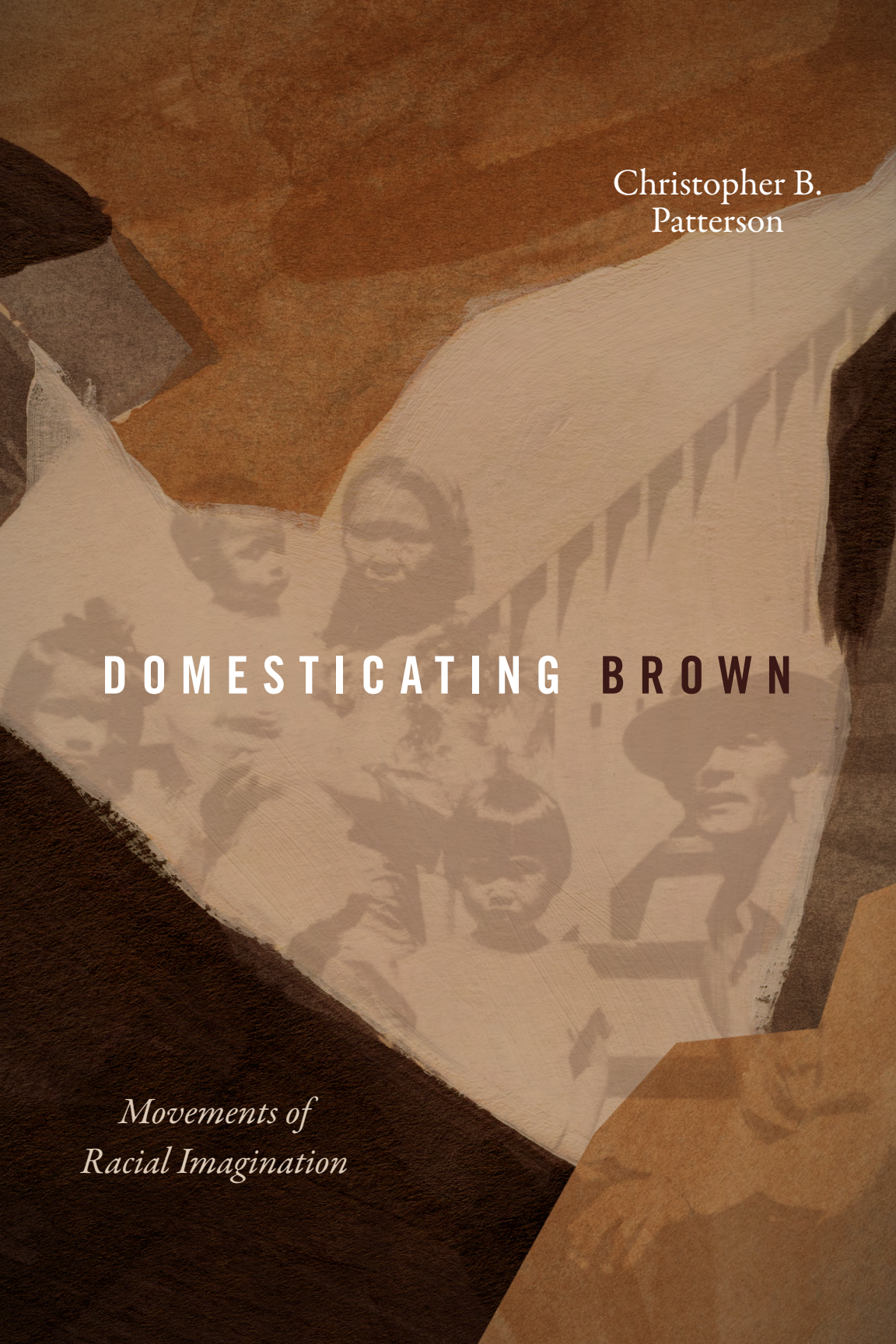
Christopher B.
Patterson
DOMESTICATING BROWN
Movements of
Racial Imagination

Domesticating Brown

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Domesticating Brown

Movements of Racial Imagination

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TURN:

Deadication

This book is ac/knowledge/ment

dedications to the dead

moving through worlds

of mothers, lovers, and friends

Contents

Acknowledgments

I am writing this on May 9, 2024, from the Professors for Palestine tent at the People's University for Gaza encampment within the University of British Columbia, my current home institution. Currently, a genocidal bombing campaign led by the state of Israel and supported by the United States and its allies has ended the lives of over 34,900 people in Gaza and injured over 78,000 others. I write from a university occupation, aware that every major university in Gaza has been decimated by bombs. I eat from the people's kitchen, knowing that all humanitarian aid has been cut off at the Rafah-Egypt border, intensifying the starvation and famine of over two million people.

I am writing this on day eleven of this encampment, which I have been present at and active within since day one. I am writing this while receiving constant phone *bings* from fellow organizers, letter writers, and safety rangers. I am writing this just after editing text for a teach-in, the third I plan to give here. I write this on an iPhone notepad titled "Kent State," the moniker I use to camouflage notes on direct actions and teach-in programming, a name that reminds me of the students who were massacred by the US military while speaking against the secret aerial bombing of a neutral country—Cambodia—which resulted in the deaths of thousands and a genocide that would kill millions.

"What would our world be like," I asked the students on day six of this encampment, "had the world listened to the students at Kent State, rather than murdered them?" Five years of aerial bombing preceded the deaths of those protesters, followed by five years of genocide. A university that refuses to acknowledge the ethical knowledge of student protest is a university that can only produce "knowledge."

This book, *Domesticating Brown*, began as a travel log of the colonial racemaking I saw while traveling through the Banana Pancake Trail of mainland

Southeast Asia in 2008. It later resurfaced through collections of notes written alongside the camp city of the Occupy movement in Seattle's downtown, then solidified within the art galleries and domestic worker alliances of Occupy Hong Kong in 2014. Now I write its final edits within a Palestine solidarity encampment. As such, this book connects entangled contexts; it modulates alongside the traffic of American war munitions. Here we remain exposed and overseen, we who refuse the demarcations separating the university and the camps of refugees, of migrant laborers, of open-air prisons, of those massified populations slated for exposure, debilitation, and death. The campus encampment: an intrusion of the inhumane into the space where humanity itself is produced.

An acknowledgments section often consists of many lists of names, giving space to individuals and communities that helped produce the book. In the Palestine solidarity encampment, we have no names. Some inhabitants I know now only by their camp names: Babes, Eggplant, Lilac, Meteor, Mothera, Solid, Hummous, Salmon, and Not-a-Name. As a colleague commented, "All these names make me feel like I've entered a science fiction novel." The encampment of administrative resistance is a speculative space because it is one created by the colonized, the brown worlds becoming undomesticated. We attend camp rallies and meetings in poly-queer disguise, with glossy pink sunglasses, netted kaffiyehs, and black COVID-19 masks. In this encampment I have seen students struggling with depression, self-hate, and grief smile, laugh, dance, and create for the first time, in ways no classroom has ever invited them to do. Here the students call me "Sky," the protagonist of my first novel: a suicidal young man who, like them, might turn his anger and grief into radical political action in solidarity with the victims of our own empire.

For any book that centers our colonial histories and our brownness, a traditional acknowledgments section will appear redundant. You will find names all throughout this book. In every chapter you will find expressions of gratitude. In the endnotes you will find Easter eggs of appreciation. In the afterword you will find grief toward those our communities have lost. What is an acknowledgment that lacks names? What kind of knowledge can such an acknowledgment create?

In this encampment our lack of identities tethers us together, commits us to our politics, and sees our ethical and moral commitments, not our titles, as central to who we are. This is where the project around brownness for me began, and where it is coming to a close.

As I wrote this last sentence, another buzz on my phone: The long-feared and anticipated Israeli invasion of Rafah, the last refuge for civilians in Gaza, has now begun.

I have to finish writing this now. It is still May 9, 2024, less than an hour after I began. I am stopping here because my shift is beginning, where we may undergo new safety training that will prepare us for an escalation that might occur tonight, tomorrow, or not at all. I cannot explain it here before I leave, but this feeling for me is a feeling of brownness: It is a feeling of enthrallment, of facing the machines of war in solidarity with Gaza, with Rafah, with Papua New Guinea, with Kashmir, with Kānaka Maoli, with Sudan, with Haiti, with Uighurs, with all those whom the colonial war touches, with all those who believe the permanency of war is not permanent: It is a thing and, like all things, can be struck in its neck and left out to bleed. It is we, the brown domesticated masses, who hold the knife.

Whatever the next hour brings ~ thank you for reading this, and for acknowledging us.

Foreword

FOR LIFE

The body is the site of physical and social experience, and as such cannot be denied the potential for generating knowledge.
—TERESIA K. TEAIWA, "bikinis and other s/pacific n/oceans"

Wherever invoked, brownness summons an archive of our embodied selves. Like for most people in the world, brownness has shaped my own history of deviations.

My mother's side of my family is descended, as far as we can tell, from a mixture of Filipino (Ilocano) and Chinese (likely Gaoshan/高山 peoples from Taiwan). Our certainty about this is paper-thin, as the primary patriarch from whom we are descended—Basilio Agsalud—was not, in fact, our biological kin. Debates thread through our annual gatherings about the racial background of his wife, my great-grandmother Luciana, who some say looks more Chinese than Filipino, as well as the racial mixture of her first husband, my biological great-grandfather, who disappeared from the archives and remains a mystery in our talk-stories.

With our pasts a blur, my family has remained living on or connected to the island of Oahu in the settler colony of Hawai'i for over a century, expanding family networks through intermarriage with people of Chinese, Japanese, white, Black, Khmer, and Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) descent, many of whom do not identify as Asian American or Filipino but as local or brown. This transpacific and oceanic sense of brown has nurtured particular affective affiliations within my extended family, yet has also shifted dramatically for my mother and siblings, who ended up in Portland, Oregon, where we became the only brown people on our block besides our Laotian neighbors.

My own sense of brown took root in Portland in relation to my white father; my Ilocana mother; my twin brother; my Black, Indigenous, and Filipina sister; and her half-white son. It grew with frequent visits to Hawai'i, where I was the lightest skinned of my family, and in Las Vegas, where my family moved when I was thirteen, a place where brownness was conceived as primarily Latino, or sometimes Filipino, but was always tied to minimum-wage service employment. The sense of brown that I experienced in Las Vegas was worlds apart from that of family belonging in Oahu or of hypervisibility in Portland. In Las Vegas I felt brownness mostly through the invisibility of brown labor, as I took jobs alongside other browned coworkers in movie theaters, warehouses, and sales floors. My sense of brown has shifted many times since. From Las Vegas I moved to Seattle, Washington, where brownness was often subsumed into Asianness; then to Gimhae, South Korea, where I was often grouped with Filipino entertainers; then to Nanjing, China, where I found brief community among South and Southeast Asian and Arab migrants; then to Hong Kong, where brownness most often signified migrant construction workers, criminalized exiles and refugees, and live-in domestic workers from Indonesia and the Philippines. Today I live in Vancouver, Canada, where brownness is usually imagined through colonized histories and diasporic generations of South Asians, who represent some of the most vulnerable populations within the city.[1]

In each instance of brownness I've experienced, my knowledge of what it meant to be brown fractured, bit by bit, eventually shattering my sense of how the world viewed me, and how I imagined myself. Whenever brownness emerged, it just as quickly slipped away, outside of any verifiable lineage, characteristics, or nation. Even now, as I remain in place, my brownness continues to shift, depending on who I am encountering, where they are, and what time of year it is (or how harsh the lighting). My body will read differently to different people. To some, I am white, white-passing. To others, I am East Asian. To others, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Latino, Middle Eastern. My brownness also changes depending on the season, as my skin is significantly darker in summer and lighter in winter. It depends too on my clothing style, on whether or not I am wearing glasses, on the way I walk, on the way I talk, on the type of people I surround myself with. These moving contextual elements that help dictate how others see me are entirely absent in most diversity languages and protocols, which tend to mark me and other brown peoples as passing or not passing as white, as being a visible minority or a non–visible minority, or as being mixed race. Despite institutionalized (mis)recognitions, these flexible racial encodings carry a privilege that many racialized people do not

have. I do not take this for granted. Being visually ambiguous—being brown or browned—can be both a blessing and a curse, a cage and a key.

~

Wherever it is invoked, brownness makes trouble. When racial categories become comfortable, brownness reveals contradictions. When lineage and tradition feel like the solid ground holding us up, brownness turns history into vapor. When we desire to protect our homes or our homelands, brownness enters as contamination, as virus. When our political allegiances feel sacrosanct, brownness turns our gaze to the desecrated, the unseen, the earth, the dirt.

~

Whenever brownness is invoked to mean a single people, a single history, I think of the many forms of brownness in my family and loved ones, peoples who are variously—and often seen as mixtures of—Filipino, Indigenous, Black, Japanese, Khmer, Chinese, Turkish, Arab, Korean, Latino, Laotian, South Asian, white. Who, among us, is more brown than anyone else? Then I think of my own body and its history of brown movement. When and where was I the most brown, and when the least brown? Was I brown when, returning to my white grandmother's house after a jog, a neighbor called the police, describing me as "a Black man in a hoodie"? Was I brown when, in the dead of a Canadian winter, a colleague told me that I shouldn't study race because "everyone will look at you and only see a white person"? Was there ever a perfect, Goldilocks middle ground, where I was most purely, definitively, brown? Or can we imagine that all of these experiences, and all of these people in my family circles, could be called *brown*, with no hierarchy among them, only the constant movement of a sliding, straying racial form?

