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**Zora Neale Hurston's Visual and Textual Portrait of Middle Passage Survivor  
Oluale Kossola/Cudjo Lewis**

Hannah Durkin

**Ascription:** Hannah Durkin is in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics, Newcastle University, Percy Building, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, UK. Email: [Hannah.durkin@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:Hannah.durkin@newcastle.ac.uk)

Abstract

This article examines African American folklorist Zora Neale Hurston's book-length biography and film of the last known Middle Passage survivor, Oluale Kossola/Cudjo Lewis, to explore her cinematic and literary engagement with slavery and to recover Lewis as a co-author of both documents. Hurston's literary project, 'Barracoon', in which she situated herself merely as Kossola's amanuensis and foregrounded the 'inexpressible violence' and 'horror' of his experience, represented an unusually frank twentieth-century record of enslavement and post-slavery life. Such work pre-dated and lacked the patronising tone of much of the WPA Slave Narrative Collection (1936-38), whose investigators were mainly white and whose subjects' accounts were often reconstructed loosely from field notes. Moreover, Hurston's footage of Lewis circumvented literary mediation altogether to provide an Atlantic slavery survivor with an unprecedented visual outlet for self-expression.

In 'Barracoon', her book-length biography of the last known Middle Passage survivor, Oluale Kossola/Cudjo Lewis (ca. 1840-1935), Zora Neale Hurston observed that, 'Africa's ambassadors to the New World have come and worked and died, and left their spoor, but no recorded thought'.<sup>1</sup> Her manuscript, which is presented as a series of interviews with a man who endured kidnapping in West Africa and enslavement in the US, positions itself as a corrective to such historical silencing. Hurston was one of the earliest black anthropological fieldworkers and 'Barracoon' was her first book-length research project.<sup>2</sup> She was also one of the earliest scientifically trained ethnographic filmmakers, and she combined her textual record with visual footage of Kossola to create an almost unique moving image of an Atlantic slavery survivor.<sup>3</sup> Yet critics have largely ignored 'Barracoon', and Hurston's pioneering contributions to visual anthropology have still to be widely recognised. This study examines Hurston's footage alongside 'Barracoon' to explore her cinematic and literary engagement with slavery and to recover Kossola as a co-author of both documents. Hurston's anthropological work was funded by white patronage, which implicated it in a history of voyeurism and cultural appropriation. Nevertheless, she resisted traditional scientist-subject hierarchies in her attempt to document Kossola's life story. Her literary project, in which she situated herself merely as Kossola's amanuensis and foregrounded the 'inexpressible violence' and 'horror' of his experience, represented an unusually frank twentieth-century record of enslavement and post-slavery life (14, 53). Moreover,

Hurston's footage of Kossola circumvented literary mediation altogether to provide an Atlantic slavery survivor with an unprecedented cinematic outlet for self-expression.

This study investigates comparatively 'Barracoon' and Hurston's footage to draw meaningful attention to their importance as documents of an Atlantic slavery survivor's experiences. There are only a small number of first-hand literary records of enslavement and the Middle Passage from an African perspective, most of which give very brief accounts of such experiences.<sup>4</sup> There are also few narratives that speak openly about post-emancipation racial injustices.<sup>5</sup> That the texts predated, emerged independently from, and deviate in significant ways from other early twentieth-century oral ex-slave narratives underscores their historical significance. Hurston's text and film of Kossola are vital personal records of the horrors of the Atlantic slave trade that help to give human voice to its traumas as well as the decades-long psychological, economic, cultural, and social impact on those who endured it.

Yet although Hurston's visual and textual documents of Kossola deserve sustained attention for giving extremely rare voice to the horrors and injustices of the Middle Passage, slavery and its aftermath, their link to a history of white voyeurism and the effect that this had on their production mean that they should be scrutinised with care. A comparative investigation of the texts is particularly useful as it helps to shed light on the politics of their conception and, consequently, their representational limitations, but also on Kossola's authorial contributions. 'Barracoon' and Hurston's footage are mediated records of enslavement that reflect the historical period in which they were collected and the constraints placed on Hurston as a black woman fieldworker beholden to her white employer. Consequently, they exemplify the impossibilities of representing meaningfully the horrors of enslavement. Yet their

shortcomings are paradoxically valuable for pointing up the complex authorship of ‘as told to’ ex-slave narratives and critical ways in which such texts should be approached.

A member of the Yorùbá people thought to be from the Bantè area of what is now west Benin, Kossola was one of more than 100 West African children and young people who comprised the human cargo of the *Clotilda*, the last slave ship to reach the US, which docked in Mobile Bay, Alabama in 1859. Hurston interviewed and filmed Kossola for two months in the summer of 1928, when he was in his late eighties. Across nearly 100 pages, ‘Barracoon’ describes his kidnapping and the slaughter of his community by an army from Dahomey, his subsequent sale and passage across the Atlantic at the hands of novice Canadian and Yankee traders thought to have been acting on a bet, and his enslavement for five years and six months as a steamboat worker. The manuscript also recounts the *Clotilda* survivors’ unsuccessful attempt to finance their passage home after emancipation and their subsequent purchase of land – at full cost – from their former owners, which they used to establish Africatown, the first US town to be run continuously by black people and the only one founded by Africans.<sup>6</sup> Kossola’s description of his post-slavery life evidences his poverty and records the intellectual battle that he waged with his employer and former owner to exercise his short-lived right, during Reconstruction, to vote as a black man in the US South. The narrative also reveals the prejudice the survivors endured from African Americans, who had been taught to view Africans as ‘savages’, the group’s subsequent conversion to Christianity, and the despair Kossola felt at the death of his wife Abile, who was also a *Clotilda* survivor, and all six of his children (71). The surviving footage of Kossola shows him on his porch, wielding an axe to demonstrate his agility, and posing and speaking before the camera.

