a common unity, thus reinforcing the prevailing ethos. White South Africans by means of education and social policies, were able to render the Tuskegee Pan-African vision mute in order to successfully maintain and protect their identity, power and status.

Table II
Basic Statistics for African Education 1920

Province	African Population ¹		Schools		Teachers		Enrolment		Expenditure		Per Pupil Expenditure		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	£	%	£	s.	d.
Cape	1 639 634	34,9	1602	59	3412	63,5	110 519	60,9	257 853	76,5	2	6	3
Natal	1 139 804	24,3	468	17,5	700	13,0	25 579	14,1	36 195	10,7	1	8	3
Transvaal	1 495 869	31,8	409	15,3	891	16,6	28 953	16,0	39 054	11,6	1	6	6
OFS	421 978	9,0	200 ²	7,5	374 ²	10,0	16 433	9,1	4 000	1,2		4	4
Union	4 697 285	100,0	2679	99,9	5377	100 ¹	181 484	100,1	337 102	100,0			

Notes: 1 Based on the 1921 census
2 Figures are for 1925; 1920 figures are not available

Source: Union of South Africa *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education* [U G No. 29/1936] (Pretoria Government Printer, 1936) pp 18, 22, 27, 35.

Figure 4.4.3 Basic Statistics for African Education 1920. Source: Union of South Africa, *Report on the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education: UG No. 29/1936* (Pretoria Government Printer, 1936).

Table III
Basic Statistics for African Education, 1953

Province	African Population ¹		African Schools		Ave. Enrolment (elem. & sec.)		Expenditure	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	£	%
Cape	2 492 021	29,1	2407	43,0	311 873	36,2	2604	37,9
Natal	1 810 102	21,2	1145	20,4	176,697	20,5	1547	22,5
Transvaal	3 480 077	40,7	1446	25,8	288 257	33,4	2106	30,6
OFS	774 190	9,0	604	10,8	85 543	9,9	625	9,1
Union	8 556 390	100,0	5602	100,0	862 370	100,0	6882	100,1

Notes: 1 Based on 1951 Census

Source: Official Yearbook of the Union of South Africa No. 28-1954-55 Pretoria: Government Printer, 1955/56 pp 250-52, 685.

Figure 4.4.4 Basic Statistics for African Education 1953. *Official Yearbook of the Union of South Africa No. 28-1954-55* (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1955).

Chapter 5 - Afro-Puerto Ricans and the Tuskegee Experience

On December 2, 1899, Booker T. Washington attended a benefit for the Tuskegee endowment fund in New York City at the Madison Square Garden Concert Hall. The attendees included prominent businessmen, such as J.P Morgan and John D. Rockefeller. At the event, Washington sat down for an interview with journalist Frank G. Carpenter in which the Tuskegee principal discussed his outlook for the Black race and why the Hampton-Tuskegee model was key to helping Black people secure property, education, and economic independence. During this interview, Washington and Carpenter talked about how Tuskegee had started helping Afro-Puerto Ricans since Puerto Rico had become a U.S. territory following the Spanish-American War the previous year. Washington stated, “There is only one solution of the race problem, and that is to show the people [of Puerto Rico] how they can support themselves, to educate their hands, as well as their heads... We must teach them first how to make a living, make them independent and show them that labor is both manly and profitable.”²⁷⁵ Washington shared in the idea of the United States’ civilizing mission of uplifting the people in America’s newly acquired territories. “I can not see why they [Puerto Ricans] should not be educated into being good American citizens.”²⁷⁶ Washington believed that Tuskegee and its model of education could accomplish the goals of Americanization and elevate the status of Afro-Puerto Ricans.

With the incorporation of new territories in the Pacific and Latin America, the United States began its process of Americanizing its new territories. This included the reorganization of Puerto Rico’s government, trying to make English as the island’s dominant language, and revamping its education system. Puerto Rico offered a strategic military value to the U.S. Navy

²⁷⁵ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 276.

²⁷⁶ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 277.

due to its location but was economically significant, with sugar being the island's most lucrative commodity. Tuskegee also had an interest in developing commercial, agricultural, and industrial prospects in Puerto Rico. In 1898, shortly after the end of the Spanish-American War, the first group of Puerto Rican students arrived at Tuskegee. Their entry signaled the beginning of a long history of Puerto Rican and African American relations at Tuskegee. The Puerto Rican-Tuskegee program represents an important but overlooked dimension in the narrative of African American-Afro-Caribbean relations. Between 1898 and 1915, Tuskegee became a space where Puerto Rican students engaged in a process of cultural exchange. They traveled across the American South, encountered Jim Crow, and carved out a new identity and meaning for their lives.

United States control of Puerto Rico brought a new dynamic into the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. While Puerto Rican people had for decades migrated to the United States, relatively few settled in the American South. Puerto Rican peoples were not only pushed to migrate to the United States because of social and economic needs but were also encouraged to migrate by the United States and Puerto Rican governments. US intervention in Puerto Rico offered new opportunities for Puerto Ricans, especially Afro-Puerto Rican peoples who found opportunities for upward mobility difficult under the Spanish caste system. Booker T. Washington believed that the answer to the race problem in Puerto Rico, one that would benefit Afro-Puerto Ricans, was opening Tuskegee's doors to them. Tuskegee became a space where Afro-Puerto Ricans and African Americans learned, clashed, and formed new identities. Compared to Black Anglophones, African descendants living throughout Latin American (or Spanish controlled colonies) countries were much slower to identify with constructions of "Blackness." Examining the experiences of Black Puerto Ricans at Tuskegee helps to understand the construction of racial versus ethnic identity, and in understanding Afro-diasporic activism.

Scholars like Solsiree del Moral have taken a nuanced approach in discussing the actions of both Americans and Puerto Ricans in relation to U.S. intervention in Puerto Rico. Rather than seeing the U.S. empire in Puerto Rico during this period as a contest between two sharply polarized groups, del Moral views their interaction as a process of negotiation. This chapter builds on her approach by exploring that process.²⁷⁷ This chapter attempts to advance the argument that U.S. officials attempted to Americanize the Puerto Rican education system. Under Spanish rule, Afro-Puerto Ricans were denied educational opportunities. The process of Americanization was rejected by families and educators to some degree, such as English-language instruction, but they also redefined and appropriated other tenets of Americanization to their benefit to increase literacy and skills required for better occupations and social mobility. Pushing their citizenship-building vision through the schools, Puerto Ricans negotiated a different school project--one that was reformist yet radical, modern yet traditional, colonial yet nationalist. Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee believed that Tuskegee could play a part in both the Americanization process and in uplifting Afro-Puerto Ricans from the lower rungs of Puerto Rican society. Conversely, Afro-Puerto Ricans believed that Tuskegee could help them achieve the goals of social, political, and economic upward mobility.

Other scholars like Clif Straton have argued that U.S. imperialism offered not simply the chance to exercise authority over foreign markets, resources, and labor pools, but also the opportunity to reinforce, reshape, and reorder the relations of power at home, including in the nation's growing school systems.²⁷⁸ U.S. intervention in Puerto Rico included transplanting its racialized ideas into the education system. A Jim Crow-like system of educational segregation

²⁷⁷ Solsiree del Moral, *Negotiating Empire: The Cultural Politics of Schools in Puerto Rico, 1898-1952* (Chapel Hill: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013).

²⁷⁸ Clif Straton, *Education for Empire: American Schools, Race, and the Paths of Good Citizenship* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016).

was instituted as the Black/white racial binary that existed in the United States was instituted in designating Puerto Rican students to schools in the United States. “White” students were funneled into higher education schools while “Black” students were funneled into practical schools like Tuskegee. While assigning Afro-Puerto Ricans to schools like Carlisle, Hampton, and Tuskegee were attempts to maintain a racial hierarchy, Afro-Puerto Rican students confronted their Blackness at Tuskegee, amidst both the African American student body and within the context of the Jim Crow South. Afro-Puerto Rican students asserted an emergent and collective nationalist and Pan-African identity at Tuskegee. By becoming teachers, Afro-Puerto Ricans became central to the formation of Puerto Rican nationalism in the first half of the twentieth century, a time when the US colonial state exercised tremendous authority over the island.

Scholars continue to debate whether the US governance of Puerto Rico was a sharp contrast to Spanish rule, but that is not the focus of this chapter. However, Jose-Manuel Navarro has argued that both under the Spanish system and U.S. control, the transmission of colonial values and loyalty to the metropolitan government was tantamount. United States educational policies in Puerto Rico displayed an underlying ideological unity. Throughout the first decade of colonial control, United States policy makers fostered assimilation, Americanization and de-Puerto Ricanization through educational practices that sought to make Puerto Ricans into “Tropical Yankees,” the Caribbean variants of the native born white citizens of contemporary Boston, Philadelphia, Topeka, or New York.²⁷⁹ By racializing Puerto Ricans, U.S. officials designated Puerto Ricans to certain educational institutions based on their race, which included

²⁷⁹ Jose-Manuel Navarro, *Creating Tropical Yankees: Social Science Textbooks and U. S. Ideological Control in Puerto Rico, 1898-1908* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002).

“non-white” Puerto Ricans attending Hampton, Tuskegee, and Carlisle. The Americanization process at Tuskegee was difficult for Afro-Puerto Rican students. Conflict and academic issues were a problem, but many of the Puerto Rican students that attended Tuskegee saw that practical and normal education offered possible paths to economic and political gain in Puerto Rico. Afro-Puerto Rican graduates of Tuskegee espoused the benefits of a Tuskegee education to prospective students.

Using correspondence, memos, and letters from Booker T. Washington, the Department of Education in Puerto Rico, and Puerto Rican students that attended Tuskegee, this chapter highlights Tuskegee’s complex relationship with Puerto Rico and imperialism while also examining how Afro-Puerto Rican students confronted their Blackness, adding a complex dimension to examining Pan-African relationships between the United States and Latin America. Tuskegee’s goal of creating future race leaders was emblematic in the case of Puerto Rico. As Washington and Tuskegee officials maneuvered their way through the barriers of Jim Crow and imperialism, Tuskegee students attempted to build Pan-African networks within the new Puerto Rican system.

Puerto Ricans and Empire

On July 28, 1898, U.S Army General Nelson Miles proclaimed, “We have not come to bring war against a people which has been oppressed for centuries; but...to bring protection... and bestowing upon you the guarantees and the blessings of the liberal institutions of our government.”²⁸⁰ However, American occupation was received with mixed emotions. Many Puerto Ricans hoped U.S. annexation of Puerto Rico would bring with it new opportunities,

²⁸⁰ Cayetano Coll Cuchi, *La Ley Foraker. Estudio Histórico-Político Comparado* (San Juan: Tip. del Boletín Mercantil, 1904), 117.

including, but not limited to, improved socio-political status. However, the United States' history of nation-building, territorial expansion, and racism quickly became apparent in its governance of Puerto Rico. In an 1899 U.S. government report, U.S officials argued that all classes and people were willing to “accept American institutions and to be content with them.”²⁸¹ In that same report, officials noted that in many places in Puerto Rico, there were “evidences of great prosperity, rich plantations, and promise of a great future for Porto Rico,” referring to the white population of Puerto Ricans but there was also great “poverty and ignorance;” referring to the Black population.²⁸²

Part of the United States' civilizing mission included education in agriculture with the goal of creating a more productive labor force. U.S. commercial interests were supported by the Puerto Rican Republican Party (Partido Republicano), which was made up of members who had commercial ties to the United States. The plan to “Americanize” the Puerto Rican education system through manual education offered new paths to social mobility.²⁸³ At the “Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian and Other Dependent Peoples”, which discussed strategies of offering assistance and racial uplift to various groups, including African Americans and Puerto Ricans, backing practical education in agriculture and manual training of teachers were discussed as solutions to solving both Puerto Rico's educational needs and strengthening its agricultural sector.²⁸⁴ The larger idea was to create future leaders,

²⁸¹ United States Division of Insular Affairs, *Report of the United States Insular Commission to the Secretary of War Upon Investigations Made into the Civil Affairs of the Island of Porto Rico: With Recommendations* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1899), 5.

²⁸² United States Division of Insular Affairs, *Report of the United States Insular Commission to the Secretary of War Upon Investigations Made into the Civil Affairs of the Island of Porto Rico: With Recommendations*, 6.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁸⁴ Lilian Powers, *Report of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian and Other Dependent Peoples* (New York: Lake Mohonk Conference, 1908), 151.

experts in agriculture that could then teach the next generation of Puerto Ricans.²⁸⁵ High illiteracy rates, along with few secondary schools and institutions of higher learning, left the people of Puerto Rico in a state of educational poverty. Persons of color were greatly affected by limited educational opportunities in Puerto Rico. Overall, opportunities to receive education were scarce. Paths to rudimentary literacy did exist for Puerto Rico's Black population, although to a far lesser extent than for whites. Secondary education in Puerto Rico resembled the state of African American education in the American South in that Black people were virtually left out. To remedy the education crisis, the Board of Education was established on December 7, 1899.

Race and sex.	Total persons 10+.	Persons able to read.	Per cent able to read.
White males.....	202,351	62,335	30.8
White females.....	206,727	48,511	23.5
Total white.....	409,078	110,846	27.1
Colored males.....	120,216	20,547	17.1
Colored females.....	130,000	18,403	14.2
Total colored.....	250,216	38,950	15.6

Figure 5.1 The table shows the literacy rates of Puerto Rican males and females by race. Source: Joseph Sanger, Willcox, Walter Francis, and Henry Gannett, *Report on the Census of Porto Rico, 1899* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900), 82.

Solving the educational crisis in Puerto Rico was of interest to both Puerto Rico and the United States. Commissioner of Education, Martin Brumbaugh, who was committed to the United States' imperialist principals, argued that the best strategy for attracting students while still maintaining the United States' goal of Americanizing the Puerto Rican education system was to preserve Spanish culture while merging English language into the fold. Because Brumbaugh realized that preserving Spanish cultural traditions was of primary importance to the

²⁸⁵ Powers, *Report of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian and Other Dependent Peoples*, 152.

people of Puerto Rico, he championed the use of Spanish in elementary schools and English in secondary schools. “The Spanish language is precious to these people. All their history and their traditions and their civilization are bound up with it. The schools must not lightly turn this fact aside.”²⁸⁶ However, the idea was that gradually English would supplant Spanish, transforming Puerto Ricans into English speaking, American supporters.

Samuel McCune Lindsay, a professor of sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, replaced Brumbaugh as Commissioner of Education in 1902. Lindsay believed that education could do far more to advance the Americanization of Puerto Rico than any military action ever could:

Colonization carried forward by the armies of war is vastly more costly than that carried forward by the armies of peace, whose outpost and garrisons are the public schools of the advancing nation...the sum spent on education would work such a change Porto Rico as to put beyond the question of a doubt the ultimate and splendid success of ingrafting of American institutions in Spanish America.²⁸⁷

English teachers from the United States were sent to Puerto Rico to assist in the establishment of English as the language of instruction on the island. The Department of Education organized normal schools for the education of teachers following the model used for similar programs at the Hampton Institute in Virginia and the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial School in Alabama, of which by 1901, Tuskegee had already had already roughly 1,100 students enrolled, with many coming from outside the United States, including Puerto Rico, increasing to 1,400 students by 1907.²⁸⁸ By 1904, the first Puerto Rican alumni of Tuskegee began teaching at these normal

²⁸⁶ Commissioner of Education of Puerto Rico, *Report of the Commissioner of Education for Porto Rico* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 65.

²⁸⁷ Commissioner of Education of Puerto Rico, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education Puerto Rico, 1902* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), 43.

²⁸⁸ Booker T. *Washington, Up from Slavery* (London: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1907), 313.

schools in Puerto Rico.²⁸⁹ While funneling Afro-Puerto Rican students to Tuskegee was a form of segregation in U.S. schools, these students were using their Tuskegee education to their advantage while also confronting their Blackness in the American South.

