

2-11-2014


Harlemites, Haitians and the Black International: 1915-1934

Felix Jean-Louis III

Florida International University, fjean025@fiu.edu

DOI: 10.25148/etd.FI14040811

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd>

 Part of the [American Material Culture Commons](#), [Cultural History Commons](#), [Diplomatic History Commons](#), [Intellectual History Commons](#), [Other American Studies Commons](#), and the [Social History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Jean-Louis, Felix III, "Harlemites, Haitians and the Black International: 1915-1934" (2014). *FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 1154.

<https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd/1154>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by the University Graduate School at FIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of FIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact dcc@fiu.edu.

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

HARLEMITES, HAITIANS AND THE BLACK INTERNATIONAL, 1920-1934

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

AFRICAN AND AFRICAN DIASPORA STUDIES

by

Felix Jean-Louis

2014

To: Dean Kenneth G. Furton
College of Arts and Sciences

This thesis, written by Felix Jean-Louis, and entitled Harlemites, Haitians and the Black International: 1915-1934, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend it be approved.

April Merleaux

Chantalle F. Verna

Alexandra Cornelius, Major Professor

Date of Defense: February 11, 2014

The thesis of Felix Jean-Louis is approved.

Dean Kenneth G. Furton
College of Arts and Sciences

Dean Lakshmi N. Reddi
University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2014

Dedication

To my mother, Chantal Jean-Louis, who believed in her wayward son when no one else would. To my father, Felix Jean-Louis, who defined manhood, partially, as an intellectual endeavor.... I hope I become a man. Finally, pour Jean-Louis who, by sheer fact of his age is historical; but, who at 94 years of age possesses a young mind that has provided me with hours of historical education, discussion, and debate- none of which I have won.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I must thank the members of my thesis committee: Dr. Alexandra Cornelius, Dr. Chantalle F. Verna, and Dr. April Merleaux. Thanks for your insight, knowledge, your reassuring words, encouragement, faith, and your patience as only historians can give. Without your touch this thesis would be dribble. Especially Dr. Cornelius for her endless revisions, thank you for crafting me as a writer of history. Much thanks to Mamyrah Prosper without whose support, confidence building, and love this thesis would be unfinished. Also, thanks to Lindsey Maxwell for taking time out of her unforgiving graduate schedule to edit this work.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

HARLEMITES, HAITIANS AND THE BLACK INTERNATIONAL: 1920-1934

By

Felix Jean-Louis

Florida International University, 2014

Miami, Florida

Professor Alexandra Cornelius, Major Professor

On July 28, 1915 the United States began a nineteen year military occupation of Haiti. The occupation connected Haiti and the United States and created an avenue of migration in the country. As a consequence of extreme racism in the South and segregation in the Northern states, the majority of the immigrants moved to Harlem. The movement of people reinvigorated the relationship between African Americans and Haitians. The connection constituted an avenue of the interwar Black International. Using newspapers articles, letters, and press releases from the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the Yale Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library I seek to examine the relationship between the two groups. The thesis demonstrates how they compared and contrasted the material conditions of the two cultures in order to promote solidarity. These common bonds, my thesis shows, were the basis for anti-occupation activism in the United States that was anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.	Introduction.....1
	Haiti and the United States 1804-19154
	Caribbean Migration to Harlem in the Interwar Years10
	The Interwar Black International17
	U.S. African Americans and Haitians22
	Overview.....24
II.	Building Reciprocity: Translation and Décolage in Action28
	James Weldon Johnson: Translating the Material Conditions.....32
	Forging and Cementing International Alliances50
	Goodwill and Business Alliances56
	Conclusion65
III.	Anti-Occupation: The Assemblages of Empire and Financial Interests67
	James Weldon Johnson and “The Nation” Articles69
	Johnson, the Haitian Elite and the Union Patriotique80
	The Union Patriotique in Harlem 1923-193193
	Dantès Bellegarde and Walter White 1931-1934104
	Conclusion120
	Bibliography122

I

Introduction

In the beginning of the twentieth century the United States exerted its influence into the Caribbean. It occupied or intervened in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua.¹ U.S. American hegemony expanded into the Caribbean region, as the country emerged as a hemispheric power. In 1915 the United States began a nineteen year occupation of Haiti. The military domination served to weaken the traditional political and economic ties to France and replaced them with connections to the United States. Jim Crow in the South and racial segregation in the Northern states cast Harlem, New York City as the destination for Haitian migrants entering the United States. These migrants reinvigorated the relationship with African Americans that had existed since the independence of Haiti in 1804. The rejuvenated exchanges fomented dialogues among activists and intellectuals in both countries. The conversations constituted an avenue of the interwar Black International. The Black International, in the period between World Wars I and II, were the discussions born out of the reunion of Afro descended people. The moments after the First World War witnessed the largest movement of Afro descended people since the slave trade. Colonial subjects from across the Afro descended world rejoined in the metropolises. Haitians met Senegalese, Jamaicans met African Americans, Trinidadians met Nigerians, and so on. People migrated in search of employment, others were taking advantage of educational opportunities being afforded to colonial subjects, and colonial troops who fought in

¹ Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean: 1898-1934* (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1985).

European campaigns remained on the continent. The reunion of variously dispersed people fostered conversations and elaborations on what Blackness meant born out of the comparisons of the material conditions of people of African descent. My thesis locates the conversations between Haitians and African Americans that created, shaped, and informed discourses of Blackness. It does so by exploring the cultural translations, mutual exchanges and dialogues surrounding the comparison of material conditions and the ‘different sameness’ of the manifestations of the versions the African Diaspora. It presents the building of the ‘different sameness’ as the critical component undergirding the feeling of solidarity within the African American community with the Haitians in order to affect the ending of the United States military presence in Haiti. It also conceptualizes the anti-occupation efforts of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Haitians as anti-imperialist in discourse that emphasized the anti-democratic and repressive nature of the occupation and decried the influence of U.S. financial concerns in influencing the decision to invade and profited from the engagement.

The United States military occupation of Haiti coincided with the social, political, and cultural movement of the Harlem Renaissance. The movement aimed to remake the image of Black people, reorient the understanding of African American culture, and reclaim the African past. In response to the occupation the Haitian writers turned to their own popular culture and their African lineage as legitimate manifestations of ‘Haitian-ness’ in a movement known as Indigenism. Inspired by Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian ethnographer, indigenist writers turned to Haitian folk culture as a reservoir from which literature and Haitian culture should be drawn. The indigenist writers also sought to re-

historicize African culture as the glorious past from which Haitian culture derived.²

Harlem and the Renaissance centered there, as Irma Watkins-Owens and others have demonstrated, was the culmination of the contributions and efforts of African Americans and migrants from across the diasporic world.

During the interwar years of the 20th century, African descended people from all corners of the globe met in the colonial metropolises of Paris, London, and Harlem. These migrants arrived at these hubs in pursuit of education and work, or to escape the increasing violence of imperialism. The connections forged in these meetings provoked discussions, conflict, and fraternity among members of the Diaspora. They engaged in discussions centered on comparing and contrasting of material conditions and variations in the culture of people of African descent. These exchanges evolved into what is known as Black International discourse as defined by Jane Nardal's eponymously titled article (1928). The Black International as Minkah Makalani and others have demonstrated contained a radical element that fought against the assemblages of imperialism, capitalism and racism. Further, as Brent Hayes Edwards has discussed, the international's translation of cultural idiosyncrasies and relating of specific material conditions were conducted through literary channels. The connections of Port-au-Prince to Harlem created an avenue of conversation within the global Black International exchanges. These dialogues were emboldened by Haitian migrants who ingrained themselves into the milieu of Harlem and used the activist climate of the Renaissance to undermine the American presence in Haiti.

² Magdaline W. Shannon introduction to *Ansi Parla l'Oncle*, by Jean Price-Mars (Washington D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1983), ix.

Haiti and the United States 1804-1915

As the first two independent nations in the Western Hemisphere the histories of Haiti and the United States have been linked for over 200 years. Furthermore, since its successful slave rebellion and subsequent independence in 1804, Haiti served as a beacon of hope and inspiration for enslaved people of African descent. The news of the revolt traveled “wide and fast” throughout the colonized world.³ The 1812 Aponte rebellion where the conspirators used images of the Haitian revolutionaries and the name of Jean Francois, in drawing sympathizers in Cuba demonstrates the way that the revolutionaries and the ideals became part of the imagination of enslaved African people. The advent of the rebellion created fear in the hearts and minds of slave holding societies, including that of the United States.

Haiti and the United States were seemingly natural allies. As colonies they both struck powerfully at the bell of liberty during the ‘age of revolution’. The former exploded in its unequivocal demand of emancipation from the horrors of bondage and chattel slavery; the latter dissolved political bonds in pursuit of the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The United States had the distinction of being the first independent republic in the Western Hemisphere; Haiti being the first independent Black republic in the world. Their respective independence was separated by only twenty years. As the American colonists fought for their independence soldiers from Saint Domingue, Haiti’s colonial name, were present to assist. On the outskirts of Savannah, Georgia Henri Christophe, general in the Haitian army during the revolution

³Matt D. Childs, "A Black French General Arrived to Conquer the Island': Images of the Haitian Revolution in Cuba's 1812 Aponte Rebellion," in *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, ed. David Patrick Geggus. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 140.

and the future King of northern Haiti, Andre Rigaud and a racially mixed contingent of French colonial soldiers from Saint Domingue were not allowed to participate for fear that the sight of blacks engaging in the struggle would incite enslaved African Americans to rebel.⁴ It is precisely the issue of slavery, equality, and race relations that divided the two young nations.

The colonial slave order continued through independence and emerged as the corner stone of the economy of the United States. While the Northern states were not dependent on slave holding, the Southern states were slave holding societies. The aftershocks of the Haitian revolution spoke directly to the fears held by U.S. Southern slave holders. Their trepidations coupled with general racist sentiments caused the U.S. government to deny recognition of Haitian independence until after the United States' Civil War had ended slavery. The southern planters had reason to be worried; Denmark Vesey, and David Walker referenced the Haitian success in their respective attempts at liberation.⁵ For African Americans, Haiti was the materialization of their hopes of freedom, dignity, and equality.

Early into Haiti's independence the leaders sought to cast themselves as a beacon of liberty for enslaved people of African descent. Haitian president Alexandre Pétion assisted a defeated and depleted Simón Bolivar with refuge and weapons on the condition that he free the South American enslaved people as he fought for independence.⁶ Henri

⁴ George P. Clark, "[The](#) Role of the Haitian Volunteers at Savannah in 1779: An Attempt at an Objective View," *Phylon* (1960-) 41(1980):359.

⁵ Léon D. Pamphile, *Haitians and African Americans: A Heritage of Tragedy and Hope*. (Gainesville: University of Florida, 2001), 37.

⁶ Laurent Dubois, *Haiti: The After Shocks of History*. (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2012), 60.

Christophe and Jean-Pierre Boyer offered land to free U.S. African Americans in order to augment an agricultural class decimated in the war for independence. The grandfather of W.E.B. Du Bois was one of the U.S. African Americans who went to Haiti for his freedom and land.⁷ Haiti figured into the myriad of repatriation schemes as Anglo-Americans endeavored to figure out what to do with the recently emancipated African Americans.⁸ Frederick Douglass, one of the leading African American figures of his time, was appointed minister and consulate to Haiti in 1889.⁹ Douglass viewed Haiti, and its revolutionary heroes, as evidence contradicting the prevailing racist discourses of the period.¹⁰ In his position as minister Douglass worked to promote U.S. American interests in Haiti, while attempting to foster equanimity between the two nations in their negotiations.¹¹

Haitians and African Americans have had a long history of “transnational engagements.”¹² When the American occupation began in 1915 African American political leaders were keenly interested. Haiti represented a paradox for African Americans. On one hand, it was a source of pride for the African Americans; on the other, its political instability served as point of shame for a people that looked to Haiti as

⁷ Pamphile, *Haitians and African Americans*, 104.

⁸ Willis D Boyd, “James Redpath and American Negro Colonization in Haiti 1860-1862,” *The Americas* 12 (1955): 169.

⁹ Robert S. Levine. “Frederick Douglass, War, Haiti,” *PMLA* 124 (2009): 4.

¹⁰ Millery Polyné, *From Douglass to Duvalier: U.S. African Americans, Haiti, and Pan Africanism, 1870-1964* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010), 48.

¹¹ Polyné, *From Douglass to Duvalier*, 54.

¹² Polyné, *From Douglass to Duvalier*, 11.

an example of Black self-determination.¹³ After the overthrow of President Boyer in 1843, the history of the executive branch of the Haitian government unfolded as a succession of leaders overthrown by their successor. As the twentieth century began the Haitian political landscape was at its most volatile. By the time of the invasion in 1915 there had been nine presidents in the century. Brenda Plummer wrote that an already “unstable” political situation was “degenerating quickly between 1910 and 1915 [with] crisis follow[ing] one another in rapid succession.”¹⁴ Those that had not been overthrown had been assassinated. For example, General Antoine Sam used a coup against Alexis Nord, himself in power as a result of a coup d’état, to gain power and was overthrown by Cincinnatus Leconte who was blown up in the Presidential Palace; all occurring between 1908 and 1912.¹⁵ The pinnacle of the turnover and brutality would come between February 1914 and July 1915 when, in an eighteen month period there were three presidents.

Orest Zamor ascended to the presidency of Haiti by coup d’état in February of 1914. By November of that same year he would be unseated by Joseph Davilmar Theodore. Theodore would then be unseated by Jean Valbrun Guillome Sam by February of 1915. By June of 1915 Sam was facing a challenge to his power by Rosalvo Bobo. Bobo’s forces descended onto the capital causing Sam to flee the national palace. In

¹³ Brenda Gayle Plummer, “The Afro American Response to the Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934,” *Phylon* (1960-) 2 (1982): 127.

¹⁴ Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Haiti and the Great Powers, 1902-1915* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1988), 220.

¹⁵ Emily Green Balch, *Occupied Haiti; being the Report of a Committee of Six Disinterested Americans Representing Organizations Exclusively American, Who, having Personally Studied Conditions in Haiti in 1926, Favor the Restoration of the Independence of the Negro Republic* (New York: Negro University Press 1969), 173.

response, Sam called for the execution of some 160 political prisoners. The local population, outraged by the act, returned the violence onto Sam chopping his body to pieces and parading through the streets with the parts. The chaotic violence of Sam's deposing would be the catalyst needed by the U.S military to invade.

On June 28, 1915, the United States Marines entered Haitian territory beginning its nineteen year occupation which ended in August of 1934. While the political turmoil and violence served as the pretext for the invasion, other geopolitical and economic currents influenced the American decisions to invade. First, there had been an increasingly influential German presence in the country. They had become major political players exercising their capital and clout to finance revolutions with the ultimate end of securing concessions from the victorious party.¹⁶ On the eve of WWI the Americans feared Germany's designs on Saint Mole as a refueling station for its navy.¹⁷ Secondly, by this period, National City Bank had gained control of the Banque National d'Haiti and the government's debts. The bank president Roger L. Farnham, according James Weldon Johnson, who investigated the occupation for the NAACP, "was the most important figure who influence[ed] policy making towards Haiti in the American State department".¹⁸ The bank wanted to control the customs houses in securing repayment of the 'Haitian obligations'.

¹⁶ David Nicholls, *Haiti in the Caribbean Context: Ethnicity, Economy and Revolt* (Oxford: Macmillan in association with St. Anthony's College, 1985), 109.

¹⁷ Walter H. Posner, "American Marines in Haiti, 1915-192," *The Americas* 20 (1964): 239.

¹⁸ Léon Pamphile, "The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti," *Phylon* (1960-) 47 (1986): 93.

During the nineteen year occupation, the U.S. military exercised its powers in subduing the people. The occupation leaders imposed martial law on the population, imposed curfews as well as maintaining tight censorship over the press and confronted other forms of political resistance. Those who refused to comply were arrested. The military violently put down rebellions in 1919, of the Cacos, politically influential, armed rural Haitians; and again in 1929, consisting of students, stevedores, and peasants in Port-au-Prince and Cayes. Throughout, a group of Haitians totaling approximately 500 migrated to New York fleeing the traumas and oppressions of the occupation.¹⁹

These immigrants were part of the larger movement of people in the ‘age of migration’. In this period large numbers of people migrated into the United States and from within to meet demands for labor. People of African descent also factored in this movement of people. Jim Crow in the South and segregation in the North afforded the migrants few places in which to settle. One of the major destinations for these migrants was Harlem, New York City. Harlem, by the early 1920’s was described as the “Negro metropolis.”²⁰ Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian ethnologist, famously called Harlem “the greatest Black city in the world.”²¹ Harlem of the 1920s and 1930s drew people of African descent from across the globe. They came from the southern United States, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. These migrants contributed to creating the

¹⁹ Michel Laguerre, *American Odyssey: Haitians in New York City* (London: Cornell University Press 1984), 167.

²⁰ Claude McKay, *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), 1968.

²¹ Martin Monroe, *Different Drummers: Rhythm and Race in the Americas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 72.

Harlem that was one of the cultural, political, and intellectual capitals of diasporic Blackness in the West.

Caribbean Migration to Harlem in the Interwar Years

The largest group of non-U.S. American African descended migrants arrived from the Caribbean region. The term Caribbean here is inclusive of the Anglophone, Francophone, Dutch and Spanish speaking nations situated in the Caribbean Sea, who share interrelated economic, social, cultural and political histories. Sociologists, anthropologists, and historians have all contributed to the literature on these migrants. One can discern several themes found in much of the literature on Harlem in this period. They discuss factors influencing movement to the United States and immigration patterns. They raise the issues of conflict and cooperation among African Americans and Afro-Caribbean people and the ways the migrants met and dealt with American racism. Transnational connections is another theme as the writers maintain immigrants stay connected to their homeland through various channels such as migrant networks and associations. The final theme of migrant involvement in the politics of the United States, and their contributions, to the political discourses of the Harlem Renaissance is used to demonstrate their entrance into the fabric of United States culture.

There are very few works dedicated to the experience of Afro-descended migrants into the United States during this period. Indeed, much of the scholarship discussing these migrants are works focused on Harlem, the Renaissance, or African Americans with the Afro-Caribbean peoples included. For much of the twentieth century there have not been many treatments dedicated solely to the Black migrant. Ira Reid's seminal 1929

work, *The Negro Immigrant*, was, for decades, the lone monograph dedicated to Black migrants; largely, but not entirely, centered on Harlem. The earliest work on the Afro Caribbean migrants was written in 1925, after the immigration reform bill of 1924 and has been a subject of scholarly interest ever since. Throughout the historiography there is a conversation across time, discipline, and prerogatives that has, increasingly, created a nuanced understanding of the Caribbean migrant's experience and place in the Harlem of the Renaissance. There has been and increased focus on the experience of the Caribbean migrant in the past quarter century. As Irma Watkins-Owens has suggested, it is the drive to preserve the Harlem Renaissance as the apogee of African American culture that has rendered the contributions of migrants invisible²². Important works on the period and movement have largely ignored or slighted the contributions and place of the migrants in shaping Harlem. Further, many works addressing the immigrants often describes an undifferentiated mass, largely gendered male. More recent scholarship has focused on the assemblages of race, ethnicity, gender, and class in unearthing the immigrants' experiences.

"The Gift of The Tropics" (1925) by W.A. Domingo and Reid's work (1929) represent the earliest publications written during the migrant's arrival and adjustment. Claude McKay's *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* (1940) is his memoir of Harlem of the era. Domingo and McKay, Harlemites of Caribbean origin, present first hand reflections of the migrant's life in Harlem. Domingo, writing in Alain Lomax's *New Negro*, presents an educated and hardworking immigrant group. McKay locates the immigrant group in all facets of Harlem life from politics to the illegal numbers game popular at the time. Reid's

²² Irma Watkins Owens, *Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants and the Harlem Community, 1900-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 4.

sociological work is the most scholarly exploration offering both quantitative and qualitative insights. Reid delineates between the various nationalities of the immigrants and explains cultural tendencies that shape the migrants experience it in the U.S.

These works serve as the foundation for all subsequent literature, establishing several themes. The authors introduced the migrant's arrival into the United States and rejection of its particular brand of racism. The writers note that the migrants left a, more or less, racially homogenous nation in which race did not play as salient a role as in the United States. Upon confronting their racially defined second class status, the migrants were unwilling to accept United States racial norms and became radical in their social outlook. The authors demonstrate the ways that both natives and immigrant's rejection of bigotry and Jim Crow racism forged pan-ethnic solidarity. Another major trope established by these early writers is the politicization of the migrant either in the informal political realm as street corner "agitators" or as active members of the city political establishment. The racism that united the groups also divided them as native and migrant alike competed for finite political and economic resources. These writers asserted that the migrants arrived in Harlem, generally, with better education and professional work experience than the African Americans.

Roi Ottley's work, *New World A-Coming (1943)* is a socio-historical analysis of Harlem. The work investigates the centrality of race in the African American experience. Ottley, like Reid, highlights the plurality of cultures and nationalities of the migrant group. Highlighting the impact of segregation on residence, Ottley discusses the role of phenotype in determining the residences of the migrants noting that those that could 'pass' for white lived outside of Harlem. Ottley introduces transnational elements into

the literature. His work demonstrates how the migrants stayed connected to the current events of their homeland and their concern of the migrants with United States foreign policy of the region.

Gilbert Oslofsky's *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto* (1966) is a historical examination from the end the 19th through the early 20th century. Oslofsky uses the teleology of decadence in explaining the processes by which Harlem becomes a "slum". Within this conceptualization, Oslofsky characterizes the Caribbean immigrant as the 'model black'. In a discourse that foreshadowed Thomas Sowell's assertion that U.S. African American 'culture' is responsible for the degradation in the community, Oslofsky employed the trope of the 'upstanding' Afro descended immigrant in an indictment of African Americans.²³ He characterized the West-Indian migrants as hard working, thrift, and educated against the native African American population who he cast as lazy, uneducated, and irresponsible. He portrayed the antagonism between native and migrants result of nativism in the African American community.

The 1970's marked the beginning a focusing on the place of Caribbean immigrants' contributions to shaping Harlem of the 1920's and 1930's. Dennis Forsythe's chapter in *Ethnicity in America*, "West Indian Radicalism in America: An Assessment of Ideologies" (1976) and Keith Henry's article "The Black Political Tradition in New York: A Conjecture of Political Cultures" (1977) place the Caribbean immigrant at the vanguard of Harlem's political activism. They expand on the earlier works assertion that the immigrant experience with American racism heightened their radicalism. Forsythe places the migrant's activity in labor unions and in radical

²³ Winston James, "Explaining Afro-Caribbean Social Mobility in the United States: Beyond the Sowell Thesis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44 (2002) 218-262.

newspapers. Henry's work focuses on the impact of the street corner, or soap box, politics practiced by migrants and its effect on the political culture of Harlem.

Philip Kasinitz's *Caribbean New York* (1992) focuses on the intersection of race and ethnicity in the Jamaican migrant experience. Kasinitz echoes the earlier works in noting the migrant's move from spaces that were homogenous racially and culturally to a place where they become a racially oppressed minority and a cultural outsider. Furthering previous author's contributions, Kasinitz privileges education as the determinant of the immigrant's adaptation. He forwards the understanding that return migration was either a response to the racial conditions or lack of economic opportunity. Kasinitz concludes that the Jamaicans migrants who stayed were of a professional class with higher levels of education while those who returned were unskilled workers who migrated for temporary or seasonal labor.

