

The Baltimore *Afro American's* Pan African Consciousness Agenda, 1915-1941

by

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Abstract

The Baltimore *Afro American* newspaper's support for a Pan-African consciousness agenda for its readers was a significant occurrence in the history of the Black press. In its support of Pan-Africanism, the *Afro American* advocated an African identity and forged a connection to Africa and other parts of the Diaspora for the local and national Black community. This paper uses a Pan-African paradigm to examine the *Afro American's* coverage of, and support for, three major Diaspora areas: Haiti, Liberia, and Ethiopia between 1914 and 1941. The *Afro American's* news coverage focused on political, social, and economic happenings that directly affected the global Black community.

The primary objective of this paper is to examine the definition of Pa-Africanism, and to discuss ways in which the *Afro American* put forth its own Pan-African agenda as it relates to each of the three Diaspora communities. Thus, the *Afro American's* coverage of Africa and the Diaspora demonstrates its Pan-Africanist views and adds to the current scholarship on Pan-African thought.

The *Afro American* and The Black Press

The Baltimore *Afro American*, one of the leading Black newspapers of the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, attempted to forge a reconnection to Africa and other parts of the Diaspora with the aim that African Americans would begin to identify the similarities in their individual and shared experiences with other Africans. These similarities were intended to raise their level of consciousness, as well as to forge a level of Black solidarity for Blacks globally. A sample of the *Afro American*'s Pan African agenda was evident in its coverage of the African Diaspora in three areas, Haiti, Liberia, and Ethiopia between 1915 and 1941.

Hence, the primary objective of this paper is to use the case of the Baltimore *Afro American* and its coverage of global issues that affected Blacks within the United States and in three Diaspora communities, and to examine the relationship and coverage of Pan African issues by the Black press. This paper will also address several relevant questions with regard to the type of Pan African agenda the newspaper advocated (i.e. conservative, moderate, or radical Pan-Africanism) and whether the news coverage is characterized by a theoretical or applied Pan Africanist model. The analysis will borrow from definitions of Pan Africanism that were provided by scholars such as Sylvia M. Jacobs, St. Claire Drake, and Jeremiah I. Dibia. Finally, the paper will propose new criteria for defining Pan Africanism, specifically as it relates to Black newspapers.¹

Historical Background: An Introduction

The Black press is perhaps one of the most significant yet underused sources for examining African American views from within the African American community. While primary papers of leading civil rights organizations and prominent African American leaders and church organizations provide important insights into the African American experience, the Black press' contribution has much to add to our understanding of Black thought, and more specifically, Pan African consciousness.

Unlike the Black church, the press with its editorials, opinion pieces and letters to the editor, offered a multi layered perspective and an array of voices for the Black community which was not always included in religious rhetoric. The Black press reached a far greater constituency than its circulation figures reflected. Through individuals, families, barbershops, salons, churches, social and civic organizations, Black newspapers circulated the community. The Black press covered the full range of human experiences. From births, marriages and deaths to college graduation and higher achievements in academia, the Black press gave voice to its readers.²

The Black press, with regards to Africa, provided a forum for debate about Africa's meaning and relevance in Black America. Although the influence of African American leadership on the Black community and the Black press was weighed heavily at times, the Black press sometimes stood boldly against leadership and provided an alternative view for the Black community. For example, during the early part of the twentieth century leaders like Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and Marcus M. Garvey reacted to worldwide activities that affected Blacks in Haiti, Liberia, and Ethiopia. The reactions of these leaders were sometimes supported by the *Afro American* and other times disregarded as disparate. In the case of DuBois and Garvey's views on Liberia, the *Afro American* reaction was decidedly different from both leaders. However, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia ignited a stronger reaction from African American leadership as well as the Black press. The main goal of the Press in the twentieth century was to reflect a perspective which centered on its concern for the region and those of the Black community.