Afro-Puerto Ricans at Tuskegee

Provisions for sending Afro-Puerto Rican students to industrial schools in the United States began at the turn of the twentieth century, with Tuskegee standing out because of Washington's work. In a May 1901 letter, Brumbaugh wrote to Washington asking him to accept more Puerto Rican students. Brumbaugh stated "it is my desire to send as many to you as you conveniently accommodate, as I believe that you are doing the best work for the colored race that is now being done anywhere in the United States."²⁹⁰ As part of the Americanization process, Brumbaugh also noted that sending Afro-Puerto Ricans to Tuskegee was a way to "break up their Spanish language."²⁹¹ Washington hoped that teaching Afro-Puerto Rican students under the Hampton-Tuskegee model would help in the Americanization process while also solving the race problem in Puerto Rico by providing new opportunities for Afro-Puerto Ricans. The Tuskegee principal expressed his views in an interview with American journalist Frank George Carpenter that was published in the Memphis *Commercial Appeal*. Washington stated:

There is only one solution to the race problem, and that is to show the people [of Puerto Rico] how they can support themselves, to educate their hands, as well as their heads; to give them mental and religious culture, and at the same time industrial training. We must teach them first how to make a living, make them independent, and show them that labor is both manly and profitable.²⁹²

²⁸⁹ Commissioner of Education of Puerto Rico, *Report of the Commissioner of Education for Porto Rico* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), 448.

²⁹⁰ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 6: 1901-1902* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 106.

²⁹¹ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 6: 1901-1902*, 106.

²⁹² Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 276.

The Puerto Rican press was aware of the work of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee and there was support for what technical education had to offer. An article in *El Boletín Mercantil de Puerto Rico*, a popular Puerto Rican newspaper, described Washington's vision as "meritorious," praising Tuskegee for realizing that in the racial climate of the time, it was easier for Black people to "earn a living and find work being a carpenter or tailor [rather] than an engineer or philosopher."²⁹³

Beginning in 1900, the legislative assembly of Puerto Rico helped secure funding for the education of Puerto Rican students in the United States. Booker T. Washington requested \$150 scholarships per student, but Brumbaugh countered with offering \$250 scholarships per student with the caveat that the Puerto Rican government would handpick each student.²⁹⁴ The Puerto Rican government pushed Puerto Rican students to pursue industrial education over a strictly academic one. Training Puerto Ricans in the habits of industry was believed to be essential to meeting the needs of the Puerto Rican people. The Puerto Rican government hoped that training enough Puerto Ricans in agriculture would entice the United States to construct an agricultural experiment station on the island. Coffee, sugar, tobacco, and fruits would be part of this new experimental station. Students would, for the most part like at Tuskegee, be Black lower class, rural men and women who like at Tuskegee would receive free boarding, lodging, and tuition.²⁹⁵ However, in 1900, the cost of such an endeavor exceeded the reality of construction of such an institution. Sending students to the United States was much more cost effective.

²⁹³ "Las Próximas Elecciones en Los Estados Unidos: La Raza de Color," *El Boletín Mercantil de Puerto Rico*, October 29, 1900, 1.

²⁹⁴ "An Act," *Gazeta de Puerto-Rico*, February 8, 1901, 1.

²⁹⁵ Department of Education of Puerto Rico, *Report of The Commissioner of Education For Porto Rico to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 755.

Support for educating Afro-Puerto Rican students at Tuskegee came from both the Puerto Rican government and Afro-Puerto Ricans themselves. Samuel McCune Lindsay fully supported the work of Tuskegee and Booker T. Washington saw a Tuskegee education as the best solution for Puerto Rico's Afro-Puerto Rican population. "Puerto Rico needs men trained to plan the work for other workmen." Lindsay articulated that Puerto Rico "needs men so trained that they can almost revolutionize agricultural methods, and who will be able to carry out the directions laid down by capitalists and promoters. I believe that these schools [like Tuskegee] are exercising a great influence in the South."²⁹⁶ Many Afro-Puerto Rican leaders like José Celso Barbosa saw Tuskegee's education as a pathway out of poverty and toward increased political representation for Puerto Ricans.

Barbosa was a strong political voice among the Afro-Puerto Rican population. Having trained in the United States as a physician, he supported Washington's message of moral uplift and economic efficiency, writing, "All my work here is to impress my people with the idea they need to be educated, save money, and to raise their moral standard."²⁹⁷ Barbosa was essential in the recruitment of Afro-Puerto Rican students to Tuskegee. Barbosa and Washington communicated regularly, and Barbosa held the Tuskegee principal in high regard for his commitment to Black progress and to Puerto Rico. In an October 1901 letter to Washington regarding the admittance of Eugenio Lecompte, a prospective Afro-Puerto Rican student, Barbosa expressed his admiration, "I know the great interest that you always take in favor of our

²⁹⁶ Department of Education of Puerto Rico, *Report of The Commissioner of Education For Porto Rico to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 842.

²⁹⁷ Jose Barbosa to Booker T. Washington, March 25, 1902, Box 191 Reel 191, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

people, and I hope that with your help my young friend will come back to Porto Rico, and will help us in our endeavors towards the betterment of our people.”²⁹⁸

In 1901, eighteen students were allocated for enrollment at Tuskegee. Sixteen of the eighteen arrived coming from various parts of Puerto Rico, including Ponce, Aguadilla and Mayagüez.²⁹⁹ The cultural differences between the Afro-Puerto Rican and African Americans often caused conflict as the new arrivals from Puerto Rico had difficulties fitting into the Tuskegee environment and in the American South in general. Josephine Bruce, who was appointed the women’s dean of Tuskegee in 1899, observed the difficulties largely came about in regards to accommodations because Afro-Puerto Rican students shared cottages with their African American cohort.³⁰⁰ Conflict usually involved how Puerto Rican students were more concerned with using their tuition money for clothing and other material items, which aggravated Black American students who saw Puerto Rican materialism as braggadocious and antithetical to Tuskegee’s mission.³⁰¹ A very concerned Washington urged the Commissioner of Education to curtail the direct streamline of financial resources to Puerto Rican students, urging that funds for students should instead be directly sent to Tuskegee. Washington reassured the Department that Tuskegee was simply looking out for the benefit of Puerto Rican students. “The Porto Rican students are making a good record this year, better than ever, but there is always danger in young persons being spoiled if they have the handling of too much cash. We treat them just the same as

²⁹⁸ Jose Barbosa to Booker T. Washington, October 1, 1901, Box 175 Reel 172, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁹⁹ Commissioner of Education to Booker T. Washington, October 1, 1901, Box 175 Reel 172, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁰⁰ Josephine Bruce to Booker T. Washington, April 8, 1902, Box 191 Reel 191, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

we would our own students.”³⁰² In Washington’s opinion, Puerto Rican students wasted their money on material goods. At the core of the conflict, however, was a much larger issue of cultural amalgamation and Puerto Rican resistance to it.

As more Puerto Rican students began attending Tuskegee, issues involving Puerto Rican students created mixed support for the continuation of the Puerto Rico-Tuskegee program. Supporters of the Puerto Rican-Tuskegee relationship argued that the endeavor was of “great importance to the Puerto Rican.”³⁰³ Stakeholders in Puerto Rico as well as in the United States made substantial donations to fund Puerto Rican students at Tuskegee. The hope was that the training of Puerto Ricans at Tuskegee to become industrious would provide a template for the recruitment of other Afro-Latin American peoples so they could return home, flourishing in agriculture by developing new farming methods and creating institutes in the image of Tuskegee.³⁰⁴ However, Puerto Ricans at Tuskegee constantly battled to reconcile the Americanization process and their own national consciousness. They were not against industrial education, so long as it aided in the process of self-determination. Efforts by Tuskegee teachers and students to impose African American cultural hegemony led to many Puerto Rican students resisting Tuskegee and other industrial schools.³⁰⁵ Many students tied Tuskegee to US meddling in Puerto Rican affairs, thereby connecting technical education to imperialism. By opposing the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education, students believed they were demonstrating cultural superiority over American imperialist ambitions.

³⁰² Booker T. Washington to E. M. Bainter (San Juan, Puerto Rico), May 16, 1913, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁰³ “Instituto de Agricultura, Artes y Oficios de Lajas,” *La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico*, March 11, 1907, 1.

³⁰⁴ “Instituto de Agricultura, Artes y Oficios de Lajas,” *La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico*, March 11, 1907, 1.

³⁰⁵ Cuban Supply Orders, Research and Statistics file, 1903-04, Tuskegee University Archives, Tuskegee, AL.

The rigid instruction and often harsh treatment of Puerto Rican students conflicted with their cultural and political traditions. In 1902, for example, a letter signed by angry “Cubans and Puerto Ricans” arrived on Washington’s desk. Students mobilized to protest the mistreatment of Lola Tizol, a Puerto Rican female student from Ponce. Tizol alleged that Tuskegee administrators physically beat her for failing to attend chapel services. The letter declared, “we are going to act as men do, we are by your request to laid the case before you and beg justice, as we understand the school ought to settle the matter with all possible impartiality.”³⁰⁶ Their letter of protest helps demonstrate the ways students channeled their protest against the Tuskegee administration. Puerto Ricans struggled to accept American plans for education, especially to the strict Tuskegee regimen.

Many students did make the most out of their education at Tuskegee, viewing Tuskegee as a path to upward mobility. Students like Lino Rivera shared a similar situation as many African Americans who attended Tuskegee. Rivera came from a rural part of Puerto Rico and was unable to afford to attend college, so he saw Tuskegee as an opportunity. Rivera expressed his interest in Tuskegee in a letter to Booker T. Washington in 1910, where he hoped that he would be able to work off his tuition and, in the process, learn a trade.³⁰⁷ Rivera was just one student who expressed interest in attending Tuskegee. Washington received letters from prospective students frequently, expressing their interest in Tuskegee and their hope to be lucky enough to attend the school. Students like Jose Jimenez hoped that they would be able to obtain

³⁰⁶ Petition Signed by Eighteen Students including Two Puerto Ricans, Apr 17, 1908, Box 908 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁰⁷ Lino Rivera to Booker T. Washington, December 18, 1910, Box 910 Reel 685, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

an education that could not only offer possibilities of upward mobility but also an education in general, something which had long been a challenge for Afro-Puerto Ricans.³⁰⁸

For the students that were accepted, their daily schedules were specifically designed to ensure success. For example, Fabiana Lopez, an aspiring teacher, entered Tuskegee in October 16, 1909. Embracing the normal component to Tuskegee's curriculum, she took classes in preparation of becoming a teacher back in Puerto Rico. She took classes in theory, U.S. history, botany, algebra, chemistry, and modern and medieval history. Records of her grades prove Lopez's abilities in the classroom, she earned high marks in her courses.³⁰⁹ Another student, Celina Rivera, who attended Tuskegee from 1911-1914, finished her course in less than four years. Rivera attended Tuskegee focusing on tailoring with the goal of opening her own business in Puerto Rico. To support her aspirations, Rivera took classes in bookkeeping, economics, labor, and domestic science.³¹⁰ Classes such as economics, philosophy, and humanities highlight the diverse course offerings of Tuskegee, illuminating how the Hampton-Tuskegee model combined rigorous academic training with training in trades, morality, and religion.

Differences between how Afro-Puerto Rican and African American students embraced their Black identity became apparent almost immediately. Afro-Puerto Ricans acknowledged the racial hierarchy that existed within the United States but minimized its impact because of how diverse the racial structure was in Puerto Rico. Many of the Puerto Rican students entering Tuskegee were descendants of mulatto and free people of color and they struggled to adjust to the binary racial order in the United States. As a result, cultural exchanges took place in which

³⁰⁸ Jose Jimenez to Booker T. Washington, November 1, 1911, Box 911 Reel 685, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁰⁹ Dean Fred Fleggle to Booker T. Washington, November 4, 1909, Box 906 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

both U.S. and Puerto Rican students learned from one another. Barbosa saw the Tuskegee-Puerto Rican experiment as a liberating experience, a chance to challenge both U.S. and Puerto Rican stereotypes surrounding Blackness. He expressed his feeling in a letter stating, “the history of the Negro in the United States is an inspiration to men of color, who have to be proud...due to the efforts of Negroes themselves.”³¹¹ To Barbosa, and students that sought out Tuskegee, they believed that Washington and his college embodied Black progress. But Tuskegee was not easy for Puerto Rican students as they struggled to accept American plans for education and fitting in at Tuskegee.

Puerto-Rican students’ experiences at Tuskegee varied greatly. Some students embraced the Tuskegee curriculum and the school’s rigid rules while others had more difficulty adjusting. On August 23, 1912, Commissioner Edward G. Dexter corresponded with Washington concerning dissatisfied students. Rafael Ramos and Luis Lafaye were both students who grew increasingly disenchanted with conditions at the school and wished to return home to Puerto Rico.³¹² The two were more interested in pursuing academic instruction than a trade. Dexter wrote, “I gather from the letters that they feel that when the academic work offered by the institute is completed that there is nothing for them.”³¹³ Others who embraced the Tuskegee curriculum achieved great success. Carlos Valle, who graduated Tuskegee in 1913, receiving his certificate in agriculture. While after graduating Tuskegee he taught agriculture in Puerto Rico, he made the most out of his time at Tuskegee. Valle was described by school administrators as a “valued member” of the band, having applied his Puerto Rican musical appreciation and

³¹¹ José Barbosa and Pilar Barbosa de Rosario, *Problema De Razas* (San Juan: Imprenta Venezuela, 1937), 85.

³¹² Dept of Education of Porto Rico, August 25, 1911, Box 74 Reel 67, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³¹³ Edwin Dexter to Booker T. Washington, August 25, 1912, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

influence on the Tuskegee Band. The exchange of cultural ideas during his time on tour appeared to be an invaluable cultural experience for him and for his classmates.³¹⁴ Valle's experience highlights the efforts of Puerto Ricans at Tuskegee, including their participation in extracurriculars at Tuskegee, their academic success, and their lives post-graduation.

Having graduated in May 1913, Valle returned to Puerto Rico and with the help of Washington, he was selected as a candidate for a teaching position in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. A letter published in the *Tuskegee Student* sheds light on Valle's success after Tuskegee. In an essay entitled, "A Porto Rican Graduate," Valle wrote:

Dear Principal Washington: It gives me pleasure to write this letter describing the work I have been doing since leaving Tuskegee. I do not find words to express to you the gratitude I feel for the opportunity you gave me during my stay at Tuskegee Institute. The education and experience received through the efforts of yourself and faculty are proving to be both useful and profitable to me. I was especially grateful to get work as soon as I finished school. I am sending you testimonials from the Dean and Commandant of the University. I wish to tell you that the 1913 Porto Rican boys and girls who went out with the motto, 'No Heights too Great to Ascend,' are doing excellent work. All of us are holding up with our hands the great name of Tuskegee Institute. My kindest regards to the members and the student body.³¹⁵

Other students had more difficulty finding work after leaving Tuskegee. Such was the case of Manuela Cortez. After applying for a position as a Domestic Science Teacher at Puerto Rico's newly constructed normal school, she was told she would have to take additional classes to teach at the university level despite being qualified to teach after receiving her certificate from Tuskegee. The issue was not that her degree did not qualify her to teach but the wording of her certificate confused the school officials.³¹⁶ Tuskegee officials were quick to

³¹⁴ Booker T. Washington to Commissioner of Education of Puerto Rico, July 25, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³¹⁵ Carlos Valle, "A Porto Rican Graduate," *Southern Letter*, March 3, 1915.

³¹⁶ Department of Education of Porto Rico, July 23, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

respond as they were concerned about the potential damage that could be done to Tuskegee's international image. Emmett J. Scott oversaw scholastic issues like these. In a letter to Washington, he argued, "in each of these cases I have written special letters which I hope have been helpful to these young women but as above indicated the diploma is apparently not regarded as formerly."³¹⁷

Tuskegee alumni in Puerto Rico were welcomed back with mixed perceptions. Victoria Maria, a Tuskegee alumnus, wrote to Washington in September 1913 discussing her time at Tuskegee and other alumni. In her letter, she dubbed the work of the graduates on the island as "most splendid." She commented, "All the boys who took the course were appointed special teachers of agriculture and the girls of economics."³¹⁸ Also in her letter, she noted how some Puerto Rican alumni continued to question the overall effectiveness of the degree. "In some instances some Porto-Rican have gone there and been known as slow, unambitious, unfaithful, and dull they have returned after three or two years with Diploma and Certificates."³¹⁹ With increasing numbers of Puerto Ricans entering and graduating from Tuskegee, Maria noted they were becoming a growing force in Puerto Rico. To consolidate this force, she suggested the establishment of a Tuskegee alumni club. "Last summer there was an attempt to organize a Tuskegee Club, but it was a failure, kindly send a circular around the island and if you say that you wish it so everyone will cooperate heartily."³²⁰ The Porto Rican Tuskegee Club was funded by alumni and was designed to spread the Tuskegee idea throughout the island and as a space of

³¹⁷ Emmett J. Scott to Booker T. Washington, July 13, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³¹⁸ Department of Education of Porto Rico, September 24, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³¹⁹ Department of Education of Porto Rico, September 24, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³²⁰ Department of Education of Porto Rico, September 24, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

congregation for alums of the program. The creation of this club offers insights into the ways in which Afro-Puerto Rican established their identities by creating transnational linkages.