Irma Watkins-Owens' *Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants and the Harlem Community 1900-1930* (1996) is a seminal work in the historiography endeavoring to undo the marginalization of the immigrant in the constitution of Harlem and to the Renaissance. Watkins-Owens places the immigrant squarely in the shaping of Harlem in this period. Whereas Oslofsky emphasized the contentious relationship between the two groups, Watkins-Owens illuminates the many points of cooperation and coexistence without neglecting the conflict. Further, similar to Kasinitz, she notes the centrality of class and ethnicity in the lives of the immigrant. In another composition, "Early-Twentieth-Century Caribbean Women: Migration and Social Networks in New York City", Watkins-Owens explores the female migrant experience. She undermines the androcentric discourse of the existing literature demonstrating how men and women

experienced migration differently. The migrants are characterized as transnational in consciousness intimately related to their country of origin. The connection to their homeland is economic, with migrants sending home remittances. Further, the migrant women maintain familial obligations often having left children and spouses behind.

Heather Hathaway and John Lowney use the works of Caribbean writers of the Renaissance to nuance our understanding of the migrant experience. Hathaway, in *Caribbean Waves: Relocating Claude McKay and Paule Marshall (1999)*, explores the assemblages of identity and race consciousness. In her investigation she concludes that the immigrants adopt a hybrid consciousness infusing the understandings they arrive with and African American conceptualizations. She uses this position to challenge ideas of racial homogeneity in Harlem. Similarly, Lowney's article "Haiti and Black Transnationalism: Remapping the Migrant Geography of Home to Harlem" (2000) focuses on the plurality of cultures in Harlem and the fractious relationship between native and migrant groups. In echoing the works of previous authors, Lowney demonstrates how cultural differences and competition for a finite set of resources informed the quarrels between the groups.

The next collection of writing asserts the role of Caribbean migrant, namely those from the British West Indies, in the literary production of the Harlem Renaissance. In Francoise Charras' chapter in *Temples for Tomorrow: Looking Back at the Harlem Renaissance* entitled "The West Indian Presence in Locke's New Negro (1925)", the West Indian writer is centered at the heart of the Harlem Renaissance. She charges that the nationalities of the Caribbean writers, such as McKay and Domingo, have been obscured to promote the movement as the apogee of African American production. These

figures, she notes, have been included in the pantheon of Renaissance figures. Louis J. Parascandola's anthology, *"Look for Me All Around You" Anglophone Caribbean Immigrants in the Harlem Renaissance*, is a collection of literary works by migrants from the English speaking Caribbean. He uses these works to demonstrate their centrality in the movement. Robert Phillipson's article "The Harlem Renaissance as Post-Colonial Phenomenon" discusses the extent to which the Harlem Renaissance was shaped by the Caribbean immigrant's anti-colonial views. Phillipson focuses on transnational themes, especially found in McKay's *Home to Harlem (1928)*, to demonstrate the migrants' influence on African American discourses. The migrants, as colonial subjects, infused radical political discourses of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism into the consciousness of the Renaissance.

The Interwar Black International

The movement of these people to Harlem created a space where people who had previously been separated by nation, culture, and language met and exchanged. Harlem, New York was transformed by these migrants into a hub of the Black International. The Black International, whose name is derived from Jane Nardal's eponymously titled essay, is the meetings and discussions of Afro-descended people in the colonial metropolises of London, Paris, and the emergent Harlem, New York City during the beginning of the twentieth century. Unlike Paris and London, New York did not have the colonial heritage that connected it to colonies, although by the turn of the century it had established itself in Cuba and Puerto Rico. In counter distinction to these colonial centers Harlem was a meeting point for members of the Anglophone, Francophone, and

Hispanophone worlds, allowing for a larger spectrum of experiences within the discussions. Further, the English and French colonial subjects in Harlem, then, linked it to London and Paris. The Black International has been the subject of a surge in intellectual interests over the last ten years. These interventions have focused on three major themes. It has been studied from the perspective of the intellectual and literary output that served as a cultural exchange and to voice the prerogatives of the Diaspora. It has also been explored as a radical Marxist movement that voiced an understanding of the racialized classist oppression of people of color and its inherent ties to capitalism. And a focus has also been placed on the contacts between various people of African descent in these metropolitans and the fertile atmosphere of discussion, debate, and action engendered through racial solidarity.

Brent Hayes Edwards' *The Practice of Diaspora* (2003), describes the Black International as a literary movement aimed at uniting the African Diaspora. The aim, Edwards puts forth as being "a constructed Blackness."²⁴ The construction focused on translating the differences that overcomes linguistic, experiences and cultural differences in hopes of fostering 'reciprocity' among the Diaspora allowing its members to find "traces of the other in the self."²⁵ Similarly, in *Literary and Sociopolitical Writings of the Black Diaspora in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (2010) Kersuze Simeon-Jones views the literature of the period as creating a connection throughout the Diaspora by touching on similar histories and futures. Wendy Walters in "Writing the Diaspora in

²⁴ Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation and the Rise of the Black International* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 2003), 5.

²⁵ Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, 110.

Black International Literature” (2008) characterizes the literary movement as aiming to create a “sense of homeness in the diaspora” that has been denied full citizenship in their home countries as well as the places they have migrated.²⁶ In counter distinction to these attempts at Diasporic unity Michelle Stephens in *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914-1962* (2005) argues that Caribbean writers articulated a ‘worldly’ vision of Blackness, one inherently tied to “empire and colonization”.²⁷ She finds writers of the International engaging in questions about the structures affecting the Diaspora, rejecting Edward’s claim that they were seeking to only foster linkages throughout.

The current of the international that attacked the structural elements affecting the material conditions of Afro descended people is termed “Radical Black Internationalism”. Radical Black internationalism is used to describe those of the Diaspora who sought a political construction of Black identity, through a Marxist lens, as racially oppressed members of the proletariat. Here Michelle Stephens, in her article, “Black Transnationalism and the Politics of National Identity: West Indian Intellectuals in Harlem in the Age of War and Revolution,” notes how Black Marxists combined “preexisting ideal of racial sovereignty with a revolutionary vision of a communist society.”²⁸ In *The End Of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line* (2009) Roderick Bush explores the ways radical Black

²⁶ Wendy Walters, “Writing the Diaspora in Black International Literature “With Wider Hope in Some More Benign Fluid...” Diaspora Consciousness and Literary Expression,” in *Diasporic Africa: A Reader* ed. Michael Gomez. (New York: New York University Press 2008), 281.

²⁷Michelle Anne Stephens, *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in The United States, 1914-1962* (Durham: Duke University Press 2005), 6.

²⁸ Michele Anne Stephens, “Black Transnationalism and the Politics of National Identity: West Indian Intellectuals in Harlem in the Age of War and Revolution,” *American Quarterly* 50 (Sep. 1998): 599.

Internationalists fought to centralize the role of race in the debates of Communist International. Hakim Adi's "The Negro Question: The Communist International and Black Liberation in the Interwar Years" highlights the ways Black Internationalists established links between imperialism, capitalism and racism. Further, he demonstrated how the Black International served to unite radicals in Africa, Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean. Minkah Makalani's: *Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939* (2011) presents the various currents influencing the radicalizing of the Diasporic population and the ways in which the communist party united Black workers. His most insightful contribution is his elaboration of the ways in which the international Communist movement provided inspiration and structure to various transnational liberation struggles.

The third current in the Black International literature is the presentation of the metropolitan centers as central to fostering the Black International debates and movements. Edward's *The Practice of Diaspora* places Paris and Harlem as key influences on the writers of the discourses. Makalani's *In the Cause of Freedom* demonstrates the roles and connections between Harlem, the British West Indian colonies, and London in nurturing and influencing the radical Black Internationalist positions. Michel Fabre's *From Harlem to Paris* enumerates the various Harlem Renaissance luminaries who spent time in Paris of the 1920s and 1930s. His work investigate the moment of contact between the American writers and the Black French colonial writers that Edwards writes about in his work. Building on the work of Fabre, Tyler Stovall's *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Lights* (1996) and Jennifer Anne Boittin's *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and*

Feminism in Interwar Paris (2010) examine the activities Africans, Afro Caribbean migrants, and African Americans in Paris their interactions and the cross fertilization of ideas that emerged from the discussions. Jonathan Derrick's *Africa's 'Agitators' Militant Anti-Colonialism in Africa and the West, 1918-1939* (2008) centers on the voices of Africans from the French colonies in Paris informing the anti-imperial currents of the Black International discourses through the articulation of their particular experiences.

Throughout, magazines, newspapers, and literary journals emerge as critical components of the International in the cultural exchange and in disseminating thoughts and calls for action. Nardal, a Black intellectual from Martinique studying in France published her aforementioned essay titled "Black International" in the journal *La Dèpeche Africaine*. In the chapter titled "In Black & White: Women, *La Dèpeche Africaine*, and the Print Culture of the Diaspora" Derrick elaborates on the centrality of print media in voicing the prerogatives and objectives of colonial citizens in describing themselves and their desires. Similarly both Edwards and Makalani describe the role of journals, newspapers, and reviews in the articulation of Black International disquisitions.

My work seeks to place the relationship of African Americans and Haitians as one of the avenues of dialogue of the Black International. The metropole involved here is Harlem, New York City. It will examine the writings and conversations of elite Haitians and Harlemites as an attempt to unite African Americans and Haitians despite their differences. Secondly, it examines their collaborative effort to attenuate the military occupation by emphasizing the role of capitalist interests involved in promoting the need for the intervention and their subsequent profiteering. In doing so they highlight the inherent ties of empire building to capitalist desires.

The political activism of the Black International aimed at ending imperial reaches throughout the African descended world. This central feature of the movement was present in Harlem. As the United States began to expand its influence, African Americans spoke out against the imperialist and racist tendencies of the government. In the first quarter of the century the U.S. military had exerted its power into the Caribbean Sea. The occupation of Haiti captured the interests of African American leaders. The NAACP and Haitians engaged in a joint effort to undermine the American presence in the country.

African Americans and Haitians

African Americans and Haitians have been connected since the 19th century. The authors who examine the link between the two people discuss the image of Haiti in the minds of enslaved African Americans in the antebellum South and they discuss the mutuality of cause that solidified this transnational bond. As Leon Pamphile forwards, Haiti was a beacon of “hope” for the African Americans who themselves were still enslaved in a country that, much like Haiti, had shaken off their colonial ties.²⁹ He presents 19th century Haiti as a source of pride for a “rising” African American community.³⁰ More than just inspiration the African Americans and Haitians have shared in a history of collaboration, cooperation, and discussion. The relationship has further been examined by Millery Polyné in his work *from Douglass to Duvalier: U. S. African Americans, Haiti and Pan Americanism 1870-1964 (2010)*. In his work he characterizes

²⁹ Pamphile, *Haitians and African Americans*, 9.

³⁰ Pamphile, *Haitians and African Americans*, 16.

the relationship as being part of the larger hemispheric connectivity of Pan Americanism. However, within that framework he describes the particular relationship between Haitians and African Americans to be part of what he terms ‘black Pan Americanism’. For Polyné black Pan Americanism was engaged in by these two groups as an attempt to “create new possibilities for political, cultural and economic development.”³¹ Polyné demonstrates how the relationship became problematic at times as each group balanced nationalism with intra-racial concerns. Both Pamphile and Polyné explain how in the latter part of the 19th century African Americans and Haitian engaged in, a sometimes coordinated, effort to rehabilitate the image of the black race. However, as written about by Brenda Gale Plummer, the political instability of Haiti caused much consternation within the African American community souring the image of Haiti their minds.

The NAACP’s campaign against the United States’ occupation of Haiti has been investigated by historians Rayford Logan, Pamphile, Mary Renda, and most recently Mark R. Schneider. Logan’s article “James Weldon Johnson and Haiti” (1971) examines the efforts of Johnson and the NAACP to politicize the occupation between the years of 1919 and 1922 beginning with the former’s fact finding trip to Haiti. Johnson is presented as having influenced George Sylvain into reviving of the nationalist group the Union Patriotique. The results of Johnson’s trip is said to have culminated in a series of articles entitled “Self-Determining Haiti”. Logan uses these articles to show how the NAACP’s publicity led to a Senate commission sent to Haiti to investigate the conditions of the country under the military occupation. Pamphile’s 1985 article “The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti” survey’s Johnson and the Association’s efforts

³¹ Polyné, *Douglass to Duvalier*, 9.

between 1920 and 1922. Pamphile highlights Johnson's correlation of American business interests and the occupation. Pamphile also describes Johnson's role in exposing the excessive use of American force in putting down the Caco insurgency. Pamphile elaborated on Johnson's influence on the Union Patriotique. Pamphile's work *Haitians and African Americans: A Heritage of Tragedy and Hope* (2001) emphasizes the response of the NAACP was one borne out of racialized understanding of the occupation. He adds here that African Americans saw the occupation as an assault on the hopes and aspirations of Black people everywhere. He examines the collaborative efforts of the NAACP and the Union Patriotique in assailing the military presence in the country. Schneider's investigation is a chapter of his book *"We Return Fighting": The Civil Rights Movement in the Jazz Age* (2010) in which he characterizes the NAACP as using the struggle for Haitian sovereignty to raise its profile. He elaborates on how the discussions regarding Haiti were informed by conversations the NAACP was engaged in with "a broader group of anti-imperialist reformers."³² Similarly Renda's work *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* engages the efforts of the NAACP to attenuate the occupation, as well as the efforts of other anti-imperial groups. In her work she discusses the ways Johnson worked at undermining the representations of Haiti as the "exotic" other that reinforced its need for paternalistic tutelage towards civilization.³³

³² Mark Robert Schneider, *"We Return Fighting" The Civil Rights Movement in the Jazz Age* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 87.

³³ Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 194.

Overview

The occupation, as it has been discussed, connected Haitians and Harlemites in political action. They worked together to fight against the presence of the U.S. military in Haiti and exposed the injustices of the occupying force. While Harlem has been written about as a critical meeting point for the African Diaspora in the Black International discussions, the place of Haitians in this discourse has been understudied. While the connections between Haiti and African Americans have been investigated, the idea of mutual exchange and reciprocity in the dialogue has not. These discourses among intellectuals fueled and united Haitian and African American activism against the occupation and facilitated comparisons of the material conditions of the distant Black cultures.

Chapter two discusses the intellectual connections, collaborations and the debates within the framework of the Black International. These discourses between Haitian and Harlem elites run parallel and are basis for African American solidarity towards the Haitian plight. Drawing largely on Edwards' *The Practice of Diaspora* I argue that Harlemites such as Johnson, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Jessie Fauset, and Haitian Dantès Bellegarde engaged in the act of translating Haitian culture, history, material conditions, and experience under U.S. American rule to create solidarity on the basis of similar, yet different, cultures and experiences. Using Edward's concept of travel as an important component of translation, I use Johnson's notes from his time in Haiti in demonstrating what I term 'translation in action'. I use translation in action to mean the process by which the traveler sees the parallels and similarities while in a foreign environ. By using his notes we become privy to Johnson drawing connections and distinctions between the

material conditions of African Americans and Haitians as he witnessed them in Haiti. The chapter also examines Johnson and Jessie Fauset's articles in the September 1919 edition of *The Crisis* which aimed at translating the 'mysterious' Haitian culture something more familiar. Further, it highlights the role of Haitians, namely Dantès Bellegarde, as part of a larger Pan Diasporic movement at the Pan African conferences of 1919 the 1920's. Bellegard's speeches at the Pan Africans conferences and those given in front of African American audiences, and carried in the Black press, reveal, in efforts to unite people across cultural separation, consciousness of the shared subjugation of Black people globally. The spirit of exchange and translation led to a call for economic ties culminating in the publication of the journal *Goodwill* in 1934 as the occupation drew to a close. *Goodwill* was established as a bilingual, English and French, monthly periodical that contained articles about both African American and Haitian culture and history, side by side. Along with these cultural exposés were articles that promoted Haiti as a country open for business and in need of investment. The occupation connected intellectuals in dialogues and debates which introduced, explained, compared, contrasted, and painted the idiosyncrasies of each respective version of Blackness.

The third chapter focuses on the activist, radical discourses of the interwar Black International. The central theme of the chapter is the collaborative efforts of Haitian and Harlemites, namely the NAACP, to end the American occupation. The joint effort was born out of a diasporic understanding of parallel histories of racially based subjugation. Further, this sense of unity it intensified as it is the same U.S. system of racism that was currently affecting both African Americans and Haitians, Moreover, the pan-diasporic community in Harlem responded to the American actions as part of a larger assault on

Black people worldwide. The fifteen year effort, beginning with James Weldon Johnson's fact finding mission to Haiti in 1919 and ending with the conclusion of the occupation, is conceived here in three phases: the first period from 1919-1923 is the beginning of the alliance: the second phase, from 1923-1930, is marked by Union Patriotique activities in Harlem; The third period mark the final years of the occupation, from 1930-1934 is characterized by the efforts of Dantès Bellegarde in Washington.

In these three periods two central themes of the international emerge. First, print media was the central used by the activists to raise awareness of the events in Haiti. The NAACP and the Haitians used the national network of African American newspapers to disseminate the material conditions of the occupation. The articles compare and parallel the manifestations of racism in the United States to the acts of the military against the Haitians. Second, the radical activist anti-imperial, anti-colonial currents of the Black International situated occupied Haiti within the larger push for universal Black emancipation. The killings, martial law, incarcerations of nationalists and outspoken journalist, the censorship and general repression of Haitian criticism of foreign rule were used to counter the government's claim that the military's presence was to bring stability and democracy to the beleaguered nation. This union of Haitians and African Americans would birth friendships and spark discussions amongst these intellectuals.

In August of 1934 the U.S. American military occupation of Haiti ended. In the nineteen year course of the occupation many Haitian's lost their lives, and others were incarcerated. The echoes of the occupation still reverberate in the politics of Haiti today. The United States influence in Haiti is wide spread and can be found in the political arena, economic sphere, society, and cultural characteristics. The occupation served to

(re)unite the people of the first independent Black republic with African Americans at the moment that latter was emerging as a powerfully vocal group within the United States. The expanding influence of the United States military transformed the NAACP's fight equality at home into an international struggle for racial equality. This connection fostered a robust defense, discussion, and dissection of Blackness. This was just one conversation in the multitude of conversations developing in the moment between artists and thinkers throughout the Black world.

II

Building Reciprocity: Translations and Décollage in Action.

In March of 1920 Johnson set sail for Haiti to investigate the administering of the U.S. military occupation of Haiti. He was charged with validating or discrediting the stories of the military's use of excessive violence, and to determine the efficacy and impact of the occupation on Haiti. While in Haiti Johnson visited the elite and popular classes as he traveled throughout the country. His travels took him to the cities of Port-Au-Prince, the capital, its suburb Pétionville, Cap Haitien, a major city in the north of Haiti and through rural communities in the countryside. He visited peasant Haitian women selling their goods in the market and was invited to the homes and social clubs of the most prestigious members of Haitian society. His experience in Haiti allowed him to capture not only the effects of the U.S. military presence but also the material conditions of Haitian culture. His notes reveal U.S. American gaze in assessing the Haitian paradigm. In his personal notes we witness how he compared and contrasted Haitian and American realities as he assesses elements of the Haitian culture. As Johnson witnesses more of the material conditions of Haitians, of all segments of society, he begins to see their reciprocal presence in the African American setting. This is the nascent moment in the process by which he reinterpreted the Haitian experience into terms recognizable to African Americans in order to generate solidarity with the Haitians in the African American community. The process that began with Johnson's voyage was continued in *The Crisis* through articles by Johnson, Jessie Fauset, and W.E.B. Du Bois. The process of decoding was furthered by Dantès Bellegarde who, through speeches, paralleled and connected the two communities. The act of translation is a critical component of the

Black International as it facilitates the act of *décollage*, overcoming of differences, in order to promote sameness despite the difference. The translation of Haitian culture was critical in building the necessary reciprocity in the African American community that undergirded the anti-occupation movement.

The Black International is the collaborations, discussions, relationships, and ideas born out of the reuniting of Afro-descended people in colonial metropolises. Writers and activists promulgated these narratives across national and linguistic boundaries; across oceans, seas, and time. Tiffany Patterson and Robin Kelley trace the origins of this transnational pan-Diasporic discourse to the sixteenth century and the writing of Juan Latino. Further, they characterize these discourses as being comprised of “writers and activists [who] defined themselves as part of an international Black community.”³⁴ Roderick D. Bush construes the international as “both a process and a condition that is constantly being remade through movement, migration, and travel.”³⁵ In the United States Afro descended immigrants from the Caribbean, Africa, and Southern states converged in Harlem a pluralistic concentration of people of African descent. Harlem became the meeting place for the diaspora serving as fertile grounds for debates, contrasts and comparisons about their material conditions. It also served as a center of coordination for political action. The American control of Haiti intensified the movement and communication of peoples between the two countries.

³⁴ Tiffany R Patterson and Robin D.G. Kelley. “Unfinished Migrations on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World,” *African Studies Review* 43 (Apr. 2000): 13.

³⁵ Roderick Bush, *The End Of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), 21.

The migrants, fleeing the intensifying violence of the occupation added to the multiplicity of the ways Blackness was understood. African American and Haitian activists' collaboration aimed at attenuating the U.S. American presence in Haiti. Partnership required, as Brent Hayes Edwards has forwarded, a 'translation' of Haitian culture, in order to create 'décollage'. The French word 'décollage' is used by Edwards to describe the process by which the cultural differences between the dispersed members of the Afro-descended community were bridged.³⁶ The traversing of the divide was necessary in order to enlist and unite African American opinion in solidarity with the Haitian's struggles. The writers demonstrated the parallels and unifying themes found in both Haitian and African American experiences, while divergences were crafted to present similarities within the differences. The translations and décollage were directed at building 'reciprocity' or mutual answerability between the two groups. The process of décollage illuminated their paralleled experiences despite their differences, and fostered collaborative discourse and action between the Haitians and African Americans. The trends emergent from these political alliances were born out of meetings, conversations, and writings among intellectuals in both locations.

The record of the movement reveals that a prominent role was played by elite men in both countries. These activists popularized the discussions in order to enlist the power of the force of the public's numbers. The drive engaged and untied people such as Johnson, W.E.B. Du Bois, Dantès Bellegarde, in conversations about Blackness and the material conditions of their respective cultures as well as those of the entire Afro-

³⁶ Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation and the Rise of the Black International* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 2003), 14.

descended population. These conversations transpired across great distances via letters, journals, newspapers, books and essays. The pinnacle of the translation and reciprocity in print media is in the bilingual journal *Goodwill*, which has not been discussed by scholars, distributed in the United States and Haiti.

The occupation of Haiti corresponded with a rise in African American militant rejection of American racism and an assertion of the abilities and rights of Afro descended people to engage in all aspects of society. Harlem, the epicenter of the New Negro movement, was a multicultural Black enclave where members from across the African Diaspora migrated, and contributed their voices to its constitution. Many writers have examined the ways that these international immigrants, largely from the British West Indies, arrived in Harlem and added an anti-imperialist voice to the African American discussions of racial oppression and demands for equality. By 1919 Du Bois, a major figure of the New Negro movement had spearheaded the first 1919 Pan-African congress. Further, Johnson, in his position as Secretary of the NAACP, extended the gaze of the organization internationally realizing that American racism was being “exported overseas.”³⁷ That the Haitians were facing the same racism as people of African descent in the United States became a major theme in building anti-occupation support. In the September 1915 edition of *The Crisis*, the journalistic organ of the NAACP, edited by Du Bois, called for its readership to “save Hayti [sic]” the nation that “made slaves free”.³⁸ The occupation of Haiti was an affront to the movement of self-determination. Haiti had

³⁷ Léon D. Pamphile, "The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti." *Phylon* 47.1 (1986):92.

