**The Roots and Routes of Imperium in Imperio:**

**St. Clair Drake, The Formative Years**

“Chicago: like the back of your hand;

the earlier railroad the same.

Just as heavily veined and stressed,

you know and carry with you whole

all of our suffering; a spread of pain

which, we know, you conceal quietly.”

*Andrew Salkey, 1973.[[1]](#endnote--1)1*

“My earliest memories of a black college involve an episode fifty-six years ago… My father had taken me…with him on a visit to his alma mater, the school that had fashioned him into a preacher and my mother into a schoolteacher, Virginia Theological Seminary and College…He had come there as a young immigrant from Barbados; my mother had come across the mountains from Staunton in the Shenandoah Valley. I remember that visit…Years later I watched black Baptists giving suppers and begging ‘to keep the Seminary alive’… The Seminary was theirs. It is still alive, impecunious and struggling. They refuse to let it die.” *St Clair Drake, 1971.[[2]](#endnote-0)2*

**Introduction**

St. Clair Drake is forever connected to Chicago, because of his involvement with the sociologist Horace Cayton to the writing of *Black Metropolis*.[[3]](#endnote-1)3 Published by the University of Chicago Press in 1945, *Black Metropolis*, now in its fourth edition, remains an important work in fields of urban sociology, anthropology, and African American history for giving meaning to the concept of a metropolis within a metropolis: the product of a color line and pervasive discrimination, but a world distinctive in its attributes and belonging entirely to black people. Emerging from an ethnographic view of Depression-era Bronzeville in Chicago’s South Side, this concept expressed the attachment black people had for a way of life and a separate institutional culture that was essential for survival and getting ahead in a world controlled by whites. Connected to other black communities by the ebbs and flows of southern migrations, Bronzeville was organized around “families, cliques, churches, and voluntary associations… ordered within” a dynamic “system” of “upper, middle, and lower social classes” that developed in isolation from the larger city. Though its inhabitants struggled against the deprivations and impoverishment resulting from racial covenants and the job ceiling, Bronzeville was a “way of life” that “many did not want to see all together disappear with integration.”[[4]](#endnote-2)4 Belonging to city’s laboring masses, black people did not agitate for social equality by joining, en masse, the “Communist Party” or “New Union movement.”[[5]](#endnote-3)5 Instead, they “tenaciously clung to life, liberty, and happiness” through the churches, businesses, and newspapers they created for themselves.[[6]](#endnote-4)6 They “did not ordinarily experience their social separateness as oppressive or undesirable.” This was “the world of their relatives and friends. They knew no other!”[[7]](#endnote-5)7

It was this understanding of Bronzeville as a separate black community that made *Black Metropolis* a uniquely insurgent text within in a genre of literature produced during the interwar period around local studies of “race relations.”[[8]](#endnote-6)8 In a review of *Black Metropolis* for the *Chicago Defender,* Walter White of the NAACP was convinced its “view of the Negro Problem and the ghetto” had serious implications for “integrationist discourses.”[[9]](#endnote-7)9 While its description of a community’s customs, habits, and strivings showed black people as “essentially American,” the full extent of their social rejection by the larger city of Chicago countered what White saw as a consensus view of racism being uniquely southern.[[10]](#endnote-8)10 Against popular narratives of American progress, *Black Metropolis* pointed to how the modernizing forces of urbanization and industrialization had failed to sweep away the primitive system of racial discrimination.[[11]](#endnote-9)11 That a modern black community like Bronzeville took root and flourished suggests that race in Chicago was less rigid than the system of southern caste; the full extent of black people’s separate spatial existence also implied that neither was it equivalent to the ethnicity of European immigrants.[[12]](#endnote-10)12 The essential theme of *Black Metropolis* was that racism in American society was widespread, impeding social progress and reinforcing the boundaries of a self-affirming world made by black people in the middle of Chicago’s South Side.

Though widely viewed as a collaborative text, this controversial conception of *imperium in imperio* in *Black Metropolis* actually belonged to Drake*.*[[13]](#endnote-11)13As author of twenty-three of the twenty-four main chapters, Drake, more than Cayton, defined the scope and content of *Black Metropolis*.[[14]](#endnote-12)14 The study’s methodology reflected the influence of social anthropology on Drake’s sociological imagination while a graduate student at the University of Chicago in the 1930s. The idea of metropolis within a metropolis, however, had much deeper roots as the embodiment of what Drake already experientially understood as a distinctive black response to systems of racial domination.

Along an “earlier railroad” that maps his own migrations across a shifting geography of race, Drake encountered Bronzeville as one of several communities interconnected by “the multidirectional flow of black populations.”[[15]](#endnote-13)15 Moving beyond approaches to the study of the African Diaspora that mainly focus on the dispersal of populations through the trans-Atlantic slave trade, this consideration of Drake’s early years locates the origins of an idea in *Black Metropolis* to his movements through multiple black communities that, in their totality, offer a post-emancipation conception of the Black Atlantic as a single socio-economic entity. Much like the Bronzeville he came to “know like the back of his hand,” Drake came to know these communities as composite parts of a Black Atlantic world that resulted from the continued migrations of populations made vulnerable by the upheavals of capitalism and the caste-enforcing structures of white supremacy in the early twentieth century.[[16]](#endnote-14)16 Each represented a metropolis within a metropolis, informing Drake’s sense of identity and worldview well before he embarked on the writing of *Black Metropolis*.

**Roots and Routes From**

**Barbados to Virginia**

Drake never wrote an autobiography. However, he did give it some thought toward the end of his life, noting that one major theme would be his “lifelong search for identity…in a world where blackness had been denigrated for 500 years.”[[17]](#endnote-15)17 This rare moment of critical reflection on the meaning of his oeuvre was based on his identification with a tradition of “vindicationist” writing that was first set in motion by the response of black intellectuals to the system of racial slavery in America and an awareness of himself as a “Pan-African Diaspora product, which, as he states, made him a “partial insider” to multiple black communities.[[18]](#endnote-16)18

In 1879, Drake’s father, John Gibbs St. Clair Drake was born in Payne’s Bay, Barbados, a fishing village located in St. John’s Parish along the southwestern coast of the island.[[19]](#endnote-17)19 His parents, John Benjamin and Nancy Cummins, were slaves whose “freedom came,” Drake explains, “with the abolition of slavery in the British Empire.” Like much of the West Indies during this period, Barbados was a colony with a small, open economy in a worldwide capitalist system. Drake’s father’s universe of operation within this setting was circumscribed by birth, because, according to Drake, “he didn’t come from the old free Barbadian population.”[[20]](#endnote-18)20 Though “born free,” Drake’s father was locked into the lower rungs of a society where, as C.L.R. James remarked of Trinidad at the time, “class and racial rivalries proved far too intense” for a black majority to overcome.[[21]](#endnote-19)21 In 1899, Drake’s father graduated from the Academic Department of Harrison College, a Methodist-run secondary school established for the “poor and indigent boys of St. John’s Parish.”[[22]](#endnote-20)22 Undoubtedly aware that his aspirations would remain unfulfilled if he stayed on the island, he, like tens of thousands of others West Indians, pinned his hopes for a better life on migration. In this way Drake’s came to understand his father’s migration to the United States as being “unleashed” by a “poverty” exacerbated by “overpopulation” and “a social system in which British settlers and their mixed blood descendants kept most blacks in a subordinate position.”[[23]](#endnote-21)23

Arriving to the United States at the turn of the last century, Drake’s father was among the first wave of post-emancipation “refugees” from the West Indies.[[24]](#endnote-22)24 His migratory experience actually resulted from a combination of forces that made life in Barbados exceedingly difficult for a landless black majority. As Winston James explains of the scale and specific determinants of Caribbean migration during this period, “there was no shortage of compelling reasons for black people—from the poor to the aspiring professional class—to escape these islands, insofar as they could.”[[25]](#endnote-23)25 For Barbados in particular, a series of natural disasters, compounded by a colonial policy that privileged the interests of a small landholding oligarchy, created serious economic dislocation for those “least capable of withstanding it.” When the Panama Canal boom, banana plantations of Central America, oil fields of Venezuela, sugarcane plantations of Cuba, and factories and steamship lines of industrializing America beckoned, Bajans, Jamaicans, Kittians, Trinidadians, and other islanders answered their call.[[26]](#endnote-24)26 With most going to Central America and to cities in the northeastern United States, Drake’s father was among the few to disembark in Norfolk, Virginia, a port city whose centuries old Afro-American population came in by way of that very same water route that opens up to the Atlantic world. As Drake explains of his father’s “apocryphal” arrival, “he jumped ship in Norfolk” sometime between 1903 and 1904. While hanging around the docks, black Baptist preachers persuaded him to go to school at Virginia Theological Seminary and College in Lynchburg. While a student at the seminary, he shed his Methodist cloak and discovered his life’s calling—“to preach the gospel to the poor” and “set at liberty the captive.”[[27]](#endnote-25)27

While at the seminary, Drake’s father met Bessie Lee Bowles. Eight years his junior, Bowles was a native of Staunton, Virginia. As Drake recalls of his mother, her “people were slaves” and his grandmother, Mary Bowles, was an “illiterate” domestic worker, “born a year or two before slavery was abolished in this country.” In the segregated universe of Staunton, Drake’s grandmother worked as a maid at the all white Mary Baldwin Seminary for Women, a Presbyterian school. Since the pursuit of higher learning was generally “valued by nearly all the black families that worked around the school,” Drake remembered how his grandmother always stressed the importance of education for her two children, Bessie and Franklin.[[28]](#endnote-26)28 While educational opportunities for black women were limited, it did elicit significant support from black Baptist churches.[[29]](#endnote-27)29 Though excluded from the clergy and relegated to gendered spaces within the church, black women benefited from a Black Baptist commitment to a universal system of education. Seen as essential to the elevation of the black Baptist family, this initiative in the area of education gave Drake’s mother the rare opportunity to develop herself intellectually and work in coalition with other black women toward advancing the race. In this way, Drake’s mother followed Virginia’s own Nannie Helen Burroughs into the Women’s Club of the National Baptist Convention and pursued a course of teacher training at the Virginia Seminary, an institution that embodied the aspirations of an emancipated population for education.[[30]](#endnote-28)30

In April of 1910, Drake’s parents were married. Nine months later Drake was born in Suffolk, Virginia where his father oversaw the spiritual wellbeing of some three hundred souls at the First Baptist Church in nearby Harrisburg.[[31]](#endnote-29)31 Throughout his life, Drake considered himself a product of these crosscurrents in the Black Diaspora. Though he would discover through his mother’s family the spirit, culture, and longings of Afro-America, his awareness of a Black Diaspora came from his father. In the general flow of human history, Drake’s birth was the outgrowth of a post-emancipation migration that was driven by economic dislocation and the boom of distant markets, which resulted, at the Virginia Seminary, in the convergence of black communities with roots in the centuries long history of racial slavery in the Americas.