Hurston's manuscript and footage are fragmentary documents of Kossola's life that have lain largely untouched in archives for decades. Hurston was an inexperienced filmmaker hindered by cumbersome and unsophisticated recording equipment and the film lacks sound, is just three minutes long, and is partly overexposed. 'Barracoon' was never published and, with the exception of Genevieve Sexton, who takes it seriously as a document of Kossola's slavery experience, critics of Hurston's work have tended to dismiss the manuscript.<sup>7</sup> Kossola's voice dominates the text, which adopts a frank tone; there are no examples of the slippery narrative voice and playful language for which Hurston's later anthropological writings are renowned. The manuscript's impact on Hurston's career trajectory, particularly its role in ending her creative partnership with celebrated African American writer Langston Hughes, has only recently been unearthed.<sup>8</sup> Equally, a decades-long dismissal of the *Clotilda* as a hoax in spite of compelling evidence including the ongoing existence of Africatown and one chronicler's photograph of the ship's charred hull has helped to obscure the text and footage's historical value.<sup>9</sup> Early Hurston biographer Robert Hemenway may also have deviated attention from the manuscript by denouncing it as a 'heavily dramatic, semifictionalized narrative', and which, while purporting 'to be solely the words of Cudjo[,] in fact ... is Hurston's imaginative recreation of his experience'.<sup>10</sup> Hemenway had reason to be wary of 'Barracoon': Hurston had previously published a plagiarised article on Kossola for the *Journal of Negro History*.<sup>11</sup> Yet Sylviane Diouf, who has traced the history of the *Clotilda* and its survivors, asserts that, 'not having done research on Cudjo and his companions, [Hemenway] was not in a position to assess the veracity of Hurston's work'.<sup>12</sup> Diouf asserts that, 'With few exceptions, the information provided in "Barracoon" is confirmed by other sources ... Far from being fictionalized,

Cudjo's story, as transmitted by Hurston, is as close to veracity as can possibly be ascertained with the help of other records'.<sup>13</sup>

'Barracoon' predated but has still to be considered alongside a number of interwar archival interviews with formerly enslaved African Americans. Such recovery projects emerged to counter the white Southern bias of mainstream US historians, who rejected enslaved men and women's testimony and, by implication, the horrors and injustices of their experiences. However, although the interviews were intended as correctives to such elisions, they are deeply limited as personal documents of enslavement. One of the earliest of these studies, begun by John B. Cade in 1929, was less interested in the human experience than in the social structure of slavery.<sup>14</sup> Fisk University student Ophelia Settle Egypt provided a much more vivid account of the personalities of the formerly enslaved.<sup>15</sup> Her interviews were recorded seemingly verbatim and included information on African Americans' Civil War service and post-slavery experiences, including incidents of lynching. Yet she relied on pre-set questions and her subjects remained nameless due to legal concerns. By far the most comprehensive study was the Slave Narrative Collection, which was conducted by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) between 1936 and 1938. However, black interviewers were virtually excluded from WPA staffs in Southern states; a culture of racial fear in the South and interviewees' economic dependence on white people affected their responses; white WPA interviewers often lacked empathy and phrased questions to elicit a certain kind of response; and WPA narratives were not verbatim accounts, but instead were edited or revised before being typed.<sup>16</sup> Hurston's status as a black Southerner gave her a positionality that differed from almost all of the WPA interviewers and her interview technique contrasts starkly with the Slave Narrative Collection.<sup>17</sup> Instead of adhering to a series of pre-set

questions, Hurston's manuscript suggests that she stepped back and allowed Kossola to direct the discussion. 'Barracoon' positions Hurston merely as the recorder of his narrative. In a preface that seeks to authenticate her subject's account, she states that Kossola has been 'permitted to tell his story in his own way without the intrusion of interpretation' (n.p.). Kossola's voice dominates the narrative; only rarely does Hurston interject in his remembrances.

However, like the WPA narratives, 'Barracoon' still formed part of a Euro-American research project. Hurston was collecting data on black Southern US cultures for wealthy white patron Charlotte Osgood Mason when she interviewed and filmed Kossola and her job contract required her to 'lay before' Mason 'all of said information, data, transcripts of music, etc. which she shall have obtained'.<sup>18</sup> Thus, Hurston had no real 'ownership' over her fieldwork material. Mason denied Hurston academic respectability by refusing to fund her doctoral studies, which exemplifies the latter's subordinate position: she was hired as a collector, not an interpreter, of African American culture.<sup>19</sup> A dictated note from Mason to the African American writer Alain Locke, who advised Mason and mentored Hurston, and in which she instructed him to 'take out your eyes ... and open wide the door to your heart' when reading 'Barracoon', reveals that her investment in Kossola was a well-intentioned recuperative project attuned to his humanity but that such interest was nevertheless informed by a primitivist notion of a pre-modern black culture which 'white blood' was currently 'deadening'.<sup>20</sup> The manuscript includes a handwritten dedication to Mason, who Hurston calls 'my Godmother, and the one mother of all the primitives, who with the Gods in space is concerned about the hearts of the untaught' (n.p.). Such an obsequious address highlights both Hurston's economic dependence on Mason and the manuscript's ultimate purpose: to document apparently dying black cultures for the benefit of an

assumedly white readership. Yet Mason's patronage also imbued Hurston with a degree of investigative freedom that she had lacked previously as a student of anthropology at Columbia University. As Valerie Boyd notes, Mason 'only wanted results ... and didn't care so much about form or method'.<sup>21</sup> Hurston was not expected to apply standard anthropological recording practices in her engagement with Kossola, which results in an unusually intimate interaction between researcher and interviewee.

In contrast to the questionnaire-based approach of other twentieth-century ex-slave interviews, 'Barracoon's' seemingly unmediated narrative approach therefore allows for a fuller articulation of Kossola's suffering. There are inevitable shortcomings to Hurston's questioning: she fails to press Kossola on revelatory moments in the narrative, such as his experience of the Middle Passage, and his six-year enslavement is mentioned only briefly. There is also a significant factual inconsistency. An earlier interview with Kossola recorded two deaths on the *Clotilda's* journey, but in 'Barracoon' he declares, 'nobody ain sick and nobody dead' (60).<sup>22</sup> Hurston's approach nevertheless affords Kossola space to impress upon the reader the horror of his community's slaughter and the disorientation of seeing 'nothin' but water' during his transatlantic passage (59). He claims to have been on the ship for 70 days, and recalls the fearsome sound of the ocean:

Oh Lor! I so skeered on de sea! De water, you unnerstand me, it make so much noise! It growl lak de thousand beastes in de bush. De wind got so much voice on de water. Oh Lor! Sometime de ship way up in de sky. Sometime it way down in de bottom of de sea. Dey say de sea was calm. Cudjo doan know, seem lak it move all de time (59).

Such a recollection highlights the claustrophobia, spatial confusion, and consequently the terror of Kossola's confinement, in which death by drowning feels ever imminent.

