Du Bois as Diplomat:
Race Diplomacy in *Foreign Affairs*, 1926-1945

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Introduction

This article explores W.E.B. Du Bois' involvement in foreign policy during the volatile post-World War I years through his series of essays directed to policy architects, specialists, and diplomats published in *Foreign Affairs* from 1925-1945. Primarily, this article explores how Du Bois' writings in *Foreign Affairs* reflect his self-appointed role as a scholar-diplomat. The term scholar-diplomat refers to the relationship that Du Bois developed among several audiences as a *de facto* representative for African Americans, Africa, and the African Diaspora. His writings in *Foreign Affairs* represent a broad characterization of the global black experience a rapidly changing world.[1] While most of the recent scholarship on Du Bois' contributions to the international discourse on race tend to focus on the second wave of his most productive period of writing following World War II, the prior articles that Du Bois contributed to *Foreign Affairs* gives us insight into how he was processing some of his earliest travels and organizational work in the first four Pan-African Congresses from 1919-1927.

Du Bois used his clout as the preeminent race scholar in the United States to translate concerns of racial inequality to the discourse of international relations. He did so by intellectually, strategically, and vicariously engaging three particular audiences. First, Du Bois wrote to an academic audience of intellectuals who were advancing their own theories about race and the role of people of color in the world. Du Bois' "brilliant but biased pen," as Clark University sociologist Robert C. Dexter put it in his 1922 review of *The Negro Problem*, was engaging major debates of race scholarship during the interwar years. Du Bois provided a neglected black critical perspective amongst other leading intellectuals of his day.

Second, Du Bois understood that these articles were read and acknowledged by major political figures and policymakers of the day. During this same period, Du Bois strategically wrote and attempted to meet with numerous

[1] I would like to acknowledge a former colleague Robert Kane for a series of discussions on W.E.B. Du Bois' ideas during the Woodrow Wilson presidency that contributed to some of the early ideas of this project. These discussions explored African American ideas of race particularly as they related Japan and other non-white nations. See Kane, "Race and Representation: Japan and the Limits of a Wilsonian Democratic Peace," *White House Studies* 10, no. 4 (April 2011): 379–406. I am also graciously indebted to the Africana Cultures and Policy Studies Institute for feedback provided through the Scholars Roundtable Workshops.

heads of state, including Woodrow Wilson and Georges Clemenceau, and business leaders such as Harry Firestone. Although he often attempted to press his way into the discussion of global politics among white world leaders, he was much more successful in meeting with African dignitaries such as Liberia's Charles King and Senegal's Blaise Diagne. He may have turned to *Foreign Affairs* as the most effective platform for disseminating his ideas to white statesmen outside his immediate sphere of influence. From the very beginning of the publication, Du Bois attempted to use his academic expertise to mold political opinion on major political issues of the day in an advocacy role for the African diaspora.

Third, these articles reflect how Du Bois was not only writing on *behalf* of Africa and its' diaspora, he was writing *to* them, vicariously incorporating his presence among African leaders and visits to the continent to leverage his position as the legitimate representative of the black world.

The period between the World Wars was a volatile period in American foreign affairs but also in Du Bois' intellectual development. Du Bois in many ways was still smarting from his decision to back Woodrow Wilson for President in 1912 and reevaluating his having urged of African Americans to "close ranks" and support American efforts in World War I. Du Bois had not yet absolved his aspirations for full participation in the American system but was simultaneously advancing Pan-Africanism as a framework for African American global solidarity.[2]

Foreign Affairs has been a unique publication that enabled readers to consider how international policy questions of the era were engaged by leading minds. The work is an important source to examine Du Bois' contributions to the discourse of international affairs. Du Bois' articles published in the magazine give us insight on his writing to a specific audience, an informed reader inclined to use data in foreign policy discussions and implementation. Importantly, Du Bois' writings in *Foreign Affairs* allow us to examine his work in a broader intellectual context to better understand how his ideas differed from political thought in the academic mainstream.

The scholarly magazine was founded in 1922 and published by the Council on Foreign Relations (founded 1920-21) with the goal of improving the understanding of U.S. foreign policy and international affairs. The mission of the

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[2] Du Bois had withdrawn from the Socialist Party to support Wilson's candidacy. Kenneth M. Glazier, "W.E.B. Du Bois' Impressions of Woodrow Wilson," *The Journal of Negro History* 58.4 (October 1, 1973): 452–453; Du Bois' letter to Woodrow Wilson in March of 1913, vicariously representing African America, reminded the newly elected president: "We black men by our votes helped to put you in your high position. It is true that in your overwhelming triumph at the polls that you might have succeeded without our aid, but the fact remains that our votes helped elect you this time, and that the time may easily come in the near future when without our 500,000 ballots neither you nor your party can control the government." Du Bois, "An Open Letter," in *Selections from the Crisis*. Herbert Aptheker, Ed. Kraus-Thomson, 1983, 51; Gerald Horne, "Race from Power: U.S. Foreign Policy and the General Crisis of 'White Supremacy,'" in *The Ambiguous Legacy: U.S. Foreign Relations in the "American Century,"* Michael J Hogan, Ed, Cambridge University Press, 1999, 302–336.

magazine was to "promote the discussion of current questions of international interest."[3] *Foreign Affairs* was established by seventy-five academics and experts in international affairs, an outgrowth of two previous publications: *The Journal of Race Development* (July 1910-April 1919) and *The Journal of International Relations* (January 1920−April 1922). Race was a trope in each of these phases of the publication's evolution, from articles in the 1910s focusing on India and "primitives" of Africa and their "dusky" descendants in North America to diatribes against empire by Raymond Buell, Evans Lewin, and Jean Roche.[4]

Foreign Affairs became a platform for the some of the most prominent scholars and political leaders to engage international issues and public opinion.[5] Du Bois' writings in *Foreign Affairs* have been overlooked in much of the existing literature on his thought. While numerous historians such as Gerald Horne, Brenda Gayle Plummer, and David Levering Lewis have addressed the internationalism of Du Bois and blacks abroad, these works tend to emphasize the developments of the *Foreign Affairs* years as part of the broader narrative of Du Bois' post-World War II experiences. Azza Layton's *International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States, 1941-1960* also examines various aspects of Du Bois' involvement in international developments relating to racial justice. Layton takes up Du Bois and his contributions to Pan-Africanism focusing on how he set the stage for an emerging generation of activists that used international pressure to challenge racial segregation but her work also pushes the reader to consider the long-term impact of the domestic agenda of the civil rights era.[6]

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[3] "Editorial Statement." *Foreign Affairs* 1.1 (September 15, 1922): 1–2.

[4] *The Journal of Race Development* ran from 1910 to 1919 and was succeeded by the *Journal of International Relations* from 1919-1922. Du Bois was not the only African American on the board. George Washington Ellis, who also served as a later editor of the journal, wrote for the journal and admired Du Bois. Vernon J. Williams Jr., "A Gifted Amateur: The Case of George Washington Ellis," *American Anthropologist* 104.2 (June 1, 2002): 544–550; The Council on Foreign Relations has received attention from a variety of critical perspectives in recent years. The standard history of the CFR is detailed in Robert D. Schulzinger, *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs: The History of the Council on Foreign Relations.* Columbia University Press, 1984; A recent work on the history of Foreign Affairs can also be examined in Peter Grose's *Continuing the Inquiry: The Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996.* Council on Foreign Relations, 2006; James Perloff, *The Shadows of Power: The Council on Foreign Relations and the American Decline.* Western Islands, 1988; Laurence H. Shoup, *Imperial Brain Trust: The Council On Foreign Relations And United States Foreign Policy.* Author's Press, 2004.

[5] For example, President Franklin D. Roosevelt used *Foreign Affairs* to voice the Democratic foreign policy platform in 1928, Leon Trotsky wrote on autarchy in 1934, and the famed British historian H.G. Wells wrote in July of 1935 of "Civilization on Trial." William Hyland, "*Foreign Affairs* at 70." *Foreign Affairs* 71.4 (Fall 1992).