**Religious Intellectuals Against**

**Race and Racism**

When black people renewed their efforts to establish independent churches after the Civil War most gravitated into the Baptist fold. Without bishops or a strong central organization, the Baptist appeal was in its support of an “essential freedom” for congregations to organize themselves and worship in the way they saw fit. By the close of the nineteenth century, there were over 1.3 million black Baptists in the South, more than three times as many as any other denomination.[[32]](#endnote-30)32 From Baptist churches came state conferences, newspapers, schools, and colleges like that of the Virginia Seminary.

The Virginia Theological Seminary and College was the first post-Civil War higher educational institution established in Lynchburg when interest in an “all black” theological school emerged at the 1886 meeting of the Virginia Baptist State Convention in Richmond. Its founder, Phillip Morris, argued successfully for such an institution that would be “controlled by blacks” and “independent of whites.” In 1887, the convention purchased six acres of land for this purpose, and the following year the Virginia seminary was incorporated. It was, as one observer remarked, “a school of the Negroes, by the Negroes, and for the Negroes.”[[33]](#endnote-31)33 Guided by this spirit of independence, its founders believed that “Negro peoples were perfectly capable of higher intellectual pursuits” and “carrying on with their work without the white man always at their elbows.”[[34]](#endnote-32)34 The Virginia seminary quickly became a “center of radical thought in regards to the race question” and its students, staff, and faculty “zealous proponents of the causes of the Negro American” and “African improvement” and “freedom.”[[35]](#endnote-33)35

The culture of education at the Virginia Seminary emphasized a Christian responsibility for the spiritual salvation and uplift of black populations across the globe, and a commitment to projecting the gospel of self-help, thrift, temperance, chastity, and patriarchal authority as the assured path to independence.[[36]](#endnote-34)36 Emboldened by this mission, several of the seminary’s early graduates almost immediately made their impressions felt in parts of the Black Atlantic world. In Drake’s childhood universe, they, along with his father, were his earliest models of intellectual action and leadership.

Ironically, the gateway to a culture of anti-colonial activism was the American mission movement. From its beginnings in the early nineteenth century, white missionaries carried through the racially paternalistic ideas of British mission societies. These early initiatives held that “Afric’s sons and daughters” were somehow the “white man’s burden,” to which exclusively belonged the responsibility to “exercise a trust” over “the spiritual and material welfare of people whose racial status,” many believed, “equivalent to that of children.” While seen as “incapable of attaining “the heights of western civilization” Africans were considered well to “receive all the spiritual blessings of Christianity.” As Sylvia Jacobs contends, mission societies spread the dominant theory of white supremacy and were seen as essential in the advance of colonial governments. When black Americans assumed a minor role in the evangelization of the “land of their forefathers” at the end of the nineteenth century, many had come to accept the idea of “manifest destiny” as propagated by white missionaries, going so far as to see slavery as providential.[[37]](#endnote-35)37 By expressing a collective sense of racial obligation for Africa’s “uplift” and “redemption,” however, black missionaries from Virginia soon distinguished themselves within this history by aggressively confronting, oftentimes violently, the problems of colonialism.

Drake saw John Chilembwe as a reflection of the independent spirit, race consciousness, and sense of Christian mission cultivated by the Virginia seminary. A native of Malawi, then the British colonial protectorate of Nyasaland, Chilembwe graduated, according to Drake, just a few years before his father.[[38]](#endnote-36)38 Returning to Malawi from Lynchburg in 1900, he emerged as an important symbol in the early history of anti-colonial activity by protesting forcibly an exploitative system of plantation labor and the conscription of Africans into a war against the Germans. In February of 1915, driven by millennial expectations that the “Kingdom of God was at hand,” Chilembwe seized on the opportunity of world war to lead two hundred of his followers into a three-day armed rebellion against the British monopoly of power in Malawi. Though quickly suppressed, this initial blow against colonialism reflected how one graduate of the Virginia seminary imbued Christianity with radical apocalyptical themes, believing that the “heavenly Father will help us” and “strengthen all weak brethren” in bringing about a “New Jerusalem.”[[39]](#endnote-37)39 In Drake’s view, an irony of Chilembwe’s legacy was that “freedom fighters in Central Africa came to know more about the [Virginia] Seminary than did black Americans.” In the very least, according to Drake, they knew that the man who was “hanged for leading the Nyasaland rising against the British was a Seminary graduate.”[[40]](#endnote-38)40

Like Chilembwe, Drake remembered how William Sheppard travelled to Africa to participate in its uplift and redemption. Arriving from his native Virginia to the Congo Free State, now Zaire, in 1890, Sheppard spent two decades as a missionary among the Bakuba people.[[41]](#endnote-39)41 Through this experience, he became substantially defined by his militant opposition to the cruel and exploitative treatment of people in the Kasai District, principally by the Kasai Rubber Company during the reign of King Leopold II.[[42]](#endnote-40)42 As Drake recounts of Sheppard, “he would periodically visit our church and home” where “he and my father’s other missionary friends talked often of events and experiences in Africa.” Drake heard directly from Sheppard of his “missionary work among the Bakuba,” and of how he condemned slavery, attacked the colonial policies of the Belgians, and was briefly jailed for being outspoken.[[43]](#endnote-41)43 In 1923, Drake attended a sermon delivered by Sheppard where he described the ordeal of his nine months of imprisonment in the Congo for reporting to the *London Times* that, “King Leopold was a murderer.”[[44]](#endnote-42)44 Believing, in “simple” theological terms, that “God let the Germans punish the Belgians for having cut African hands off down in the Congo,” Drake’s father was inspired by Sheppard to break rank with the Black Baptist Convention by refusing to raise money for Belgian war relief.[[45]](#endnote-43)45 In contrast to W.E.B. Du Bois, who encouraged black Americans to “close ranks” in support of Wilson and the war, Drake’s father questioned the ethical dimensions of the war itself, seeing in it no viable solution to the problems of colonialism.[[46]](#endnote-44)46

In the context of Drake’s childhood years, the post-emancipation encounters of Virginia’s black missionaries with colonial Africa signified a critical shift in the history of the Black Atlantic. According to Donald Roth, “for many black families in the United States after 1900, the evangelical rather than emigration publicist became the major source of information about Africa.” In their writings and speeches, they pointed to the abuses of colonial systems, and “drew pictures of Africa” that were “no longer painted in dark tones.”[[47]](#endnote-45)47 They were the African experts of the day, men who were moved by their actual experiences in colonial settings. The early anti-colonial activities of Chilembwe and Sheppard gave Drake “a window onto the broader world.” It was through this window that he first encountered Africa and the “cultures of the developing world.”[[48]](#endnote-46)48 As he explains, “someone was always around who had just returned from the mission movement.”[[49]](#endnote-47)49 Well before Drake entered the field of anthropology in the mid-1930s, it was the stories of black missionaries, who instilled in him “an appreciation for the “cultural similarities and differences between Africa and the U.S.” [[50]](#endnote-48)50

Sheppard and Chilembwe were among Drake’s earliest intellectual influences. These were men who merged a religious nationalism with a militant tradition of social activism along post-emancipation routes of migration in the Black Atlantic world. As bearers of Christian civilization, they distinguished themselves in the history of Protestant missionary activity by directly confronting the excesses of colonialism and introducing a black American audience to a contemporary African cultural and political reality. In the larger history of post-emancipation interactions with Africa, these missionaries from Virginia laid the basis for the sustained involvement of black intellectuals in colonial affairs. As Drake explains, “between the end of the 19th century and the outbreak of World War I…there was a gradual secularization of black leadership in the United States, the West Indies, and Africa. As an increasing number of college graduates emerged who were not trained in theology, the ‘vindication of the Race’ passed from the hands of those who believed in Providential Design and Biblically-sanctioned ‘Ethiopianism.”[[51]](#endnote-49)51 By returning to Africa along routes of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, black missionaries bridged the colonization schemes of nineteenth century emigration advocates with twentieth century Pan African dreamers, who, like Drake, saw the overthrow colonial and tribal societies as a necessary prerequisite for Africa’s independence.[[52]](#endnote-50)52

Along with missionaries, the Virginia seminary sent forth a generation of black clergymen who, according to Drake, considered themselves “race men” and “defenders of black rights” in the United States.[[53]](#endnote-51)53 This religious intelligentsia “took the words of the Magnificent seriously.” They believed in the God of Daniel, in the God of black Christianity: benevolent and loving, but also an avenging God, a deliverer with a special concern for the oppressed. Like his father, Drake described these men as “able, ambitious,” and “proud of their command of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.”[[54]](#endnote-52)54 They held firm to a providential view of history, believing that some day soon God would “cast down the mighty from their seats” and “exalt them of low degree.”[[55]](#endnote-53)55 During World War I, many of these clergymen followed their congregations to northern cities where jobs were opening up to blacks in America’s wartime industries. Working through a range of religious and voluntary associations, they seized on the opportunity of war to highlight the limitations of American democracy and advance specific projects of racial uplift. Of this group, Drake remembered how his mother “idolized” James Robert Lincoln Diggs, William Henry Moses, and Junius Caeser Austin.[[56]](#endnote-54)56

Serving as president of Virginia Seminary when Drake’s parents were students, Diggs emerged at the forefront of radical black politics during the First World War and gravitated into the Garvey movement, eventually becoming president of Baltimore’s division in 1919. In 1921, as “acting chaplain” of the UNIA, Diggs presided over the marriage of Garvey to his second wife, Amy Jacques, proclaiming to all in attendance that “he [Garvey] was called to our service and appointed by Jehovah and his son, the Messiah, to lead us on to victory.”[[57]](#endnote-55)57 Seeing Garvey as the fulfillment of millennial expectations, Diggs gave the UNIA its biblical justification and its leader providential meaning within a distinctively black Christian tradition.