Front page news coverage was very symbolic in the Black press. For the *Afro American* newspaper the image of Africa and America appeared on its masthead. This was a constant reminder of the connection between America and Africa and continues to appear in its current weekly newspaper. There on the front page of the newspaper, readers could find explicit connections made between their experiences in the United States with Blacks in the Diaspora. For example, during the 1930's reports on lynching and other violent acts that were committed against Blacks in the United States were a constant focus in the press. Additionally, readers would also find articles related to European colonization of Africa, African resistance to European domination, as well as news on the varied cultural expressions of the African continent. Beginning with the first Black newspaper, editors expressed their desire to have "Africa at the center of the column, proving that natives were not stupid or uncivilized."³ This idea was vital to the development of cohesion not only within the national Black community, but also between African Americans and African people dispersed throughout Africa and other parts of the world. Thus, the coverage not only informed Blacks but also helped to elevate morale and build a sense of collective consciousness.⁴

Nineteenth and early twentieth century scholars have paid close attention to global events and its relation to the experience of Blacks nationally. Robin D.G. Kelly's timely article, "But a Local Phase of a World Problem': Black History's Global Vision, 1883-1950" provides examples of the diasporic nature of Black scholarship. Kelly's article helps to center this current discussion into the broader framework of Pan African consciousness among African Americans. He explores the idea of transnational perspectives in African American thought. In Kelly's assertion, historians, writers, and activists defined themselves as part of a larger Black community, or as a part of an "African Diaspora." Additionally, Kelly argues that the expressed support of emigration by Blacks became a central issue in Black political discourse and thus became a critical topic for historical investigation.⁵

Kelly believes that the nature of Pan African ideology espoused by historians and activists was born out of their sense of a diasporic identity that can also be described as “imagined community.” He explained the difference between diasporic identity and nationalisms. First, unlike nationalist sentiment, the African Diaspora is not a sovereign territory with defined boundaries. Rather it has been limited to people of African descent who share a single culture and historical roots, regardless of location, and language. Moreover, many in the Diaspora view themselves as an oppressed nation without a homeland, or choose Africa as their homeland.⁶ Examples of Black press coverage indicate that the press utilized the same approach used by historians to write the history of Blacks. For example, in the early twentieth century, when the United States military occupied Haiti and European domination in Africa progressed, African Americans developed renewed sentiments toward other members of the African Diaspora. These events, occupation and colonization, gave rise to anti colonial sentiments that Garvey expressed, as well as the protests of radical magazines and newspapers.⁷

The historical writings and scholars Kelly chose to focus on such as W. E. B. DuBois, Rayford W. Logan, Carter G. Woodson, and many others, serve as examples of the continual global ideology as highlighted in their scholarship. The Baltimore *Afro American* printed articles by many of these scholars including, Logan, Woodson, and DuBois. Therefore, Kelly’s article provides adequate support for the kind of “global vision” or Pan African ideology the *Afro American* newspaper adopted in the twentieth century.⁸

Defining Pan Africanism in the Black Press

Pan Africanism in Black newspapers can be defined as a fluid model that encompasses elements of all three theories that were outlined by Jacobs, Drake, and Dibua. It includes common destiny and history, social, political, religious, and cultural aspects for unification of the global Black community. It also utilizes a hierarchal framework, in which, culture influences the press’ support of specific political and economic agendas. What is critical in the present conception of Pan Africanism espoused by the press is the importance of region and its history. Hence, Diasporic region impacted the type of Pan Africanism the press adopted. Moreover, depending on the history and seeming destiny of the diaspora region, and the Black press’ identification or connection to the particular region, Pan Africanist ideas the newspaper espoused reflected a moderate, conservative, or radical tone.

Also, questions that can be included in the analysis are: What regional ties are felt by the press and why? What did the region desire for itself? Did the press share similar aspirations for the region? Did the press coverage extend beyond reporting on the region or did it become directly involved? And finally, how did press involvement impact communities on both sides of the Diaspora?

Toward a Pan African Agenda

The *Afro American* employed several tactics to call African American attention toward the global African community. Not only did the *Afro American* attempt to forge a symbolic connection between African Americans and other Africans across the Diaspora, but it also developed and supported concrete measures to carry out its mission. Using Haiti, Liberia, and Ethiopia as case studies, the evidence of the *Afro American's* Pan African consciousness agenda is compelling.

There are several supporting factors that proved the newspaper's commitment to a Pan African agenda for the global Black community. In the case of Haiti, the *Afro American's* coverage began weeks prior to the U.S. military deployment to the island and continued through the occupation. Every week beginning in 1915 through 1934, Haiti received front-page coverage as well as commentary in the editorial section of the paper. On the editorial page of the paper the publishers, editors, and journalists expressed their opinion and furthered their Pan African agenda. Therefore, if one did not fully understand the perspective of the paper by reading the front cover headlines, the editorial section made the newspaper's position obvious to readers.