The process of Americanization did not have the intended results that either Washington or the U.S. government intended. Tuskegee graduates returned to the island with degrees that were able to elevate their economic and political positions. The Hampton-Tuskegee model preached economic independence, dignity in labor, and education in practical skills. Afro-Puerto Rican students defined Washington's vision on their own terms. Towards the end of the 1910s, they sought out economic independence from U.S. corporations. Since agriculture was the backbone of the Puerto Rican economy, acquiring land and learning modern farming methods was necessary. Because the Department of Education was focused on expanding vocational education, Tuskegee graduates sought to mold vocational education on their own terms by becoming teachers, union leaders, and controlling curriculum while also bargaining for better pay and greater employment opportunities.

Legacy of the Hampton-Tuskegee Experiment

By Washington's death in 1915, nearly one hundred Puerto Rican students had graduated from Tuskegee. Their successful efforts to equip the people of Puerto Rico with the necessary skills to become self-supporting became evident through the work of alumni throughout the island. Whether teaching in the new university or heading a public school, Tuskegee alumni made a significant impact. Tuskegee alumni played an integral role in shaping the future of Puerto Rico, helping define and consolidate a nationalist and anti-imperial culture. One year before Washington's death, the Puerto Rican House of Delegates voted unanimously for independence from the United States. Continued U.S. intervention in Puerto Rico only increased Puerto Rican nationalism. While U.S. officials continued to push for vocational education to

meet increased economic demands on the island, Puerto Rican activists demanded educational improvements and increased access to higher education. The Commissioner of Education Paul Miller stated in the Report of the Commissioner of Education in 1918 that “[M]any of the teachers and not a few of the older pupils have become efficient propagandists, ready and able to take part in the molding of public opinion along patriotic lines.”³²¹

Jaime Bishop, for instance, who studied agriculture at Tuskegee in 1907 and graduated Tuskegee in 1913, brought with him a revolutionary spirit to Tuskegee. Having returned to Puerto Rico after graduation, Bishop was able to put his degree to work, having secured employment in agriculture. But Bishop also became politically active in Puerto Rico, trying to establish a branch of Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in San Juan. Bishop argued that Afro-Puerto Ricans should embrace their Blackness, criticizing those who did not. In a 1922 article in *El Mundo*, Bishop elaborated on his position, “Since you are refractory to help the progress of your race; since you admit to being black among whites and claim to be white among blacks; Since you do not have enough courage to share the fight with us, common sense should tell you that you should leave alone those of use who in good faith want to give what little we have for the aggrandizement of our race.”³²² Bishop also took an activist interest in other matters concerning Afro-Latin American peoples. Through the efforts of Puerto Rican activists from Tuskegee, successful pressure was placed on the Puerto Rican legislature to pass educational reform measures and inclusion of Black Puerto Ricans in the state building process. Afro-Puerto Rican Tuskegee Students returned to a restructured Department of Education and a new educational philosophy that they helped create.

³²¹ Department of Education, *Report of the Commissioner of Education for Porto Rico: 1918* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), 514.

³²² Jaime Bishop, "La Juventud de la Raza Negra está Cansada de los Monos-Sabios," *El Mundo*, August 10, 1922, 4.

Commissioner Miller, who served from 1915 to 1921, demanded the Department of Education expand its focus on vocational education for Puerto Rico's rural population. Increasing student interest in vocational education was a problem that Miller sought to resolve. "The only solution to this problem would be the forming of villages which would . . . attract to these places the great majority of our peasant population."³²³ Miller's new focus was in part a response to the Jones Act which, while it granted Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship, entrenched United States economic control over the island. The Jones Act signaled the end of aggressive Americanization and introduced a new phase in the colonizing mission. Policy makers abandoned any serious idea they may have entertained regarding the use of Puerto Rico as a social laboratory for Americanization. Puerto Rico emerged as an important sugar producer for the U.S. market and evolved into an even more crucial geo strategic asset during World War I. To assist in increasing Puerto Rico's agricultural production, agricultural education was pushed harder.

A decade earlier, the need for a school built in the image of Tuskegee was envisioned. Expanding the normal and agricultural schools of the University of Porto Rico at Rio Piedras to include workshops and laboratories so that "mechanical arts, domestic arts, and agriculture" could thrive was to solve the country's labor and education issues.³²⁴ Additionally, it was believed by the Department of Education that it would change Afro-Puerto Ricans' alleged "contempt for manual labor."³²⁵ Afro-Puerto Rican students that graduated from Tuskegee carried that Hampton-Tuskegee spirit with them and helped implement that model in the University of Puerto Rico's expansion of its programs. Eugene Lecompte, who had graduated at

³²³ Department of Education, *Report of the Commissioner of Education for Porto Rico: 1922* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 248.

³²⁴ Frederick Pennock, "Letters to the Outlook: Porto Rico's Need--Our Duty," *Outlook*, Nov 16, 1907, 591.

³²⁵ Ibid.

the head of the senior Agricultural class in May of 1905 became a leader in expanding educational opportunities for the Puerto Rican people. Upon graduation, he taught agriculture in the public schools of Rio Piedras and Juanna Dias for several years. His experiences at Tuskegee were paramount in the uplift of the Puerto Rican people, especially Afro-Puerto Ricans, as he applied the tenants of the Hampton-Tuskegee model to teaching his students at the University of Puerto Rico. Many of Lecompte's students described him as "conscientious, up to date, full of interest and zeal and on the course of uplifting the children of his own country, the men who will be leaders and guides of tomorrow."³²⁶ ³²⁷This was the very essence of what Washington and Tuskegee envisioned and aimed to accomplish with all of their students.

Other alumni such as Angel Whatts, Saturnino Sierra, and Salvador Barea, all of whom graduated Tuskegee in 1908, carried on the Tuskegee spirit as teachers in the public school system.³²⁸ They demonstrated the characteristics of respectability that Tuskegee pushed, as they all married and reared children in Christian households, embracing conservative ideals of thriftiness and religious zeal once impressed upon them at Tuskegee. Barea was selected to work for the island's summer institute to train teachers in Ponce. Through the teachings of Barea and others like him, countless numbers of Puerto Rican students were brought in contact with the Tuskegee spirit.³²⁹ Graduates of Tuskegee were at the forefront of the education movement in Puerto Rico. By the mid-1920s the University of Puerto Rico envisioned itself as a pan-American university with specific diplomatic and economic responsibilities. Commissioner of

³²⁶ Executive Council to Dr. Jose C. Barbosa Concerning Tuskegee Graduates in Porto Rico, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³²⁷ "Fiesta Intelectual," *Boletín Mercantil de Puerto Rico*, October 21, 1913, 8.

³²⁸ Department of Education of Porto Rico, October 18, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³²⁹ Department of Education of Porto Rico, September 24, 1913, Box 74 Reel 67-68, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Education Juan Huyke, who served from 1921 to 1930, sought to position the university along with its Tuskegee graduates into a position of power and influence. Huyke sought to build a bridge between the United States and Puerto Rico, a bridge that would benefit both countries. The influence of Tuskegee was imperative, according to Huyke, “for the training of students for the important work of uniting the Americas.”³³⁰

The University of Puerto Rico’s adoption of the Hampton-Tuskegee model was emblematic in the expansion of courses that it offered. Similar to the gendered system at Tuskegee, the University of Puerto Rico also adopted a gendered system of education. Women being tasked with learning domestic trades reinforced gender-based division of labor. One of the more popular domestic trades for women was in needlework, a trade that was adopted from the Tuskegee curriculum. In 1918, the needlework industry was targeted by the Department of Education for its capacity to employ huge numbers of unemployed young women. The Puerto Rican Department of Education pointed to the “pressing duty of the [manual] schools to train the country girls to do this work in a more efficient way and so increase their income and the income of Porto Rico.”³³¹ School officials held conferences with manufacturers and designed special needlework courses.³³² By 1920, projected demand for skilled workers who were “expert in needlework” exceeded supply, and the legislature authorized hiring additional instructors in those municipalities where the prospects of employment were most favorable.

Throughout the 1920s, demand for this skilled but very low-paid labor held steady. Women constituted by far the majority of the labor in needlework, and their work, despite

³³⁰ Department of War, *Annual Report of the Governor of Porto Rico, 1929-1931* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1931), 375.

³³¹ Jose Rosario, “Home Economics in the Rural School,” *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, February 1922, 1919, 691-692.

³³² Department of War, *Annual Report of the Governor of Porto Rico* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1923), 182-183.

miserable pay, was skilled and demanding. The schools not only prepared women for incorporation into gender-segmented labor markets but sustained the needlework industry by providing fresh contingents of cheap female labor trained specifically for it. Women graduates of Tuskegee like Arcadia Carillo and Carmen Marrero took up teaching positions at Puerto Rican schools training young women in domestic skills like needlework which was in high demand. In 1931, the federal government financed vocational training in Puerto Rico and declared that "the principal emphasis will be laid upon training for jobs in the needle trades which are dominant industries in Porto Rico."³³³

The renewed focus on manual and agricultural training for Puerto Rico's rural population was designed to solve educational disparities that affected Puerto Rico's Black population as well as alleviate the island's labor problem while meeting the U.S. economic demands. Manual training and agricultural training were integrated into Puerto Rico's public school system. K-12 students studied farming and growing methods, cultivating home gardens. A number of the teachers at these schools were Tuskegee graduates or were graduates of the University of Puerto Rico which adopted the Hampton-Tuskegee model.³³⁴ Social and political unrest grew during the 1910s and 1920s as Puerto Ricans became increasingly frustrated with the United States, including U.S. corporations who were buying up large tracts of land. African American newspapers called attention to the exploitative practices of U.S. corporations in Puerto Rico and how Black people were the most impacted, linking U.S. intervention to U.S. racial policies.³³⁵ One of the most outspoken activists was Francisco M. Zeno who had served in the Puerto Rican

³³³ Society for the Advancement of Education, "The Vocational Education Program of Porto Rico," *School and Society* 33 (1931): 558-559.

³³⁴ Secretary of War, *Report of the Governor of Porto Rico to the Secretary of War, 1918-1919* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1919), 553.

³³⁵ "Annual Survey by Associated Negro Press," *Savannah Tribune*, December 28, 1922, 1.

legislature and was a member of the liberal Union Party. Zeno argued that U.S. corporations were displacing the *jibaros* (rural farmers), stripping them of their agricultural roots and limiting their possibility of economic independence. He believed that to solve the issues that plagued rural Puerto Ricans, especially the conditions of Puerto Rico's rural Black population, land reform was necessary and rural schools would help bring about change.

Zeno was influenced by the Hampton-Tuskegee model which is evident in his push for expanding the rural school network. He recommended that a "general system of agricultural instruction that transforms all rural schools into rural agricultural schools" be implemented. In addition to teaching modern farming techniques, the schools, much like Tuskegee, would also teach liberal arts and mathematics along with hygiene, all of which would help mold the rural population into "model citizens."³³⁶ Zeno supported the instruction of Afro-Puerto Rican students who attended Tuskegee and Tuskegee's model of education because in order to modernize Puerto Rico's agricultural sector and support small farmers, a trained cadre of teachers who were knowledgeable, efficient, modern farming techniques was of utmost importance. He articulated his belief in agricultural education and Puerto Rican progress in his work *Concurso Científico del Ateneo Puertorriqueño*:

The scientifically organized rural school of agriculture could do good reconstructive work here. The 'jíbaro begins to feel the natural fatigue that any painful and poorly compensated way of fighting for existence produces. He routinely tills the land...because he can't find anything else to do. But his legendary attachment to the farm and rural life weakens as time goes by and he feels the pain of his misery intensify more. The 'agricultural worker' tends to migrate to urbanized areas; and when he sends his son to school, he is singularly seduced by the stimulus of that 'passed tomorrow' is a 'man of letters' and does not have to 'pull the saw'. It is worth pausing to seriously consider this justified aversion towards the "land" that is beginning to take shape in the psyche of the Puerto Rican peasant.³³⁷

³³⁶ Francisco Zeno, *Concurso Científico del Ateneo Puertorriqueño: Tema, El Obrero Agrícola o de los Campos, Estudio Laureado* (San Juan: La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico, 1922), 132.

³³⁷ Francisco Zeno, *Concurso Científico del Ateneo Puertorriqueño: Tema, El Obrero Agrícola o de los Campos, Estudio Laureado*, 138.

Zeno's vision for Puerto Rico's rural population, which included Afro-Puerto Ricans, was starkly similar to Booker T. Washington's message in the "Atlanta Exposition" address. Almost three decades earlier, Washington called for African Americans to see that there was "as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem."³³⁸ To accomplish these aims, Puerto Ricans needed to wrestle authority over the classroom from colonial administrators.

The 1920s and 1930s saw an increase in Puerto Rico nationalism that was a response to U.S. colonialism and poor conditions in Puerto Rico. One of the leaders of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party was Pedro Albizu Campos. Campos was of Afro-Puerto Rican descent and experienced racism in the United States while serving in the U.S. Army. Because he was categorized as Black in the United States, he was assigned to an all-Black unit in the Army. Although he was Black, Campos, like many Afro-Puerto Ricans, did not identify as Black but as Puerto Rican. Campos had a connection to Tuskegee as his nephew, Rafael Ramos, briefly attended Tuskegee before returning home as he desired to study music rather than agriculture.³³⁹ Campos fought for Puerto Rican independence and believed that the many races that made up Puerto Rico is what made it unique. According to Albizu: "We are a people predestined in history because Puerto Rico is the first nation in the world where the unity of the spirit takes shape together with the biological unit of the body."³⁴⁰ Albizu believed that Puerto Rico was an "ethnonation," one in which "race had nothing to do with biology."³⁴¹ Like Marcus Garvey and Booker T. Washington, Albizu shared in the idea of economic uplift and education that would support that, tying these ideas to Puerto Rican nationalism and anti-colonialism.

³³⁸ Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (London: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1907), 220.

³³⁹ Rafael Ramos to Booker T. Washington, December 26, 1909, Box 906 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁴⁰ Pedro Albizu Campos, *Obras Escogidas: 1923-1936* (San Juan: Editorial Jelofe, 1975), 324.

³⁴¹ Pedro Albizu Campos, *Obras Escogidas: 1923-1936* (San Juan: Editorial Jelofe, 1975), 118.

Educators wanted to establish their authority in the classroom by challenging partisan politicians and U.S. colonial authorities which they continued to do as Puerto Rico entered the 1920s. “The Puerto Rican rural school has the inescapable duty of preparing the peasant child for the realization of a more scientific, more modern, more productive work, more in harmony with our times,” stated Department of Labor inspector Soto Latorre in December 1917.³⁴² Many of the students who attended Tuskegee from Puerto Rico came from small, rural family farms and as proponents of education reform, helped lead the push for industrial education. They argued that there was no “better school than the Normal School to prepare teachers...and to provide [the people] with better livelihoods.”³⁴³ The Department of Education agreed that agricultural and normal education should be given greater support but not for the same reasons as Puerto Rican activists and teachers unions.

By the end of the 1930s, increased funding to vocational education was made possible through several acts of Congress. The Smith-Hughes Act, or the National Vocational Education Act, which was passed in 1917, provided federal aid to states for the purpose of expanding vocational education programs, was extended to Puerto Rico in 1931.³⁴⁴ The same year, the Puerto Rico Vocational Act was passed which also allocated additional funds for the expansion of vocational programs in Puerto Rico.³⁴⁵ And lastly, the George-Deen Act which also provided for the further development of vocational education, was approved by Congress in 1936 and

³⁴² Department of Education of Porto Rico and Jose Padín, eds., *The Porto Rico School Review* (San Juan: The Department of Education and the Porto Rico Teachers' Association, 1917), 35.

³⁴³ Department of Education of Porto Rico and Jose Padín, eds., *The Porto Rico School Review* (San Juan: The Department of Education and the Porto Rico Teachers' Association, 1917), 38.

³⁴⁴ United States House of Representatives, *Laws Relating to Vocational Education and Agricultural Extension Work* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1941), 45.