³⁸Editorial, *The Crisis* (September 1915): 232.

been viewed by African Americans as a “keeper of liberty in the New World.”³⁹ The occupation caused a reaction from both leaders in the community as well as the public.⁴⁰ The NAACP used this sentiment to politicize the occupation as an issue that affected the African American voters in the United States. As the occupation entrenched itself, the Association and African Americans grew increasingly disconcerted at the news of violations committed by the American forces and decided to act, sending Johnson to investigate.

In many ways, there was no better candidate to send than Johnson. He was fluent in French, then the official language of the Haitian state. Johnson had an ancestral connection to the island; his great grandmother had migrated to the United States in 1802.⁴¹ Johnson had international political experience, serving as a consul in both Venezuela and Nicaragua.⁴² Johnson’s experience informed his understanding that the United States was exporting its racial views along with its expanding influence.

James Weldon Johnson: Translating Material Conditions.

Translation was the pivotal component towards connecting and united the two cultures in opposition to the occupation. The act of decoding was to express the lives of

³⁹ Léon D. Pamphile, *Haitians and African Americans: A Heritage of Tragedy and Hope* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 102.

⁴⁰ Brenda Gayle Plummer, “The African American Response to the Occupation of Haiti,” *Phylon* (1960-) 43 (1982): 125.

⁴¹Rayford W. Logan, “James Weldon Johnson and Haiti,” *Phylon* (1960-) 32.4 (1971): 92.

⁴²Logan, “James Weldon Johnson and Haiti,” 92.

Haitians in terms that have a reciprocal component in African American culture as well as explaining Haitian idiosyncrasies in terms understandable to Johnson's readership. Once the reorientation was complete, the differences separating the two cultures could be bridged and the African Americans would come to include the Haitians as part of their community. Overcoming of these divides, *décollage*, was necessary in creating an atmosphere where African Americans felt compelled to engage in Anti-occupation resistance. The end of the process of *décollage* was to generate the feeling within the African American community that they were part of the same community as the Haitians, despite, or in spite of, cultural differences. They had to be presented as part of the same struggle to overcome the same racial oppressions. The variations in culture Johnson saw and reported were presented in the most favorable light. Further, this was a necessary as the political instability and the stories of 'voodoo'[sic] sullied the image of the country in the minds of African Americans.⁴³ Johnson worked to recast and redeem the image of Haiti.

Johnson's mission was to uncover the true nature of the occupation and, as he arrived into Port-au-Prince harbor, he was introduced to the racist understanding of the military forces. He related the "astonishment" of the white officers at the existence of the black officers in the Haitian military.⁴⁴ In Haiti Johnson began to appreciate the continuities in the way the Haitians experienced the U.S. American brand racism at the hands of the troops. Johnson begins to understand the occupation as steeped in American

⁴³ Plummer, "The Afro-American Response," 126.

⁴⁴ James Weldon Johnson, "Haitian Notes," 5, Yale Collection of American Literature, James Weldon and Grace Neil Johnson Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven Conn.

racism and expanding its influence. Johnson traveled to Haiti as African Americans were demanding their rights in the United States and protesting against the normalization of violence imposed upon them.⁴⁵ In this vein his notes are replete with the manifestations of Southern style racism in Haiti. He writes that the South is “truly in the saddle in Haiti” lamenting that more northerners had not been appointed to important positions in the administration.⁴⁶ Mary Renda, in her interrogation of the paternalistic understanding of the military highlights the racially informed approach the Marines took in executing the occupation.⁴⁷

Johnson uncovered that Haitians had become second class citizens in their own country. He views the arrogance of these troops, unable to hide their prejudice, and feelings of superiority expresses it in their actions and attitude towards the Haitians.⁴⁸ In his April 3, 1920 entry he quoted a Louisianan’s lament that the “nigger in Haiti can look the white man in the eye.”⁴⁹ Johnson captured an incident where a laughing marine, recounting a story of kicking a Haitian on the street for not following his orders. The punch line of the story was that the attacked Haitian was a “former member of the chamber of deputies.”⁵⁰ He concluded that the attitude of the Americans towards the Haitians to be that of a “conqueror” towards the subjugated and not that of benevolent

⁴⁵ David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was In Vogue* (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), 28.

⁴⁶ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”75.

⁴⁷ Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 101.

⁴⁸ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”38.

⁴⁹ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”51.

⁵⁰ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”72-73.

force pacifying and aiding a troubled people⁵¹. This, he finds out, is the biggest affront to the Haitian people

Johnson's introduction into bourgeois Haitian circles gave him ample material to contrast with their African American counterparts. On April 5th Johnson visited the home of a certain M. Larsche, which was his "first view of the interior of a cultured Haitian's house."⁵² He described the home as tasteful and modest in "its riches."⁵³ Later on in the day Johnson visited the Bellevue club. He characterized the club as being splendid and without parallel when compared with those of African Americans.⁵⁴ Johnson was also a guest of one 'Mr. Boco', on April 11, 1920.⁵⁵ In his notes Johnson remarked on the size of the residence. It is a large estate, he says, with 1000 head of cattle, fruit plantations, a grinding mill, a distillery and hundreds of Haitians who live and work the land as "sharecroppers".⁵⁶ Johnson was struck by the lavishness of the two full meals one served at eleven am and the other served at three pm. What was of the greatest interest to Johnson was to gauge the "quality of conversation and discourse" especially among the men.⁵⁷ He remarked that the women of Haitian society remain mostly silent while the men discuss. The exception to this is the wife of Arthur Rosemond, who despite her voice

⁵¹ Johnson, "Haitian Notes,"18.

⁵² Johnson, "Haitian Notes,"67.

⁵³ Johnson, "Haitian Notes,"67.

⁵⁴ Johnson, "Haitian Notes,"67.

⁵⁵ Johnson, "Haitian Notes,"83.

⁵⁶ Johnson, "Haitian Notes,"83.

⁵⁷ Johnson, "Haitian Notes,"84.

in the discussions, remained obscured as simply Mrs. Rosemond. Mr. Rosemond, however, left him very impressed with his “brilliance and wit.”⁵⁸

The women in Johnson’s notes were either the women of the Haitian aristocracy who adhering to the dictums of class propriety, or of the women of the popular working class who Johnson idealized. In his treatment of the women, he had come to appreciate the nuances of the phenotype divide of the nation, albeit expressed through his masculine gaze. He noted that there are two types of “beauties” in the country, the mulatto and the royal black type which he defined as the national type.⁵⁹ The ‘royal black’ is described in Johnson’s notes in poetic eloquence merging with an inherent objectification. Johnson described the archetype as:

[Having] a colorfully turbaned head, gold looped ringed ears; straight and svelte with an independent stride with an almost haughty air, carrying themselves as many Queen of Sheba... Lithe as a she tiger.⁶⁰

Johnson also captures the central role played by the Haitian peasant working class women in the economy of the country calling them “the most numerous tradesmen in the country.”⁶¹ (Italics mine) Johnson encountered peasant women making their way into Port-au-Prince carrying their produce on their heads or on donkeys to supply the city with its fruits and vegetables.⁶² These women he finds gathered “day in and day out” in the

⁵⁸ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”84.

⁵⁹ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”51.

⁶⁰Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”51.

⁶¹ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”65.

⁶² Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”47.

market selling produce grown on their own plots of land by their own hands.⁶³ He finds these women so kind and pleasant that in his notes he writes of the irony that he finds in “white Mississippians... civilizing Haiti”, calling the idea “laughable” except for the fact that it is actually being put into “execution.”⁶⁴ The prevalence of women in the public sphere is cause for Johnson to wonder in his notes as to the whereabouts of the men.⁶⁵ He discovers that the men stay at home as a circumstance of Haiti’s history where men were “seized”, making it a cultural necessity to stay away from the roads.⁶⁶ The seizing of workers was a hallmark of the Boyer presidency, 1820-1844, where men were forced to work on the plantations, through the institution of the *corvée*.⁶⁷ The *corvée* was a forced labor system through which rural Haitians were collected by agents of the government and forced to work on plantations. The *corvée* was reinstated by the occupation forces in order to build the road that connected Cap Haitien to Port-au-Prince.

As he travels, Johnson’s notes reveal that he found similarities in the material conditions of the popular class in both countries. In comparing the rural African American rural southern setting to that of the Haitian peasant experience he concludes the latter as a variety of what he knew of the former. In the Haitian countryside Johnson witnessed a “feast day” celebration that found reminiscent of those he had seen in the “African village in Nassau” and the “ring shouts” of the Southern African American

⁶³ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”48.

⁶⁴ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”48.

⁶⁵ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”65.

⁶⁶ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”65.

⁶⁷ Laurent Dubois, *Haiti: The After Shocks of History* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2012), 105.

religious tradition.⁶⁸ He contrasts the rural Haitian material culture it against the Southern African American experience, and held the Haitian condition in esteem. He finds the Haitian wood plaited, clay plastered, thatch roofed homes as “superior” to the “traditional log cabin” homes in the South.⁶⁹ Johnson finds cleanliness to be the rule of the Haitian home juxtaposing it to the “filth and the squalor” among both whites and blacks in the South. In the rural Haitians he finds an independent individual who works their own land, owning their own home instead of being “industrialized slaves” owing on a mortgaged house as those in the United States.⁷⁰ That they were not beholden to any master, Johnson concluded, was the real reason why the U.S. Americans thought that Haitians are in need of civilization.

The contacts made during Johnson’s three month mission to Haiti were very important. He made connected with the Haitians who eventually took up leadership roles in the struggle against the occupation⁷¹. Further, the meetings fostered the conversations that informed the translation of Blackness that underscored the anti-occupation movement. The relationships and friendships born out of these connections facilitated the communication and dialogues that for the next fourteen years were joined in anti-occupation activities. A letter, dated December 10, 1920 from Arthur Holly, son of Bishop James Holly, doctor and author of books on Haitian “education, medicine and

⁶⁸ James Weldon Johnson, *Along This way, The Autobiography of James Weldon Johnson* (New York: Viking Compass Press, 1933), 305.

⁶⁹ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”46.

⁷⁰ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,”49-50.

⁷¹ Pamphile, “The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti,” 92.

religion” expressed gratitude for Johnson’s advocacy.⁷² Holly wrote that Haitians viewed Johnson as a savior or a “second L’Ouverture”, tying him directly to the black general who emancipated the enslaved people in Haiti.⁷³ In this letter Holly expressed his desire to open a branch of the “Association” in Haiti.⁷⁴ He proposed a collaboration between Haitians and others related by “race” to work towards the end of Haiti’s “self-determination”.

Johnson worked to render Haitian realities relatable to the African American community in order to form collusion born and bonded out of a racial solidarity founded on shared subjugations and the desire for political sovereignty. His experiences, conversations, and research in Haiti became the basis for a number of articles and lectures. Famously, a series of four articles were written for *The Nation* articles published in 1920. The information gathered by Johnson reached a larger African American audience through a an essay published in the September 1920 edition of *The Crisis*, the journal of the NAACP, edited by W.E.B. Du Bois. Johnsons hoped that African Americans saw the similarities between themselves and the Haitians, as he unveiled the material conditions of the Haitian life before and after the United States American arrival. Johnson was charged with the task of alloying and eroding African American feelings of disappointment in the supposed backwardness of the Haitian people and government, sow pride in the Haitian past and present by attacking negative stereotypes propagated against

⁷² Pamphile, *Haitians and African Americans*, 79.

⁷³ A.P. Holly to James Weldon Johnson, December 10, 1920, Yale collection of American Literature, James Weldon and Grace Neil Johnson papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

⁷⁴ Holly to Johnson, December 10, 1920.

Haiti, and affirm the country's citizens as members of the 'Black race' subject to and victims of racial oppressions.⁷⁵

The articles in *The Crisis* were constructed with the purpose of recasting the Haitian milieu, material conditions of the Haitians, and the American undertaking in Haiti in a light that would generate communion and collaboration in the minds of African Americans. The September 1920 edition of *The Crisis* contained several articles about Haiti. There was an article by Johnson called "The Truth about Haiti", an un-credited essay on Haitian history, and an installment of Jessie Fauset's column "Pastures New" which centered on Haitian writers. The sum of the pieces was to positively recast Haiti's image and to present a counter narrative to the American discourses. 'The U.S. South' figures heavily in Johnson's piece, with the Haitian paradigm at times diverging and paralleling with the American experience. Converting Southern African Americans from stranger to ally of the Haitian people was central to the mission of coalition building. The largest number of African Americans lived, had lived, or had family that lived in the South. It was further poignantly directed to southerners were the most afflicted by the negative stereotypes of blacks and victims of the most egregious racially oriented American violence. Through these articles Haitian culture was transformed from a distant culture materially and historically apart from African American context and rendered analogous, despite the two people's respective idiosyncrasies.

The edition's Haitian section, the three articles grouped together, begins with the essay on Haitian history. In the study's discussion, Haiti's past is cast not as a history

⁷⁵ Plummer, "African American Response to Haiti," 127.

apart, but as part of the story of the Americas. Further it aimed at creating, what Polyné has termed “black Pan Americanism” which located people of African descent in the West as being part of the same history of oppression. It begins with Columbus’ arrival to the island and the subsequent slaughter of the indigenous population.⁷⁶ The piece continues into a discussion of the importation of enslaved Africans and the plantation economy that developed as a result in the French colony. There is a discussion of the advent of mixed race people in the colony, born out of liaisons between White men and women of color who owned property. The children of these relationships were second class citizens in the colony and subjected to laws that denied them of their “civil rights”. As they sought to fight for their rights in a “small rebellion” they were killed “with great brutality”⁷⁷. The Bois Caiman revolt, generally discussed as a slave uprising, is portrayed as a slave uprising in defense of “the free negroes.”⁷⁸ The arch continues into a presentation of the rise of Toussaint L’Ouverture from slavery to prominence, described in the article as “the greatest of all American Negroes.”⁷⁹ His achievements are listed as coming to dominance of the colony and establishing a constitution that gave equality to all.⁸⁰ His capture is described as an act of treachery that led him to imprisonment and death. The purpose of this selected history, one that omits the class and race struggle between the Haitian revolutionaries, addresses the recounting to African American

⁷⁶ “Haitian History,” *The Crisis*, September 1920, 216.

⁷⁷ “Haitian History,” *The Crisis*, September 1920, 216.

⁷⁸ “Haitian History,” *The Crisis*, September 1920, 216.

⁷⁹ “Haitian History,” *The Crisis*, September 1920, 217.

⁸⁰ “Haitian History,” *The Crisis*, September 1920, 217.

understandings. The history of Haiti is characterized as a struggle for civil rights and emancipation of African descended people. In naming L'Ouverture the greatest American Negro, it ties the Haitian leader to other 'American', U.S. or otherwise, Negroes.

Johnson's article sought to wrest the image of the Haiti from characterizations of degradation and decadence. His article "The Truth About Haiti" revalorized the Haitian past and undermined the misrepresentations of Haiti. The piece responded to "aliens" who have presented the Haitian Revolution as a group of "semi savage blacks" overrunning a minority population.⁸¹ The tone and construction of the piece targeted African American sensibilities. Johnson characterized the revolution as being more than uprising but a social reordering of the slave order that transformed slaves into leaders and redistributed land to the formerly subjugated. He then reimagines the maligned legacy of Henri Christophe as not a savage "ludicrously playing at King", but as a tireless administrator.⁸² Christophe's main contribution is cast as having built the Citadel which he called the "most wonderful ruin" in the Western Hemisphere which he compared favorably to the pyramids of Egypt⁸³. He ended the section by connecting the leaders of the Revolution to the Afro-descended world stating they were the product of a "people of Negro blood."⁸⁴

⁸¹ James Weldon Johnson, "The Truth about Haiti," *The Crisis*, September 1920, 218.

⁸² Johnson, "The Truth about Haiti," 218.

⁸³ Johnson, "The Truth about Haiti," 218.

⁸⁴ Johnson, "The Truth about Haiti," 218.

In the remainder of the article Johnson sought to disprove the negative stereotypes of Haitians and defend their ability to govern themselves. In doing so he related the material conditions of Haitians to his readers. He assailed the supposed anarchy of Haiti using the ordered construction and cleanliness of Port-au-Prince to refute the allegations that since their independence Haitians have not been “retrograding into barbarism.”⁸⁵ He said that the shanti towns used as “propaganda” of the devolution of the people are remnants of the French colonial order. He asserts that, in fact, Port-au-Prince is one of the most beautiful cities in Latin America. Continuing, to dispel the mistruths about Haitians, he affirmed their cleanliness relating an observation of rural Haitians that he has seen “nothing of the filth and the squalor” found in the South.⁸⁶ Johnson related a conversation he had with an U.S. American business man who reported that Haitians import more soap, per capita, than any other people in the world, as evidence that the Haitians, by rule, “are a clean people.”⁸⁷ He refuted an article that cast Haitians as lethargic people who preferred rest to work. Johnson countered this with his firsthand experience with the Haitian women. Drawing from his notes, he recounted the market woman’s daily journey of several miles carrying the produce they raise themselves to question the ability of anyone to “call such a people lazy.”⁸⁸

He undermined the idea of Haitian “degradation”, when he asserted that the “kind, courteous... simple and wholesome” manner of living he found in the city and country

⁸⁵ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 218.

⁸⁶ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 221.

⁸⁷ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 221.

⁸⁸ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 221.

lives of the population.⁸⁹ In his time in the country he noted the absence of prostitution and crime found in other “Latin American cities” as proof of the morality of the people.⁹⁰ On the topic of Haitian ignorance, Johnson related his estimation of Haitians to be “quick witted” and in possession of “lively imaginations”; yet, acknowledged the widespread illiteracy. He attributed this issue to the language binary in Haiti. Johnson presents a nuanced understanding of the Creole [sic]/French divide in the country. He described ‘Creole’ as a language in its own right and not a “dialect” but an Africanized French unintelligible to French speakers.⁹¹ The problem of illiteracy, he attests, is born out of the oral nature of the language which rendered instruction impossible, which has “reduced the masses to ignorance.”⁹² Interestingly, Johnson stated he discussed the issue with Haitian Intellectuals. On his trip he met with George Sylvain, whose *Crick? Crack!* is one of the earliest and most important works in the development of Haitian Creole into a written language.⁹³ The meeting between Sylvain and Johnson sparked the joint political struggle which is the focus of the next chapter.

Johnson also captured the material conditions of the Haitians under American domination. He described the construction of the road connecting the Southern part of the country to the North, a major accomplishment touted by the Americans, as the product of

⁸⁹ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 222.

⁹⁰ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 222.

⁹¹ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 222.

⁹² Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 222.

⁹³ Rachelle C Doucet and Bambi Schieffelin, “The “Real” Haitian Creole: Ideology, Metalinguistics and Orthographic Choice,” *American Ethnologist* 21, (1994): 182.

the *corvée*, a system of forced labor. The men used by the military forces were “seized” from their farms or off public roads and compelled to work.⁹⁴ Further he claimed that these kidnapped men were confined to compounds, beaten and terrorized.⁹⁵ The experiences of these workers were compared to that of African Americans in chain gangs.⁹⁶ He cited the compulsory drudgery as the root cause for the Caco revolt. The Cacos were an armed politicized group of rural Haitians who took up arms against the U.S. American forces. In response to the rebellion, Johnson recounted tale of the American forces shooting unarmed men engaged in cock fighting as an example of what he terms a “sport” of Caco hunting.⁹⁷ He also pointed out instances of rapes committed by the American marines against Haitian women as further example of “brutalities and atrocities.”⁹⁸ Johnson attributed these acts of barbarism to the presence of Southerners in the occupation forces and administration. He found it “laughable” that “white Mississippians” were in charge of bringing “law and order” to Haitians.⁹⁹ Johnson claimed that the “Americans” had brought their prejudices with them to Haiti.¹⁰⁰ He wrote about how the American forces have their own segregated meeting places where Haitians are not allowed. Johnson placed the South in control when he related how the person in charge of ameliorating the Haitian school system a Louisianan, a place, he says,

⁹⁴ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 223.

⁹⁵ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 223.

⁹⁶ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 223.

⁹⁷ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 223.

⁹⁸ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 223.

⁹⁹ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 224.

¹⁰⁰ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 224.

does not have adequate schools for “white people.”¹⁰¹ Johnson’s declares the education program of the Americans to be a failure.

In capturing the material conditions of Haitians and their predicament as a result of the American military presence, Johnson presented a picture of Haitians that is materially recognizable to African Americans. The stereotypes of idleness and immorality are two stereotypes that had been used to describe African Americans. Similarly African Americans would have recognized the suggestion that blacks would regress without the tutelage of whites. The lack of proper education that results in an uncultivated populace was a central issue in the African American struggle for equality. Further, Johnson’s connection of the occupation to American racism, especially the impact of the Southern variety, translates the conditions into terms that echo in minds and hearts of the African American readership of *The Crisis* to abating the American presence in the country. 1919 was a volatile year for African Americans. It was the ‘red summer’ of 1919 so called because of the numerous race riots in United States cities, an increase in lynching and the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan. The heinous acts committed against the Haitians particularly resonated in the minds of African Americans. In no small part the community refused to continue to accept such acts quietly as captured in the Jamaican poet Claude McKay’s poem “If We Must die”. The poem served as a call to arms for the African American community imploring it to “fight back” against the violence of Whites.¹⁰² The piece served to surmount the differences between the two and present the

¹⁰¹ Johnson, “The Truth about Haiti,” 224.

¹⁰² Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue*, 28.

shared circumstances of racially orientated oppression and violence. The article is the first step in enlisting African Americans in the movement to abate the U.S. military presence in the country.

Jessie Fauset's "Pastures New" provided her audience with a "glimpse" into Haitian Literature.¹⁰³ She set the early Haitian production apart from its counterpart in her assertion that its "maturity and stylistic quality" is absent from the American variety.¹⁰⁴ Fauset discussed the "propagandists" who wrote in defense of the Black race and attacked racism. A discussion is given the work of Beauvais Lespinasse whose work *History of the Freedmen* is an investigation into the racial basis for slavery as well as an investigation into what Fauset describes as the "eternal question of the color line."¹⁰⁵ She introduces the work of Anterior Firmin, *The Role Played by Black Haiti in the History of Civilization*, which she says discusses the "favorite" topic of race and its ramifications. Léon Audain's treaties is presented as "sanely and wisely" demystifying "voodoo"[sic] and undoing its assailing by the critics.¹⁰⁶ Elaborating on his work, she presents his position of comparing the sacrifice of animals to European bullfights, cock fighting, and the blood shed of the gladiator combats of Rome, who he says gave Europe its civilization.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Jessie Fauset, "Pastures New" *The Crisis*, September 1920, 224.

¹⁰⁴ Fauset, "Pastures New," 224.

¹⁰⁵ Fauset, "Pastures New," 224.

¹⁰⁶ Fauset, "Pastures New," 225

¹⁰⁷ Fauset, "Pastures New," 225

The piece also discusses the “pure literati” comprised of the poets, dramatist, and novelists. She describes with superlatives the works of George Sylvain, Frederick Marcelin, and Amilcar Duval. In great detail she describes the “patriotic” work of Pierre Faubert. She quotes his work on the defining moments of the revolution where “yellow [and] black” unified to fight for the country’s independence.¹⁰⁸ Fauset calls Oswald Durant, “the lyricist, the poets of poets” whose poetry is about love “grave or gay.”¹⁰⁹ She extolls the virtues of the Haitian poets who writes about life’s joys and ills although “lived in different skies and in varied climes.”¹¹⁰

Fauset’s work introduced Haitian authors to her public. The presentation of these writers serves to prove the abilities of Haitians to achieve a high level of cultural production. Fauset, herself a writer, connects the “literati” of Haiti to the bourgeoning literary movement that came to be known as the Harlem Renaissance. Much like in the Haitian writers discussed by Fauset the American writers wrote in defense and promotion of the Black race. Part of the thrust of the Harlem Renaissance was to valorize African American history and folk culture in which the Haitian version is presented through the work of Audain, and Firmin. The poetry, written in different locations and in dissimilar atmospheres; accounting for the difference between the African American poetry and the Haitian variety which none-the-less contained its own ‘lyricists’ and ‘patriots’.