Pan African Agenda for Liberia/Ethiopia

Front page and editorial coverage of Liberia and Ethiopia was equally provocative. Bold headlines like *Slavery in Liberia* appeared in the *Afro American* during its early coverage of Liberia. The *Afro American* raised questions like, Should the descendents of enslaved Africans be slavers? What should be the appropriate course of action to ensure freedom and justice for all Africans? What would be the Pan African course of action that would strengthen the relationship between African Americans and Liberians? These questions illustrate the complex nature of the *Afro American* and the Liberia connection.⁹

Initially, the regional connection and type of Pan Africanist coverage the *Afro American* provided was related to African American cultural and historical ties to Liberia. However the notion of liberating Africa became problematic for the *Afro American* when African-American returnees were accused of being slavers or colonizers of other Africans in Liberia. While the idea of emancipating Africa from colonial occupation and improving the condition of Black people worldwide was a key element in the newspaper's concept of Pan Africanism; The *Afro American* expressed condemnation and disgust toward Liberian leaders who were accused of allowing such atrocities against fellow Africans to occur. The *Afro American* related the experience of Black enslavement in the U.S. to the conditions that indigenous Liberians suffered at the hands of their leaders.

The *Afro American* angle on the slavery issue was provocative because it differed from the opinion of leading Pan-Africanist like DuBois, Nnamdi Azikiwe, and George Padmore. While Du Bois criticized African Americans who expressed disappointment with Liberian officials for allowing slave like conduct to exist, the *Afro American*, utilized a radical Pan Africanist approach, and defended the indigenous population.¹⁰

Ethiopia's front-page coverage was equally suggestive. Headlines like *Afro Readers Ready To Raise A Regiment*, and *Volunteers for Abyssinia* were featured for several consecutive weeks. The *Afro American* campaign for Ethiopia borrowed from several aspects of Pan African ideology. Between 1928 and 1935 the *Afro American* connection to Ethiopia focused on the religious ties between African descendents and Ethiopia. Immigration, race vindication, and economic support to Ethiopia became major components of the *Afro American* Pan African ideology during Italian aggression toward Ethiopia and throughout the occupation.¹¹

During the 1930's the promotion of race consciousness and solidarity with Ethiopia resounded within the *Afro American's* pages. In the words of historian James Meriwether, "by claiming the solidarity of Black people across the span of thousands of miles, African Americans animated strands of thinking seen in earlier black nationalist and Pan-African thought: the emphasis on unity, the desire for a strong nationality, the promotion of black pride, the aim of ending white supremacy."¹²

Leadership within the *Afro American* News Organization

Carl Murphy's role as the president and chief editor of the *Afro American* greatly impacted the news coverage as it related to the Diaspora. Carl Murphy was a local businessman, journalist, and scholar who thought globally. He was well educated and well traveled. Murphy had established relationships with many of the brightest and most knowledgeable scholars and students of the Diaspora. He often sought their expertise to report on the Diaspora as was indicated in the Haitian and Liberian coverage. *Afro American* reporters were equally valuable. The practice of sending reporters abroad not only to cover the news firsthand for *Afro American* readers, but to directly involve themselves in the areas they covered, was extraordinary. During the occupation of Haiti, Carl Murphy traveled to Haiti as an unofficial member of the Robert R. Moton Commission. His main interest was to investigate the Haitian situation first hand. Secondly, he wanted to provide *Afro American* readers with a clear understanding of the importance of Haiti's position in the world. Thus to connect Haiti's experience with the experience of Blacks in the U.S. Equally important was the *Afro American's* mission to find some aspects of the Diaspora experience to hold up to the Black community as a positive image.¹³

Another example of the *Afro American's* direct involvement in Diaspora issues was shown during William N. Jones' good will mission to Liberia. In 1933, Jones, *Afro American* journalist and contributing editor received an invitation from Liberian Minister and future President Barclay to serve as a goodwill ambassador to Liberia. Jones' involvement in Liberia went beyond reports about Liberia and its labor crisis. Following his extensive travel throughout Liberia, Jones developed the "Save Liberia Plan," designed to develop economic, political, and educational networks between Liberians and African Americans.¹⁴