³⁴⁵ United States Committee on Pacific Islands and Porto Rico, *Laws of Porto Rico Book 32*, (San Juan: Government Printing Office, 1931), 303-312.

Puerto Rico was granted \$129,434.38 for vocational agriculture.³⁴⁶ By expanding Puerto Rico's vocational education program, U.S. officials hoped to strengthen its economic ties to Puerto Rico under the banner of economic and social uplift. U.S. officials and Puerto Rican elites hoped to maintain the separation between urban and rural areas, creating farmers that would see dignity in their labor while becoming better, more faithful American citizens. Officials believed instilling dignity in manual labor via the Hampton-Tuskegee model needed to be done in Puerto Rican from an early age. To accomplish that, a new type of rural school was founded: the second-unit rural school.

Second-unit rural schools first began in the United States. In an attempt to bring education to rural America in the 1920s and 1930s, second-unit rural schools combined manual and academic instruction, similar to Tuskegee under Booker T. Washington. These schools offered training in agriculture and industrial arts, like blacksmithing, for boys and domestic training, like housework and needlework, for girls. These schools also offered basic liberal arts instruction to combat illiteracy. By the time second-unit schools were implemented in Puerto Rico in 1931, Tuskegee's curriculum had undergone significant changes, shifting from vocational education to academic higher education, becoming an accredited, degree-granting institute. Robert Russa Moton, Tuskegee's second principal, took Tuskegee in a direction, moving the college away from Washington's accommodationist philosophy and while still offering a vocational curriculum, Tuskegee also embraced higher education. This was not the case, however, in Tuskegee-inspired schools outside the United States where private commercial enterprises and their political stakeholders still believed in the Hampton-Tuskegee model of

³⁴⁶ United States House of Representatives, *Laws Relating to Vocational Education and Agriculture Extension Work* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1941), 62-64.

education. In Puerto Rico, technical education was expanded to the K-12 curriculum. For instance, rural schools targeted grades 4-8 and they had five main objectives: retain the young rural population in rural sections, make boys better farmers and girls better homemakers, keep large tracts of land out of the hands of corporations, combat illiteracy, and increase productivity of the island.³⁴⁷ In 1931-1932 the work began in 23 teaching centers, with 23 teachers and an enrollment of 3,276 students. During the school year 1940-1941, there were 114 teaching centers, 114 teachers, and an enrollment of 7,106 students not counting the part-time and evening classes. Vocational education that was founded on the Hampton-Tuskegee model was foundational to Puerto Rico's development.

³⁴⁷ Francisco Urgel, *The Evolution of Industrial Arts Education in Puerto Rico* (State College: The Pennsylvania State College Press, 1938), 42.

(En miles - In thousands)

División industrial Industry group	1947-48	1948-49	1949-50	1950-51	1951-52	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55	1955-56
TODAS LAS INDUSTRIAS - ALL INDUSTRIES.....	589	585	596	604	571	550	540	539	558
Agricultura - Agriculture.....	214	214	214	201	190	170	172	162	159
Caña - Sugar cane.....	85	82	87	85	85	80	73	64	58
Café - Coffee.....	20	19	22	18	22	20	24	26	31
Tabaco - Tobacco.....	12	19	20	17	14	15	15	14	12
Otros productos - Other products.....	97	94	85	81	68	55	60	59	59
Silvicultura y pesca - Forestry and fishing.....	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	(1)	(1)
Manufactura - Manufacturing.....	103	102	106	111	90	99	98	95	99
Azúcar - Sugar mill.....	9	9	11	9	8	10	9	9	8
Trabajo de aguja a domicilio - Home-needlework.....	45	51	51	55	34	37	31	29	25
Trabajo de aguja (talleres) - Factory needlework.....	18	9	12	13	14	15	18	17	20
Otras industrias manufactureras - Other manufacturing industries.....	31	33	32	34	34	34	40	39	47
Minería - Mining.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	2	3	2	2	(1)
Construcción - Construction.....	35	34	27	27	33	39	32	34	38
Comercio - Trade.....	86	87	90	93	94	84	83	89	93
Al por mayor - Wholesale.....	6	6	7	9	8	4	5	7	7
Al detal - Retail.....	79	81	82	84	87	79	78	82	86
Finanzas, seguros y bienes raíces - Finance, insurance and real estate.....	2	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	4
Transportación, comunicación y otros servicios públicos - Transportation, communication, and other public utilities.....	30	27	30	28	26	30	31	34	37
Servicios - Service industries.....	75	70	77	86	79	71	67	69	71
Gobierno - Government.....	41	45	45	50	51	50	50	50	55
Otras - Other.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

(1) Menos de 2,000 - Less than 2,000.

Fuente de información: Departamento del Trabajo de Puerto Rico, Negociado de Estadísticas del Trabajo.
Source: P. R. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Figure 5.2 This table shows the number of employed workers by industry group for the fiscal years 1948 to 1956. Source: Puerto Rico Bureau of Economics and Statistics, *Anuario Estadístico, Puerto Rico: Statistical Yearbook, Puerto Rico 1955-1957* (San Juan: Bureau of Economics and Statistics, 1957), 105.

During the 1950s, the expansion of vocational education programs under Operation Bootstrap led to an increase of Puerto Ricans, especially Afro-Puerto Ricans, gaining access to opportunities in urban centers, creating a new urban working class. Bootstrap implemented by the U.S. government and the Puerto Rico Economic Development Administration sought to modernize Puerto Rico's agricultural economy to an industrialized one. Puerto Rican novelist and director of the Department of Hispanic Studies at the Catholic University of Ponce Enrique

Laguerre wrote in a 1954 article reflecting on the importance of industrial education to Puerto Rico's future, "that we [Puerto Rico] are leaving a rural culture to enter into another urban universal culture," a new future that was to shaped by "vocational schools."³⁴⁸ Puerto Rico's Black intelligentsia played a significant role in shaping the island's education programs, challenging its paternalistic and demeaning attitude toward working class Afro-Puerto Rican and creating greater opportunities for employment in vocational trades while also attempting to redefine the Puerto Rican nation, calling attention to the exploitation of Puerto Rico's Black urban working class.

Conclusion

Recruiting Afro-Puerto Rican students to Tuskegee was part of the Americanization process to train them in agriculture and other manual trades to make them better American citizens. However, Puerto Rican students adopted their Tuskegee education into a usable mechanism, one that fit their needs. They learned, taught, and bargained for cultural and political mobility. While at Tuskegee, they confronted their Blackness in a way they had never before. Segregated into Black institutions, Afro-Puerto Ricans experienced segregation and racism in the American South. While in the United States the skills learned at Tuskegee were designed to maintain the racial order in the South, Afro-Puerto Rican graduates of Tuskegee used those skills to become educators, leaders, and activists that were focused on improving conditions for Puerto Rico's Afro-Puerto Rican rural population and constructing a new collective national identity, challenging U.S. imperialist designs. The tenets of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education were embraced by Afro-Puerto Rican students and leaders who by assessing the educational and

³⁴⁸ Enrique Laguerre, "Vocational Education," in *A Land of Hope in Schools: A Reader in the History of Public Education in Puerto Rico, 1940 to 1965*, ed. Osvaldo Rodríguez Pacheco (San Juan: Editorial EDIL, 1976), 174.

economic landscape of Puerto Rico believed it offered the best solution. As José Barbosa wrote in a letter to Booker T. Washington in 1901, students “want to go to your college, in order to get all the knowledge necessary to be of some benefit to the future of their country and their people.”³⁴⁹

“Wherever our graduates go, the changes which soon begin to appear in the buying of land...in education, and in high moral character are remarkable...Communities are fast being revolutionized through the instrumentality of these men and women.”³⁵⁰ Booker T. Washington reflected on successes of Tuskegee graduates in *Up from Slavery*. For Afro-Puerto Rican students, the spirit of Tuskegee was transformative in Puerto Rico throughout the twentieth century. While the Tuskegee model may have been supported by U.S. officials for their own economic and political gain, Puerto Rican supporters of vocational education worked within the channels of imperialism to improve their conditions. Teachers’ unions, workers unions, and political supporters used vocational education to shape Puerto Rican discourse. Afro-Puerto Rican graduates of Tuskegee and Afro-Puerto Rican leaders used the Hampton-Tuskegee model to attempt to create a collective Puerto Rican identity, one that embraced Blackness. The complexities of identity surrounding Blackness and the legacies of U.S. imperialism are still grappled with by Afro-Puerto Ricans. The U.S. government facilitated the arrival of Afro-Puerto Rican students at Tuskegee. In Cuba, however, Afro-Cuban students willingly sought out Washington and the Tuskegee Institute.

³⁴⁹ Jose Barbosa to Booker T. Washington, October 1, 1901, Box 175 Reel 172, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁵⁰ Washington, *Up from Slavery*, 315.

Chapter 6 - Afro-Cubans and the Fight for Independence

During his 1875 speech during the Hampton Institute's commencement ceremony, Booker T. Washington took part in a debate with other members of his graduating class on whether the United States should annex Cuba. Debates during the commencement ceremonies were a tradition for members of Hampton's graduating class. Interest in the fate of the Spanish colony of Cuba captivated the attention of imperial powers across the Atlantic because Cuban rebels were fighting against Spanish rule. In his speech, Washington championed a pragmatic approach to solving America's racial dilemma, offering a solution to quell Afro-diasporic concerns while arguing against American annexation of Cuba. Washington stated that "the difficulties before the country [the United States] in the emancipation of 4,000,000 blacks were quite enough without adding that of the Cubans: that annexation would flood the country with ignorance and crime."³⁵¹ Washington argued that the American government had grossly mishandled Reconstruction by failing to prepare African Americans for the "duties of citizenship," and seriously doubted its competency to handle the acquiring of more people of color.³⁵² Washington doubled-down on his imperialist but anti-annexationist stance during the debate, arguing that:

1, Spain has a right to Cuba by discovery and colonization; 2, the United States have more than enough, let them take care of themselves; 3, the interests of peace forbid the risks of entanglement in bloody and costly war [of annexation]; 4 the situation of Cuba and character would make her inhabitants a burden. Wait till the Cubans are more capable of self-government. A whole South is stricken with it. This country recently passed through an awful crisis, in which its very

³⁵¹ "Hampton Anniversary," *New York Times*, June 15, 1875, 5.

³⁵² Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (London: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1907), 83.

foundations were shaken. Wouldn't it be wise, before we risk a war for Cuba, to redeem ourselves from the meshes of the last war?³⁵³

Two decades later, Washington was forced to revisit this debate, only this time as leader of Tuskegee Institute, while the nation was embroiled in the Spanish-American War of 1898. By the time the war broke out, as the United States entered the global stage of imperialism, Washington was nationally recognized as the country's most important Black leader and educator, succeeding Frederick Douglass. His institution attracted thousands of students and his political connections surpassed that of any other race leader at the time. As U.S. involvement in the Cuban conflict became more and more likely, Washington could no longer argue as he had done in 1875; he believed his Afro-Spanish brothers could not afford it. Instead, by the turn of the century, Washington saw Cuban independence as a chance to disseminate the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education to people of African descent across the Diaspora. From 1898-1915, Tuskegee became a space where Cuban independence was worked out, not only through the efforts of Washington, but in a complex and deliberate push by Afro-Cubans themselves.

The experiences of Afro-Cubans at Tuskegee and the eagerness of Afro-Cubans who sought out Booker T. Washington and embraced his message helps highlight how the transnationalization of the Hampton-Tuskegee model took shape. Unlike in Puerto Rico, where Afro-Puerto Ricans were funneled into Tuskegee because of U.S. segregation laws, Afro-Cubans chose to go to attend Tuskegee because they believed it would improve their position within Cuba's social, political, and economic structures. This chapter shows how Tuskegee became a space where Cuban students combined Tuskegee education, Cuban culture, and the fight for

³⁵³ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 2: 1860-1889* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1972), 63.

independence to challenge imperialist systems. The chapter also shows the evolution of Washington's imperialist views, at times embracing imperialist rhetoric while also providing the tools to help Black Cubans attain economic independence. Studying Tuskegee's connection to the U.S.'s complicated relationship with Cuba reveals new insights about the limitations of Pan-Africanism such as the relationships of Afro-Cubans to the African diaspora and how the struggle for increased visibility on the part of Black Cubans played into the struggle for independence.

Scholars like Ada Ferrer have argued that the histories of Cuba and the United States have shaped each other's trajectory, including the histories of Afro-Cubans and African Americans. This chapter positions itself within her argument by examining how Booker T. Washington used the experiences of African Americans under slavery and then Jim Crow to argue why Black Americans and Cubans should be involved in the United States' imperialist aims and in Cuba's future.³⁵⁴ Booker T. Washington pressed for African American soldiers to be included in the Spanish-American War but was also a member of the Anti-Imperialist League, arguing that the United States' own failures in addressing the Black question would be exacerbated in Cuba with the country's large Black population. In addition to pressing for Afro-Cuban rights, Washington also supported the development of entrepreneurship and agricultural training for Cuba's Black population and believed that Tuskegee could help them achieve those goals.

Other scholars like Frank Guridy have argued that at Tuskegee, Afro-Cubans and African Americans forged relationships, developing strategies to circumvent Jim Crow and imperialism. These relationships were motivated by the material incentive of education, political solidarity,

³⁵⁴ Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (New York: Scribner, 2022).

artistic inspiration, and the possibility of economic independence as much as they were by a psychological sense of belonging. Afro-Cubans took advantage of emerging imperialist structures to try and create opportunities for themselves in Cuba by achieving political, social, and economic upward mobility. Afro-Cubans viewed the issue of racial inequality not simply as a national question but also as one that pertained to themselves and African Americans as members of the larger transnational collective they often described as *la raza de color* (the colored race).³⁵⁵ As Afro-Cubans struggled for citizenship rights within the Cuban republican system, they developed cultural, economic, and political ties with their Black neighbors to the north as a complementary strategy to navigate the obstacles presented by imperial and racialized power in Cuba.

The Cuban fight for independence was met with mixed reactions from African Americans which was reflected in northern and southern newspapers. David Hellwig contends that many northern-based Black newspapers, which were middle class in orientation, presented themselves as militant advocates of racial advancement but took cues from the white press on how they covered stories in Cuba while southern newspapers espoused a more aggressive message by likening the situation of Black Cubans to African Americans in the South, arguing that both systems were causes of white oppression.³⁵⁶ This chapter explores Booker T. Washington's efforts to balance supporting Black equality in Cuba while aligning with overall U.S. policy. He tried to achieve this by working with US officials like Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft to advance US designs while also working to solve the Black struggle at home and abroad. The struggle for independence by Afro-Cubans from the end of the nineteenth century to 1915

³⁵⁵ Frank Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

³⁵⁶ Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes, *Between Race and Empire: African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

captured the attention of African Americans, especially Booker T. Washington who viewed the struggle against Spanish and U.S. imperialism as analogous to Black Americans' fight for first-class citizenship. To combat discrimination in land ownership, education, and access to public services, Afro-Cubans latched onto Washington's message of self-help and practical education as a pathway to improve their legal and a social position, similar to their diasporic kin in the United States.

Using correspondence, memos, and letters from Booker T. Washington, Afro-Cuban leaders, and Cuban students who attended Tuskegee as well as U.S. government documents, this chapter highlights Afro-Cubans' relationship with Tuskegee and imperialism while also addressing how Afro-Cubans took initiative to seek out the Alabama school. At Tuskegee, Afro-Cubans students confronted their Black identity, which adds a complex dimension to understanding the African diaspora. Tuskegee's goal of creating future race leaders was emblematic in the case of Cuba as Cuban students tied the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education to the struggle for independence. As Washington and Tuskegee officials maneuvered their way through the barriers of Jim Crow and imperialism, Tuskegee students attempted to build diasporic networks within the Cuban system.