Moses shared Diggs’s commitments to building a separate black nationality under the flag of the UNIA. A contemporary of Chilembwe at the Virginia seminary, Moses was pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Drake’s mother’s hometown of Staunton for over a decade, before migrating to Pittsburgh and then to Philadelphia where he assumed the pastorate of Zion Baptist Church. In Philadelphia, Moses co-founded the Colored Protective Association (CPA) with the Methodist minister R.R. Wright, seeing the NAACP as ineffective in “protecting” black people from police brutality, unjust arrests and imprisonments, and racial discrimination in the areas of jobs and housing.[[58]](#endnote-56)58 Like Diggs, Moses supported the activities of the UNIA, believing that when “Ethiopia stretched forth her hand unto God…the name of Marcus Garvey would be embalmed in our memories…through the long ages.”[[59]](#endnote-57)59 Although he was eventually pushed out of Zion Baptist Church for his defense of Garvey’s clandestine meetings with the Klan, Moses remained a popular figure within Black Baptist and UNIA circles if for no other reason than religious and secular nationalists found common cause in his particular brand of Ethiopianism.[[60]](#endnote-58)60

More than Diggs and Moses, Austin’s religious nationalism was expressed within organizations that attached a black American struggle for civil rights to a broader movement for human rights. A native of Virginia, Austin graduated from the Virginia seminary in 1910, the same year as Drake’s father, and followed his congregation to Pittsburgh where he took the helm of Ebenezer Baptist Church. As Randall Burkett explains of Austin’s popularity, he was known “for his eloquence as a speaker” and by “his willingness to speak forthrightly on racial issues.”[[61]](#endnote-59)61 Believing the sacrifices of black soldiers earned black people a voice in the postwar peace process, he established the International League of Darker Peoples (ILDP) and, with William Monroe Trotter, the National Race Congress (NRC). Seeing America’s race problem as part of a worldwide problem of white supremacy, Austin worked through these organizations to send representatives to petition on behalf of black Americans the international body of nations meeting at the Versailles Peace Conference.[[62]](#endnote-60)62 His activities in this regard naturally led him into the Garvey movement. Against increased government surveillance and growing criticisms of Garvey from within the black community, Austin, like Moses, rallied to the UNIA leader’s defense. In 1922, in his opening address at the Third International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World, Austin wrote Garvey into Old Testament prophecy, declaring “he is not a spy; he comes not as a traitor, nor a hired servant for foes, but as appointed by God to lead us on to victory.” Heralding Garvey as “an angel sent by God to lead the folks,” he encouraged black people “to follow their Moses, Marcus Garvey.”[[63]](#endnote-61)63

Drake’s relationship with Austin carried through to Chicago where he sustained an interest in the problem of black people locally and globally. As pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church in the city’s South Side, Austin gave Drake entre into the institutional life of Bronzeville’s churches during the writing of *Black Metropolis.[[64]](#endnote-62)64* Following nationalist uprisings in Kenya, he also assisted Drake, through the Chicago-based Afro-World Fellowship, in providing African students with scholarships and, in some cases, political asylum from colonial and white settler governments in Africa.[[65]](#endnote-63)65 As with the First World War, Austin’s involvement in African affairs during the early years of the Cold War placed him in opposition to U.S. foreign policy initiatives.

In the broader history of African American social and political thought, these black clergymen of the Virginia Seminary provided modern Black Nationalism with its religiosity. Along with Drake’s father, they joined the migrations of southern black populations to northern cities where they gave emergent political movements their millennial meaning. In the rise of Marcus Garvey and the UNIA they imagined a Moses who was leading a worldwide black nationality onward toward the fulfillment of its providential destiny. Corresponding to a period in which, as Robin Kelly contends, “black intellectuals paid attention to the international situation and black peoples’ place within it,” Drake encountered religious leaders who actively worked through their churches and established civil rights organizations to expose the contradictions of American society and morally frame the Negro Problem as the problem of white supremacy shared by black populations worldwide.[[66]](#endnote-64)66

As a separate black institution the Virginia seminary produced a generation of clergymen and missionaries who expressed a clear and necessary relationship between Christian theology and a life of activism. These were men who, according to Drake, found objectionable Booker T. Washington’s national leadership on “the grounds that he was too subservient and obsequious” to the “powers” of segregation and racial violence in the South.[[67]](#endnote-65)67 Corresponding to the consolidation of European colonial rule in Africa, and the mass migration of southern blacks to cities in the North, these coreligionists from Virginia were at the forefront of historic movements for social change. Their connection to the Virginia seminary suggests that early anti-colonial and civil rights struggles in the Black Atlantic world were informed by a race consciousness and sense of Christian mission that radiated outward from the upper-South and along specific routes of trans-Atlantic and domestic migrations. Within this stream of black intellectual and political activity, and along a second route of post-emancipation migration in the Black Atlantic world, Drake could locate his own genealogy.

**Black Migration and Diaspora**

**Making in Pittsburgh**

In 1916, Drake became part of the first mass migration of southern blacks to the North. It was, as he and Horace Cayton described in *Black Metropolis*, a moment in the history of Diaspora-making when over one million “caste-bound Negroes in the South stirred,” leaving behind flood, famine, and economic hardship for new opportunities” elesewhere.[[68]](#endnote-66)68 In the case of Pittsburgh, the Great Migration fueled the rapid growth of that city’s black population, from 27,000 in 1910 to well over 80,000 by 1930.[[69]](#endnote-67)69 As with Drake’s father’s turn of the century migration from Barbados, this movement corresponded to the economic boom of the steel industry and limited opportunities for “surviving” and “getting ahead” in the South.[[70]](#endnote-68)70

Before the onset of World War I, Pittsburgh emerged as the industrial capital of the United States. With black men constituting upwards of twenty-seven percent of the labor force by 1910, factory work was central to the black experience in the city. As Joe Trotter and Jared N. Day observed of this experience in relation to the “dismal failure” of the Great Steel Strike of 1919, they came first as strikebreakers, used by the steel companies to “break the back” of organized labor.[[71]](#endnote-69)71 In a very short period, however, southern migrants became a more reliable source of labor and industrial firms soon intensified their efforts to recruit more black workers. [[72]](#endnote-70)72 In Pittsburgh, as in cities across the North and Midwest, a mostly southern agrarian population entered a modern industrial age and laid the foundation for a new Diaspora community.

Following the rail lines along the Atlantic corridor, these new arrivals to Pittsburgh were part of a modern migration. They came by the tens of thousands, transplanting with them entire communities. Like several other Virginia clergymen, Drake’s father followed his congregation to Pittsburgh where jobs in wartime industries opened up to black people. As Drake explains of his experience during this period, “when the great migration northward began…my father and J.C. Austin followed parts of their congregations from the Virginia Tidewater to a place where money was flowing.” In Pittsburgh, Austin became head of Ebenezer Baptist Church in the all-black Hill District of the city and Drake’s father assumed the pastorate of Bethany Baptist Church, settling with his family in the mostly white working class neighborhood of Brushton.[[73]](#endnote-71)73

If Pittsburgh’s color line in industrial employment was relaxed during the war, for black people to cross it in the area of housing carried considerable risks and no short supply of courage. Legal and extralegal measures, which included a combination of creative zoning laws, a large and energetic chapter of the Ku Kluk Klan, and local law enforcement, reinforced a system of de facto segregation in the city.[[74]](#endnote-72)74 However, against white resistance, Drake’s father “insisted upon buying a house in a neighborhood that blacks had not lived in before and” true to his militant spirit “threatened to shoot anybody who tried to deface his property.”[[75]](#endnote-73)75

Although Drake’s family lived beyond the boundaries of a black majority, his father was very much integrated into a dynamic religious culture of the Hill. In this section of city some forty-five churches emerged during the era of the Great Migration. In addition to several Baptist churches, these included numerous “holiness” storefronts, several AME and AME Zion churches, a Presbyterian church, an Ahmadiya Islamic Mission of America, and even a black millenarian sect in the form of Noble Drew Ali’s Moorish Science Temple of America (MSTA). With twenty-five of these institutions claiming memberships of well over twelve thousand people, the church was, in all of its varied denominations, the essential organizing body around which a black community in Pittsburgh developed.[[76]](#endnote-74)76

The church was also where Drake got his “intellectual start.” As he explains, “as a child I saw this institution from the inside and mastered a body of knowledge, which would prove valuable to me when I made the study of religious behavior my special subject.”[[77]](#endnote-75)77 Forced to attend church regularly during the week and “twice on Sunday,” Drake “found ample time to read the Bible from Genesis to Revelations and from Revelations to Genesis” before he was ten. As he recalls, “older church people” use to say that, “that young man is going to be a preacher someday.” Little did they realize, however, that “I was becoming an expert on the Old Testament and the Levirate, incest, adultery, and fornication” well “before I ever heard anything about anthropology.”[[78]](#endnote-76)78