Following the Italo-Ethiopian war both Jones and Ralph Mathews, another *Afro American* journalist traveled abroad to investigate the situation. In Geneva, Jones witnessed Emperor Haile Selassie denounce the League of Nations for failing to uphold its agreement to protect its own members from occupation. Even after Selassie left Ethiopia, the newspaper continued to focus its Diaspora discussion on the country.¹⁵

Applied Pan Africanism: Economic, Political and Military Support

The *Afro American* encouraged political and economic ties between Black people in the Diaspora, with Blacks in the U.S. In the case of Ethiopia, there was a push by the *Afro American* for Blacks to join political organizations that were developed to provide support to Ethiopia. The *Afro American*, along with many Black organizations and clubs, was appalled by Italy's attack against the nation that was important to Blacks throughout the world. Ethiopia symbolized Black achievement, freedom, power, and African Independence. Italy's challenge to Ethiopia became a mobilizing factor, which sparked diasporic solidarity through political and economic support for Ethiopia. The *Afro American* became actively involved through its endorsement of Ethiopian organizations in the U. S. through its coverage of the many lectures and rallies that were held on behalf of Ethiopia, and through its volunteer campaign for the Ethiopian army.¹⁶

Another aspect of the *Afro American's* application of a Pan African ideology was its support for emigration to all three Diaspora areas. The *Afro American* felt that well-trained African Americans would potentially be more prosperous in areas that were governed by Black people. Moreover, they believed that skilled and educated African Americans possessed knowledge that would help to ensure the success of independent Black nations. In the case of Ethiopia, the *Afro American's* call for Blacks to enlist in Haile Selassie's military was by far the most radical example of the newspaper's advocacy for connections between diaspora groups.¹⁷

Foreign Policy Advocacy

Finally, the *Afro American's* coverage and criticism of U.S. presidents and their foreign policy agenda toward Africa and the Diaspora was one of the most noted battles waged by the *Afro American*. Its mission to recognize and validate the experience and desire of both the national and global Black community was demonstrated in its involvement with U.S. foreign policy. In Henry Lewis Suggs' analysis of the Black Press influence on U.S. foreign policy in Haiti, he argued that the press did not change the character and scope of policy. Rather, Suggs contended, U.S. policy was predicated primarily on security requirements and U.S. capitalist interests. Although one would agree that the press's views on U.S. operations in Haiti may not have been the determining factor in ending the military occupation, this study highlights the role that the *Afro American* played in calling the governments attention to its foreign policy agenda in Haiti and Liberia.¹⁸

The U.S. government's willingness to allow an all Black commission, which included Carl Murphy, to investigate Haiti during the occupation meant that it was aware of African American sentiments toward Haiti. In fact, records from the Department of State relating to Carl Murphy and the Baltimore *Afro American* coverage provide proof of the government's concern about the Black press. In a letter written to the U.S. Secretary of State, from Stuart E. Grummon, Charge d'Affaires in Haiti, Grummon responded to *Afro American* articles that were written by Murphy during his trip to Haiti. In several articles Murphy outlined some of the most important issues that he wanted *Afro American* readers to know. He discussed the positive reception that Commission members received from Haitians, the results of the Commission's study of Haiti's educational system and social affairs, the student protests at the U.S. controlled agricultural college, and the political crisis. Grummon expressed serious concerns about Murphy's "prejudiced article" on the student protests and political climate which he believed "accentuated the resentment and agitation against the intervention by the Nationalist faction here." Grummon also expressed concerns about Haitian sentiments toward Murphy. He believed the Haitian people accorded too much credibility to Murphy.¹⁹

Murphy's presence, the State Department believed, influenced a significant portion of the Haitian population to protest against the occupation. The State Department records also illustrate that there was a concern about Black press coverage and its impact on African Americans especially when press coverage was the major vehicle of disseminating news that was important to Black people. Therefore, the U.S. government must have been concerned about keeping the critical reaction of the African American press to a minimum. A negative reaction from members of the Black press could potentially spark resentment from a section of the population and the government hoped to prevent that from happening. Therefore, the Black press's involvement in and coverage of Haiti must have impacted some aspect of U.S. foreign policy with regards to the Diaspora.²⁰