¹⁰⁸ Fauset, “Pastures New,” 225

¹⁰⁹ Fauset, “Pastures New,” 225.

¹¹⁰ Fauset, “Pastures New,” 225.

Interestingly, Johnson had stressed the role of literature in determining the inferiority of a people.¹¹¹

The September edition of *The Crisis* began with an entrance by the editor “Opinion of W.E.B. Du Bois” it exudes a decidedly Pan Diasporic tone in the section on “The Rise of the West Indian”. In the editorial he informed his readers that African Americans represent only half of the “Negro population” in the West.¹¹² In the essay he explicated for his readership the core understanding that fomented the process of cultural décollage when he stated that the particular histories of each group of people informed their way they understand the Negro problem. That the differences between the members of the Diaspora were a function of their various experiences of slavery and the society in which they were emancipated. This particularity of circumstance has fostered “discontent” and disunity as the members of the Diaspora met as a result of migration.¹¹³ In Harlem, where African Americans met with the Diaspora there were many levels of contention as the groups vied for the same opportunities. Yet, he asserts, it is the peasants from across the Afro descended world that began asserting the “Africa for the Africans” sentiment.¹¹⁴ The feeling, Du Bois related, is “yet inchoate” but could come to help blacks in the United States. He appealed to his readers to understand these “new all

¹¹¹ Ann Douglass, *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1995), 313.

¹¹² W.E.B. Du Bois, “Opinion of W.E.B. Du Bois,” *The Crisis*, September 1920, 214.

¹¹³ Du Bois, “Opinion of W.E.B. Du Bois,” 214

¹¹⁴ Du Bois, “Opinion of W.E.B. Du Bois,” 214.

[ies]” in the struggle for “Black Democracy.”¹¹⁵ The editorial and the pieces translating Haiti to African Americans fell into an internationalist perspective adopted Du Bois and the NAACP in joining the Pan-African community and foster collaboration.

Forging and Cementing International Alliances

The coalition building between the Haitians and the African American community was part of a larger global movement of solidarity and collaboration amongst people of African descent. The call for unity and cooperation led to the creation of the Pan-African Congress. The congresses were moments where translations and *décollage* took place and where material conditions were compared. The first Pan-African Congress was held in February 1919 in Paris, France.¹¹⁶ The conference was put together by Du Bois and Blaise Diagne.¹¹⁷ The Senegalese Diagne was first black member of the French legislature.¹¹⁸ Du Bois envisioned that the congress would bring members together in conference for the sake of better acquaintance in order to facilitate conversations and exchanges of ideas and unity.¹¹⁹ In a January 1919 memorandum Du Bois set the agenda of the conference which included the comparing of material conditions of Afro descended people “throughout the world,” discussing the requisite elements for “future development” of Black people, and the full recognition of the governments of Abyssinia,

¹¹⁵ Du Bois, “Opinion of W.E.B. Du Bois,” 214.

¹¹⁶ W.E.B. Du Bois Papers Reel 8 Frame 45.

¹¹⁷ W.E.B. Du Bois Papers Reel 8 Frame 45.

¹¹⁸ Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*, 117.

¹¹⁹ W.E.B. Du Bois Papers Reel 10 Frame 300.

Liberia and “Hayti”[sic] on the conference agenda.¹²⁰ Dantès Bellegarde was one of the two Haitian delegates among the fifty seven representatives in attendance.¹²¹ Villius Gervais, the other Haitian representative, introduced a resolution denouncing the American presence in Haiti, which was ultimately adopted.¹²²

The Second Pan-African congress of 1921 was held on various day in multiple destinations in several European colonial metropolises. Dantès Bellegarde and Gratien Candace were honorary presidents of the Congress at the suggestion of Du Bois.¹²³ On September 4th in Paris Bellegarde introduced a resolution calling for the “modern world” to prioritize the “self-government as the ultimate aim of all men and nations.”¹²⁴ He also issued a reproach of the British imperial forces treatment of the “Hottentots” in South Africa.¹²⁵ By speaking about the right to self-rule and the suffering of other people of African descent at the hands of imperial forces, Bellegarde implicitly connected the plight of his beleaguered nation and people to that of the Diaspora. A fact that would have been apparent to all in attendance. His presentations and writings in journals, such as Isaac Beton’s *Imperium*, led Du Bois to call him the “international spokesman of the Negro.”¹²⁶ Through their work in the conferences Du Bois and Bellegarde developed a

¹²⁰ W.E.B. Du Bois Papers Reel 10 Frame 300.

¹²¹ W.E.B. Du Bois Papers Reel 8 Frame 46.

¹²² W.E.B. Du Bois Papers Reel 8 Frame 97.

¹²³ Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, “Dantès Bellegarde and Pan-Africanism,” *Phylon* (1960-) 42 (1980): 235.

¹²⁴ Bellegarde-Smith, “Dantès Bellegarde and Pan-Africanism,” 235.

¹²⁵ Mercer Cook, “Dantès Bellegarde,” *Phylon* (1940-1956) 1 (1940): 129.

¹²⁶ Bellegarde-Smith, “Dantès Bellegarde and Pan Africanism,” 226.

relationship founded on a shared commitment to ameliorating the conditions of Afro-Descended people. In August 1927 the fourth Pan African Congress was held in Harlem, New York with Bellegarde in attendance as a “special guest.”¹²⁷ At the conference, he gave a speech on the “Dispersed Children of Africa.”¹²⁸ Bellegarde’s role on the Pan-African Congresses and the subject matter he presented indicate an internationalist perspective on the issues that affected the members of the black race, and an understanding that the issues of one segment of Afro descended people was a concern for all.

Bellegarde also served in various positions as emissary for Haiti. In January 1931 Bellegarde arrived in the United States to assume the position of Haitian minister. He used his time in the United States to renew relationships with figures in the NAACP. For the next four years he had unfettered access to the twelve million African Americans whose votes he believed were the key to “Haitian freedom.”¹²⁹ In the United States, Bellegarde worked at fostering a relationship of mutuality with the African American population. He worked intimately with Walter White and the NAACP to continue the anti-occupation movement begun by Johnson and other Haitians. He was in attendance at numerous meetings held by the NAACP and met with politicians attempting to persuade their opinion about the American presence in his home land. In bridging the divide between the Haitians and African American, Bellegarde spoke at public and private

¹²⁷ Bellegarde-Smith, “Dantès Bellegarde and Pan Africanism,” 237.

¹²⁸ W.E.B. Du Bois Papers Reel 22 Frame 1174.

¹²⁹ Edward A. Jones, “Phylon Profile, X: Dantès Bellegarde – Miracle of Haiti,” *Phylon* (1940-1956) 11 (1950):19.

events. In the speeches he extolled the virtues of Haiti, the importance of pan-Diasporic unity, and connected African American culture to his own.

Bellegarde used his time in the United States to illuminate the similarities between Haitians and African Americans in order strengthen the collaboration against the occupation. In May 25, 1932, Bellegarde addressed a select group of Harlemites at the opening of a Haiti collection consisting of material donated to the public library by Arthur Schomburg.¹³⁰ Bellegarde spoke before an audience comprised of the members of the Harlem Adult Education committee forum.¹³¹ His intervention sought to disabuse his nation's besmirched reputation by valorizing the history and literary output of his country. The speech asserted that Haiti's image had been maligned because it was of "African descent."¹³² Continuing, he contended that his country's history had been unfairly characterized as a series of "bloody operettas in the attempt at validating the supposed "deep seated" inability of the "black race" to be self-governing and civilized.¹³³ African Americans in attendance must have sympathized as they were asserting their own ability to self-govern. Of the Schomburg collection, Bellegarde declared that it was the "best propaganda for Haiti" and that it had the possibility to facilitate a more sympathetic understanding of the "black man's soul."¹³⁴ The Schomburg collection, in his opinion, served to refute and undermine "the critical and unjust aspersions" made against the

¹³⁰ *The New Amsterdam News* 6/1/32, *Atlanta Daily World* 6/5/32.

¹³¹ *The New Amsterdam News* 6/1/32.

¹³² Dantès Bellegarde Speech May 25, 1932, 1.

¹³³ Dantès Bellegarde Speech May 25, 1932, 1.

¹³⁴ Dantès Bellegarde Speech May 25, 1932, 2.

Haitian people.¹³⁵ The speech was carried in its entirety by in the June 5th edition of the *Atlanta Daily World*.

In another speech before an NAACP audience at the home of Frederick Douglass Bellegarde paralleled the life of Douglass and the history of Haiti. The comparison is predicated on the basis that they were both subjugated by their being of the Black race, with Douglass being its “finest example.”¹³⁶ The analysis begins with the rise of both out of slavery, scarred but not impeded from achieving their potential. He portrays Douglass as transcendent of his position despite what the “barbarous society had denied him” into the ranks of “illustrious men.”¹³⁷ Bellegarde presents Haiti as having similarly risen from the dregs of “servitude” to ascend into membership in the global community.¹³⁸ Once they achieved their emancipation, the talk continued, Bellegarde demonstrated that the two, once denied education, went about educating themselves; Douglass taking the initiative to educate himself, and the Haitians opening schools for the uneducated former slaves.

Bellegarde demonstrated the ways in which both entities used their position to promote the liberty of others. He recounts the historical moment when Pétion, an early Haitian president, aided Simon Bolivar in his quest for Latin American independence. Connecting Haitians to the African Diaspora struggle for freedom he tells how the price

¹³⁵ Dantès Bellegarde Speech May 25, 1932, 2.

¹³⁶ Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

¹³⁷ Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

¹³⁸ Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

the Haitians asked in return for their aid was a promise of “liberating the slaves in Hispanic America.”¹³⁹ He connects Douglass to a moment in Haitian history when the U.S. armed forces threatened the country’s freedom. Bellegarde historicized a moment in 1889 when three gunships of the American Navy in Port-au-Prince bay threatened to “impose on Haiti” the concession of Mole St. Nicolas. He noted how Douglass used his position as minister to Haiti and his connections to African American newspapers to popularize the issue. He thus challenged President Harrison to live up to his values of conducting international relations fairly, “irrespective of the size of the nation.”¹⁴⁰

Bellegarde concluded his speech with a reminder of Douglass’ commitment to the practice of “international morality.”¹⁴¹ He reinforces this idea by contrasting it with a hypocritical quote from Secretary of State Henry Stimson. Stimson, who was in office during the occupation, wrote that the international community should not recognize the “title or right” obtained through the use of violence.¹⁴² The quote was used by Bellegarde to an allusion to the ongoing United States capitalist profiteering and land grab in Haiti. He ends the speech with reminder that Frederick Douglass would be a defender of freedom regardless of “race, sex, nationality or geography”.¹⁴³ In a room full of the intellectual, political, and moral heirs to Douglass’s legacy, Bellegarde a descendent of Haitian Revolutionaries chronicled the rise from slavery to prominence of two of the

¹³⁹ Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

¹⁴⁰ Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

¹⁴¹ Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

¹⁴² Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

¹⁴³ Dantès Bellegarde May 22, 1932 Speech NAACP Papers.

most significant figures in the history of the African Diaspora. In showing that Douglass aided the Haitians Bellegarde called for renewal of the African American commitment to Haiti's independence. His speech issues a poignant reminder: old oppressions, born in slavery, are alive today.

Goodwill and Business Alliances

As the end of the occupation neared, other Haitian leaders used to connections forged between African Americans and Haitians and called on the two groups to form stronger commercial ties to one another. The political movement that the translation was supposed to buttress also undergirded the push for economic cooperation in order to develop the Haitian economy away from the white business interests in the United States.¹⁴⁴ In April 1934 Haitian President Sténio Vincent, who was a vocal member of the Union Patriotique, a Haitian anti-occupation group discussed in the next chapter, was in the United States for meetings with U.S. president Roosevelt, gave a speech to a Harlem crowd.¹⁴⁵ The news of the meeting was carried in *The New York Amsterdam News* in both the April 14th and April 21st editions. Vincent spoke at a luncheon “tendered” by the publisher of the Amsterdam News, William H. Davis.¹⁴⁶ At the event Vincent spoke about solidarity and the need for continued relations between Haitians and African Americans. In the speech he stressed the “parallel” interests of both people and the way those

¹⁴⁴ Millery Polyné *Douglass to Duvalier: Haitians, African Americans and Pan Americanism 1870-1964* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida 2010), 11.

¹⁴⁵ *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 14, 1934.

¹⁴⁶ *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 14, 1934.

interests have promoted “racial solidarity.”¹⁴⁷ Vincent called for a “centralized” union represented by a congress charged with investigating the “common problems” of the two.¹⁴⁸ Seeking to promote business relationships he issued a “welcome to any ‘Negro delegation’” that came to Haiti, saying that Haiti offered opportunities “to the Negro agriculturists.”¹⁴⁹ Arthur Schomburg attended as did William Hardy a Boston civic and political leader, Hubert T. Delany commissioner of taxes and assessments of New York City and many others. The presence of these men speaks to the importance that the African Americans placed in developing business relationships with Haiti. The article published on April 21st drew a distinction between Vincent and Louis Borno, his predecessor. Under the Borno administration the “Black American was not wanted”; however, the current government is “sincere” in its overtures.¹⁵⁰ The relationship African American and Haitians forged in Blackness against the American military operation now came to include the push to build an economic union to develop the Haitian economy.

The pinnacle the new cultural and financial relationship proposed by Vincent was *Goodwill*, a journal published and distributed in Haiti and the United States beginning in December 1934, four months after the end of the occupation¹⁵¹. The announcement of the forthcoming magazine was made by Henri Rosemond cousin of the proprietor, Ludovic

¹⁴⁷ *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 14, 1934.

¹⁴⁸ *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 14, 1934.

¹⁴⁹ *New York Amsterdam News*, April 14, 1934.

¹⁵⁰ *New York Amsterdam News*, April 21, 1934.

¹⁵¹ The magazine collection at the Schomburg is missing the first edition. The microfilms contain destroyed and incomplete issues. The initial edition in December 1934 was missing. It is the January 1935 publication that defines itself as the second edition implying the existence of the first in December.

Rosemond, and carried in *The New York Amsterdam News* on November 3, 1934.¹⁵²

Ludovic was the proprietor of Utilities D'Haiti, an organization with offices in both locales that endeavored to import Haitian goods such as coffee and sugar into the United States and promote trade between the two countries.¹⁵³ In 1935, the *Utilities* came to develop the first commercial bus line in Haiti.¹⁵⁴ The venture was incorporated “under the state laws of New York” and the buses were made by the Greenfield Bus company in Ohio, a “Negro corporation.”¹⁵⁵ *The New York Amsterdam News* carried the notification of the birth of the “first [U.S.] American Negro concern” in Haiti.¹⁵⁶

The purpose of *Goodwill*, issued monthly was the development of “a better racial, intellectual and commercial relationship” between Haitians and African Americans.¹⁵⁷ It was to continue bridging the cultural divide separating the two groups in the vein of the method of the NAACP with *The Crisis*. The Journal contained pieces in both English and in French in order to make it “comprehensible” to people in both societies.¹⁵⁸ The fact is a critical component of continuing the *décollage* and fostering the new initiative of mutuality in future financial ventures. The articles on African Americans were about their achievements and great figures and written exclusively in French. Similarly the pieces

¹⁵² *New York Amsterdam News*, November 3, 1934.

¹⁵³ Ira A. Reid, *The Negro Immigrant: His Background, Characteristics and Social Adjustment 1899-1937* (New York: AMS Press 1939), 96.

¹⁵⁴ *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 9, 1935.

¹⁵⁵ *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 9, 1935.

¹⁵⁶ *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 9, 1935.

¹⁵⁷ *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 3, 1934.

¹⁵⁸ *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 3, 1934.

related to Haiti were published in English and its subject matter was on ‘important’ Haitian figures and ‘significant’ moments in the History of the country. Some of the articles about Haiti focused on the rehabilitation of the Haitian image. Other pieces served as a call for financial investment. They emphasized Haiti’s need for capital and asserted the many possibilities existed for economic development in Haiti.

An examination of the various editions illuminates the nature of the journal. The January 1935 issue began with an open letter to the readership from general manager Leon Desportes, who had secured American investments in the *Utilities* bus venture.¹⁵⁹ The letter related the hope that the magazine would “contribute a great deal” of good to Afro descended people in the world.¹⁶⁰ The introduction called on the “15 million” Black Americans in order to help Haiti but to serve as a “coordinating force” in connecting the two people.¹⁶¹ The opening article of the January edition is an English language exposé on Haiti, written by Charles B. Reynolds.

Reynolds’ piece attempted to rehabilitate the image of Haiti and its people. Secondly, it served as an articulation of the country’s geographic beauty. The article made use of these first two themes in order to promote Haiti as a land in desirous of investment. The essay, much like the *Crisis* pieces, begins by situating Haiti in the history of the west informing the reader that Haiti, behind the United States, is the second

¹⁵⁹ *New York Amsterdam News*, March 9, 1935.

¹⁶⁰ Leon Desportes, “Open Letter,” *Goodwill*, January 1935, 1.

¹⁶¹ Desportes, “Open Letter,” *Goodwill*, January 1935, 1.

“independent nation” in the West and the “first born Negro Republic” in the world.¹⁶² It defended Haiti by attacking critics who have only “skimmed the surface” of Haitian history in maligning it, while acknowledging that Haiti has been far from “perfect” in the course of its evolution.¹⁶³ The article shifts into the “serene’ environs of the country, “awaiting the traveler.”¹⁶⁴ Haiti is presented as a paradise mountains and hills, “palm and coconut trees”, and of mangoes and bananas.¹⁶⁵ While describing Haiti’s topography Reynolds informs his reader that Haiti is “endowed with resources” ready for the development and waiting for sufficient “capital” to suit “her” resources.¹⁶⁶ To the ready investor, the article continues, Haiti also offers a workforce of a “younger, well trained” generation waiting for employment.¹⁶⁷

In the same edition, there is a French article on James Weldon Johnson entitled “An American Negro Reflects on His Past,” written by Arne Kildal. The feature on Johnson targeted the elite, literate, Haitians who were, much like Holly, of Johnson’s role in fighting the occupation. The piece is written in promotion of the publication of Johnson’s autobiography *Along This Way*. The article is a brief account of the life and work of Johnson, done in order to inform the Haitian reader of the significance of the subject in the course of American Negro history so to create interest in the Haitian

¹⁶² Charles B. Reynolds, “Haiti,” *Goodwill*, January 1935, 4.

¹⁶³ Reynolds, “Haiti,” 4.

¹⁶⁴ Reynolds, “Haiti,” 4.

¹⁶⁵ Reynolds, “Haiti,” 4.

¹⁶⁶ Reynolds, “Haiti,” 6.

¹⁶⁷ Arne Kildal, “An American Negro Reflects on His Past,” *Goodwill*, January 1935, 6.

readership for the publication. The piece opens with an elaborate presentation of Johnson's dedication to the 'Negro cause'. Kildal presents him as a "tireless" crusader for his race who could not idly sit and watch his people treated as "foreigners" in a land that had worked for generations.¹⁶⁸ He cites his role in the "creation" of the "new type of Negro" who is characterized as an intellectual.¹⁶⁹ The article shifts into a chronological listing of Johnson's achievements. It walks through his education from high school in Jacksonville through law school. Johnson's "political" career as a diplomat is described as "particularly concerned with the conditions" of the members of his race, emphasizing that he left the administration of President Woodrow Wilson because of differences with his racial politics¹⁷⁰. His activism for his 'race' is characterized by the author through his organization of the "majestic... *Silent Parade*."¹⁷¹ The author informs the reader of the impact of this moment by saying that it did more to explain the "Black soul" than any meeting.¹⁷² Kildal describes Johnson's poetic work as "spiritually oriented and particularly moving" and credits him with producing the important works of *The Book of American Negro Spirituals* and *The Book of Negro Poetry*. In the conclusion Kildal describes Johnson's autobiography as a full of "humor, gaiety, sensibility" and being a beautiful work.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ Kildal, "An American Negro Reflects on His Past," 5.

¹⁶⁹ Kildal, "An American Negro Reflects on His Past," 5.

¹⁷⁰ Kildal, "An American Negro Reflects on His Past," 7.

¹⁷¹ Kildal, "An American Negro Reflects on His Past," 7.

¹⁷² Kildal, "An American Negro Reflects on His Past," 7.

¹⁷³ Kildal, "An American Negro Reflects on His Past," 6.

The March 1936 issue of *Goodwill* contained a review of *Viejo*, by Maurice Casseus. The review was originally written in French and translated by Felix V. Jean-Louis, one of *Goodwill*'s reoccurring contributors. The novel is characterized as a work steeped in Blackness, and the review is targeted at enticing the African American reader. In the account the work is describe as a "love poem" full of "racial consciousness."¹⁷⁴ It asserts its translation will be a success in the United States due to its "African narrative chants" which will resonate with African Americans as it parallels the "melancholy of the Southern plantation."¹⁷⁵ The reviewer asserts that it is a "cry for social rights," a theme prevalent in African American literature of the era.¹⁷⁶ The review ends with a direct nod to Black America with the author of the piece comparing it stylistically to the works of the "American Negro romance writer" namely, Langston Hughes.¹⁷⁷

The edition also contains a French piece on the American boxer Joe Louis. Joe Louis, in the article is defined by his Blackness and his defiance of White America. It calls on Haitians to recognize Louis as the champion that made the "race" fashionable, and to do so "as soon as possible."¹⁷⁸ The essay parallels Louis with other black fighters including the Haitian "Godfrey" who is called a defender of "Haiti" as well as the Black race.¹⁷⁹ It recounts his successes in the ring emphasizing Louis' making a "mockery of

¹⁷⁴ Felix V. Jean-Louis, trans, Review of *Viejo*, by Maurice Casseus", *Goodwill*, March 1936, 5.

¹⁷⁵ Jean-Louis, trans, Review of *Viejo*, by Maurice Casseus", 5.

¹⁷⁶ Jean-Louis, trans, Review of *Viejo*, by Maurice Casseus", 5.

¹⁷⁷ Jean-Louis, trans, Review of *Viejo*, by Maurice Casseus", 5.

¹⁷⁸ *Goodwill*, March 1936 p11.

¹⁷⁹ *Goodwill*, March 1936 p11.

his adversaries” which has engendered the “hostility of the White race.”¹⁸⁰ It describes Louis’ “serene” demeanor as he is married thirty minutes before a fight, unfazed by neither the “darkness of his wife nor his own “blackness.”¹⁸¹

These articles represent a cross-section of the racially oriented tone of the pieces in *Goodwill*. Others such as the September 1935 interview with Paul Robeson, or the English piece on a play about the Caco Revolt, a three edition exposé on the life of Toussaint L’Ouverture, and a French translation of a speech given by Eleanor Roosevelt on how the African American struggle for equality has transformed American society. All the articles served to connect the Haitians and Americans in paralleled experiences Blackness by explaining the manifestations of race, as it is particular to the respective environment in which it is born. Moreover, they acquainted the respective communities with aspects of the other’s experience. The processes of translation and décollage are undertaken in the magazine with the end of building business relationships born out of racial mutuality and understanding.

Parallel to the racially oriented pieces are those that encourage business. Many of the articles that extolled Haitian virtues call for investment in Haiti. Each edition is replete with, in English, for Haitian business running from a full page advertisement for the Ansonia hotel in Champs Mars, to smaller ones for cobblers, tailors, furniture makers, distilleries, and pharmacists. No U.S. American businesses are advertised. Another theme

¹⁸⁰ *Goodwill*, March 1936, 11.