We also learn that his African kidnappers strip him before placing him on the *Clotilda*, treatment of Middle Passage victims that is supported by archaeological evidence.<sup>23</sup> Kossola's forced nakedness fills him with 'shame' and he is appalled to find it used in the US as apparent proof of his racial inferiority: 'We come in de 'Merica soil naked and de people say we naked savage. Dey say we doan wear no clothes. Dey doan know de many-coats [term of derision for the Kroomen ethnic group that placed him on the boat] snatch our clothes 'way from us' (58). He also describes the group's sorrow when they reached the US, stressing the hard, dangerous labour they faced as well as their loss of freedom and bewilderment at being stranded so far from home. His grief is 'so heavy' on arriving in the US that he thinks he might 'die in [his] sleep' when dreaming of his mother (61).

While acknowledging that his owner Jim Meagher was significantly less cruel than his brother Tim, Kossola outlines the exploitative treatment he endured while enslaved, which is characterised by incessant hard work and the threat of violence and even death. Forced to tote wood on a steamboat at night, he risks falling into the sea and drowning in the darkness. Whenever the boat reaches a loading point, he fears the overseer's whip: 'Every time de boat stoppee at de landing ... he go down de gangplank and standee on de ground. De whip stickee in his belt ... He cuttee you wid de whip if you ain' run fast 'nough to please him. If you doan git a big load, he hitee you too' (63-64). Kossola can still visualise and recalls for Hurston all twenty-one of the landing points on his journey, none of which he has visited since 1865, which hints at the lasting psychological impact of his enslavement. His account thus serves powerfully to counter contemporaneous white histories of an idyllic Southern plantation life.

Hurston's voice enters the narrative mainly to reflect on Kossola's trauma, an approach that encourages reader identification with suffering that other sources confirm

was ongoing. In an earlier interview, Kossola claimed to recall the horror of his kidnapping during every Sunday church service, an assertion that is evidenced by the vividness of the remembrances he provides in the manuscript.<sup>24</sup> Noting in her autobiography *Dust Tracks on a Road* that her encounter with Kossola gave her ‘something to feel about’, Hurston observes in ‘Barracoon’ that, after a particularly painful recollection, ‘Kossola was no longer on the porche [sic] with me. He was squatting about that fire in Dahomey. His face was twitching in abysmal pain. It was a horror mask ... His agony was so acute that he became inarticulate’ (53).<sup>25</sup> Hurston’s arresting confrontation with Kossola’s mental anguish is a self-reflexive engagement with the limitations of her own account – the horror that Kossola has endured is beyond words and therefore beyond the textual record – that paradoxically adds emotional weight to his experience. It is an extremely rare literary reflection on the traumas of a West African’s enslavement and, specifically in this scene, the severing of family relationships through mass slaughter and permanent geographical displacement.

However, the insertion of this observation also undermines Hurston’s authorship somewhat by intimating that elements of the interview were not taken from a first-hand interview with Kossola, but yet again drew on an earlier source, Emma Langdon Roche’s *Historic Sketches of the South* (1914). Hurston’s arresting image of a ‘horror mask’ is strikingly similar to Roche’s description of the anguished faces of Kossola and other *Clotilda* survivors as they recollected their story on her behalf:

None have gotten over the shock of their early experience. When these are referred to there comes into Kazoola’s and Abaché’s faces unspeakable and indescribable anguish. Poleete’s is *like a mask*, unchanging, unscrutable, except for the eyes, and these – small, deep-set, watchful – are almost uncanny (emphasis added).<sup>26</sup>

The similarity between Roche and Hurston's mask comparisons could be read as coincidental. However, another similarity can be found a few pages further into the manuscript. Kossola's recollection of emerging for the first time from the hold of the slave ship and seeing nothing but ocean as recorded in 'Barracoon' is an almost verbatim quotation from Roche's text. 'We looka, an' looka, an' looka – nothin' but sky and water. Whar we com' from, we do not know – whar we go, we do not know' in *Historic Sketches of the South* becomes 'We lookee and lookee and lookee and lookee and we doan see nothin' but water. Where we come from we doan know. Where we goin, we doan know' in Hurston's text (59).<sup>27</sup> Kossola was interviewed on a number of occasions and it is possible that he recounted his experience of the Middle Passage in the same manner each time, but the phrases are so similar as to make mere coincidence unlikely.<sup>28</sup> Only a few small phrases in 'Barracoon' were taken from Roche's book, and Hurston's 'borrowing' of elements of Kossola's story from another source does not undermine the historical truth of such statements. However, the appearance of second-hand elements shows that the manuscript has shortcomings as a document of Kossola's experiences; there are gaps in Hurston's recovery project that she has looked elsewhere to fill, perhaps in response to intense pressure from Mason to complete the manuscript. Paradoxically, her decision to alter his words slightly seemingly to convey more precisely than Roche his still heavily accented English suggests a meaningful effort to recreate his voice on the page even as it reveals that 'Barracoon' was not an entirely verbatim interview with an enslaved man but, like the WPA narratives, subjected to some degree of post-interview alteration.

Hurston's plagiarism and editing practices show that, even as a black Southerner, she was no less implicated than her white peers in the politics of anthropological documentation. Hurston does engage self-reflexively with her role as

recorder of Kossola's experiences, describing in detail her meetings with him and the trust that she must build in order to elicit his story. Conversations are conducted around his chores and days pass in which they do not talk at all:

I had spent two months with Kossola, who is called Cudjo trying to find the answers to my questions. Some days we ate great quantities of cling-stone peaches and talked. Sometimes we ate watermelon and talked ... Sometimes we just ate. Sometimes we just talked. At other times neither was possible, he just chased me away. He wanted to work in his garden or fix his fences. He couldn't be bothered. The present was too urgent to let the past intrude (94).

Hurston positions herself as a respectful and sensitive interviewer, telling Kossola, 'I don't want to wear out my welcome. I want you to let me come and talk with you again', and thus allowing him to dictate the terms of their conversations (37). Yet her gentle interviewing technique also hints at the power relations at play in her pursuit of his life story, regardless of the empathy she expresses towards him. She gains his trust by bribing him with fruit, meat and insect repellent. Kossola is at times reticent, yet actively seeks to please Mason, who is giving him money, telling Hurston that he 'lak please her. She good to me and Cudjo lonely' (55).

Hurston worked with Mason and Alain Locke to deter another anthropologist, Paul Radin, from visiting Kossola in a battle over 'ownership' of his story.<sup>29</sup> She also claimed in a letter to Langston Hughes that she had found another Middle Passage survivor, who she judged to be 'a better talker than Cudjoe', and who she hid from Mason: 'no one will ever know about her but us'.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps Hurston intended to protect this extremely elderly woman from public scrutiny or sought to subvert the constraints that Mason had imposed on her collective activities, but her effort to take control of this women's story, presumably with the aim of including it in her unrealised literary

venture with Hughes, meant that a rare female voice of the Middle Passage was ultimately lost to the historical record.