~

Domesticating Brown seeks to understand not brown people as racialized subjects but rather the possibilities that the uprooting movements of brownness open for imagining race otherwise. I begin with my own storied articulation to understand how brownness alters from person to person, modifies its surroundings, and creates a multitude of brown meanings and ways of being. The futility of brownness as a singular, coherent racial form directs us to theories not of brownness but of brown movements, and to the scholarly and creative practices that emerge from its eruptive, disruptive paths.

If brownness cannot be separated from the desire to know brownness itself—or in the academic sense, to understand what brownness *is*—then brownness is not an object or an agent but a metaphor for an ecosystem of racial imaginings. Brownness, like all racial constructs, is not a thing, not matter than can be followed or defined without exposing the contradictions

of our own desires to follow and define it. But as Logan Smilges writes of their own crip and queer experiences, "some differences seem to matter more, and the differential mattering of those differences matters."[2] Though brownness might not be matter itself, our embodiments of brownness, even a single shade, matter, and create matter too.

Brownness frustrates in its movability, in its change and transition. It is also the metaphorical change of a musical composition, the "movement" that may pattern other forms but can also let go of deterministic definitions. Brown movement is the moment of political, social, and artistic movements, which claim an era only to shift away. It is also the material and putrid sense of "having a movement," as in to defecate, to take a shit (usually brown in color). Likewise, brown movement is the matter that remains with us, the critical and creative practices that end up sticking to our bodies, to our butts, as we continue to move through the world. Brown movement is thus akin to what Sandra Ruiz and Hypatia Vourloumis describe as the "momentum" that "undoes linear temporal and spatial orders," that's "already there and we need to attune our ears to hear it."[3]

To move with brownness is to follow the matter we are left with, to understand how it was needed, desired, discarded, made waste, and made anew. What are the problems of our world, our empire, our capitalist systems, our communities, that brownness, often imperfectly, becomes needed, desired, and discarded to solve?

~

Domesticating Brown attempts to manifest a poetic imaginary of a brown world. Édouard Glissant saw "the imaginary" as "all the ways a culture has of perceiving and conceiving of the world."[4] Multiple imaginaries intersect, activate, and change through encountering "the Other." For Glissant, these imaginaries are shaped by colonial forms of history and race-making meant to produce an "imagined transparency of relation," where racial histories and identities are taken as authentic and real, making the powers that structure them both legitimate and necessary.[5] Yet even these totalizing imaginaries can embark toward poetic relations with others, new creative imaginaries that do not reflect reality but refigure it, projecting imagination into reality. In doing so, as Paul Ricoeur wrote, a form of "productive imagination" emerges that can free itself "from the rule of the original, then provides a new aspect, a new dimension to reality."[6]

Following Glissant, this book's attempt to relate realms of knowledge across space and time cannot be categorized "as either a discipline or a science but, rather, as an imaginary construct of reality," one that can trace the imaginary's networks of culture, power, and language, without the "abusive generaliza-

tion" produced by empire's singular and totalizing view of itself.[7] Following Ricoeur, this book's melding of creative and analytical forms attempts to manifest a brown imaginary that can open "new ontological possibilities that were blocked by the already existing."[8] Wherever brownness emerges as an imaginary site for the ungovernable, untraceable, and unpredictable mass, it becomes marked for domestication through scientific categorizations and strategies of colonial containment.

~

The chapters of *Domesticating Brown* trace imagined domestications by following the overlapping racial formations of colonial Asia and Oceania, focusing on narratives of brown bodies and peoples, as well as the forms of creative imagination that reframe brownness. Specifically, I read across narratives of the brown body in Southeast Asia, southern China, the Philippines, and the Pacific Islands, focusing on the ways that brownness has been shaped by colonial travel narratives as well as Indigenous and Southeast Asian local narratives to reveal forms of creative and imaginative domestication that are characteristic of liberal empire. Each chapter of *Domesticating Brown* seeks to understand how colonial subjects and other marginalized peoples have strategized ways of resisting and reversing dominating notions of brownness through art, curation, and epistemological difference—in alternative imaginings, in sliding among shades of brown.

Since brownness does not move in a straight line, the chapters of this book too sway in a series of turns that Kandice Chuh might call "deliberately promiscuous," less an interweaving of disciplinary methods and more an interlacing of academic categories—of knowledge, of identity—with the messy forms of creative and speculative writing.[9] These chapters turn toward historical events and academic discourses to just as easily turn away from them, toward forms of fiction, poetry, and creative prose. By deviating from given genres, each chapter attempts to flow alongside brownness; by tethering storytelling to academic research, each chapter is a storied manifest of my own travels through brownness as I have experienced it. These chapters thus see brownness from its margins, untethered to a particular racial form or genealogy, a turn to the way that nonbrown peoples become brown, and the way brown peoples inhabit particular shades of brown. Thus, the "turns and turning" in these chapters follow the "inherent incoherence" of transpacific studies, where, as Tina Chen writes, ideas and methods are in constant "rotation, revolution, repression, relation, and recursivity."[10]

The introduction begins by tracing a very brief history of transpacific brownness, focusing on efforts to transform meanings of race during the colonial

projects in the Philippines, in Hawai'i, and during the Vietnam War. The second half reimagines brownness not through a deep archival dive but through the movement of a theoretical triptych that skims along the surface of brownness, moving from brownness as (1) a site for the ungovernable "brown mass," to (2) peoples marked for domestication through strategies of colonial containment, and to (3) the complex "shades" that reveal troubling genealogies and shameful intimacies.

Chapter 1 turns toward the academic and popular histories that express the tensions of yellowness and brownness in the mythos of the Mongol Empire. I present my short story "Crossing the Caucasus," as well as my own creative, academic, and racial relationship with the Mongols to explore histories and feelings of yellowness (as Mongolian or Mongoloid) in ways that presage and reframe the histories and feelings of brownness (as Arabic, as Indian, and as non-Mongolian Asians). Chapter 2 turns to the historical formations of brownness in my own migratory lineages within the Philippines and Hawai'i, and attempts to reframe migration as *motility*, where any individual or group migration has crucial effects on the systemic movements of the whole. Chapter 3 then turns toward the contemporary figure of the Filipina domestic worker in global cities known for cosmopolitan attitudes and sexual difference (Bahrain, Hong Kong, Honolulu, Las Vegas), focusing on literature, documentary film, and erotic performance. Chapter 4, cowritten with Y-Dang Troeung, turns to forms of Chinese brownness, focusing on films and video games about Hong Kong before and after the 1997 handover. We consider how these texts produce "organic Chineseness" as a brown form of Chineseness whose dynamic complexity invites domestication by Western empires through global capitalist labor stratifications and hybrid cultural expressions. Finally, the fifth chapter turns toward aesthetic expressions of brownness that have pushed against Western creative writing industries. It examines the critical conversation around master of fine arts (MFA) programs, as well as my own creative and academic responses to MFA-style writing to reflect on my own "brown crafts" and to offer a new brown creative praxis. The afterword provides a final storied manifest of this book's travels, noting the people, places, and collaborations that made this line of thought possible. Particularly, I dwell on this project's debt to my deceased partner, Y-Dang Troeung, whose imagination and intellect formed the brown world we shared together.

Between chapters, I have placed a "turn," a brief poem or story that attempts to defamiliarize our relationship to brownness and to embark toward a new shade of brown through differing contexts and archives (from history to family talk-story to anecdote to literature to film to video games). At the beginning

of every chapter, there is a charting of each chapter's travels, from its origin in thought, to the places it was presented as a talk or dialogue, to the hybrid forms and arguments it undertook, to the journals where it was published or rejected, to its revision for this book. Through these formal expressions of movement, the context of these chapters—and my own positionalities while writing them—helps form every shade of brown.

~

Domesticating Brown is the last book in a "transpacific empire" trilogy that began with my first academic book, *Transitive Cultures: Anglophone Literature of the Transpacific* (2018), and continued with *Open World Empire: Race, Erotics, and the Global Rise of Video Games* (2020). Both books navigated the ways that racial formations have manifested across the transpacific, from colonial history to today: *Transitive Cultures* explored narratives of Southeast Asian migration, mixture, and transition among given racial identities; *Open World Empire* focused on the forms of racial hybridities and "Asiatic" spaces that emerge in new media forms. This trilogy's main aim has been to engage transpacific frameworks to investigate the imperial forms of racial capitalism as they have manifested through art (literature, digital media), history (colonialism in Southeast Asia, information technology manufacture), and discursive encounters concerning migration, war, and the promises of imperial inclusion.

Domesticating Brown is the third in this trilogy of transpacific empire but also belongs to a different writing trajectory of creative poetry and prose, which includes my novels *Stamped: an anti-travel novel* (2018) and *All Flowers Bloom* (2020) and my prose-poetry work *Nimrods: a fake-punk self-hurt anti-memoir* (2023). All these works were written and published under my matrilineal name, Kawika Guillermo, my mother's maiden name and the name she had intended for me. While all my publications have, thus far, kept my "academic" and "creative" works and identities separate, *Domesticating Brown* disrupts this demarcation to seek more creative, speculative, and poetic methods that reveal how our own writing, as brown peoples, has remained situated within processes of domestication.

~

Domesticating Brown was not written in log cabins, during vacations, or within any secluded environment. I have yet to take a sabbatical, nor have I been on a writing retreat, nor have I ever won a major state-funded grant. This book, like many books of brown authorship, was written within the commonplace norms of hardship, the daily struggles to survive, the knowledge that writing might also mean sacrifice. As I expand on in chapter 5, brown creative works are often publicized as a response to an exceptional crisis. Yet there is a danger in seeing

our own writing as exceptional, as a way of pushing through our struggle, rather than a habitual practice of recuperation, reflection, and community. We do not merely write to survive our lives; we write for life itself. This is the writing of caretakers who poem while children nap, of service workers who edge out stories between smiles, of educators who struggle to find an hour free from attending to students, administrators, bosses, and banks. The depiction of a clear-headed writer within a quiet and reflective rural setting does not reflect the forms of writing that commonly come from marginalized peoples. Even the presumed need for a writer to have "a room of one's own" can mark writing practices as impossible from within the norms of poverty, debilitation, and crisis.

Domesticating Brown was written during multiple deaths and tragedies in my family: the deaths of three grandparents, my son's seizures, my nephew's drug addiction, my cousin's suicide, the sudden death of a treasured mentor. But, more than any other crisis, I faced the diagnosis of my wife Y-Dang Troeung with pancreatic cancer, which took her life only a year later. To write this project within these moments was not merely a sense of rising above or dealing with the pain of these events. As Sandra Ruiz writes, brownness opens the possibility for "a type of liberatory mourning," "a practice of engagement for harboring loss and its possibility for more abundant ways of living."[11] In much of brown life, our work is for the living and the dead, because tragedy is our norm. And writing is just one of our daily, communal acts that imagine our norm otherwise.

~

This book's chapters parse through the colonial violences that have produced the imaginary malaise of brownness through a mode of writing that is both episodic and exilic, a mode that the historian Vicente Rafael once called "a remove from any single public or place" that remains "the product of the aleatory conditions" as well as "a signpost for future projects."[12] The exilic meandering of *Domesticating Brown* moves within the form of a spiral, one that flows alongside the elusive and universalist modes of the human and the relational frame of racial formations. The spiral moves through various contexts and concepts that illuminate the imaginaries of brownness, ultimately reaching toward its darkest, coldest gravities—that is, the colonial conditions of emergence and the imperial violences of each turn. As Glissant writes, imagination itself works "in a spiral: from one circularity to the next" that "encounters new spaces and does not transform them into either depths or conquests."[13] The brown imaginary's spiral cannot be confined to the binaries of race-making present within any particular time and place but rather "creates a network and constitutes volume."[14]

Domesticating Brown's trust in the spiral as a generative structural form is also deeply personal: It is the form my late wife Y-Dang Troeung used in her final book, *Landbridge [life in fragments]*, a spiral text that moves through context and concept, as well as through prose, image, documentation, and anecdotes. The book's rush of movement perforates linear timelines to seek out the gravity at its center: bombs, genocide, refuge, illness, and death. The feeling of this movement, as Y-Dang wrote, reveals "a rhyming [that] happens at different points in time, [when] the personal chaos within can match the spiral of violence without."[15] Written alongside the intimate writing and editing of *Landbridge*, *Domesticating Brown* too uses the spiral form to trace violences that are both personal and historical, experiential and social, within and without. To trace violence in this way, as Y-Dang affirmed, is not necessarily to lose yourself in it, to accept its mad incoherence. This chaotic, violent spiral "doesn't always have to drag you down. . . . It can generate new things."

~

We are a family gifted at the art of movement, of straying and sliding and striving.
—Y-DANG TROEUNG, *Landbridge*

The chapters of this book work recursively, in a spiral, beginning and ending with a foreword and afterword that reflect on the ways we encounter brownness, how we latch on to it in endearing and intimate ways. Traditionally, forewords and afterwords are not written by the book's author but by a distant supporter—or in some cases, a corrective critic. This is true for this book as well. From the introduction to chapter 5, this book was written in Y-Dang's presence, and it absorbed all the care and wisdom she had to give. Its foreword and afterword were written after her presence, by a changed and estranged author who could never write the same again.