¹⁸¹ *Goodwill*, March 1936, 11.

of the economic current of the journal was the English articles that proclaimed that Haiti was making itself available for business.

For example an article carried in the January 1935 issue entitled “Haiti’s Exportable Articles”, Jean-Louis translates a Price-Mars speech making the case for agriculture as corner stone of the Haitian economy. He calls for an expansion and diversification of Haiti’s agricultural production through investment that would infuse much needed capital into the Haitian economy and abate the unemployment.¹⁸² Price-Mars asserts the need to gear advertisements for the produce to the tastes of the American people in order to expand the markets available to the Haitian producers. In the same edition there is a translated article from the *Sunday Chronicle’s London Paper*.¹⁸³ The article examined the ways English has become the lingua franca of the world by demonstrating the reaches of the British Empire.¹⁸⁴ It emphasized the role of the language in conducting international business. In the March 1936 edition there is an English article, *Fields of Possibilities in Haiti* which was a reprint of a report given by President Vincent to the Haitian congress. In this report Vincent lists the “Several fields of opportunities” for commercial endeavors and the efforts undertaken by the “congress” to encourage “foreign and domestic” capital investment¹⁸⁵. In his account the president emphasizes the “protection” that will be afforded to the “willing investors.”¹⁸⁶ The

¹⁸² Felix V. Jean-Louis, “Haiti’s Exportable Articles”, *Goodwill*, September 1935, 12.

¹⁸³ Jean-Louis, “Haiti’s Exportable Articles”, 12.

¹⁸⁴ *Goodwill*, September 1935, 30.

¹⁸⁵ *Goodwill*, March 1936.

¹⁸⁶ *Goodwill*, March 1936.

President listed coffee production, banana and other tropical fruit possibilities, the production of Rhum, and Sisal as the leader in production for manufactured goods such as “bags, hats, slippers” and other articles.¹⁸⁷

Conclusion

By 1934 the Haitians and African Americans had succeeded in forming a transnational, cross cultural, and bilingual alliance that recognized the shared community inhabited by both people that eventually explored the economic potential of the relationship. The arrival of James Weldon Johnson in Haiti renewed the relationship between African Americans and Haitians. Johnson arrived with the mission of uncovering the truth about the occupation of Haiti. His experience in Haiti resulted in a series of articles and propelled his activism against the military presence in Haiti. In order to end the U.S. American presence in Haiti, Johnson realized that the cultural divide between the two people must be bridged in order to engender African American support for the plight of the Haitians. He worked toward building the relationship between the two people through unmasking Haitian culture, history, and achievement to the African American population. Johnson engaged in the process of translating the Haitian material conditions as so African Americans could find similarities within the differences. Through his work, together with that of Bellegarde and other speakers and authors, they connected the two people in order to produce a collaborative effort in attenuating the

¹⁸⁷ *Goodwill*, March 1936.

occupation. In the process personal and business relations were formed that fueled and paralleled the drive to attenuate the U.S American presence in Haiti.

III

Anti-Occupation Resistance: The Assemblages of Empire and Financial Interests

James Weldon Johnson arrived in Haiti with the goal of discovering the true nature of the United States military occupation of Haiti. What Johnson uncovered was the assemblage of business interests and the military invasion. Further, Johnson surmised that the end of the military presence was not, as the official government rhetoric stated, to assist the Haitians in governing themselves, but to expand the influence of the burgeoning United States Empire. While in Haiti Johnson uncovered the violence, censorship, social and political repression the United States forces enacted on the Haitian people. His time in Haiti revealed that the marine presence sought to install a government that was acquiescent to the desires of United States. Johnson's trip promoted discussions that allied Haitians and Harlemites in political action against the occupation. The two groups collaborated to publicize, denounce, and reveal the 'truth' of the activities of the United States in Haiti. In doing so they characterized the occupation as an act of imperialism affected through censorship, anti-democratic tactics, and military repression to satiate capitalist interests while expanding and securing U.S. American hegemony.

The activists engaged in a campaign that emphasized the military domination, subversion of democratic rule, and demonstrating the intimacy of United States business interests in directing the military occupation. Their efforts aimed at undermining the notion that the military landing was a benevolent endeavor, and, instead to designate it as an act of economic and political domination. The drive against the military presence in Haiti targeted African American voters in effort to create mass political consciousness

within the community. The activists spread their message through a series of press releases which were disseminated through a network of African American newspapers. In their pronouncements business interests were described as force behind the landing of troops in Haiti, business leaders as directing the course. Further, their missives highlighted the repressive and brutal nature of the occupation. The movement was sustained and buttressed via a transnational communications network connecting Haiti and the United States. The information coming out of Haiti supplied the information for the anti-occupation denouncements. Further, the Haitians who traveled to the United States used their experiences in Haiti to undermine the U. S. government's rationale justifying the occupation. The activists' efforts adhered to the framework established by Johnson in his articles in *The Nation* which highlighted the violence, repression, financial entanglements, and the failures of the occupation. They continued his use of official documents of the U.S. government juxtaposed to the reality of affairs in Haiti in order to promote an anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist sentiment within the African American community which was to be converted into political action.

Within the thirteen year coordinated effort there emerged three discernible periods. The first period began with Johnson's voyage to Haiti in February 1920 and culminated with the Harding Commission in 1923. The most fervent activity denouncing the occupation occurred in these years. Johnson's publications, the Memorial to the president of the United States issued by the Union Patriotique, and the Harding Commission are the key moments of the period. The second stage is marked by the Union Patriotique opening a branch in Harlem in 1923 and culminated in the Forbes commission of 1930. In these years NAACP reduced its efforts in defense of the Haitian cause. The

Union, from Harlem, acted independently, issued its own press releases, held meetings, and petitioned the United States government. This moment culminated with the first Haitian elections since the beginning of the occupation, as recommended by the members of the Forbes commission. The final period is characterized by the emergence of Walter White as the leading NAACP voice involved in the anti-occupation movement. In these last years, Dantès Bellegarde replaced the Union Patriotique as the main Haitian actor in the United States for the liberation of the country. Here, the NAACP and the Haitians directly petitioned the U.S. government while still seeking mass mobilization. In this period the coalition was tested as the Haitians and African Americans diverged on the direction the movement should take in order to bring the occupation to an end. The occupation ended in August of 1934 as a matter resolved through diplomatic channels. In the course of their anti-occupation efforts African Americans and Haitians affected several changes, some minor some major, in the course of the occupation.

James Weldon Johnson and the Nation Articles

Johnson's time in Haiti began in the wake of the U.S. military's defeat of the armed Caco rebellion. His arrival in Haiti marked the beginning of the first phase of the collaborative effort to abate the American presence in the country. His mission was to accurately capture the nature of the presence of the United States in Haiti. In Haiti he met and discussed with many Haitian intellectuals including George Sylvain whom he

described as “small, shy, and distinguished.”¹⁸⁸ Johnson tutored Sylvain on the methods employed by the NAACP in building organizational structures, encouraging George Sylvain to revive the defunct organization.¹⁸⁹ The meeting fostered the relationship that buttressed the collaborative efforts between the Union and the NAACP.

Johnson used his time in Haiti to gather information that he used to condemn and expose the occupation as a violent and repressive regime that served the interests of the National City Bank of New York. He wrote in his notes that Haiti’s sovereignty was not in jeopardy, but it is their “economic independence” that was at risk.¹⁹⁰ Further, his notes give us insight into his understanding of the occupation characterizing the attitude of the military to be that “of the conqueror towards the conquered” and not of a benevolent tutelage.¹⁹¹ By the end of his time in Haiti he concluded that the United States did not come to “aid” the nation but to economically exploit the country.¹⁹² His investigative trip to Haiti culminated in his four articles for *The Nation* between August and September of 1920. Unlike previous readings of Johnson’s work that characterized the articles as denouncing the occupation, my reading here makes two claims. First, Johnson’s articles served to cast the U.S. American presence in Haiti as imperialistic, undemocratic, repressive, and as serving the ends of the National City Bank. The writings had the effect

¹⁸⁸ James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way, The Autobiography of James Weldon Johnson* (New York: Viking Compass Press, 1933), 346.

¹⁸⁹ Léon D. Pamphile, “The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti,” *Phylon* (1960-) 47 (1986): 96.

¹⁹⁰ James Weldon Johnson, “Haitian notes,” 17, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven Conn.

¹⁹¹ Johnson, “Haitian Notes,” 18.

¹⁹² Johnson, “Haitian Notes,” 106.

of casting the U.S. military control as an act of imperialism and not the benevolent intervention into a chaotic nation. Secondly, the paradigm established by Johnson, served as the formula for anti-occupation activism for the next fifteen years.

Published on August 25, 1920 the first article entitled “The American Occupation” is an assailing of the stated motives for the occupation. The piece served to denounce the occupation by historically situating the advent of the United States’ invasion within a teleological argument that aimed at revealing the true nature of the occupation. These motives, Johnson declared, were the reason why “3,000” Haitians had been killed by “American rifles and machine guns.”¹⁹³ He asserted that the use of military force was tied to the “interests of the National City bank of New York.”¹⁹⁴ In the article, the bank’s vice-president Roger L. Farnham is introduced. Farnham’s role in the occupation is characterized having been the virtual “representative of the State Department” in Haiti.¹⁹⁵ The banking interest, Johnson asserted, had become the repository for all Haitian funds collected by the occupation officials. The bank had exclusive privileges in the country, it was the only U.S. such institution to establish itself in the country. In Haiti, the banks gained exclusive control the Banque National d’Haiti and, therefore, the nation’s finances.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ James Weldon Johnson, “The American Occupation,” *Self Determining Haiti, the Nation*, August 25, 1920, 5.

¹⁹⁴ Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 5.

¹⁹⁵ Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 5.

¹⁹⁶ Pamphile, “The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti,” 93.

Johnson historicized the 1915 intervention by presenting the earlier attempts by the United States to gain financial and political control over Haiti. The revelation served to undermine stated purposes of the need for pacifying and stabilizing the unruly country. He traced the history of the United States desires in Haiti to a 1914 attempt to gain control of Haitian finances. The United States attempted to force a concession from the Haitian government and withheld recognition of the Joseph Davilmar Théodore administration unless he signed a treaty that relinquished financial control of the country.¹⁹⁷ The terms presented to the president were similar to the treaty imposed on the Dominican Republic, occupied by the United States from 1916-1925, which Théodore refused. Johnson claimed that to have had accepted would have rendered the Haitian government “lax in its duties.”¹⁹⁸ The political chaos of 1915, Johnson asserted, served as the much needed pretext for the United States to gain control of Haiti.¹⁹⁹

The real intentions for the invasion were revealed, in Johnson’s opinion, in the immediate aftermath of the military landing. The U.S. military occupation of Haiti was not to stabilize the country, but to dominate it politically and economically. The immediate possession of the National Palace, selecting an “acceptable” president, and the imposition of a Convention that allowed the United States complete control of the custom houses announced, for Johnson, the nature of the United States’ intervention. Further, he noted that the military had “already seized by force” the customs houses before the

¹⁹⁷ Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 5.

¹⁹⁸ Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 7.

¹⁹⁹ Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 7.

Convention was ratified²⁰⁰ The Constitution, forced upon the Haitian people, was ratified in a manner that Johnson described as “unconstitutional” and characterized it as effectively rendering Haiti under the control of a foreign power.²⁰¹ Johnson discussed the provisions of the document in order to demonstrate how it rendered the country under absolute U.S. military rule. He highlighted the amendment that called for ratification all acts of the military occupation and courts as well as the acts of the (sympathetic) President.²⁰² The article ended with a comparison of the United States’ actions in Haiti to “Austria’s invasion of Serbia or Germany’s rape of Belgium.” He decried the hypocrisy of the United States government in doing what it had claimed to have “destroyed” in the world in World War I, by affecting an imperialist occupation of Haiti.²⁰³

The second article, “What the United States Has Accomplished” published September 4, 1920, served to undermine the propaganda of the positive impact the military presence has had in the country. This became a salient theme of the anti-occupation movement to undermine the supposed benefits to Haiti by revealing the hollow, unfulfilled promises and the malevolent force the military exercised to accomplish its goals. There are three accomplishments, touted by the administrators of the occupation which are: the building of the road connecting Port-au-Prince to Cap Haitian, the “enforcing of sanitary regulations”, and the improvement of the public

²⁰⁰ Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 7.

²⁰¹ Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 7.

²⁰² Johnson, “The American Occupation,” 8.

²⁰³ James Weldon Johnson, “What the United States Has Accomplished, *The Nation*, August 25, 1920, 12.

hospital.²⁰⁴ Johnson suggests that the sanitary regulations and the public hospitals were not issues in need of resolution. Building the road through the use of forced labor, in Johnson's estimation, is endemic of the way the military administration has conducted the occupation. The workers were "seized" and "taken away" in a manner Johnsons described as reminiscent of "African slave raids."²⁰⁵ He described how the workers were beaten and kept in compounds that they were unable to leave.²⁰⁶ Johnson claimed it was those practices that led to the armed Caco resistance. Further, he added that military violence toward the Haitians included rape, battering, and torture. Johnson stated that the methods employed have engendered "deep resentment and terror" among the Haitian people instead of the atmosphere of democratic collaboration the occupation expressed to be building.²⁰⁷ The contradiction revealed the essence of the occupation; by using this example, Johnson exposed critical elements of the execution of the occupation: violent repression and subjugation at the hands of the military.

Johnson portrayed the efforts of the occupation forces to ameliorate the education system in the country and to build a gendarme comprised of Haitians as total failures. He assessed that there has been no progress in the educational system in the five years of military control. Johnson stressed that not one school had been built and that new teachers had neither been introduced nor trained. The other failing was the unfulfilled convention requirement that the occupation administration was to create a Haitian

²⁰⁴ Johnson, "What the United States Has Accomplished," 12.

²⁰⁵ Johnson, "What the United States Has Accomplished," 13.

²⁰⁶ Johnson, "What the United States Has Accomplished," 13.

²⁰⁷ Johnson, "What the United States Has Accomplished," 17.

populated gendarmerie.²⁰⁸ Johnson presented this as particularly dubious since the U.S. military had disarmed many segments of the society. Concomitantly, Johnson viewed the gendarmes, populated by marines who he described as Southerners, “steeped in color prejudice”, as inherently dubious.²⁰⁹ The racism of the gendarmes revealed in their daily policing of Haiti led to interactions that became a source of frustration for the Haitians.²¹⁰

The third installment of the series “The Government Of, by, and For the National City Bank”, was published on September 11, 1920. The article served a threefold purpose: first, it emphasized the role of the bank in orchestrating occupation; secondly, it detailed the means by which it made its profited during the occupation; finally, finally it tied banking interest to the administration of the occupation. Johnson asserted that the bank had been jointly working with the State Department, using military and civilian personnel to further their aims while the United States government paid their salaries.²¹¹ The article focused on Farnham’s role in designing and managing the occupation, and asserted that his opinion “supersede[d]” those of anyone else’s in the country.²¹² The article claimed that the vice president of the bank made use of the U.S. Navy’s ships to travel back and forth from Haiti which served to demonstrate the intimate relationship between the bank and the military. The impact of the article was to highlight the

²⁰⁸ Johnson, “What the United States Has Accomplished,” 16.

²⁰⁹ Johnson, “What the United States Has Accomplished,” 17.

²¹⁰ Johnson, “What the United States Has Accomplished,” 17.

²¹¹ Johnson, “The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank,” *Self Determining Haiti*, September 11, 1920, 19-20.

²¹² Johnson, “The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank,” 20.

assemblages of capitalist interests to the occupation. It showed how despite the altruistic claims made by the government capitalist interests were being satiated by the military presence.

The article enumerated the methods by which National City Bank had enriched their profits and reinforced the idea that the occupation itself was simply a tool of capitalist interest.²¹³ The piece detailed the process by which Farnham orchestrated the takeover of the *Banque National d'Haiti*.²¹⁴ Johnson opined that the National City Bank had become the repository of all the “rewards” collected by the occupation while receiving a commission in addition to collecting accumulated interest on the deposits²¹⁵ Further, he charged the bank with devising a scheme that manipulated the value of Haitian bonds to its benefit. The intrigue of the Haitian certificates was tied to Haiti having defaulted on its loan repayment for the first time in its history. The failure to pay, under the auspices of the occupation, caused a severe drop in the value of the price of the internal securities. The devalued commodities were then sold by their Haitian owners, as Johnson puts it, “for a song.”²¹⁶ The conspiracy, drawn out by Johnson, deepened as he informed the readership that the stocks were purchased by the U.S. Americans. The devalued notes were purchased with insider knowledge of a forthcoming loan that would dramatically increase their worth, and thereby return “handsome profit” to their

²¹³ Johnson, “The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank,” 20.

²¹⁴ Johnson, “The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank,” 20.

²¹⁵ Johnson, “The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank,” 21.

²¹⁶ Johnson, “The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank,” 21.

holders.²¹⁷ He further demonstrated the banking interests control over Haitian affairs accusing the bank of withholding of the salaries of the Haitian officials as means of pressuring the government agencies to acquiesce to the National City Bank's wants.²¹⁸

In the bound pamphlet *Self-Determining Haiti*, the articles are followed by a collection of supplemental pieces comprised of official documents and press releases and served as evidence for the assertions made by Johnson. They also established the paradigm followed by the NAACP and the Haitian activists of using official documents in undermining the occupation. Johnson used the 1918 constitution to demonstrate how the document was written to benefit the United States business interests.²¹⁹ These documents served to further support the characterization of the occupation as a tool of economic interests buttressed by military dominance.

The four critical sources presented are two conventions, the Haitian counter proposal to the first convention. The documents served to reinforce the position of Johnson and the NAACP that the occupation benefitted the United States and its financial interests which rendered Haiti subject to their wishes. The first document presented was the *Fuller Convention*. The convention was issued May 22, 1915 a full three months before the United States invaded Haiti.²²⁰ The *Haitian Counter-Project* issued in June of 1915, written with the aid of Fuller, introduced the theme of financial 'stewardship' by

²¹⁷ Johnson, "The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank," 21.

²¹⁸ Johnson, "The Government Of, By, and For The National City Bank," 25.

²¹⁹ James Weldon Johnson, "The New Constitution of Haiti," *The Nation*, August 28, 1920, 38.

²²⁰ James Weldon Johnson, "The Proposed Convention with Haiti," *The Nation*, August 28, 1920, 32.

the U.S. government in article II. Johnson wrote that the Haitian government had accepted Fuller's terms with "slight verbal variations", except to add a clause for the departure of the forces once "order has been reestablished."²²¹ The *Haitian Counter Project*, interestingly, ceded more Haitian control and allowed the U. S. president to "appoint" a "financial advisor" and a "general receiver" for the customs houses in article III.²²² These 'official' documents were presented to demonstrate that the United States was interested in establishing a military presence in Haiti before the political chaos of July 28, 1915, which served as the pretense for the invasion.

The two 'proposed' conventions were juxtaposed with the actual document passed into law on September 15, 1915, almost two months after the landing of the troops.²²³ The passed legislation capitulated control of the Haitian government to the United States, especially relinquishing financial determination. The document issues the guidelines for the functioning of the Haitian government while under occupation. The second and third articles place control of the Haitian finances in U.S. American control. Article two asserts that the U.S. president will nominate a receiver of the customs house that will be "appointed" by the Haitian leader.²²⁴ The financial advisor was to be nominated and appointed in the same method. The following six articles detail the roles of both the receiver and advisor had rendered the Haitian government use of national finances

²²¹ James Weldon Johnson, "The Haitian Counter-Project" *The Nation*, August 28, 1920, 33-34.

²²² Johnson, "The Haitian Counter-Project," 33.

²²³ James Weldon Johnson, "The Haitian-United States Convention," *The Nation*, August 28, 1920, 34.

²²⁴ Johnson, "The Haitian-United States Convention," 35.

dependent upon the approval of agents of the United States.²²⁵ The remaining articles enumerate further the ways in which the Haitian government had been rendered subservient to the occupation forces. This information, presented in light of the earlier U.S. American attempted stewardship of the Haitian government and finances, serves to undermine the official rhetoric of the government for involvement in Haiti.

In total these articles were written to forward the understanding that the United States arrival in Haiti produced a de facto and de jure act of domination. Johnson demonstrated how the U.S. administration had rendered the Haitian government impotent, the military brutalities that suppress resistance, and the economic domination engendered by the assemblage of these currents. His work in *The Nation* established the themes and tone of the activism that fought against the domination. The demonstration of the counter democratic tactics of the military administration presented an alternative narrative to the discourse of the occupation being necessitated to promote stability in the politically chaotic nation. Secondly, by emphasizing the failures of the military regime to produce any good works in the country and illustrating the excessive cruelty enacted on the Haitian populace, Johnson undermined the rhetoric of the benevolent disposition of the military landing and presented it instead as an act of oppression. The discussion of the influence of National City Bank in the U.S. government's decisions regarding Haiti emphasized the influence of business interests in determining the outcome of the occupation of the country. The occupation, characterized by repressive military domination influenced by economic concerns, was no longer to be understood as righting

²²⁵ Johnson, "The Haitian-United States Convention," 35.

a nation that had fallen off course, but as an imperialist endeavor to satisfy capitalist desired. Going forward with anti-occupation activities *The Nation* articles became the rubric used by other activists against the occupation. The themes of anti-democratic efforts, egregious exercising of force, and economic domination became manifest in the efforts the Union Patriotique and by Johnson's successors. Also, the hypocrisy U.S. government's official discourse was exposed by the activists who often confronted the hollow rhetoric with the actual acts of the occupation forces and leaders.

Johnson, the Haitian Elite and the Union Patriotique

As discussed earlier, Johnson's understanding of the occupation was informed by the Haitian elite. His defense of the Haitians echoed the discontent of the disenfranchised political and economic ruling class who had been rendered second class citizens. Johnson's meetings with intellectual luminaries such as Jean Price-Mars and Georges Sylvain placed him in important political circles. He also met with Author Rosemond, Percival Toby, Palaus Sannon, and Emile Faubert, and other members of Haiti's urban elite. The relationships born out of these meetings evolved into the transnational anti-occupation movement. Many of these men were active in the collaborative efforts of the two people to attenuate the U.S. American presence in Haiti.

It was during this trip to Haiti that Johnson encouraged Sylvain to activate the defunct resistance organization called the Union Patriotique.²²⁶ Sylvain had organized the

²²⁶ Pamphile, *Haitians and African Americans*, 117.

Union, a nationalist group, in 1915 to represent the claims of the Haitian elite and defend national sovereignty in the face of the occupation.²²⁷ Price-Mars, a member of the Union's central committee, praised Sylvain in his attempt to unite the elite, who had been slow in their denunciation the United States' presence.²²⁸ The Union Patriotique answered a call made by Price-Mars in his "Postulates of a Special Education" which implored all those with talent to work toward up lifting the nation, an appeal to the elite to participate in determining the fate of the occupied country.²²⁹ Sylvain's lack of early success in forming a united front was due to the then prevailing sentiment that the United States' presence would be beneficial to the country.²³⁰ Johnson in his "far reaching" conversations with Sylvain "urged him" to reorganize the Union and provided him with the blue print of the NAACP to guide him.²³¹

In his conversations with the members of economic and social class, Johnson discovered that as the occupation entrenched itself, its repressive nature turned much of the opinion against the military presence and financial control. In a discussion with M. Seymour Pradel, a lawyer, politician, and former Secretary of the Interior, Johnson was informed that there is no intelligent Haitian "who does not oppose the occupation."²³² Pradel claimed that had the occupation been carried out in the spirit of aid and through a

²²⁷ Pamphile, "The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti," 96.