As religious leaders, both Austin and Drake’s father held considerable influence among blacks in Pittsburgh. At five thousand loyal parishioners, however, Austin’s congregation at Ebenezer Baptist Church outnumbered that of Reverend Drake’s at Bethany Baptist by ten to one.[[79]](#endnote-77)79 Pointing to his father’s connection to the conservative Wesleyan Methodist and Plymouth Brethren tradition of Barbados, Drake partly attributed this “disparity in influence” to Austin’s superior oratory abilities and to his father’s cultural aversion to the “shouts” and “rousements” characteristic of what he termed the “southern black Baptist tradition.” Moreover, Drake described his father as a bit of an Anglophile, who was prone to “sing Rule Britannia” and “display,” during wartime, “the Union Jack in the window of his home”[[80]](#endnote-78)80 Although his admiration for, and sense of belonging to the British Empire would undergo a radical transformation as a result of his brief return to the West Indies after the war, Drake’s father’s racial consciousness during this period included what must have been seen by many black Americans as a peculiar allegiance to the history and culture of a foreign power. That Drake’s father also held on to his “British passport to intimidate whites” suggests that his romance with empire also served to steel him against the psychological insult of being seen (or unseen) by the larger society as undifferentiated from the masses of southern blacks.[[81]](#endnote-79)81

As Ira Reid observed of this colonial mentality in his study of black immigrants in Harlem during the 1920s and 1930s, West Indians were not use to the blatant discrimination they encountered in the United States. As a result, many tended to put social distance between themselves and black Americans by embracing the symbols and traditions of the British Empire.[[82]](#endnote-80)82 Similarly, Gilbert Osofsky emphasized a “nostalgia for homeland” as the basis for the construction of an exaggerated nationalism that, while serving as a type of buffer against the strangeness of a new culture, contributed to the heightening of interethnic strife as many black Americans resented what they interpreted as “West Indian standoffishness.”[[83]](#endnote-81)83 For Drake, his father’s peculiar orientation to England was cause for much anxiety. As he recalled, “my father wanted me to consider myself a West Indian,” which meant “bringing me up to admire the British Empire.”[[84]](#endnote-82)84

Similar to Chicago’s Bronzeville in the 1930s, Drake experienced the Hill District of Pittsburgh as a burgeoning “metropolis within a metropolis.” It was, as one account suggests, a world hemmed in by a wall of segregation and racial discrimination that spread across the entire city and region.” Against this wall, and because of it, blacks intensified their institution building efforts, “transforming segregation into congregation.”[[85]](#endnote-83)85 As Drake remembers, this was a “fast moving period in my life;” it was the era of “motion pictures” and the “widespread” use of the “plane, radio, and automobile.”[[86]](#endnote-84)86 It was also a time of “card playing, dancing, and the policy game;” of professional black baseball and boxing; of nightclubs and afterhours spots. The Hill was a “dynamic, thriving, and bustling area described by one long-time resident as “Pittsburgh’s Little Harlem” and another as “the crossroads of the world.”[[87]](#endnote-85)87 This culturally generative black community ushered in an era of modernity through sports, music, and a range of venues for entertainment. Though Drake’s full participation in this culture was restrained by his family’s connection to the church, he remembered how the sights and sounds of the Hill represented a reflection of the creative expression and interaction of black people with the city.

The Hill District of Drake’s childhood was also organized around fraternal associations, literary and mutual benefit societies, and a wide variety of social clubs that were outlets for leisure, cultural expression, and socialization. The *Pittsburgh Courier* newspaper, founded by Robert Vann, shaped and reflected a black mainstream, and banks, real estate and insurance companies, barbershops, and funeral homes captured its entrepreneurial spirit. Reflective of the latter, Drake’s father joined Austin in establishing the Home Finders League (HFL). According to Drake, the League was formed to address the needs of new arrivals to the city, “getting [them] settled” and “signed up on the membership rolls of the NAACP.”[[88]](#endnote-86)88 At the same time, the HFL was also a profit driven enterprise, which, like Philip A. Payton’s Real-Estate Company in Harlem, capitalized on the Great Migration in the name of nation building.[[89]](#endnote-87)89 As Trotter and Day explain, the HFL was connected to other business ventures that drew from the savings of nearly five thousand depositors to purchase property in the city worth well over three hundred thousand dollars.[[90]](#endnote-88)90 In turn, Austin and Drake’s father sold and rented this property back to migrants and their families, creating opportunity in the housing market where none had previously existed. The activities of the HFL were based on a shared vision of social uplift that measured racial progress by the free-market principles of capital accumulation and profit.

Although the black community in Pittsburgh was an empowering symbol of “racial potential,” it also reflected the harsh realities of de facto segregation. Black migrants made significant inroads into the city’s industrial workforce, but they tended to be concentrated in menial positions and faced an on-going pattern of “last hired” and “first fired.”[[91]](#endnote-89)91 While some black women gained access to jobs in the industrial sector, many more were locked out of the city’s manufacturing industries. As was the case in the nineteenth century, black women in Pittsburgh, as much as ninety percent in 1920, remained tied to jobs in the domestic and personal service industry.[[92]](#endnote-90)92 Such conditions forced some to return to the South and the local chapter of the Urban League to outright discourage further migration into the city, citing “the difficulty of [even] finding work.”[[93]](#endnote-91)93 Added to the difficulty of work, most newcomers expressed shock and disappointment by the overcrowded and dilapidated conditions of housing in the Hill District.[[94]](#endnote-92)94

These circumstances mirrored other aspects of black life in Pittsburgh. Only a handful of schools allowed black and white students to attend together, and well up and through the Great Depression there was not even a single black teacher to be found in the entire public school system.[[95]](#endnote-93)95 From 1917 to 1923, Drake was one of only a small number of black children to attend an integrated public school. As he remembers of his experience as a racial minority in this context, “it was here,” in Pittsburgh, where his “earliest attitudes toward racist practices were formed.”[[96]](#endnote-94)96 Although his knowledge of race prejudice was “vague” Drake “at least” recalled “one fight” with a white classmate over “being insulted about the color of [his] skin;”[[97]](#endnote-95)97 and then there was the problem of black exclusion from Brushton’s only library, as well as from the floor seating in this community’s only theater.”[[98]](#endnote-96)98 From public accommodations and large commercial establishments, to restaurants, swimming pools, skating rinks, hospitals, and cemeteries, black people were either excluded from service all together, or offered provisions on a segregated and unequal basis.[[99]](#endnote-97)99 Virtually every institution serving the public across Pittsburgh discriminated against blacks in some form or fashion.

Such conditions engendered a response from the city’s black religious and political leaders. Under Austin’s direction, the local branch of the NAACP campaigned against injustice in all areas of life. It pushed for the employment of black teachers in the city’s public school system, the admission of black students to previously all-white schools, the passage of new state civil rights laws, the termination of police harassment, and an end to labor and union discrimination against black workers.[[100]](#endnote-98)100 Moving from local to global concerns, Drake’s father allegedly traveled with Austin to Washington, D.C. in October of 1918 where they sought to press Wilson to make federal anti-lynching legislation the “fifteenth point” in his “fourteen point” plan for remaking a post-war democratic world.[[101]](#endnote-99)101

From his pulpit at Bethany Baptist Church, Drake’s father worked to build a black political base and increase access to better housing, employment, and education. Believing it was “better to elect a Negro generally speaking than any white man,” he supported Robert Vann’s use of the *Pittsburgh Courier* to mobilize a politically independent voting block against the commanding sway of the Republican Party’s patronage system.[[102]](#endnote-100)102 Identifying white working class racism as the principle cause of black economic oppression and degradation, Drake’s father encouraged black workers to believe in the power of their own numbers to become “strikebreakers” and form independent labor unions along racial lines.[[103]](#endnote-101)103 He also advocated forming race-based economic cooperatives and, along with Austin, held out the HFL as a model of black potential. In 1923, however, the HFL “went bust” and, having “stood for the notes,” Drake and Austin fell into disfavor with the Baptist hierarchy, as well as with many members of Bethany and Ebenezer Baptist Church.[[104]](#endnote-102)104 Soon thereafter, Austin left Pittsburgh “somewhat under a cloud of suspicion” and resettled in Chicago where he became pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church, the largest black church in the city’s South Side. Under the pretext of attending to his ailing mother, the Reverend Drake was granted an “indefinite leave of absence” from his pastoral duties at Bethany Baptist and, in October of that year, returned, with Drake, to Barbados; Drake’s mother, meanwhile, left for Staunton to stay with her mother during their yearlong absence.[[105]](#endnote-103)105

Over the course of a year between 1923 and 1924, Drake travelled with his father throughout the West Indies, visiting the Virgin Islands, Antigua, Guadaloupe, Granada, and St. Lucia.[[106]](#endnote-104)106 This was, as he explains, his “first contact with a black society,[[107]](#endnote-105)107 impressing on him an appreciation for the “cultural differences between Afro-Americans and West Indians”[[108]](#endnote-106)108 and “stimulating” his earliest “interest in anthropology.”[[109]](#endnote-107)109 For his father, a return to the West Indies only shattered his sense of belonging to England. In his native Barbados, he was moved by the realities of an economy in rapid decline. The “rigidity” of this island’s economy— “its miniscule and unresponsive manufacturing base outside of the sugar industry, its powerful and greedy cabal of merchants, its limited supply of land massively outstripped by demand”—created serious economic dislocation. Moreover, massive inflation impoverished the populace. “It reduced the spending power of those who had returned with Panama [Canal] money, devouring their hard earned cash with astonishing rapidity.” Many of the returnees, who thought they had earned enough elsewhere to make a reasonable living at home, soon discovered that they, once again, had to “take to the high seas.”[[110]](#endnote-108)110 According to Drake, his father was “appalled by the poverty of the people of the Indies” and “incensed by the attitudes of the British ruling class,” which “developed” into a full-blown “antagonism toward the Empire.” On his return to Pittsburgh in 1924, Drake’s father joined the Garvey movement, seeing in it the most expedient course “for the freeing of Africa from imperialist domination” and creating “an independent West Indian federation.”[[111]](#endnote-109)111