This book is dedicated to Y-Dang, who showed me how brownness moves differently, how it contains lifeworlds that can be shared from place to place, person to person. On the day we met, Y-Dang and I merged these lifeworlds together. We joked about our curves; we compared our skin color; we shared clothing; we brushed hair. Our momentum grew as we learned more about each other's backgrounds, histories, families, and writings. Our brown worlds formed when we shared our fantasies, our ideas, and our love. Our worlds changed when we began to imagine a future together. After her death we continue to move, to stray, to slide, and to strive.

if every word
may be
your last
let every word be
beings for
life

Introduction

BROWN THEORY: A STORIED MANIFEST OF OUR WORLD

Dawn comes rapidly in the Peninsula, up to a certain point, though the sun takes time to arise from under its bed-clothes of white cloud. One moment all is dark as the Bottomless Pit; another, and a new sense is given to the watcher—or so it seems—the sense of form. A minute or two more, and the power to distinguish colour comes almost as a surprise—the faint, dim green of the grass, the yellow of a pebble, the brown of a faded leaf, each one a new quality in a familiar object, hitherto unnoticed and unsuspected. —HUGH CLIFFORD, *Studies in Brown Humanity*, 1898

The above excerpt is from *Studies in Brown Humanity*, a mixture of story, travelogue, and "study" written by the British colonial administrator Hugh Clifford. Meant to interpret "things which have actually occurred in the Malay Peninsula," Clifford's stories frequently deploy the term *brown* to characterize people understood within an amalgam of races and classes, and whose destinies were under the charge of the British.[1] Describing brown as skin color and as landscape ("the surface of a muddy puddle"), Clifford also, as in the excerpt above, conceives of brownness through language strewn in the muddiness of metaphor, and against other races.[2] Upon arrival to the jungle valley, the watcher first sees a "white cloud" and the darkness of a "Bottomless Pit."[3] But given time, he begins to sense other forms of color: "dim green," "yellow," and "brown." Mentioned last, brownness appears within the colonial gaze only in relation to others, an unspecified, indefinable mixture that comes "hitherto unnoticed and unsuspected."[4]

Published in 1898, Clifford's *Studies in Brown Humanity* gave metaphor to brownness at a crucial moment of imperial expansion. British, French,

Dutch, and Spanish empires would be joined in Asia by the Americans, who in 1898 presumed power over the Philippines and Guam following the Spanish-American War and in that same year colonized and annexed the independent state of Hawai'i. But before the Americans' arrival in Asia, brownness had been conceived in the eighteenth century as a term of race analysis, mostly credited to the German racial scientist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, who also popularized the term Caucasian to mean the white race. Blumenbach became one of the first to insist on the term *brown* as a means of classifying Malays, Polynesians, and others in Southeast Asia and Oceania. As with Clifford's metaphorical description, for Blumenbach, brownness only arrived as an afterthought, an addendum written twenty years after his original 1775 taxonomy that included white (Caucasian and Arab), yellow (East Asian), red (Native American), and Black (sub-Saharan African). Despite its late arrival, brownness became visible as a conceivable threat to white purity. White races, Blumenbach argued, had a tendency to "degenerate into brown."[5]

The racial scientific discourse of brownness gave legitimacy to a term that is used quite differently in North America today. *Brown* in the contemporary United States, as Nitasha Sharma has argued, signifies racial groups who hail from the Global South but who do not fall under the signs of Black or Arab: mainly Latino/a/xs and South Asians.[6] Yet even in the United States, races seen as yellow or white were once conceived of as brown (Japanese, Koreans, Italians), and brownness has been a significant marker within communities of color (brown African Americans, brown Indigenous peoples, brown Arabic peoples, brown Hawaiian locals). Once we broach the confines of America and into Asia, other senses of brown play important roles in imperial design. As Eng-Beng Lim has argued, the colonial discourses in Asia—whether British or American—were regulated by an age-old orientalist dyadic formation: "The colonial is a white man and the 'native' is a brown woman."[7] That the "native" was cast through the "ethno-visual" marker of brownness produced an ambiguous and fantasy-driven colonial subject, where brownness was always othered within binaries of "white/brown, man/boy, rational/exotic, clean/dirty, First World/Third World."[8] Turn-of-the-century traveling writers like Jack London wrote of Japanese as brown-skinned farmworkers, as "the little brown man" who, unlike "yellow" people, could not constitute a "brown peril" because his achievements were borrowed from the West.[9] In the same era, the mixed Chinese Canadian author Edith Maude Eaton/Sui Sin Far traveled to Jamaica and wrote in solidarity with the colonized populations that she was "of the brown peoples of the earth," invoking brownness to refuse "the anti-black construction of Asians as the colonial handmaidens of whiteness."[10] Later studies by

postcolonial authors, like *Brown Heritage: Essays on Philippine Cultural Tradition and Literature* in 1967, deployed brownness to express the multiple (and sometimes unwieldy) standpoints produced within colonial subjugation.[11]

Domesticating Brown: Movements of Racial Imagination interrogates the slippery senses that brownness has manifested and follows its transitions among transpacific colonial encounters. *Domesticating Brown* conceptually rethinks a universalist (and widely North American) idea of race to consider the constant movements in racial contexts, meanings, and practices that brownness reveals. From this transpacific framing, *Domesticating Brown* tracks a storied manifest for brown theory limited in scope to the author's own brown life-world—in this case, focused on Southeast Asia, the Philippines, Oceania, and the American West Coast—in the hopes that other theories of brownness will follow, each concerning their authors' own brown worlds. By activating the transpacific both as the imperial relations among Asia, Oceania, and America and as an epistemological paradigm that navigates the disciplinary logics produced through these encounters, I will attempt to untangle a story of how some people in Asia went from resembling a wild and uncontainable threat to representing a form of brownness that became necessary for the reproduction of the Global North.

As I hope to show throughout this book's chapters, the story brownness tells is about how some people in Asia and Oceania became shaped as domesticatable—as in, were offered the gifts of inclusion within a global community but only as its necessary handmaidens. This shift was not uniform and, in fact, depended on racial tropes of wildness allotted to previous generations to legitimize the process of domestication and to presume its potentiality. Untethered to a particular racial identity, this story interrogates the slippery roles that brownness has played within histories and spaces of colonial encounter. As the last color term to be used by racial scientists, brownness has delineated racial hierarchies in between Blackness and whiteness that, to Western colonial powers, have emphasized the possible degradation of whiteness, or, to the colonized, have promised future induction into whiteness. These are the movements of brownness: its constant reemergence within new mixtures of racial constructs, identities, and bodies, which reveal the colonial histories and the imperial designs of each context.

The movements of brownness across the transpacific chronicle multiple colonial formations within the ongoing present of racial capitalism, where "the loss, disposability, and unequal differentiation" required of capitalism are enshrined by race and racism.[12] My first academic book, *Transitive Cultures: Anglophone Literature of the Transpacific*, sought to expand on this framework by seeing

contemporary modes of empire as operating through a "pluralist governmentality" that expects individuals to "visibly express their difference . . . and in doing so, to represent imperial state power as neutral, universal, or benevolent."[13] As I argued in that book, pluralist governmentality was tested in the colonies of Southeast Asia and Oceania to differentiate forms of brownness into separable capitalist labor forces. *Domesticating Brown* builds on this previous work by attempting to explicate how the ongoing violences of racial capitalism exploit and reshape worlds of brown, whose horizon of progress is *meant to be and to remain* colonial whiteness. Connected through colonial whiteness, these brown worlds are by no means restricted to Asia and Oceania but have been reiterated in colonial empires across the globe. During the United States' colonial acquisitions of the Philippines, Hawai'i, and Puerto Rico, brownness came to address the contradictions of US colonialism with its anti-imperial legacies of throwing off its own colonizer.[14] In such an iteration, the domesticatable brown subject was a crucial form of colonial race-making that helped shape the US empire, according to Faye Caronan, as "not a conqueror but a liberator," "not a colonizer but a teacher," and to mark overseas US territories as "first and foremost a burden, not a benefit."[15]

Brownness draws attention to the forms of disciplinary as well as creative and imaginary ways of reframing the colonized body. Following queer women of color feminists like Teresia Teaiwa, Andrea Canaan, Maile Arvin, Gloria Anzaldúa, and others, this manifest reads across narratives of the brown body in Southeast Asia and Oceania, focusing on the ways that brownness has been shaped by colonial encounter and reshaped by creative narratives of brown embodiment. As brown movements can only be traced through specific attention to bodies, families, and communities, brownness elides universalizing forms of "Theory" that can hide, neutralize, and universalize the experiences of being within a visibly white body. These theorists of the flesh have cultivated a form of embodied knowledge that does not "emerge to the sight of institutional knowledge management, [but] escapes its notice," and have seen their authors' bodies and histories as sites "for apprehending generic colonial technologies of marginalization and erasure."[16] My own experience with brownness as both a racialized labor category and a sense of affective belonging resonates with Andrea Canaan's 1981 essay in *This Bridge Called My Back*, "Brownness," where she writes that to be brown—in Canaan's case, light skinned and Black—is to be swayed by both material and personal conflicts of interest that carry the affective charge of steadily reaching out toward whiteness.[17] For Canaan, brown peoples are pushed to play "a diabolical self-destructive game" where some get the role of the "superhero image" of the brown woman or the "super-stud

image of the brown man," but in so doing, many unwittingly transmit racist presumptions onto the mass of brown people who cannot measure up.[18]

These narratives of the body bridge the analytical divide between material and affective experiences. Rather than see these analyses as separable, brownness tethers them together, revealing their interdependency within our research as well as their tangled impacts on our present. As brown embodiments are radically plural, their seemingly incoherent histories remain uncontainable within a multiculturalist racial order of things. Yet these histories and various experiences of brownness resonate on the level of affect, attunement, and sense, as they reappear within networks of shared stories of colonial encounter and domestication. For José Esteban Muñoz, this "sense of brown" describes a world that "is already here"; "is vast, present, and vital"; and belongs to the "majority of those who exist, strive, and flourish within the vast trajectory of multiple and intersecting regimes of colonial violence."[19] Colonial violence past and present is definitive of a sense of brownness, a racial form that emerges and transforms through and against imperial conquest. But colonial violence perpetrated by whom? Muñoz need not say, and neither must we articulate a particular perpetrator here, except to express that it is, in remaining unnamed, also necessarily plural; it cannot be merely attributed to whiteness, but also yellowness; not merely yellowness, but also lighter shades of brown; not merely lighter shades, but a brownness of colonized futurity.

Muñoz's own theoretical manifest on brownness began during the continual HIV/AIDS crises in the 1990s, which were delimited by queer-of-color communities who suffered in greater numbers but were far outside state and media narratives. His understanding of brown shifted from "feeling" to "commons" and "sense" alongside the growing xenophobia during the war on terror against "brown terrorists" and the influential performances of latinidad artists. Muñoz's meditations on brownness, alongside other theoretical frames, allow us to trace a nascent yet unarticulated field of brown theory by broadening our gaze to the brown transpacific, the site of the first articulations of brownness, but also one of the most elusive forms of brownness today. If Muñoz came to understand brownness as "a sense" rather than "a feeling," as he initially conceived of it, then, like any sense, brownness must be interpreted through particular genealogies of colonialism before it can be sufficiently understood within the realm of embodiment and sensory articulation, that is, of feeling and affect.

This introduction attempts to move alongside transpacific movements of brownness by venturing on two diverging paths. First, it traces a brief history of the structure and ideology of transpacific brownness, focusing on efforts to transform meanings of race during the colonial projects in the Philippines and

Hawai'i and during the Vietnam War. To trace brownness in this way challenges "limited understanding[s] of transnationality as only manifest when multiple locales are addressed," as it attends to the ways that borders themselves participate in reproducing brownness.[20] As these varied contexts show, the slippery formations of brownness showcase the impossibility of its own capture. Following this brief history, I attempt to conceive of brownness not through a deep archival dive but through the movement of a theoretical triptych that skims along the surface of brownness, feels for its textures, and offers ways that we—the always present *we*—might relate. Specifically, I move from brownness as (1) a site for the ungovernable *mass*, to (2) peoples marked for *domestication* through strategies of colonial containment, and to (3) the complex *shades* that reveal troubling genealogies and shameful intimacies. Rather than reveal a bounded identity, brownness arrives as a concept that cannot be grasped or produced into knowledge. For Muñoz, brown was most often the body rendered as Latino/a/x or latinidad when approached from the confining and conflating prism of North American pluralist governmentality. For others, brownness signifies South Asian peoples, North African and Middle Eastern peoples, Oceanic peoples, or what some have called "Filipinx hispanidad."[21] Brownness, in its ceaseless reimagining, will always look askew when approached from different spaces, times, and positions. As one's point of view moves, so too does brownness stray.