Tuskegee Attitudes Towards Cuba

Cuba had become a classical Caribbean plantation economy during the first half of the nineteenth century. Sugar and slavery dominated the Cuban economy and society thereafter until the abolition of slavery in 1886. Throughout sugar's development in Cuba, African slaves were continually imported to meet sugar's labor demands, in much the same way as in the eighteenth-century British and French Caribbean, and in Brazil. Cuba was the last great destination of the

transatlantic slave trade, which was not legally banned until 1867.³⁵⁷ The free Black and mulatto population remained relatively stable as a percentage of the total population: 15 percent in 1827 and 17 percent in both 1846 and 1862. There were fundamental regional differences in the proportion of free Black people and mulattos. By 1862, about 12 percent of western Cuba's inhabitants were free peoples of color; 16 percent in central Cuba; and nearly a third of the population were free peoples of color in eastern Cuba. Cuban free peoples of color migrated to regions where slavery was relatively less significant to demographic, social, and economic structures.³⁵⁸

The outcome of the U.S. Civil War hastened the end of Cuban slavery as well. With the slave trade closed, and with the demise of slavery in the United States, Cuban slaveholders surely knew their days were numbered. Yet it was only the political pressure exerted upon the colonial elite because of the abolitionist nature of the Cuban republic in arms during the Ten Years' War that forced Spain's hand. The threat of a slave insurrection, or of the massive abandonment of western Cuban plantations by slaves because of the offer of freedom if republican territory was reached, made abolition nearly mandatory to preserve Spanish colonialism. There was favorable sentiment in Cuba among liberal for the abolition of slavery, which served as a rallying cry for the working classes and Afro-Cuban populations, ultimately leading to the beginning of the Ten Years' War over dissatisfaction with the Spanish crown.³⁵⁹ While some Afro-Cubans won election to the *Cortes* (Spanish Parliament), the failure of the Spanish to implement greater political and economic reforms led to the resumption of the Cuban

³⁵⁷ "The Race Question in Cuba," *The Sun*, November 15, 1906, 8.

³⁵⁸ Laird Bergad, *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 112.

³⁵⁹ Laird Bergad, *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 289.

War for Independence in 1895. This second movement was multiracial and actively enlisted support from across class lines. Men of modest social origins replaced the elite *Criollo* leaders of the previous movement. José Martí, a middle-class poet and activist, led an uprising that began on February 24, 1895, and which this time included Afro-Cubans as the backbone of the liberation movement. But while Martí was leading Cuba's fight for independence, Washington was imploring African Americans to “cast down your buckets where you are.”³⁶⁰

Booker T. Washington believed in a conservative approach to race relations and Black progress in Cuba and the United States. in an article in *The Continent*, Washington articulated his position:

With a negro population sixteen times as large as that of Cuba why has there been no negro rebellion in the United States? It is not because the American negro has not had provocation as compared with his brothers in Cuba. The American negro has had much more reason for a resort to physical violence. Legally [in Cuba] there is no such thing as racial discrimination.³⁶¹

Washington's comparisons between racial discrimination in Latin America and the United States highlights his global perceptions of race relations. While Jim Crow segregation and racial violence, such as lynching, were largely absent in Cuba, a color line did exist. Washington's views reflect the arguments of the time that Cuba was an island where “former slaves and slave masters could live harmoniously.”³⁶² For Washington, armed resistance was not the answer but rather advocated, much like he articulated in the “Atlanta Exposition Address,” accommodation and expanding access to education. “In the solution of most human problems,” Washington

³⁶⁰ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 3: 1889-1895* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 584.

³⁶¹ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-1914* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 32-22.

³⁶² Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes, *Between Race and Empire African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 71.

explained, “education is not only cheaper than war, but it is far more permanent in its effects.”³⁶³

In 1898, the United States was involved in a war against Spain to expand its empire beyond its continental borders. Cuba was significant to the United States because of its agricultural value, namely sugar, but also because of the desire to establish a military base at Guantanamo.

When the U.S. government declared war on Spain in 1898, Washington pledged the assistance of Black Americans. While opposed to expansionism, Washington believed that military service was one of the best ways African Americans could prove their value to the United States to white Americans. Washington articulated this after the war in a speech at the National Peace Jubilee in October 1898, commemorating the end of the Spanish-American War:

A few months ago, the safety and honor of the Republic were threatened by a foreign foe...Let them tell how the Negro faced death and laid down his life in defense of honor and humanity, and when you have gotten the full story of the heroic conduct of the Negro in the Spanish-American War – heard it from the lips of Northern soldiers and Southern soldiers, from ex-abolitionist and ex-master, then decide within yourselves whether a race that is thus willing to die for its country, should not be given the highest opportunity to live for its country.³⁶⁴

Washington urged his students from Tuskegee to enlist so they could spread the tenets of the Hampton-Tuskegee model in Cuba. For instance, John William Dean, a former student at Tuskegee, was a soldier in the 9th Regiment stationed in Santiago de Cuba. In a letter published in the *Tuskegee Student*, Dean wrote a poem to his classmates, articulating the message of uplift:

The shout of we slaved borthers in Cuba. Yes rouse Americans and cheer, and let your voices be heard, where ever men love liberty and prise that sacred word. For lo on Santeago's hights, our galant standard waves, and fredom dawns on souls of men, who yesterday were slaves. Where shafter leads conquering train with stern heroic miles, fair Cuba drops her captivi[n]g, and lifts her head and smiles. The

³⁶³ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 12: 1912-1914*, 35.

³⁶⁴ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 491.

proud castilians hireling bow before rights stern decree, The pearls of the antilles
now is fated to be free.³⁶⁵

The letter by Dean underscores the idea that U.S. expansionism was an opportunity to fight for citizenship, respectability and equality. In Cuba, Afro-Cubans believed a period of racial democracy would be ushered in with the arrival of the United States. Leaders like Antonio Maceo idealistically declared, “Here there are no whites and no blacks, only Cubans.”³⁶⁶ Tuskegee students and teachers would play a significant part in this process by expounding the Tuskegee spirit as Cuban students began arriving at the school at the close of the nineteenth century.

Afro-Cubans Arrive at Tuskegee

Technical education was important for Cuba’s future, but Spanish colonial education was unable to meet the needs of many Cubans. The Cuban economy dominated by the United States was becoming more diverse which required the mastery of new information and new skills to help meet the demand for skilled teachers and more knowledgeable farmers. The answer to meeting these demands lay in technical training that was unavailable on the island. For Cubans that wanted to climb the social and economic ladder via technical education, traveling abroad was the only means to obtain those skills. “The instruction we need most — technical and industrial — does not exist in Cuba,” complained Cuban author Enrique José Varona.³⁶⁷ Afro-Cubans who were marginalized in Cuban society, they took it upon themselves to seek out education abroad and many believed that technical education was the quickest and most open path towards

³⁶⁵ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898*, 443.

³⁶⁶ Jorge Ibarra, *Ideología Mambisa* (La Habana: Instituto del Libro, 1967), 52.

³⁶⁷ José Varona, *Cuba contra España: Manifiesto del Partido Revolucionario Cubano a los Pueblos Hispano-Americanos* (New York: S. Figueroa, 1895), 61.

upward mobility. However, rampant discrimination and racial inequalities in post-emancipation Cuba rendered social advancement and access to education difficult for Afro-Cubans. Tuskegee, known for its recruitment of marginalized African diasporic groups, was an attractive option for Afro-Cubans seeking to advance.

For centuries, Afro-Cubans and Black Americans shared a common struggle of historical oppression, racial inequality, and political disenfranchisement, a bond that became stronger as the United States became a global empire at the end of the nineteenth century. Tuskegee became a cultural center as the worlds of Afro-Cubans and African Americans collided. Booker T. Washington's message that was communicated in the works of *Up from Slavery* and "The Future of the American Negro," inspired many Afro-Cuban families who sent their children to study at Tuskegee.³⁶⁸ Cuban students studying in the United States resisted assimilation into American culture and instead focused on using their educational gains to advance in Cuban society. While they resisted assimilation, Afro-Cubans did forge new identities through this Tuskegee-Cuba connection.

Educating Afro-Cubans was a way that Washington could expand Tuskegee's reputation while trying to improve the lives of uplift Black people across the globe. Washington articulated his conviction that Tuskegee could play important roles in assisting Cuba in rebuilding socially and economically in a letter to the *Christian Register* in August 1898. Providing Afro-Cubans with an industrial education would "do for them what it is doing for our people in the South."³⁶⁹ Washington's letter was later

³⁶⁸ JF Domenech to Booker T. Washington, January 10, 1912, Box 416 Reel 338, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁶⁹ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898*, 455.

published in the *New York Times* and expanded upon. “If the funds can be secured, it is the plan of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute at Tuskegee, Ala., to bring a number of the most promising men and women to this institution to receive training that they may return to Cuba and start, in the interest of the people, industrial training on the island.”³⁷⁰ Washington’s words gained the attention of General William Ludlow, who was serving as the Military Governor of Havana. Ludlow was an advocate of industrial education and championed the “systemization of industrial schools in which youths of the city and country can be taught trades and occupations,” explaining that the “Cuban youth must be taught something that will enable them to live.”³⁷¹ Washington and Ludlow shared an enthusiasm for a Tuskegee education for Afro-Cubans albeit with different goals in mind. The Tuskegee president was able to maneuver inside the space created by US imperialism. Washington believed that the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education could create an enduring basis of Afro-Cubans’ long-term success within US administered Cuba while satisfying Afro-Cubans leaders’ and US officials’ shorter-term goal of creating a more productive labor force. “One generation gathers the material and the next builds the palaces,” he wrote. “Very largely, this must be the material gathering generation of black people but in due time the palace will come if we are patient.”³⁷² In effect, Washington imagined using American officials’ imperialist desire to make Cuba a more robust satellite economy to lay the foundations for the next generation of Afro-Cubans to attain equality.

³⁷⁰ “Industrial Education in Cuba,” *American Journal of Education*, December 1, 1899, 32-33.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

³⁷² Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Co., 1900), 73.

Education served an important function for Afro-Cubans. They believed that by achieving an education, they could actively challenge racial discrimination in Cuban society. Juan Gualberto Gomez, an Afro-Cuban journalist, was at the forefront of the movement for equal rights and access for Cuba's Black populations. For Gomez, *Cuba Libre* (A Free Cuba) could only be fully recognized through education and transnational organization.³⁷³ In 1900, Gomez and Martin Marua Delgado, another Afro-Cuban journalist, served as the only non-white revolutionaries to participate in the Cuban Constituent Assembly. During the establishment of the Assembly, U.S. military leaders under the leadership of Military Governor of Cuba General Leonard Wood openly opposed any definition of citizenship that gave electoral rights to "the illiterate mass of people."³⁷⁴ Wood wrote to President McKinley that, "We are dealing with a race that has steadily been going down for a hundred years and into which we have got to infuse new life, new principles and new methods of doing things."³⁷⁵ Constructing a Tuskegee-like school in Cuba was impractical for the time because of the cost so the easier path was to facilitate the education of Afro-Cubans in the United States.

Mestizo and *criollo* have meanings in Cuba distinct from some other parts of the Americas. While the *criollos* were the native-born Cubans of European descent, the *mestizo*, or mulatto, population were the individuals who were mixed, Black and European. The *mestizo* identity strongly emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century to set aside racial differences in Cuba and unite under "one Cuba." What Cuba's

³⁷³ "Santiago de Cura," *Evening Star*, April 26, 1902, 11.

³⁷⁴ Leonard Wood to Elihu Root, February 8, 1900, Box 28-29, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁷⁵ Leonard Wood to William McKinley, April 12, 1900, Box 28, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

nationalist leaders preached and practiced stood in stark and more concrete contrast to the emerging racial order of the United States. Cuban rebels spoke of a raceless nation in the period that represented the nadir in American racial politics. Thus, the escalation of racial violence, the spread of spatial segregation by race, and the dismantling of political gains made during Reconstruction in the South occurred in the United States precisely as Afro-Cuban and *mestizo* leaders gained increasing popularity and power in Cuba.³⁷⁶ Seeing a possible path towards improved economic, social, and political conditions in the new U.S.-Cuban alliance, Afro-Cubans sought to use their Black identity to their advantage at Tuskegee while still maintaining their Cubanness.

The first Afro-Cuban students arrived at Tuskegee in 1898. President William McKinley's visit to Tuskegee in October 1898, in which the president conferred his support for Tuskegee's plans to enroll Cubans, made it easier for Booker T. Washington to obtain funding for the new arrivals. Donors like Caroline Phelps Stokes, the daughter of northern philanthropist Anson Phelps Stokes, wrote to Washington offering support. "I notice by the paper that you wish to take some of the young men and women from Cuba and Porto Rico educating them at Tuskegee and sending them back as teachers," wrote Caroline Phelps Stokes.³⁷⁷ In March 1900, Washington wrote to Stokes confirming receipt of a \$300 check for constituting a "contribution for the care of the Cuban boys."³⁷⁸ As part of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education, Cuban students were given the opportunity to work and pay for school on their own merit. "11 of the young

³⁷⁶ Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

³⁷⁷ Caroline E. Phelps Stokes to Booker T. Washington, September 14, 1898, Box 905 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁷⁸ Booker T. Washington to Caroline Phelps Stokes, March 24, 1900, Box 905 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

men who have come from Cuba have regular workdays in some department and are learning trades, which they hope to find useful when they return home. During the summer they will be kept at work just the same as other students and...[will] earn something toward their own support,” wrote Washington.³⁷⁹ Washington’s commitment to self-support and the initial Cuban students helped set a positive tone for the relationship between Tuskegee and supporters of the Tuskegee-Cuban experiment.

In addition to officials from Tuskegee, the US government, and US philanthropists, Afro-Cuban students already enrolled at Tuskegee played an active role in recruiting Afro-Cuban students to Tuskegee. The Tuskegee principal often used Afro-Cuban students from within the school to help recruit prospective students. Thomas Austin, a middle-class Afro-Cuban student from Key West, Florida, was one such recruiter. In November 1898, Austin traveled to Cuba as an emissary of Tuskegee, going from village to village, espousing the benefits of a Tuskegee education.³⁸⁰ Austin was the ideal candidate for this job for several reasons. First, he was a firm believer in the Hampton-Tuskegee model. Second, he was bilingual. Third, he was already exposed to Cuban émigrés who had been settling in at Key West. Washington hoped that Austin would be able to draw from Cuba students who were willing to accept the benefits of a Tuskegee education from someone who was more familiar to them ethnically and culturally. Although Austin faced challenges in recruiting large numbers of Cubans, by 1899, he had successfully recruited and assisted in bringing eight Cubans to Tuskegee.³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ Booker T. Washington to Caroline Phelps Stokes, March 24, 1900, Box 905 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁸⁰ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 4: 1895-1898*, 501.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 503.

Afro-Cuban student demographics varied in range and represented the diverse characteristics of what types of students attended Tuskegee. Some students arrived with very little means while others came from the Afro-Cuban elite. Regardless of socioeconomic status, they shared a common goal which was to receive an education that offered the greatest potential to improve their status upon return to Cuba. Afro-Cubans like Juana Maria Cardenas and Carmen Navarro directly stated their hopes while attending Tuskegee. “We strive[d] in our country to fulfill this desire but we cannot do it here and now all our hopes are in your hands.”³⁸² A good number of prospective students seeking admission were skilled tradesmen struggling to navigate their way through the challenges of Cuban society under the new US imperialist structure that was more focused on establishing a manageable labor pipeline to work on plantations and in industry.

Skilled workers belonging neither to the rural laboring majority nor to the educated Black elite, feeling the pressure of the US imperialist system, jumped at the chance to learn the Tuskegee curriculum. Prospective students included Eleno Lino, who knew little English, but had a close friend write to Tuskegee. “Having heard by a friend of mine, the opportunities afforded by your night school to poor colored men who are anxious [sic] to have a better education I write you these few lines to see if there is any room for me.”³⁸³ Others like Bernardo Calderón, a mechanic from Havana, wrote to Washington in 1912 expressing his desire to attend Tuskegee to make himself “independent from the ‘patronos’ [bosses].” Calderón claimed that while being a

³⁸² Juana Maria Cardenas and Carmen Navarro to Booker T. Washington, n.d, Box 905 Reel 683, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁸³ Eleno Lino to Booker T. Washington, September 20, 1902, Box 905 Reel 683, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

mechanic ensured that he would not “die of hunger in Cuba,” he felt that further vocational training would ensure that he could establish a family and have, as he put it “the peaceful old age that I desire.”³⁸⁴ The hopes and aspirations of prospective students from segments of the skilled working class who neither belonged to the rural laboring majority or to the educated Black elite sought opportunities to advance themselves in the face of racism and colonialism by molding the Hampton-Tuskegee model to their aims.