[6] Gerald Horne. "Toward a Transnational Research Agenda for African American History in the 21st Century," *The Journal of African American History* 91.3 (July 1, 2006): 288–303; David L. Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois, 1919-1963: The Fight for Equality and the American Century.* Macmillan, 2001; Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960.* University of North Carolina Press, 1996; Azza Salama Layton, *International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States, 1941 – 1960.* Cambridge University Press,

Of all the articles submitted during this period, Du Bois' writings in *Foreign Affairs* reflected most critically on the global dilemma of race after the most destructive war then known to humankind—a story significant within itself. Africans had paid a tremendous price in sacrificing their labor and lives on the Western and Middle Eastern fronts of the war for the defense of competing colonial powers. When World War I broke out, many African colonies had been forced to declare support for their metropoles regardless of whether economic or geopolitical interests were aligned elsewhere.[7] This decision of allegiance was significant in the case of Liberia, where Du Bois had visited shortly after the war in 1923. He saw firsthand how Liberia's siding with the Allies during the Great War undermined the emerging nation's significant trading interests with Germany.[8] The theme of global economic exploitation became a major one in his work during these years, reflecting the complexity of his racial analysis that far too often has been relegated to domestic matters of the African American experience.[9]

In his own words Du Bois had "not then lost faith in the capitalistic system" nor solidified the political philosophy that characterized his latter years from 1948-1963.[10] He was much more open to the possibility of political participation after a period of trial in which blacks could prove their valor, intelligence, and patriotism.[11] Some of his earliest extensive and transgressive travels to Russia, China, and Poland had taken place during these years, foreshadowing the period of his radical internationalism when the American government would interpret his international presence as a threat to national security and seize his travel credentials.[12]

2000, 34–38. This work is very complementary to the line of arguments made by Thomas Borstelmann, Amy Kaplan, and Mary Dudziak that have all internationalized African American appeals for racial justice in a foreign-policy context in which Du Bois played a key role; See Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena.* Harvard University Press, 2001; Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002; and Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy.* Princeton University Press, 2002.

[7] Albert Adu Boahen. *General History of Africa. Vol. 7, Africa Under Colonial Domination, 1880-1935.* University of California Press, 1990, 133–135. Also see Roderick Bush, *The End of White World Supremacy.* Temple University Press, 2009.

[8] W.E.B. Du Bois. "Liberia, the League and the United States," *Foreign Affairs* 11.4 (July 1, 1933): 683.

[9] In a similar manner, Reiland Rabaka has argued that Du Bois' contributions to sociology have been excluded from consideration in the canon of sociological thought. Rabaka, *Against Epistemic Apartheid: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Disciplinary Decadence of Sociology.* Lexington Books, 2010.

[10] Du Bois, "Liberia, the League and the United States," 684.

[11] Du Bois. "Close Ranks (1918)," in *Call and Response: Key Debates in African American Studies*, Henry Louis Gates and Jennifer Burton, Eds. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2008; W.E.B. Du Bois, "Returning Soldiers," *The Crisis*, May 1919; Lewis, 525–534.

[12] In 1952, the State Department refused to issue a passport for Du Bois to travel to a peace conference in Rio de Janeiro, the Youth World Festival in Warsaw (1955), and Ghana's independence ceremonies (1957).

More so than in latter years, the Du Bois of the interwar era is willing to engage the prospects of gradual democratic change and political compromise within the existing political channels. Consistently challenging the racial subtext of colonial discourse, he is confident that the rationalism of scientific study will persuade his opponents to see the error of their ways and to change course. During this era, the great professor was steadily working out ideas of what double-consciousness meant in the realm of domestic and foreign policy in what Brandon Kendehammer refers to as "anti-colonial nationalism."[13] In his own personal development, Du Bois was becoming aware of the deep-seated personal and cultural prejudices that prevented many Americans and Europeans from casting off racial bigotry.[14]

Du Bois, in his role as a scholar-diplomat, exposed the role of race in international conflict, foreshadowed problems of the Cold War and the post-independence era, and challenged prevailing ideas of nationalist discourse with his vision of Pan-Africanism. We can reconsider how Du Bois' ideas and experiences abroad during this period relate to contemporary assumptions about the role of race in international conflict by examining Du Bois' multiple roles of this era: (1) as a scholar-diplomat intertwining his academic expertise with a global presence, (2) as a forthsayer warning of the consequences of imperial powers denying democratic rule in their colonies, and (3) as a Pan-Africanist navigating multi-racial alliances for the development of Africa and its diaspora.

Du Bois as Diplomat

A 24-year old Du Bois living abroad with a German family in Berlin suffered a stinging academic humiliation in 1892. He was denied a doctoral degree from Friedrich Wilhelm University due to a complex combination of administrative, curricular, personal, and racial considerations.[15] Prior to that, Du Bois had also been humiliated during a visit to a white American professor while on holiday in Eisenach. The professor "from the Far West," was shocked to learn that Du Bois was consorting with Dora Marbach, and proceeded to lecture Herr Doktor Johannes Marbach (the young woman's father) on the impropriety of racial intermingling.[16] These formative experiences abroad combined with his own academic acuity created the intellectual context for Du Bois' profound international insights over the next fifty years. Du Bois collated personal experiences in the United States and abroad to challenge the role of race in international discourse and prevailing ideas of white supremacy in diplomatic relations.

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[13] Brandon Kendhammer. "Du Bois the Pan-Africanist and the Development of African Nationalism," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30.1 (2007): 51–71.
[14] Du Bois. *W. E. B. Du Bois: A Reader.* Macmillan, 1995, 388–389.
[15] Lewis, 143–146.
[16] Ibid, 128–130.

Du Bois was unable to travel abroad again until 1900, when he attended the Paris Exposition to present an exhibit on black economic development. While in Europe he attended the Pan-African Congress in London that July and first uttered his famous phrase "the problem of the 20th century is the color line" in a speech addressing the delegation. It was nearly twenty years later, in 1919, however, when Du Bois organized the Pan-African Congress in Paris and was elected secretary, establishing him as the African American diplomat of an international movement to combat white supremacy.[17] This particular conference, in the shadow of World War I and a stone's throw from Versailles, was a watershed moment for Du Bois and African American diplomacy. He had already rebuffed Booker T. Washington some ten years earlier, as the latter spoke in London to promote same conciliatory tones that ingratiated "The Wizard" among white masses in the segregated South.[18] Du Bois' diplomatic position underscored his critique of Washington in *Souls of Black Folk*, framing his domestic priorities for blacks in an international context: a demand for political power, extension of civil rights and national sovereignty, and pursuit of higher education across linguistic, cultural, and colonial boundaries. Du Bois would have none of this—he refused to allow Washington to represent black America abroad and promoted himself as a necessary counterpoint to counterproductive conciliatory measures undermining racial progress in the United States.[19]

For the United States, a nationalist racial discourse had evolved into foreign policy objectives and *de facto* colonial economic policies in the Caribbean and Latin America from the 1890s to the 1920s. By gradually incorporating Europe, and by association Africa, into foreign policy discussions, American views on race during this period became part of a global discussion on racial supremacy in which Americans diplomats were key participants.[20]

Du Bois had been a founding member and contributing editor of *The Journal of Race Development* (known previously as the *Journal of International Relations*) after the founding issue in 1910. The publications shared some board members and were consolidated or absorbed by *Foreign Affairs* in 1922. The original board of the *JRD* was dominated by liberal anthropologists. The founding

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[17] Ibid, 175; Kaplan, 179.

[18] Du Bois. *The Souls of Black Folk : Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism*. Henry Louis Gates and Terri Hume Oliver, Eds. W.W. Norton, 1999, 40; William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, "Propaganda and World War" in *W. E. B. Du Bois: A Reader.* Macmillan, 1995, 392–393.

[19] Imanuel Geiss. *The Pan-African Movement: A History of Pan-Africanism in America, Europe, and Africa.* Africana Publishing Company, 1974, 176; Clarence G. Contee, "Du Bois, the NAACP, and the Pan-African Congress of 1919." *The Journal of Negro History* 57.1 (January 1, 1972), 13.

[20] For a more detailed discussion on the implicit and explicit manifestations of racial logic in foreign policy see the following: Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy: A History*. Northeastern University Press, 1992; Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, 1st ed., Hill and Wang, 2001; Michael L. Krenn, Ed., *The Impact of Race on U.S. Foreign Policy: A Reader*. Routledge, 1999.

co-editors George Blakeslee and G. Stanley Hall invited Du Bois, and Alfred Kroeber. Du Bois' own work was published alongside other race experts of his day such as Franz Boas and David Prescott Barrows. As Jessica Blatt discusses, Blakeslee and other contributors to *JRD* often discussed race using "Lamarckian notions of heredity and crude, climate-based evolutionary theory, long since discarded."[21] These views on race were rather ubiquitous in social science during the Progressive era but Blakeslee presented a unique paradox in that he adopted paternalistic views of race reform while being an adamant critic of European colonialism.