Brown Transpacifics: Malayness in the Philippines, Hawai'i, Vietnam

One way to begin a storied manifest of brown theory is to trace brownness not from south to north but from east to west, that is, as a sense of brown based in transpacific migration patterns, triangulating among East and Southeast Asia, Oceania, and North America. These geographies of brownness deviate from the casual ways that *brownness* is used and often universalized within North American ethnic studies scholarship to mean either Latino/a/x or South Asian. The brown transpacific decenters the US as the figurative space where brownness is most relevant, to see other forms of brownness in relation to nonwhite (but often lighter-coded) majorities: the Middle East, where over 60 percent of Filipino overseas workers reside; East and Southeast Asia, where brownness is often compared to yellow forms of East Asianness; the shared sense of south-to-north brownness in the Philippines via Spanish colonial history; the forms of brownness that instantiate forms of Blackness untethered to the continent of Africa (Filipino "Negritos," Melanesians, Sri Lankans, dark(er) Indians, Indigenous

groups in Papua New Guinea). As the brown transpacific has remained at the margins of brownness, it can detach us from the American prism of pluralist governmentality to help us understand how others have also become brown.

In unsettling historically separated regional boundaries, a transpacific sense of brown motions toward an archipelagic and oceanic understanding of those who have been colonized by both the West and the East, by both state and capital. Brownness becomes more visible when we sharpen onto the spaces of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, whose peoples have historically been presumed to have no traces of modernity within their precolonial societies, with few, if any, "modern structures" of bureaucracy, education, or impersonal government. While precolonial India, China, and Japan have consistently been held up as examples of precolonial modernity, brown peoples in Southeast Asia and Oceania have been seen as better positioned for domestication within a Western empire's provinces than those from larger state bureaucracies who had little aspiration and felt little need to adapt to Western colonial powers (Qing dynasty China, Joseon dynasty Korea, Edo period Japan).[22] From this point of view, brownness remains a signifier for nomadism, for weak or even anarchic state forms, and for nonbelonging within ethno-states. Inheriting traits of nomadism within our modern world, brownness is so often perceived as a bug in the system of nation-state belonging, or perhaps a virus. Whereas Blackness has been recently theorized to form the negation within a modern racial episteme, and yellowness has been typified as the alien diasporic, brownness has remained implicit as an incalculable mass of colonial leftovers seeking rescue, refuge, and privilege.

If brownness is tied to coloniality, it can look tricky from the viewpoint of Asia, where not all colonization has been Western. Yet as brown theory keeps visible the limits of its author—in this case, me, the Philippine American Anglophone—we can hereon consider how Western colonization in Southeast Asia and Oceania solidified a particular form of brownness both as a wild threat and as adaptable "brown boys" adopted into the "benevolent assimilation" of Western colonial power. As we saw in Hugh Clifford's *Studies in Brown Humanity*, brownness in Southeast Asia and Oceania has often taken the racial marker of Malay racial origin. In the Philippines, Spanish colonial scholarship "regarded in large measure the Filipinos as Malay," so that Filipino Malayness widely operated as a form of transnational racial belonging.[23] Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Malayness was known to racial scientists and anthropologists as "the Malay Problem," which the famed anthropologist Louis Sullivan, in his 1919 book on racial types in the Philippines, saw as *the* sustained racial conundrum of Southeast Asia and much of Oceania. For anthropologists like Sullivan, Malayness represented

neither tribe nor culture nor race, and its peoples were often of such mixed backgrounds that any assigned racial categories could only be tentative. These variations of brownness were a problem in that they resulted in "an apparent stratification of the population" but also could not "be definitely solved from anthropometric data," forcing Sullivan and other anthropologists to categorize populations less through categories of racial heredity and more through religion (Christian, Muslim, Pagan) and geography (coastal, jungle, mountainous, islandic).[24] Today Malayness continues to remain a murky construct that can be domesticated into national belonging (Malaysia), Indigeneity (bumiputera), Islamic religious beliefs, and sharia law. Malayness has thus remained "slippery as an object of analysis" and has fluctuated within the space of the "not Chinese," the "not white," and the "not Indian/black."[25] Within this brown mosaic, Malayness has been claimed by Malaysians, Indonesians, Polynesians, and Filipinos, yet a more expansive form of Malayness has been downplayed, suppressed, or simply ignored, in fear that an unrestrained view might dilute the accuracy of Malayness as a racial category.

During the anthropological era of the "Malay Problem," two important figures sought to adopt discourses of Malayness to create a new anti-imperial and transnational racial imaginary. The first was Dr. José Rizal, the Filipino-Chinese Hispanic mestizo associated with laying much of the groundwork for Filipino nationalism. Not long before his execution in 1896, Rizal found intellectual grounding in Malayness that would later be utilized for anticolonial organizing against the Spanish. Though Rizal mainly believed in reforming Spanish colonialism, his influence has represented both "an anticolonial striving for political and intellectual self-determination in the face of Spanish malfeasance and debilitation" and the views of "a Philippine mestizaje that integrated and replicated colonial rehabilitation."[26] Before his death Rizal tried to persuade mestizos and ilustrados (educated leaders like Rizal himself) to see their collective futures outside of Spanish colonialism and within a "Malayo-Tagalo" race that had connections to the "ancient kingdoms and ruins" of Sumatra and Japan.[27] Asserting Malayness, as Nicole CuUnjieng Aboitiz argues, was a way for Rizal and other ilustrados "to counter the argument of Europeans who described the archipelago as overrun by an anarchy of tribes and races."[28] According to an early biography, Rizal's formation of the Indian Bravos in Paris was secretively pledged to the liberation of "the Malay people" as a whole, imagining Philippine independence as a first step toward liberating Malay peoples in Borneo, Indonesia, Malaya, and elsewhere.[29] For Rizal, ever the linguist, the term *Malay* also invited aspirations of revolution, as it was stunningly close to the Tagalog term *malaya*, meaning "free"

and "independent." However, in using evidence found in European scholarship to create these inter-Asian racial relations, Rizal and other ilustrados also depicted Malayness within a racial hierarchy, as superior to and separate from others lost to colonization or barbarism. "The Filipino race," Rizal wrote, "like all the Malayans, does not succumb to the foreigner as do the aborigines of Australia, the Polynesians, and Indians of the New World. . . . The Filipinos accept civilization and maintain contact with all peoples, and can live in all climates."[30]

Similar notions of Malayness as a hybrid racial form grounded in an Asian-centered anticolonialism emerged within the same historical period in the islands of Hawai'i, where King Kawika Kalākaua—Hawai'i's last sovereign king and the first monarch ever to circumnavigate the globe—was drawn to forms of Polynesian racial brownness that descended from the Malay race. As Maile Arvin has argued, settler colonialism in Hawai'i was and continues to be "fueled by a logic of possession through whiteness," where Kānaka Maoli (Hawaiian natives) are "repeatedly positioned as almost white (even literally as descendants of the Aryan race), in a way that allows white settlers to claim Indigeneity in Polynesia."[31] As with the Philippines, the brownness of Hawaiian natives had for decades disrupted anthropological divisions of racial types due to their mixtures and absences of subjects with verifiable purity. Brownness in both Hawai'i and the Philippines was formed within a colonial racial imagination structured by anti-Blackness, by an alien and alienated form of yellowness, and by a wild(er) form of Native Americanness. Ethnographic divisions within Oceania as a whole, as early as 1879, relied on separating Polynesians and Filipinos as brown stock rather than yellow, red, or black stock, or as Negrito-Polynesian and Malayo-Polynesian populations, where the Malayness of Malayo signified a brownness contrasting the yellowness of the Chinese, as well as the Blackness of the "Negrito," the Melanesian, or the Indonesian.[32] In Hawai'i, anthropologists began to see Kānaka Maoli as emerging from a "Maylay" stock, notably deemed "less inferior" due to their physical prowess, their navigation skills, and the beauty of native women.[33] Polynesian—and by extension Malay—brownness thus signified an exceptionalism where the colonized "savage" could become noble rather than wild and was therefore governable.

As US sugar barons and diplomats descended on Hawai'i, ultimately annexing the kingdom as a US territory, King Kalākaua sought to invoke colonial racial theories of brownness to imagine cross-oceanic solidarities among colonized peoples. His 1881 World Tour visits to Siam, Singapore, Johor, Malaya, and Penang were ostensibly to import labor into Hawai'i's sugarcane fields—a role that would eventually fall to Japanese, Chinese, and then Filipinos—yet this tour also compelled Kalākaua to see Polynesians as sharing racial kinship

with Malays, as his visits with state officials led him to conclude that Malays and Polynesians were "long-lost brothers."[34] For Kalākaua as well as Rizal, Malayness represented an anticolonial racial form that could unify colonized peoples into a familial solidarity against white oppressors by cultivating a racial background that was more hybrid and worldly than those who supposedly remained in the darkness of racial stagnation.[35] While Kalākaua's writings often appeared to be "steeped in the ways of white imperialism" (by, for example, seeking primarily to import workers from Asia rather than Black workers from the racially segregated United States), Rizal's writings on a new Filipino "enlightened" populace (implicitly mestizo/a) were, according to Sony Coráñez Bolton, "structured and enabled by the unfreedom of Black peoples in the epoch following the emancipations of slaveholding nations across the world."[36] This sense of brownness as a hybrid racial form, signified through a transpacific sense of Malay belonging, became a space of conditional possibility for the dispossessed as well as a means of enshrining some colonial racial hierarchies, and it would help frame national liberation struggles across Southeast Asia and Oceania.

Both Rizal and Kalākaua sought to use brownness to jockey for control within given colonial structures by reimagining imperial subjectivities into forms of inter-Asian solidarity. Both their leaderships ended in tragedy: Rizal was executed by the Spanish; Kalākaua was pressured to sign the Bayonet Constitution, which stripped the Hawaiian monarchy of its sovereignty. Subsequently, their efforts at inter-Asian racial blurring left brownness to be reshaped within a context of US colonial violence. In Hawai'i, shortly after Kalākaua signed the Bayonet Constitution, the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition reclassified brownness in Oceania and Southeast Asia on a two-mile strip, placing the races of the world "along a smooth linear progression from dark anachronistic primitivism to enlightened white modernity" and situating Kānaka Maoli between the "American Indian Show" and "Algeria and Tunisia" and before the wide array of more civilized races "of the Mohammedan world, West Asia, and East Asia."[37] Kalākaua's attempt to bring Indigenous Hawaiians within closer proximity to Malayness by inhabiting a Malayo-Polynesian brownness represented a shift in racial discourses from when Polynesians were once made similar to Caucasians.[38] Similarly, after the Philippine-American War, the skin color symbolizing beauty and might began to shift from brown Malay skin (moreno or kayumanggi) to fair (maputi) or mestizo/a mixed skin, while American colonial forces began to dismantle the solidarities of both Malay and Filipino by emphasizing cross-ethnic hatreds and hierarchies.[39] President William Howard Taft, then American governor-general of the Philippines, was the

first to call Filipinos "our little brown brothers" to reemphasize their proximity to both savagery and domestication, while also denying forms of white, Black, and red racialization of Filipinos that had been prevalent before and during the war. These common racial comparisons shifted when the Philippines became a colony to govern rather than a war to win or a space to settle, and American anthropologists went to great lengths to typify Filipinos as brown brothers deserving of "white love."[40] Further brown racializations manifested through the distribution and cataloging of a colonial census (1903–5) and the zoo-like voyeurism of the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, which, like Native Hawaiians at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair before it, staged visual representations that placed Filipinos into a hierarchical amalgam of brown races.[41] As newly colonized people, Filipinos were placed within internal stratifications of brownness, from "civilized" mixed mestizo/as to "savage" Igorots to darker-skinned Negritos. These delineated racial categories saw Filipino colonial subjects as fluctuating between wildness and civility, while also subsuming differences so that all Filipinos—wild, civil, Christian, Muslim—remained contained within a Malay brown color code.