Many of the students who sought admission to Tuskegee were connected to influential Cuban leaders such as Juan Gualberto Gómez and Martín Morúa Delgado, both of whom were among the tiny number of Black elected officials in the early years of the Cuban Republic. For example, Leonardo Ibañez came to Tuskegee as a result of the efforts of Gómez, who was his godfather. He arrived at Tuskegee in September 1903 after Gómez asked the school to admit him. In his request, the Afro-Cuban leader assured the school that the student's guardian, Fermín Zuñiga, would “pay his scholarship annually without fale [sic]” and insisted that Ibañez was a student who would “observe good conduct in every respect.”³⁸⁵ Some — perhaps most — of these students were members of the tiny Afro-Cuban elite who were scrambling for educational opportunities in a period of uncertainty. Although better off than the poor laboring class in Cuban cities, racial discrimination saw no distinction between the two. Members of the Cuban elite benefited immensely from political connections. While many Cuban students were able to obtain initial scholarships for their first year at Tuskegee, some students were not fully sponsored nor were annual scholarships always available to fund them for four

³⁸⁴ Bernardo Calderón to Booker T. Washington, January 14, 1912, Box 905 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁸⁵ Juan Gómez to Booker T. Washington, August 8, 1903, Box 218 Reel 217, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

years through Tuskegee. As a result, personal connections not only provided access to schools in the U.S. but allowed for students to complete their education.

According to available records, on average, fifteen Cuban students entered Tuskegee annually between 1898 and 1920.³⁸⁶ The most Cuban students to enter the Institute in one given year was twenty-three, in 1905/1906. Washington continued his push to increase those numbers, writing to Leonard Wood in January 1900. “The Government has so far very kindly given us free transportation for these students,” wrote Washington, “If you think well of the idea, I will be very glad to have you send us two or three more young men or women of the Negro Race.”³⁸⁷ Wood’s stamp of approval cemented government support of the Cuban program for years to come. The translation of Washington’s works *From Slave to Professor* in 1901 and in *The Future of the American Negro* in 1912 helped raise awareness of Tuskegee and Washington’s vision of technical education in Cubans which helped increase in support for Tuskegee.³⁸⁸ In a 1911 letter written to the *Tampa Morning Tribune* a young Cuban, M. A. Montejo wrote, “We Cubans have come here in search of personal freedom, in return for which we brought with us capital, talent, honest labor, and morality.”³⁸⁹ Securing a Tuskegee education was viewed by Cubans as a possible way to secure those ambitions.

³⁸⁶ Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute: Minutes, General Faculty, October, 1903-1920, Box 937 Reel 694, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁸⁷ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 2: 1860-1889*, 415.

³⁸⁸ JF Domenech to Booker T. Washington, January 10, 1912, Box 416 Reel 338, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁸⁹ M.A.. Montejo Letter to Tampa Morning Tribune, September 12, 1896, Box 574 Reel 433, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

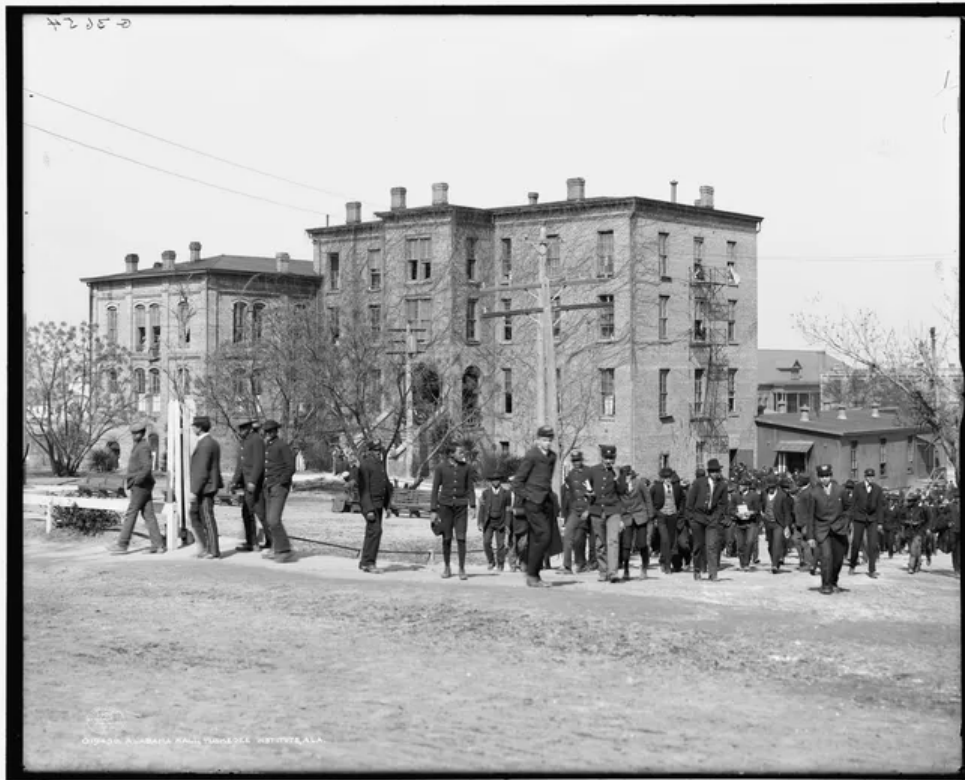


Figure 6.1 Alabama Hall, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama (1906). Detroit Publishing Co., Copyright Claimant, and Publisher Detroit Publishing Co.

Washington's belief that Cuba was fertile ground for his vision of technical education as a pathway to racial liberation was buttressed by a steady stream of messages he received from Afro-Cuban during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Students like Fernando Calderon wrote letters to Washington, expressing their eagerness to the Tuskegee principal. "I am very anxious to be at your school," wrote Calderon, "as I want to possess a trade so I could do better than what I am doing now."³⁹⁰ The experiences of Afro-Cuban men and women were divided along gender lines. Craftsmen found Tuskegee's "industrial" program to be suitable for their sons, young Black Cuban women found the "normal" aspect of the school's curriculum appealing as many Afro-

³⁹⁰ Fernando Calderon to Booker T. Washington, December 16, 1911, Box 416 Reel 338, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Cuban women hope securing teaching positions in Cuba's school system offered the best path towards social mobility while maintaining gender norms.

While many Afro-Cubans wanted to attend Tuskegee's normal school, Afro-Cuban women were largely excluded from Tuskegee. In some cases, they were overlooked and ignored by the school and the U.S. occupation government. One such student, Juana Cárdenas, persistently pestered the school for admission. After unsuccessfully applying for admission in 1900, she wrote to the school again one year later. "With great pains I have saved the money to pay my way to your Normal College," wrote Cárdenas, "On the 8th of June of last year I received a letter from you where it was stated that you were unable to pay the transportation of new students from Cuba, but that you might provide otherwise. Are you able and willing to help me? If it is [so], and I pray the Lord it will be so, He and my family will thank you for it."³⁹¹ Despite Cárdenas's persistent efforts, there is no record of her attending the school. Of the eleven new students who went to Tuskegee in the fall of 1901, only two of them were women: María Casanova, who came with her brother Patrocino, and Sixta Ramírez, the sister of Celestina Ramírez, who was already a student at the school. The relative absence of Cuban female students was a persistent pattern. Throughout the two decades of Cuban attendance at Tuskegee, only four of the students were women. The school, however, advertised its commitment to coeducation in recruitment pamphlets and ads. Tuskegee's leaders, like the leaders of other Black American schools, saw themselves as preparing special roles for women in its project of racial uplift. The absence of Afro-Cuban women

³⁹¹ Juana Cárdenas to Booker T. Washington, June 28, 1901, Box 905 Reel 683, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

was less a byproduct of Tuskegee's recruitment process than a result of Afro-Cuban families' reticence to sending their daughters faraway, shirking their domestic duties at home for the possibilities of education.

The Afro-Cuban Revolutionary Spirit and Tuskegee

Military Governor of Cuba Leonard Wood lent his continued support to technical and normal education for Cubans. Wood, who believed fiercely in the superiority of American ways and institutions, aimed almost single-handedly to transform Cuba into a mirror of United States society. For Wood, education was to purify Cuban minds. He believed that American schools could persuade Cubans to forgo their Spanish ways and embrace enlightened American ideals. For Wood, education was the key to a cultural revolution that could reconstruct Cuban society for the benefit of Cubans and Americans. To achieve this, US schools needed to be readily available to accept students and provide them with the necessary resources. Wood reasoned that given the opportunity, Cubans would flock to the schools and once educated they would recognize the superiority of American over Spanish values and patterns of behavior. "Success in Cuba," he said, "is so easy that it would be a crime to fail."³⁹²

Even after the end of Wood's governorship in 1902, his reforms endured and so did the interest of students wanting to pursue American educational opportunities. For one thing, the ideas and revolutionary spirit of José Martí were congruent to America's educational system. Martí advocated for universal compulsory schooling and favored practical, utilitarian instruction over classical education. He urged that the church be dissociated from public education in regard to both content and administrative structure. And he argued that great effort should be expended in securing an adequate force of teachers. Above all, he believed in the almost mystical power of

³⁹² Hermann Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood: A Biography* (New York: Harper Bros., 1931), 260-261.

education to benefit every individual.³⁹³ Wood believed that the best way to get Cubans to buy into the Americanization of education was to incorporate many of Martí's ideas into the new educational direction. Wood's immediate successor, President Tomas Estrada Palma, was himself an eminent educator and supporter of Afro-Cuban rights. As an exile in the United States while Cuba was a Spanish colony, Estrada opened a secondary boarding school named Central Valley in New York for the sons of other exiles, and himself taught language and literature. The school gained fame for its innovative methods and unwillingness to compromise Cuban values and customs in favor of North American ways. It was also highly egalitarian, admitting Black children and not charging poor pupils for tuition and lodging.³⁹⁴ Schools like Central Valley and New Paltz, which transformed itself into a normal school in 1884, had welcomed Cuban students before the first students arrived at Tuskegee. Cuban students realized the benefits of a normal education before Tuskegee, but Tuskegee's program and its resources offered the best opportunity to see their vision of progress met.

Martí's advocacy for racial unity and improved education sparked a wave of Afro-Cubans to form organizations that promoted equality for Afro-Cubans and greater opportunities for practical education. For example, El Partido de Independiente de Color (PIC), was founded as an organization that supported and facilitated Afro-Cubans' integration into Cuba's educational, social, and political spheres. The party also promoted the idea of racial self-respect and pride among the island's Black communities. In the wake of the passing of Cuba's Morúa law in 1910, which banned Black political parties, the PIC appealed to the President William Howard Taft, invoking the third article of the Platt Amendment which stated that the US would

³⁹³ Emma Perez, *Historia de la Pedagogía en Cuba: Desde los Orígenes Hasta la guerra de Independencia* (Havana: Cultural, S.A., 1945), 308.

³⁹⁴ Emma Perez, *Historia de la Pedagogía en Cuba: Desde los Orígenes Hasta la Guerra de Independencia* (Havana: Cultural, S.A., 1945), 351-352.

protect the life, property, and individual liberty of the citizens of Cuba. The petition to President Taft asked: “to accept our most solemn protest in the name of the Independent Party of Color against outrages against our persons and our rights by the armed forces of the Cuban Government.”³⁹⁵ The work and rage of the PIC came to head in an uprising in May 1912 as PIC members and other Afro-Cubans were killed at the hands of the Cuban government that had US military support. The revolutionary spirit and pride of Afro-Cubans persisted and endured in the students that enrolled at Tuskegee who hoped that their Hampton-Tuskegee education could help bring about necessary change in Cuba that would protect the lives and freedoms of Afro-Cubans.

A revolutionary spirit lifted many Cuban students while at Tuskegee despite pressure to conform to Tuskegee’s conservative and rigorous values. Constant drill, extended study hours, manual labor through trade school, curfews, excessive fines, suspensions, and demerits made life at Tuskegee extremely difficult for them. In addition, they also faced discrimination at Tuskegee for being “outsiders.” In one instance, several Cuban students were intimidated and assaulted by other American Tuskegee students and faculty. In a letter to Booker T. Washington, the students wrote that Tuskegee officials “...told our parents we would be treated all right up here, then when we came back and that little disturbance came up, Mr. Jackson [Tuskegee’s mathematics teacher] cried out ‘why dont you come back and take the whole crowd, meaning the Cuban boys.’”³⁹⁶ Cuban students were also criticized for their diets, which differed from the diets of Tuskegee’s African American population, and were often the last to receive new school uniforms. These issues were a major reason behind why Afro-Cuban students had a difficult time adjusting to the

³⁹⁵ Louis Perez, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902–1934* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986), 151.

³⁹⁶ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 201.

Tuskegee environment, but they maintained that the Hampton-Tuskegee education was their best strategy for evoking change in Cuba, so they continued to endure and enroll.

Cuban students, disillusioned by the harsh reality of “otherness” at Tuskegee, wrote letters to the *New York Herald* sharing their experiences of mistreatment of not only themselves but of other foreign students as well. The Cuban students recalled one instance in which they were late to supper because they were out playing and Dr. Alonzo Kenniebrew, Tuskegee’s resident physician, had ordered the boys working in the kitchen to attack the Cuban students. “During the Scuffle, German [one of the Tuskegee kitchen workers] jumped on Sixto [Rodriguez] and bruised him up very bad...Dr Kenniebrew, German and the boys that worked in the kitchen, came up behind us as we were going and remarked that we had a pistol in the crown. Dr Kenniebrew then gave German his pistol and told him to ‘Kill the black Cuban.’”³⁹⁷ Despite incidents like what Sixto Rodriguez detailed, Afro-Cuban students continued to buy into Tuskegee’s overall mission. “When we reflected and thought of the harm it would do to the school, we refrained from doing so; especially on your account, because you are responsible for us and we do not want to put you in any trouble,” they wrote to Washington.³⁹⁸ They put their faith in him to bring due justice to their concerns, Washington responded in a letter shortly thereafter that “The committee also decided that justice to the Cuban students demands that they be informed by the Principal that this institution does not countenance such actions on the part of its teachers.”³⁹⁹ The process of creating multicultural education at Tuskegee was not easy for students and administrators.

³⁹⁷ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 5: 1899-1900*, 200.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 224.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 174.

Warnings and suspension records demonstrate the difficulties that Cuban students had with adjusting to Tuskegee's demands. Students like Emileo Trenard were considered to have a "dangerous character," which insisted that he liked to, "fight all the time."⁴⁰⁰ Another student, Esteban Saldana, was reported for poor behavior. Washington wrote to Estaban Saladana's mother, Eliterio Saldana, informing her that her son was exhibiting "terrible behavior." Eliterio Saldana wrote to Washington "begging for kindness" and asking the teachers to "correct" her son "using such means as may be necessary should he not pay attention to the peaceful observation [of instruction]."⁴⁰¹ Saldana received citations for constantly disrupting study hall sessions and being absent. From January to March 1911, Saldana was written up for repeatedly refusing to go to school. By the end of the school semester, Saldana committed more openly defiant offenses of refusing to obey school direction and defacing of school property. He was ultimately suspended. Students also had difficulties in adjusting because the learning curve was not adjusted for Cuban students, who were expected to meet all of Tuskegee's requirements despite lacking the cultural and educational background of American-born students.

Underperforming students were often expelled and sent home. Such was the case of Pedro Sotolongo. Writing on behalf of Sotolongo's father, J.M Gomez, begged Washington and Tuskegee for Pedro Sotolongo to remain enrolled in school despite his son's poor performance.⁴⁰² Warren Logan, Tuskegee's treasurer and member of Tuskegee's Executive Council, informed Gomez that Pedro had "proved himself wholly unsatisfactory in every way and is not at all appreciative of what is being done for him. He seems to not realize the purpose

⁴⁰⁰ Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute: Minutes, General Faculty, October, 1903-1904, Box 938 Reel 694, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁰¹ Eluterio Saldana to Booker T. Washington, February 21, 1911, Box 911 Reel 685, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁰² JM Gomez to Warren Logan, December 11, 1915, Box 918 Reel 687, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

he is here for.”⁴⁰³ While some accommodations were made for Cuban students, they were expected to assimilate the Tuskegee culture which made their adjustment difficult. Tuskegee’s aims mirrored imperialist ambitions in that both wanted to create a cadre of obedient, orderly, civilized individuals. Forcing Cuban students to forgo their identity and adopt both an American and Tuskegee identity highlight the inequalities of Pan-Africanism. Failing to assimilate Tuskegee’s values, Washington believed, would lead to the downfall of Afro-Cubans and their struggle. Washington articulated his message in a December 1905 speech called “The Survival of the Fittest”:

You will have to realize, more and more, that neither our [Black people’s] previous condition, attracting, as it may have, sympathy and pity in the past, nor our color, will help us forward in an appreciable degree...Unless educated men are wise enough to put their education into agricultural, mining and other fundamental industries, you will find [Cuba] with all its wealth will lose its hold on its island just as the Indian’s country has passed from the jurisdiction of the red man.⁴⁰⁴

Washington failed to realize the racial, social, and political complexities of Cuba, which led to differing experiences and outcomes of Tuskegee’s Cuban student body.