²²⁸ Shannon, *Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian Elite and the American Occupation*, 44.

²²⁹ Shannon, *Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian Elite and the American Occupation*, 40.

²³⁰ Shannon, *Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian Elite and the American Occupation*, 35.

²³¹ Johnson, *Along This way*, 348.

²³² James Weldon Johnson notes, 14.

commission then it may have benefitted the country; however, that its execution had been carried out by “rough ignorant men who view themselves better than the most cultured Haitian” was the source of the discontent.²³³ Further, he informed Johnson that these tactics thus employed will prevent the United States from achieving its stated mission in Haiti.²³⁴ In his own research Johnson concluded that manner in which the occupation had been carried out had caused the more educated and “patriotic” Haitians to withdraw themselves from participating in its execution.²³⁵ The elite of the society, formerly the rulers, had been excluded from the “American colony”. The marine officers and administrators have come to develop their own social set gatherings of nightclubs where “Haitian officials and cultured Haitians” are excluded.²³⁶ The “drawing of the color line”, as Johnson terms it, is problematized by the Haitian women in attendance who had married into white society.²³⁷ Johnson went on to write that even the “roughneck” marines felt themselves superior to the “natives”, including the professional Haitians educated in France and the United States.²³⁸ Afro descended British West Indians hired to administer the occupation became “a source of irritation” for the Haitians who realized that they had lost control of their country to both white and black “foreigners” who were

²³³ James Weldon Johnson notes, 14.

²³⁴ James Weldon Johnson notes, 15.

²³⁵ James Weldon Johnson notes, 38.

²³⁶ James Weldon Johnson notes, 38.

²³⁷ James Weldon Johnson notes, 38.

²³⁸ James Weldon Johnson notes, 38.

now “in charge of their affairs.”²³⁹ He described the situation as a “vicious cycle” where discontent bred resistance, which leads to greater repression.²⁴⁰

It was the atmosphere of discontentment and disillusion that allowed Sylvain, with the direction of Johnson to launch the Union, this time with much more success. The Union was re-launched in November of 1920.²⁴¹ The constitution of The Union Patriotique declared their objective as being committed to the reestablishment of normal political relations between Haiti and the United States.²⁴² A central committee comprised of “fifty-five members” in Port-au Prince was formed. It was comprised of those who signed their name to the constitution and represented by a fifteen member bureau.²⁴³ The fifteen member bureau was charged with executing the decisions of the central committee monthly meetings and relating the information to those “interested in Haitian question.”²⁴⁴ The constitution declared that the Union was to employ all “practical ways and take all measures to enable” the ousting of the United States military dominance.²⁴⁵ There were four main demands issued by the organization: the suspension of martial law; the removal of American troops to be replaced by the Haitian military police, the

²³⁹ James Weldon Johnson notes, 41.

²⁴⁰ James Weldon Johnson notes, 106.

²⁴¹ NAACP Papers Part 11, Ser. B, Reel 8, frame 896.

²⁴² NAACP Papers Part 11, Ser. B, Reel 8, frame 896.

²⁴³ NAACP Papers Part 11, Ser. B, Reel 8, frame 896.

²⁴⁴ NAACP Papers Part 11, Ser. B, Reel 8, frame 896.

²⁴⁵ NAACP Papers Part 11, Ser. B, Reel 8, frame 896.

abrogation of the Haitian Convention; and they called for a Haitian Constitutional Assembly.

The Union worked in Haiti building support against and challenged the U.S. American presence in the country. They also used their connections in the NAACP to bring their plight to African Americans. Johnson via his contacts in the press and the NAACP provided the Union with an outlet for its voice in the United States. Members of the central committee traveled to the United States and politicized the cause of the Union through newspaper articles, letters to the NAACP, and public speaking engagements. The first mission sent by the central committee arrived in New York in February of 1921. The Haitian Mission, as it would come to be known, consisted of Sténio Vincent, former chairman of the Haitian Senate ; Paulus Sannon, former Haitian minister to the United States; and Perceval Thoby former Secretary of the Haitian Legation at Washington. The first two men arrived in the United States on February 15th and the latter arrived February 26th.²⁴⁶ The NAACP hosted dinners and social functions for the delegation.²⁴⁷ In a statement issued by the NAACP the threesome reiterated the four objectives of the Union claiming that it voiced the “want[s]” of the Haitian people.²⁴⁸ The mission, staying at the Union Square Hotel made use of their stay in New York City to promote the Haitian case.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ *New York Age* March 5, 1921

²⁴⁷ Mark Robert Schneider, *“We Return Fighting” The Civil rights Movement in the Jazz Age* (Boston: Northeastern Press, 2002), 88.

²⁴⁸ NAACP Press Release dated February 15 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 501.

²⁴⁹ James Weldon Johnson letter to Paulus Sannon, March 12, 1921 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, and Frame 501.

The visitors used the access to media outlets to voice their experience of the occupation as the forces had censored the Haitian's ability to voice an accurate "account" of the "policy of the Wilson administration."²⁵⁰ On March 3rd Thoby and Vincent issued a statement to *The New York Globe*. In their statement, they critiqued the U.S. military regime.²⁵¹ They followed Johnson's example and described the occupation forces as a malevolent presence that is working to the benefit of capitalist interests. They emphasized the establishing of martial law and the rule military courts by the regime. The five years under the military tutelage of the United States is characterized as being the "most autocratic [and] despotic" in the country's history.²⁵² The U.S. American tenure in Haiti, the men asserted, is backed by "certain financial interests that seek to dominate Haitian business."²⁵³ These were the reasons why Admiral H.S. Knapp, who was the chief administrator of the occupation forces in Haiti, had engaged in a "slander campaign" against the Haitian people.²⁵⁴ Vincent, speaking on behalf of the group, gave an interview to *The New York Age* on March 15, 1921.

The representatives remained in New York City despite their stated purpose of petitioning the United States government directly in Washington. The trio strategically awaited the transfer of power to Harding in order to avoid the prejudices of the outgoing

²⁵⁰ Sténio Vincent interview, *The New York Age* March 5, 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 602.

²⁵¹ *The New York Globe* March 3, 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B. Reel 8, Frame 597

²⁵² *The New York Globe* March 3, 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B. Reel 8, Frame 597.

²⁵³ *The New York Globe* March 3, 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B. Reel 8, Frame 597.

²⁵⁴ *The New York Globe* March 3, 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B. Reel 8, Frame 597.

Wilson Administration”.²⁵⁵ The Harding administration provided the Haitians with hope for change as he had used the “issue to appeal to black voters.”²⁵⁶ On March 22nd the visiting delegation attended a “liberal dinner” where they continued to denounce the military rule of the country. *The New York Call* carried a report of the gathering. The daily characterized the men as victims of military aggression describing Sannon as relinquishing his position as minister rather than ratifying the “pernicious treaty; and the session of congress over which Vincent presided was said to have been dismissed at gun point by “General Smedley Butler and his marines.”²⁵⁷ The delegates condemned the misappropriation of the country’s “revenues” under the “pretext” of establishing financial “order.”²⁵⁸ Further they issued a condemnation of the forces’ introduction of “race prejudice” where none had previously existed.²⁵⁹ In attendance at the gathering was Johnson who echoed the group’s sentiments that the U.S. racism had arrived in the country with the “incompetent Southerners.”²⁶⁰

The inauguration of the Harding administration brought the mission to Washington in order to directly petition the government. On May 9th the NAACP issued a press release of the report made by the three members of the Union. They met with members of the State Department and the Foreign Relations committee of the Senate and

²⁵⁵ Sténio Vincent interview, *New York Age* March 5, 1921 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 602.

²⁵⁶ Brenda Gayle Plummer, “The African American Response to the Occupation of Haiti,” *Phylon* (1960) 43 (1982): 134.

²⁵⁷ *The New York Call* March 22, 1921 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 606.

²⁵⁸ *The New York Call* March 22, 1921 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 606.

²⁵⁹ *The New York Call* March 22, 1921 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 606.

²⁶⁰ *The New York Call* March 22, 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 606.

the House.²⁶¹ The members of the Union voiced the grievances of the Haitian people in the course of the five years of military rule. The group presented the economic, social, and political situation in the country since the arrival of the army. The memorial continues the theme tying economic profiteering to the subversion of the democratic order and militaristic domination of the Haitian government. They levied charge of “kidnapping of 500,000” dollars on to the Navy gunboat named “Machias” which were deposited into a New York bank.²⁶² The second indictment against the forces was the death of “9,475” prisoners between 1918 and 1920 in the military camps of Chabert and Cap Haitian.²⁶³ The statement contained twenty-five specific instances of excessive violence by the military. In the presentation, the group recounted the dissolution of the Haitian legislature by General Smedley D. Butler and the marines, with their arms drawn. Further, they claimed that the U.S. marines assured the ratification of the new constitution by allowing only affirmative votes to be cast.²⁶⁴ The Haitians characterized the occupation as the most terrible regime of military “autocracy” conducted in the name of the United States democratic principles.²⁶⁵ News of the assertions of the Haitians were carried in *The New York Evening Post*, *The New York Globe*, and *The New York Herald* which made known the extent of the activities of the occupation to a wider audience.

²⁶¹ NAACP Press release May 9. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 721.

²⁶² NAACP Press release May 9. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 721.

²⁶³ NAACP Press release May 9. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 721.

²⁶⁴ NAACP Press release May 9. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 722.

²⁶⁵ NAACP Press release May 9. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 721.

The meeting with the U.S. government officials now completed, the Union continued to make full use of the NAACP's press connections to voice their discontent with the troops presence. They maintained their representation of the military control of the country as standing in contradiction with democratic principles, suppressing Haitian liberties, and economically exploiting the country. On May 20th another member of the Union Patriotique, M. Pierre Eugene de Lespinasse issued a statement emphasizing the economic ruin Haiti had suffered since the arrival of the U.S. military. He noted that the Haitian government had defaulted on its interior debt "for the first time in 116 years."²⁶⁶ The failure to repay its creditors had caused financial hardships for the Haitians who had invested in their country; he added, echoing the original assertions made by Johnson. He added, introducing into the discussion, the migration of 100,000 "common people" to Cuba because of the misery and their inability to feed themselves as a result of the economic and social policies instituted.²⁶⁷ Finally, he stated that the financial crimes of the occupation have been "committed" in both "diplomatic and financial chambers" further linking the policies of the armed interference to capitalist interests.²⁶⁸

The trio of Sannon, Vincent, and Thoby issued a June 11th announcement of the reestablishing of military censorship in the country.²⁶⁹ The censorship of the press and speech had been a charge levied against the occupation; however in the six months

²⁶⁶ NAACP Press release May 20, 1921. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 744.

²⁶⁷ NAACP Press release May 20, 1921. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 744.

²⁶⁸ NAACP Press release May 20, 1921 .NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 744.

²⁶⁹ NAACP Press release June 11, 1921 .NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 759.

leading up to the U.S. Election the restrictions had been eased.²⁷⁰ Thoby released the appeal to the “American People” from the offices of the NAACP. The claims found in the declaration included the May 26th order issued by John Russell commander of the marine forces. The document issued by Russell prohibited all speech and writing which “discredit[ed]” the military, those who “incite[d]” the people against the occupation “functionaries”; or those who denounced the Haitian government.²⁷¹ In the wake of the declaration by the members of the Union the U.S. forces arrested two journalists: Joseph Jolibois, outspoken critic of the occupation, and M. Lanoue, with a third person Léon Thobaud “being sought.”²⁷²

The efforts of the Haitians led to the creation of a Senatorial commission led by Senator Medille McCormick. The realities of the occupation had been exposed. Harding, who used the occupation to win African American votes, was forced into correcting the course of the occupation. The commission was charged with investigating the claims made by the activists. The Commission held hearings in two locations Washington D.C. and Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The hearings began in August of 1921.²⁷³ In Washington the members of the committee met with military and civilian personal, including Johnson. In Johnson’s testimony before the Committee he related the discontent of the Haitians as a result of the execution of the occupation.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ *New York Globe*, March 3, 1921. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 597.

²⁷¹ NAACP Press release, June 11, 1921. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 759.

²⁷² NAACP Press release June 11, 1921. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 8, Frame 760.

²⁷³ Shannon, *Jean Price-Mars, The Haitian Elite and the American Occupation*, 54.

²⁷⁴ Pamphile, "The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti," 99.

The investigation arrived in Haiti on November 30, 1921.²⁷⁵ The commission only stayed in Haiti for four days to conduct the inquiry.²⁷⁶ Johnson had been in communication with Sylvain in efforts to coordinate a presentation of the Haitian grievances to the committee. Upon their arrival the Senators were greeted with a mass demonstration with signs asking ‘Will Haiti be your Belgium?’, ‘Shall Haiti be your Ireland?’, and ‘Shall Haiti be your Congo?’²⁷⁷ Sylvain and the Union Patriotique organized all members of Haitian society to give testimony to the inquiry board.²⁷⁸ Sylvain presented the Senators with people from Port-au-Prince, St. Marc, Miragoane, La Grajon, Savanne Grand, and other cities. Priests, lawyers, journalist, and a former Senator all gave their accounts of heinous acts of violence committed by the military forces.²⁷⁹ Jolibois, many times in conflict with the occupation administration, was one of those who testified before the commission.²⁸⁰ The result of the inquiry was a report thousands of pages in length that called for a rectifying of the manner by which the occupation was being administered and not an evacuation²⁸¹. Mark Schneider claims that the efforts of Farnham and sociologist Carl Kelsey, who wrote a report in favor of the occupation, “carried the day.”²⁸² The disappointing results were carried in a January 4, 1922 article by

²⁷⁵ Pamphile, "The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti," 99.

²⁷⁶ Gruening, "The Senators Visit Haiti and Santo Domingo," *The Nation*, January 4, 1922, 7.

²⁷⁷ Gruening, "The Senators Visit Haiti and Santo Domingo," 7.

²⁷⁸ Logan, "James Weldon Johnson and Haiti," 401.

²⁷⁹ NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 139.

²⁸⁰ Gruening, "The Senators Visit Haiti and Santo Domingo," 7.

²⁸¹ Schneider. "We Return Fighting", 89.

²⁸² Schneider. "We Return Fighting", 89.

Ernest Gruening, editor of *The Nation* and advocate for Haiti's liberation. Details were also issued in a February 21st NAACP press release of the same year.

The outcome of the Commission was disappointing, yet, the Haitians, fighting for their sovereignty, remained undeterred. However, as the NAACP became increasingly preoccupied with its domestic agenda it deprioritized the Haitian cause.²⁸³ Although they were allocating fewer resources to the plight, the Association continued to voice its support, strategize, and guide the Union through letters. The Union continued to use the NAACP's press releases to further reach African Americans, now concerned with the impact of the United States military in Haiti. The disappointing results did not deter the Haitians from politicizing the issue further. The anti-occupation movement had grown as a result of their efforts. The joint effort of the Haitians and the NAACP had increased awareness and criticism of the occupation. The objection to the military presence included both "prominent and obscure" men and women.²⁸⁴ Further, the migration of West Indians to Harlem in the 1920's added to the number of Afro-descended people agitating against the occupation.²⁸⁵

The Union continued its efforts to deride the occupation by demonstrating the inherent imperialistic qualities found in its execution. George Sylvain, via an NAACP press release, issued a statement denouncing the censorship of the press and the martial law established by the administration of the occupation. The censorship, he asserted, has had Phiteas Lemaire, editor of the *Courier Haitien*, tried before a military court on

²⁸³ Schneider, "We Return Fighting," 89.

²⁸⁴ Plummer, "The Afro-American Response to the Occupation of Haiti", 137.

²⁸⁵ Plummer, "The Afro-American Response to the Occupation of Haiti", 138.

February 21st and “sentenced to six months of hard labor” while incurring a fine of 300 dollars.²⁸⁶ His crime was publishing a story on a violent attack on a Haitian citizen by the U.S. military.²⁸⁷ Jolibois, had been twice arrested in June of 1922 for protesting the “financial powers” imposition of a 40,000,000 dollar loan on the Haitian government.²⁸⁸ The loan in question was highlighted by Johnson as an act that rendered the evacuation of troops “imprudent” until the “banking houses” were remunerated.²⁸⁹ Johnson decried the arrest as another act of “imperial despotism” of the “benevolent tutelage”, sarcastically placed in single quotes in the article, of the mission.²⁹⁰

There was a protest held in Haiti held against the imprisonment of the editors of Haitian newspapers.²⁹¹ The information of the protests came to the Association, and released to the U.S. press, from a forwarded article taken from *Le Courier Haitien*. The crux of the piece is to expose the U.S. military replacing “patriotic” Haitian judges with judges sympathetic to their mission.

The article also serves to demonstrate the hypocrisy of the abolishing of martial law only to replace it with a sympathetic judiciary. The article echoed Sylvain’s earlier call for an end to martial law saying those presiding over the hearings is also “parties” to the

²⁸⁶ NAACP Press release March 9, 1922 .NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 143.

²⁸⁷ NAACP Press release March 9, 1922 .NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 143.

²⁸⁸ NAACP Press release July 28, 1922. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 215.

²⁸⁹ NAACP Press release July 28, 1922. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 215.

²⁹⁰ NAACP Press release July 28, 1922 N.AACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 215.

²⁹¹ NAACP papers Press release May 21, 1923 NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 267.

disputes.²⁹² The release includes imperialistic characterization of the occupation; saying Haiti will become the United States' "Ireland."²⁹³

The Union Patriotique in Harlem 1923-1931

On November 16, 1923 the NAACP issued a statement on the arrest of Haitians in opposition to the government of the occupation, including, once again, Jolibois. The statement also charged that the military forces were censoring information being sent to the "United States" and opening all letters "leaving the country."²⁹⁴ The information found in the press release came from a letter to Johnson from Joseph Mirault dated November 12, 1923.²⁹⁵ Mirault, a member of the Union was now in New York, living on West 147th street. In a letter received by Johnson's office Mirault, acting on behalf of the "Union", sought assistance from the Association in raising funds "through the colored people" of the United States for the Haitian cause.²⁹⁶ The letter written by Mirault marked his entrance into the fight for the ending of the occupation. Mirault had been the New York correspondent for *Le Courier Haitien* while working part time as a Pullman

²⁹² NAACP Press release March 9, 1922 .NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 143.

²⁹³ NAACP papers Press release May 21, 1923 NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 267.

²⁹⁴ NAACP Press Release November 16, 1923 NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 319.

²⁹⁵ Joseph Mirault to James Weldon Johnson November 12, 1923 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 312.

²⁹⁶ Joseph Mirault to James Weldon Johnson December 6, 1923 NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 330.

porter.²⁹⁷ He eventually took a leadership role in the New York branch of the Union Patriotique.

The decision to open an office in New York was born out of Johnson's response to Mirault's letter. Johnson's reply was less than enthusiastic about the possibility of such funds being raised through the papers, although he pledged his assistance in the matter. In the letter he voiced his opinion of the efficacy in opening an office of the Union in New York. The office, Johnson opined, could disseminate "literature and appeals" on the experience of the Haitians.²⁹⁸ On December 28th Mirault wrote to Johnson informing him of the first meeting of the Union Patriotique. The meeting was held on Haitian Independence Day, January 1, 1924 at 8 p.m. at the Young Women's Christian Association.²⁹⁹ The staff of the Union offices in York came to include "Secretary General" Jean G. Lamothe who issued releases from 61 East 133rd Street, in Harlem.³⁰⁰ Following the NAACP's model, the Union would issue press releases highlighting the conditions of the Haitians through its own "Information Service". While the Harlem bureau of the Union organized itself, it, and its Haitian counter parts continued to use the services of the NAACP to promote their cause.

In September 1924 the NAACP released information of another act of the suppression of Haitian rights. The information of the violation was born out of an August

²⁹⁷ Plummer, "The Afro-American Response to the Occupation of Haiti, 1915-34", 138.

²⁹⁸ James Weldon Johnson letter to Joseph Mirault December 11, 1923. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 330.

²⁹⁹ Joseph Mirault to James Weldon Johnson letter December 28, 1923. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 337.

³⁰⁰ NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 25.

9 letter to Johnson from Jolibois sent from prison. In the letter Jolibois related the conditions he faced while incarcerated. He recounts his solitary confinement, malnutrition and the unsanitary conditions under which he is kept. In the letter he asks Johnson to use his influence with “his brothers of color” to use their votes in the upcoming election for the service of the “Haitian people.”³⁰¹ The information in the letter was verified by a second letter sent by Victor Benjamin, Georges G. Petit, and P. Savaine dated August 24. In the letter they appealed to their “black brothers” in the United States for support. They reiterated the conditions Jolibois endured and asked the NAACP for 4,000 dollars needed to bail him out asking that the funds be cabled via the Bank Royale of Canada.³⁰² The information sent in the letters was issued in the press release dated September 13, 1924. The press release stressed the dilemma faced by the Haitians in describing a “recent law” that imposed a “six month” imprisonment for “opening subscription lists” that aimed at accumulating the release funds.³⁰³

The suppression of the Haitian anti-occupation movement, economic exploitation, and military domination was again presented in a January 25, 1925 release issued by the association. The information was supplied by laborers who organized a protest against the regime. In their memorandum they cite the multifaceted assault on the Haitian economy by the administration of the occupation. It revealed the corruption of the Haitian financial stability through the devaluation of the national currency, the gourde, to one

³⁰¹ Joseph Jolibois to James Weldon Johnson August 8, 1924. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 400.

³⁰² Letter to James Weldon Johnson August 14th 1924 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 406

³⁰³ NAACP Press Release September 13, 1924. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 425.

fifth of its former value.³⁰⁴ They issued a condemnation of the importation of wood to build railway ties that denied the “lumber workers” from earning an income.³⁰⁵ They charge the administration of the occupation with using the Haitian schools and prisons as a source of cheap labor for their benefit.³⁰⁶ Referring to the revised constitution, they charge “industrial companies” with acquiring “rights they had heretofore been denied” in the country. In a nationalist defense they object with the occupation’s efforts to make English the national language in place of French.³⁰⁷

The release marked the beginning of the assault on the administration of Haitian President Louis Borno. Borno became the target for the activists. They declared that Borno was ineligible to be Haitian president due to his French citizenship. Borno’s father had naturalized as a Haitian citizen in 1874, “nine years after” the birth of Louis, rendering the infant a French citizen.³⁰⁸ They claimed that the election of Borno had been conducted in secret and at night by the “Council of State”, a body chosen and organized by the American High Command on April 14, 1922.³⁰⁹ Thoby denounced the election of Borno as a farce made possible through “intrigue, corruption, and pressure.”³¹⁰ Thoby further attested that Borno only ascended to the executive position

³⁰⁴ NAACP Press Release January 9, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 492.

³⁰⁵ NAACP Press Release January 9, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 492.

³⁰⁶ NAACP Press Release January 9, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 492.

³⁰⁷ NAACP Press Release January 9, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 492.

³⁰⁸ NAACP Release March 3, 1926. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 562.

³⁰⁹ NAACP Release March 3, 1926. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 560.

³¹⁰ NAACP Release March 3, 1926. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 562.

only after he agreed to ratify the 40,000,000 dollar loan extended to Haiti by the U.S. government.

The Borno regime is characterized as having secured its legitimacy through the manipulations of the U.S. military power. Borno was accused of using the U.S. Marines to assault and menace voters, while continuing the censorship of dissent by arresting twenty-seven journalists. The journalists and the writers assailed Borno as an instrument of the occupation forces, and emphasized his subservience to Russell, military commander of the occupation. Mirault asserted that Borno is simply a “figurehead” of General Russell.³¹¹ Russell himself claimed that Borno never acted without consulting him.³¹² Russell was the most powerful person in Haiti. He had concentrated “all powers of the country” in his person.³¹³ With the support of Russell, Borno ruled as a dictator having expelled several members of the Haitian council, replacing them with “members more favorably disposed toward himself.”³¹⁴ Further, he accused Russell of inciting disorder in the country in order to secure the continuation of the military presence.³¹⁵ The Borno-Russell alliance was characterized as dictatorial, repressive, and undemocratic. They used the incident of the arrest of Edouard Pouget to demonstrate the machinations of the administration. They issued a press release that detailed Pouget’s arrest and solitary

³¹¹ Mirault Letter to Arthur Spingarn February 3, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, F 497.