Yet flaws and omissions in Hurston's collecting activities should not obscure 'Barracoon's' significance as a historical document and the overall validity of Kossola's story. Hurston admits in her authenticating preface that her text is incomplete and that it contains 'essential truth rather than [sic] factual detail' (n.p.). Even Diouf, who relies on 'Barracoon' as an aid to tracing the history of the *Clotilda's* survivors, rejects an element of Hurston's account that, on close inspection, appears to be true. Diouf identifies allusions to 'Amazons' in Hurston's autobiography *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942) and an article she wrote for the *American Mercury* in 1944 as 'inventions' added long after her encounter with Kossola to 'spic[e] up the story'.<sup>31</sup> The 1944 article's account of Dahomeyan society appears to capitulate to nineteenth-century European fantasies of African bloodlust: the female warriors are 'even more bloodthirsty than the men' and the palace at Abomey is 'made of bleached skulls'.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Kossola is captured by men in 'Barracoon' but by a single 'big woman' in the *American Mercury* article.<sup>33</sup> Yet Kossola does still allude to women soldiers in 'Barracoon': a woman executes his village's king in both narratives. Moreover, he mentions them not only in the text that Hurston plagiarised but also in a 1922 interview for Presbyterian newspaper *The Continent*, a source that also describes 'a battalion of Amazons who were as fiendish as the men' and which is unlikely to have been available to Hurston given its ephemeral nature and limited circulation.<sup>34</sup>

Kossola's description of his kidnapping recalls the depiction of Dahomeyan savagery disseminated in European travellers' accounts and which, as Edna G. Bay observes, 'epitomized everything negative that the Euro-American imagination of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries wanted to believe about Africa'.<sup>35</sup> Such narratives

served falsely to juxtapose ‘enlightened’ Europe, which established a centuries-long international slave trade in which decapitation was just one of many endemic acts of racialised violence, with ‘barbaric’ Africa in order to justify invasion as a civilising endeavour. But the horror of Kossola’s recollections should still be taken seriously in order to reflect on the human suffering that was central to the slave trade on both sides of the Atlantic. Kossola remains traumatised by the decapitation of his fellow villagers and sight and smell of their severed heads, which his captors carry as trophies, and which begin to rot before being smoked in front of their kidnapped kinsfolk. His account is substantiated by both indigenous and colonial histories, which, as Ian Armit notes, ‘consistently stress the role of decapitation and the display of skulls in precolonial Dahomey and neighbouring states’.<sup>36</sup> Bas-reliefs also provide visual evidence of the presence of both decapitations and women soldiers in mid-nineteenth-century Dahomey.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, as Bay observes, ‘Dahomean oral history is essentially the self-serving story of those who held power’; there are almost no accounts of the slaveholding kingdom’s victims.<sup>38</sup> By charting just one man’s experience, ‘Barracoon’ therefore gives rare human insight into the psychological horrors of the kidnapping and slaughter of a nineteenth-century West African village.

Nor should such references obscure the significant ways in which the text recuperates West African cultures. In the first paragraph describing her encounter with Kossola, Hurston notes the practices that he has retained from his West African childhood: ‘he locks his gate with an ingenious wooden peg of African invention’ and eats his breakfast from a ‘round enameled [sic] pan with his hands, in the fashion of his fatherland’ (15). In her opening discussion with him, she grants him space to dispel myths that served to justify the Atlantic slave trade as part of a salvation process for benighted African souls: ‘in Afficky we always know dere was a God; he name Alahua,

but po' Affickans we cain readee de Bible, so we doan know God got a Son. We ain ignorant – we jes doan know' (16). That such descriptions of West African craftsmanship and religious beliefs occur so early in the text suggest that Hurston included them purposely to counter commonly held racist myths and celebrate Kossola's heritage.

Despite revealing the horror of Kossola's kidnapping and the slaughter of his family, the life story that Hurston records also contrasts US racist injustices with West African legal structures in order to interrogate primitivist distortions in significant ways. The first section of the text is devoted to Kossola's West African childhood remembrances. He describes the justice village leaders bestow on a murderer who, once condemned, is tied to the corpse of the man he killed. The culprit is quite literally brought face-to-face with his victim and thus with his crime and then left to die or break free. The sentence is harsh but designed to match the act and justice, it is implied, has been served. By contrast, the final third of the text documents the brutal injustices that Kossola endures in the US. He is subjected to five and a half years of bondage and a lifetime of exile. Once freed, he is denied reparations or retribution and thus any sense of resolution for the crimes that have been committed against him. After emancipation, he endures a series of additional tragedies. In a chapter entitled 'Cudjo learns about law', he is awarded but never receives compensation when a train appears deliberately to strike his wagon, incapacitating him. He is also denied accountability when three of his five sons die in suspicious circumstances. He claims that 'Somebody call hisself a deputy sheriff kill de baby boy', Feichitan/Cudjo (76).<sup>39</sup> He asserts that the killer is now a pastor and that he murdered his son in cold blood: 'He say he de law, but he doan come 'rest him ... he hidin' hisself in de back of de wagon, an' shootee my boy' (76-77). In Cudjo's experience, the US church and legal system are not only indifferent to injustice, but even complicit in it.

The negative contrast that 'Barracoon' establishes between Kossola's childhood and adult homes situates the text within a wider recuperation of African cultures that was a key component of the 'Harlem Renaissance' or 'New Negro Movement', an interwar explosion of black cultural expression whose impact was felt globally. Kossola had already contributed to the movement before Hurston interviewed him. One of his West African parables, 'T'appin (Terrapin)', appeared in Alain Locke's *The New Negro* (1925), the key text of the movement. The parable was later printed in the *Journal of American Folklore* and in both English and French in the francophone Caribbean journal *La Revue du Monde Noir* (1931-32), which took its inspiration from New Negro writing.<sup>40</sup> *La Revue* sought to establish diasporic connections across linguistic boundaries and point up the value of African-derived cultural forms. Although short-lived, it would in turn influence the Négritude movement, an international Black liberation ideology that emerged in response to French colonial racism. Kossola's story provided both movements with a link to a nineteenth-century West African oral heritage.