In the case of Liberia and Ethiopia, the *Afro American's* approach to covering U.S. foreign policy was no less forceful. In fact, the U.S. Department of State became aware of William Jones and the *Afro American's* "Save Liberia Plan." In a classified letter to the U. S. Secretary of State dated November 20, 1933, the British Embassy warned that William N. Jones had been in England and had made contact with George Padmore. The Embassy officials were obviously unaware that Jones was en route to Liberia on a good will mission. Although the Embassy was neither familiar with Jones nor knowledgeable of the importance of the *Afro American* news, it deemed it necessary to contact the Department of State to enquire about Jones. The memos that were transmitted between the U.S. and London show the concern U.S. and foreign officials felt about keeping a watchful eye on African Americans and especially the press.²¹

Unfortunately for the *Afro American*, Ethiopia did not cause a major reaction from the U.S. government. The refusal of the U.S. to involve itself in Italian aggression there infuriated the *Afro American*. The U.S. had no security issue, territorial stake, or important economic interest in Ethiopia. Therefore, Roosevelt did not feel pressure to become involved in the Ethiopian-Italian conflict. More importantly, James Meriwether's study pointed out those efforts within the Black community and among its leadership may have impacted the success that African Americans hoped for during the Italian aggression in Ethiopia. Organizations like the NAACP tried to arrange a powerful delegation, which included Carl Murphy, to lobby the U.S. government and the League of Nations to denounce Mussolini but was hampered because of the leadership's inability to devise a plan that could be agreed upon by all members of the organization. However, the refusal of the U.S. to involve itself in Ethiopia did not squash the *Afro American's* commitment to keep Ethiopia at the forefront of important issues in the global Black community.²²

Still Not A Popular Cause: The *Afro American* Toward the End of the Second World War

The *Afro American's* attempt to forge a connection between African Diaspora groups was no small undertaking. Its commitment to these groups, the level of sophistication in its coverage, and the Pan Africanist giants that it attracted made its mission all the more substantial. However, the relationship between African Diaspora groups shifted after the Second World War and the *Afro American's* coverage began to reflect the change in Diaspora relations.

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia helped to spark the organized Post World War II African Nationalist Movement. Both Africans and African Americans fought in the War to win the rights of their respective country, or in the case of Africa, their colonizer's territory, to stamp out oppressive nations like Germany and Italy. They each returned home with a renewed sense of hope that their sacrifice for their country would bring forth equal rights and freedom at home. Sadly, that was not the case for African Americans or for their African "brethren."

On the other side of the Atlantic, African Americans continued their fight for human rights and equality in America, while at the same time keeping one eye on Africa. Although the *Afro American* did not lose its interest in the Diaspora, it can be argued that it felt less pressure to maintain its intense focus on Africa, especially since the Pan African movement adopted another shape during the Post World War II era. More importantly for the *Afro American*, African leaders such as Nkrumah, and Azikiwe appeared to embody the type of leadership that the newspaper forcefully advocated. Moreover, internal problems in America began to take center stage in the *Afro American* news. With one eye on Africa, the *Afro American* focused on supporting NAACP efforts to win civil rights through the courts. Carl Murphy's quest to secure equal rights for African Americans therefore became an important mission for him personally, and for the type of news that the *Afro American* would cover between 1945 and 1957.

Conclusion

Examining the Black press, more specifically, the *Afro American's* discourse about Africa and the Diaspora helps to increase our understanding of the relationship between Diaspora communities toward Africa. It also adds another dimension to existing scholarship on the Black press and Pan African thought, and ways to examine important concerns in Black American thought in the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century.

In addressing the broad subject matter, this paper included many pertinent applied and theoretical forms of Pan Africanist ideology. Hence, as it relates to the Black press' coverage of the Diaspora, Pan Africanism can be defined as a dynamic concept as opposed to a static theory. While applied Pan Africanism has a concrete practical application for abstract or theoretical concepts; theoretical Pan Africanism advances symbolic connections to Africa from Diaspora communities. Finally, both applied and theoretical Pan Africanism may advocate an African identity based on origin and shared oppression among Africa and the African Diaspora. With regard to the initial question related to the type of Pan African consciousness the newspaper advocated, the *Afro American's* Pan African agenda could be situated within conservative, radical, or moderate forms of Pan Africanism. However its coverage also elucidates the notion that both applied and theoretical Pan Africanism, whether romanticized or radical, can be used in isolation or simultaneously as a part of an overall theoretical construct.