Soon after his return to Pittsburgh, Drake’s father once again became embroiled in a public scandal, which, this time, resulted in his ouster as pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, a position he had held since his arrival to the area eight years earlier. Dubbed by the *Pittsburgh Courier* as the “Drake-Patterson-Bethany episode,” Reverend Drake was charged by his temporary replacement, Reverend A.M. Patterson, with acting in a “reckless” and “non-Christian manner” by maintaining, in full view of his neighbors, an “intimate” and “romantic” relationship with his niece, who, in his wife’s absence, came from New York to live with her uncle and cousin in Brushton. [[112]](#endnote-110)112 According to Patterson, such behavior was demonstrative of the reverend’s “extreme moral weakness,” a view shared not only by his congregation, but by his wife as well, who rejected, with equal vigor, claims made by her husband suggesting she had been “poisoned by sinister influences” during his time in the West Indies.[[113]](#endnote-111)113

The alleged transgressions of Drake’s father against a morality that attached racial integrity and respectability to patriarchy, fidelity, female chastity, and family initiated yet another transformative event in Drake’s life. In 1924, after fourteen years of marriage, Drake’s parents separated and Drake, then thirteen years old, returned with his mother to her native Staunton.[[114]](#endnote-112)114 From this moment forward, the Reverend Drake existed only as a “role model” and “absent hero” in his son’s imagination.[[115]](#endnote-113)115 The reason, according to Drake, was that his father “resented” that he “chose to go with” his “American Negro relatives” instead of “cleaving” to his “West Indian side.” Never again did Drake lay eyes on his father, but bore witness, from afar, to his meteoric rise in the leadership structure of the Garvey movement, becoming International Organizer of the UNIA in 1926 and then returning to the South in 1927 to become headmaster of Liberty University, a UNIA-sponsored college that, according to Drake, “eked out a precarious existence” in Jamestown, Virginia.[[116]](#endnote-114)116 As Drake would later learn from his father’s second wife, Reverend Drake eventually returned to his Methodist roots and kept abreast of his son’s activities through newspaper clippings. Less than a year before his father’s death in 1959, Drake learned that he “took great pride in the fact that his boy was out there [in Ghana] helping Nkrumah vindicate Garvey.”[[117]](#endnote-115)117

**A Shade of Segregation in the**

**Shenandoah**

The Virginia that Drake returned to with his mother points to the existence of multiple south(s) and, at the same time, the extent to which, from the perspective of Pittsburgh, the “whole United States was southern.”[[118]](#endnote-116)118 In Pittsburgh, Drake became aware of a color line, and in Staunton he continued to contend with its humiliations. However, Staunton was neither Pittsburgh nor Adams County, Mississippi where, as Drake would much later discover, the declining economic system of cotton production maintained an almost unalterable social division that bound a majority of black people as a peasant class to the hardships, cultural politics, and terror of living Jim Crow.[[119]](#endnote-117)119 In Staunton, Drake developed a race consciousness that was informed by the institutional culture of the city’s black community and adopted a challenge demeanor that openly engaged forms and symbols of racial disrespect and misrecognition. He learned how to navigate the color line and, on at least one occasion, directly confronted it and forced change. His experience during this period lends meaning to a particular shade of segregation that fell over this region of the South at the beginning of twentieth century.

The Staunton of Drake’s youth was once a sleepy town in the Shenandoah Valley that came to life with the coming of the Virginia Central Railroad in 1854. By connecting Staunton to Richmond and beyond, the railroad invigorated the town’s economy and rapidly grew its population. Just before the outbreak of the Civil War, the town became the largest city in Virginia’s upper Valley, boasting some four thousand residents, three banks, eighty businesses, and well over four hundred dwellings. In addition to possessing vital industries around the railroad, Staunton was connected to Richmond by magnetic telegraph, and gas lines illuminated its streets and homes.[[120]](#endnote-118)120 As Edward Ayers explains of these economic transformations, “landlords, capitalists, immigrants, laborers, and large planters rushed in when opportunities beckoned…The railroad allowed this region of Virginia to grow almost immediately when someone discovered a way to make the land pay.”[[121]](#endnote-119)121 The decade of sectionalism and national disunion was one of prosperity for Staunton, carried there by Virginia Railroad Line.

As Staunton grew in the late nineteenth century so too did its black population. Prior to the expansion of the railroad network into this region of the state, the number of black people, like the larger white population, was relatively small. In contrast to the lowlands, the small-scale economies of the western counties were less dependent on the use of slave labor.[[122]](#endnote-120)122 With the coming of freedom after the war, however, migrations of black people to Staunton, mostly from within the state, steadily increased. Fueled by the promise of wages and the prospect of more tolerant surroundings, well over a thousand newly emancipated slaves arrived in Staunton to lay the foundation for the development of a black community. By 1900, when Staunton’s inhabitants numbered well over seven thousand people, the city’s black community constituted nearly a third of its entire population.[[123]](#endnote-121)123

Most in this first generation of black settlers lacked any formal education and, like Drake’s grandmother, were concentrated in the city’s service industries as laborers and domestic workers.[[124]](#endnote-122)124 From this position they built a community that reflected, over time, the critical differences between systems of segregation defined first by preference and then by law. When asked by Secretary of War Edwin Stanton “in what manner” would he [and his people] prefer to live,” Garrison Frazier captured the mood of this first generation of settlers to Staunton in saying that “I would *prefer* [that we] live by ourselves, for there is prejudice against us in the South that will take years to get over.”[[125]](#endnote-123)125 Such post-war sentiment among newly emancipated slaves led to the creation of three black churches in Staunton. From these churches emerged the city’s first independent black schools, numerous businesses, and a variety of religious and voluntary associations.[[126]](#endnote-124)126

If racial separation in Virginia was based on preference in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, then the late nineteenth and early twentieth century marked its codification by law, bringing the state in line with the rest of the South. In the era of the New South, regional distinctions could be drawn by the rapidity in which southern states became “racially divided” and “unequal” as a consequence of law. As Richard Sherman contends, “during the first two decades of the twentieth century, a number of steps had been taken in Virginia to “settle the race question, guarantee white supremacy,” and assuage the anxieties of white southerners concerning the “utter collapse of civilization” should a comprehensive legally sanctioned system of racial separation not be put in place.[[127]](#endnote-125)127

With the rise of the eugenics movement and what C. Vann Woodward described as the falling away of effective restraint exercised by the presence of “Northern liberalism, Southern conservatism, and Southern radicalism,” Virginia moved to adopt a state constitution in 1902 that severely restricted the franchise for black people. This was followed in 1910 with a new statutory definition of a “colored person” being any persons with “one-sixteenth or more of negro blood, and a series of laws, passed between 1900 and 1918, that pertained to railroads, streetcars, residential areas, and prisons.[[128]](#endnote-126)128 More than just a throwback to what Ayers described as “old-fashioned racism,” the system of racial segregation that took hold in the Virginia of Drake’s youth became to whites a badge of sophisticated, modern managed race relations. By the turn of the century, the veil of segregation even enclosed the modern machinery of the railroad upon which so much of Staunton’s growth and prosperity depended.[[129]](#endnote-127)129 In the climate of Plessy, and well after most other southern states enacted similar laws, Virginia’s legislature and courts drew a color line hard and fast across the state.

This was the segregated reality of Staunton when Drake returned with his mother in 1924—a Jim Crow society wherein a system of laws made the black community aware of itself. With his mother, Drake lived in his grandmother’s home on South Street in Staunton’s small black community. The most immediate change he experienced as a result of this transition was his family’s descent within a class system from the relative security of Baptist parsonages to the less than secure “lower middle-class” lifestyle of Staunton’s laboring masses. To help supplement his grandmother’s earnings as a domestic, Drake’s mother returned to teaching at a local black elementary school and Drake went to work after school as a plasterer’s apprentice.[[130]](#endnote-128)130

Despite a change in his family’s economic circumstances, Drake considered these years to be “a rather exciting period” in his life, but one in which his learning of what meant to be a Negro was also “rather frustrating.” He recalled that “we [the black community in Staunton] were segregated, but it was not the same harshness of the Deep South—Mississippi, Alabama, or Louisiana.”[[131]](#endnote-129)131 It was, to be sure, a “divided society.” However, in contrast to the rampant discrimination of Pittsburgh’s wartime industries, racism seemed more of a “nuisance” than anything else. In some instances, it demanded from Drake a degree of cunning to overcome, like on those occasions he enlisted his grandmother to secure books for him from Mary Baldwin’s “whites only” library.[[132]](#endnote-130)132 On other occasions, Drake openly opposed the psychological insults of segregation. In a letter he had written to the editor of Staunton’s daily newspaper, for example, Drake condemned the practice of referring to “black women…by their first name, rather than by Miss or Mrs.” To his surprise, the “paper actually changed” its policy. “Spurred on” by the “taste of victory,” the young Drake became, at this moment, “a habitual protester,” unwilling to conform to, or remain silent about segregation’s humiliations.[[133]](#endnote-131)133 That the local newspaper actually changed its policy suggests a greater degree of flexibility in Staunton’s system of segregation as compared to that of the Deep South.