Collected by Arthur Huff Fauset, one of Hurston's few African American anthropologist contemporaries, 'T'appin' mirrors stylistically Hurston's text in that it appears to have been recorded verbatim. The story documents the same speech patterns as 'Barracoon' and Kossola at one stage interrupts his tale to query if he is being recorded: 'You got a pencil dere, ain't you?'<sup>41</sup> This impression of non-intervention, which echoes Hurston's claim that she did not interfere in Kossola's story, is a reminder of the subservient position of black anthropologists in early anthropology: Hurston and Fauset were both employed as collectors, not interpreters of their material. However, it also had subversive potential because it invested the storyteller with an unusual level of authorial influence. As Lee Baker observes, 'Fauset was exceedingly critical of the

amateur and commercial folklorist who “assumes to interpret Negro character instead of simply telling his stories”<sup>42</sup>; his purpose was to ‘let people speak for themselves’ without external intervention.<sup>42</sup> ‘T’appin’ formed part of Fauset’s effort to counter the distortions and commercial imperative of Joel Chandler Harris’s Uncle Remus stories and thus to recover the cultural significance and prove the African origins of Southern black folk tales. As Anne Elizabeth Carroll observes, Kossola’s story is ‘a subtle piece of evidence against the argument that Africans forgot all of their expressive traditions on the traumatic middle passage and arrived in America as blank slates – particularly since the story includes prayers for food, written in what presumably is an African language’.<sup>43</sup> Much like Hurston, Fauset achieved this recuperative project through a narrative technique that foregrounded the storyteller’s voice.

In this regard, Hurston’s film footage is even more significant than ‘Barracoon’ and ‘T’appin’, not only for authenticating the existence of its interviewee, but also for providing him with a measure of self-representation which, although incredibly short, silent, partially obscured, and subjected to editing, resists the writer’s mediating pen.<sup>44</sup> This rare moment of visual self-authorship was still caught within a legacy of racialised spectatorship, however. Hurston produced 15 film reels during her 1928 trip to the South, of which nine survive, including one of two reels of Kossola. The camera was an extremely unusual tool of ethnographic documentation at this time. Hurston’s anthropological mentor Franz Boas, who initiated her first trip to interview Kossola, which resulted in her plagiarised *Journal of Negro History* article, began to use film in his research in 1930. However, he was not the source of her filmmaking activities. Instead, it was Mason who provided her with a camera, together with a car for travelling through the South, as part of her job contract.<sup>45</sup> Hurston’s access to a car and camera – key symbols of modern consumerism – positioned her socially at odds with the

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communities that she sought to visit and invites readings of her project as part of a wider history of white voyeurism and cultural commodification.<sup>46</sup> The emergence of film and photography at the height of colonialism provided Euro-American societies with tools by which to define racial 'otherness' and formulate their own communities as modern and progressive. As Brad Evans summarises, 'Photography and film emerged as new technologies for the reproduction of social difference as spectacle'.<sup>47</sup> Hurston was employed effectively as a white woman's eyes, which rendered her complicit in such racialised technological narratives. Her camera was meant to document visually Kossola and black Southern culture more generally for Mason, an elderly white woman who lacked the physical mobility to satisfy her curiosity first-hand.

Hurston's function as a hired hand highlights her own exploited status as an African American researcher, as is evidenced by a letter that she wrote to Mason. In it, she begs to be allowed to view and share some of the film reels as she hopes to incorporate some of their material into *The Great Day* (1932), a theatrical revue that she has written:

Godmother, may I show Mr. Colledge the fire-dance films from the Bahamas?  
I'd see to it that no one saw them outside the Judson offices, and I'd see that they were handled carefully and returned immediately. It would save time if I could ... Then too, seeing the films would refresh my memory on details. Please, may I?<sup>48</sup>

Hurston's plea reveals that she had no ownership over the footage that she shot and was unable to share or even to view it and therefore to benefit artistically and intellectually from the material that it contained without prior permission from her white benefactor.

Such racialised viewing hierarchies inform the Kossola film, but in ambivalent and limited ways that ultimately afford him some dignity and agency onscreen. The footage is the only section of Hurston's surviving film work to contain a title and intertitles, which shows that it was subjected to some degree of editing. Elaine Charnov speculates that these textual additions were added for the benefit of Mason, and thus for white consumption.<sup>49</sup> Given her lack of access to the film material, Hurston may not have been involved in the editing process. The titles guide the viewer's perception of Kossola, which draws attention to his status as visual spectacle. As Jennifer Lynn Peterson has observed in relation to early twentieth-century travelogues, the insertion of titles has the effect of directing audience perceptions, implicitly limiting the independence of the film subject, and became an increasingly common tactic in early travel cinema by the late 1910s.<sup>50</sup> Kossola is introduced as the 'last of the Takkoi slaves in America', which situates him as a unique 'specimen', a historical curiosity. He is described as 'Full of vigor at 89, *Always* cheerful and dignified [emphasis added]', which highlights his strength and endurance, but also his apparent joy and willingness to perform for the camera. In this regard, the footage occludes the trauma that Kossola expresses in 'Barracoon', and which has a profoundly visual aspect: it is written onto his face. His apparently constant state of contentment also plays into minstrelsy-derived plantation fantasies of black joviality, which supports rather than challenges white historical revisions of US slavery. Yet the final intertitle, in which Kossola is described as 'always gracious and courtly', still encourages a more radical, politicised interpretation: at a time when European and US cultural narratives fixated on Africans' apparent savagery, the film directs attention to Kossola's civility.

The footage itself reinforces such a portrait of Kossola as resilient, self-sufficient, and dignified. Kossola is shown wielding an axe to chop firewood. Other

surviving material from Hurston's field trip shows much younger black men performing adept axe movements and *Dust Tracks on a Road* celebrates such men as 'poets of the swinging blade' engaged in 'infinitely graceful, dance of body and axe-head' in a rare 1940s literary tribute to African American masculine beauty.<sup>51</sup> Hurston's cinematic positioning of Kossola – a Middle Passage and slavery survivor – in the same action as the men can therefore be read as an attempt to celebrate his physical prowess and hence his humanity in order to point up the perversity of his reduction to chattel. As Thadious Davis has noted, Hurston's 'concern is with Cudjoe in action, rather than repose, so that he is not a relic, not a static museum-piece showcasing subjected or abject people or a remnant of enslavement, but a living transmission, an adapting survivor, and a reanimation of stolen black bodies'.<sup>52</sup> The footage stands alone in bringing a Middle Passage survivor visually to life; in so doing it creates space for representational autonomy.