Exemplary of Du Bois was an article he published in *Foreign Affairs* in April 1917 titled "On the Culture of White Folk." Published during the same month the United States entered World War I, the article was a scathing indictment of the role of white supremacy in the international system, repeatedly pointing that "the cost of war is preparation for war" and a key component of that preparation included the callous exploitation of non-white people for the benefit of the white world, emphatically discussing how in exploiting the darker peoples of the world, nations of Europe had brought themselves to war with each other. The only glimpse of optimism in the article affirms Du Bois' belief in the ability of nonwhite peoples of the world, two-thirds of its population, to unite for global change to save humanity. Du Bois suggested, "A belief in humanity is a belief in colored men. If the uplift of mankind must be done by men then the destinies of this world will rest ultimately in the hands of darker nations."[22]

The *JRD* framed a critical context for some of the most forward thinking intellectuals to write on race at a time dominated by pseudo-scientific positivist racial theory known as *eugenics*. For example, in 1929 Du Bois publicly debated one of the best-selling authors of the day, Lothrop Stoddard. Stoddard, Madison Grant, and others articulated a highbrow theory of race that became part of the architecture of racialized segregation. In his public speaking and writing in the *JRD*, Du Bois and like-minded scholars countered the prevailing view in nationalist discourse that race-mixing was a form of white genocide, and that the preservation of the white race was central not only to the health of society but the future of civilization.[23]

One year after the First Pan-African Congress, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) was started at Woodrow Wilson's request by Elihu Root (former Secretary of State), Newton Baker (former secretary of war), John Davis (1924 Democrat presidential candidate) and Hamilton Fish Armstrong (managing editor

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[21] Stephen Whitfield. "Franz Boas: The Anthropologist as Public Intellectual," *Society* 47.5 (September 2010): 430–438; Jessica Blatt, "'To Bring Out The Best That Is In Their Blood': Race, Reform, and Civilization in the Journal of Race Development (1910-1919)," *Ethnic & Racial Studies* 27.5 (September 2004), 692.

[22] Du Bois. "Of the Culture of White Folk." *The Journal of Race Development* 4 (1917), 444.

[23] Matthew Pratt Guterl. *The Color of Race in America, 1900-1940.* Harvard University Press, 2001, 140–143; Carol M. Taylor, "W.E.B. DuBois's Challenge to Scientific Racism." *Journal of Black Studies* 11.4 (June 1981): 449–460.

of *Foreign Affairs*). The CFR and its most important publication *Foreign Affairs* was largely the product of Edwin F. Gay (dean of Harvard Graduate School of Business).[24]

In an effort to provide nonpartisan and noncommercial information to the U.S. government and the American public on foreign affairs, scholars were invited to publish and address serious foreign policy questions of the day. The original group was somewhat open-minded, allowing Jews and African Americans to participate in the dialogue but remained well aware of the limitations of racial progress. Nevertheless, Armstrong invited the leading African American academic to submit an article outlining a black perspective on global affairs.[25]

Du Bois' invitation came during the bloodiest period of American race relations in the postbellum era. Scores of race riots broke out all over the nation in 1919, making the lynch mob a rule of law and a burning point of contention for many black veterans, who came to terms with the fact that their bravery in service of country had further alienated them from a vehemently anti-black American society. In May of 1919, in a *Crisis* article entitled "Returning Soldiers," Du Bois outlined the contradictions and the ethos of post-World War I America as a society that dared lynch, disenfranchise, rob, and insult the "Soldiers of Democracy."[26]

Liberia also became a point of interest and contention for Du Bois during 1920s. Liberia, founded by the descendants of former American slaves in 1847, held strategic interest for several parties: the United States, England, Germany and African Americans. Its abundant rubber and iron ore lured rapidly modernizing nations in search of the raw components necessary for economic growth. Inevitably, the economic questions about Liberia became intertwined with its political destiny.

In 1911, Emmett J. Scott, Late Commissioner of the United States to Liberia queried in *JRD*, "Is Liberia Worth Saving?" arguing the Monrovia government was "primitive and crude," miraculous to survive at all, being a so-called outpost of civilization surrounded by 2 million indigenes.[27] During the Great War, the Allies saw the prospects of using Liberia as an important base to attack the Germans, who had been an important trading partner of the Liberians since 1855, but now following the war it took on new meaning to a variety of interested parties.[28] For example, American bankers were interested in extending

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[24] Philip Jessup et al. *International Security: The American Role in Collective Action for Peace.* Council on Foreign Relations, 1935, vii.

[25] Peter Grose. *Continuing the Inquiry: The Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996.* Council on Foreign Relations, 2006, 18.

[26] Du Bois. "Returning Soldiers." *The Crisis* 18 (May 1919), 13.

[27] Emmett J. Scott. "Is Liberia Worth Saving?" *The Journal of Race Development* 1.3 (January 1, 1911), 285.

[28] Charles H. Wesley. "The Struggle for the Recognition of Haiti and Liberia as Independent Republics." *The Journal of Negro History* 4 (1917), 369; Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Liberia in World Politics.* Negro Universities Press, 1970, 119–120. Also note that Liberia held strategic value because of its rich store of palm oil that was used to make ammunition.

Liberia a loan but doubts by Congress on the inability of the nation to repay led to contentious debate and restrictive lending policies. This was not the first time that Liberia was granted a loan. Although the country was less than one hundred years old, it had been granted three major loans by the time of the Great War totaling more than $2.4 million dollars.[29] According to Nnamdi Azikiwie, the future president of Nigeria who wrote contemporaneously on the subject in his 1934 work *Liberia in World Politics*, each loan was characterized by fraud, beginning with President Edward Roye himself, who mishandled some 30% of the loan. In 1906, the Erlanger Company granted another $200,000 loan to address Liberia's default. This time around, strict financial controls were placed upon the conditions of the loan and placed under the discretion of rubber concessionary companies who squandered almost the entirety of the sum on the construction of roads to facilitate the export of rubber. Liberia, in turn, requested more loans to cover the previous balances and each time was met with stricter conditions for the loans and a greater loss of autonomy over the extraction of its resources.[30]

In 1923, Du Bois learned that a new group of American lenders had also attempted to extend a $5 million line of credit to Liberia for development.[31] The lenders included everyone from Garveyites, who Du Bois had come to disdain, to Harvey Firestone, whom Du Bois viewed cautiously as an ally for interracial and transnational collaboration.[32] The Liberians sought initial American investment to address the encroachment of the French and the British who were attempting to expand into the region.

To procure this loan there would be a political price Liberia would have to pay. When nations such as Nicaragua (1912), Haiti (1915), and the Dominican Republic (1916) defaulted to foreign creditors, international agreements often dictated that lenders could seize the customs houses, which essentially paved the way for an outright occupation.[33] The U.S. repeatedly intervened in Latin America and the Caribbean, citing the Monroe Doctrine to prevent European encroachment. Now the U.S. turned to a similar tactic in Monrovia itself in 1912 when it created a receivership in the customs house to control and collect revenues from the rubber industry. The trustee of the receivership was appointed by the American president himself and three others were designated by Germany, Britain, and France.[34]

Du Bois was not alone in recognizing the racial dimensions of the

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[29] The loan adjusted for inflation would be $56 million dollars today.
[30] Azikiwe, *Liberia in World Politics,* 111–114.
[31] Solomon Hood. "Letter from Solomon Hood to W.E.B. Du Bois," May 7, 1923, W.E.B. Du Bois Papers, Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA. http://oubliette.library.umass.edu/view/pageturn/mums312-b023-i430/#page/1/mode/1up; Marcus M. Garvey, Robert A. Hill, and Universal Negro Improvement Association, "Liberian Construction Loan," in *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers: Sept 1920 - Aug 1921*. University of California Press, 1984, 227–228.
[32] Lewis, 124.
[33] Lester D. Langley. *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934.* Rowman & Littlefield, 1983.
[34] Azikiwe, *Liberia in World Politics,* 118.

economic conflict. The Caribbean Pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey also recognized the potential of diplomatically engaging Liberia. Garvey envisioned Liberia as the capitol of a Negro Republic in Africa, the gateway to an African Renaissance. Du Bois saw Liberia as a place for reunion and a model in black autonomy.[35] In 1923, he traveled to Liberia to represent the U.S. as a Special Ambassador of the Coolidge Administration at the Inauguration of President Charles D.B. King. Although Du Bois described his appointment as "purely ornamental," he took the opportunity to pen correspondence with both President King of Liberia and U.S. Minister to Liberia Solomon Porter Hood, outlining his views on Pan-African diplomacy between African Americans and Liberians.[36] According to David Levering Lewis, Du Bois also used his presence, unbeknownst to the Coolidge Administration, to affirm the American commitment to Liberia in spite of escalating hostilities over boundaries instigated by the French and British.[37] Hood's response in May of that year affirms the framework of Du Bois' Pan-African insistence and the challenges ahead:

> You have said Liberia would be redeemed and put on its feet through the agency of the black man. It can be, provided they are such men properly organized as I have indicated before. You have spoken of direct commercial intercourse on a small scale. It cannot be done on a small scale. The problem is too large, and the difficulties to be incountered [sic] is too great, besides, if anything is to be done to command the respect and confidence of the Liberian Government, it must be done on a large scale.[38]

Correspondence between Du Bois and Hood and others illustrates a growing concern about Liberia's development as an autonomous black nation and the role of Western capital. Du Bois' correspondence during this period also reached the future Prime Minister of England Ramsey MacDonald, popular writer H.G. Wells, and the prominent economist and future chair of the Labour Party, Harold Laski. Du Bois' transatlantic network and the willingness of dignitaries around the world to meet with him illustrates his informal influence, working behind the scenes of traditional diplomatic channels to challenge prevailing ideals of black people and to speak on behalf of Africa.[39] Du Bois used these experiences to feed into his scholarly work and other publications.

Du Bois' 1925 *Foreign Affairs* essay "Worlds of Color" further outlined his views on the role of race in international conflict following his travels to Liberia and the Third Pan-African Congress in London. The article foreshadowed themes of the third Congress, challenging prevailing ideas of white nationalist discourse

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[35] Frank Chalk. "Du Bois and Garvey Confront Liberia: Two Incidents of the Coolidge Years," *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 1.2 (November 1, 1967): 135–142.
[36] Du Bois. "Liberia, the League and the United States," 684.
[37] Lewis, 120–121.
[38] Hood, "Letter from Solomon Hood to W.E.B. Du Bois."
[39] Lewis, 487–490.

by exposing the cultural and economic consequences of white supremacy in foreign policy. The attendees affirmed that the development of Africa was not solely for the benefit of metropoles but should benefit its inhabitants. Du Bois' scholar-diplomat role in the Congress was underscored as he compared issues of lynching and mob rule in the United States to white minority rule in Kenya and Rhodesia. He spoke as a representative for black Americans to engage Africans in diplomatic channels to dismantle the global color line.[40]

In "Worlds of Color," Du Bois saw Liberia as a relevant signifier for resistance to the imperial order.[41] He maintained that the color line was as entrenched in 1925 as it had been when he first penned the phrase in *Souls of Black Folk.*[42] Du Bois responded to European efforts to maintain and expand the racist designs of empire while chastising the United States for its complicity in a unique form of racial domination. For Du Bois, the racist designs of empire were implicit within the economic logic of imperialism--the two were inseparable.[43]

Foreign Affairs' editors, Hamilton Fish Armstrong and Archibald Cary Coolidge, both realized the essay's profound exegesis of the racial logic implicit in the internationalist framework. Coolidge wrote, "Many who object to it will do so because the thoughts it suggests make them feel uncomfortable, as in my own case." Although the editors felt uncomfortable with the essay, their commitment to publishing it speaks volumes to the level of Du Bois' scholarship, the character of the editorial staff, and the institutional culture at the Council on Foreign Relations.[44]

A string of publications and speeches engaging black internationalism by Du Bois from 1890 to 1926 illustrate these changing internationalist perspective on the race question. During this period Du Bois authored some 436 publications and speeches that were published in periodicals edited by others.[45] The articles published in *Foreign Affairs* illustrate the beginning of the first wave of Du Bois' work on the international dimensions of the color line [see Figure 1].

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[40] Geiss, 251–256; Bush, 84-86..
[41] DuBois. "Worlds of Color." *Foreign Affairs* 3.3 (April 1, 1925), 433-444.
[42] Ibid, 444; Du Bois, Gates, and Oliver, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 5.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Coolidge, quoted in Grose, *Continuing the Inquiry*, 18–19.
[45] This number excludes book reviews and reprints of previous articles but includes public speeches that Du Bois prepared reprinted in other periodicals. Also, this number does not include the writings that he published in volumes or periodicals that he personally edited such as *Crisis Magazine* that reflect his larger body of works.

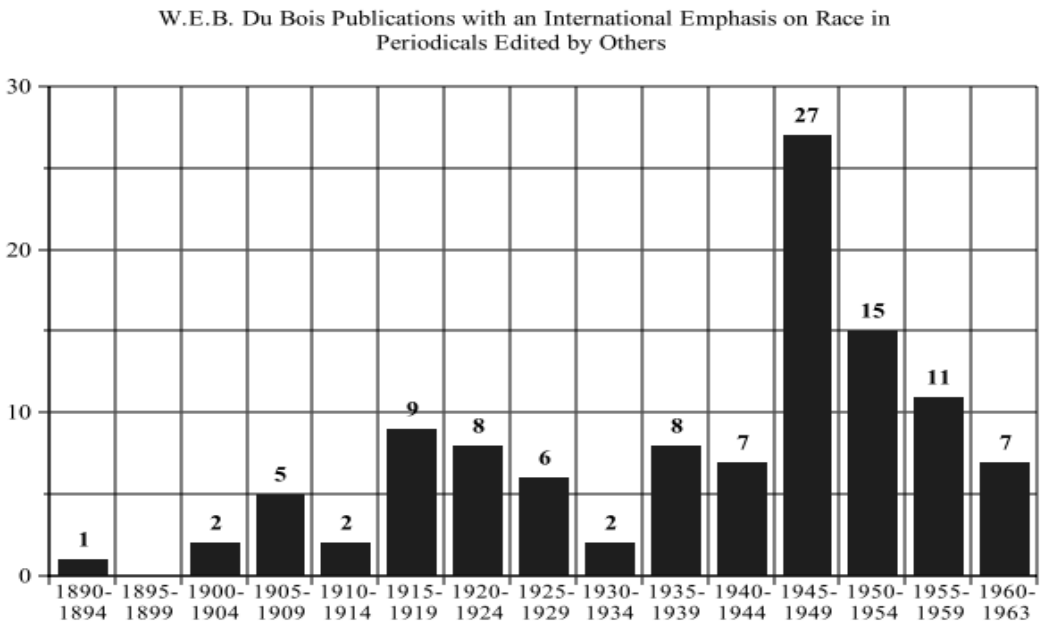

Figure 1[46]

In 1933, he challenged nationalist discourse when he published his second article for *Foreign Affairs* entitled, "Liberia, the League, and the United States," a critical contribution on the role of transnational capital, race, and the failure of international diplomacy to address the serf-like conditions in the country. The essay critically engaged the racial dimensions of the global capitalist order with a clarity that resonates today, including a long discussion of the history of international finance to manipulate Liberia. The article hinted at an international application of Du Bois' concept of the "talented tenth" and its limitations but also reified his own role as a scholar–diplomat, rendering his influence and expertise to the practical arts of international relations. The central argument of the article was that Liberia needed assistance both in the form of humanitarian goodwill by her African American allies in the United States but also in the form of fair access to international capital and investment.[47]

Du Bois outlined a brief history of Liberian attempts to gain international capital but unlike European narratives, Du Bois maintained the fraud that characterized these loans was not only attributable to Liberian mismanagement but

[46] This graph was compiled using Herbert Aptheker's annotated bibliography of the published writing of Du Bois. Aptheker, *Annotated Bibliography of the Published Writings of W. E. B. Du Bois.* Kraus-Thomson Organization, 1973.