Notes

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¹ Jacobs's article entitled, "Pan-African Consciousness Among Afro-Americans" defined Pan-Africanism as the idea or belief that all people of African descent, no matter where they are located, have a common destiny and history and should work together for the liberation and improvement of Black people everywhere. See, Sylvia M. Jacobs, "Pan-African Consciousness Among Afro-Americans," in *Black Studies: Theory, Method and Cultural Perspective*, ed. Talmadge Anderson (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1990), 68-75. Drake's article, "Diaspora Studies and Pan-Africanism," points out that in addition to Pan-African emphasis on solidarity between Black people globally; it has also been its emphasis on both cultural and political activity that has added to its distinctive characteristics. He argued that both cultural and political activity have always been present with the former reinforcing the latter. See also, St Clair Drake, "Diaspora Studies and Pan-Africanism," in *The Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*, ed. Joseph E. Harris (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1993), 451-514. Dibua's article entitled, "Pan-Africanism" provides a broader definition of Pan-Africanism. He adds that Pan-Africanism is a multifaceted approach that included political, economic, cultural, and religious aspects in the struggle for the unification, rehabilitation, and regeneration of peoples of African descent in all parts of the world Also see, Jeremiah I. Dibua, "Pan-Africanism," in *Africa: The End of Colonial Rule Nationalism and Decolonization*, ed. Toyin Falola, vol 4 (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), 29-48.

²Lauren Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History*, (Beverly Hills, London and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1984), 22-23. See also, Stanley Nelson, *The Black Press: Soldiers Without Swords*, (California: Newsreel Film Company, 1998) 86 minutes.

³ *Freedom's Journal*, March 16, 1827, masthead of first edition. Samuel E. Cornish and John B. Russwurm were the editors of the first Black newspaper.

⁴*The Black Press: Soldiers Without Swords*, (1998).

⁵There are a myriad of sources that provide an in-depth discussion of Pan African ideology and its development. Some of the most comprehensive works include Immanuel Geiss, *The Pan African Movement: A History of Pan Africanism in America, Europe, and Africa* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1974), George Shepperson, "Pan-Africanism and pan-Africanism: Some Historical Notes, *Phylon* 23 (Winter 1962): 346-358. Also, see George Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism? The Coming Struggle for Africa* (London: Denis Dobson, 1956),

And also, see, St. Clair Drake, *The Redemption of Africa and Black Religion* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1970). For a detailed discussion of the influence of African American nationalism on African nationalism, see J. Ayodele Langeley, *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973). See also, C. L. R. James, *A History of Pan-African Revolt* (Washington, D. C.: Drum and Spear Press, 1969) For this article See, Robin D. G. Kelly, "But A Local Phase of a World Problem: Black History's Global Vision, 1883-1950," *Journal of American History*, 83 (December, 1999): 1045-1077. See also, Sylvia M. Jacobs, "Pan-African Consciousness Among Afro-Americans," *Black Studies: Theory, Method and Cultural Perspective*, ed. By Talmadge Anderson, (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1990): 68-75.

⁶ Robin D. G. Kelly, "But A Local Phase of a World Problem," *Journal of American History*, 83 (December, 1999): 1045-1077.

⁷Ibid., 1076.

⁸See Baltimore *Afro American* newspaper articles in January 15, 1927, June 14, 21, 28, and July 12, 26, November 12, 1930. See, Rayford W. Logan, *The Diplomatic Relation Between the United States and Haiti, 1776-1891*, Harvard University, Ph.D. Dissertation (1936). Rayford Logan's Haiti investigation was printed in the Baltimore *Afro American*, July 7, 14, 28, August 11, 18, 25, September 8, 1934. Carter G. Woodson, *The Miseducation of the Negro* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers Inc., 1933). See also, the *Afro American's* reference to Carter G. Woodson's publication in Baltimore *Afro American*, November 11, 1933.

⁹ In the opinion of some, it was argued that descendants of enslaved Africans were themselves virtually enslaving their brethren; which was a sign that Liberia had failed as an independent Black nation. Racists regarded the failure as an example of Black incapacity. The attacks that were launched against Blacks inspired some Black elites to aid in the defense of the Liberian elite. Overwhelmingly, the literature of journalists, Black intellectuals, and the Black middleclass began to reflect their desire to vindicate the race and dismiss the wrongdoing of their brethren. On August 17, 1929 the *Afro American* printed an editorial entitled "Slavery in Liberia" it read... its strange that Liberia, founded as an asylum for slaves freed from their chains in America, should permit the nefarious system to continue...In light of this evidence friends of the West African republic want not a commission to investigate, but expects slavery and forced labor to end to end once and for all. After the U.S. State Department commission filed its report the *Afro American* urged Liberian officials to end slavery. See *Afro American*, October 25, 1930. For a detailed discussion of racist attacks that were stated by U.S. officials in response to the Liberian scandal see, I.K. Sundiata, "The Liberia Lobbies," in *Black Scandal: America and the Liberian Labor Crisis, 1929-1936*. (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1980, pp. 81-106.