Shortly before his death, Kossola rejected the opportunity to feature as a spectacle in a vaudeville show despite badly needing the income that such a role would bring.<sup>53</sup> His refusal reveals his desire to exercise control over his visual representation, which is detectable in Hurston's footage. Kossola spends much of the film talking to the camera, but the lack of sound means that his voice is lost to posterity. However, his expressive gestures and clothing afford him some agency. Kossola smiles while on the porch and poses readily with his axe, revealing willingness to perform for the camera, but on his terms. An undated typed assessment of Hurston's films in Alain Locke's papers at Howard University, presumably written by Locke or Mason, dismisses the footage. The author concludes that, not only is the second half of the footage spoiled, but there is 'Too much talking at the woodpile': Hurston has failed to rein in Kossola, who appears to control the length of time that he will submit to being filmed.<sup>54</sup> After

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talking briefly, he walks back to his porch and gestures to the camera with his arm, suggesting that he is shooing Hurston away; he has had enough of being filmed. Conversely, the reviewer of Hurston's footage reads her lost reel of Kossola as 'Very good', noting in particular that the 'Close ups of [the] story-teller [are] excellent', which suggests that such footage adhered to a more 'scientific' framing of Kossola.<sup>55</sup> Hurston toyed with the visual language of anthropological display in one of the only close-ups from her surviving 1928 footage, in which a young woman presents herself in profile as if posing for an ethnographic portrait, and we can speculate that she asked Kossola to pose in a similar manner in the lost reel. Yet the surviving footage of Kossola resists such allusions to scientific documentation. Instead, we are left with footage whose focus and duration he appears ultimately to control and which fixates on his physical prowess rather than his physiognomy.

Part of the woodpile footage is over-exposed, which highlights Hurston's status as an inexperienced filmmaker who was forced to contend with embryonic recording technology. Together with the absence of sound, such footage is a reminder of the film's omissions as a document of Kossola. But this technical mistake also draws attention to the joins and limits of the recording. We are not in control of what we see onscreen, which undermines further the commodifying gaze and alludes to the impossibility of conveying cinematically with any degree of adequacy the horrors of enslavement. Instead, Kossola's experiences exist only as a cinematic trace. Disturbing truths are available to the discerning viewer, but only through visual and textual cross-referencing. As an enslaved man, Kossola's 'value' was rooted in his strength and health. The footage celebrates such physical power and in doing so alludes with perhaps unwitting specificity to his economic function during slavery as recounted in 'Barracoon', in which he was required to tote wood as an steamboat worker. *The*

*Continent*'s interview with Kossola recounts a scene in which he walks to the woodpile, picks up an axe, and pronounces its name repeatedly in English to demonstrate the manner in which his North American kidnappers taught him the language.<sup>56</sup> The action of wood chopping recorded in Hurston's film can therefore be read as a reference to Kossola's US 'education'; at the very least, it is a reminder of the ways in which everyday activities and the English language are for him linked to violent displacement and human theft. These associations remain indecipherable to viewers with no reference to *The Continent* article. However, even a more explicit re-enactment could not convey meaningfully such traumas to an audience physically and emotionally removed from the original events, which points as much to the broader boundaries of second-hand documentation as to the film's specific limitations.

A handwritten, undated note in Alain Locke's papers, presumably written by Locke but perhaps by Mason, records one further attempt visually to document him. It states that, 'Zora must get fine photo of Kusolla [sic]'.<sup>57</sup> The instruction can be read as part of an attempt to validate Kossola's existence and thus to authenticate 'Barracoon' given the image's likely purpose as a textual illustration, but it also underscores the voyeuristic nature of the project and Kossola's subservient status as a found 'object' to be documented. Hurston gives no visual descriptions of Kossola in 'Barracoon' in possible resistance against reader voyeurism although she did take a photograph of him as instructed, which is now thought to be lost. Yet 'Barracoon's' description of the photo session provides further evidence of Kossola's efforts to assert control over his visual representation. He agrees to be photographed on condition that he receives a copy of the portrait, and prepares for the session by putting on his best suit but also by removing his shoes, as he wants to look like he is in Africa, 'where I want to be' (91). The portrait will thus serve as a commentary on his displacement and enduring

nostalgia for his lost homeland. Similarly, the patched trousers that he wears in the film are a deliberate aesthetic choice and a sign, not of his poverty, but of his staunch commitment to sewing, a traditionally male skill in West Africa.<sup>58</sup> He also dictates the location of the photo shoot: in the cemetery among his wife and children's graves. Not only will the image function as an ethnographic record of the last known Middle Passage survivor, but it will also point up his ongoing devotion to family and ancestry by alluding to the West African community from which he was torn – as hinted at by the missing ancestral graves – but also his resilience in forging a new life and legacy with his fellow *Clotilda* survivors in Africatown.

In 1932, four years after Kossola's interview and a year after 'Barracoon' was completed, he dictated a poignant letter to Mason, who by this stage had ended her contract with Hurston: 'I wrote you several letters and Has not got any anser it leaves me at lost to know whether you are still alive I Havent Heard from you nor your god Daughter [Hurston] Pleas answer this that I may know whether you are all Right and yet alive'.<sup>59</sup> Kossola's imploring letter speaks to the sad conclusion of Hurston's interview project. 'Barracoon' failed to secure a publisher in the Depression-era US, which led Hurston to focus on other projects and created a permanent rift with her patron. The manuscript was abandoned, although Mason continued to write to Kossola and Hurston mentioned him in *Dust Tracks on the Road* and published her article on the *Clotilda* for the *American Mercury* as late as 1944, 16 years after her last meeting with Kossola and nine years after his death. Yet 'Barracoon' and the film's disappearance into the archives should not lead us to dismiss their significance as records of his experiences. The text and footage both show that Kossola sought to exercise control over his representation and the terms on which he shared his life story and was aided by Hurston's unusually empathetic and deferential interviewing

technique. 'Barracoon' and the footage together function as a unique cinematic and textual record of Atlantic slavery's human legacy. Despite their representational limitations, they are radical interwar confrontations with the traumas of bondage but also the resilience and dignity of a formerly enslaved man.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Zora Neale Hurston, 'Barracoon: The Story of the Last 'Black Cargo'. Typescript (ca.1931), Box 164-186, Folder 2, Alain Locke Papers, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, 2. Subsequent references to 'Barracoon' in this article will appear in parentheses. Kossola was known as Cudjo Lewis in the US and used this name in letters. However, mindful of his 'lov[e] for his native name' and the slave origins of his US name, I refer to him by his birth name throughout this study. Emma V. Berger, 'Cugo Lewis, "Freeborn ex-Slave"', *The Continent*, 26 Jan. 1922, 93.