The transpacific colonial genealogy of Malayness in the nineteenth century provides wider historical context for how the contemporary use of *brown* as a term of endearment to potentiate collective agency was later part of a broader sea change in racial terminology throughout the twentieth century. In the United States, rulings in the 1920s against Japanese and South Asian individuals attempting US naturalization—*Ozawa v. United States* and *Thind v. United States*—codified brownness as distinctly and legalistically nonwhite, drawing brown away from a discourse of whiteness or civility and closer to a discourse of Blackness that had been emerging among Black authors and artists. In 1906 W. E. B. Du Bois opposed the eugenicist racial science of brown and black taxonomies by using the term *brown* as a "commonsense judgment on color" that showed "the diversity and mutability of racial characteristics," writing that "black" was "really a series of browns varying between black and yellow."[42] During the Harlem Renaissance, *brown* was a key trope used among Black women poets to signal mixed heritage, beauty, and eroticism, traits that often challenged the New Negro image of modern African American women "increasingly rooted in urban, middle-class values."[43] In 1928 Zora Neale Hurston wrote that leaving Eatonville—one of the first all-Black towns in the United States—for Jacksonville made her "a fast brown," "a brown bag of miscellany . . . against a wall in company with other bags, white, red and yellow."[44] In these creative racial imaginaries, brownness was used to express self-determination with the knowledge that the term itself was not autonomously defined and was a product of movement itself.[45]

The American war in Vietnam presented another shifting racial imaginary of brownness that fluctuated through military violence and anti-imperial political mobilization. The new context of militarized empire in Vietnam would deploy familiar anthropological taxonomies of Malay, Malayo-Tagalog, and Malayo-Polynesian, less as a positivistic language of scientific race-making and more as a signifier for colonial subjugation tethered to US colonial projects in the Philippines (as well as Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Hawai'i).[46] In the 1950s the newly formed Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) took advantage of an increasingly slippery sense of brown through military propaganda campaigns like Operation Brotherhood, where operatives attempted to "befriend and win the trust of the Vietnamese" by exporting Filipino doctors and nurses to South Vietnam so they could "explain, as one brownskin to another, what the real purpose of American assistance is."[47] As Yến Lê Espiritu argues, American imperialists in Vietnam relied heavily on the "widespread claim of the unique success of the American colonial project of the Philippines to reshape backward people."[48] The narrative of Americans venturing to Asia to civilize Vietnam formed through America's previous depictions of Filipinos as "little brown brothers," as well as through French orientalist depictions of Vietnamese men as "effeminate 'boys' who were indistinguishable from women."[49] For Vietnamese as well as for Filipinos and Japanese before them, brownness emphasized the ability to adapt and display hybrid senses of culture and knowledge—talents that also made the colonized brown people suspects of wildness, hypersexuality, and organized resistance. These tendencies became recoded into a pathological state of brownness: *running amok*, a phrase borrowed from the British in colonial Malaya, since its entry into the English language has become "a means of typecasting entire cultures and peoples, especially Malays, Indians, and Filipinxs, as essentially cruel, violent, and volatile."[50]

Within the US anti-imperial protests of the 1960s and 1970s, organizers and artists reimagined imperial notions of brownness from wild and resistant colonial subjects to radicalized political movements of various racial constructs, identities, and heritages. The Chicano-based Brown Power and Brown Berets movements helped form the basis for an anti-imperial sense of brown alongside Black Power, while the budding Asian American movements imagined forms of solidarity with Vietnamese victims of war, and the Delano grape strike (1965–70) brought together Filipino and Mexican farmworker unions to create a movement that, for the historian John Gregory Dunne, "would inaugurate 'brownness' as a mode of thinking."[51] Meanwhile, popular figures like Muhammad Ali formed affiliations with Vietnamese people through the color brown: "Why," Ali stated in 1967, "should they ask me to put on a uniform and

go 10,000 miles from home and drop bombs and bullets on brown people in Vietnam while so-called Negro people in Louisville are treated like dogs and denied simple human rights?"[52] To insist on a Vietnamese brownness during the Vietnam War was to call attention to a much longer colonial subjectivity, where under French colonialism Vietnamese subjects were forced to depict themselves within a hygienic regime of "clean and fair, rather than dark and dirty."[53] When left in the hands of artists, writers, and activists, brownness has carried the potential to slide across nations, oceans, and languages, representing a wild, messy ambivalence that reflects empire's own ambiguity as a dominating entity offering both freedom and violence.[54]

A Brown Triptych

> Here is the drama within the color brown: it is itself a mixture of yellow, red, and black—the iridescent reminder that we are in brownness and of brownness, here and now.
> —JOSHUA JAVIER GUZMÁN, "Brown"

The discourses of transpacific brownness in racial science and anthropology, and among anti-imperial leaders and communities, trace and help undo the amalgamations of brownness as a mere means of inclusion into whiteness or as a separation from colonial wildness, toward a brownness that is always plural and present, whose categories and characteristics can only proliferate. Indeed, this very brief history alludes to sharper instances of brownness that move alongside discursive history but cannot be explained by its thematic flow—the more granular moments of resistance, reinvention, recasting, and rearticulation. These moments evade critical genealogical methods as they are often camouflaged through what I previously called *transitive culture*, or what the artist Kiam Marcelo Junio has called *dazzle*: "when an animal or print will move so quickly that it confuses a predator's visual field."[55] Here I will attempt to approach the dazzling impressions of brownness through a triptych format, where, as Gilles Deleuze writes, "rhythm takes on an extraordinary amplitude in a *forced movement* which gives it an autonomy, and produces in us the impression of time."[56] One could perhaps call this "impression of time" an impression of transition among nonbinary forms, the "trip" our mind takes as our eyes wander the triptych. When we read for movement, we can't help but see the brownness of ourselves not as a source of stability or settlement, but as a force of movement that "emphasizes the dynamics of the encounter and the ever-shifting possibilities for generating knowledge through diffuse strategies of embodiment."[57] Brownness thus never appears as a whole mirror reflecting our

selves, but as a blurred and broken prism, what Muñoz called "shards of a larger and continuous world."[58]

This section turns from a genealogical critique of transpacific brownness and toward ways of impressing brownness through three shards of power and position, which I will invoke throughout this book:

Brown Mass / Domesticating Brown \ Shades of Brown

The syntax of these shards tells us how we can perceive brownness outside of a familiar colonial grammar book. In the first, *brown mass* is the noun—it remains present yet does not approach a claim to existence (no definite article *the* that would imply an *is*); in the second, an unnamed actor we can only distinguish as nonbrown has agency and attempts to domesticate the brown object, to do the work of domesticating said object; in the third, a plural complement, *shades*, indicates an opening that reveals the noun as a structure unto itself wherein more nouns and adjectives are presumed to coexist. In the way brownness once exposed the limits of anthropological race-making in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these shards too can disrupt traditional, disciplined studies of race and history in our present, as they make little attempt to discover elisions in historical narratives, or to dissolve binaries. Rather, the triptych as method joins theorists such as Amit Rai and Jasbir Puar in seeking to intensify and proliferate race by attuning to "the perpetual differentiation of variation to variation, of difference within rather than between, and the multiplicity of affirmative becomings: the becoming otherwise of difference."[59]

Shard: Brown Mass

But who among us would know our way back, could climb over that mess again?
—SOUVANKHAM THAMMAVONGSA, *Cluster*

Brown mass names the "unhuddled" and "unwashed" masses on the move; organic populations that expand ever outward. In news media, brown masses are explicitly characterized not by race but by infrastructure: migrant caravans, boat people, wetbacks, island hoppers, slum dogs. Brown masses conjure brownness within a logic of pure mixture, which, in an order of pluralist governmentality, can only recall illegible blurred forms of human beings often presumed backward or developmentally forestalled by their own cultural mores: their often Catholic or Muslim religiosity, their poverty in respect to nations within the Global North, their histories of colonization and war that are somehow untethered to the imperial violences committed by the Global North. Within national discourses, brown mass is conceived as an outside

threat—in covert wars and coups in Vietnam and Central and South America, often called *dirty wars*; and in the ways that terms like *migrant*, *undocumented*, and *illegals* will not name an official racial identity but will imply darker skin.

As a term, *brown mass* conjures Hortense Spillers's notion of Black female bodies as "that zero degree of social conceptualization," or as bare flesh; as well as Anne Anlin Cheng's notion of yellow female racial form as "ornamental/surface/portable."[60] These theories of embodiment are not mutually exclusive but express focused alchemies of racialization that allow us to reinhabit and disidentify with interlocking forms of personhood. In turn, brownness coheres not as a hypervisible and vestibular flesh, nor as an ornament or decorative surface, but rather as an organic and omnivorous mass whose main affective production is the incitement of an outside capable of unsettling (only to reaffirm) the boundaries of national sovereignty. As shown in the cases of Rizal, Kalākaua, and others, such affective limits can be reframed to incite anti-imperial political mobilization, to reanimate conceptions of brown mass into transnational solidarity movements against nonbrown colonial powers.[61]

Care must be taken with notions of embodiment, which can sometimes imply bodily difference as an originator or indicator of a particular type of cognition (to reiterate a colonial mind/body dualism). Rather, the ever-shifting embodiment of brownness can trace what Coráñez Bolton calls a "colonial bodymind" structured by the violence of colonial disablement that is "anchored and thus rendered the benchmark attesting to Filipino success or failure."[62] The colonial bodymind (what I will simply call *brown embodiment*) traces how race, queerness, gender, and disability (or hierarchies of capacity and intellect) are formed through particular bodily signs and functions in ways that subjected peoples who embody these traits are constantly subjected to, made aware of (through their own difference), and can thus react to (or reenact). It is thus within an ambivalent form of perihumanity that brown mass operates as an uncontainable threat to the (white) nation, as a human flow needing to be dammed or redirected. Brownness thus produces the limns of the nation: healthy population versus diseased mass; timeless borders versus growth and movement; national multiculturalism versus indistinguishable mixture; secular humanism versus spiritualism; civilization versus barbarism.

As a racialized referent to infrastructure as much as population, brown mass has manifested in the contemporary period through the media image complex of wide (often aerial) views that circulate and curate visual experience, producing not just images but the seen and the scene itself.[63] Images of brown mass are often accompanied by a spectacle of statistics that understand brown peoples only as stateless populations, numbering in the millions and always growing.

These inconceivably high numbers are dramatized as mass, so that brownness becomes coeval with scale itself, producing a *trypophobic* image complex of clusters and porous surfaces. Brown mass is not the swarm of yellow peril led by a villainous mastermind but a trypophobic sensescape of clumped-up, tangled, and stomped-upon organisms still somehow plodding forward. These are the visual scenes of slums, refugee camps, migrant caravans, or domestic workers huddled on cardboard mats. In films they are the indistinguishable crowd whom the hero must propel above and grapple over; in video games they are the zombielike enemies who run straight into death, desiring only flesh. These images are trypophobic because they produce a phobia of the voids (trŷpa) that swallow the pristine order of civilization. Coined in 2005 to mean a "fear of clustered holes," *trypophobia* elicits disgust as much as fear, and can be associated with objects meant to produce cleanliness, like sponges and soap bubbles, but is most often triggered by detailed images of organic matter: skin swelling, goosebumps, seedpods, the skin patterns of poisonous snakes and octopuses.[64] The disgust conjured from these images can be easily overlaid with images of undifferentiated brown masses. As Sara Ahmed writes, the affect of disgust slips from objects to bodies where they "stick," so that being disgusted by a thing or an event—the lack of food and water in a refugee camp, the heteropatriarchal norms of a culture or nation, or the 9/11 attacks—eventually transfers to the bodies of peoples who are associated with such acts. The speech act of disgust, as Ahmed writes, thus translates from "It's disgusting!" to "They are disgusting" to "We are disgusted by them."[65] The *we* and the *they* here draw clear distance between the disgusted and the disgusting that recalls the elevated gaze of an aerial view, so that "through the disgust reaction, 'belowness' and 'beneathness' become properties of [the others'] bodies."[66]

The trypophobic conjoining of fear and disgust characterizes the image complex of brown peoples as a disordered mass. Its visual power reinstates viewers within a national body vulnerable to contamination. Abstract design and digital media see "mass" as ordered and algorithmic: the artwork of Victor Vasarely, digitized pixel art, smartphone apps, GIS mapping systems, contact-tracing systems made visible by COVID-19. Brown mass intercedes within this visual sensescape as a return of organic decay, as the perforation of smooth digitized surfaces. The digital artist Scott Eaton's 2019 video *Entangled II* expresses the digital anxieties of brown bodily decay by applying algorithmic neural networks to an archive of over twenty-five thousand photographs of human bodies (figure I.1). Though each photograph features "carefully lit and staged human figures," the digital output of the project's artificial intelligence interprets this mass data as brown mass, a spill of fleshy mounds with barely discern-

ible arms and legs whose color fluctuates from dark to light brown.[67] In Eaton's similar 2019 work *Humanity (Fall of the Damned)*, Eaton applies his neural network AI to an archive of a hundred thousand nude photographs, which are used to shape the texture, color, and appearance of a thousand hand-drawn human bodies (figure I.2). Though *Humanity* is a digitally enhanced painting rather than a video, it too captures the fear of bodily (and brown) mobility in its tumbling, coiled brown masses on the move. Both artworks, one of entanglement and one of "the Damned," play on the anxieties of digital realms that could become "impure" through brown anarchy, thus illustrating the racializing processes that form brown people into an unruly mass. The bodies in these artworks meld, mix, and threaten to pour out of the screen (or out of their secured digital demarcations within the World Wide Web). So too the images' brown bodies resemble forms of inhumanity—the stretching and concaving of their organs and limbs seem to cause no pain but are merely part of their material, monstrous forms.

For human rights practitioners, the response to the trypophobic image complex that renders brown people inhuman has been to individualize, to pluck out figures from the entangled spill of bodies. The mass of refugees from a burning Vietnamese village is cropped out to focus on a single nude child, Kim Phuc; the brown mass of Syrian refugees retreating across the Mediterranean gains the empathy of a mass movement though the circulated image of a single deceased child, Alan Kurdi. While these images later become the most memorable pictorial responses to brown death, the typical colonial response to the brown mass is to exercise a form of control that blurs the biopolitical with the zoological, which consists of creating new infrastructural surveillance that transforms the brown mass from distortion into distinction. The trypophobic image complex thus operationalizes large-scale tactics in response to the supposed scale of brown mass: During and after his 2016 presidential run, President Donald Trump's answer to southern border migration was to build a border wall 1,300 miles long costing $45 billion, even though nearly half of undocumented immigrants arrived by plane. Similar high-scale responses can be found in the growth of drone technologies and satellite surveillance; the vast network of over eight hundred US military bases; mass aerial bombing in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos; and the global mobilizations of permanent war itself.

Efforts to depict both the scale of war and the subsequent movement of wayward populations from an aerial view need not always be seen as villainous, or as Caren Kaplan writes, as an "opposition between powerful panopticism and subterranean resistance," but can rather trouble the "conventional divide between power and resistance."[68] We see this in the work of the artist and filmmaker Ai Weiwei, whose works have attempted to depict large-scale death,

FIGURE I.1. Video still from Scott Eaton, *Entangled II*, 2019. From Eaton's website, https://www.scott-eaton.com/2020/entangled-ii.