¹⁰ Baltimore *Afro American*, August 17, September 21, 1929. See, W. E. B. Du Bois, "Pan-African and New Racial Philosophy, *The Crisis*, XL (November, 1933): 247-262. See also, Ben N. Azikiwe, *Liberia in World Politics*, (London: A.W. Stockwell, 1935), 245, Ben Azikiwe, "In Defense of Liberia", *Journal of Negro History*, XVII, 1 (January, 1932): 30-50, George Padmore, *Pan Africanism or Communism*, (London, 1956), 148. Also, Marcus Garvey was supportive of Black emigration to Africa. He supported African liberation from European powers, and strengthening economic ties between African Americans and Africa. Garvey's desire for Liberia was for it to serve as the center for the UNIA's headquarters as well as the destination for African returnees from America. See Amy J. Garvey, *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* (New York, 1923).

¹¹ Baltimore *Afro American*, February 23, 1935. In this particular issue the paper printed five letters to the editor from *Afro American* readers. See Robert F. Stansbury to Editor, "Abyssinia Should Strike First," and also, "Abyssinia Will Defend Her Temple of Freedom." Rienzi B. Lemus, to Editor, "Thinks Abyssinians Can Lick Mussolini." See, Otho Hill, to Editor, "Picture Boycott Suggested," Baltimore *Afro American*, February 23, 1935.

¹² Baltimore *Afro American*, March 9, 1935. The editorial section includes letters to the editor from the global Black community in response to their sentiments toward Africa and Ethiopia. Dongtoss Papapio of London, England, James Smith of the Virgin Islands, and African Americans from varying parts of the U.S. were featured in William Jones, "Day By Day" column. See Also, James H. Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 45.

¹³ Baltimore *Afro American*, "Haitians Resent Intrusion by the U.S.," August 28, November 20, 1915. See also, Baltimore *Afro American*, June 14, 21, 28, and July 12, 26, and December 6, 1930. See also *Report of the United States Commission on Education in Haiti, October 1, 1930*, The Department of State, Latin American Series, no. 5, (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1931), 66-74.

¹⁴ Baltimore *Afro American*, November 23, 1933 through June 23, 1934.

¹⁵ "AME's Pray for Abyssinia," Baltimore *Afro American*, February 23, 1935. See also, "Pray for Ethiopia," Baltimore *Afro American*, March 2, 1935. "Solomon, Queen of Sheba Founded Ethiopian Lore," Baltimore *Afro American*, March 9, 1935. "Beale Street Has All-Night Prayer for Ethiopia," Baltimore *Afro American*, August 3, 1935. "Ethiopia's Prayer," "Prophecy Comes True," Baltimore *Afro American*, October 12, 1935. "Solomon's Ark Is in Ethiopia," and November 12, 1935. Baltimore *Afro American*, February 15, April, 11, July 25, 1936. See also, Baltimore *Afro American*, October 8, November 26, 1938, and April 29, 1939. Also, Baltimore *Afro American*, September 16, 1939 and June 22, 1940.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Baltimore *Afro American*, February 23, March 2, 9, 16, November 2, 23, 1935.

¹⁸ Henry Lewis Suggs, "The Response of the African American Press to the United States Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934," *Journal of African American History*, 87 (Winter 2002):70-82.

¹⁹ A thorough investigation of State Department records as well as Foreign Service records should indicate a true sense of the Government's perspective on the Black press as well as illustrate important aspects of the Black press' influence on U.S. Foreign Policy. For the purpose of this paper see, Letter from U.S. Charge d'Affaires Stuart E. Grummon to U.S. Secretary of State, September 1, 1930 (U.S. Department of State Records, RG 59 Decimal File 838.42-Moton Commission/26), NARA.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ London Embassy to U.S. Department of State, RG 59 Decimal File Classified document (800.00B-Jones William N./1)., NARA.

²² James H. Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black America and Africa, 1935-1963*, (2002), 36-37.

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