<sup>2</sup> The only other major African American fieldworkers active during the 1920s were John Mason Brewer, Thomas W. Talley, and Arthur Huff Fauset, the latter of whom collected folklore material from Kossola but did not document his life story.

<sup>3</sup> Although Frederick Webb Hodge recorded a Zuni community in his capacity as assistant director of the Museum of the American Indian as early as 1923, Hurston's filmmaking activities appear otherwise to pre-date recordings by other scientifically trained filmmakers. Sylviane Diouf identifies Hurston's footage as the only film of a Middle Passage survivor. Sylviane Anna Diouf, 'Cudjo Lewis at the UN', *Sylviane Anna Diouf: Historian of the African Diaspora*, 30 March 2009. Available at: <http://www.sylvianediouf.com/blog.htm?post=588810> [accessed 17 Sept. 2016]. African Americans' absence from pre-sound-era cinema was such that actor Harry Gray, who appeared in black-cast Hollywood production *Hallelujah* (1929), is the only other formerly enslaved person of whom I have found a filmic trace.

<sup>4</sup> J. S. Handler identifies 15 Middle Passage survivor autobiographies, not including 'Barracoon', only six of which refer, in varying degrees, to the Middle Passage itself. He notes further that, 'Usually very little is said about the individual's life in Africa prior to being transported to the New World'. J. S. Handler, 'Survivors of the Middle Passage: Life Histories of Enslaved Africans in British America', *Slavery & Abolition* 23.1 (2002): 23, 30, 38. Handler's list is incomplete. For example, it does not include Florence Hall's memoir, which as Randy M. Browne and John Wood Sweet note, 'did not skip over the harrowing transatlantic crossing', or account for the approximately 50 African enslavement narratives that Pier Larson has counted. However, it underscores 'Barracoon's' rarity as a historical account of kidnap and the Middle Passage, particularly given that only a fragment of Hall's narrative survives and many of the African accounts that Larson records are very brief. Randy M. Browne and John Wood Sweet, 'Florence Hall's 'Memoirs': Finding African Women in the Transatlantic Slave Trade', *Slavery & Abolition* 36.4 (2015), 6; Pier Larson, 'Horrid Journeying: Narratives of Enslavement and the Global African Diaspora', *Journal of World History* 19 (2008): 443.

<sup>5</sup> As David W. Blight asserts, 'It is not so much the memory of slavery that matters in the bulk of the postwar genre, but how slavery was overcome by a narrator who competed and won his place in an ever-evolving and more hopeful present'. David W. Blight, *A Slave No More: Two Men Who Escaped to Freedom: Including Their Own Narratives of Emancipation* (2009; Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2007), 13.

<sup>6</sup> Despite the environmental and demographic damage wrought on the town by decades of big business interference, descendants of the *Clotilda's* survivors continue to live and farm in Africatown according to West African practices. Matthew Teague, 'American slaves' origins live on in Alabama's Africatown', *Los Angeles Times*, 6 June 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Genevieve Sexton, 'The Last Witness: Testimony and Desire in Zora Neale Hurston's "Barracoon"', *Discourse* 25.1&2 (Winter & Spring 2003): 189-210.

<sup>8</sup> Carla Kaplan attributes the rupture of Hurston and Hughes's literary partnership not to the play *Mule Bone* as has been traditionally understood, but rather to the former's failure to juggle her commitments to both Hughes and 'Barracoon'. See Carla Kaplan, *Miss Anne in Harlem: The White Women of the Black Renaissance* (New York: HarperCollins, 2013), 240-50, and "'Betwixt and Between": Zora

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Neale Hurston In – and Out – of Harlem’, in *A Companion to the Harlem Renaissance*, ed. Cherene Sherrard-Johnson (Chicester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 242.

<sup>9</sup> See Emma Langdon Roche, *Historic Sketches of the South* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1914), 102. As Sylviane Diouf observes in her chronicle of the *Clotilda* survivors, the *Wanderer*, which reached Georgia in 1858, was still listed as the last US slave ship as recently as 2006. Sylviane A. Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2 and 251 n.2.

<sup>10</sup> Robert E. Hemenway, *Zora Neale Hurston: A Literary Biography* (1977; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), 100-1.

<sup>11</sup> Zora Neale Hurston, ‘Cudjo’s Own Story of the Last African Slaver’, *The Journal of Negro History* 12.4 (Oct. 1927): 648-63.

<sup>12</sup> Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*, 246.

<sup>13</sup> Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*, 246. Diouf’s text is one of two book-length studies of the *Clotilda* survivors, both of which give credence to ‘Barracoon’ as a historical source. See also Natalie S. Robertson, *The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Making of AfricaTown, USA: Spirit of Our Ancestors* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008).

<sup>14</sup> Nearly 500 interviews were collected for this project, but never published, although a summary of some of its finding can be found in John B. Cade, ‘Out of the Mouths of Ex-Slaves’, *The Journal of Negro History* 20.3 (Jun. 1935): 294-337.

<sup>15</sup> Egypt collected 100 interviews. Some of these can be found in Ophelia Settle Egypt and Charles S. Johnson, *Unwritten History of Slavery: Autobiographical Accounts of Negro Ex-Slaves* (Nashville: Fisk University Social Science Institute, 1945).

<sup>16</sup> John W. Blassingame, ‘Using the Testimony of Ex-Slaves: Approaches and Problems’, *Journal of Southern History* 41.4 (Nov. 1975): 481-4. The Federal Writers Project employed Hurston twice, but in a junior role and not on the Slave Narrative Collection, and many of her contributions to the Project were never published.

<sup>17</sup> Notably, African American writer Sterling A. Brown, who served as the Federal Writers Project’s Editor on Negro Affairs, referred interviewees to Hurston’s writings as a guide for recording black Southern dialect, but her representational practices were not meaningfully adopted. See Lori Ann Garner, ‘Representations of Speech in the WPA Slave Narratives of Florida and the Writings of Zora Neale Hurston’, *Western Folklore* 59.3/4 (Summer – Autumn 2000): 215-31.

<sup>18</sup> Contract between Zora Neale Hurston and Charlotte Osgood Mason, 8 Dec. 1927, Box 164-99, Folder 5, Alain Locke Papers.

<sup>19</sup> Dalit Alperovich, ‘African American Culture, Anthropological Practices, and the Jewish Race in Zora Neale Hurston’s Mules and Men’, in *Race, Color, Identity: Rethinking Discourses about ‘Jews’ in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Efraim Sicher (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 116.