Institutions within Staunton’s black community affirmed Drake’s race consciousness. At Staunton’s Booker T. Washington High School, which was founded two years before Drake’s arrival, he recalled never feeling completely disadvantaged.[[134]](#endnote-132)134 “We,” referring to himself and other black students, “ were able to pass” the “all white” and “very fine looking” Stonewall Jackson High School…on the way to “our little, underfinanced cracker box high school…without giving much thought, if any, to Jim Crow.”[[135]](#endnote-133)135 In the racially prescribed space of Booker T. Washington, Drake thrived, remembering that his “classes were lively, basketball exciting, and the annual Negro history week inspirational.”[[136]](#endnote-134)136 His teachers “encouraged” him to write poetry, “generally about nature,” and he even edited the school yearbook.Freed from the constraints of his strict Baptist father, he also embraced all that modernity in Staunton had to offer. As he recalled, “I, like other high school boys, enjoyed dancing and going to the movies with friends.[[137]](#endnote-135)137

In contrast to his experiences in the public school system of Pittsburgh, Drake and his peers at Booker T. Washington High School benefited from the presence of black administrators and teachers. They were “educated, highly motivated and endeavored to create academic programs that were equaled to, or better than those at local white high schools.”[[138]](#endnote-136)138 Winston Douglass, Booker T. Washington’s principal, was, as one observer remarked, “a man of distinction above the ordinary.” A fraternity man and graduate of Columbia University, Douglass taught English literature and mathematics and was fluent in German, French and Spanish. Moreover, Drake remembered him as someone committed to advancing a “progressive program” of study among the students.”[[139]](#endnote-137)139 Like its principal, the teachers of “Booker T. High” had come from outside the South, bringing with them a clear conception of black education based on what Drake believed to be ideas and sentiments “scavenged from writers of the Harlem Renaissance.”[[140]](#endnote-138)140 They were the pioneers of Black Studies, introducing such courses as “The Negro in Literature; The Negro in Art; The Negro in Science,” and “The Negro Journalist.” These were Staunton’s “Talented Tenth,” men and women who, along with a “large group of upwardly mobile blacks” in the city, sought “learning and respectability.”[[141]](#endnote-139)141

As a separate black institution Booker T. Washington High School expanded Drake’s horizons, instilling in him a genuine appreciation for “Afro-American culture.”[[142]](#endnote-140)142 The extent to which this environment informed his view of the world was evident in some of his earliest writings. One in particular earned him the school’s Lincoln Essay Medal in 1925. Published in the school newspaper, for which he served as an associate editor, Drake’s homage to Abraham Lincoln sought to give meaning to his wartime presidency. “When Lincoln stood for an issue,” Drake wrote, “God alone could make him change his mind. Subjected to the criticism of his opponents and the caviling of the Democratic Party, he never wavered for an instant in his fight for freedom.”[[143]](#endnote-141)143 More than Lincoln himself, it was the elemental force of freedom as nurtured by institutions within this separate black community that undergirded Drake’s emerging social consciousness.

**Conclusion**

From the island colony of Barbados where power, influence, and wealth was concentrated among a few to the separate universe of independent Baptist institutions in the Virginia Tidewater after the abolition of slavery; from the Hill District of Pittsburgh where a southern population was encountering modernity in the era of the Great Migration to the declining economies of the British West Indies after colonial rivalries were settled by a world war; finally, back to Virginia, west of the Blue Ridge Mountains where the Virginia Central Line cut a path through the Shenandoah, carrying with it the promise of prosperity and greater freedom: the migrations embedded in Drake’s genealogy and cultural identity links multiple black communities across a shifting geography of race. Each represented a composite part of the Black Atlantic world and, much like Bronzeville of *Black Metropolis,* correlated with what Drake experientially came to know as differentiated systems of advantages within which black people organized a separate institutional life and culture.

Drake’s movement across these contexts offers a view of historic communities as the embodiment of a collective black response to social alienation. They formed the prism through which Drake arrived at an understanding of American society and himself as a product of the Black Diaspora. In Pittsburgh, he formed his earliest attitudes toward racist practices; in Virginia, he discovered Afro-American culture; the West Indies, a black society. Along a much longer trajectory that began with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and continued through systems of racial segregation and colonialism in his own time, Drake would eventually develop a worldview of racism as the cumulative effect of capitalist domination.

A major theme of Drake’s childhood in Virginia is how “rarely black people gave any thought to segregation,” with the exception of those moments when Jim Crow made them aware of their subordinate status. The system of racial segregation in the Upper South, as experienced by Drake, seemed moderate when compared to the violent caste enforcing structures of the Deep South. Though similarly codified by systems of law, the Virginia that Drake knew accorded space for the development of independent black institutions and, when necessary, circumvention and direct confrontation with the effect of securing greater social advantages and, at times, even forcing change in the system of Jim Crow. In this context Drake never felt a sense of inferiority based on race. Instead, black communities in the Tidewater and Shenandoah—and the churches, schools, and voluntary associations around which they were organized—expanded his horizons and affirmed his positive association to a separate Afro-American nationality.

Paralleling the post-emancipation migrations of black populations from the South, Drake’s time in Pittsburgh suggests that against the broader backdrop of industrial capitalism the majority of black people remained outside institutions of power and concentrated, as wage laborers and domestic workers, in menial positions in industry. While wartime demands facilitated the passage of black people into a modern industrial workforce, these gains were minimal compared to whites. In contrast to the experience of most black people in Pittsburgh, Drake’s integrated social existence suggests that color line was less rigid than in Virginia. However, Drake’s experiences also shows that the integrated community of Brushton was a racially contested space where discrimination was extensive and the threat of violence constant. When considered against his experiences in the Upper South, Drake’s time in Pittsburgh points to the long reach of segregationist systems in the era of the Great Migration.

Through his father, Drake encountered black societies of the West Indies in which the increasing hardships of everyday life for the majority of ordinary people engendered, over time, a tradition of migration. Against more familiar patterns of West Indian immigration, Drake’s father went to Virginia where he was taken-in by black Baptist clergymen. His experience in this regard uncovers how black communities in the Upper South were also points of entry for West Indian immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century. Moreover, Black institutions like the Virginia seminary played a crucial role in adjusting West Indian (and African) arrivals to an Afro-American social cultural reality where they soon discovered that ideas of race carried a more severe stigma than in colonized settings.

Drake’s formative years as a whole speaks to the centrality of the Black Baptist church in laying the basis for the development of an independent religious life around which new communities emerged and organized themselves. Black Baptist institutions and voluntary associations became critical sites of convergence for Black Atlantic populations. Though overwhelmingly patriarchal, the particular commitment of black Baptist leadership to a system of universal education enabled even women, like Drake’s mother, to realize the aspirations of an oppressed population only decades removed from slavery. The Black Baptist desire to develop the intellectual and material resources of a subjugated people affirmed a separate nationality and reflected an activist theology that was directed toward countering the effects of racial domination throughout the Black Atlantic world.

Finally, Drake’s father was representative of a generation of clergymen and missionaries, who carried this Baptist inspired race consciousness, Christian sensibility, and commitment to social justice into nascent political movements in the early twentieth century. This history, as evidenced by Drake’s formative years, points to the southern roots and religiosity of modern Black Nationalism, forcing a reconsideration of Virginia’s place in setting the stage for historic struggles for social change years before the emergence of the modern civil rights movement in the South and organized anti-colonial movements in sub-Saharan Africa. If Drake’s migrations reveal the transnational connections between historic communities in the United States, Africa, and West Indies, then Baptist ministers and missionaries, as well as Garveyites and New Negro intellectuals, were his earliest windows onto this world. Through them he encountered Africa and a variety of cultures in the Diaspora, ultimately arriving at a view of imperium in imperio that found sociological meaning in the pages of *Black Metropolis*.

1. 1 Andrew Salkey, “Landscape after Retirement (a poem for St. Clair Drake),” St. Clair Drake Papers, Box 4, Folder 5, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and History, New York Public Library.

   [↑](#endnote-ref--1)
2. 2 St. Clair Drake, “The Black University in the American Social Order,” *Daedalus*, 110, 3 (Summer 1971), 883. [↑](#endnote-ref-0)
3. 3 St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
4. 4 Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 121. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
5. 5 Ibid., 122. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
6. 6 Ibid., 396. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
7. 7 Ibid., 122. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
8. 8 The explosion of community studies on race relations began in the mid-1930s with an emphasis on the South, see, for example, Charles S. Johnson, *Shadows of the Plantation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934); John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937); Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom: A Cultural Study in the Deep South* (New York: Viking Press, 1939); Allison Davis and Burleigh R. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941). The American Council of Education also supported community studies, see Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage: The Personality Development of Negro Youth in the Urban South* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941); E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways: Their Personality Development in the Middle States* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1940); and Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt: Negro Youth in the Rural South* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941).