FIGURE 1.2. Scott Eaton, *Humanity (Fall of the Damned)*, 2019. From Eaton's website, https://www.scott-eaton.com/2019/humanity-fall-of-the-damned.

mourning, and displacement. His 2009 work *Remembering* sought to represent the tragedy of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake and to criticize the Chinese government's low construction quality (as well as its efforts to silence survivors) through an art piece of nine thousand school backpacks that spelled the words of one victim's mother in Mandarin: "She lived happily for seven years in this world." As Hentyle Yapp has written, Ai's work on the global stage "grapples with race as a fracturing force in the world, rather than something to be included, considered, remedied, or made whole," by exploring "what it means to be seen as a faceless mass and horde—those repeated as objects of history."[69] Rather than individualize the people out of the mass, Ai's work dwells within the perceived networks of capitalist, state, and imperial violences that conditioned its emergence.

Ai's attempts to represent the scale of masses of peoples outside of a trypophobic (or merely static) image complex returned in his 2017 film, *Human Flow*, which depicted refugees across the world through aerial footage from nonmilitarized drones, while also showing interactions with the cameras themselves: refugee children playing with the aerial machine, Ai's own use of selfie sticks, the camera crews creating the footage, the border guards who arbitrarily sought to limit its range, the documentation required by each respective state entity. We the viewer feel the camera's gaze in profile shots that linger on a single person or family; we notice its shakes when walking with refugees; we are blinded by sandstorms; we hear the gusts of wind and feel its push. The film's aerial views of refugee camps—similar, as Ai says, to the northeastern China labor camp where he grew up—pace slowly over tin and tarpaulin roofs, tents, inflated boats, buses, life jackets, warehouse dorms, miles-long fences, and mud dwellings. Ai's depiction of forced movement shifts focus away from masses of peoples and toward their material and left-behind presences, challenging the trypophobic image complex that sees brown people as infrastructure by revealing the infrastructure that is built specifically to control, manage, slow down, expose, debilitate, and exclude brown peoples (figures I.3 and I.4). The film's aerial views thus defamiliarize images of refugees away from trypophobic affects of fear or disgust by consistently "alerting us to the fact that what we are witnessing is not only an ongoing humanitarian crisis but also the *production* of crisis itself."[70] The aerial views of *Human Flow* avoid the voyeuristic desires to know and surveil brown masses, and rather call attention to the dehumanizing regimes of such a gaze, one that is taken on by border guards, administrators, and state representatives.[71] Rather than clarity, the aerial views of masses of peoples in *Human Flow* create what Kaplan calls a "world-making propensity" that demands viewers take an active role in imagining the views and experiences of those relegated to the below.[72]

FIGURE 1.3. Ai Weiwei, "Airport Tempelhof Camp, Berlin, Germany. 2016/02/09," from *Human Flow*, 2017. http://www.humanflow.com.

FIGURE 1.4. Ai Weiwei, "Nizip Camp, Gaziantep, Turkey. 2016/03/27," from *Human Flow*, 2017. http://www.humanflow.com.

Shard: Domesticating Brown

> The animal is always linked to the story of mass and individual dispossession.—JOSÉ ESTEBAN MUÑOZ, *The Sense of Brown*

Depictions of wild and uncontainable brown mass present a sense of a brown world to come that brings anxiety to those invested in the present order of

things. For them, brownness is only a coming deluge that demands every nation nail up its windows. The arrival of the brown mass on the borders of nation, city, or screen reiterates the promise and purities of nation-state sovereignty, while disavowing the nation-state's historical and continual role as an imperial power that has caused the very dispossession, colonization, and extraction that produced the stateless figures of the brown mass itself. Rather than invoke the injustices of war and exploitation, the brown mass resembles the unfinished work of colonization. The shard of brown mass cannot bridge what Nikhil Pal Singh has called the congruous but often separated "inner wars" of racial conflict and the "outer wars" against brown people.[73] Instead, its imaginary work is to invigorate a process that transforms brownness from an indistinguishable mass into incorporable but servile populations who presage a safer, postracial future where "we are all brown." This process we can call *domestication*.

Domesticating delineates a process whose completion is always deferred into a postracial future, the operational *-ing* of the gerund. Domesticating is not to be confused with the process of assimilating, that is, the process through which the new arrival transforms from a *migrant* (eluding the state, stateless, rightless, targeted by police, and subjected to carceral enclosure and exploitation) to an *immigrant* (subject to rehabilitation, cure, conversion, national belonging). I use the term *domestication* not to name a real process of assimilation but to illustrate the colonial logics of an imagined process toward an imagined state of progress. *Domesticating brown* thus names a colonial logic similar to the logics of elimination that Patrick Wolfe uses to frame the long violences against Indigenous peoples in Australia, and the logics of possession that Maile Arvin uses to frame the long violences against and incorporations of Polynesian peoples in Oceania.[74] Like these, domesticating brown is a logic of slow, slow violence, which understands racial difference through forms of animality and organicism—in this case, through the domestication of dogs, horses, and flora. In undergoing generations of domestication, such nonhuman beings construct a symbiotic relationship with the humans who come to depend on and even identify themselves with the domesticated.[75] Domesticating brown accounts for the self-fulfilling logics that colonial powers have used to blur the colonized subject with the domesticated animal in order to orient brownness toward a future in which later generations will have normalized and interiorized the violences that the previous generations once fought against. Domestication is about long (often generations-long) processes where seemingly temporary states of colonial violence become habituated and routine until future generations only recall past normalcies as myth and legend. These long processes can seem nonviolent, benevolent even. The slow drip of domestication allows one

to forget that what one is witnessing, feeling, and experiencing is injustice; when the building of walls over time means future generations will grow up inside those walls, never seeing their neighbors except through iron sights.

The shard "domesticating brown" illuminates the threat that brownness represents as an infiltration of racial purity, a threat that Louis Sullivan and other anthropologists once found so jarring that it made biological categories of race seem "meaningless and indefensible."[76] This is brownness as it has appeared in many scholarly studies: as a glitch in the multicultural system defined by the problems of "shadism," "colorism," "mixed race," or "passing." This private and invisible asylum of relational intimacy rouses erotic ways of seeing and feeling, but it must contend with the uneasy genealogies of mixture tattooed onto the brown body, which signify the unrestrained and ongoing transgression of sexual taboos: the exotic, the erotic, and the often wayward forms of proliferation. Such fears of brown sexuality are tethered and reproduced through imperial imaginaries of nonhuman domestication, where the term *husbandry* refers to both the domestication of nonhuman animals and the controlled monogamous patriarchy of the colonial family unit, and often requires forms of selective breeding: fixing, neutering, and other forms of producing biological limits on reproduction and managing the unpredictability of sexual desire.[77] Brownness thus invokes incarnate pleasures; as Amber Musser writes, "In contrast to an ecstasy that imagines transcending corporeality, brown jouissance is a reveling in fleshiness, its sensuous materiality that brings together pleasure and pain."[78] For Hiram Pérez, in encounters with (queer) white desire, the brown body often acts "as a repository for the disowned, projected desires of a cosmopolitan subject[;] it is alternately (or simultaneously) primitive, exotic, savage, pansexual, and abject."[79] In this erotic sense, brownness is recursive—it is both reviled *and* desired because of its exoticness, its wildness, its reproductive danger. Brownness resembles a form of libidinal sexuality that cannot be contained yet must always *be in the process of being* contained.

Brown sex holds not the transcendence of procreation but the fleshiness of proliferation. For some, this can elicit "brown jouissance"; for others, it is a thing to be controlled or culled. To be brown is thus to be within the orbit of domestication, to be ever moving, ever evading, ever developing, because one can never be fully domesticated, even if one wanted to, even if one chose to stand still. Domesticating brown thus goes beyond sexual policing to perceive the erotic disciplining that concerns how the brown body is expected to experience life itself: how one works, plays, speaks, and moves. The excesses of pleasure that brown people—particularly brown women—experience threaten the world as affective auras, as the "brown jouissance" that must be

domesticated within the future-oriented promise of colonial belonging.[80] Put simply, one should not gain erotic pleasure from domestic work, caretaking, construction, entertainment, service, or even sex work but should undertake such service with the duty and gratitude of being granted a brighter (and more domesticated) future.

Domesticating brown thus references the brown figure as a feminized subjectivity—a woman to be domesticated into the house rather than left to roam, love, and be. Discursively situated within what Alys Weinbaum calls "the race/reproduction bind," the procedural logic of domestication reframes the sexual, effervescent energy of brown women into recognizable labor power.[81] Its main representational figure across the globe is the migrant brown female affective laborer, whose dark(er) skin can signify either the maternal duty of the domestic worker in the Global North or the erotic improprieties of the sex worker who inhabits the peripheries of extraction zones, military bases, and tourist sites. Indeed, brown women from Southeast Asia and Oceania have become globally recognized examples of a brown femininity feared to fluctuate between these seemingly opposed types, which compel brown women to perform acts of affective self-sacrifice that, as Neferti Tadiar puts it, reroute "libidinal energies" into markers for a migrant laborer's "capacities for suffering, for relieving suffering for others, [and] for using their selves as the instruments of others' relief."[82] Domestication thus points to the gendered and queer differences of brown embodiments, where, in order to bolster the cognitive and bodily abilities of brown men, the "cultivated mestizo mind needs an undomesticated one," whose presence as willful, promiscuous, or even insane women showcases the limits to colonial mixture.[83] As Coráñez Bolton notes, in Hispanicized spaces like the Philippines where mixed brown men can appear as leaders of a new nation or as marginalized identities within the nation, brown women are often named national/cultural possessions whose bodies are subject to colonial dispossession through sexual acts, resulting in the "mestizaje's domestication of the colonial bodymind."[84] To return to Sara Ahmed, these logics of domestication react to the affects of fear and disgust elicited from the brown mass, for as the brown mass feels closer to and comes into proximity with the national citizen-subject, intimate and unrestrained knowledge of the brown subject becomes imperative. As Ahmed writes, "The others who are the objects of our disgust must be penetrated or uncovered. We must 'get to them' to 'get away from them.'"[85]

Though the logic of domesticating brown is imagined, like brown mass, on a large scale, its everyday practices involve a system of tutelage that individualizes brown subjects by bringing them into the domestic space of the

(lighter-skinned) national family. For Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Grace Kyungwon Hong, and Lisa Nakamura, the exploitation of yellow working bodies in North America was often conditioned on their depiction as "hyper-productive automatons, exceptionally suited for the repetitive and inhuman pace of industrial labor."[86] In contrast, the exploitations of brown domestic and service work in the twentieth century have been ascribed by forms of sentiment toward white womanhood, whose tutelage over domestic subjects reinforced their own moral superiority, their "powers of sympathy," and codified the "affective structure of the proper bourgeois subject epitomized by white womanhood."[87] White domestic womanhood in particular was called on to temper the exploitation by white men, shaping the domestic worker as a brown woman of excessive feeling whose racial capacities of affective maternal care would only need to be harnessed by white womanhood to benefit the white(r) family. Rather than operating through the "racist hate" of anti-Asian discourses, tutelage toward brown workers has often taken the form of a "racist love" that promises full belonging and advancement up the ladder of brown shades, *eventually*.[88] As Chun, Hong, and Nakamura point out, this "eventually" never comes; "it is always a suspended and vestibular temporality that simply binds agency and humanity to whiteness."[89]

Hollywood films featuring brown protagonists express logics of white tutelage of brown subjects through the repeated trope of the brown orphan boy: Mogli from *The Jungle Book*, Aladdin the "street-rat," Jamal Malik from *Slumdog Millionaire*, Saroo Brierley from *Lion*, "Pi" Patel from *Life of Pi*. For brown women, this trope appears in representations of domestic workers like in Alfonso Cuarón's 2018 award-winning film, *Roma*, which, despite its many accolades, was critiqued widely for its main character, Cleodegaria "Cleo" Gutiérrez, who is given almost no backstory nor a family life of her own free from that of her bourgeois light(er)-skinned employers. Similarly, the 2016 Singaporean film *Ilo Ilo* sees the Filipina migrant worker as coming from an untraceable brown mass to affectively rescue the alienated Chinese family.[90] The film's title, *Ilo Ilo*, names the city that the migrant Teresa is pulled out of, yet the film never features images of the city, nor does Teresa discuss her own upbringing. We see the same type of "plucked out of the herd" brown domestic character in Marta Cabrera of the 2019 film *Knives Out*, whose original country is so forgettable that nobody can recall which country it is, and whose purity is so extreme that telling a lie literally makes her vomit.[91] Presumed religious and pure, the brown domestic characters of Cleo, Teresa, and Marta must reject their own origins, communities, and sexual desires to be individuated from an unknowable and irrelevant brown mass. Their domesticated station precludes

lives that are not given value by communities or lovers, nor by clients or markets, but by the nationalist form of the bourgeois family (whether white, yellow, or lighter-skinned brown), upheld by the security apparatus of the state.