Julio Despaigne, an Afro-Cuban student who attended Tuskegee from 1905-1906, highlighted the conflicts over the issue of Cuban students accepting the Tuskegee spirit. Despaigne wrote, “When they [Cubans] come here none of them know the American customs. It is impossible for them to learn their instruction with their Cuban customs.”⁴⁰⁵ He believed that several adjustments would make the process of social adjustment smoother. First, Despaigne believed newly arrived foreign students should be kept in separate dorms from those already at the institution. He argued that often the older students had a somewhat negative influence on

⁴⁰³ Warren Logan to JM Gomez, December 24, 1915, Box 918 Reel 687, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁰⁴ Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 8: 1904-1906* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 456-457.

⁴⁰⁵ Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers Volume 8: 1904-1906*, 366.

newer students. Second, he suggested Spanish-speaking students be taught only by Americans, which would help in the integration process of Cuban students but also in the Americanization process. Despaigue remained at Tuskegee until his graduation in 1908. His advice proved valuable for creating a “more suitable” atmosphere, not only for Spanish-speaking students but for foreign students as a whole and the administration readily adhered to his advice. Washington forwarded the letter to Major Julius Ramsey, the Commander of the Tuskegee Cadets, emphasizing, “It contains many matters that will be valuable to keep in mind.”⁴⁰⁶

Despite the challenges Afro-Cuban students faced, many thrived at Tuskegee and their successes were felt in Cuba. Adolfo Perez, a student at Tuskegee, penned a thank you letter to Washington, appreciating what Tuskegee had meant to him and other Afro-Cubans. “I have a great pleasure to write to you,” Perez wrote, “in demonstration of my gratitude for the work that you are doing in favor of ‘our race,’ hoping that good and great deal of our young people are taking such opportunities.”⁴⁰⁷ Cuban students over the course of their time at Tuskegee were able to break down some cultural barriers between them and their American counterparts. Tuskegee allowed for Cuban students to celebrate Cuban holidays and practice cultural customs. Cuban students were adamant however that the celebrations should not solely involve Cubans but other Tuskegee students as well. Despite its rigid environment, the Tuskegee Institute became a point of contact for peoples throughout the African diaspora. Afro-Cubans, Afro-Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and Africans all came to celebrate one another because they were bought into the idea of racial pride and improvement. The Cuban student club wrote to the Executive Council, “The Cuban Students have by request of your kindness to grant them permission to

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 364.

⁴⁰⁷ Adolfo Perez to Booker T. Washington, February 14, 1912, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

celebrate... now the 3rd anniversary of the unification of the Cuban republic” to which the school obliged.⁴⁰⁸



Figure 6.2 The Club Atenas in Havana, shortly after it opened in 1930.Box 458, Folder 11092. Courtesy of Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Afro-Cuban students in becoming more connected with groups within the African diaspora, also came to appreciate how the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education could benefit all groups within the diaspora. The effects of imperialism and Jim Crow strengthened the relationship between Cuban, African and African American students. Sharing experiences of hardship and oppression, Afro-Cuban students believed that Tuskegee and largely the United States could be a positive force for good in uplifting Black people. Julio Despaigne, for instance, while noting “the American treat the negro bad too,” he argued that “the negro have more

⁴⁰⁸ Cuban Student Club to the Executive Council, May 1905, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

protection here than there [Africa].”⁴⁰⁹ Despaigne highlighted that despite the claim that “European nation[s] go to Africa because they want [to] help the African[s] to be civilized citizen[s]. That is far from the truth...European nation are not philanthropic.”⁴¹⁰ Despaigne fully supported Tuskegee’s vision and argued that other diasporic people did as well in that once they received their education, they would go back to their country and teach their families and friends, spreading the message of Tuskegee’s virtues and its importance. Afro-Cubans pushed for the United States to continue its civilizing mission of education via the Hampton-Tuskegee model.

Cuban students wanted to integrate into campus life at Tuskegee. They organized a Cuban student club and several Cuban students contributed to the *Tuskegee Student*, the school’s student newspaper. Cuban students even petitioned Tuskegee’s Executive Council to commemorate Cuban holidays at the school. In 1909, several students requested a full day off to celebrate the anniversary of Cuba’s independence and although they were denied the full day off, they were granted half a day to celebrate.⁴¹¹ While the differences between Afro-Cuban students and their American classmates did occasionally manifest themselves in ugly ways, the largest obstacle that Cuban students often had to overcome centered around Tuskegee’s Executive Council. To add to the stress of Cuban students, home life back in Cuba often complicated their experiences. In 1906, a Cuban student wrote, “I have been here two terms and I am working every day, but my health does not help me in my purpose for every month I had to go to the hospital. Now, my people who used to assist me are in a sad condition with the distraction of my

⁴⁰⁹ Julio Despaigne to Booker T. Washington, April 7, 1906, Box 906 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴¹⁰ Julio Despaigne to Booker T. Washington, April 7, 1906, Box 906 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴¹¹ Letter from Armando Marrero, Pedro Nunez, and Fernando Dominich, May 3, 1909, Box 909 Reel 684, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

home.”⁴¹² This student, like others in similar positions, hoped to secure vacant scholarships which the school made available for Cuban students. Although they naturally wanted the scholarships to alleviate the economic burden of attending school, they framed their appeals around Tuskegee's leaders' view of their mission. Students noted the school's general “kindness” and “encouragement,” which reaffirmed their goals. “I will be able to study,” wrote a Cuban student, “and I will be a worthy representative of Tuskegee when I go to Cuba.”⁴¹³

Tuskegee's Cuban alumni returned to Cuba not only equipped with new skills and knowledge, but also a rejuvenated revolutionary spirit. In this space, returning alum operated under a new purpose and with new, progressive expectations. Many Cuban students obtained the necessary skills to be successful and productive citizens while at Tuskegee. Carlos Lépez de Céspedes, grandson of former Cuban governor and Afro-Cuban rights activist Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, attended Tuskegee in 1906. Céspedes attended Tuskegee to study civil engineering. Combining his Tuskegee education and his revolutionary heritage, Céspedes believed he would be able to create positive change for Black Cubans.⁴¹⁴ Other Students like Luis Valdez, following in the footsteps of Céspedes, represented both the Tuskegee spirit and Cuba Libre. After graduating from Tuskegee in 1908, Valdez returned to Cuba and became a successful architect who hoped to inspire a new generation of Tuskegee educated Black Cubans. He became a founding member of Club Atenas which he also designed, and it grew to become the most prominent Afro-Cuban Society in Cuba.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹² Letter to Booker T. Washington, July 18, 1906, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴¹³ Letter to Booker T. Washington, July 18, 1906, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴¹⁴ “Reformatórios Agrícolas en Cuba,” *La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico*, July 14, 1906, 4.

⁴¹⁵ Guridy, *Forging Diaspora*, 56.

Conclusion

While Tuskegee's Cuban graduates did experience some successes, the Tuskegee-Cuba experiment achieved mixed results. Afro-Cuban leaders and Tuskegee who hoped that industrial education would be able to respond to the needs of Black Cubans, were instead disillusioned as Cuban society under the auspices of the United States conformed to the old Spanish mold. For example, teaching contracts of faculty who underperformed were renewed because of their personal connections and because of their whiteness while many Afro-Cuban teachers were removed or struggled to find work.⁴¹⁶ Despite these setbacks, the U.S. occupational authorities, Tuskegee, and the Cuban government continued to stress the benefits of industrial education. In their rush to provide schools and teachers, US officials hastily and haphazardly formulated teacher certification plans, much to the detriment of Tuskegee alumni who graduated with teaching degrees and struggled to secure employment upon their return to Cuba. Non-Afro-Cubans were given examination answers ahead of time and it was overlooked by school boards who encouraged the hiring of friends, family, and donors.⁴¹⁷ Because schools were modeled after the similar school systems in the United States, the Americans encouraged such abuses. American officials encouraged the eschewing of classical education in favor of practical education because they, like Tuskegee and its supporters, believed that normal and industrial education would have a greater appeal to the masses so there was strong US support for Afro-Cubans seeking education in the United States.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁶ Munson Steamship Line, *The Cuba Review and Bulletin* (New York: Munson Steamship Line, 1914), 376.

⁴¹⁷ Jose F. Martinez Diaz, *Historia de la Educación Pública en Cuba desde el descubrimiento hasta nuestros Días y causas de su fracaso* (Pinar del Río: Imprenta La Casa Villalba, 1943), 66-109.

⁴¹⁸ Munson Steamship Line, *The Cuba Review and Bulletin* (New York: Munson Steamship Line, 1914), 376.

On the one hand, the Americans were able to achieve enormous success in enrolling pupils, building schools, and recruiting teachers because they directed unprecedented resources into developing the school system. Insofar as the Americans were able to bestow rewards on the system's participants — parents, students, teachers, school authorities, politicians — the Cubans responded positively to their methods and success was assured. To parents and children, education held the promise of securing a better way of life for the future. To teachers, school officials, and others, the school system represented good jobs. To the idealistic it meant participation in developing a democratic society. However, these achievements tended to conceal deep flaws in the system.⁴¹⁹ Black Cubans were successfully enrolled in schools, even in disproportionately greater numbers than white children, the schools continued to be controlled by whites to their own advantage. Hence, even though Black people constituted about one-third of the overall population, and more than one-third of the public-school population, only 3 percent of the teachers in public schools were Black.⁴²⁰ While the connection between Tuskegee and Cuba dwindled after Washington's death, Cuban alumni carried on the Tuskegee legacy upon their return home. Concerned with the lack of secondary education for Cuba's Black population, several of Tuskegee's Afro-Cuban alumni founded the Instituto Booker T. Washington in Havana which offered Afro-Cubans elementary and advanced education.⁴²¹ Afro-Cubans interpreted the Tuskegee spirit for themselves as they did not view it as simply "schooling for the new slavery."⁴²² More importantly, however, they used Tuskegee's resources to redefine

⁴¹⁹ Superintendencia de Escuelas de Cuba, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Public Schools Together with the Annual Reports of the Provincial Superintendents and Others* (Havana: Rambla & Bouza, Printers, 1902), 164.

⁴²⁰ *Havana Post*, July 21, 1901.

⁴²¹ Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 131.

⁴²² The term "schooling for the new slavery" is the central argument in Donald Spivey's *Schooling for the New Slavery*. Donald Spivey, *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978).

themselves and carve out space in the new Cuba. These students merged Washington's message of uplift with independence and nationalist teachings of Afro-Cuban patriots in their own way lifted themselves up through education at Tuskegee.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

As the second half of the twentieth century began, a number of significant events challenged Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee model of education and reshaped his legacy. First, beginning in the 1950s, European colonial governments started the process of decolonization, granting independence to their African colonies. Washington's words of imploring Black people to "cast it [their buckets] down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions" endured as various African governments have continued to push for TVET (Technical and Vocational Education Training) programs.⁴²³ While these programs have government support, the criticisms of technical and vocational training that endured throughout Washington's lifetime and after his death endured as students sought general education opportunities: lack of gainful employment opportunities, low wages, and low quality of the curriculum.⁴²⁴ In other instances, like South Africa after 1953, missionary schools that taught vocational and technical instruction were put under state control and many were either closed or had their funding significantly reduced. The Tuskegee model also, unbeknownst to Tuskegee officials, laid the blueprint to creating a low-wage, disempowered labor force as was the case in Liberia under the Firestone corporation who used the Booker Washington Institute in Kakata to achieve such a goal.

In Latin America, particularly in Puerto Rico and Cuba, the legacies of Washington and Tuskegee were found not in its institutions as much as it was in its people. Many Afro-Puerto

⁴²³ Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery: An Autobiography* (New York: Doubleday, Page, & Co., 1901), 219.

⁴²⁴ "Transforming Education in Africa: An Evidence-Based Overview and Recommendations for Long-Term Improvements. A Report by UNICEF and the African Union Commission," *UNICEF*: UNICEF, 2021.

Rican students attended Tuskegee to obtain their teaching certification so they could become educators in Puerto Rico. The enrollment of Puerto Rican students at Tuskegee was already underway by the turn of the twentieth century and so was the construction of the Industrial Normal School in Fajardo, Puerto Rico. Its mission was to prepare teachers for Puerto Rico's new US-controlled educational system.⁴²⁵ The school was mirrored after Tuskegee's teacher training program and several Tuskegee graduates went on to become teachers and administrators at the college as it expanded in scope and scale over the course of the twentieth century. By 1950 the normal school had become the College of Education of Puerto Rico. In Cuba, Fidel Castro's communist regime severed Tuskegee's connections to the island in the 1950s.

From 1915 to 1950, the Tuskegee model of education and the legacy of Booker T. Washington had already undergone significant change as African American students demanded a type of education that did not limit their educational, political, social, and economic aspirations. The Tuskegee Model could not withstand the shifting dynamics in America as moves towards self-determination for African Americans ramped up in the latter part of the 1920s and onward. According to W.E.B. Du Bois, "...the industrial school has failed because with a definite object it lacked appropriate method to gain it."⁴²⁶ Industrial education was unable to adapt to "new branches of industry, new techniques [that] are continually opening...[which] call for changing curricula and adjustments [which are] puzzling for a school and a set course of study [like Tuskegee]."⁴²⁷ Even while seeing its limits, many African Americans, including Du Bois, as well

⁴²⁵ "Las Profesoras de Ciencias Domésticas y Los Planes del Departamento: Importantes y Categóricas Declaraciones de Mr. Edward H. Bainter, Comisionado de Educación," *Boletín Mercantil de Puerto Rico*, Aug 9, 1913, 8.

⁴²⁶ Philip Foner, ed., *W.E.B. Du Bois Speaks Volume 2: Speeches and Addresses* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), 63.

⁴²⁷ Foner, ed., *W. E. B. Du Bois Speaks Volume 2: Speeches and Addresses*, 65.

as wealthy white philanthropists to an extent, hoped to improve on industrial education instead of abandoning it because they still hoped it could help African Americans achieve autonomy and independence. The difference between Du Bois and interest groups invested in schools like Tuskegee was that interest groups still wanted to promote technical education over higher education. They believed that the institutions most effectively leading the way to “self-determination” of the African American race were both Hampton and Tuskegee.

The need for higher education colleges like Fisk and Howard were noted but the belief was that there was a wider need of schools such as Hampton and Tuskegee to help African Americans get on their feet economically.⁴²⁸ Schools like Tuskegee and Hampton faced opposition not just from educated African Americans and proponents of African American self-determination, but also from their own students.⁴²⁹ Realizing that opportunities were slim in the job market and that an industrial education did not necessarily mean job security and success, students demanded that the system of education at Tuskegee and Hampton change. In 1927, the students at Tuskegee went on strike and voiced their complaints. A letter written in *The Nation* noted that the Tuskegee model of education had long and tirelessly been exploited Black people. They attested that the model was based on an outdated program of industrial training for African Americans that discouraged college work, exploiting the methods of ‘learning by doing.’ Tuskegee’s program was forced to change after the South established certain standards of education for teachers, both Black and white, and schools like Hampton and Tuskegee were well below the standards. This change in educational standards led to Hampton graduates becoming teachers, physicians, and lawyers instead of cooks, carpenters, and farmers. Tuskegee University

⁴²⁸ "Education the Only Way," *New York Times*, October 01, 1924.

⁴²⁹ Robert Russa Moton, “The Negro: Steady Progress,” *London Times*, July 4, 1922, vi.

was slow in revamping its curriculum but the strictness that was synonymous with the Tuskegee model was even slower to change. A new era of U.S. imperialism that was ushered in with the advent of the Cold War renewed the connection of the struggles of Tuskegee students to people impacted by U.S. intervention.