   [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
9. 9 Walter White, book review of *Black Metropolis*, by St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Chicago Defender*, November 17, 1945, 22. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
10. 10 Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
11. 11 I am specifically referring here to Gunnar Myrdal’s widely accepted view of racism as a moral dilemma, see Gunnar Myrdal, with the assistance of Richard Sterner and Arnold Rose, *American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944); the idea that racial prejudice would gradually give way to integration, resulting from the urbanization and industrialization following a period of migration is drawn from Robert Parks’s race relation cycle theory, see Robert Park, “Human Migration and the Marginal Man (1928),” in *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader,* ed. Werner Sollers (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 156-167.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
12. 12 Faye V. Harrison first made this critical distinction between conceptions race and ethnicity as informed by *Black Metropolis,* see Faye Harrison, *Outsider Within: Reworking Anthropology in the Global Age* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 72. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
13. 13 Discussions of *Black Metropolis* tend to assume an equal relationship between Drake and Cayton in the writing of the book, see, for example, William Julius Wilson, forward to *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945, rpt.1993), xlviii; this assumption is based on the uncritical recognition of *Black Metropolis* as a collaborative project emerging from data collected by the Cayton-Warner research project, see Horace Cayton, *Long Old Road: An Autobiography* (Seattle and London, University of Washington Press, 1963), 236-239; between 1937 and 1940, however, Drake even oversaw the Cayton-Warner project and the over two hundred WPA workers who were attached to it, see St. Clair Drake, “How We Wrote Black Metropolis,” (lecture, Chicago Center for Afro-American Studies and Research, Chicago, IL, November 6, 1981) Box 77, folder 38, St. Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
14. 14 Drake states he “wrote all of *Black Metropolis* with the exception of one chapter,” but “Cayton criticized them all,” see Drake, letter to John Bracey, 19 January 1975, files of John H. Bracey, author’s possession; Cayton became involved in a dispute with Warner over the authorship of *Black Metropolis*, informing him that “since Drake wrote most of *Black Metropolis*, and he [Cayton] raised funds for the book, wrote a chapter [Chapter 6: Along the Color Line], and assisted Drake in the layout, only their names should appear on book; he concluded by insisting that Warner not appear as an author since he did not contribute enough to be considered as such, see Horace Cayton, letter to Warner, 10 January 1944, Box 5, folder 28, St. Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
15. 15 Faye Harrison, *Outsider Within,* 104. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
16. 16 I see this discussion as responding to what Frank Guridy recognized as the necessity for scholarship focusing on the post-emancipation Black Atlantic world, see Frank Andre Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2010), 4-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
17. 17 St. Clair Drake, folder marked “Prospectus for autobiography,” 1976, Box 37, folder 7, St. Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
18. 18 For a discussion of this tradition of racial vindication, see St. Clair Drake, *Black Folks Here and There: An Essay in History and Anthropology, Vol. I* (University of California, Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, 1987), 7-10; for Drake’s reference to himself as a Pan African product, see St. Clair Drake, “Diaspora Studies and Pan Africanism” in *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora,* ed. Joseph Harris (Washington, D.C: Howard University Press, 1982) 475. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
19. 19 For information on Drake’s father, see St. Clair Drake, letter to Michael Fitzgerald, 20 February 1986, Box 2, Folder 52, St. Clair Drake Papers; for an obscure biographical reference to John Gibbs St. Clair Drake, see Joseph B. Earnest, *The Religious Development of the Negro in Virginia* (Dissertation: University of Virginia, 1914), 208. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
20. 20 George Clement Bond, “A Social Portrait of John Gibbs St. Clair Drake: An American Anthropologist,” *American Ethnologist*, 15, 4 (November 1988), 763.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
21. 21 C.L.R. James, *Beyond A Boundary* (London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2005), 68-69. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
22. 22 Biographical notes on St. Clair Drake, n.d., Faculty Biographical Collections, Roosevelt University Archives, Box 3, Folder 1; see also Earnest, *The Religious Development of the Negro in Virginia,* 208; for a brief history of Harrison College see Courtney Blackman, “Harrison College: The Cradle of Leadership,” (lecture: University of the West Indies, April 30, 2008). [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
23. 23 St. Clair Drake, introduction to *A Long Way from Home*, by Claude McKay, (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1970), x. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
24. 24 Milton Vickerman, *Crosscurrents: West Immigrants and Race* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
25. 25 Winston James*, Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia: Caribbean Radicalism in Early Twentieth Century America* (London and New York: Verso, 1998), 41. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
26. 26 Winston James*,* 45; see also Milton Vickerman, 61-63. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
27. 27 Bond, 763. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
28. 28 Ibid., 764. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
29. 29 Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 273; see also Anne Firor Scott, “Most Invisible of All: Black Women’s Voluntary Associations,” *Journal of Southern History*, 56, 1 (February, 1990), 3-22. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
30. 30 For a discussion of this idea of universal education within Black Baptist circles, see Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent,* 150-184; Drake mentions activities of his mother as a churchwoman and clubwoman, see Bond, “A Social Portrait of John Gibbs St. Clair Drake,” 764.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
31. 31 On a questionnaire Drake’s father listed his position as minster of First Baptist Church in Harrisburg, see Earnest*,* 208. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
32. 32 The growth of Black Baptist churches occurred within the context of an historical moment when “black southerners established their own churches and whites seemed happy to see them go,” see Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 160. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
33. 33 Earnest*,* 117; for a history of the Virginia Seminary, see also William Dabney Tyree, *Virginia Seminary: The Development of Its Educational Philosophy* (Thesis: Virginia Theological Seminary and College, 1955). [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
34. 34 George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African: John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting, and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915*, (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1987), 114. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
35. 35 Randall Burkett, *Black Redemption: Churchmen Speak for the Garvey Movement* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1978), 100. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
36. 36 My understanding of the concept “racial uplift” draws from Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 2-5. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
37. 37 Sylvia Jacobs, “The Historical Role of Afro-Americans in American Missionary Efforts in Africa,” in *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa,* ed. Sylvia Jacobs (Westport, CT; London, England: Greenwood Press, 1982), 7, 19. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
38. 38 Bond, 763; see also St. Clair Drake, “The Black University in the American Social Order,” 883. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
39. 39 Jane Linden and Ian Linden, “John Chilembwe and the New Jerusalem, *Journal of African History*, 12, 4 (1971): 639-640. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
40. 40 St. Clair Drake, “The Black University in the American Social Order,” 883.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
41. 41 Walter H. Williams, “William Henry Sheppard, Afro-American Missionary in the Congo, 1890-1910,” in *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa*, ed. Sylvia M. Jacobs (Wesport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1982), 135-154. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
42. 42 See William H. Sheppard, *Presbyterian Pioneers in Congo* (Richmond, Virginia: Richmond Press, 1917); for a biography of Sheppard, see Pagan Kennedy, *Black Livingstone: A True Tale of Adventure in the Nineteenth Century Congo* (New York: Viking, Penguin Group, 2002). [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
43. 43 Benjamin Bowser, “Studies of the African Diaspora: The Work and Reflections of St. Clair Drake,” *Sage Race Relations Abstract*, 14, 3 (August 1989): 4-5. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
44. 44 “Dr. Sheppard tells of his ordeal in the Congo,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, (May 31, 1923): 7.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
45. 45 St. Clair Drake, 1986 interview by unknown, “Conversations with St. Clair Drake,” video recording, Program of African Studies for African Studies, PVT1311, Melville Herskovits Africana Studies Library, Northwestern University. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
46. 46 W.E.B. Du Bois, “Close Ranks,” *Crisis,* 16, 3 (July 1918): 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
47. 47 Donald Roth, “The Black Man’s Burden: The Racial Background of Afro-American Missionaries and Africa,” in *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa*, 37. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
48. 48 St. Clair Drake, lecture, Roosevelt University (ca.1986), Box 6, folder 1, St. Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
49. 49 Bond*,* 764. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
50. 50 Bowser, 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
51. 51 St. Clair Drake, *The Redemption of Africa and Black Religion* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1970), 73-74. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
52. 52 For a discussion of how Drake situated missionary activities within the larger history of Pan African activity, see Drake, “Diaspora Studies and Pan Africanism,” 476; Chilembwe’s call for “Africa for Africans” was consistent with the anti-colonial thrust of Continental Pan Africanism, see St. Clair Drake, “Pan Africanism: Myth or Reality,” (Lecture: Roosevelt University, Chicago, Illinois, 15 April 1961). [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
53. 53 For discussion of these figures see, Randall Burkett, *Black Redemption,* 99-137. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
54. 54 Bond, 764; for Drake explanation of the views of Baptist clergymen, see also St. Clair Drake, letter to Frank Untermyer, ca. 1986, Frank Untermyer Papers, authors possession. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
55. 55 See Drake’s notations on the cover of a copy of Burkett’s *Black Redemption*, box 2, folder 22, St. Clair Drake Papers, [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
56. 56 St. Clair Drake, letter to Randall Burkett, 20 September 1988, Box 5, folder 28, St. Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
57. 57 Burkett, *Black Redemption,* 110; for a brief discussion of Digg’s relationship to the Garvey movement, see Robert A. Hill, *Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, *vol. III* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), fn5, 695; for a discussion of the National Equal Rights League, see Stephen R. Fox, *The Guardian of Boston: William Monroe Trotter* (New York: Antheneum, 1970), 140-141, 251. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
58. 58 V.P. Franklin, “The Philadelphia Race Riot,” in *African Americans in Pennsylvania: Shifting Historical Perspectives*, eds., Joe William Trotter and Eric Ledell Smith (University Park, Pennsylvania University Press, 1997), 323. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
59. 59 For a discussion of Moses’ connection to the Virginia Seminary and Marcus Garvey, see Randall Burkett, *Black Redemption,* 122-137.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
60. 60 Burkett, *Black Redemption,* 115; for a discussion of Garvey’s relationship to the Ku Kluk Klan, see E. David Cronon, *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1955, rpt.1969) 187-189. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
61. 61 Burkett, *Black Redemption,* 117. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
62. 62 In 1926, Austin met with Calvin Coolidge as a representative of the National Race Congress to press the issue of lynching, see Fox, *The Guardian of Boston: William Monroe Trotter* (New York: Antheneum, 1970) 257-259; Drake specifically mentioned his father’s involvement in this initiative led by Austin, though there is no supporting evidence, see Bond,“A Social Portrait of John Gibbs St. Clair Drake,” 764. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
63. 63 Randall Burkett, *Black Redemption*, 118; for a good discussion on the history of federal surveillance of the Garvey movement, see Theodore Kornweibel, *Seeing Red: Federal Campaigns Against Black Militancy, 1919-1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998). [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
64. 64 Drake informs Fitzgerald of his relationship to Austin going back to his childhood days in Virginia, see St. Clair Drake, letter to Michael Fitzgerald, 20 February 1986, Box 2, Folder 52, St. Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
65. 65 Drake founded the Afro World Fellowship in 1951 with labor activist George McCray and attorney Edith Sampson to stimulate interest in Africa. In the context of the Cold War, Drake saw Afro-World Fellowship as important in “keeping Africa on our side in the current East-West rivalries by dispelling ignorance about African affairs,” see St. Clair Drake, letter to unknown, April 20, 1951, Box 12, File 36, St. Clair Drake papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
66. 66 Robin D.G. Kelly, “But A Local Phase of A Word Problem: Black History’s Global Vision, *Journal of American History*, 86, 3 (Dec. 1959), 1057-58. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
67. 67 Bond, “A Social Portrait of John Gibbs St. Clair Drake,”764. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
68. 68 St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 58. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
69. 69 Joe W. Trotter and Jared N. Day, *Race and Renaissance: African Americans in Pittsburgh Since WWII* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
70. 70 The place of black people in industrial history of the Tidewater made the choice of Pittsburgh as a place of destination almost a natural one, see Charles Dew, *Ironmaker to the Confederacy: Joseph R. Anderson and the Tredeger Iron Works* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966). [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
71. 71 Trotter and Day, *Race and Renaissance,* 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
72. 72 For a statistical account of black workers in Pittsburgh’s industry, see Trotter and Day*,* 10-11. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
73. 73 St. Clair Drake, letter to Frank Untermyer, ca. 1986. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
74. 74 Trotter and Day, 14*.*  [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
75. 75 St. Clair Drake, letter to Michael Fitzgerald, 20 February 1986, Box 2, folder 52, St. Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
76. 76 Trotter and Day*,* 15-16 [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
77. 77 Biographical Collections, Roosevelt College Archives, Box 3, folder 1; Drake’s interest in the Black Church evident in *Black Metropolis,* in a memoranda prepared for Gunnar Myrdal’s *American Dilemma*, see St. Clair Drake, *The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago* (1 June 1941), unpublished, author’s possession; also see St. Clair Drake, *Black Religion and the Redemption of Africa* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1970). [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
78. 78 Bond, 763. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
79. 79 St. Clair Drake, letter to Frank Untermyer, ca. 1986; see also Trotter and Day, *Race and Renaissance,* 15. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
80. 80 St. Clair Drake, letter to Michael Fitzgerald, 20 February 1986 [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
81. 81 St. Clair Drake, letter to Frank Untermyer, ca. 1986. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
82. 82 Ira D.A. Reid, *The Negro Immigrant* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 107-108. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
83. 83 Gilbert Osofsky, *The Making of the Ghetto* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 89; Winston James states that West Indians derived a sense of status from being subjects of the British Empire, see James, *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia,* 73.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
84. 84 Biographical Sketch of St. Clair Drake, Associate Professor of Sociology, Roosevelt College, Box 3, folder 1, Roosevelt University Archives, Biographical Collections. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
85. 85 Trotter and Day, 15. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
86. 86 St. Clair Drake, “Prospectus for an autobiography.”