[47] Booker T. Washington. *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of Today.* James Pott, 1903, 33–36; Zachery R. Williams, *In Search of the Talented Tenth: Howard University Public Intellectuals and the Dilemmas of Race, 1926-1970.* University of Missouri Press, 2010, 17–19.

also to a complex interplay between several international factors of the color line. Liberia's troubles were compounded by the refusal of the United States to recognize the Liberian government, the inaction and inability of the League of Nations to act in the international interest of all parties especially when those parties were black, and the attitude of private capital, namely the Firestone Corporation, to reinforce the racialized status quo.[48]

The article also provided brief but useful insights of Du Bois' diplomatic relationships with black statesmen of the era such Liberian Presidents Arthur Barclay and Charles King, U.S. Ministers to Liberia Solomon Porter Hood and Charles E. Mitchell, and Charles Johnson (League of Nations International Commission of Inquiry). Speaking of his diplomatic prowess, Du Bois wrote in *Foreign Affairs*:

> …I was designated by cable to act as Special Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary. The appointment was purely ornamental, but I did all I could to cooperate with Hood and Africa and Liberia and tell them of the tremendous interest which American colored people had in them.[49]

From this statement we can see how Du Bois interpreted his role, primarily in this capacity to communicate the aspirations of black Americans for international solidarity. Du Bois also wielded his academic celebrity and his diplomatic pen to advocate for the cause of Liberia personally in a letter to the rubber magnate Harry Firestone in 1933. In the same *Foreign Affairs* article Du Bois outlined his personal appeal to Firestone: "I know what modern capital does to poor and colored peoples. I know what European imperialism has done to Asia and Africa."[50]

Du Bois' second Liberia essay in *Foreign Affairs* also paralleled his frustrations with the color line on the domestic front. During this same period Du Bois, so moved by the stagnancy of racial affairs in the United States and abroad, penned a series of articles in the *Crisis* that urged for an economic policy of self-segregation. These new perspectives of would exacerbate interpersonal differences between the great professor and the NAACP board, leading to Du Bois to tender his resignation in 1934. Du Bois' resignation from the NAACP infused his international perspectives with a new militancy against the global racial order.[51]

Du Bois as Prophet

In 1934, a sixty-six year old Du Bois returned to Atlanta University, to head the Sociology Department. While there he published *Black Reconstruction* in the

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[48] Du Bois, "Liberia, the League and the United States," 695.
[49] Ibid, 684.
[50] Ibid, 681, 684, 687–688.
[51] On the ideological aspects of the split, see Elliott M. Rudwick, "Du Bois' Last Year As *Crisis* Editor." *The Journal of Negro Education,* vol. 27.4 (1958): 526-533; On the organizational and interpersonal aspects of the split, see Raymond Wolters, *Du Bois and His Rivals.* University of Missouri Press, 2002, 228-239.

midst of the Abyssinia Crisis. Italy invaded Ethiopia and built fortifications at Walwal, violating the spirit of the Italio-Ethiopian Treaty of Friendship and the Kellogg-Briand Pact.[52] Du Bois and other black internationalists were disappointed that the League of Nations did not condemn the action.

The regional context for what unfolded in Ethiopia was much more complex, however. Ethiopia was challenged by expanding regional influence of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, in addition to further-reaching ambitions of France, Turkey, and the Italy in Northeast Africa. There had been a long determination beginning with Tewodros to procure modern weapons and training in Western military techniques in order to preserve the sovereignty of Ethiopia. During the reign of Tewodros II, Italy had just emerged from the era of *il Risorgimento* and was prompted by the grand project of imperialism at the Berlin conference of 1884. The nation attempted to procure colonial possessions and take its place in the world among the imperial nations of Europe. Following Tewodros, Emperor Yohannes IV saw a renewed vigor of Italy to dominate the region. One of the rulers, Menelik of Shewa attempted to increase his regional influence by trading for arms with the French but became wary of the Italian presence in Eritrea. In 1889, the soon to be infamous Treaty of Wuchale was signed by Menelik and the Italian Count Pietro Antonelli, ceding diplomatic authority of Ethiopia to the Italians through Article 17 of that agreement.[53] Soon thereafter, Menelik prepared for an Italian offensive. Nearly 10,000 Italian troops marched into Ethiopia into the high mountainous region. Menelik patiently waited for the Italians to give up the strategic position. In February of 1896 in Adwa, Menelik's army gained the opportunity. The Italians lost more than 70% of their army resulting in an Ethiopian victory that was heralded throughout the African diaspora.

Though an average of only about four thousand Americans actually lived abroad in Africa during the latter 1930s, African Americans resonated deeply with the symbolism and affinity for a continent they had never seen or visited.[54] Ethiopianism became a rallying cry for many blacks of Harlem and throughout the diaspora. It represented a form of black cosmopolitanism that was in some ways just as significant as the Haitian Revolution had been in developing a black transnational identity some 130 years prior.[55] In the 1920s and 1930s, Ethiopia

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[52] Haile Selassie and Edward Ullendorff. *My Life and Ethiopia's Progress, 1892-1937: The Autobiography of Emperor Haile Sellassie I.* Oxford University Press, 1976, 222–225.

[53] Sven Rubenson. "The Protectorate Paragraph of the Wichale Treaty," *The Journal of African History* 5, no. 2 (January 1, 1964): 243–283; Sven Rubenson, *Wiçhalé XVII; the Attempt to Establish a Protectorate over Ethiopia.* Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 1964; Carlo Giglio and Richard Caulk, "Article 17 of the Treaty of Uccialli," *The Journal of African History* 6, no. 2 (January 1, 1965), 221; Antoinette Iadarola, "Ethiopia's Admission into the League of Nations: An Assessment of Motives," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 8.4 (1975), 603-605.

[54] S. Shepard Jones, Denys P Myers, and World Peace Foundation. *Documents on American Foreign Relations. January 1938 - June 1939.* World Peace Foundation, 1939, 516.

[55] Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo. *Black Cosmopolitanism : Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-century Americas.* University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, 7–8.

represented the hope of an independent Africa for millions throughout the diaspora. As some argued, Ethiopia presented a sense of optimism for the future of the continent, living evidence that European domination on the continent was not a foregone conclusion and that Africans could overcome European armies and claim their place in the world.[56] Ethiopia held special and overlooked significance for Du Bois. A seminal work, *Darkwater* (1920), often overshadowed by the literary success of the *Souls of Black Folk*, provides an example of how Ethiopia was used by Du Bois as both a metaphor for the African diaspora but also as a literal reference. "In black Africa today only one-seventeenth of the land and a ninth of the people in Liberia and Abyssinia [Ethiopia] are approximately independent, although menaced and policed by European capitalism." Du Bois reiterated that the wealth of the Western world was dependent on the exploitation of resources and labor in Africa, factors of imperialism further underscored by the recent war.[57]

In October of 1935, Du Bois published "Inter-Racial Implications of the Ethiopian Crisis" in *Foreign Affairs* addressing the dilemma, through the metaphor of the color line. The article was a three-part essay appearing in *Foreign Affairs* in the midst of the Great Depression. Du Bois began the article by countering common misconceptions that the Ethiopians, were not black. He affirmed, "Abyssinia is a word of Semitic origin, but Ethiopia is Negro. Look at the pictures of Abyssinians now widely current. They are as Negroid as American Negroes. If there is a black race they belong to it. Of course they are not and never were any "pure" Negroes any more than there are "pure" whites or "pure" yellows. But in the rough and practical assignment of mankind to three divisions, the Ethiopians belong to the black race."[58]

In the second part of the essay Du Bois went on to talk about nationality, culture, and religion as historical problems that accompanied exploitation of particular classes of people in the past but pointed to how Europe was the first to engineer a particular design of exploitation that was based in race and color. He skillfully argued that "no problem of race and color need have arisen" but the fact that it did made further exploitation of colonies in Du Bois' view "necessary and justifiable." This calculus, Du Bois argued, was implicit in the nationalist imperial system that pitted Germany, Belgium, Italy and others against each other to develop empires that reinforced deeply flawed global views about race. Using Ethiopia as a prime example, Du Bois went on to discuss the significance, symbolic and literal, of nominally free nations including: Haiti, Liberia, Japan, China, and India. He discussed the symbolic and literal significance of Belgian and Italian aggression, contesting and exposing the racist undertones of so-called

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[56] Jonathan T. Reynolds and Erik Gilbert. *Africa in World History.* Pearson Educational, 2004, 253.

[57] Du Bois. *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil.* Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920, 64; Du Bois, "The African Roots of the War," *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1915).