³¹² Donald Cooper, “The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti, 1928-1934” *The Withdrawal of the United States From Haiti, 1928-1934*, *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 5 (Jan. 1963) : 83.

³¹³ Mirault Letter to Arthur Spingarn February 3, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, F 497.

³¹⁴ NAACP Release May 26, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 529.

³¹⁵ Mirault Letter to Arthur Spingarn February 3, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, F 497.

confinement and described both as having occurred outside of due process.³¹⁶ Pouget had been arrested for writing an editorial that was “displeasing to the administration.”³¹⁷ A February 25th letter from Mirault to Arthur Spingarn added that Pouget was also charged with organizing an attempt on the life of President Louis Borno. Mirault added that although no proof had been proffered Pouget remained behind bars.

On March 3rd, 1926 the NAACP released a memorandum by Thoby, representative of the now sixty one Committees and 20,000 members of the Union Patriotique.³¹⁸ The directive is an eight page assault of the conditions in Haiti as a result of the occupation and Borno’s tenure. The memo charged the regime with bringing the country into economic ruin and disenfranchising the Haitian peasant, alienating them from their land. It provided key evidence on the President’s subservience to U.S. business interests and how it negatively impacted the Haitian popular class. Thoby asserted that Borno has reversed a tradition that allowed the peasants to rent or buy lands at modest prices. He has called on the tenants to provide documents that may have fallen victim to the elements and thereby unrepresentable. These tracts of land were then reclaimed by the state and sold to “American companies,” which was only possible because of the change in the constitution.³¹⁹ These displaced people, left with no other option have been forced to migrate to Cuba by the tens of thousands to find work. The devaluing of the gourde, first presented by the Haitian laborers, has lowered the standard of living enjoyed by the

³¹⁶ NAACP Press Release January 9, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 492.

³¹⁷ NAACP Press Release January 9, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 492.

³¹⁸ NAACP Release May 26, 1925. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 529.

³¹⁹ NAACP Release March 3, 1926. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 563.

Haitian people.³²⁰ Further, by acquiescing to the wants of the financial advisor, Borno had caused the financial ruin of many Haitian businessmen. Through manipulation of the import taxes the business men have lost money and rendered them incapable of meeting their banking obligations. Finally, he asserted that Borno has allowed for the ratification of another loan for 16 million dollars that “further indebt[ed]” Haitians to the United States.³²¹

The Committee On Haiti emerged as an anti-occupation group who worked with the Haitians. They also used print media to disseminate information about the occupation. The Committee also published Union Patriotique documents. Beker released a letter written by Victor Cauvin, of the Union, to Frank P. Kellogg, U.S. Secretary of State during this period of the occupation. The letter presented evidence that the United States has not lived up to the promise of promoting democracy in Haiti. In the letter he cites the 1918 constitution, designed by occupation officials, to hold the administration of the occupation accountable to its provisions. The letter asserted that the Haitian Chamber had been disbanded and yet had been recalled. Lamothe used this as evidence that the Haitian government has ignored the “legitimate demands” of the people.³²² The letter enumerated the articles of the constitution that had been violated by the administration of the occupation. He informed the Senator of the problematic nature of failing to recall the legislature, as it was the body from where the president is elected.³²³ His assertion was

³²⁰ NAACP Release March 3, 1926. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 563.

³²¹ NAACP Release March 3, 1926. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 566.

³²² NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 666.

³²³ NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 667.

that every president elected by the Counsel of State, namely Louis Borno, was in violation of the Constitution which emphasized the “necessity of the Chambers.” In the process³²⁴

On December 11th Secretary General Lamothe wrote to Senator William H. King. King, a Democrat from Utah and vocal opponent of the occupation, appealing to the Senator to use the power of his office to “compel” the Haitian president to “honor his promise.”³²⁵ In the letter to the Senator Lamothe referred to Haitians as victims in a “conquered country.”³²⁶ Holding elections, Lamothe stressed, was a critical step in returning democratic government to Haiti. He argued that the United States would restore its reputation in the world opinion if it supported elections and withdraw the military presence.³²⁷

The campaign against Borno and holding the United States government accountable to its stated goal of promoting democracy resulted in the Forbes Commission; dispatched in 1930. The efforts of the activists caused President Hoover to reexamine the policies of the previous administration and directed his focus to the government’s Latin American policy. In 1929 he declared his intentions to remove the troops from the island.³²⁸ Hoover created the Forbes Commission to examine the

³²⁴ NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9, Frame 668.

³²⁵ Jean Lamothe Letter to Senator William H. King. December 11, 1929. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9 Frame 765.

³²⁶ Cooper, “The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti,” 86.

³²⁷ Jean Lamothe Letter to Senator William H. King. December 11, 1929 NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 9 Frame 765

³²⁸ Cooper, “The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti,” 90.

administering of the occupation in order to bridge the policies of the Borno- Russell administration and the critiques leveled by the opposition.³²⁹ On February 28th the commission began its twelve day investigation. The commission held hearings at which Haitians testified about their grievances. Among those who testified was Jean Price-Mars, representing Cap Haitien and Grand Riviere du Nord. Price-Mars presented a petition calling for the restoration of the legislature for the purposes of electing a president and the withdrawal of troops.³³⁰ The commission met with many Haitians critical of the occupation and the Borno-Russell alliance. The findings of the Forbes commission, submitted March 1926, called for the Haitianization of government services and called for elections.³³¹

Louis Borno stepped down on May 15, 1930 marking an eight year hold on the presidency.³³² Eugene Roy, the candidate acceptable to both Borno and Russell, was selected as interim president.³³³ In October 1930 elections were held throughout the country.³³⁴ Jolibois, the bane of the United States military occupation, and other nationalists emerged as the leading candidates for office. Bellegarde noted that those who had “most energetically” denounced the “American regime” were elected to the

³²⁹ Schmidt, Hans. *The United States Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press 1995, 210.

³³⁰ Shannon, *Jean Price Mars, The Haitian Elite*, 91.

³³¹ Shannon, *Jean Price Mars, The Haitian Elite*, 92.

³³² Cooper, “The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti,” 94.

³³³ Shannon, *Jean Price Mars, The Haitian Elite*, 92.

³³⁴ Schmidt, *The United States Occupation of Haiti*, 219.

Senate and Chamber of Deputies.³³⁵ The frequently imprisoned Jolibois received the most votes however, was too young to hold the office of President.³³⁶ His party's electoral victory allowed for Sténio Vincent to ascend to the executive office³³⁷. On November 18th Sténio Vincent was sworn in as President of Haiti.³³⁸ The nationalists, now in power, focused their effort on Haitianizing governmental services, attenuating the military presence, and regaining control over the nation's finances.

The newly formed government immediately came into conflict with the U.S. occupation administration. The issue revolved around the right of the Haitian government to appoint Haitians to positions without consent of the U.S. officials. Vincent placed four men to various public works positions, but George Duncan, a U.S. Naval commander in charge of the public works department, rejected them.³³⁹ Lamothe, building support for the Haitian cause, issued a press release of a letter addressed to the editor of *The Herald Tribune* to define the Haitian position regarding the incident. The letter responded to a story published by *The Tribune*, favorable to the "American treaty officials", which described Duncan's refusal as based on the appointees' lack of qualifications.³⁴⁰ According to Lamothe, refusing the candidates was Duncan affirming and reminding all of his power, in the wake of the Forbes commission, delineating himself as the sole

³³⁵ Shannon *Jean Price Mars, The Haitian Elite*, 96.

³³⁶ Shannon, *Jean Price Mars, The Haitian Elite*. 92.

³³⁷ Schmidt. *The United States Occupation of Haiti*, 219.

³³⁸ Cooper, "The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti," 94.

³³⁹ Lamothe to Editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*, February 14, 1931. NAACP Papers, Series B, Reel 10, Part 11, Fame 25.

³⁴⁰ Lamothe to Editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*, February 14, 1931. NAACP Papers Series B, Reel 10, Part 11, Frame 25.

authority in placing new employees.³⁴¹ The release continued by quoting the *Haiti-Journal* newspaper which stated that Duncan, in denying the commissioned Haitians, was acting “under orders” of the American Legation.³⁴² Lamothe cites *La Press*, another Haitian newspaper, which characterized Duncan as acting against the “execution of the Forbes Commission.”³⁴³ In the release Lamothe used a citation from the Haitian newspaper as an authentic Haitian voice calling for the removal of Duncan and of Dana Munro, the new head of the U.S. Legation, from power. Included in the press release was a direct quote from *La Press* voicing the dissatisfaction of the Haitian people with the treaty official’s abiding by the changes born as a result of the findings of the Forbes Commission. It claimed that the United States administration has demonstrated that “no collaboration” is possible between the two people and called for the 1915 treaty to be abrogated.³⁴⁴ As result a new tactic in the anti-imperialist discourse emerged, as the activists began holding occupation officials accountable to the recommendations of the Forbes Commission and using the U.S. government’s failure to live up to their promises as evidence of the insincerity of their mission.

³⁴¹ Lamothe to Editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*, February 14, 1931. NAACP Papers Series B, Reel 10, Part 11, Frame 25.

³⁴² Lamothe to Editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*, February 14, 1931. NAACP Papers Series B, Reel 10, Part 11, Frame 25.

³⁴³ Lamothe to Editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*, February 14, 1931. NAACP Papers Series B, Reel 10, Part 11, Frame 25.

³⁴⁴ Lamothe to Editor of *New York Herald Tribune*, February 14, 1931. NAACP Papers Series B, Reel 10, Part 11 Frame 25.

Dantès Bellegarde and Walter White 1931-1934

By 1931 the leading voices of the anti-occupation had changed. By this time James Weldon Johnson had been replaced by Walter White as Secretary of the NAACP. For the Haitians, Dantès Bellegarde emerged as the leading figure representing the voice of Haitians in anti-occupation activities. The Union Patriotique's anti-occupation activities in the United States diminished greatly during this period. On February 16, 1931 Bellegarde presented his diplomatic credentials to the United States as Haitian Minister to the United States.³⁴⁵ In his initial meeting with President Hoover he praised the efforts of the administration in adopting the recommendations of the Forbes Commission and for ensuring that elections were held in the country.³⁴⁶ In a letter dated February 22nd Bellegarde, writing to White, proclaimed his desire to continue the relationship the Haitians have had with the Association. Bellegarde thanked White for the "fraternal sympathy" he has demonstrated towards the Haitian people.³⁴⁷ He stressed the dependency of the beleaguered country on the work of the "race brothers" with whom they share the same oppressions.³⁴⁸ He continued to emphasize the common interests shared by both groups adding that the fate of Haiti is tied to that of the African Americans stating the "failure" of the former to regain its independence is a "failure" of the efforts of the latter.³⁴⁹ Bellegarde, a prominent figure in the Pan-African conferences

³⁴⁵ *The New York Times* February 17, 1931.

³⁴⁶ *The New York Times* February 17, 1931.

³⁴⁷ Bellegarde to White February 22, 1931. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 29.

³⁴⁸ Bellegarde to White February 22, 1931. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 29.

³⁴⁹ Bellegarde to White February 22, 1931. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 29.

led by Du Bois, was well aware of the political pressure and agitation of the African Americans for their own civil rights which extended to disenfranchised descendants of African people everywhere.

The letter referenced a newspaper article about a recent trip taken by White to Haiti. Upon his return from Haiti in February of 1931 White reaffirmed the NAACP's commitment to Haiti and tied it directly to African Americans' own struggle for equality. He called on black people in the United States to follow, with interest, the situation in Haiti claiming "many whites" do not want a successful government in Haiti, merging the occupation to the domestic racism.³⁵⁰ He reminded the community to remember Haiti's importance as the only independent black nation in the west, serving as an example of black people's ability to self-govern. He added that "propaganda" of their failures "emanates" from sources "hostile" to the aims of black people everywhere. In his call for the renewed effort he informed the readers that occupation officials are waiting for 1932 election and the change of the administration into the hands Franklin D. Roosevelt. They hoped that he would extend the United States military presence in the country. White was concerned with the possibility of a Roosevelt administration because, as he informed the readers, it was Roosevelt who rewrote the Haitian constitution in 1918. "Colored citizens", the release ends, "should be vigilant" in fighting against the extension of the occupation.³⁵¹ White was determined in bringing an expeditious end to the United States domination of Haiti.

³⁵⁰ NAACP press release February 13, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 26.

³⁵¹ NAACP Press Release February 13, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 26.

White worked closely with Bellegarde. In the three years when both men were cooperating in defense of Haiti they exchanged countless letters written in both English and French and spent many hours in conference with one another. The familiarity bore a friendship between the two men. The correspondences from Bellegarde almost always began with ‘Mon Cher Ami’ (My Dear Friend) and those from White began with equally affectionate entrees. The relationship between the two was at its most heartfelt in the wake of the passing of White’s father in December of 1931. Bellegarde sent White a touching letter in which he claimed to be able to know the valor of White’s father through the “formation of [White’s] heart.”³⁵² He added that White’s friends, who come to memorialize his father, are doing so as a testament to the man he helped craft.³⁵³ The relationship between the two helped to drive the movement for the next three years.

Although Bellegarde emerged as the most distinct Haitian voice in this period, the members of the Union were still active in Harlem. On April 24th the N.A.A.C.P held a luncheon for Ernest Chauvet at the Hotel Brevoort.³⁵⁴ In attendance were Du Bois, Johnson, Herbert J Seligman, and Author Spingarn.³⁵⁵ After the gathering Chauvet issued a statement attacking the “maladministration” of the occupation.³⁵⁶ He supported his claim of mishandling asserting that the occupation officials placed unqualified U.S. citizens into positions instead of the qualified Haitians who were seeking employment.

³⁵² Bellegarde to White December 8, 1931. NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 647.

³⁵³ Bellegarde to White December 8, 1931 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 647.

³⁵⁴ NAACP Press Release April 24, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 130.

³⁵⁵ NAACP Press Release April 24, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 131.

³⁵⁶ NAACP Press Release April 24, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 130.

He added that the U.S. Americans hold the most “important offices”; yet, they do not speak the language.³⁵⁷ Chauvet cited examples of marine corporals, without medical training, who had been made “health officers” and of a “mere American typist” who had risen to the position of a road engineer.³⁵⁸ Chauvet claimed that the Haitians had done their part in living up to the terms of the Forbes Commission and calling on the United States to “make the recommended changes.”³⁵⁹

Upon his arrival into United States politics, Bellegarde used his access to the U.S. main stream media to dispraise the actions of the U.S. military forces. He seized the opportunity to assail the record of General Smedley Butler’s actions in Haiti, thereby casting doubts on the other so-called successes of the occupation. Butler, of the U.S. Marines, had been the subject of recent diplomatic controversy, having called Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini a “hit and run driver” when Bellegarde embroiled him in this dispute.³⁶⁰ Butler, who had dissolved the Haitian legislature by force years earlier, had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for taking Fort Riviere during the Caco uprising.³⁶¹ The conflict was born out of an assertion made by Bellegarde in the April 13th edition of *The Washington Herald* questioning the existence of the fort and the extent of the battle.³⁶² In the article Bellegarde claimed that he was first informed of the

³⁵⁷ NAACP Press Release April 24, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 131.

³⁵⁸ NAACP Press Release April 24, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 131.

³⁵⁹ NAACP Press Release April 24, 1931. NAACP papers part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 131.

³⁶⁰ *The New York Times* April 25, 1931.

³⁶¹ *The New York Times* April 26, 1931.

³⁶² *The New York Times* April 26, 1931.

battle and the existence of the fort from Ernest Gruening of the *Nation*.³⁶³ Butler took offense to Bellegarde's claims and wrote a letter of protest to the State Department. Bellegarde's claims were supported in a letter to White from Victor Cauvin of the Union Patriotique. In the letter Cauvin states that the fort had long been "abandoned."³⁶⁴ Further, he wrote that the news of the battle had been suppressed through military repression and "censorship" of the occupation administration.³⁶⁵ Ultimately the situation was diffused by Bellegarde who claimed that it was a misunderstanding that resulted from a language barrier. In an April 29th letter Herbert J. Seligman, publicity director of the NAACP, wrote to Bellegarde and praised the manner in which he handled the situation.³⁶⁶ In Seligman's opinion, the way in which the situation unfolded was "more harmful to Butler" than to the Haitian cause.³⁶⁷ Bellegarde acquiesced for the sake of diplomacy, his reputation remained intact, however the dispute served to cast both a key moment and a celebrated figure of the occupation into question.

Along with engaging the U.S. government in his official duties Bellegarde collaborated with the NAACP to solidify African American support of the Haitian plight. He was invited to present at the twenty-second annual Conference of the NAACP held in

³⁶³ *The New York Times*, April 26, 1931.

³⁶⁴ Victor Cauvin to Walter White May 2, 1931 NAACP papers Series B Part 11 Reel 10 Frame 144.

³⁶⁵ Victor Cauvin to Walter White May 2, 1931 NAACP papers Series B Part 11 Reel 10 Frame 144.

³⁶⁶ Herbert J. Seligman to Dantès Bellegarde April 29, 1931 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 141.

³⁶⁷ Herbert J. Seligman to Dantès Bellegarde April 29, 1931 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 141.

Pittsburgh, and accepted with “great joy.”³⁶⁸ He was scheduled to present during the July 5th session”; however, concern over Bellegarde’s reputation cause him to refrain.³⁶⁹ Both he and NAACP officials to found it prudent for him not to attend the conference because it might affect his efficaciousness in petition the U.S. government as an agent of the Haitian government.³⁷⁰ Bellegarde felt that his presence at the conference would impede the ability to critique the situation in Haiti.³⁷¹ Despite their physical absence the Haitian voices were present at the conference. Both Bellegarde and Vincent sent letters to White detailing the conditions in Haiti. Bellegarde wrote on June 28th that the Haitians have lost faith in the aftermath of the Forbes Commission due to the ineffectiveness of those sent to execute its recommendations.³⁷² President Vincent’s letter dated June 29 stressed the ambiguous timeframe for withdrawal of the troops as a concern of the Haitian government.³⁷³ He referred to the Forbes Commission recommendation of the gradual exit of marine troops and quotes the American minister in Haiti as saying that there is no set time for the departure of the troops.³⁷⁴ The substance of the letters of both men was used at the conference.

The results of the conference were carried in *The Crisis*. The articles in *The Crisis* served to inform the African American readership of the insincerity of the administration

³⁶⁸ Bellegarde to White June 23, 1931 NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 178.

³⁶⁹ Bellegarde to White June 23, 1931 NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 178.

³⁷⁰ Bellegarde to White June 24, 1931 NAACP Papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 180.

³⁷¹ Bellegarde to White June 24, 1931 NAACP Papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 180.

³⁷² Bellegarde to White June 28, 1931 NAACP Papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 183.

³⁷³ Sténio Vincent to White June 29, 1931 NAACP Papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 193.

³⁷⁴ Sténio Vincent to White June 29, 1931 NAACP Papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 193.

in its promises to Haiti and to further rally the community behind the Haitian cause. In his assessment of the proceedings Du Bois described the Pittsburgh meeting as a success in the August 1931 edition of *The Crisis* citing both the presentations and the good attendance.³⁷⁵ More significantly, the meeting proved to be a reaffirmation of the association's dedication to the plight of the Haitians. The situation in Haiti was one of the key issues of the conference. At the conference a resolution was passed which asserted that the "American Negro" will hold U.S. government accountable to promises made to Haiti.³⁷⁶ Further they appealed to the President of the United States compelling him to take measures that to "reassure" the Haitian people of the restoration of their sovereignty.³⁷⁷ The resolution proclaimed that the Haitians had lived up to their part of the arrangements while the United States had "been slow" in meeting its obligations.³⁷⁸ The appeal called upon the government to "immediat[ly] fulfill" the recommendations of the Forbes Commission, appoint a new Commission which was to include "one Negro", and a called for the withdrawal of all military forces before the 1936 deadline.³⁷⁹

The Haitian government again found itself in conflict with the administration of the occupation this time over the payment of the salaries of Haitian officials. On October 27th Bellegarde wrote to White informing him that Dana Munro, American minister to Haiti, had withheld the salaries of Haitian functionaries from the President down to the

³⁷⁵ W.E.B. Du Bois, "Postscript," *The Crisis*, August 1931, 279.

³⁷⁶ W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Twenty-Second Annual Conference, N.A.A.C.P.," *The Crisis*, August 1931, 284.

³⁷⁷ Du Bois, "The Twenty-Second Annual Conference, N.A.A.C.P.," 284.

³⁷⁸ Du Bois, "Postscript," p 279.

³⁷⁹ Du Bois, "Postscript," p 279.

most “humble civil servant”.³⁸⁰ He withheld the funds in response to the appointment made by Vincent that Munro did not want to approve.³⁸¹ The day after receiving the letter from Bellegarde White issued a telegram to Hoover reminding him that the Forbes Commission’s accomplishments were in jeopardy by withholding the salaries.³⁸² White assured Bellegarde the NAACP will continue fight Munro’s actions.³⁸³

On November 5 White received a reply from the state department denying the accusations levied against Monroe. The letter informed White that the new budget set by the financial advisor included the salaries of the government employees.³⁸⁴ The State Department asserted that it was the mismanagement by the government that had caused delays in the payment of salaries.³⁸⁵ Unsatisfied, White and the NAACP turned to the media to expose the financial manipulation of the Haitian government. The media offensive began with a press release which reiterated the paradigm established by Johnson exposing the occupation an imperialistic act functioning for U.S. American business interests. Citing a “well informed source” the release accused Munro of issuing payments to the American employees while claiming to not have had enough funds to pay the Haitians.³⁸⁶ White asserted that those who are responsible for the Haitian finances were only concerned with collecting revenue rather than securing the finances of the

³⁸⁰ Bellegarde to White October 27, 1931 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 461.

³⁸¹ White to James Kerney, editor of Trenton Times, NAACP papers Par 11 Series B, Reel 10 Frame 474.

³⁸² White to Bellegarde October 28, 1931 Part 11. Series B Reel 10 Frame 438.

³⁸³ White to Bellegarde October 28, 1931 Part 11. Series B Reel 10 Frame 438.

³⁸⁴ State Department to White November 4, 1931 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 frame 510-512.

³⁸⁵ State Department to White November 4, 1931 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 frame 510-512.

³⁸⁶ NAACP, Press release. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 563.

country.³⁸⁷ In the release the situation is characterized as a case of “financial dictatorship” that stands against the rule of international law.³⁸⁸ Finally the release attested to the fact that the Haitian legislature abrogated the 1915 treaty which gave the financial advisor control over the Haitian finances and the ability to withhold payment as evidence to the illegality of Monro’s actions.³⁸⁹

White enlisted other media outlets in his efforts to raise African American awareness of the continued economic domination of the Haitians. In a letter to the editor of the Courier post, a Camden, New Jersey newspaper, White used the model established by his predecessor Johnson, and asserted that the reason for the continued U.S. military presence in the country was to secure the debt owed to U.S. business interests. White issued a moral challenge to the United States, asking if the debt owed by Haiti, of fifteen million dollars, was just cause for the country “throttling the independence” of another country.³⁹⁰ In the letter White states that Japan’s invasion of Manchuria has “blinded” the American people from following the on goings in Haiti.³⁹¹ One reader picked up on this and further compared Japan’s invasion of Manchuria to the United States’ aggression.³⁹² The Japanese, the writer stated, had clear motivation for their transgression; namely, the need for raw materials, the protection of over a billion dollars

³⁸⁷ NAACP, Press release. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 565.