    [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
87. 87 Trotter and Day, 21 [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
88. 88 Trotter and Day, 20. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
89. 89 David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem was in Vogue*  (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 25-27. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
90. 90 Trotter and Day, 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
91. 91 Ibid., 12.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
92. 92 Ibid., 13. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
93. 93 Ibid., 12.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
94. 94 Ibid., 11.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
95. 95 Ibid., 13 [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
96. 96 St. Clair Drake, letter to Michael Fitzgerald, 20 February 1986; see also Bowser, “Studies of the African Diaspora,” 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
97. 97 Biographical Sketch of St. Clair Drake, Associate Professor of Sociology, Roosevelt College, Roosevelt University Archives. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
98. 98 St. Clair Drake, letter to Michael Fitzgerald, 20 February 1986; see also Bowser, 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
99. 99 Trotter and Day, 15. [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
100. 100 Ibid., 23. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
101. 101 St. Clair Drake, letter to Frank Untermyer, ca. 1986; see also Bond, 763. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
102. 102 Trotter and Day, 23. [↑](#endnote-ref-100)
103. 103 St. Clair Drake, letter to Frank Untermyer, ca. 1986; see also Bond, “A Social Portrait of John Gibbs St. Clair,” 763. [↑](#endnote-ref-101)
104. 104 Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-102)
105. 105 Randall Burkett, letter to author, 22 June 2003, author’s possession; see also unknown, “Local Pastor Departs for the West Indies,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, (October 11, 1923): 13. [↑](#endnote-ref-103)
106. 106 Biographical Sketch of St. Clair Drake, Associate Professor of Sociology, Roosevelt College. [↑](#endnote-ref-104)
107. 107 St. Clair Drake, “Prospectus for autobiography.” [↑](#endnote-ref-105)
108. 108 Bowser, 21 [↑](#endnote-ref-106)
109. 109 Bond, 775.

     [↑](#endnote-ref-107)
110. 110 Winston James, 45-46. [↑](#endnote-ref-108)
111. 111 Biographical Sketch of St. Clair Drake, Associate Professor of Sociology, Roosevelt College. [↑](#endnote-ref-109)
112. 112 “Will Refute Charge That Rev. Patterson ‘Poisoned Her Mind,’” *Pittsburgh Courier,* (May 10, 1924) front page; see also “Admits Wife Left His Home With Mother,” *Pittsburgh Courier* (May 3, 1924) front page; see also “Not a Pastor in Real Sense of the Word, Says Accused Wife, Purest Type of Womanhood,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, (17 May 1924), 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-110)
113. 113 “Admits Wife Left His Home With Mother,” *Pittsburgh Courier,* (May 3, 1924), front page; also see “Not a Pastor in Real Sense of the Word, Says Accused Wife, Purest Type of Womanhood,” *Pittsburgh Courier* (May 17, 1924): front page. [↑](#endnote-ref-111)
114. 114 “Staunton News,” *Pittsburgh Courier* (May 10, 1924), 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-112)
115. 115 St. Clair Drake, letter to Michael Fitzgerald, 20 February 1986. [↑](#endnote-ref-113)
116. 116 For specific reference to Drake’s father in UNIA circles, see Randall Burkett, *Garveyism as a Religious Movement: The Institutionalization of Black Civil Religion,* (Metuchen, New Jersey & London: Scarecrow Press, Inc. and The American Theological Library Association, 1978), 132; after leaving Bethany Baptist Church, Drake’s father resurfaced in 1926 as International Organizer for the UNIA. Corresponding to the period of Garvey’s imprisonment in Atlanta on mail fraud charges, Drake’s father was elected to this position at an emergency convention of the UNIA held in Detroit, Michigan in March of 1926, see Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and UNIA Papers, volume 6,* September 1924- December 1927 (UCLA Press: Berkley, 1989), 117, 440; The activities of Drake’s father as International Organizer were covered extensively in the Negro World, see, unknown, “Fine Tributes to Marcus Garvey as Anniversary of the First World Convention is Observed,” *Negro World* (August 7, 1926), 2; also see unknown, “President General’s Inspiring Message Kindles Enthusiasm at Monster Convention Meeting,” *Negro World* (August 8, 1926), 3; In 1927, Drake’s father undertook a new position within the UNIA as Headmaster of Liberty University, which was located on the James River some twelve miles from Jamestown, Virginia. Formerly the Lott-Corey Smallwood Industrial Institute for Negroes, Liberty University enjoyed a short life, and was soon forced to close its doors after the mortgage school became due, see Hill, *Marcus Garvey Papers,* vol.6, 440; the fundraising efforts of Drake’s father on behalf of Liberty University received extensive coverage in the *Negro World*, see, unknown, “Dr. J.G. St. Clair Drake Gives Details of Property Purchase,” *Negro World* (July 24, 1926), 3; unknown, “The UNIA Buys Quarter Million Dollar Property for Great Negro University,” *Negro World* (July 7, 1924), front page; also see unknown, “Negroes Should Unite and Make University Project a Striking Success,” *Negro World* (August 7, 1926), 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-114)
117. 117 St. Clair Drake, letter to Frank Untermyer, ca. 1986. [↑](#endnote-ref-115)
118. 118 This idea is derived from Payne’s analysis of the nationwide support George Wallace received for his resistance to school desegregation, see Charles Payne, “The Whole United States in Southern,” *Journal of American History*, 91,1 (December 2004), 90.

     [↑](#endnote-ref-116)
119. 119 In 1935, Drake travelled for the first time into the Deep South to assist Allison Davis with the research for the study of race relations in Mississippi, see St. Clair Drake, “In the Mirror of Black Scholarship: W. Allison Davis and Deep South,” Institute of the Black World, ed., *Education and the Black Struggle: Notes from the Colonized World*, (Cambridge: Harvard Educational Review, 1974). [↑](#endnote-ref-117)
120. 120 J. Lewis Peyton, A History of Augusta County, Virginia (Staunton: Samuel Yost and Sons, 1935), 257-258. [↑](#endnote-ref-118)
121. 121 Ayers, *Southern Crossing: A History of the American South, 1877-1905* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), *,* 100. [↑](#endnote-ref-119)
122. 122 Ibid., 28 [↑](#endnote-ref-120)
123. 123 Peyton, 265-268. [↑](#endnote-ref-121)
124. 124 Ibid., 266. [↑](#endnote-ref-122)
125. 125 Garrison Frazier, “Colloquy with Colored Minsters,” *Journal of Negro History* 16, 1 (January 1931), 90. [↑](#endnote-ref-123)
126. 126 Peyton, 267. [↑](#endnote-ref-124)
127. 127 Richard B. Sherman, “ The Fight for Racial Integrity in Virginia in the 1920s”, *Journal of Southern History,* 54, 1(Feb. 1988), 69-70. [↑](#endnote-ref-125)
128. 128 C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 70-88. [↑](#endnote-ref-126)
129. 129 Edward Ayers, *Southern Crossing,* 100. [↑](#endnote-ref-127)
130. 130 St. Clair Drake, folder marked “autobiographical sketch,” ca. 1966, Frank Untermyer Papers, authors possession. [↑](#endnote-ref-128)
131. 131 Bowser, 5; see also C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957). [↑](#endnote-ref-129)
132. 132 Bond, 764. [↑](#endnote-ref-130)
133. 133 Bowser, 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-131)
134. 134 St. Clair Drake, folder marked “autobiographical sketch,” ca. 1966.

     [↑](#endnote-ref-132)
135. 135 Bowser, 5; Drake reiterates this sentiment elsewhere, see Bond, 764. [↑](#endnote-ref-133)
136. 136 Bowser, 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-134)
137. 137 Biographical notes on St. Clair Drake, n.d., Faculty Biographical Collections, Roosevelt University Archives, Box 3, Folder 1 [↑](#endnote-ref-135)
138. 138 Bond, 764 [↑](#endnote-ref-136)
139. 139 Thomas Young, “Principal of Booker T. Pledges to Endeavor to Keep the Standard High,” *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, July 1, 1927, front page; see also unknown, “Winston Douglass at Booker T. Washington High,” *Journal Norfolk Journal and and Guide,* June 25, 1927 front page; Douglass was member of Omega Psi Phi and was responsible for naming the fraternity’s journal, the *Occular*. See, Thomas Young, “Principal of Booker T…” front page. [↑](#endnote-ref-137)
140. 140 Bond, 765 [↑](#endnote-ref-138)
141. 141 Unknown, “Academic Program at Booker T. Washington High School,” *Norfolk Journal and Guide (*February 2, 1927): 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-139)
142. 142 Bond, 765. [↑](#endnote-ref-140)
143. 143 St. Clair Drake, “Abraham Lincoln,” *The Echo* 2, 1 (February, 1925): 7.

     [↑](#endnote-ref-141)