[58] Du Bois. "Inter-Racial Implications of the Ethiopian Crisis: A Negro View." *Foreign Affairs* 14.1 (October 1, 1935), 82.

benevolent imperialism around the globe.[59] The crux of the second part of the article centers on the indictment of whiteness in a moral, ethical, and religious framework. Du Bois argued that Christian missions were used as a tool of imperial foreign policy, at best a "smokescreen to reduce the natives to submission." He pointed out that Italy's aggression towards Ethiopia was not a result of the absence of Christian piety or technological progress but stemmed solely from hypocritical views of culture and self-serving economic interests. Thus the role of the Italian intervention had less to do with advancing the so-called march of civilization than appropriating land and posturing fascist doctrines of white supremacy. He argued:

> All this is not pleasant reading for those who pin their faith on European civilization, the Christian religion and the superiority of the white race. Yet these are the bare facts. They might be differently interpreted and variously supplemented, yet under any form they remain the story of selfishness and shortsightedness, of cruelty, deception and theft.[60]

Du Bois concludes the article by addressing the conundrum that the Italian invasion (and the presumed acceptance of it by the Western world) placed the world in a crisis. He argued that this effort would make the world more unstable and increase violence in the "whole colored world" to resist white aggression.[61]

> Italy has forced the world into a position where, whether or not she wins, race hate will increase; while if she loses, the prestige of the white world receive a check comparable to that involved in the defeat of Russia by Japan [1905]…Black men and brown men have indeed been aroused as seldom before. Mass meetings and attempts to recruit volunteers have taken place in Harlem, the West Indies and West Africa.[62]

Du Bois interpreted the symbolic value of Italian aggression towards Ethiopia as a useful countermeasure to dismantle some of the psychological forms of control used in Africa and throughout the African diaspora. For example, he held that the symbol of Ethiopia would help black men understand the deviousness of the use of African troops and religion to subdue the continent, the hegemonic colonial policy of assimilation of black leadership by the French, and the co-optation of a biracial ruling class in West Indies by the British.[63]

More broadly, Du Bois' endorsed a *realpolitik* vision of Pan-Africanism that was very much rooted in anti-colonial concepts of power and progress. He went on to declare:

> The moral of this, as Negroes see it, is that if any colored nation expects to maintain itself against white Europe it need appeal neither

[59] Ibid, 83–84.
[60] Ibid, 85–87.
[61] Ibid, 87–89.
[62] Ibid, 88.
[63] Ibid, 87–92.

> to religion nor culture but only to force. That is why Japan today has the sympathy of the majority of mankind because that majority is colored. Italy's action in Ethiopia deprives China of her last hope for aid from Europe. She must either follow Japan or fall into chaos.[64]

Du Bois was participating in an evolving international dialogue on race on several fronts. Du Bois was responding to the Garveyites who framed their Pan-Africanism using aesthetic impulses, excluding lighter complexioned blacks (such as Du Bois) and whites from their ranks. He was also responding to American *and* European diplomats who viewed Africa and empire through constructed assumptions about the inferiority of yellow, brown, and darker-hued peoples. Lastly, he was appealing to Africa and the African Diaspora, affirming a certain spiritual quality that bonded these worlds together using global metaphors of a color line and a universal experience in a modernizing world.

In a profoundly prophetic analysis, it was during the interwar years that Du Bois identified the role that exclusion of colonized people would come to play in international affairs. Du Bois warned that future conflicts would be certain to emerge if autonomy were not preserved for Liberia and Ethiopia.[65]

Du Bois as Pan-Africanist

Du Bois' ideas articulated in *Foreign Affairs* during the interwar years also relate to his developing views of internationalism and the future of Pan-Africanism. Following a period of prolific traveling in 1936 that included Germany, China, Soviet Union, and Japan, Du Bois studied industrial education with attention to nation building and developed a more pragmatic approach to Pan-Africanism. From this background, Du Bois critiqued land and labor policies in South Africa, Kenya, and the Congo, a betrayal of democratic reforms in British and French West Africa, and the framework of "indirect rule" in which Africans themselves were used in their own domination as police and military forces.[66] He addressed the international calculus of alliance formation and nation-building as more than mental abstraction but attempted to present workable models for change in the realm of foreign policy.

As World War II drew to a close, Du Bois, attended both the Dumbarton Oaks (1944) and San Francisco Conferences (1945) that established the United Nations (UN) as a representative for the NAACP. As the UN Charter was drafted, Du Bois criticized its silence on colonialism as a blatant omission in its quest for global harmony.[67] The Charter would promise "[t]o maintain international peace

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[64] Ibid, 89.

[65] Ibid; W. E. B Du Bois, "The African Roots of War." *Atlantic Monthly*, May 1915, 707–708, 714.

[66] Du Bois. "Black Africa Tomorrow." *Foreign Affairs* 17.1 (October 1, 1938), 101–104.

[67] Du Bois. *The World and Africa and Color and Democracy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 245–247. Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957.* Cornell University Press, 1997; Carol Elaine Anderson, *Eyes Off the*

and security" but the majority of the permanent Security Council all held colonial possessions.[68] The gist of Du Bois' criticism of the U.N. Charter was that the prevailing conceptions of a global democratic framework alluded to in Franklin Roosevelt's 1941 "Four Freedoms," Pope Pius XXII "Peace and the Changing Social Order" (1941) and even the Atlantic Charter exposed the racial implications of a world order built on peace without explicitly dismantling the racial imperial designs of the West. By 1948, Du Bois' fears had been confirmed by the reluctance of major powers to allow the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to be a binding treaty.[69]

Du Bois met and corresponded with Ralph Bunche, then the first African American to have an official diplomatic role at the State Department, who went on to become under-secretary of the United Nations. Bunche had been influenced by Du Bois during his earlier years but had become critical of race men in general and Du Bois in particular as the professor drifted further to the left while Bunche gravitated more towards the center. Bunche, the only high-level U.S. representative at the UN meeting, had come to see Du Bois' work as outdated, provincial, and a form of ethnic chauvinism. He worked to move toward race-neutral language and to downplay international appeals addressing the status of blacks in the United States in the interests of other less divisive issues, an agenda with which Walter White, head of the NAACP, reluctantly complied.[70]

Du Bois articulated some of his most significant positions (later pronounced in San Francisco) in two *Foreign Affairs* articles: "Black Africa Tomorrow" in 1938, and the 1943 essay "Realities in Africa: European Profit or Negro Development?" "Black Africa Tomorrow," published in the October issue *of Foreign Affairs,* hinted at a trajectory for Pan-African policy and rendered a searing criticism of European capital in Africa. Labor and raw materials, Du Bois argued, were key in tracing Western motives in the continent and claims of philanthropic work were laughable.[71] Greed and avariciousness for land made it possible for 25% of the most arable land in Kenya to be held by white settlers and 2 million whites to control 90% of the land in South Africa. When outright violence was unable to accomplish the policy of imperialism, Du Bois outlined how the European powers turned to "negotiation and treaty" which "left the land largely in the hands of indigenous black folk" but still accomplished the work of extraction and exploitation through indirect rule.[72]

Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955. Cambridge University Press, 2003; Lewis, 509–510.

[68] "Charter of the United Nations." Reviewed on April 24, 2013, http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/.

[69] Brenda Gayle Plummer. *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996, 200–2.

[70] Charles Henry, Ed. *Ralph J. Bunche: Selected Speeches and Writings.* University of Michigan Press, 1996, 1, 5–8; Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize*, 149.

[71] Du Bois, "Black Africa Tomorrow," 100.

[72] Ibid, 102-104.

Du Bois examined the question of true democracy by engaging the hitherto unacknowledged Aborigines Rights Protection Society and National Congress of British West Africa who are advancing calls for self-government every bit as articulate and grounded in Western concepts of democracy as the founding fathers in the United States. The question of native rights was clearly not a question of justice but more so an issue of color and race that allowed the European masses from the elite, peasants, and even the masses of the working class to collectively ignore the moral wrong of foreign domination. This complicity, argued Du Bois, came at a great cost:

> The white worker, rising at six in the morning and dropping to dreamless stupor and nine in the evening, may feel satisfaction in knowing that his machine-like effort supports civilization. Yet he made well ask himself whether it is necessary that labor pay for industrialized civilization with emasculated manhood, whether his poverty is necessary, whether wealth is the extreme of luxury or whether it is calm contentment. Has the African worker a message for European labor?[73]

Criticizing the process of imperialism rooted in culture and then exploitation, "Black Africa Tomorrow" was a jeremiad on Western ethnocentrism as much as prophetic vision of a new world. Although this was a work was deeply critical of colonial practices and Western ethnocentrism, it was an optimistic essay that emphasized pragmatism over idealism. The solution that Du Bois proposed was an alternative to "benevolent despotism" through political agitation based in a diasporic consciousness, communalism, and cooperative ventures. Citing ones already existing in French Equatorial Guinea, he prophesied a future of uprising, in which:

> …white rulers in Kenya, the Union of South Africa, and the Belgian Congo may...someday face the mass of their black subjects in arms--arms supplied by European rivals, or by black America, or even by brown and yellow Asia.[74]

Before World War II had ended, Du Bois published his final *Foreign Affairs* essay "The Realities in Africa" in July of 1943. The essay pointed to the end of the war and addressed the unresolved economic problems of a race-conscious imperialism in the long durée. Once again, he critiqued so-called humanitarian impulses that were used for a cover of exploitative mechanisms and urged for a policy of vigilance against what Walter Rodney and others would later characterize as the process of underdevelopment.[75] Said Du Bois:

> Governmental investment and its concomitant political control have been the basis upon which private investors have built their private empires, being thus furnished free capital by home taxation; and

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[73] Ibid, 109.
[74] Ibid, 105, 110.
[75] Walter Rodney. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.* Howard University Press, 1981.