³⁸⁸ NAACP, Press release. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 563.

³⁸⁹ NAACP, Press release. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 563.

³⁹⁰ NAACP, Press release. November 23, 1931 NAACP Papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 frame 274.

³⁹¹ NAACP press release November 23, 1931 NAACP Papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 frame 274.

³⁹² Editorial of the Week Courier-Post, November 26, 1931. NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 633.

of investments in Manchurian railroads, and the need to secure a friendly government to needed to facilitate their plans.³⁹³ However, author stated, the United States hid behind the ideal of promoting democracy and stabilizing a politically unruly country while they “usurp[ed]” their independence. The ulterior motive of the foray was to “safe guard American business interests in Haiti.”³⁹⁴ The message of the tie of business interests to U.S. military involvement in Haiti had, entered into the African American lexicon.

Seligman, normally in the back ground of the NAACP’s efforts, wrote an article entitled “The Haitian Crisis” that denounced the United States’ attempted financial coercion of the Haitian government. He emphasized efforts taken by the Haitians to regain financial control. Seligman placed the Haitian debt to the United States in historical context, and characterized the process as illegal.³⁹⁵ Returning to the fundamental elements of NAACP objection to the occupation; Seligman highlights the role of the National City Bank of New York in orchestrating the occupation in order to saddle Haiti for their profit.³⁹⁶ He connected the need to secure repayment of the loan to the continued military presence in the country. The memorial was distributed through the media networks connected to the Association. Copies were sent William White of the

³⁹³ Editorial of the Week Courier-Post, November 26, 1931. NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 633.

³⁹⁴ Editorial of the Week Courier-Post, November 26, 1931. NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 10 Frame 633.

³⁹⁵ NAACP Papers part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 642.

³⁹⁶ NAACP Papers part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 643.

Emporia Gazette, Walter Lippmann of the NY Herald Tribune, Royal Davis of the Evening Post, and Gerald Johnson of the Baltimore Sun.³⁹⁷

The alliance between the Harlemites and Haitians began to strain in 1932 as the actions of the Haitian government conflicted with the vision of the NAACP leadership. These measures also tested the personal relationship between Bellegarde and White due to the former's loyalty to his government. The origin of the differences began with a treaty signed on August 5, 1932. The points of contention were two treaties signed by the Vincent administration which White believed the Haitian government should have rejected. As White and the other 'friends of Haiti' fought for an unequivocal return of Haiti's independence, Vincent and his administration sought to capitalize on whatever scant opportunities presented themselves. White interpreted the actions taken by the Haitian government as compromises that jeopardized the efforts and gains made in the fifteen year fight for Haitian sovereignty.

The first treaty signed August 5, 1932 called for the Haitianization of many of the services controlled by the occupation forces. White was critical of the document because it did not discuss the withdrawal of troops or the return of financial control.³⁹⁸ What was left unclear in this accord was the final withdrawal of the troops and complete resolution of the financial oversight of the United States over the Haitian coffers.³⁹⁹ The unsettled aspects addressed in the September 3, 1932 accord. This agreement stipulated that the Gendarmes were to be completely Haitianized by the end of 1932 and that the Marines

³⁹⁷NAACP Papers part 11, Series B, Reel 10, Frame 644.

³⁹⁸ Cooper, "The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti," 95.

³⁹⁹ Cooper, "The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti," 95.

would exit thirty days later.⁴⁰⁰ The signing of these two accords fomented disappointment within the NAACP.⁴⁰¹ Vincent signed the agreement fearing a change in administration from Hoover to Roosevelt would bring with it less favorable conditions for negotiating the withdrawal of troops.⁴⁰²

White, attuned to Vincent's concerns about the outcome of the 1932 elections, wrote to the Haitian president to alleviate his concerns.⁴⁰³ In the letter White informed Vincent that the NAACP was directing its efforts towards elucidating Roosevelt's position on Haiti.⁴⁰⁴ In fact the Association was trying to influence the candidate's position on Haiti. White was connected to New York State governor Herbert Lehman who was a board member of the NAACP and "very close" to Roosevelt was to facilitate the contact.⁴⁰⁵ White used this intermediary to send message to Roosevelt that a favorable position on Haiti would secure him the favors of "negro voters."⁴⁰⁶ The missive issued a reminder that "many colored people" were cautious of him because they had not forgotten his claim of having written the detrimental Haitian constitution of 1918.⁴⁰⁷ White forwarded the message sent to Roosevelt to Ernest Chauvet, editor of *Le*

⁴⁰⁰ Cooper, "The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti," 96.

⁴⁰¹ White to Vincent, September 28, 1932. NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 221.

⁴⁰² Cooper "The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti," 96.

⁴⁰³ White to Vincent September 28, 1932. NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 221.

⁴⁰⁴ White to Vincent September 28, 1932 NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 221.

⁴⁰⁵ White to Vincent September 28, 1932 NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 221.

⁴⁰⁶ White to Vincent September 28, 1932 NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 222.

⁴⁰⁷ White to Vincent September 28, 1932 NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 223.

Nouveliste, who reprinted the letter on the first page of the daily.⁴⁰⁸ White issued a warning to Chauvet, stating that a “quarrel” between Haitian politicians would undermine the efforts of those fighting for Haiti.⁴⁰⁹ The Haitian Senate rejected the concord, citing the continued financial domination as the cause of the reversal.⁴¹⁰ The rejection of the treaty by the Haitian Senate served to lessen White’s disappointment with the Haitian Administration.

After the November 1932 election of Roosevelt, the Haitian government engaged the new administration and directed their effort to end the occupation through official channels. Working with the new administration they replaced the treaties with an “Executive agreement” signed August 7, 1933. The agreement was similar to the rejected treaties in many respects; however, several key concessions were made to the Haitians. One major concession was the full evacuation of United States forces by the end of 1934, three months earlier than previously agreed upon.⁴¹¹ The revised deadline for complete withdrawal of troops was “hailed” by the NAACP in a press release. The statement emphasized the role of the NAACP in liberating the beginning with James Weldon Johnson’s 1920 fact finding mission which led to the reactivation of the Union Patriotique cited as the nascent moment of the resistance movement. Johnson felt “confident” that the “Haitian People” realized that they owed the NAACP a “debt of

⁴⁰⁸ NAACP October 5 Press Release Part 11 Series B Reel 11Frame 252.

⁴⁰⁹ White to Chauvet September 29, 1932 Part 11 Series B Reel 11 F 239.

⁴¹⁰ Bellegarde to White September 19, 1932. NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 204.

⁴¹¹ Cooper, “The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti,” 96.

gratitude” for their freedom.⁴¹² The NAACP presented itself as the sole champion and combatant for the Haitian cause, obscuring the role of various Haitians and Haitian groups.

The interests of the two groups began to diverge in 1933. While the racial solidarity continued, as Polyné forwarded, the particular national interests of the groups caused divergence in approach.⁴¹³ While the August 7 accord signaled the end of the military presence, it also continued presence of a financial advisor in Haiti until 1941.⁴¹⁴ The provision alarmed White. White’s voiced of his disagreement with the signing of the 1933 order. His condemnation resounded with self-importance. In his letter to Vincent, White demonstrated what had become a United States centric view when he assessed the meaning of the agreement. In expressing his incredulity, he contextualized the struggle as being “fifteen years” long, which marks the length of the NAACP involvement in the fight, rather than the length of the occupation.⁴¹⁵ White asserted that that the signing of the treaty had to be the result of a “distressing lack of acquaintance with the facts” or duplicitousness in regards to Haiti’s “interests.”⁴¹⁶ Having consulted neither Bellegarde nor Vincent, White drafted a memorial to Roosevelt in the name of Haiti’s friends who had fought “in the face of great odds” for “full” restoration of Haitian independence.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹² NAACP Press release. NAACP papers Part 11, Series B Reel 11, Frame 461.

⁴¹³ Millery Polyné *Douglass to Duvalier: Haitians, African Americans and Pan Americanism 1870-1964* (University Press of Florida, 2010), 11.

⁴¹⁴ Cooper, “The Withdrawal of the United States from Haiti,” 97.

⁴¹⁵ White to Vincent, October 9, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel, 11 Frame 509.

⁴¹⁶ White to Vincent, October 9, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 11 Frame 509.

⁴¹⁷ White to Vincent, October 9, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 11 Frame 509.

The memorial denounced the continued financial control of the country as the continued influence of business interests in the government.⁴¹⁸ White also accused the Haitian president of entering an executive agreement only because he knew the Haitian legislature would have rejected its terms.⁴¹⁹ The letter to Vincent and the memorial served as part of White's attempt to have the agreement over turned.

White sought to enlist Bellegarde in fighting against the Executive agreement. At the Paramount hotel in New York, White along with Ernest Gruening, editor of the *Nation* and advocate for Haitian sovereignty, asked Bellegarde to resign his position as minister in protest of the signing of the accord.⁴²⁰ White and Gruening had calculated that the impact of the resignation of someone as distinguished as Bellegarde had the weight to influence the perception of the treaty.⁴²¹ Gruening urged Bellegarde to resign in an October to use the resignation as an opening for those sympathetic to Haiti's cause to act.⁴²² Bellegarde refused the request for a multitude of reasons including his "friendship" with Vincent.⁴²³ He also cited injury to his reputation which would diminish his capacity to serve his country.⁴²⁴ Bellegarde questioned the efficacy of committing an act he considered political "suicide."⁴²⁵ Cynically, he declared that his abdication would only

⁴¹⁸ NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 479.

⁴¹⁹ NAACP papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 479.

⁴²⁰ Bellegarde to White, November 21, 1933. NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 591.

⁴²¹ Gruening to Bellegarde, October 16, 1933 Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 276.

⁴²² Gruening to Bellegarde, October 16, 1933 Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 276.

⁴²³ Bellegarde to White, November 21, 1933 NAACP paper Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 591.

⁴²⁴ Bellegarde to White, October 22, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 537.

⁴²⁵ Bellegarde to White, October 22, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 537.

amount to “provoke a few articles” by U.S. Americans.⁴²⁶ White, in a letter to Gruening, expressed his “disappointment” with Bellegarde and “disgust” for his uncompromising position.⁴²⁷ Expressing his U.S. African American understanding of the fight for Haitian independence he declared his “refusal” to allow Bellegarde to “jeopardize all that we have fought for.”⁴²⁸

The dispute between the friends cooled when Bellegarde was recalled and removed from his position as Minister to the United States in November of 1933. Ironically, the Haitian government suspected Bellegarde to have been in collusion with those who agitated against the treaty, allegedly having provided them with information.⁴²⁹ Bellegarde faced attacks from the pro-Vincent press for speaking out against the accord.⁴³⁰ In his final remarks to the U.S. American press, he emphasized and tied the imperial and financial aims of the continuing occupation. Borrowing Roosevelt’s definition of an aggressor nation as one that “sends troops beyond its own frontiers” Bellegarde applied it to the United States occupation of Haiti.⁴³¹ He characterized the U.S. Americans as “financial aggressors” who send its economic minions across national boundaries.⁴³² In wake of Bellegarde’s dismissal his comrades came to his defense with his government. White wrote an unsolicited letter to Vincent which refuted the

⁴²⁶ Bellegarde to White, October 22, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 537.

⁴²⁷ White to Gruening, October 25, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 536.

⁴²⁸ White to Gruening, October 25, 1933 NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 536.

⁴²⁹ Pierre Hudicourt to White October 31, 1933. NAACP papers, Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 541.

⁴³⁰ Bellegarde to White November 21, 1933. NAACP papers, Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 591.

⁴³¹ *The New York Times*, November 3, 1933.

⁴³² *The New York Times*, November 3, 1933.

accusations that Bellegarde was acting against the president or the Executive Agreement.⁴³³ Bellegarde, in a farewell letter, thanked White for his work for Haiti and for his “generosity of heart” in their friendship.⁴³⁴ Gruening penned a letter issuing his personal regrets the way the Haitian government had treated Bellegarde and lamented, in hindsight, that Bellegarde had not resigned his post in protest.⁴³⁵

Conclusion

Bellegarde returned to Haiti to become a civilian and no longer active in public service for his country. Less than a year later the last U.S. American troops left Haiti. The final year of the occupation saw no great impediments to the smooth return of full Haitian control of the country. What began as a fact finding mission for Johnson became a multinational, anti-imperialistic, anti-capitalist movement. Those who voiced their discontent with the occupation understood the assemblages of empire and capital, the expanding United States hegemony and the financial interests which propelled it and profited from the domination. Through the disappointment of the McCormick Commission and the gains of the Forbes Commission the Haitians and Harlemites worked tirelessly using all available means to bring the occupation to a close. Both participants gained from the anti-occupation movement. As the ending of the occupation became a reality Haitian political figures wrote to the NAACP for their efforts. In a letter to White, Jean Price-Mars, Haitian ethnographer, cited the efforts of James Weldon

⁴³³ Bellegarde to White November 21, 1933. NAACP Papers, Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 591.

⁴³⁴ Bellegarde to White November 21, 1933. Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 591.

⁴³⁵ Gruening to Bellegarde November 2, 1933. NAACP papers Part 11 Series B Reel 11 Frame 549.

Johnson, whom he met in 1919, for his efforts. His gratitude extended to Johnson particularly for exposing the situation in Haiti and holding the United States to its values.⁴³⁶ Situating himself as “Black man”, “Haitian” and “Senator”, Price-Mars thanked the Association for its “support” of his people’s struggle.⁴³⁷ The drive to return sovereignty to the Haitian people was built on solidarity of shared destiny. Haiti, the first independent black republic, was seen as bastion of hope for self-determination in the African American community. Additionally, the African Americans saw the expansion of United States influence to be tied the spread of Jim Crow; therefore, they saw the Haitians suffering from the same prejudices and oppressions and themselves. The fifteen year struggle that united the two people forged a relationship that continued well into the 20th century.

⁴³⁶ Price-Mars to White, December 4, 1934, NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 658.

⁴³⁷ Price-Mars to White, December 4, 1934, NAACP Papers Part 11, Series B, Reel 11, Frame 658.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Manuscripts and Archives

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Division, New York Public Library

NAACP Papers

W.E.B Du Bois Collection

Goodwill

Yale Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library's collection of James Weldon Johnson Collection.

Johnson (James Weldon) and Grace Nail Johnson Papers

News Papers and Periodicals

Atlanta Constitution

Atlanta Daily World

Chicago Daily Tribune

Chicago Defender

Crisis

Crusader

Hartford Currant

Nation

New York Amsterdam News

New York Times

New York Tribune

Pittsburgh Courier

Washington Post

Books

Domingo, W.A. "The Gift of the Tropics". Ed Alain Locke *The New Negro: Voices of the Harlem Renaissance*. Simon and Schuster, New York. 1992 (first printed 1925).

Johnson, James Weldon. *Along This Way: The Autobiography of James Weldon Johnson*. New York: Viking Compass Press, 1933.

McKay, Claude. *Harlem: Negro Metropolis*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York 1968

Reid, Ira De A. *The Negro Immigrant: His Background, Characteristics and Social Adjustment 1899-1937*. AMS Press, New York. 1939 second printing 1970

Secondary Sources

Articles

Bellegarde-Smith, Patrick D. "Dantès Bellegarde and Pan-Africanism." *Phylon* (1960-), Vol. 42, No. 3 (3rd Qtr., 1981), pp. 233-244 Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/274920> .

Bryce-Laporte, Roy Simon. "Black immigrants: The Experience of Invisibility and Inequality". *Journal of Black Studies* 3 (1, Inequality and the Black Experience: Some International Dimensions) (Sep. 1972): pp. 29-56.

Clark, George P. "The Role of the Haitian Volunteers at Savannah in 1779: An Attempt at an Objective View." *Phylon* (1960-), Vol. 41, No. 4 (4th Qtr., 1980), pp. 356-366.

Cook, Mercer. "Dantès Bellegarde." *Phylon* (1940-1956), Vol. 1, No. 2 (2nd Qtr., 1940), pp. 125-135.

Cooper, Donald B. "The With-drawl of the United States From Haiti, 1928-1934" *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Jan., 1963), pp. 83-101.

Henry, Keith S. "The Black Political Tradition In New York: A Conjunction of Political Cultures". *Journal of Black Studies* 7 (4, Facing North America: Caribbean Political and Cultural Definitions) (Jun 1977): pp. 455-484.

James, Winston. "Explaining Afro-Caribbean Social Mobility in the United States: Beyond the Sowell Thesis". *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44 (2) (Apr 2002): pp. 218-262.

Jones, Edward A. "Phylon Profile, XX: Dantès Bellegarde--Miracle of Haiti" *Phylon* (1940-1956), Vol. 11, No. 1 (1st Qtr., 1950), pp. 16-22.

Levine, Robert S. "Frederick Douglass, War, Haiti." *PMLA*, Volume 124, Number 5, October 2009, pp. 1864–1868.

Logan, Rayford W. "James Weldon Johnson and Haiti." *Phylon* (1960-) 32.4 (1971): pp. 396-402.

Lowney, John. "Haiti and Black Transnationalism: Remapping the Migrant Geography of Home to Harlem." *African American Review* 34 (3) (Autumn 2000): pp. 413-429.

Munro, Dana. "The American Withdrawal from Haiti, 1929-1934." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Feb., 1969), pp. 1-26.

Pamphile, Léon Dénis. "The NAACP and the American Occupation of Haiti." *Phylon* (1960-) 47.1 (1986): pp. 91-100.

Patterson, Tiffany R., Robin D.G. Kelley. "Unfinished Migrations on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World." *African Studies Review*, Vol.43, No. 1, Special Issue on Diaspora (APR., 2000) pp.11-45.

Phillipson, Robert. "The Harlem Renaissance as Postcolonial Phenomenon." *African American Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Spring, 2006), pp. 145-160.

Plummer, Brenda Gayle. "The Afro-American Response to the Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934." *Phylon* (1960-) Vol. 43, No. 2 (2nd Qtr., 1982), pp. 125-143.

[Posner, Walter H. "American Marines in Haiti, 1915-1922." *The Americas* 20 \(January 1964\): 231-266](#)

Steins, Martin. "Brown France vs. Black Africa: The Tide Turned in 1932." *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 14, No. 4, Special Issue on African Literary History (Winter, 1983), pp. 474-497.

Stephens, Michelle Anne. "Black Transnationalism and the Politics of National Identity: West Indian Intellectuals in Harlem in the Age of War and Revolution". *American Quarterly* Vol. 50, No. 3 (Sep., 1998), pp. 592-608.

Books

Adi, Hakim. "The Negro Question: The Communist International and Black Liberation in the Interwar Years. ed. Michael O. West, William G. Martin, and Fanon Che Wilkins. *From Toussaint To Tupac: The Black International since the Age of Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2009.

Boittin, Jennifer Anne. *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 2010.

Breiner, Laurence A. *An Introduction To West Indian Poetry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1998.

Bush, Roderick D. *The End Of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 2009

Charras, Françoise. "The West Indian Presence in Alain Locke's *The New Negro*". *Geneviève Fabre and Michel Feith Temples for Tomorrow: Looking Back at the Harlem Renaissance*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 2001.

Childs, Matt D. "'A Black French General Arrived to Conquer the Island': Images of the Haitian Revolution in Cuba's 1812 Aponte Rebellion." *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, ed. David Patrick Geggus. pp. 135-156. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press. 2001.

Dash, J. Michael. *Haiti and the United States: National Stereotypes and the Literary Imagination*. 2nd ed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.

---. *Literature and Ideology in Haiti, 1915-1961*. Totowa, N.J.: Barnes & Noble Books, 1981.

Derrick, Jonathan. *Africa's 'Agitators': Militant Anti-Colonialism in Africa and the West, 1918-1939*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2008.

Dubois, Laurent. *Haiti: The After Shocks of History*. New York: Metropolitan Books. 2012

Edwards, Brent Hayes. *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation and the Rise of the Black International*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 2003.

Fabre, Michel. *From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in Paris 1840-1980*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press. 1991

Fowler, Carolyn. *A Knot in the Thread : The Life and Work of Jacques Roumain*. Washington: Howard University Press, 1980.

Forsythe, Dennis. "West Indian Radicalism in America: An Assessment of Ideologies" Ed Frances Henry *Ethnicity in the Americas*. Paris: Mouton Publishers. 1976

Gomez, Michael. "Introduction" ed. Michael Gomez. *Diasporic Africa: A Reader*. New York: New York University Press. 2008.

Hathaway, Heather. *Caribbean Waves : Relocating Claude McKay and Paule Marshall*. Bloomington : Indiana University Press. 1999.

Kasinitz, Philip. *Caribbean New York : Black Immigrants and the Politics of Race*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca. 1992.

- Langley, Lester D. *The Banana Wars :United States Intervention in the Caribbean: 1898-1934* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky. 1985.
- Lewis, David Levering. *When Harlem Was In Vogue*. New York: Penguin Books.1981.
- Makalani, Minkah. *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2011.
- McDuffie, Erik S. “[She] spent twenty minutes condemning all other forms of government but the Soviet”: Black Women Radicals in the Garvey Movement and in the Left during the 1920s” ed. Michael Gomez. *Diasporic Africa: A Reader*. New York: New York University Press. 2008.
- McKay, Claude. *Harlem: Negro Metropolis*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968.
- Osofsky, Gilbert *Harlem; The Making of A Ghetto; Negro New York, 1890-1930*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
- Ottley, Roi. *New World A-Coming*. New York: Arno Press. 1968.
- Pamphile, Léon Dénis. *Haitians and African Americans : A Heritage of Tragedy and Hope*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001.
- Putnam, Lara. “Nothing Matters but Color: Transnational Circuits, the Interwar Caribbean, and the Black International” ed. Michael O. West, William G. Martin, and Fanon Che Wilkins. *From Toussaint To Tupac: The Black International since the Age of Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.
- Renda, Mary A. *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- Schmidt, Hans. *The United States Occupation of Haiti 1915-1934*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1995.
- Schneider , Mark Robert “*We Return Fighting*” *The Civil Rights Movement in the Jazz Age*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002.
- Shannan, Magdaline W. *Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian Elite and the American Occupation 1915-1935*.
- Sharpley-Whiting , T. Denean. “Femme Negritude: Jane Nardal, La Dépeche Africaine, and the Francophone New Negro. Ed. Manning Marable and Vanessa Agard Jones. *Transnational Blackness: Navigating The Global Color Line*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan Press. 2008.

Simeon-Jones, Kersuze. *Literary and Sociopolitical Writings of the Black Diaspora in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Lanham: Lexington Books. 2010.

Stephens, Michelle Anne. *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals In The United States, 1914-1962*. Durham: Duke University Press. 2005.

Stoval, Tyler. *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Lights*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1996.

Turner, Joyce Moore. *Caribbean Crusaders and the Harlem Renaissance*. Urbana : University of Illinois Press. 2005.

Watkins-Owens, Irma. *Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants and the Harlem Community, 1900-1930*. Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1996.

-- "Early-Twentieth-Century Caribbean Women: Migration and Social Networks in New York City" Ed Nancy Foner. *Islands in the City: West Indian Migration to New York..* Berkeley: University of California Press 2001.

Walters, Wendy. "Writing the Diaspora in Black International Literature "With Wider Hope in Some More Benign Fluid" Diaspora Consciousness and Literary Expression". ed. Michael Gomez. *Diasporic Africa: A Reader*. New York: New York University Press. 2008.