While the fear and disgust toward brown mass(es) can be resolved through large-scale operations like charity or war, the function of domesticating brownness is performed through individual or family-based tutelage. Yet both responses remain within a pluralist structure of patronage whose long-term aim is colonial domestication. Indeed, the term *domestication* itself comes from *domus*, the Latin term for "a type of house occupied by the wealthier classes," suggesting that the non-domesticated may be characterized less by not having a home than by coming from a home of ruin and poverty.[92] Narratives centering on brown people orphaned and rescued from the brown mass highlight the desire to domesticate the brown individual as a means of protecting them from themselves—their communities, their histories, their traditions, their own pleasures/desires—thus rerouting diverse cultural practices toward unified forms of domestic (national and household) maintenance. Logics of domestication thus see the individualized brown person's community and history either as irrelevant or as perpetually dangerous, elevating the home of the light(er)-skinned national family as a cocoon of protection, and the nation itself as a space of refuge for those orphaned from the brown mass. For such brown and migrant peoples, this domesticating narrative of home within a host family or nation, as Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing writes, "too often sugarcoats captivity."[93]

Shard: Shades of Brown

"Hey mom, you want milk in your coffee?"
"Yeah, make it as brown as your skin."
—a conversation with my mother

If the previous two shards can be situated within theoretical discourses of embodied personhood (as with brown mass) or of colonial logics (as with domesticating brown), the third shard, *shades of brown*, emerges not through discursive theorization so much as through sites of culture, art, literature, and the conversations that shape brown intimacy. They are in the unmeasurable, messy, and sometimes contradictory lives of brown peoples and in those who study brownness for whom "the failure to domesticate and tame the unpredictable queer migrant is itself a way out of the strictures of oppressive evaluative frames."[94] Shades of brown is thus less about forming judgments through discourses of brownness and more about making re-

parative worlds through the playful experimentation and reimagining that the sense of brown affords. Put simply, shades of brown emerges not when brown people are making a speech or teaching a class, but in the complex and ambiguous spaces alongside given and found families, when we feel no need to represent ourselves as an identity. Put crudely, it is the way we abuse given languages of race in queer and intimate spaces by operationalizing them for laughs or for the smallest possible gestures, to "make my coffee as brown as your skin."

Queer theorists of color have often attempted to account for brown shades through conceptions of value. Eng-Beng Lim, Lisa Marie Cacho, and José Esteban Muñoz have argued that brownness remains a site of devaluation and surplus labor, remaining easily (even untenably) reproducible, mere surplus. This method of understanding shades of brown accounts well for the contextual (but still colonial) distinctions of brownness tied to value. Where brown reproduction seems to need no protective mechanism, a language of value and devalue can capture the slippery capacity of brownness by reinstating class, caste, and colorist distinctions evident within local contexts. Here brownness represents not a race or a minority identity but a "commons" for those who remain browner than their immediate communities, or are otherwise browned by colonial and imperial subjugation.[95] This constant reinscription of darker shades of brown informs the "ideological codes used for deciding which human lives are valuable and which ones are worthless."[96] And yet to articulate shades of brown as a shard—as elusive and straying movement—means only tentatively invoking concepts like value and devalue, colonizer and colonized, marginalized and privileged. To think in shades is not, as one might suggest, politically sound, as its discursive traffic moves through terms that carry the seemingly infinite adjectival meanings of the transitive form. Shades cannot be approached fully through a materialist language of value, as even in precise contexts the very term *value* replicates, as Jodi Melamed argues, a universal rationalization that can insist on the same racial capitalist structures "for social forces as a whole everywhere."[97] Shades of brown signals value within subjective limitations, as brownness is not approached as such but is peppered through erotic and playful lexicons of *bronze*, *tan*, *ashen*, *tawny*, *fulvous*, *dusky*, and *dark*. Who could name the value of such terms? Who could posit patterns in their use, or name their misuse?

Perhaps a more palpable way to think with shades of brown is through the shame that we—brown academics invested in social justice—might have when facing our own family's racisms, or with the way we ourselves have capitulated and allied with power even through languages of decolonization, antiracism, intersectionality, community belonging, and so on. For my own family

in Oahu, the tension between the terms *local* and *settler* often manifests in an unease that brings shame to our family gatherings, where I have witnessed and partaken in talk-stories of family histories that blur the boundaries of Indigenous (Kānaka Maoli) and Asian settler through our unknown genealogies, our cross-racial intimacies, our openness to familial adoption, and our affective ties to Hawai'i. Within our shared senses of brown, our family gatherings are beset by undeniable inequalities that expose the importance of these critical designations: Most of the Kānaka Maoli members of my family live in poorer historical plantation areas like Waipahu and Wahiawa and work in service, retail, fishing, or various forms of caretaking and affective/eroticized labor, while the more broadly local-identified live in wealthier areas of Kailua and Honolulu, or in the mainland United States. Much of the tension in my family is tied to the way the term *local* emerged in the early twentieth century through solidarity labor movements within diverse and stratified Hawaiian plantations but has also been invoked to flatten Indigenous peoples with Asian migrants through a presumptive reference to colonial whiteness. As Haunani-Kay Trask famously argued, the reductive effects of *local* can allow Asian settlers to "claim Hawai'i as their own, denying indigenous history, their long collaboration in our continued dispossession, and the benefits therefrom."[98] At the same time, *Asian settlers* and *settlers of color* have also carried an unease among Asians in Hawai'i who feel their positionality being conflated with that of white colonial power.

The discursive shift of *local* and *settler* illuminates the task of brown theory to trouble binaries that remain dependent on a reference to colonial whiteness, to instead centralize the complex relations within the relative incoherence of brownness and its vacillating plurality of colonial subjectivities. As Dean Saranillio argues, the critical distinctions of the term *Asian settler* are too often forgotten to instead reinscribe binary relations of "oppressed or oppressive."[99] Likewise, the anxieties of *local* and *settler* capture a brown feeling of fluctuating between binaries, a sense of being both oppressor and oppressed. To think within shades of brown thus undertakes the difficult and crucial work of dismantling not merely binaries but also relational modes of racial thinking, where brownness is seen in relation to nonbrown peoples within a North American racial formation. Rather, shades of brown conjures methods of self-referencing and interreferencing, as it parses through various forms and power relations of brownness that are also never exclusively brown. The shift from *local* to *settler* accounts for the disproportionate colonial effects on Indigenous peoples and the way localism has widely been crucial to the curtailment of Native Hawaiian sovereignty. Shades of brown frames this shift not as a reinscription of a new oppressor/oppressed binary, nor as a racial relation between two distinct types

(since the boundaries between native and settler, as in my family, are never uniform or clear), but as the very axis of coalition for differently brown groups.

Thinking through shades of brown compels us to see terms like *Asian settler* as discursively practicing a similar coalition-building work that the term *local* once performed, except not through the rhetorics of sameness but through a critical assessment of the differences of our various brown genealogies and their historical relations to colonial power. Shades of brown thus does not take the point of view of "marginalized people" but that of brown people who talk-story among other brown people within a brown world. It sees logics of domestication as neglecting the view of brown people who have "chosen" domestication, who perhaps see themselves engaging in acts of manipulating, adopting, repurposing, even flourishing in an ambivalent but intimate relationship with state and capitalist power, a symbiosis that could be interpreted as parasitic as easily as exploitative, but could also be reframed as doing good for marginalized people because it reinforces power's dependency on the peripheral brown ethnic. Thus, thinking in shades can get pretty shady. Through it, we can throw shade at ourselves, and we can help understand the shame we experience when racist and colonial ways of thinking emerge not from white perpetrators but from Indigenous, Black, brown, and yellow people within our intimate circles. Such shades are difficult to write about within academic languages because they can dispel the cultural logics of marginalization that condition the very livelihoods of brown people, where trauma and oppression often signify a capacity to give wisdom or to create art. To think in shades is to consider how shared oppression does not necessarily make us better, wiser, or more morally sound people, nor does it help sharpen our critique, but can merely press us down into silence, self-absorption, debilitation, and contradiction. Our shades often bring us shame. Their danger is in revealing, as Olúfẹmi Táíwò puts it, that our "oppression is not a prep school."[100]

Ever Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's student, José Esteban Muñoz expanded on his mentor's notion of queer shame through his own story of brown shame as a Cuban American whose community was characterized by an "ultraconservative dominance."[101] Similarly, my own shame comes from my brown communities who sometimes ally with anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, anti-Asian, and antibrown interests while denying their own historical circumstances. To see shame as shades is also to see the spirit shades of our past, the apparitions without bodies who sit beside us as we comprehend our own embodiment. These shades are also the ever-present histories of our disturbing relations—the genocide and eradication of Indigenous communities, colonial complicity, rape, and all the acts of forgetting that occur when we reduce ourselves to narratives of

grievance. Indeed, these shades of brown sit with me as I write this; they disrupt my own political position (and, by extension, Muñoz's) because they force me to account for myself as light(er)-skinned, American, academic-educated, worldly, English-speaking, gendered as masculine, and a professor who, like the members of family and community I examine here, has also partaken in questionable alliances in order to survive in academia, holding on to the notion that I am producing *radical* pedagogy, scholarship, and art. Thus, to think in shades is not just about value or position but also about the hidden forms of language, performance, and affect that emerge when brown people of many shades dwell alongside each other in what Muñoz called a "commons of the incommensurate" that "goes beyond a politics of equivalence."[102] Our "being-in-common-in-difference" reveals a storied manifest of intimacies that have taken place among those we call servants and masters, colonized and colonizer. As shame descends on us, we are reminded that our very being-in-the-world was made possible by troubling forms of affection, which are ever present within relationships that future generations might consider merely exploitative or opportunistic. Shades of brown disturbs the presentist political visions of our pasts and futures, laying at our feet not merely the act of intimate encounter (the mixed-race subject) but the ways that we brown people have dwelled uncomfortably within our own worlds.

Brown Theory

This world is white no longer, and it will never be white again. —JAMES BALDWIN, *Notes of a Native Son*

The brown triptych has moved us to a considerably different place than where we began. We are no longer within a theory of marginalization or minority subjectivity or even, at its core, race. Brownness reminds us that the nonwhite gaze describes the vast, vast majority of the world, and so too brown theory proceeds with brownness as already the way of the world. It seeks not to draft grand theoretical axioms but to reinvigorate bodies with the histories and perspectives of our brown world, to move through the multitude of transitions that form brown personhood, among the indistinguishable and the categorizable, the plastic and the fungible, the queer and the queered, the people who wave flags and the people who dazzle in shards. In this way, brown theory attempts to trace what Sony Coráñez Bolton and Ryanson Alessandro Ku have called the "subterranean nature of empire—its quality of being everywhere at the same time always absconding from sight."[103] Brown theory does not ask,

"What if we centered marginalization rather than whiteness?" but "What if our theory did not only reflect our world but moved with our world?" Brown theory tends to dissolve rather than solve, problematizing the roots of the questions themselves. What does it mean "to call," and why do we feel that one name, one position, one coherent self, could possibly account for our many selves, souls, and roles?

The refusal to remain consistent with a single term (*brown mass / domesticating brown \ shades of brown*) embraces the messiness of multiple terms, of indefinitive definition, and provides a flexible method for flowing alongside the fluctuations of brownness in various contexts. Through this triptych form, we can also return to the artworks of Scott Eaton to see how the multiple shards of brown theory can transform an art object. "Domesticating brown" asks us to reread the interwoven, monstrous "brown mass" of *Entangled II* and *Humanity of the Damned* as expressing the anxieties of the para-human object reaching out to intoxicate the viewer, a being in need of saving, of being put to use, of being individualized, incorporated, domesticated. "Shades of brown" ponders how these brown objects themselves refuse their own objectification by refusing stillness itself. The movements of brown theory are thus the movements of constant rereading: We reread the images of brown peoples as a mass caught (and damned) through their own tangles and knots, as domesticatable subjects whom viewers are tempted to pluck out of the wriggling and writhing populace, as proliferating shades of threshing, floundering movement, whose brown bodies are the very slippery surface of flesh needed to remain mobile. All these analyses intersect to interpret a work of art that is, in every description by the artist and critics, not about brownness or race at all but about systems of thought that primarily concern "the human" (in this case, the progression of AI and the aesthetics of human bodies within digital archives). To the white world, as in Blumenbach's initial formulation, brownness appears only as a nuisance, an afterthought, a stray idea that misses the larger point. For the rest of us, it is the story of colonialism, of power, and of ourselves. And so long as colonial relations remain, brownness will flow through every instance of human expression.