> while the mass of people in the mother country have been taxed and often heavily for this governmental gift abroad, the private capitalists...have reaped not only interest from his own investment but returns from investments which he did not make.[76]

Further, he established that the two great world movements of the slave trade and the establishment of capitalism were based in the exploitation of Africa. Furthermore, techniques of domination developed over two centuries and the role of race in economic exploitation continued to play a major role in the present. Du Bois also pointed to a more complex rendering of the cultural identities of the continent than in previous articles of the series. He reminded readers that for convenience he referred to Africa in a word but that there was no unity of physical, cultural, historical, or racial identities. Africa was at least eleven regions (North Africa, French West Africa, Egypt, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Ethiopia, France Equatorial Guinea, the Belgian Congo, British West Africa, British East Africa, and Portuguese Africa and South Africa).

Ironically, Du Bois used the imposed boundaries by the European empires to convey regions of cultural unity instead of the much more complicated and granular cultural and linguistic zones that emphasize indigenous identities. It made it much easier for Du Bois is to do this because he focused on a common African identity that was synonymous though not identical to blackness in the United States.[77]

Throughout this essay and the others in the series, Du Bois commonly used the term Negro and African throughout the African continent interchangeably. Du Bois is not unique in this regard, as many scholars of Africa and the general public made little distinction between people with black skin--the difference lies in why. For Du Bois, the most compelling issues were taking place on the level of the state and in order for Africans throughout the continent or blacks in America to effectively grapple with the issues they faced, it would take organization on a grand scale using methods of development to address the realities of a European dominated world. The most effective method of addressing the "decree of inferiority" was upon economic grounds and to some extent this could only be accomplished through a raw assessment of colonialism and its role in subsidizing white supremacy.[78]

Turning to the voice of a scholar-diplomat once again, Du Bois argued that social development of Africa was incompatible with private profits of foreign investment. Du Bois saw the German desire for domination over African and Asian labor and raw materials as a key component of World War I. Now writing in the midst of World War II, Du Bois raised the question once again:

> An important aspect of the World War of 1939 is the competition for

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[76] Du Bois, "The Realities in Africa: European Profit or Negro Development?" *Foreign Affairs* 21.4 (July 1, 1943): 724.
[77] Ibid, 724–725.
[78] Ibid, 727.

> the profit of Asiatic labor and materials--competition in part between European countries, in part between those countries and Japan… It would be a grave mistake to think that Africans are not asking the same questions that Asiatics are: 'Is it a white man's war?...Is the development of Africa for the welfare of Africans the aim? Or is the aim a world dominated by Anglo-Saxons, or at least by the stock of white Europe?[79]

The final section of the essay pointed to 125 million people in the continent of Africa who were not being considered in plans for postwar reconstruction. Du Bois pointed out that major world leaders, including Franklin Roosevelt, Pope Piux XII, British Christian leaders, Winston Churchill and other American publicists such as Henry Luce and Clarence Streit had attempted to seriously raise the issue of a truly and economically independent Africa. Du Bois offered a haunting prophecy--that to refuse to deal with Africa on equal terms with Europe would return to another rivalry and another war.[80]

Du Bois underscored the role of commerce in sustaining the racial philosophy during the modern age and warned that the world had to reckon with a fundamental question. Would it pursue European profit or Negro development? This was a problem that could not be left to the forces of the market alone since those forces were concentrated in the preservation of a global white power structure. He argued that if there were to be a lasting and effective change it must be through and "organ of international trusteeship and the native intelligence of Africa."[81] He held that "[u]nless this question of racial status is frankly and intelligently faced it will become a problem not simply of Africa but of the world."[82]

For Du Bois, the problem of the color line signified in colonial policies in Africa, created a scenario in which cheap black labor and raw materials transferred to the West would undermine European labor, increasing the power of the investors and leading to labor strife. He held that the situation would increase in the influence of investors and employers over the political organization of the state ending in class warfare and increased international conflict. Differing from a typical class analysis, Du Bois, affirmed the centrality of the "fiction of inferiority" and the suppression of African workers as a root cause of the coming conflagration.[83]

The article was published alongside that of Carl Brandt's "Problems of Invasion and Occupation." Brandt also examined the issue of colonialism in Africa but drew differing conclusions. In a response letter to a concerned reader these differences were not lost on Du Bois, who held fast to his view, emphasizing that

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[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid, 729.
[81] Ibid, 730–731.
[82] Ibid, 727.
[83] Ibid.

free enterprise alone would not resolve the African dilemma, even if only local labor in resources were used:

> Private investment should be welcomed; but it should be under control in Africa even more than it is in England. In England...wages of labor, conditions of work, the work of women and children, are regulated in the public interest...The public cost of this legislation cuts down the profits obtainable by private industry. Private investors seek territory worth such costs can be updated; whereas in Africa, labor works long hours at 30 to 50 cents a day, where the cost of education and public services paid for by the public are negligible. This sort of profit ought to be curbed by international legislation and guardianship. And this not solely for philanthropy, but for insurance against future war and turmoil.[84]

What makes this response particularly interesting is that he points to the failure of free enterprise in Europe to address social ills as evidence to restrict its application in Africa. Du Bois called upon international cooperation to address these issues not only on humanitarian grounds, but as a preventative measure against future wars.[85]

These essays detailed his evolving views on Pan-Africanism based on a cautious sense of optimism and on his personal engagement with key leaders in Africa and the African Diaspora. In 1945, the force of the possibilities of change and the optimism of the post-war era carried over into the 5th Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England. For the first time, the demands for independence throughout Africa were foreshadowed by concessions by colonial regimes. Du Bois met Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Hastings Banda, and others soon to be heads of state in an emerging Africa. Some ninety delegates attending with strong representation from Africa, the Manchester meeting proved a watershed event in the history of Pan-Africanism.

In 1946, Du Bois led the movement to draft a UN petition on behalf of African Americans, which led to the publication of Du Bois' most important diplomatic scholarship "An Appeal to the World." Ultimately, the prominence of Du Bois' international diplomacy and policy-oriented studies led to his exile. Shortly after becoming co-chairman with Paul Robeson on Council of African Affairs in 1948, several years later in 1951 he was indicted as "unregistered foreign agent" under the McCormack Act, a law designed to persecute political activists working on behalf of a foreign principal. He was refused a passport the following year and excluded from what would have been the crowning diplomatic event of his life by being unable to witness the independence ceremony of Ghana in 1957. Martin Luther King and other civil rights activists were present at Nkrumah's request but in a cruel twist of irony, Du Bois the preeminent scholar-

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[84] Du Bois. "Letter to Eric Cochrane, 1943 Jul 6." *The Correspondence of W.E.B. Du Bois, Volume 2.* University of Massachusetts Press, 1997, 366.
[85] Ibid.

diplomat was unable to attend.[86]

Conclusion

Du Bois' *Foreign Affairs* articles framed the centrality of race in global struggles for a predominately white audience at the reins of power. The articles highlighted Du Bois' role as a representative, a dual agent for African American and American interests. He presented in very clear terms that the interests of black America and United States were not identical but neither were they perpetually at odds. Working as a self-appointed diplomat, Du Bois attempted to confront two worlds in which race played a key role. He brought together his personal views on race that were deeply shaped by explicit and violent manifestations of white supremacy in the United States with global discussions on empire that were just as vituperative but obscured through the economic discourse of modernization. Du Bois' personal international experiences, broad academic training, and familiarity with audiences in the United States and abroad made his discussion of race accessible to a wider audience as he translated the obtuse economic developments of empire into a transparent analysis of race. Understanding these works is also important because Du Bois saw himself as the legitimate heir to the mantle of the black self-appointed statesman Frederick Douglass. One aspect of Douglass' storied career that appealed to Du Bois was his presence as a statesman despite never holding public office.[87] This is an important theme to consider because although Du Bois was well-known his positions on a variety of political and economic questions were never universally accepted by African Americans, let alone the whole of the Diaspora. Raymond Wolters takes up the issue of Du Bois and his rivals in the context of the World War I and interwar years in several chapters in *Du Bois and His Rivals*. Wolters addresses the rising protest from black newspapers who disagreed with Du Bois' decision to "close ranks" and support Woodrow Wilson and the outrage that Du Bois had been considering an appointment in the U.S. Army. His scholarly authority was often challenged as mere polemic by white critics and as an inauthentic representation of the voice of the black masses by Garvey and others.[88]

As Mahgan Keita and Kwame Appiah discuss, although Du Bois argued that race was a social construction, he faced a paradox of having to combat the global imaginary of white supremacy in the racial and civilizationist terminology of his opponents—which included both whites and blacks. We get a particularly useful insight into how Du Bois grappled with these complex issues of representing the race, struggling to speak on behalf of and to a variety of

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[86] Lewis, 565.