<sup>20</sup> Charlotte Osgood Mason, note entitled ‘Alain Leroy Locke’ [dictated], 6 Dec. 1931, Box 164-100, Folder 8, Alain Locke Papers.

<sup>21</sup> Valerie Boyd, *Wrapped in Rainbows: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston* (London: Virago, 2003), 162.

<sup>22</sup> Berger, ‘Cugo Lewis’, 93.

<sup>23</sup> Helen MacQuarrie & Andrew Pearson, ‘Prize Possessions: Transported Material Culture of the Post-Abolition Enslaved – New Evidence from St Helena’, *Slavery & Abolition* 36.4 (2015), 22.

<sup>24</sup> Berger, ‘Cugo Lewis’, 93.

<sup>25</sup> Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, in *Zora Neale Hurston, Folklore, Memoirs, and Other Writings*, ed. Cheryl A. Wall (New York: The Library of America, 1995), 711.

<sup>26</sup> Roche, *Historic Sketches of the South*, 125.

<sup>27</sup> Roche, *Historic Sketches of the South*, 87.

<sup>28</sup> Hurston originally appropriated the statement for her *Journal of Negro History* article on Lewis, which Hemenway estimates to have been 75 percent plagiarised from Roche’s book. That the statement appeared again in Hurston’s 1944 *American Mercury* article suggests that her plagiarism was not the minor discretion of an anthropological novice as Hemenway asserts. Hurston, ‘Cudjo’s Own Story of the Last African Slaver’, 658; Hemenway, *Zora Neale Hurston*, 96-8; and Zora Neale Hurston, ‘The Last Slave Ship’, *The American Mercury* 58 (1944), 357.

<sup>29</sup> Mason instructed Hurston to ‘write Kossula [sic] and his daughter[-in-law] and tell them they must not give their material to anyone who is white’ in response to Jewish anthropologist Paul Radin’s interest in interviewing him. Mason to Hurston, 13 Feb. 1928. Cited in Lynda Marion Hill, *Social Rituals and the Verbal Art of Zora Neale Hurston* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1996). As their correspondence shows, Mason and Locke actively conspired against Radin to prevent him from interviewing Kossola. See their letters between 6 Feb. and 14 March 1928 in Box 164-8 of the Alain Locke Papers.

- <sup>30</sup> Zora Neale Hurston, Letter to Langston Hughes, 10 July 1928, in *Zora Neale Hurston: A Life in Letters*, ed. Carla Kaplan (New York: Anchor Books, 2003), 194.
- <sup>31</sup> Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*, 247.
- <sup>32</sup> Hurston, 'The Last Slave Ship', 352-3.
- <sup>33</sup> Hurston, 'The Last Slave Ship', 353.
- <sup>34</sup> Berger, 'Cugo Lewis', 93.
- <sup>35</sup> Edna G. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics, and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey* (1998; Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 1.
- <sup>36</sup> Ian Armit, *Headhunting and the Body in Iron Age Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 166.
- <sup>37</sup> Ana Lucia Araujo, *Shadows of the Slave Past: Memory, Heritage, and Slavery* (London: Routledge, 2014), 18.
- <sup>38</sup> Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 35.
- <sup>39</sup> Hurston spells the word phonetically as Fish-ee-ton, but Diouf identifies the Yorùbá spelling as Feìchitan. Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*, 137.
- <sup>40</sup> Arthur Huff Fauset, 'Negro Folk Tales from the South', *The Journal of American Folklore* 40.157 (June-Sept. 1927), 214-16; Cugo Lewis, 'Molocoye T'appin (Terrapin)', *La Revue du Monde Noir* 4 (1932), 238-41.
- <sup>41</sup> Arthur Huff Fauset, 'T'appin (Terrapin), Told by Cugo Lewis, Plateau, Alabama. Brought to American from West Coast Africa, 1859', in *The New Negro*, ed. Alain Locke (1925; New York: Touchstone, 1997), 245-7.
- <sup>42</sup> Lee D. Baker, *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 154-5.
- <sup>43</sup> Anne Elizabeth Carroll, *Word, Image, and the New Negro: Representation and Identity in the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 173.
- <sup>44</sup> Zora Neale Hurston Footage (1928), Margaret Mead Collection, Motion Picture and Television Reading Room, Library of Congress.
- <sup>45</sup> Employment contract between Mason and Hurston, 8 Dec. 1927, Box 164-99, Folder 5, Alain Locke Papers.
- <sup>46</sup> In *Mules and Men*, Hurston recalls that potential interviewees at a Florida lumberyard 'set [her] aside as different' because she owned a car until she fabricated an identity as a bootlegger. Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men*, in *Zora Neale Hurston, Folklore, Memoirs, and Other Writings*, ed. Cheryl A. Wall (1935; New York: The Library of America, 1995), 63.
- <sup>47</sup> Brad Evans, *Before Cultures: The Ethnographic Imagination in American Literature, 1865-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 4.
- <sup>48</sup> George Leydon Colledge was a concert manager and the Arthur Judson Company was his employer. Zora Neale Hurston, Letter to Charlotte Osgood Mason, 15 Oct. 1931, in Caplan, ed., *Zora Neale Hurston*, 364.
- <sup>49</sup> Elaine S. Charnov, 'The Performative Visual Anthropology Films of Zora Neale Hurston', *Film Criticism* 23.1 (Fall 1998), 43.
- <sup>50</sup> Jennifer Lynn Peterson, *Education in the School of Dreams: Travelogues and Early Nonfiction Film* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 270.
- <sup>51</sup> Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, 690.
- <sup>52</sup> Thadious M. Davis, 'Black Women's Modernist Literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Modernist Women Writers*, ed. Maren Tova Linett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 103-4.
- <sup>53</sup> Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*, 227.
- <sup>54</sup> Anon, 'Notes on Zora's Films', Box 164-99, Folder 4, Alain Locke Papers.
- <sup>55</sup> Anon, 'Notes on Zora's Films'.
- <sup>56</sup> Berger, 'Cugo Lewis', 93.
- <sup>57</sup> Handwritten note, n.d., Box 164-99, Folder 3, Alain Locke Papers.
- <sup>58</sup> Roche records the pride that Kossola took in his patchwork and Diouf notes the gendered nature of sewing practices in West Africa. Roche, *Historic Sketches of the South*, 124; Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*, 228.
- <sup>59</sup> Cudjo Lewis, Letter to Charlotte Osgood Mason, 12 May 1932, Box 164-99, Folder 15, Alain Locke Papers.