Throughout this book, *brown mass \ domesticating brown / shades of brown* will reappear and guide us along the wayward movements of brownness within a spiral of diverging discourses and representations. In chapter 1 they help trace the historicity of the Mongol Empire in our ever-imperial present, where brownness arrives in contemporary and popular revisions of Mongolian imperial histories as the mass of intolerant, anticapitalist imperial subjects (peoples inhabiting the modern-day Middle East) as well as the subjects who benefit historically from imperial domestication (collaborators who were, according to

these narratives, granted multiculturalist capitalism), and as the many shades of brown that encompass living within the Mongol Empire (those who created everyday means of sustaining beliefs, cultures, and forms of survival). In chapter 2, which considers my own lineage of Ilocano migrants and plantation workers (sakadas) in Hawai'i, the brown triptych follows the figure of the sakada through various narratives of brown mass, as seemingly infinite migrants; of domestication, as collaborative enforcers and exploitable labor; and of shades of brown, in relation to Indigenous and other browned migrants in Hawai'i. Similarly, the subsequent chapters use the brown triptych to trace movements of brownness through the personal, media, literary, and academic representations of domestic workers (chapter 3); the various imaginings of "brown Chineseness" in politicized representations of Hong Kong (chapter 4); and the discourses of ethnic authorship within life writing and autotheory (chapter 5). Each chapter's movement also explores my own sense of brown, relying on the methods of the brown triptych not to theorize or universalize *me* but to enact ways to feel, be with, refuse, and survive all the contexts that uniquely brown *us*.[104]

The movement of theory is also the story of a movement, with each author taking on a new role. Like brownness itself, brown theory cannot be separated from the gaze of the author(ity). As we attempt to account for brownness as being-in-process, as the mass to be domesticated, as the shards of color and the shades of history dwelling beside us, brown theory must remain enmeshed with the lifeworld of its author, whose sense of brown will always beg to differ. This book will inevitably privilege some understandings of brownness and marginalize others. Sometimes I will give particular reasons for doing so. Because brown theory can never be universalized, it is not merely theory but antitheory; because it cannot be made distinct from its author, it is not merely antitheory but autotheory. Thus, brown theory must be manifest rather than manifesto. We cannot attempt to create something that already exists; we can only graph its movements along the tide. Brown theory does not produce knowledge but rather, as Saidiya Hartman writes, a "storied articulation of ideas."[105] Through the storied manifest, brown theory has the potential to be just as relevant on a large scale as in one's living room, around one's (queer) family table. When political racial identities might flicker off, brownness continues to move.

Notes

FOREWORD

1. While some have argued that academia has homogenized brownness around the experiences of "high-caste Indian scholars who can access its spaces" (Borisa and Brown, "Intimate Borders," 96), it is also common in Canadian scholarship for *brown* to be interchangeable with *South Asian* or *South Asian diasporas* (Shah, "Brown Identities").

2. Smilges, *Crip Negativity*, 2–3.

3. Ruiz and Vourloumis, in Harney et al., "Resonances."

4. Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, xxii.

5. Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 55.

6. Ricoeur, *Lectures on Imagination*, 285.

7. Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 100.

8. Ricoeur, *Lectures on Imagination*, 218.

9. In *The Difference Aesthetics Makes*, Chuh writes of the "need to activate ways of going beyond the sometimes strenuous demands of disciplinarity and professionalization, ways that are not so much interdisciplinary but are instead deliberately promiscuous" (4).

10. T. Chen, "Transpacific Turns," 2.

11. Ruiz, *Left Turns*, 8.

12. Rafael, *White Love*, 15–16.

13. Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 199.

14. Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 199.

15. Troeung, *Landbridge*, 68–69.

INTRODUCTION

Parts of this introduction were published previously as Christopher Patterson, "Brown Theory: A Storied Manifest of Our World," *positions: asia critique* 31, no. 1 (2023): 91–116.

1. Clifford, *Studies in Brown Humanity*, vii.

2. Clifford, *Studies in Brown Humanity*, 40; for a deeper reading of Clifford's work, see Holden, "Dissonant Voices."

3. Clifford, *Studies in Brown Humanity*, 18.

4. Clifford, *Studies in Brown Humanity*, 18.
5. Blumenbach, *Anthropological Treatises*, 269.
6. Sharma, "Brown."
7. E.-B. Lim, *Brown Boys*, 9.
8. E.-B. Lim, *Brown Boys*, 20.
9. London, *Revolution, and Other Essays*, 326.
10. Far, "Leaves," 225; Yao, "Black-Asian Counterintimacies," 199.
11. Manuud, *Brown Heritage*.
12. Melamed, "Racial Capitalism," 77.
13. Patterson, *Transitive Cultures*, 15.
14. Isaac, *American Tropics*.
15. Caronan, *Legitimizing Empire*, 5.
16. M. Chen et al., "Introduction," 18 (original in bold); Teaiwa, "bikinis," 96.
17. I use *brownness* in ways that can also signify a more fluid form of Blackness; as Margo Natalie Crawford writes, "The space that Muñoz gives 'brown,' the way he allows it to be amorphous and a collective feeling, is similar to the lowercase 'blackness' that moves in and out of the settled identity of 'Black.'" Crawford, "What Time Is It," 154.
18. Canaan, "Brownness," 235.
19. Muñoz, *Sense of Brown*, 122.
20. M. Chen et al., "Introduction," 12.
21. Rather than "claim latinidad," Sony Coráñez Bolton offers "Filipinx Hispanidad" as an alternative to understand "the regulatory and disciplinary rubrics through which we come to know of ourselves in racial, ethnonational terms." Coráñez Bolton, *Crip Colony*, 5.
22. Patterson, *Transitive Cultures*, 16.
23. Curaming, "Rizal and the Rethinking," 327.
24. L. Sullivan, *Racial Types*, 55–56.
25. Curaming, "Rizal and the Rethinking," 326.
26. Coráñez Bolton, *Crip Colony*, 24.
27. Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation*, 37.
28. Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation*, 37.
29. Coates, *Rizal*; see also Curaming, "Filipinos as Malay."
30. Quoted in Capino et al., *Rizal's Life, Works*, 227.
31. Arvin, *Possessing Polynesians*, 4.
32. Arvin, *Possessing Polynesians*, 40.
33. Desmond, "Picturing Hawai'i," 486.
34. Armstrong, *Around the World*, 144.
35. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*.
36. Zeiler, "Basepaths to Empire," 192; Coráñez Bolton, *Crip Colony*, 60.
37. Saranillio, *Unsustainable Empire*, 42.
38. Saranillio, *Unsustainable Empire*, 43.
39. Princess Orig, "Kayumanggi Versus Maputi." For more on how Americans established cross-racial hierarchies, see chapter 2.
40. Kramer, "Race-Making and Colonial Violence"; Rafael, *White Love*.
41. Rafael, *White Love*, 35.

42. Du Bois, *Health and Physique*, 32–33. See also Haidarali, *Brown Beauty*, 27.

43. Haidarali, *Brown Beauty*, 144.

44. Hurston, "How It Feels," 155.

45. Haidarali, *Brown Beauty*, 8.

46. Justice George Sutherland's decision depriving Bhagat Singh Thind of citizenship on the basis of race relies on these racial distinctions while also providing forms of allyship among Asiatic groups, writing that "the framers did not have in mind the brown or yellow races of Asia." Daksha Pillai, "United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind," 14. For an analysis of the *Thind* decision through a "critical brown studies" analytic, see Boge, "US v. Thind."

47. Man, *Soldiering Through Empire*, 108.

48. Y. Espiritu, "Critical Transnational Perspective," 109.

49. Y. Espiritu, "Critical Transnational Perspective," 109; see also Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*, 55–56.

50. See, "Language Run Amok," 371.

51. Dunne, *Delano*, xiv.

52. Harrison, "Muhammad Ali Draft Case," 81.

53. Tu, *Experiments in Skin*, 28.

54. Martin Manalansan conceives of "messy" as characterizing his ethnographic research (of queer Filipinx diasporic peoples) where "everyday life is not a mere conglomeration of routines and clear tactics," reflected in his field notes, which are "filled with contradictory and often disconnected ideas, quotes and scenes." Manalansan, "Queer Worldings," 566.

55. Hong and Junio, "Dazzle," 137. In *Transitive Cultures*, I define *transitive cultures* as "a set of shifting cultural practices tactically mobilized in contexts where identity is defined as fixed and authentic." Patterson, *Transitive Cultures*, 4.

56. Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 61 (italics in original).

57. Musser, *Sensual Excess*, 15.

58. Muñoz, *Sense of Brown*, 118.

59. Puar, *Right to Maim*, 60.

60. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," 67; Cheng, "Ornamentalism," 416.

61. Mel Chen uses the term *reanimate* to understand how queer authors "animate" terms for new forms and collectives that express "beautiful collectivity/assemblage /reengagement of self with animate force." M. Chen, *Animacies*, 53.

62. Coráñez Bolton, *Crip Colony*, 133.

63. "Image Complex" was coined by Meg McLagan and Yates McKee to describe the infrastructure that produces and circulates visual experience. See McLagan and McKee, *Sensible Politics*.

64. Abbasi, "Trypophobia."

65. Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 98.

66. Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 97.

67. Vancouver Art Gallery, "Scott Eaton."

68. Kaplan, *Aerial Aftermaths*, 2.

69. Yapp, *Minor China*, 73–74.

70. Zimanyi, "*Human Flow*," 377 (italics in original).

71. These analyses of *Human Flow* were made in conversation with Y-Dang Troeung while we cotaught her last class together, a graduate seminar on critical refugee studies and debilitation.

72. Here I use imagination to conjure Hannah Arendt's "exertion of the imagination," which she believed was required for moral political thought (see more in chapter 5). Arendt, "Truth and Politics," 237.

73. Singh, *America's Long War*.

74. See Wolfe, *Traces of History*; Arvin, *Possessing Polynesians*.

75. I make these animalia comparisons to recognize, as Antoinette M. Burton and Renisa Mawani write, that within imperial discourses "the human/animal distinction [has] served as a recurrent reference point for who was expendable and who would flourish." Burton and Mawani, *Animalia*, 1.

76. W. Anderson, "Racial Hybridity," S105.

77. Heidi Nast writes that the domestication of the dog brought standardization and control as traits of British Empire and that "selective breeding commenced to create dogs physically tailored for war, hunting, herding, and even the sleeve or lap." Nast, "D Is for Dog," 46.

78. Musser, *Sensual Excess*, 3.

79. Pérez, *Taste for Brown Bodies*, 34.

80. Musser, *Sensual Excess*, 5.

81. Weinbaum, *Wayward Reproductions*.

82. Tadiar, "Himala (Miracle)," 724.

83. Coráñez Bolton, *Crip Colony*, 95.

84. Coráñez Bolton, *Crip Colony*, 31.

85. Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 97.

86. Chun et al., "'Understanding' Asians," 432.

87. Chun et al., "'Understanding' Asians," 432.

88. Bow, *Racist Love*, 2.

89. Chun et al., "'Understanding' Asians," 433.

90. A. Chen, *Ilo Ilo*.

91. Johnson, *Knives Out*.

92. Lien et al., "Introduction," 4.

93. Tsing, "Nine Provocations," 232.

94. Manalansan, "Messy Mismeasures," abstract.

95. Muñoz defined a "brown commons" as people and things rendered "brown because they share an organicism that is not solely the organic of the natural as much as it is a certain brownness, which is embedded in a vast and pulsating social world." Muñoz, *Sense of Brown*, 2.

96. Cacho, *Social Death*, 150.

97. Melamed, "Racial Capitalism," 82.

98. Trask, "Settlers of Color," 2.

99. Saranillio, *Unsustainable Empire*, 17.

100. Táíwò, "Being-in-the-Room Privilege."

101. Muñoz, *Sense of Brown*, 87.

102. Muñoz, "Race, Sex," 112.

103. Coráñez Bolton and Ku, "Transregional Postcolonialisms."

104. I am thankful to the readers who evaluated this manuscript for Duke University Press, who provided many of the insights and language for this paragraph.

105. Hartman, "On Working with Archives."

CHAPTER 1. CROSSING THE CAUCASUS

Thank you to Christine Kim (University of British Columbia) and Helen Hok-Sze Leung (Simon Fraser University), who gave feedback on a 2018 version of this chapter that was later rejected by *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*.

1. Saunders, *Mongol Conquests*, 12.

2. Chambers, *Genghis Khan*, 23.

3. Benjamin, *Empires of Ancient Eurasia*, 85.

4. Fijn, "Domestic and the Wild," 284.

5. Halberstam and Nyong'o, "Introduction," 454.

6. As Marianne Elisabeth Lien, Heather Anne Swanson, and Gro B. Ween write, "most scholars today agree that domestication is, at least, a two-way relationship." Lien, Swanson, and Ween, "Introduction," 15.

7. Morgan, *Mongols*, 5.

8. Deleuze and Guattari, *Nomadology*, 97.

9. Tsing, "Nine Provocations," 242.

10. *New York Times*, "E-Book Nonfiction."

11. Fusco, *Marco Polo*; Bodrov, *Mongol*.

12. Myadar, "Rebirth of Chinggis Khaan," 841.

13. Morefield, *Empires Without Imperialism*. See also Biran, "Mongol Empire."

14. Myadar, "Rebirth of Chinggis Khaan," 841.

15. Deep thanks to anonymous reader 2 for providing many of the insights of this paragraph, some of which have been revised from the reader's comments.

16. For more on One Belt, One Road and other Chinese imperial projects, see Miller, *China's Asian Dream*; Michel, "When China Met Africa," 39; Moyo, "Perspectives on South-South Relations"; and E. Wong et al., "One Belt, One Road."

17. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, xvi.

18. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, 76.

19. K.-H. Chen, *Asia as Method*, 18. Chen employs the term *subempire* "to refer to a lower-level empire that is dependent on an empire at a higher level in the imperialist hierarchy."

20. Morgan, *Mongols*, 33.

21. Down syndrome was once itself called Mongolism, and to have Mongolian traits often meant birth defects or ill health.

22. Bow, *Racist Love*, 2.

23. Hendricks, "Coloring the Past."

24. Hendricks, "Coloring the Past."

25. Heng, *Invention of Race*, 19.

26. Britton and Coles, "Spenser and Race," 3.

27. Coles, in Britton et al., "Spenser and Race," at 17:35–38.