[87] Nicholas Buccola. "'Each for All and All for Each': The Liberal Statesmanship of Frederick Douglass." *Review of Politics* 70.3 (Summer 2008): 400–419; Herbert Aptheker, "Du Bois on Douglass: 1895." *Journal of Negro History* 49.4 (September 1964): 264–268.

[88] Raymond Wolters. *Du Bois and His Rivals.* University of Missouri Press, 2002, 114–115, 118–120.

constituents in the *Foreign Affairs* series.[89]

These articles are also important because they bridge a period of time in Du Bois' life when he visited Africa for the first time. Du Bois' first visit to Africa arguably opened a new chapter in his scholarship in which he engaged not only the plight of African Americans, but the collective dilemma of the blacks on the global stage. Du Bois interactions with African heads of state such as Liberia's Charles King set the stage for a renewal in his Pan-African thinking that was being challenged simultaneously by an agenda set forth by Marcus Garvey and the UNIA.

Our understanding of African American internationalism as discussed in works by Brenda Gayle Plummer, Gerald Horne, Carol Anderson and others is greatly aided by a more detailed analysis of the biographical and historical context of these *Foreign Affairs* essays. Du Bois' model of scholar-diplomacy serves as an example for us today in how to translate the heady world of abstraction to the real world. We see how the work of black cultural and intellectual diplomacy worked for the cause of transnational solidarity. Du Bois' engagement of foreign policy, as portrayed during the volatile interwar period, foreshadowed problems and prospects of the Cold War and post-independence Africa, challenging prevailing ideas of nationalist discourse via the lens of racial injustice.

Ironically, Tewodros' and Selassie's quest for technological modernization and inclusion in the international community became a major theme of developing African nations in the post-independence and Cold War era. Just as the international community had abandoned Ethiopia during the 1930s in the name of preserving the existing European world order, many African nations would be sacrificed on the Cold War altar of proxy diplomacy between the United States and the Soviet Union. Nkrumah, Lumumba, and other Pan-Africanists attempted to advance their nation's best interest by securing the technology and diplomatic ties necessary for modernization, they also came under increasing scrutiny by the United States and alienated because of their ambitions.

As Du Bois articulated so forcefully in 1934, the role of the United States in advancing the interests of African nations abroad deeply impacted how African American citizens interpreted their own stakes in the American democratic system. When the American government applied the twisted logic of racial primacy abroad, African Americans often opted to side on the oppressed and nonaligned communities of the world. This trend that became most evident during the 1930s came to have significant consequences during the Cold War era.

Du Bois identified early on that the problems of race would be compounded by the nation state and that if people of African descent were to thrive in an international system, it would have to be one in which a common good would unite a geographically disparate people. Far too often, in an era of globalization

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[89] Maghan Keita. *Race and the Writing of History: Riddling the Sphinx*, *Race and American Culture*. Oxford University Press, 2000, 72–73; Kwame Anthony Appiah, "The Conservation of 'Race.'" *Black American Literature Forum* 23.1 (April 1, 1989): 38.

and mass media, we trivialize Du Bois' travel, not fully appreciating the scale of his scholarly diplomacy. Du Bois' travels and publications during the interwar speak to his tremendous flexibility as a scholar and an activist but also as a pragmatist, working out models for his ideas for change in foreign policy exchanges.

Some critics of race as a major factor in foreign policy have cited the lack of documentary evidence on racial motivations in foreign policy in the form of a "smoking gun" only accepting the validity of racist designs when racial language is explicitly invoked but ignoring the broader racist logic of imperial design. In doing so, such scholarship denies the scope of race in international developments and the *zeitgeist* of the time. A careful reading of Du Bois' life during this period can reconcile these contradictions. The totality of race during the interregnum era made its mention superfluous; racial dynamics were implicit in every decision of state because they were foremost in the mind of every diplomat: black or white. As well-established historiography of race and the American identity has increasing made it apparent, that citizenship came to represent race at home and abroad.[90]

For African Americans this could be a torturous and sometimes treacherous arrangement as they struggled to articulate their own racial experiences within a global racial framework. To discuss geopolitics without race leaves much to be desired from the foreign policy narrative.

Economic histories may also have contributed to the unintended consequence of distorting the current conditions in Liberia, Ethiopia, and other states within the continent of Africa by minimizing the role of race while paradoxically affirming it. Many race-conscious historians who have received the lion's share of attention in the literature have addressed the economic impact of slavery in the pre-colonial period. However, as Du Bois' discussion of Liberia and Ethiopia reveals, there is much to be explored in the interwar period. The global legacy of race impacts Western African nations whose progenitors were involved in the transatlantic slave trade but also created a geopolitical and cultural context that impacted non-participating peoples in Eastern Africa.

Economic explanations for Africa's "underdevelopment" in the contemporary global economy often hinge upon speculation about rampant corruption, a culture of poverty, and production inefficiencies, all of which were

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[90] Gary Gerstle. *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century.* Princeton University Press, 2002; George White, Jr. *Holding the Line: Race, Racism, and American Foreign Policy Toward Africa, 1953-1961.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005; Roediger gives insight into the transnational dynamics at play in racial formation and immigrant assimilation in the United States. See David R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs.* Basic Books, 2006; Krenn, *The Impact of Race on U.S. Foreign Policy*. On the complex role of whiteness and racial discrimination in U.S.-Latin American diplomacy see Michael Calderón-Zaks, "Debated Whiteness amid World Events: Mexican and Mexican American Subjectivity and the U.S.' Relationship with the Americas, 1924-1936." *Mexican Studies* 27, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 325–359.

explanations being given during the waning years of the colonial era. These views were analogues to theories of social Darwinism and eugenics that became unfashionable following World War II but the racist rationale that economic motives for exploitation were couched in continued to frame Africa's relationship with the world. Du Bois' dismissal of the core of these arguments then is equally relevant today--as the veil of economic jargon may be used as double-speak to obfuscate that much more familiar and historical logic of racial domination. During the 1930s, Du Bois parried Liberia's critics in this regard, reaffirming the racial foundations of global poverty:

> She lacks training, experience and thrift. But her chief crime is to be black and poor in a rich, white world; and in precisely that portion of the world where color is ruthlessly exploited as a foundation for American and European wealth.[91]

Race was a key theme in discussing themes of global development then as it remains now.

We should also reflect more fully on what it meant for Du Bois to be the initial contact, a diplomat, for thousands of Africans, Europeans, and Asians to African America in an age with limited radio, no television, and no Internet. Du Bois remained a powerful ambassador without the "credentials" of the office; his influence is felt more in the world today than many of his contemporaries at the State Department who attempted to curtail the scope of his global influence. It is important to consider that Du Bois' endorsements of and contributions to the Pan-African idea predate the establishment of many modern internationalists organizations such League of Nations (1919), United Nations (1945), and European Union (1992) as well as their counterparts in Africa such as the Organization of African Unity (1963), the African Union (2001), and the Economic Community of West African States (1975).

Most importantly, race scholars should venture to present alternative models and visions of the world as they would have it—this was the central work of Du Bois the diplomat. In the spirit of Du Bois, critical race scholars should present bold ideas for global social change in the realm of statecraft, whether on a grand scheme as Du Bois defiantly attempted through his interpretation of Pan-Africanism, or in smaller models as evidenced in Du Bois' endorsement of cooperative intellectual ventures between African American intellectuals and African elected officials in Liberia. It is incumbent for more academics to weigh-in on policy matters, regardless of expertise or professional training in the so-called policy sciences. It is the duty of intellectuals not to merely observe the status quo but to actively shape the dialogue, guiding the discourse towards justice, piercing the blinding veil of nationalism, and transgressing the color line.

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[91] Du Bois, "Liberia, the League and the United States," 695; Bush, 86-87, 107-108.