In 1968, a revolution took place at Tuskegee led by engineering students, who were most associated with Tuskegee's brand of practical education. Tuskegee graduates Gwen Patton, the first woman president of the Student Government Association (SGA) at Tuskegee and Wendell Paris, who was a founding member of the Tuskegee Advancement League which was an SNCC affiliated organization at the Tuskegee Institute, helped create an opening for a new crop of leaders to seize the political power on campus. On December 12, 1967, Tuskegee's engineering students did just that; they sent a five-page letter to the dean of their department, laying out a series of complaints and recommendations for improving Tuskegee's curriculum including the need to upgrade facilities, but circled back again and again to one central problem: poor instruction.⁴³⁰ The Vietnam War only exacerbated these issues as Tuskegee's male student body was required to participate in the campus' ROTC program. Members of Tuskegee's student body were angered over the war because of the treatment of Black American soldiers and because they did not wish to fight in a war that did not concern them. The criticism of the war among Tuskegee's student body was heightened after Louis Farrakhan, spokesman for the Nation of Islam, visited the campus and spoke, remarking that "The wars [of imperialism] are not going to stop until the white man's power to rule is completely broken down."⁴³¹

⁴³⁰ Chester Higgins, *Student Unrest, Tuskegee Institute: A Chronology* (Tuskegee: Tuskegee Institute, 1968), 4-9.

⁴³¹ Mary Ellen Gale, "Muslims Tell Students: Blacks In, Whites Out," *Southern Courier*, February 17, 1968, 1.

The Vietnam War provided the backdrop for the 1968 Tuskegee Uprising and on April 6, 1968, Tuskegee's engineering students along with roughly 300 others, openly demonstrated and occupied Dorothy Hall where Tuskegee's board of trustees were meeting. The students invoked the "Black University" concept which was intended to connect the demands of Tuskegee's Black student body within a global context. These academic revisions included a greater emphasis on Afro-American history and culture, and specifically the addition of an Afro-American history course as a general requirement, as well as the addition of specific, Black-oriented tracks of study in sociology, psychology, and "all of the social sciences." They also proposed a new African Studies Program, and mandatory Ibo and Swahili courses as foreign language requirements.⁴³² These proposals were intended to center Tuskegee within the African diaspora, making Pan-African connections in a way that although was different in scope than the Washington's Tuskegee model yet maintained the spirit of connecting Black peoples via education and using the avenues created by imperialism vis-à-vis the anti-war response to the Vietnam and the Black Power movement. Looking at the broader impact of Booker T. Washington's plan for the Tuskegee model concerning Pan-Africanism and imperialism is helpful in understanding the complex and complicated history of Washington and Tuskegee. Limiting this approach to the success vs. failure argument fails to consider the long-term vision of Tuskegee and the intentions behind Washington and his supporters' strategic vision. A comprehensive assessment of Washington and Tuskegee supporters must account for why they aligned with imperialist powers to achieve their objectives, how they offered strategies to potentially counteract obstacles they encountered, and how Tuskegee's legacy of Pan-Africanism

⁴³² Brian Jones, *The Tuskegee Student Uprising: A History* (NYU Press, 2022), 151.

and education impacted Tuskegee and Black peoples in the U.S. and abroad after Washington's death in 1915.

Booker T. Washington's strategy persisted well beyond 1915, as his successors, other Pan-Africanists, colonial governments, and philanthropic groups envisioned improving the Tuskegee model to meet the aims of colonial governments, interest groups, and Black people. As a gradualist and accommodationist in his views regarding Black advancement, Washington articulated a strategy that encouraged Black people to become skilled workers, hoping that if they became indispensable to the prosperity of whites, political and social rights would be granted to them. He believed Black people, starting with so little, would have to begin at the bottom, a bottom that they had been relegated to, and work up gradually to achieve positions of power and responsibility before they could demand equal treatment and rights even if it meant temporarily assuming a position of inferiority. His strategy was both protectionist of Black people as it attempted to protect them from racial violence and practical by encouraging Black entrepreneurship in the trades, agriculture, and education, all of which were available to Black people at that time. The Hampton-Tuskegee model was a path that had the potential to be a catalyst for change and social improvement. For these reasons, Tuskegee and its model of education attracted the attention of various groups that were connected and impacted by western imperialism.

A recurring question in the historiography of Washington and the Tuskegee model is whether or not it succeeded in improving the positions of Black people, given the ties to white philanthropic groups, private enterprises, and colonial officials. Certainly, its foundation was built on accommodationist and gradualist rhetoric, given Booker T. Washington's 1895 Atlanta Exposition Address, and among its loudest supporters were whites who sought to use industrial

education to inhibit the progress of Black people. Assessing the results and its applications provides insight into the successes of Tuskegee's work.

First, by 1900, Washington had established himself and was globally recognized as one of the foremost Black leaders in the United States, and shortly thereafter the world after the glowing reception of his work *Up from Slavery* (1901). Washington's promotion of Black entrepreneurship and education, which he argued were the building blocks of progress for Black people, inspired Black peoples abroad who saw the conditions they faced under imperialism as analogous to the conditions Black Americans faced under Jim Crow. Tuskegee officials, including Washington, made that connection and saw that the Tuskegee model offered a practical solution to their problems. In response, Washington and Tuskegee officials used their relationship with various entities to lend support to colonial government officials and other white stakeholders and their objectives while promoting practical solutions and assistance to Black people.

Tuskegee had varying degrees of success: overseeing the construction of Tuskegee-like schools, sending teachers to the colonies, the recruitment of students to Tuskegee, and the adoption of Tuskegee's curriculum. However, imperialist powers, philanthropic groups, and private enterprises exploited the Tuskegee model to meet their own needs of creating an obedient, productive, and low-wage labor force as was the case in Togo by the German colonial government and in Liberia by the Firestone Company; the South African government all but eliminated industrial education in 1953. By using imperialism to achieve their aims, Tuskegee, unintentionally, created a blueprint for imperialist powers used to further exploit their Black populations. By the middle of the twentieth century, the Tuskegee model of education had all but collapsed due to lack of funding and educational shifts in instruction. However, the spirit of

Tuskegee's mission persisted as a number of Tuskegee graduates became successful activists and Tuskegee's global connections abroad are still prevalent to this day. Washington and the Tuskegee model were not a resounding success, but they were hardly a catastrophic failure.

Afro-Puerto Ricans, Afro-Cubans, Liberians, Togolese, and Black South Africans attempted to use industrial education to become race leaders and economic independence within the imperialist system. After 1898, Afro-Puerto Rican and Afro-Cuban students were funneled into U.S. Black schools, like Hampton and Tuskegee, because of Jim Crow segregation. However, many students actively sought out Tuskegee because of their admiration of Booker T. Washington and their belief in the potential opportunities that practical education had to offer upon graduation. At Tuskegee, Afro-Puerto Rican and Afro-Cuban students confronted their Blackness, both shaping the culture of Tuskegee as it allowed for these groups to at times engage with their own culture, thus pushing against the Americanization process, and being shaped by Tuskegee as they confronted adversity because of their dual ethnicity. Several Tuskegee students did become influential members of their societies and help shaping politics, however many found the racial barriers back home too difficult to overcome, thus facing the same obstacles under a U.S.-influenced imperialist system as they did under Spanish colonial rule. For Africans, the results varied. Industrial education offered an appealing path towards upward mobility but the barriers they faced in Liberia, Togo, and South Africa were too difficult to overcome. Few Liberians achieved success via their Tuskegee education while the majority became cheap laborers in the very trades that were designed to help them. Regardless, even as Tuskegee's involvement waned during the mid-twentieth century, the connection between Tuskegee and African diaspora remained. Influential leaders like W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, D.D.T. Jabavu, and James Aggrey and others who carried on parts of Washington's vision continued to

push for industrial education and the defended benefits of learning trades. These variations of outcomes highlight the complexities of building Pan-African networks that left a lasting impact across the globe.

The aims of imperialist powers over the course of the twentieth century caused Tuskegee officials to adapt to the challenges these directions posed. Between 1900 and 1909, the German Colonial Economic Committee (KWK) funded Tuskegee teachers to come to Togo to teach Togolese people modern farming techniques and agricultural education in an effort to transform the colony into a sustainable source of cotton production. Throughout the nine-year period, the need to find a strand of cotton that could produce the highest yield and best quality was tasked to Tuskegee teachers to develop. The need to accomplish these goals not only placed a great deal of stress on Tuskegee teachers but on Togolese students who were required to work in the fields and stay in the classroom longer hours. Tuskegee teachers continued to argue to the colonial government that the Tuskegee model was designed to build character and uplift Black people, not subjugate them and Tuskegee officials were able to improve conditions for the Togolese while the expedition was under control of the KWK. However, in 1909, when the colonial government oversaw the expedition, the blueprint laid by Tuskegee helped German colonial officials maximize the labor of the Togolese workers. In Liberia, the story was similar. Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee officials were able to appeal to the U.S. government, including Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, regarding the plight of Liberia. Washington and Tuskegee officials were able to secure assistance from the U.S. government and private enterprises to help Liberia with their debt crisis. Washington believed that Liberia was severely lacking an economy that worked for the Liberian people, so he believed that the Tuskegee model offered a practical solution to their economic issues and to solving the issues

between native Liberians and the returnee population. However, after the Booker Washington Institute was opened in Kakata in 1929, the Firestone Company, who Tuskegee and other prominent Black leaders supported, assumed control of the college and used it to train a rubber plantation labor force. While Tuskegee was less hands-on in South Africa, they supported and influenced African leaders and Black South Africans who believed in the importance of industrial education, appealing to Black leaders, U.S. and foreign governments, and philanthropic groups to assist Black South African, however by the 1940s Tuskegee's assistance had all but ended as the Great Depression and World War II changed Tuskegee and South Africa's discourse.

Despite encountering the obstacles created by imperialist powers to expanding the reach of Tuskegee and building a Pan-African network via practical education, Tuskegee officials and students constructed a system that they believed could elevate the status of Black people. This network made up of Tuskegee officials, including Washington, Black intellectuals, and Black people in Latin America and Africa was committed to overcoming the social, economic, political, and political barriers that were created by imperialism, which mirrored Jim Crow policies in the U.S., through industrial education by working outside and inside the gray areas created by imperialism. In each case, whether it was Togo, Liberia, South Africa, Puerto Rico, or Cuba, the network Tuskegee created began to fracture over the course of the twentieth century as imperialist powers tightened their grip on their colonies and the direction of industrial education changed after the death of Booker T. Washington in 1915. Although the vision of Washington was carried on by his successors and his supporters, the changes that took place at Tuskegee affected the scope of the Tuskegee model and Tuskegee's involvement abroad. Washington's vision was flawed as the Tuskegee model failed to take into consideration that Jim Crow racism

and the racism of imperialist powers were too great to overcome through indirect approaches; industrial education was not a solution to eliminating racism, it merely created a foundation for the further exploitation of Black labor.

Historians have focused on Tuskegee's failure to successfully improve the lives of Black diasporic peoples through industrial education, viewing Booker T. Washington's alliance with imperialist powers as a self-interested bid to improve his power and prestige. Washington's 1895 "Atlanta Exposition Address" is often used to lend credence to these arguments. However, Washington should be viewed as a Black leader who was trying to find solutions that were attainable, limited the amount of white backlash, and could attract the most investment capital to support industrial education. While Washington had his critics throughout the Black diaspora, many of those same critics were also supporters. Marcus Garvey supported Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee model but was critical of Washington's focus on individual advancement rather than communal advancement. W.E.B. Du Bois supported industrial education but criticized Washington for telling Black people to forgo political advancement in favor of economic advancement.⁴³³ Garvey and Du Bois are viewed as Pan-African leaders and Booker T. Washington deserves to be in that conversation because they were all focused on a similar objective: offering solutions and support for Black people to overcome oppression. Expanding the view of Washington and Tuskegee offers a nuanced approach to understanding Washington and Tuskegee and their place within the African diaspora.

The key to a more nuanced understanding of Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee, and the African diaspora is a broader view, altering the narrative from Tuskegee's accommodation of white power structures to its complicated strategy of uplift for Black peoples. Assessing the

⁴³³ W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Co., 1909), 33-45.

involvement of Tuskegee abroad during the twentieth century and using imperialism to measure Tuskegee's Pan-African strategies highlights the successes and failures of Tuskegee but moves beyond that paradigm to detail the intentions and realities they faced. One outcome that alters the narrative of Booker T. Washington's accommodation of whites and disregarding the needs of Black peoples was Washington and Tuskegee officials' understanding of the plight of Black peoples in Africa and the Caribbean. Throughout his tenure as the Tuskegee Institute's principal, he worked tirelessly to bargain for educational assistance and monetary funds for Africans, Afro-Cubans, and Afro-Puerto Ricans. He helped secure financial assistance to Liberia and petitioned U.S. leaders to help Liberia fend off European intervention. Noting the poor condition of Liberia's economy and the lack of educational and occupational opportunities, Washington's successors helped construct a college in Kakata that is still open and bears the name of Booker T. Washington. In Togo, he sent students to help construct schools and implement educational programs to help the Togolese people. Although the expedition was sponsored by the German colonial government and the KWK, Washington urged colonial officials to let Tuskegee assume control of the expedition and called out acts of excessive violence towards the Togolese. In South Africa, Washington also called attention to the violence in South Africa and spoke about the plight of Black South Africans. In Puerto Rico and Cuba, Washington opened Tuskegee's doors to help Afro-Puerto Rican and Afro-Cuban students by offering them educational opportunities that had been denied to them under the Spanish colonial system and a number of these students went on to become successful. The biggest challenge Washington and Tuskegee faced were the colonial governments that erected racial barriers to maintain the racial hierarchy, a similar issue that Washington faced in the Jim Crow South, and which hindered Washington and Tuskegee's efforts.

Examining Booker T. Washington's relationship with other notable Pan-Africanists and the complexities and inequalities of Pan-Africanism through Tuskegee's experience alters the narrative of Pan-Africanism. In July 1900, the first Pan-African Conference was convened in London. Black people throughout the diaspora convened for three days to discuss a number of issues concerning Black people, including:

(1) To secure to Africans and their descendants throughout the world their civil and political rights; (2) To ameliorate the condition of our oppressed brethren in the continents of Africa, America, and the other parts of the world by promoting efforts to secure effective legislation; (3) to encourage our people in educational, industrial and commercial enterprises; (4) to foster friendly relations between the Cuacasian and African races....⁴³⁴

The larger aim was to promote unity among Black people throughout the diaspora. Washington lent his support to the conference even though he was not in attendance. Washington opened Tuskegee's doors and its resources to Black people from around the world. Furthermore, over the course of his career, while he had his critics, he had a number of prominent supporters throughout the diaspora. James Aggrey, D.D.T. Jabavu, Marcus Garvey, even W.E.B. Du Bois all admired Washington for his commitment to Black uplift and even though there was disagreement over the excessive insistence on industrial education, the Tuskegee model was argued to be a practical solution to helping the most distressed Black populations. Even after his death, Tuskegee officials carried on Washington's Tuskegee model in efforts to assist Black populations in Africa and in the United States for its domestic and foreign-born students. While at times they had to work within and outside of the imperialist system to accomplish the aims of imperialists and Black people, the commitment to helping Black people did not waiver. While some efforts were more successful than others, Washington and Tuskegee's efforts place them within the complicated histories of Pan-Africanism and the African diaspora.

⁴³⁴ "Pan-African Association," *The Colored American*, February 9, 1901, 8.

While acknowledging the works of other scholars, this study provides an assessment of the Tuskegee Institute's internationalism that highlights the efforts of Tuskegee and its use of the U.S. and European imperialist systems to assist Black people, and therefore arrives at a different conclusion regarding the legacy of Washington and Tuskegee. In this light, Washington and Tuskegee were not simply aligning themselves with white power structures but rather attempted to subvert them to their own advantage. Washington and Tuskegee in that same light also assume a more prominent position in the pantheon of Pan-Africanists. The legacy of Tuskegee did not end with Washington's passing nor did its influence and its focus on industrial end. Questions remain concerning the extent of influence of Washington and Tuskegee abroad and if that influence presently remains. Further study of the Black individuals and groups who were affected by Tuskegee outside the areas discussed would be helpful in providing a higher degree of clarity about the true impact of the Pan-African relationship. These questions are important because—as this study argues—Tuskegee's efforts spanned the twentieth century and are presently active in efforts abroad to expand technical education. A broader view provides a clearer picture of these efforts if they have had a significant impact on the individuals and groups in the postcolonial world, and how the efforts of Pan-Africanism have evolved at Tuskegee.

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